

# **Decentralization and Local Development Program, Northern Albania**

## **Mid-term Review Report**

**September/October 2011, Tirana**

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### *Disclaimer*

*Views expressed in this report are those of the independent experts and do not necessarily represent the position of the mandating agency*

# Contents

|                                                                                                                              |    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Executive Summary .....                                                                                                      | 4  |
| 1 Introduction .....                                                                                                         | 5  |
| 1.1 Review Focus .....                                                                                                       | 5  |
| 1.2 Methodology .....                                                                                                        | 5  |
| 1.3 Setting the General Context .....                                                                                        | 6  |
| 1.4 SDC Involvement and the DLDP Approach.....                                                                               | 7  |
| 2 Review Findings .....                                                                                                      | 9  |
| 2.1 Program Relevance.....                                                                                                   | 9  |
| 2.2 Efficiency, Effectiveness, Impact and Sustainability.....                                                                | 9  |
| 2.2.1 Improved Local Governance Structures and Procedures, Capacities and Public Services .....                              | 9  |
| 2.2.2 Shared Good Local Governance and Management Practice at National level/ Influencing National Level Policy Making ..... | 15 |
| 2.3 Program Management.....                                                                                                  | 18 |
| 3 Conclusions and Recommendations .....                                                                                      | 19 |
| 3.1 Main Conclusions Relevant to SDC Involvement.....                                                                        | 19 |
| 3.2 General Recommendations for SDC Support to DLG in Albania .....                                                          | 21 |
| Annexes                                                                                                                      |    |

### **Acknowledgements**

The assessment mission would like to express thanks to all who participated in the interviews and focus group discussion conducted in the framework of the assessment mission and shared their opinions and views sincerely and openly.

Our special gratitude goes to the SDC Country Office in Albania and the DLDP team for professional and effective organisation of the mission program, which made this review a pleasure to carry out.

### **List of Abbreviations**

|        |                                                                   |
|--------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| AAC    | Albanian Association of Communes                                  |
| AAM    | Albanian Association of Municipalities                            |
| AAR    | Albanian Association of Regions                                   |
| ADA    | Austrian Development Agency                                       |
| ALA    | Association of Local Authorities                                  |
| Coplan | Institute for Habitat Development, Tirana                         |
| COSPO  | Cooperazione per lo Sviluppo dei Paesi Emergenti                  |
| CSRD   | Cross-Cutting Strategy for Regional Development                   |
| DLDP   | Decentralization and Local Development Program                    |
| DLGCS  | Decentralisation and Local Government Cross-Cutting Strategy      |
| DP     | Democratic party                                                  |
| EC     | European Commission                                               |
| EU     | European Union                                                    |
| CoE    | Council of Europe                                                 |
| IPA    | Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance                           |
| IMC    | Inter Municipality Cooperation                                    |
| ISB    | Institute for Contemporary Studies                                |
| LGU    | Local Government Units                                            |
| NDI    | National Democratic Institute Monitoring and Evaluation           |
| M&E    | Monitoring and Evaluation                                         |
| METE   | Ministry of Economy, Trade and Energy                             |
| Mol    | Ministry of Interior                                              |
| MTBP   | Medium Term Budgeting Program                                     |
| NALAS  | Network of Associations of Local Authorities of South-East Europe |
| NGO    | Non-Governmental Organization                                     |
| NSDI   | National Strategy for Development and Integration                 |
| NUT    | Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics                  |
| OSCE   | Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe                |
| PCM    | Project Cycle Management                                          |
| PFM    | Public Finance Management                                         |
| PCM    | Project Cycle Management                                          |
| RDCS   | Regional Development Crosscutting Strategy                        |
| RDF    | Regional Development Fund                                         |
| RDP    | Regional Development Project                                      |
| REC    | Regional Environment Centre                                       |
| RLRGS  | Reinforcing Local and Regional Government Structures in Albania   |

|      |                                                              |
|------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| SDC  | Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation                 |
| SDP  | Strategic Development Planning / Strategic Development Plans |
| SECO | Swiss Secretariat for Economic Affairs                       |
| SP   | Socialist Party                                              |
| SWM  | Solid Waste Management                                       |
| TA   | Technical Assistance                                         |
| TIPA | Training Institute of Public Administration                  |
| URI  | Urban Research Institute                                     |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme                         |
| SWG  | Sector Working Group                                         |

## Executive Summary

The DLDP project is being implemented in the context characterised with the number of challenges related to local governance evolution system in Albania. The most relevant being a deficit of clear guidance related to local governance reform (in particular in the area of competencies and resources redistribution) and to the regionalisation issues in the context of EU integration, polarised political environment on the background of underdeveloped civil society, and rather weak capacities of project counterparts (relevant responsible state institutions and Associations of local governments). Yet, the project is generally viewed as successful and highly relevant. It managed to achieve certain results in terms of introducing innovative local governance and management practices in the northern regions of Albania – Shodra and Lezha (in particular, integrated participatory planning in relation to mid-term budgeting, establishing basis for increasing efficiency and effectiveness of some public services, specifically in solid waste management, inter-municipal cooperation, empowerment of women in local politics), as well as in terms of raising awareness about best experiences wider in the country.

As the DLDP became a flagship project of SDC in Albania in local governance sector, where SDC plays a leading role among donors, considerations are being given to consolidating the project success in the remaining year of the current phase and during the phasing out, in order for SDC to harvest lessons learned and to build on this important intervention in the future.

*On a short run* (within the current project phase) the project faces a need to concentrate mainly on: consolidating the impact of promoted innovations in the targeted municipalities and communes (including streamlining the project monitoring system that allows measuring impact); clarifying its role in developing capacities of the regional (Qark) institutions in the synergies with other SDC interventions at this level; and strengthening local ownership of the project outcomes with the idea to formulate credible proposal for the last phase that would secure sustainability of project achievements with local and national institutions as driving forces.

*In mid-term* (within the last phase, or phasing out) the project would need: to reconcile potential tension between, on one side, expanding the geographic coverage and, on the other side, deepening good governance and municipal/ community management instruments it has piloted in targeted municipalities and communes, in order to produce leverage for their horizontal and vertical scaling up; and to provide effective support to developing the role of local self-governments and national counterparts in maintaining informed policy dialogue on key decentralization and local governance challenges that the project addresses at the local level.

# 1 Introduction

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## 1.1 Review Focus

The objective of this Mid-term Review was to assess achievements and gaps of the Decentralisation and Local Development Program (DLDP) in terms of its relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability, in order to provide guidance for the completion of the current program phase (March 2010-February 2013) and planning of possible phasing out (detailed Terms of Reference are attached in [Annex 1](#)).

The review was commissioned by the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC) office in Albania and is conducted in the period of September 25-October 5, 2011. The review team was composed of two consultants – Elena Krylova-Mueller (MA in Governance and Development) as international team leader and Ornela Shapo (MA\ PhD Candidate in Financial Management) as a local consultant.

This report reflects on the results of the review and is structured in the following way:

*Chapter 1* introduces the review methodology and sets the context;

*Chapter 2* suggests review findings by analysing project achievements in relation to efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability by intended program outcomes and outputs, as well as some specific issues, like the combination of technical assistance (TA) and “hard” investments, social inclusion and program management;

*Chapter 3* focuses on conclusions drawn based on the review findings, as well recommendations for planning of future course of the program (both the current phase and the phasing out).

## 1.2 Methodology

The review was conducted in a highly participatory manner. It drew on a variety assessment and data collection methods that were utilised to triangulate the obtained information and provide different perspectives on the issues under the review:

- *Desk study* of relevant documents and written materials related to the program and to the overall situation in the area of decentralization and local governance in Albania (list of reviewed documents and publications is attached in [Annex 2](#));
- *Semi-structured and unstructured individual and group interviews* with key informants and stakeholders in Tirana and in the field: SDC, DLDP team, implementing partners and beneficiaries (municipal and community level, **as well as AAM and AAC**), sub-contractors/ service providers, national and regional authorities, other donors and international organisations active in the area of local governance and decentralisation in Albania. The use of semi-structured and unstructured inquiry techniques allowed the review team to maintain flexibility and to generate in-depth discussion of issues that are relevant to different stakeholders;
- *Observation* of partners during the field visits and during the NALAS conference in Tirana that the mission had an opportunity to attend;
- *Workshop* with the DLDP and SDC teams, in order to verify and discuss the review findings.

In total the review mission met 68 people (including 32 women) in the framework of organised interviews and group discussions. Detailed program of the mission is attached in [Annex 3](#).

Assessing DLDP in details on the background of the program's complexity and scope in a relatively short time was rather *challenging* for the review team. The team had to reduce the complexity and distil the information, findings and conclusions to core elements which are of relevance for the mid-term review.

### 1.3 Setting the General Context

In its political and economic transition, Albania has made a remarkable progress in the last decade on the *economic development* front with considerable investments made into structural adjustments and infrastructural improvements. The economic growth is accompanied by widening of inequalities and urban-rural divide, especially in relation to accessing employment opportunities and public services. Labour migration has become a survival strategy for many Albanian families.

The country's strong economic growth has been a key contributor to *the achievement of MDG targets*, in particular related to poverty, health, water and sanitation access. The country's performance is still weak in a number of other areas, like employment, attaining equality (especially in relation to women and Roma). Ensuring sustainability of socio-economic development, improvement of public services requires comprehensive reforms of public administration and governance system that would allow greater efficiency, effectiveness, accountability, transparency and rule of law.

In the context of these tasks and the country's *orientation towards EU integration*, special attention is to be paid to the development of local governance system in lines with the European Charter of Local Self-Governance. The Stabilization and Association Agreement between EU and Albania signed in 2006 entered into force only in November 2009. The EU membership negotiations are underway but the country still has a long way ahead to meet the EU standards. The instruments for pre-accession assistance (IPA funds) is an important source of financial support to Albania. During 2010 EU allocated a total of Euro 83,2 ml with another Euro 80 ml planned for 2011 for the IPA Component I and II. The local government units (LGUs) have so far an opportunity to access funds in support of cross-border cooperation.

*The decentralization process* (administrative, fiscal and political) was launched in Albania in the early 1990s. The local government is represented by 12 regions (Qarks) that are further sub-divided into 65 urban municipalities and 308 rural communes (later referred to as LGUs). The LGUs' representative body and the mayors are directly elected, whereas the members of the regional (Qark) council are delegated by local councils (in proportion to the population) and in addition include all mayors of the region. Currently, the Albanian Government adopted the division of the country into three regions only for statistical purposes (accordingly to the criteria of EU's Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics classification – NUTS II).

The LGUs are fulfilling devolved tasks or shared responsibilities with the central government **but efficiency in the tasks distribution and in the effectiveness in their fulfilment are far from being achieved** (especially small LGUs with weak revenue capacities have difficulties with their service provision performance). For achieving public sector efficiency and effectiveness a territorial administrative reform is needed that would: a) reduce a number of LGUs for increasing their performance, and b) define the country's vision towards regionalisation.

In *the highly polarised political environment* with main political parties (Democratic Party–DP and Socialist Party–SP) constantly fighting for influence, decentralisation and regionalisation issues are automatically gaining political connotation, which makes finding consensus a difficult task. Political frictions between DP that successfully led the reforms at the central level and the oppositional SP that gains powers at the local level become more obvious after the local election of May 2011. Moreover, in a larger number of LGUs experience situation



where the major and the majority of the council belong to different political parties, which seriously hampers decision making process.

The Strategy on Decentralisation and Local Government (SDLG) was elaborated but not yet officially endorsed by the Government of Albania. As a part of the National Strategy for Development and Integration (NSDI), in October 2007 the Government has approved the Cross-Cutting Strategy for Regional Development (CSR) that remained unimplemented and is currently under revision. Structurally, at the national level the Ministry of Interior (MoI) among other tasks is responsible for guiding the process of local governance reforms, while the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Energy (METE) until recently was responsible for regional development policies (this responsibility became blurred as a result of recent government decision to reorganise the METE).

The legal framework for the decentralization process, the fiscal decentralization (including transparency and predictability of financial inter-governmental transfers and increase of local revenue base) and the transfer of assets remain to be completed. On average more than a half of the LGUs budgets are dependent on the central government unconditional transfers. The Government has established the Regional Development fund (RDF) in 2009 that replaced the system of competitive grants for LGUs. The Fund is an annual renewable financial source for capital investment project of LGUs that are formerly coordinated with the Qarks<sup>1</sup> but are in reality negotiated between the LGUs and the central Government (the practice that undermines the regional dimension of the Fund).

Apart from the above-mentioned, the main challenges the local self-government system in Albania faces include:

- Consolidating local democracy which is associated with a need to strengthen organisational capacities of civil society outside the party system, shifting attention of political parties and councillors from party politics to LGUs performance, and strengthening accountability of local politicians and government officials towards constituencies rather than party elites;
- Improving internal organisational and managerial capacities of LGUs (including integrated planning and budgeting), including good governance and municipal/communal management and service provision standards;
- Further improvement of decentralisation policy framework (especially in the area of delineation of competencies and securing LSG's revenue base);
- Strengthening LGUs associational capacities and abilities to represent and advocate their interests vis-à-vis upper level governments. The associations representing the LGUs (Albanian Association of Municipalities - AAM, Albanian Associations of Communes - AAC, and Albanian Association of Regions - AAR) are still weak. Moreover, another LGU association – the Association of Local Authorities (ALA) led by SP has just emerged as a result of the AAM political split.<sup>2</sup>

#### 1.4 SDC Involvement and the DLDP Approach

Decentralization is one sub-domain of the SDC Cooperation Strategy for Albania 2010-2013, which comprises 30% of the total SDC annual country budget distributed mainly between the three projects:

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<sup>1</sup> Since one of criteria for accessing the RDF is the compliance of a project proposal with regional and national development strategies.

<sup>2</sup> During the introduction of legal changes affecting municipal fiscal system/ revenue base in 2009, the views of DP and SP members split (the SP members were openly opposing the legal changes arguing that they were decreasing financial independence of LGUs).

- The DLDP that is the oldest SDC intervention that started in July 2006 to support capacity development of 8 pre-selected LGUs with a population of around 220'000 inhabitants in Shkodra Qark in Northern Albania. DLDP second phase (March 2010-February 2013) - that is the subject of this review - aimed at geographic (horizontal) and (vertical) expansion and covered in addition Lezha Qark.
- The Regional Development Project (RDP) launched in January 2011, as a joint contribution of Austria and Switzerland, with the aim to support regional development in the Qarks of Shkodra and Lezha in synergies with the contribution of DLDP in these two Qarks;
- The project "Reinforcing Local and Regional Government Structures in Albania" (RLRGS) implemented by the Directorate of Democratic Institutions of the Council of Europe (CoE) since January 2010. The project focus is on policy making for strengthened inter-municipal cooperation (IMC), improved territorial planning legislation and human resources management at local level.

It is important to note that the **SCO-A** is currently one of the major players in the decentralisation and local governance domain in Albania (**referred to as "Donor Focal Point/European Lead donor in the sector"**) and is a co-chair of the national **Sector Working Group** (SWG) on Decentralisation and Regional Development.

Both DLDP internal review and the external assessment of perspectives for a second phase acknowledged that the program had been implemented in a complex political environment but achieved positive results in a short period of time, especially in the area of generating good governance and local management practices (in particular in relation to strategic development planning - SDP), establishing trust with LGUs in targeted areas by supporting their capacity building and development plan implementation in a demand-driven manner, and promoting the practice of inter-municipal exchange.

In its second phase, by building on experiences and lessons of the previous phase, DLDP emphasised the following key approaches and elements:

- *Further elaboration and deepening of the good governance/management practices* by consolidating some (e.g. linking SDP with mid-term budgeting program – MTBP) and devising new tools in a demand oriented manner;
- Continuous use of *the combination of TA with tangible investments* through the mechanism of competitive grants to LGUs aimed at supporting introduction and modelling or innovative approaches in the framework of SDPs with specific focus on improving LGUs performance in service provision;
- *Expanding program impact geographically* from 8 LGUs in one Qark to 54 LGUs with targeting also the neighbouring Qark of Lehza;
- *Better vertical integration* of the program by best practices dissemination and by linking local level experiences with upper level decision and policy making in relevant areas of intervention and by using diverse channels, including closer cooperation with the **LGUs Associations as the main national actors, the Mol and other national and regional stakeholder; importance of SWG and TSWG, broader outreach, and cooperation and synergy with other SDC funded projects;**
- Cultivating *the program's facilitation role* by empowering different level stakeholders to improve local governance practices and to lead the process of change, support the role of local service providers to LGUs.

Assessing success of these approaches and elements was among the foci of the mid-term review.

## 2 Review Findings

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### 2.1 Program Relevance

The DLDP is perceived as highly relevant by most international, national, regional, local stakeholders interviewed due to the following reasons:

- The **regions** it targets - Shkodra and Lezha – are among the poorest in the country, which imposes additional development challenges on the local governance structures;
- From its offset it has been using demand-driven approach and was very attentive towards identifying and meeting the needs of local partners, especially LGUs.

The program is also found relevant to the national priorities reflected in the NSDI and the draft DLGS of 2010 that is orientated towards strengthening local governance organisation and its administrative and fiscal competencies. However, neither the DLGS, nor the RDGS<sup>3</sup> was officially endorsed by the national government, which makes alignment of development assistance in these two areas rather difficult.

It is entirely in line with the EU integration agenda as it promotes the principles of the European Charter on Local Self-Governance and assists local governments to acquire skills that will be well utilized for mobilization and implementation of the IPA funds. The concept of EU social and economic cohesion has important implications for LGUs as it is the LSGs that will carry the burden of the localization of EU mandatory laws and reforms.

The last but not the least the project is relevant to the SDC Country Cooperation Strategy. It is a flagship project for the sub-domain “Democratisation and Decentralisation” (domain “Democratisation and Rule of Law”) that contributes to improvement of capacities of local governance actors at commune, municipal and Qark levels in Shkodra and Lezha.

### 2.2 Efficiency, Effectiveness, Impact and Sustainability

#### 2.2.1 Improved Local Governance Structures and Procedures, Capacities and Public Services

Planning, plans implementation and budgeting (output 1.1\ output 1.2)

##### *Efficiency and Effectiveness*

In order to improve capacities of LGUs in strategic planning and budgeting as well as general financial management the project has produced the following results:

- SDP methodology and the Manual on Long and Medium Term Strategic and Financial Planning were elaborated with the support of such service providers as Coplan and **closely backstopped from international experts (HSLU)**, and in close consultations with AAC and AAM. The methodology was presented at the National Conference organised by DLDP in March 2011 and received positive feedback from different stakeholders.
- An inter-LGU SDP expert group was established with 16 experts from 14 LGUs (including 8 women) with the idea to facilitate exchange of information and mutual learning **as well as to create local expertise through in depth training of inter-LGU expert group members**. The group is effectively functioning with the support of the project.
- Following the launching of the methodology a training curricular that includes 5 modules is elaborated (on integrated development planning, strategic planning cycle,

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<sup>3</sup> The latter exists in a form of a draft law since 2009

steps on SDP elaboration, reporting and controlling and monitoring and evaluation – M&E). Currently there are 35 people trained from 15 LGUs (with 31% of trainees being women).

- Similarly, the MTBP methodology was elaborated in consultations with Coplan, ISB, AAC and AAM and training modules are being delivered (on general budgeting legal frameworks; linking SDP and MTBP; local revenue and expenditure; programs, products and activities in MTBP; and M&E) and trainings launched with 44 people from 15 LGUs training (with 43% of trainees being women). Inter-LGU expert group on public finance management (PFM) was established that includes 16 experts from 14 LGUs (including 8 women).
- The trainings in both SDP and MTBP are highly appreciated by those interviewed, especially since it is provided in combination of coaching assistance in elaboration of SDPs to several LGUs (communes of Shkrel, Gruemire and Kallmet) and **in reviewing/ linking SPDs to MTBP** (communes of Dajc and municipality of Vau i Dejes).
- Additionally, in cooperation with the Lucerne University the project designs an e-MTBP tool that has been piloted in Lezha municipality and Bushat commune.
- According to the DLDP team, average costs of SDP and MTBP development assistance package per LGU is around Euro 5,000.
- Another result (**planned as a follow up of dldp phase 2**) is the provision of TA worth of some Euro 5,200 to Shkodra Qark in managing an IPA funded cross-border project led by Guri Zi commune. This is the first IPA supported project lead by an Albanian commune that is expected to have an important demonstration effect.

### *Impact and sustainability*

It is too preliminary to judge the impact and sustainability of the project inputs that are relatively recent. For instance, there is **limited** information available on instances of LGUs elaborating SDPs and MTBP on their own as a result of their participation in the relevant inter-LGU expert groups. Targeted LGUs value a lot the TA received from the project in the current and the earlier phase but still doubt about their ability to reproduce SDPs on their own in the future.

Similarly, it is too early to assess the degree of the implementation of SDPs and MTBPs developed with the project support. Yet, the degree of SDPs elaborated in the first project phase would be possible to assess but it is not systematically monitored (so far only anecdotal evidence is available on LGUs abilities to implement their SDPs).

10 LGUs received training on both SDP and MTBP, currently the follow-up assistance to LGUs in SDP is not yet **always** combined with assistance in MTBP and e-MTBP, which reduces prospects of impact. This is especially true for the communities involved into experimenting with the e-MTBP tool, although it is being partly justified by the fact that the tool is still in testing and is not yet well consolidated for application.

From sustainability perspective the project faces the following major challenges:

- Truly participatory approach to SPD and MTBP is rather difficult to ensure due to lack of structured public involvement in local decision making in the context of very poorly organised civil society. Exceptions like the commune of Dajc – where social dynamic is to a large extent influenced by the association culture promoted by the catholic church and a progressive local leadership - are very rare.
- National ownership and legitimacy of the SDP and MTBP methodologies and training curricula outside DLDP is not yet secured. The AAM and AAC were consulted in the process of the Manual elaboration and distribution, but the tool is owned by the DLDP project. This might be a limiting factor for the DLDP expectations with regards

to further replication of the project experiences. The issue of national ownership is of utmost importance in the context of the plenitude of approaches and methodologies used by different international projects (whereby many products through being results of “cut-and-paste” work, also proliferated by local service providers).

- Qarks are being involved by DLDP to the extent possible into planning and plans implementation (ensuring compliance between local and regional plans, data verification, selection of projects for funding in the framework of SDPs) but the projects hopes for synergies with the RDP have not yet materialised. This is due to multiple reasons, including the RDP launching delays and general lack of national vision currently on regional development.
- Current deficit of methodological linkages between Qark and local development planning (which is also linked to the lack of Qark competencies and funding possibilities) limits project abilities to secure SDP sustainability. For instance, planning in certain areas, like economic development or cost-efficiency in service provision (especially in the situation of such a large number of LGUs like in Albania) requires regional thinking and approach.

### Public service provision (output 1.3)

#### *Efficiency and effectiveness*

In order to improve local service provision, as well as to ensure equal access and inclusiveness of services, the project inputs resulted into the following:

- Elaboration of the Grant Fund Manual with the involvement of the Qarks of Shkoder and Lezha **and in consultations with international and national actors**, and provision of relevant training to both LGUs and Qark authorities (88 people trained, including 28 women). The rules and procedures suggested by the Manual are applied to all sub-projects under SDPs implemented with financial support from DLDP.
- Support provided to 11 projects selected on the comparative basis through the grant fund scheme (3 waste management plans and investments, 1 waste management plan, 1 water supply, 2 one-stop-shops, 3 parks/ green zones, 1 sidewalks and lightening project) in terms of both co-funding service related infrastructure and TA.
- With the idea to support targeted LGUs in the implementation of their projects, **30** people (among them **10** women) from 12 LGUs absorbed training on project cycle management (PCM) and 20 people from 11 LGUs (including 8 women) were trained in procurement related issues.
- Inter-LGUs expert group on solid waste management (SWM) is established; it includes 19 experts from 12 LGUs (including 7 women). Manual on SWM is being drafted, training curricula on SWM **is developed by Coplan with the support of REC and URI as expert service providers and in consultancy with AAC and AAM**. Training was delivered to 48 trainees from 16 LGU (25% of trainees being women). Consequently, 3 LGUs (Velipoja, Koplik, Ana Malit) have already elaborated their SWM plans with DLDP support and 3 more LGUs (Puka, Rubik **Rrëshen and Lezha**) are in the process of **SWM** elaboration. Average costs of SWM development per LGU is Euro 12,000 Euro. All TA and know-how brought through the project in SWM is very much appreciated by benefiting LGUs.
- The program involvement into promoting the IMC is a very strong example of advocating efficiency and effectiveness in service provision. Currently, **4** LGUs are involved under 2 projects in setting up and managing IMC scheme in relation to SWM.

#### *Impact and sustainability*

From sustainability point of view the following main elements deserve mentioning:



- 20% in-cash co-financing of grant projects has been an obligatory condition. There are examples of both LGUs exceeding the 20% requirement (3 LGU have co-financed between 22-24%) and LGUs failing to deliver on their co-financing commitment (5 LGUs where continuity was interrupted by change in local leadership following the recent local elections);
- Similar to the SDP and MTBP methodologies, the national ownership of the SWM planning methodology and training curricula outside DLDP is not yet secured that might also impede its further replication (so far the inter-LGU expert group has been seen as the key to replication);
- Financial sustainability of some services supported through project (cost recovery schemes) is not yet ensured and requires further DLDP support. Currently, average cost-recovery in SWM service in the LGUs assisted in this area is less than 60%.

Potential of this project component in terms of impact is also too early to judge, although there is a number of aspects and dimensions to be pointed out in this regards:

- The grant fund manual is very successfully used in the framework of the project and is praised by many local and international stakeholders but the expectation of influencing rules and procedures for resources distributions under the nationally steered RDF voiced by some interviewed stakeholders have not been fulfilled (while potentials emerged in such areas as transfer of the investment fund through treasury single account and improvement of procurement procedures related to TA). In the context of politization of the RDF issue in Albania this expectation seems to be overly ambitious. Neither there is any information yet available on the instances of the grant fund manual application by the LGUs not benefiting from DLDP funded projects or other international projects.
- Replication of DLDP piloted models need to be closely monitored. Instances of SWM plans elaboration (or service cost-recovery and reduction of waste improvements) by LGUs involved in the expert groups but not assisted otherwise by the project would be an important impact indicator. The same can be said about the instances of LGUs realising benefits of introducing the one-stop-shop model and mobilising funding from non-DLDP sources for implementing it (own funds, RDF, other donors, etc.). Equally important for the monitoring of realised benefits of TA to LGUs would be looking at whether the LGUs start investing on their own into acquiring TA, including from the DLDP service providers/ sub-contractors.
- Impact indicators of service improvement in targeted LGUs need to be built into the project M&E system. In numeric terms approximately 75,000 inhabitants directly benefit from the projects related to the improvement of service infrastructure (waste management, water, administrative services, organisation of territory) but service improvement in terms of improved coverage, inclusion/ access and quality is not monitored and documented systematically. Examples of such indicators, based on available information from some LGUs, may include: increase in time of water supply doubling from 2 to 4 hours per day (water supply project); waste collection coverage increase from 0 to 60% of community territory, or 4 remote communes receiving access to waste collection services (SWM projects); reduction of time in average citizen application procession 38% (one-stop-shop project); etc.

#### Information and communication (output 1.4)

##### *Efficiency and Effectiveness*

Under information and communication component the program supports the communes of Shengjin and Velipoja in elaboration of the Information Strategy on raising awareness of citizens and visitors on tourism potential of the area. The Strategy is being developed by

local authorities, assisted by external expertise and in cooperation with target groups within the commune, involving, business, local inhabitants, tourist NGOs and other interested local stakeholders, media, etc. Total budget of this initiative is Euro 16,750.

### *Impact and Sustainability*

The initiative has started very recently and it is supposed to contribute to strengthening the LGUs' human resources involved in information-communication and public relations work, as well improving of the revenues resulting from tourism development. However, the improvement of revenue impact indicator might be difficult to attribute to the Strategy alone, especially if it is not supported by wider initiatives on developing tourism in the region.

### Outstanding and cross-cutting issues

#### *Combination of "software" and "hardware"*

The project's approach to combining provision of TA ("software") with tangible investments ("hardware") proves to be very effective. "Hardware" inputs seem to be instrumental for the knowledge application and practicing, including in such areas as plans implementation and budgeting, PCM and procurement, IMC, service management, transparent and accountable funds management; etc.).

The benefits of the "software-hardware" combination that have a potential to produce positive impact on local governance practices and ownership through "learning by doing" are also associated with such elements as co-financing of hardware projects, integration of funds contributed by DLDP into local budgets and unified treasury system, the use of local procurement rules and regulations, accountability of TA service providers not only to DLDP but also to LGUs they assist (fixed through tripartite contractual arrangements).

DLDP involvement into "hardware" also resulted into defining areas where regulatory/ policy adjustments are required at higher level. The areas which project identified as those where it can feed upper level decision making with the generated field experiences include: a) procurement regulations (that currently limit LGUs abilities to procure TA services with the current e-procurement procedures and is compromised by a lack of services standards in many areas); b) potential utilisation of the grant fund management tool for management of public funds (including influencing the RDF management practices).

Sustainability of the DLDP's TA inputs is also challenged by a rapid staff turnover in many LGUs. This, on one side, puts additional demands on the project software investments but, on the other side, calls for better embeddedness of DLDP capacity development efforts into the national system of LGUs training and retraining (this issue will be also touched upon in the next chapter).

#### *Social Inclusion Dimensions*

Social inclusion was explicitly made as a focus in DLDP component aiming at local service improvement (Output 1.3 "selected local administrative and public services and improved ensuring equal access to all citizens, including women, poor and marginalised groups"). Otherwise, the approach to social inclusion as a cross-cutting theme in any development intervention has not been clearly spelled out (apart from the gender aspects). This might be a reason for the social inclusion aspects being not systematically pursued or reported upon by DLDP.

Yet, there are several important social inclusion angles from which the project can be looked at:

- Targeting the two poorest Qarks in the North of Albania;

- The use of inclusive participatory planning and budgeting approach (although inclusion is not monitored and, as mentioned earlier in the report, is rather difficult to secure in the context of poorly organised civil society);
- Examples of service improvement/ extension to remote rural communes (e.g. water or SWM\ IMC related projects);
- Ability of DLDP to respond to emergency in the past and support most vulnerable communes (e.g. assistance provided to some communes following the floods of 2010);
- Specific requirements put by DLDP on grant fund applicants to reflect on project proposals' social inclusion benefits. Yet, no evidence is available that those are being monitored.

One of the key project's achievements related to inclusion - although initially unplanned **in the Prodoc in this form but evolved later as a response to the needs** - was support provided to women candidates during local elections. Training of women candidates independently from their party affiliation and providing them access to seed grants in support of their campaigning initiatives had an important impact on women's political empowerment. DLDP supported establishment of a "women in politics" network. In total out of 40 members of "women in politics" network 29 were included as councillors candidates in the voting lists. Out of 16 women promoted through a women candidates catalogue 7 were (re)elected into local councils, including one women elected as the Head of local council (Rubik municipality) and one as a Deputy Mayor (Balldre commune).

Besides, the women pre-election campaign grants allowed women to reach particular traditionally marginalised community groups (like youth, women or Roma) and to explore their specific needs. Project involvement in this area also raised an important policy level concern – non-compliance of political parties with the gender political quota regulations (in many localities parties preferring to pay a fine, which is rather low, than to include women into the candidate lists).

Also, there are several areas where the project has already produced or has a potential to produce unplanned spills over on social inclusion:

- There is reported evidence that the introduction of one-stop-shop in Daijc has improved the commune's ability to identify, analyse and address problems and claims of vulnerable groups;
- Plans discussed in some locations on the involvement of Roma in the SWM schemes, since Roma people already play an important social role in reduction of waste in the communities they live in.

### *Horizontal scaling up*

Obviously, the program has been facing a need to reconcile the tension between expanding its geographic coverage, the application of a rather wide range of tools for improving local governance and management practices (SDP, MTBP, IMC, one-stop-shop, communication and information strategy) and sectors of involvement (SWM, water, tourism, administrative services) piloted in the frame of DLDP. This palette of activities results from the programs demand-driven approach and a strive not to miss opportunities to support innovations. It can be seen as advantageous in terms of providing the program with a wide experimental field, but it can also be interpreted a lack of focus that puts extra pressure on DLDP resources and abilities to consolidate know-how.

The challenge of operationalizing the horizontal scaling up approach is also linked to a lack of clarity of the Quarks role. The reasons for this lack of clarity range from the blurred status and perspectives of Quarks generally in the governance system in Albania and the unmet DLDP expectations levied on the synergies with the RDP initiative.



Although DLDP made its best to keep Qarks involved into the project implementation, **the review team felt** a certain deficit of orientation is felt within the DLDP team with regards to cooperation and capacity development targets for the Quark institutions, **especially in the context of unrealized synergies with the RDP.**

### ***2.2.2 Shared Good Local Governance and Management Practice at National level/ Influencing National Level Policy Making***

Most of the project components (under outcome 1) have an ambition to have vertical integration dimension in terms of national dissemination of practices and regulatory/ policy implications) which puts very high demands on the project team in terms of identifying and using right channels for operationalizing this integration, partnership arrangements and synergies with other actors involved in similar areas. Achievements and challenges related to vertical integration are analyzed in this chapter.

#### **National Dissemination (output 2.1)**

##### ***Efficiency and Effectiveness***

Main program achievements in terms of national dissemination of experiences it generated to the date include:

- Establishing three centers of expertise in the form of inter-municipal/ regional expert groups in the form of regional expert groups (on SDP, MTBP, SWM) with 30 LGUs included (as reported already above);
- Nine publications **(including manuals)** on different DLDP introduced tools and approaches were produced;
- Main channels **that has been used** by the project for experience dissemination **outside of targeted municipalities and communities** include
  - AAC and AAM, also through the use of their periodical newsletter that reaches all LGUs in the country,
  - the DLDP website, although the effectiveness of this channel is difficult to assess without monitoring of the website attendance dynamic, use of products and a system of users registration;
  - the national conference of 2010 attended by 140 participants, where DLDP products were presented and discussed;
  - the DLDP regional best practices competition, in which 31 LGUs participated that had a chance to candidate ideas both elaborated within and outside DLDP, with 15 best practices selected for an award and the publication;
  - Participation of Albanian LGUs in the NEXPO fair in Bosnian and Herzegovina (16 LGUs out of 54 in Lezha and Shkodra Qark);
  - **Involvements of main stakeholders in program management, monitoring and reviewing and regular meetings and experience exchange with regional and national stakeholders.**

##### ***Impact and Sustainability***

The utilization of the DLDP know-how and products nationally and its leverage to national decision making processes is difficult to assess, since this activities are rather recent and information on the impact of knowledge dissemination is not yet captured by the program monitoring system. Yet, among success examples of program impact on the national policy

making is the National Strategy on Waste **Management** that was elaborated in a highly participatory way with the support of the program that ensured heavy involvement of the AAC and AAM, LGUs and regional experts groups.

The two issues already raised earlier in the report are worth reiterating here as a potential limitation for the products dissemination and replication:

- The ownership of products supported by DLDP, including formal recognition of ownership through the use of logos on cover pages and acknowledgement of author rights; and
- The integration of the program's capacity development inputs into the national system of LGUs training and retraining. In particular, this is linked to the role of the Training Institute of Public Administration (TIPA), enhancing which that was initially envisaged in the DLDP project document but was not pursued due to claimed lack of support to the idea from the Mol and internal TIPA reforming processes. Along with the general training centre, TIPA has a special local government training centre that is meant to meet training needs of LGUs in the framework of its Training program 2010-2013 aimed at assisting government at different levels to cope with challenges of the Public Administration Reform. Thus, the DLDP strategy of building partnership with TIPA remains highly relevant.

### CB of Associations (output 2.2)

#### *Efficiency and Effectiveness*

In operationalizing the role of AAC and AAM as knowledge dissemination and advocacy channels the program achievements include the involvement of the Associations in the following processes:

- Initial capacity assessment of both Associations and relating them to DLDP activities;
- Consultations with AAC and AAM in producing tools under DLDP, specifically on SDP, MTBP and SWM;
- Participatory consultations with LGUs in the process of elaboration of the National Strategy on Waste, in which the Associations were instrumental in organizing members outreach and consultations, involvement of LGU experts and interface with relevant central government institutions;
- Using the AAM for disseminating project experiences through supporting their news bulletins;
- Supporting AAM in touring member LGUs for exploring their needs and expectations from AAM, although interrupted by the local election process;
- Participation in the national conference and some training activities of the project, like those provided for "women in politics" network;
- Mobilizing Albanian LGUs participation in the NEXPO;
- Publication of a guide of international events for LGUs by AAC;
- Besides, Associations were involved into the DLDP Coordination Committee.

#### *Impact and Sustainability*

The project AAM and AAC capacity building investments still have limited impact on the Associations. They are challenges by the following factors:

- Low internal governance standards and, as a result, politization and recent split of the AAM;

- Deficient cooperation between the two Associations;
- Poor absorption capacities also linked to limited human resources within the Associations;
- Emerging competitive service providers environment that limits abilities of the Associations to play an active role in providing access to expert services for its members (i.e. ability to go beyond representation and advocacy role). On a short run tangible expertise is more appreciated by the member LGUs than less tangible representation and advocacy services (one indicator of this being constrains the Associations face in mobilizing membership fees from their members, including from those LGUs targeted by DLDP).

#### National policy dialogue contribution (output 2.3)

Apart from the discussed above success example in supporting the National Strategy on Waste, the DLDP contribution to the national policy dialogue is modest so far (with stronger emphasis on the dialogue planned for 2012). Reasons for this are multiple, including the weakness of the Associations and little leverage of the MoI in the central government being the main project partners and a rather wide/dispersed focus on program interventions. The latter on a long-run may impede project credibility to contribute to policy dialogue by producing well analyzed and representative evidence in the support of certain reforms.

The expectations levied by DLDP on the national sectoral WG co-chaired (as facilitator) by SDC remains to be fulfilled. The SDC Country Office coordinating and the EU Lead Donor/ focal point role in the sector is highly appreciated by all national and international stakeholders interviewed. Yet, this role is difficult to fulfill in the absence of officially endorsed national frameworks and targets in reforming local governance system, as well as strong local counterparts in the government willing to drive the decentralization reform process in coordination with key central government counterparts

#### Liaison and building alliances with other actors (output 2.4)

The program has been active in coordinating and aligning its activities with other actors and projects active in the region and at the national level. This has been done on various fronts:

- On technical local governance related issues (e.g. with the MDI/ADA on gender issues; with the Soros Foundation on MTBP; with Albanian Development Fund, Netherlands Development Organization and UNDP on the approach to grant scheme management);
- On exercising policy and regulatory influence (with the CoE implemented SLRGS project on the IMC issues; with the OSCE on gender-balanced governance; supporting financially NALAS/ Congress of Local Authorities in organizing national conference, in order to support dialogue among newly elected mayors and heads of councils from all 65 Albanian municipalities and communes;
- On searching for funding synergies through co-financing (with the Dutch Embassy and COSPO in supporting Zadrime Association of LGUs in managing their IMC initiative).

Special mentioning need to be made to synergies and coordination between DLDP and other SDC-supported initiatives:

- SLRGS project implemented by the CoE that might have important clout for promoting and institutionalizing the IMC in Albania. However, so far the lines of cooperation between the two projects, apart from exchange of information and case studies, do not followed based on the signed joint action plan. The CoE project success is due to be evaluated in the coming months.

- Potential for synergies with the RDP initiative co-funded by SDC and ADA and implemented at the regional level in the North of Albania are very high, but they have not been put into practice due to delays in implementation and the current reconceptualization of the RDP following the inception phase and change in policy environment related to regional development in Albania.

## 2.3 Program Management

### *Project Steering*

DLDP has Steering and Coordination Committees with all relevant stakeholders represented. The review mission was not in the position to judge effectiveness of these strategic management instruments. The Coordination Committee gathered three times since the beginning of the DLDP phase 2 and the Steering Committee establishment was delayed due to delays in signing the bilateral agreement between SDC and the Government of Albania.

### *Program team performance*

The program delivery pace in the past was hurdled by a number of internal factors (lengthy phase 2 planning process, internal management changes, the merging of IC-Helvetas) but also external (floods in 2010 and local elections of 2011). For instance, as a result of local elections 14 out of 30 mayors and 9 out of 19 SWG experts changed in the DLDP targeted LGUs, which implies a need for additional inputs from the program to re-establish partnership relations.

The program seems to have appropriate management arrangements in terms of distribution of roles between the IC-Helvetas HQ and the branch in Shkodra. Backstopping role of the IC-Helvetas is still perceived as important for securing overall responsibility for the program implementation, including quality insurance, as well as providing access to international and regional expertise and experience where proves to be necessary.

The recent nationalisation of the team is seen as a move towards program cost-efficiency (although the cost-efficiency gains related to reduction of an international project manager position need to be looked against the costs of increased international backstopping support). The current team set up is assessed as appropriate for carrying out the program tasks. It is characterised by an effective division of tasks between the team members that allows internal coordination and cross fertilisation. Yet, advantages of having a member team in Tirana in support of the outcome 2 implementation (vertical integration) is not obvious to the review team, particularly in the context of national level coordination being also part of ToR of the national project manager (who also spends certain amount of working time in the capital), and on the background of current political difficulties in pursuing national outreach targets that are outside of program control.

The team members' performance is assessed on regular basis and internal capacity building plans are devised. Partners and sub-contractors assess the quality of the team expertise as very good, including their ability to manage content and mobilise external (national and international) expertise when needed. Recently the program has diversified its local sub-contractors, which allows it to make a more fair contribution to the development of local service providers market. External consultancy is used by the project in the cases where local know-how is missing (e.g. PFM, SWM).

So far the DLDP team has been successful in shifting into a role of facilitator to the improvement of local governance processes but this transition is not yet completed. Effective carrying out of the facilitation role by the team is clearly challenged by a deficit of capable partners at regional and national level who in mid-term perspective should learn and take over some process facilitation functions from the team, since strengthening of associational

capacities of LGUs and increasing their stake in regional and national development will remain a pending task.

#### **M&E**

DLDP has been using the instrument of internal review that allows reflecting on experiences and lessons learned in different program components (recent review reports in main program interventions areas are available and were very useful for the external review mission to understand the content and challenges of the DLDP implementation process). Yet, the value of this important monitoring tool is undermined by a rather weak program monitoring system that lacks a good system of indicators. Current system of indicators suffers from the following shortcomings: lack of clear distinguishing between outcome-based and inputs-based indicators; the problem of relevance and attribution of some indicators to the program activities and outcomes; measurability difficulties for some indicators. Deficit of good set of indicators structured along the levels of efficiency (specific activities/outputs related), effectiveness (specific outcomes related) and impact (objective related) leads sometimes to overlaps/ duplications in reporting across outputs. For instance, achievement in establishing one-stop-shop are reported in both output 1.3 and 1.4 (service provision and communication mechanisms), establishment and training of the inter-LGU expert groups, as well as dissemination are reported under both outcome 1 and 2 (capacity building of LGUs and vertical integration), etc.

### **3 Conclusions and Recommendations**

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#### **3.1 Main Conclusions Relevant to SDC Involvement**

Based on the findings the review team came to the following main conclusions:

##### Relevance

- DLDP is conceptualised in the framework of the current SDC Country Cooperation Strategy and has high relevance for Albania due to its ability to contribute to the existing general country policy orientation in the area of decentralisation and local governance and to respond to the needs of LGUs in the two targeted **regions**, including those related to gradual preparation to the EU integration agenda.

##### Improvements of local governance

- The program has been effective in identifying and meeting capacity building needs of the partner local governments but potentially there is a tension emerging between a need for expanding the geographic coverage, a number of tools for horizontal scaling up and sectors in which the program has got involved.
- A combination of “software” in the form of TA and “hardware” in the form of the investment fund proves to be an effective approach for the application of better local governance and service management practices. The local partners anticipate that the introduction of tools, such as SDP, MTBP and IMC will have a high impact in their LGUs but objectively it is too preliminary to judge the impact as most interventions are still recent and influence of program investments on service improvement (access and quality) is not yet captured by the monitoring system.
- The impact of TA on SDP and e-MTBP to LGUs would be very limited without the targeted LGUs accessing also the support on MTBP and SDP/MTBP, respectively.
- The IMC and SWM evolve as the most demanded packages that have a potential to produce tangible benefits for the LGUs and as a special area of DLDP know-how.

- The inter-LGU expert groups are emerging as an effective instrument for models/packages consolidation and replication. More active facilitation role can be played by Qarks and the Associations of LGUs but both channels remain underutilised. The former is due to current lack of program strategy with regards to Qarks facilitation role and capacity development (specifically in the context of lacking clarity on the reinforcing role of RDP), and the latter is due to low absorption capacities.
- Elements of sustainability are being built in the project intervention but local ownership of the DLDP products and its embeddness into the national system of LGUs capacity development are not yet secured.
- The program has a number of important social inclusion dimensions but its social inclusion approach is not clearly conceptualised. Yet, DLDP has been especially successful in women political empowerment.

#### National dissemination and influence

- There is another potential tension between horizontal scaling up of good governance/management models launched by the project and the vertical integration of issues identified in the field. There is clearly a need to refocus the intervention. Pressure to deliver and scale up geographically has a danger of translating into lack of national ownership.
- The program managed to demonstrate examples of the representation and advocacy role of the LGU Associations but both organisations are not yet in the capacity to sustainably carry out this role.
- Expected value added of synergies with other SDC-funded projects - RDP and SLRGS - have not yet materialised.
- Where feasible, the program has been cooperating with other international actors involved in similar issues but the task is complicated by a) overcrowded terrain<sup>4</sup> of international initiatives in the targeted region and the existing overlaps between different projects, and b) by a wide scope of DLDP activities.

#### Management

- The program has been effectively managed, although previous delays put certain delivery pressure on the team. The team is capable and respected by partners. It is able to draw appropriately on local and external expertise. External expertise was used mainly in such areas as solid waste management (CSD) and strategic planning and financial management (HSLU).
- Managerial cost-efficiency has increased with the nationalisation of the program management. To potential impact on cost-efficiency could be linked to revisiting a need for a permanent position of a team member in Tirana.
- The program team has been fulfilling its facilitation role but the strategy with the idea to hand-over some facilitation functions to local/ regional/ national institutions and structures is not yet defined.
- The program ability to reflect on its progress and to make informed decision making about effectiveness and impact of its activities and approaches is limited by an underdeveloped monitoring system.

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<sup>4</sup> According to DSDC, in the period of 2005-11, 42 projects have been funded in Shkodra and Lezha regions by different donors (most related to local economic development and development planning and plans) – see Annex 4. Yet, it should be recognized that the intensity of donors support is gradually declining.



### 3.2 General Recommendations for SDC Support to DLG in Albania

Mission findings and conclusions resulted into the following recommendations addressed to SDC, Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation and the DLDP team (with specified timing for implementing the recommendations):

#### Relevance

- SDC should take a good stock on the DLDP approaches and gains, and in its future interventions build on successes achieved and demonstrated towards the last year of the current phase and the phasing out (from 2012 onwards).
- As opportunities arise SDC, should support national actors in shaping national strategies on decentralisation/ local governance/ regionalisation beyond the DLDP, in order to secure relevance of its interventions. In particular, in a short-run, SDC could consider a possibility to support MoF and the LGU Associations in conducting a national conference on reviewing current local governance and decentralisation achievements in Albania, in order to regain the attention of high level officials to the issue (beginning 2012).

#### Improvements of local governance

- To the extent possible provide full SDP-MTBP-eMTBP packages to the targeted LGUs, for them to fully utilize the benefits of the promoted approaches. Consolidate the package for low-costs replication and consider in mid-term handing-over of the replication role to appropriate local institutions and structures. This would imply the need for closer cooperation with the MoF, TIPA, as well as more extensive peer experts' involvement for ensuring the replication of the package to other LGUs along with sub-contractors (2012).
- Narrow the DLDP focus on core success models that: a) are in demand in the context of improving LGUs performance; b) have defined national policies/ strategies frameworks; c) allow effective combination of "software" and "hardware" assistance; and d) have potential to promote inclusion. From this perspective the IMC and SWM might be the most promising option (2012).
- Further consolidate the IMC and SWM models, and translate them into solid packages for wider replication in the final phase (2012).
- The impact of DLDP interventions on strengthening LGUs organisational and service delivery capacities (performance) needs to be more closely monitored. Monitoring of the replication of the DLDP promoted approaches and models in the region (especially among LGUs expert group members) will need to be put in place (beginning 2012).
- Special attention to synergising and division of labour between the DLDP and the reconceptualised RDP is needed (2012). Two main areas for potential synergies include: marrying approaches to regional and local development planning and demonstrating the implementation of regional/ local development plans in targeted Qarks through the IMC approach (while keeping in mind the EU integration agenda, including preparation of regions and LGUs to accessing the IPA funds). Along with defining synergies there will be a need for defining clear labour division between the two projects. The review mission sees the following potentials:
  - For DLDP to focus its LGU capacity development on SDP-MTBP and development plans implementation support in the area of service delivery (specifically the IMC approach in SWM with a stronger coordination/ facilitation role of Qarks in this domain); and
  - For RDP to address the issues of regional planning (especially in the area of economic development) and regional development plans implementation

(specifically through IMC approach in economic development with capacity building of Qarks and existing, **although underdeveloped**, economic development agencies).

- Phase out information and communication as a special package and make it a cross-cutting issue by ensuring participation and transparency in SDP and MTBP, involvement of service users in service provision (SWM), as well as their environmental education and awareness building; sensitisation/ capacity development of councillors, in order for them comprehend the promoted new approaches in local governance and municipal/ communal management and to build local politics around the issues of performance rather than party affiliation **(2012-2013)**.
- Maintain inter-LGU expert groups as a venue for models/ packages consolidation and replication, but better anchor them to Qarks **and, possibly, the Associations (2012)**. Emerging potential areas for strengthening the role of Qarks under DLDP include:
  - Providing better coordination to the local development planning process, especially in the matters that require stronger supra-municipal\ regional guidance (like economic development, including tourism) and the economy of scale thinking (like efficient and effective provision of services);
  - Promoting the IMC approach and improving standards in service provision in particular (specifically in SWM)
  - Supporting exchange and experience cross-fertilisation among LGUs within their Quarks (building on project experience of issuing manuals\ guidelines, supporting inter-LGU experts groups, identification and dissemination of best practices)
- Ensure local ownership of the products/ packages developed in the framework of DLDP **(from 2012 onwards)**.
- Pay special attention to financial efficiency/ sustainability of promoted packages, including close monitoring and generating solid evidence on the benefits of their application **(from 2013 onwards – the last project phase)**.
- Build on successes of the gender components and devise further activities for women empowerment, as well as using the potential of politically active women as a channel for activating other women and bringing gender and social inclusion on the agenda **(laying ground in 2012 but a stronger focus in the last project phase)**. **By developing this component further and by providing premises for women activism, be careful not to replace women activism from the mainstream local decision making, budgeting and service provision discourse by project-based activism.**
- Define clear stand and expectations on social inclusion and its elements, specifically in relation to promoted packages/ models of service provision **(from 2012 with a stronger focus in the last project phase)**. **Great potential lies in ensuring impact of service improvement to deprived communities and traditionally underprivileged groups (implies mainly accessibility of service and quality and service users involvement). Another way of instrumentalising social inclusion (by building on project achievements to the date) is to address this aspect through the DLDP work in the area of women political empowerment.**

#### National dissemination and influence

- Define realistically with main stakeholders (jointly with reformed AAM, AAC, MoI, MoF, etc.) main lines and channels for vertical integration based on narrowed focus on selected models and packages for further DLDP support **(2012)**. **It would be**



important to involve key stakeholders early enough into the planning of the last phase of DLDP in order to jointly redefine their roles, commitments and stakes in the ensuring sustainability of the project results.

- SDC should consider a possibility to launch additional AAM and AAC capacity development initiatives outside DLDP that would allow strengthening their abilities to identify priority local governance reforms issues, and advocate and lobby for their resolution (given that AAM manages to resolve the problem of the political split). It is important that support to the Associations is not only provided in the framework of other projects with their goals and agendas (from 2012 upon availability of funds).
- Further facilitate dissemination of products and best practices through partners both regionally and nationally (2012 onwards). Nationalise the best practise reward (i.e. make it locally institutionalised and owned) (in the last project phase, but if feasible start in 2012). As a follow-up to the recommendations of the National Conference consider a possibility to support a national knowledge management platform on local governance led by Mol (the last project phase).

### Management

- Discuss results of the mid-term review and its implications with partners and reflect on them at the upcoming Steering Committee and Coordination Committee meetings, as they should influence strategic decisions in regard to future program orientation (end 2011-beginning 2012).
- Following decision on sharpening the program focus, review the current team set up and capacity building needs from the point of view of cost-efficiency and effectiveness in meeting the upcoming program tasks (end 2011-beginning 2012).
- Improve the system of indicators and establish a more rigorous and evidence based monitoring system. The review team will make an initial suggestion for improving the system of indicators in relation to the existing logical framework (see Annex 4) (beginning 2012).
- In order to consolidate the program achievements and ownership regionally and nationally and to be able to build on the DLDP successes in the future interventions in Albania, SDC should seriously consider a third phase of DLDP (phasing out with clear exit strategy). It is strongly recommended that the exit phase is implemented by the same contractor (Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation branch office in Albania), as the costs of changing the implementer will outrun the potential benefits (2012).

**Terms of Reference**

**Mid-term Review dldp**

**1. Introduction and rationale for the mid-term review**

As stated in the Credit Proposal of dldp phase II (March 2010 –February 2014), a mid-term review had been foreseen initially to assess – early enough - the relevance of the new elements and approaches designed for the second phase of the Project (from pre-defined 8 LGUs supported in Capacity Building processes to a competitive grant fund for improved service provision involving 56 LGUs, dldp role as facilitator rather than as service provider, project management increasingly in the hands of a local team) so as to allow needed adaptations within the second phase and “provide guidance for re-orienting the Project towards a 3<sup>rd</sup> (exit) phase”. This mid-term exercise is still considered as necessary and timely by both the project’s team and the SCO-A, especially taking into consideration the contextual developments<sup>5</sup>.

The political crisis at central level, coupled with a slow pace of progress of the decentralisation reform impacts seriously local government. Overall, the political polarization further hampers the reform and the local authorities at both municipal and regional level face increasing challenges, related to both structural unclarities and weaknesses but also limited access to finances. Moreover, the local elections of 8<sup>th</sup> May (whose results are not yet fully confirmed) have raised serious concerns with regard to the legitimacy of elected mayors and staff turn-over directly affecting the decentralisation projects, including dldp. The dldp mid-term review is seen as a timely opportunity to take stock of the specific situation, assess the relevance of the current focuses, approaches and instruments and allow a reflexion on possible adaptations/ corrective measures for the project’s further developments (both within the current phase and if relevant, beyond).

This analysis based on dldp practical experience will feed into a broader reflexion the SCO-A plans to have in autumn 2011 with regard to its intervention in the decentralisation sector. While the Swiss involvement *per se* in this sector is a priori not questioned and remains a priority in the Swiss Cooperation Strategy for Albania (2010-2013), there is a need to assess the relevance of the approach currently applied and the way the Swiss program could gain impact (i.e. possibility to go beyond the “pilot/lab” and enlarge outreach, ensure sustainability of investments made so far, potentials for improved dialogue with central government); this mid-term review is conducted in coordination with other projects’ milestones (i.e. review of the CoE-led “Local and Regional Government Structures” Project and revised Project Document of the Regional Development Program) and is intended to provide with key elements for a consolidated Swiss program in the near future.

**2. Background**

**2.1 Situation in the country**

The **decentralization process** (administrative, fiscal and political) is ongoing in Albania since early 90s. Local governments<sup>6</sup> are fulfilling devolved tasks or shared responsibilities with the central government in line with Decentralisation Strategy, which is not officially approved by Government of Albania. The devolution and de-concentration is neither harmonized yet nor are the revenues to fulfil the tasks ensured. The legal framework for the decentralization process remains to be completed, the fiscal decentralization (including financial transfers from the national budget and local revenues) and the transfer of assets (incl. property) is ongoing. However, transfer of financial resources<sup>7</sup> from national to local budgets lacks

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<sup>5</sup> Timeliness is given by both the context and the planning requirements for the next phase, that assumingly will imply an open tender for the project’s implementation.

<sup>6</sup> Local government is composed of 12 regions (Qarks) and the Local Government Units (LGUs) comprising 65 municipalities and 308 communes. Municipalities and communes have same rights and tasks, the distinction is mainly rural or urban character of the LGU. Representative organs (LGU council) and the mayors are directly elected, whereas the members of the regional (Qark) council are delegated by local councils - in proportion to the population - and include all mayors of the region.

<sup>7</sup> Financial resources to LGUs are composed of unconditioned grants for delegated functions, conditioned grants for shared functions. Former competitive grants are structured under Regional Development Fund.

transparency and predictability and is driven along partisan lines. The administrative structures are in place, but challenges are manifold: weak management procedures (inherited from a totalitarian and hugely centralized past), lack of democratic citizen oriented decision-making (vs. informal top-down political mechanisms) and lack of clarity of the role of the second level of local government (Qark). The associations representing the LGUs (Albanian Association of Municipalities, Albanian Associations of Communes, and Albanian Association of Regions) are weak and lack both, capacities and resources for effectively and efficiently lobbying for rights and interests of LGUs at national level. Moreover, another LGU association ALA (Association of Local Authorities), SP led, emerged in the political scene. Overall, decentralization reform is hampered by the political polarization: a successful DP-led government reform would contribute to increased (SP-led!) municipalities power.

The local elections of 8<sup>th</sup> May 2011 reinforced the high polarisation of the political scene. The results are not made public yet; nevertheless there is an acknowledgment of the fact that as the majority of municipalities belong to the opposition SP, the progress with decentralisation processes might be faced with new challenges. Preliminary post election results show that about 40-50% of the dldp partners have changed the political leadership, which will considerably question the sustainability of the results achieved so far by the Project but also challenge the latter for follow-up activities, especially with regard to capacity-building. Another concern will be related to decision-making processes in LGUs where the mayor and the majority of the council belong to different political parties, which might impact the approval and implementation of key products such as strategic plans, mid-term budget, waste plans for which the Project is highly involved. Additionally, the result of the elections will have a direct impact (not yet known) on the Associations that are partners of the Project.

## **2.2 Activity of the SDC up to now**

Decentralization is one sub domain of the new Cooperation Strategy for Albania 2010-2013, with 30% of the total budget. dldp remains an important programme, as effective decentralised structures are the backbone of an efficient public administration and for the rule of law. RDP which started in January 2011, as a joint contribution of Austria and Switzerland, with the aim to support regional development in the regions of Shkodra and Lezha, is completing the inception phase and based on the assessments conducted, will adjust the approach in accordance with the context (a process planned for June 2011). SDC supports from January 2010 *“Reinforcing local and regional government structures in Albania”*, a project implemented by the Directorate of Democratic Institutions of the Council of Europe (CoE). The focus lies on policy making for strengthened inter-municipal cooperation, improved territorial planning legislation and strengthened human resources management at local level. SCO-A has a key role in policy dialogue as co-chair of the sector working group on decentralisation and regional development.

## **2.3 Overview of objectives for dldp**

The dldp (Decentralisation and Local Development Programme) phase 1 (07/2006 – 12/2009, extended until February 2010) supported 8 pre-selected LGUs with a population of around 220'000 inhabitants in the Shkodra region in Northern Albania. An internal review and an external assessment of perspectives for a second phase of dldp<sup>8</sup>, highlighted that dldp has achieved a series of good results in a short period of time, in a difficult political environment. It noted also that the impact at national level and policy making process was rather weak and linking of strategic plans with decision making and budgeting processes remained a challenge. The review suggested the concentration on good practices and their scaling up and replication with national outreach, involving more in this process the LGUs associations.

Based on this frame, the new phase has the following intervention logic.

### ***Overall goal***

*Capacities of municipalities and communes in Shkodra and Lezha are strengthened contributing to improved regional development in Northern Albania and decentralization reform at national level.*

<sup>8</sup> Erika Schläppi, October 2009.

## **Outcomes**

### **Outcome 1: Local (LGUs) level**

*Municipalities and Communes in Shkodra and Lezha Qark have improved their governance structures and procedures, capacities and selected local public services*

### **Outcome 2: National level**

*Good practices are shared at national level through strengthened associations, thus impacting law and policy-making and their implementation at national level*

## **3. Objective and Expected results of the Mission**

### **3.1 Objectives**

The main objective of the dldp midterm review is to assess the achievements and gaps, (particularly responding to evaluation criteria of effectiveness and efficiency, but also relevance, sustainability and (possibly) impact), as well as the new project approach that the project has chosen for this phase (March 2010-February 2013). The conclusions of the review should give guidance for the completion of the current phase as well as for a possible follow-up of the Project.

### **3.2 Questions and issues to be tackled**

#### **3.2.1 General**

- 3.2.1.1 Is dldp on track within the frame given by the Project Document and logical framework?;
- 3.2.1.2 What is the beneficiaries' perception toward the results, approaches, change that that project has introduced from their perspective? At local, regional and national levels?
- 3.2.1.3 How is the gender TT included in the project, what results have been achieved and what could be done in the framework of the current phase?.
- 3.2.1.4 Considering that SCO-A is supporting three projects in the local (and regional) governance sector (dldp RDP and SLRGS), assess the current collaboration and potential further synergies between the projects. Make recommendation on how to strengthen such synergies.  
  
More generally, how dldp is fostering harmonization?
- 3.2.1.5 Based on discussions and interviews with stakeholders, how is the role of Switzerland perceived in the domain (both as lead donor in the GoAl donor discussion and funder of projects implemented by other actors) and what recommendations can be given in this regard?

#### **3.2.2 Outcome one – improved governance structures and procedures, capacities and selected local public services**

- 3.2.2.1 What is the overall assessment and comments with regard to the new approach, namely, the competitive grant fund (combination of technical assistance with co-financing), the facilitation role and its reflection into project organisational set-up and the concentration on good practice and geographical scale-up(from 8 to 54 LGUs)?;
- 3.2.2.2 What is the relevance of and results (impact) brought by the Project's intervention and capacity-building measures in the different areas of intervention (strategic planning and budgeting; public services; Information and communication with the citizen; regional development and interLGU cooperation)? Any recommendations for improvement?; when it comes to service provision, to which extent and how the de-concentrated services (depending from the line ministries) are involved? Are there any attempts or influence from the Project to instil more social inclusive approaches when it comes to service provision? If yes, where or where is there a window of opportunity?

### **3.2.3 Outcome two – shared good practices at national level, shared through strengthened associations, with impact at law making and policy implementation**

3.2.3.1 How does the phase II tackle the following difficulties as stressed under the former phase? Namely:

- Limited outreach at national level and lack of synergies with other donors' projects; what is the current coordination with other programs? How good are the best practices documented and how their dissemination is ensured? Is the partnering with the identified "multiplicators" (Associations, centres of competence) bearing the expected fruits? (dissemination of good practices among political decision-makers at national level, support to local authorities in getting a voice in the national decision-making) ; If not, why and how could it be tackled?
- The implementation of the strategic plans in concrete actions, in particular integration of them into ordinary decision-making and budgeting processes (midterm and annual planning, capital investment plans); where do we stand in this regard? What instruments have been developed to foster this process? At what level?
- Sustainability of investments: dldp acting as facilitator should put the emphasis under the current phase on strengthening the capacities of the local actors, service providers and "multiplicators". What is the stand and results of these capacity-building measures, in particular with regard to the associations and the so-called "centres of competence"? What are the problems encountered and how the dldp project could address them?

### **3.2.4 Localisation – team and performance efficiency**

3.2.4.1 Considering that dldp 2 is operating with a new local management and with a new team (backed up though by Intercooperation in Bern, who has still the overall responsibility for the mandate), assess the functioning of the current set up and provide recommendations, as needed. In view of a potential next phase and a further "localisation" process, assess the strengths and weaknesses of the current team.

3.2.4.2 What is in particular the current role, function and assumed responsibilities of the so-called 'antenna' as a point of coordination at national/central level for the outcome 2?

### **3.2.5 Paths towards the end of phase and potentials for a follow-up (exit) phase of dldp**

3.2.5.1 Do you have any recommendations for the completion of the current phase (beside the specific recommendations mentioned above)?

3.2.5.2 In the perspective of a follow-up (and exit) phase, do you see any step that should be undertaken now? Where do you see the real assets to build on in a future perspective?

### **3.2.6 Paths for future CH intervention in decentralisation in Albania**

3.2.6.1 With a forward looking view, what would be your recommendations to SDC/SCO-A for a potential next phase of the Project?

3.2.6.2 Where are the potentials and risks of continuing with the same bottom-up (scale-up) approach (in particular with regard to outcome 2 and partnering with fragile associations)? What could be the alternative to outreach?

3.2.6.3 On which aspect the emphasis should be put? With accent at which level (local, national, both) in the current context and taking into consideration the political divide and slow stand of decentralisation reform?

3.2.6.4 Accordingly what could be the set-up and role of the dldp team?

3.2.6.5 Overall how do you see the positioning of a dldp 3 as part of the Swiss intervention in the “democratisation and decentralisation” sub-sector in a mid-term perspective?

### 3.3 Expected results and reporting

1. A debriefing note in a meeting at Swiss Cooperation Office Albania with preliminary findings and recommendations will be presented to and discussed with SCO;
2. On this basis, a presentation for a “debriefing workshop” involving also the dldp team;
3. A **review report** will be delivered consisting of the following main parts:
  - (i) Executive summary, presenting the main findings;
  - (ii) and a **detailed report** based on the key questions of the review mission.

A draft report will be due after the mission (w41) while the final report (not exceeding 20 pages, Arial 11, plus annexes) should be delivered to SCO-A by week 43 (28.10.2011) latest. SCO reserves the right to request changes in the report or additional information.

### 4. Activities / Specific tasks

The review team is expected to conduct activities that contribute to the preparation of the review, mission preparation and accomplishment, debriefing process, workshop and prepare the report.

Regarding the mission, the dldp project team is responsible for logistic support and arranging the foreseen meetings and visits as per the timely planning of the detail program, agreed with the Consultant.

### 5. Mission team and Profile of the consultant(s)

The mission team will be composed of two external experts, one international and one local. The lead in coordination of the process and liaising with SCO-A will be with the international expert. The local expert should have an excellent understanding of the political context in Albania. S/he will be responsible for local coordination with stakeholders, whenever needed. The expertise in the field should be complementary between the two.

The consultant/s should be able to demonstrate the following:

- A deep and up to date knowledge and understanding of local government and decentralization processes overall;
- A good understanding of the Western Balkan region and, as possible, specifically of Albania;
- Knowledge and understanding of
  - *Strategic planning and financial management – Long and Medium Term Strategic and Financial Planning;*
  - *Information and communication mechanisms for effective and accountable governance;*
  - *Grant fund principle and processes;*
  - *Knowledge management processes in local governance;*
  - *Dynamics of relations between national and local government;*
- Ability to engage effectively with stakeholders;
- Experience on Organisational Development would be an asset;
- Good analytical skills and report writing skills as demonstrated by a successful record of previous work on related topics;
- Ability to produce a report in the English language.

## 6. Documentation and Contacts

The consultants will be provided with all the documentation on the project implementation necessary for proper evaluation: project documents, project progress reports, Yearly Plan of Operations etc. (see Annex 1). A briefing will take place at SCO-A.

## 7. Methodology for the whole review process

The review for this project will feed into the overall review that SCO-A is planning for the sub-domain Democratisation and Decentralisation with a view to assess the effectiveness of intervention and accordingly identify any needed revision or new paths for intervention.

In the frame of dldp review, a phased approach will be applied. An internal review will aim at assessing from the project perspective the achievements and lessons learnt with the view to adjust the approach, if need be. The external team will provide an independent and neutral view with regard as above. The mission in the field (Albania) should include meetings with all relevant stakeholders in particular: Mol, Associations of Albanian LGUs; other SDC funded projects, relevant donors, visits to several partner municipalities etc. Intercooperation in Bern will also be contacted before the mission (A detailed programme of the review will be provided as Annex 2). The external experts will present and “confront” their findings to the dldp team at the end of the mission in the framework of a workshop. This will allow a fine-tuning of the recommendations and also nurture some ownership on the results by the project team.

## 8. Costs, Responsibility and Contract

The expenses of the mandate will be charged to credit 7F-04382.03.03. The consultants mandate contract will be signed between SCO-A and the mandated consultants XY and AZ.

## 9. Time Schedule

The mission is tentatively planned to take place in week 39 (26 -30 September 2011). The contractual assignment will encompass:

| Tasks                                                                                                                         | International Consultant | Local Consultant |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| Preparation, documentation, briefing in Bern (int. consultant), including meeting with IC Bern; desk study (local consultant) | 3                        | 2                |
| Mission to Albania, (stakeholders, beneficiaries, project team) including the travel time and debriefing in SCO-Tirana        | 10 (W39)                 | 8                |
| Debriefing and ws with participants in Shkodra/Tirana (venue tbc)                                                             | 1                        | 1                |
| Preliminary report                                                                                                            | 4                        | 3                |
| Final Report                                                                                                                  | 3                        | 2                |
| Reserve days                                                                                                                  | 2                        | 1                |
| Total                                                                                                                         | 23                       | 18               |



## **Annex 2      *List of Reviewed Documents and Publications***

### ***Dldp Documents***

Dldp Internal Review Report 1 “Delivering strategic planning and financial management services”, mid 2010 – mid 2011”, IC

Dldp Internal Review Report 2 “Delivery of waste management services”, mid 2010-mid 2011, IC

Dldp Internal Review Report 3 “Dldp grant fund instrument: Review of the Pilot Round 2010-2011”, IC

Dldp Internal Review Report 4 “Strategies and Results for National Outreach”, mid 2010-mid 2011, IC

Dldp Internal Review Report 5 “Gender Support”, mid 2010-mid 2011, IC

Dldp Yearly Plan of Operation, July 2010 - December 2011, IC

Report on Participation in NEXPO in Sarajevo of 16 LGUS from the Regions of Shkodra and Lezha under the auspices of AAM and AAC, 9-11 March 2011

National Conference Report “Challenges and Best practices in Decentralization: Learning from Shkodra and Lezha Regions”, 3 March 2011, Tirana

Dldp Semi Annual Report for July 2010 – December 2010, IC

Dldp End of Phase Report, February 2010

Dldp 2010 Regional Best Practices Competition of local government management practices in the regions of Shkodra and Lezha of Albania, Report, July 2010, IC

Best practice Experience, Dldp, 2010

Assessment of the Albanian Associations of Local Government by D.Arn, K.Zajazi and V.Ademi, Dldp, April, 2010

Dldp Project Document Phase 2, March 2010 – February 2013, IC\SDC

Proceedings of the dldp planning Workshop, 11-12 November 2009 by D.Zuercher and E. Muedini, IC\KEK

Dldp Second Phase: Assessment of Perspectives, Report by Erika Schlaepfi, October 2009

Planning platform of Dldp, Phase II, Intercooperation/Dldp comments, October 2009

Dldp Project Proposal, Phase 1, June 2006

### ***Non-Dldp documents***

Republic of Albania: Local Governmnet Elections, OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission Final Report, 8 May 2011

Minutes of Donor Coordination Meeting for NALAS and Congress, CoE Conference, July 20, 2011

Externat Assistance in Albania. Progress Report 2009-2010, Government of Albanis, Council of Ministers\ DSDC, June 2011

Overview of the Assessment Results. Working document for the RDP Planning Workshop, Shkodra, 15-16 June 2011

Guidelines on Institutionalizing Sector WGs to strengthen Policy and Donor Coordination at Sector Level, Government of Albania\ DSDC, June 2011

Extracts from Project Document “Regional Development Program in Northern Albania”, SDC, 2011

Decentralization and Local Government Cross-Cutting Strategy, Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Albania, April 2010

SDC Country Strategy for Albania 2010-13

Program on Reinforcing Local and Regional Government Structures in Albania, Interim Report, January-December 2010, by the Directorate of Democratic Institutions, Directorate General of Democracy and Political Affairs, CoE

Communication from Commissions to European Parliament and the council: Commission Opinion on Albania's application for membership of the European Union, September 2010, Brussels

UNDP Project Inception Report "Integrated Support for Decentralization", November 2009

Decentralization and Analysis of Government Functions: National, Regional and Local. Report by R.Toto, October 2009

Regional Development Crosscutting Strategy, Approved by Decision Nr.773 dt.14.11.2007 of Council of Ministers, October 2007

**Annex 3      Mid-term Review Mission Program**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p align="center"><b>Mid Term Review MTR of dldp: Olena Krylova &amp; Ornela Shapo</b></p> <p align="center"><b>Albania: Tirana, Shkodër, Lezhë Regions</b></p> <p align="center"><b>25 September- 5 October, 2011</b></p> |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

| <i>Time</i>                 | <i>Organisations and people met</i>                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>25.09.11 Sunday</b>      | <b>Tirana</b>                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 23.20                       | Arrival of the team leader                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>26.09.11 Monday</b>      | <b>Tirana</b>                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 07.30 – 08.15               | Internal meeting of the two consultants                                                                                                                                                                |
| 08:30-10.30                 | Briefing at SDC CO                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 11:00-12.00                 | Ministry of Integration - Mr Ferdinand Poni, Deputy Minister                                                                                                                                           |
| 12.00-13.00                 | Lunch break                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 13.00-14.00                 | CoE RLRGS project - Ms. E.Muhedini, Local Program Coordinator and Mr. O.Dekovi                                                                                                                         |
| 14:30-15.30                 | Council of Ministers, DSDC - Mr. K. Seferaj, Coordinator                                                                                                                                               |
| 15:30-16.30                 | Ministry of Finance - Mr. Fran Brahimi, Local finances dpt                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>27.09.11 Tuesday</b>     | <b>Tirana</b>                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 9.00-10.00                  | SIDA – Ms. Linda Gjermani, Program Officier (support to AAC)                                                                                                                                           |
| 10.00-11.00                 | UNDP – Mr. Vladimir Malkaj, National Program Officer (regional development)                                                                                                                            |
| 11.30-12.30                 | dldp service providers (local finances) – Ms. Anila Gjika CO-PLAN, and Ms. Sabina Ymeri (Institute of Contemporary Studies)                                                                            |
| 12:30 -13.30                | Lunch Break                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 14:00-15.00                 | OSCE – Ms. Darcie Nielsen, International Program Officer (governance)                                                                                                                                  |
| 15:30-16.30                 | ADA – Ms. Merita Mansaku, National Program Officer (regional development)                                                                                                                              |
| 17:00-18:00                 | ADF/ FZSHS – Mr. Bledi Bushati, Director                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>28.09.11 Wednesday</b>   | <b>Tirana/ Shkoder</b>                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 08:30 - 17.30               | Attending NALAS/ CLA conference                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>29.09.2011, Thursday</b> | <b>Shkoder</b>                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 06.30                       | Departure for Shkoder                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 08.00-09.00                 | RDP – Mr. Daniel Wagner, Project Manager                                                                                                                                                               |
| 09.00-10.30                 | Shkodra Municipality – Mr. Ahmet Omi, Deputy Mayor, Ms. Teuta Haxhi, head of Budget, Mr. Lorenc Luka, Mayor                                                                                            |
| 11.00-12.00                 | Shkodar Qark – Mr. Gjovalin Kolombi, Head of Qark. Ms. Merita Kazazi, Head of Development Department, Mr. Kastriot Kruja, expert on Project Department, Ms. Etleva Papekaj, Head of Project Department |
| 12.30-14.00                 | UNDP/ArtGold 2 project – Mr. Spartak Sokoli, Local Coordinator Shkoder                                                                                                                                 |

|                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|-------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 14.30-16:30                               | Vau i Dejes commune - Mr. Gjon Marku, Deputy Mayor; Ms. Valjeta Nikaj, Tax office + Ramazan Geci, head of urban dpt                                                                                                    |
| <b>30.09.2011, Friday, Lezhe -Shkoder</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 08.30-10.00                               | Kallmeti commune – Mr. Petrit Marku, Mayor, and heads of key dpts                                                                                                                                                      |
| 10.30-11.30                               | Qark Lezhe – Ms. Linda Maçi, Head of Development Department and Mr.Vitor Gjokola (expert on development department).....                                                                                               |
| 11.30-12.30                               | Lezha municipality – Mr. Vitor Tusha, Mayor                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 12.30-13.30                               | Shengjin commune – Mr. Salvador Kaçi, Mayor; Mr. Dritan Pepaj, tourism dpt; Enriketa Muca( representative of dev department)                                                                                           |
| 13.30-14.30                               | Lunch break                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 15.00-17.00                               | Dajç commune – Mr. Arben Gjurarj, Mayor, Ms. Rajmonda Gjurarj, head of Urban and strategic planning dpr, Ms. Emiljana Mandi, responsible for OSSH + all commune key staff                                              |
| 09.00-10.30                               | Gender networks – Ms. Irma Kopliku (Shkodra Municipality, Council member), Ms. Aferdita Haka (Rreshen Municipality, council member), Ms. Flora Jushi (Rubik, head of council), Marie Deda (Kolsh, council member)..... |
| 11.00-12.00                               | Waste CoC\ inter-LGU expert group – 5 members: Ramadan Mema (municipality of Koplik), Sander Ndoj (municipality of Rubik), Eva Poja (Shkoder), Xhavid Selimi (Puke), Valentin Gocaj (Ana e Malit)                      |
| 12.00-16.00                               | Meeting with the dldp team                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 17.00                                     | Departure to Tirana                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>02.10.2011 Sunday Tirana</b>           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|                                           | Debriefing preparation                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>03.10.11 Monday Tirana</b>             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 08:00-9.00                                | AAC – Mr. Agron Haxhimali, Executive Director                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 09:30-10.30                               | Dldp service providers (SWM) – Mr. Edlir Vokopola (URI), Mr. Konals Gjoka (COPLA)                                                                                                                                      |
| 10:00 – 11:0                              | Prime Minister Office – Dr. Ariana Çela, Economic Advisor to Prime Minister (regional development)                                                                                                                     |
| 11:00-12.00                               | Presidential Administration – Mr. Fatlum Nurja, Adviser to the President on local government issues                                                                                                                    |
| 12:00 -12.30                              | Lunch break                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 13.00- 14.00                              | EU-UNDP/ ISD Project – Ms. Eva Martiri, National Project Manager                                                                                                                                                       |
| 14:30-15.30                               | SOROS – Ms. Adela Halo, Program Coordinator, EU Integration and Local Governance                                                                                                                                       |
| 16.00-17.00                               | EU Delegation – Dr. Ledia Muco, Economic and Trade Advisor (Political, Economic and Info Section), governance focal point                                                                                              |
| 17:30-19.00                               | AAM – Mr. Fatos Hodaj, Executive Director                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>04.10.11 Tuesday Tirana</b>            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 09.00 – 10.00                             | TACSO – Mr. Genc Pasko, expert on IPA                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 11.00 – 13.00                             | Debriefing with the SDC CO team                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 14.00 – 16.00                             | Debriefing with the dldp project team                                                                                                                                                                                  |

#### Annex 4 Some Suggestions of the Mid-term Review Team's for Modification of the Logframe and Indicators

*NB! This is not a suggestion of a completed logframe – modification of the logframe is up to the team to finalize following the annual review process (especially the activities blocks are to be revisited). This is just a suggestion on how some elements of the logframe can be modified based on the review findings with specific attention paid to the indicators.*

| Hierarchy of objectives                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Indicators (Means of verification)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Project Goal</b><br><b>Capacities of municipalities and communes in Shkodra and Lezhe are strengthened contributing to improved regional development in Northern Albania and decentralization reform at national level</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Outcome 1. Municipalities and Communes in Shkodra and Lezhe Qark have improved their governance structures, capacities and targeted local public services</b>                                                              | <p><b>Impact level (outcome to goal contribution)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Degree of SDP implementation by LGUs of the region\ Including volume of funds\ capital investments mobilised by LGUs from external sources (incl. IPA), from RDF, from own budget (<i>Source – LGU (capital investment) budgets</i>)</li> <li>– Number of LGUs in the region introducing SDPs and MTBPs without Dldp direct assistance\ Especially number of LGUs introducing these tools without direct Dldp assistance from those involved into relevant inter-LGU expert groups</li> <li>– Number of LGUs in the region introducing SWM approaches promoted by Dldp without Dldp direct assistance (specifically SWM plans elaboration, improvement of waste collection infrastructure, waste reduction, cost-recovery improvement, citizen education\ awareness building, etc.)</li> <li>– Number of inter-LGU initiatives in service provision (and number of LGUs involved) initiated by Qarks\ established in the region without direct support of Dldp</li> <li>- Revenue per capita growth in the LGUs of the regions (incl. average in the regions)</li> <li>- Percentage of women Councillors and Mayors in the region (<i>Source – election results of 2011 and 2015</i>)</li> </ul> |
| <b>Output 1.1. Capacities of selected LGUs on strategic planning and budgeting are improved and selected LGUs apply strategic planning instruments and methods, linked to annual and midterm budget</b>                       | <p><b>Effectiveness level</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Number of LGUs developed both SDP and MTBP with the support of</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

| <i>Hierarchy of objectives</i>                                                                                                                                                                                | <i>Indicators (Means of verification)</i>                                                                                                                            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Generic activities</b>                                                                                                                                                                                     | Dldp                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <i>1.1.1 Assessment of LGUs regarding their strategic planning instruments and practices and publication on strategic planning practices in AL</i>                                                            | - Number of LGUs developed SDP with the support of Dldp                                                                                                              |
| <i>1.1.2 Further development of an adequate and practice oriented strategic planning methodology, which shall be integrated in the LGU budgeting process</i>                                                  | <b>Efficiency level</b>                                                                                                                                              |
| <i>1.1.3 Training and exposure to all interested LGUs in Shkodra and Lezhe in strategic planning and budgeting (including mid-term budgeting) (rotating venues, possibly divided in 2 events)</i>             | - Availability of SDP methodology and training modules                                                                                                               |
| <i>1.1.4 Support to a selected number of interested LGUs in the elaboration of their strategic plans</i>                                                                                                      | - Number of people trained in SDP (including women)\ Number of LGUs covered with training                                                                            |
| <i>1.1.5 Support to a selected number of interested LGUs in monitoring and updating of SDP and linking it to their annual and mid-term budgeting</i>                                                          | - Number of experts (including women) involved into inter-LGU expert group on SDP\ Number of LGUs involved                                                           |
| <i>1.1.6 Establish and support regional Inter LGU expert group on strategic planning and budgeting, support to advanced LGUs to take a coaching role for others</i>                                           | - Costs of SDP package delivery per LGU (average annual – <i>with the idea to reduce costs annually</i> )                                                            |
| <i>1.1.7 Proactive coordination with other programmes/initiatives working on this topic (e.g. RDP regarding regional development planning, CoE project regarding territorial planning)</i>                    | - Number of LGUs using the mechanisms of annual participatory SDP review                                                                                             |
| <i>1.1.8 Innovative communication and information approaches are applied by LGUs enhancing transparency and easy access to planning for all citizens (mainstreaming the info and communication component)</i> | - Number of LGUs with Citizens Communication\ PR strategies                                                                                                          |
| <b>Output 1.2. Capacities of <b>selected</b> LGUs on financial and fiscal management, including the MTBP are strengthened</b>                                                                                 | - Number of LGU councillors involved in awareness training on SDP and its monitoring\ LGUs covered with councillors awareness training                               |
| <b>Generic Activities</b>                                                                                                                                                                                     | <b>Effectiveness level</b>                                                                                                                                           |
| <i>1.2.1 Assessment of current practices regarding financial management including mid term budgeting and fiscal instruments</i>                                                                               | - Number of LGUs developed both SDP and MTBP with the support of Dldp                                                                                                |
| <i>1.2.2 Manual on fiscal capacities and revenue raising of LGUs in AL</i>                                                                                                                                    | - Number of LGUs developed MTB with the support of Dldp\ Number of them with introduced e-MTBP                                                                       |
| <i>1.2.3 Training and exposure to all interested local governments in Shkodra and Lezhe in transparent financial management including mid-term</i>                                                            | - Number of LGUs evaluating their fiscal capacities and revenue raising potential from those trained by Dldp\ from those involved into inter-LGU expert group on PFM |

| <i>Hierarchy of objectives</i>                                                                                                                                                                               | <i>Indicators (Means of verification)</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
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| <i>budgeting and fiscal instruments (rotating venues, possibly divided in 2 events)</i>                                                                                                                      | <b>Efficiency level</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Availability of MTBP methodology and training modules</li> <li>- Availability of a methodology for assessing fiscal capacities and local revenue by LGUs (<i>if a separate one envisaged?</i>)</li> <li>- Number of people trained in MTBP and other PFM matters (including women)\ Number of LGUs covered with training</li> <li>- Number of experts (including women) involved into inter-LGU expert group of PFM\ Number of LGUs involved</li> <li>- Costs of MTBP package delivery per LGU (average annual – <i>with the idea to reduce costs annually</i>)</li> <li>- Number of LGUs trained in transparent budgeting skills</li> <li>- Number of LGUs institutionalising the mechanism of public budgetary hearings through local regulations</li> <li>- Number of municipalities publishing citizens friendly budget</li> <li>- Number of LGU councillors involved in awareness training on MTBP and its monitoring\ LGUs covered with councillors awareness training</li> </ul> |
| <i>1.2.4 Support selected LGUs (different size) in developing good practices transparent financial management including mid term budgeting and fiscal instruments</i>                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <i>1.2.5 Establish and support regional Inter LGU expert group on financial management including mid term budgeting and fiscal instrument, support to advanced LGUs to take a coaching role for others</i>   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <i>1.2.6 Proactive coordination with other programmes/initiatives working on this topic (e.g. USAID/ARD programme...)</i>                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <i>1.2.7 Innovative communication and information approaches are applied by LGUs enhancing transparency and easy access to budgets for all citizens (mainstreaming the info and communication component)</i> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Output 1.3. Public services in selected LGUs are improved ensuring equal access to all citizens, including women, poor and marginalized groups</b>                                                        | <b>Effectiveness level</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Number of citizens\ households benefiting from the Dldp grant scheme related to service improvement\ Increase in surface covered with SWM services within LGUs\ Number of LGUs that introduced SWM services where it has not existed (specifically rural remote communes)</li> <li>- Number of LGUs that introduced schemes for subsidising services for vulnerable households</li> <li>- Number of LGUs from those trained and from those involved in inter-LGU expert group on SWM applying new approaches to SWM (specifically SWM plans elaboration, improvement of waste collection infrastructure, waste reduction, cost-recovery improvement, citizen education\ awareness building, etc.)</li> <li>- Improved cost recovery for waste services in targeted LGUs</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Generic activities</b>                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <i>1.3.1 Assessment of LGUs regarding their waste management practices</i>                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

| <i>Hierarchy of objectives</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <i>Indicators (Means of verification)</i>                                                                                                                                      |
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| 1.3.2 Further development of an adequate and practice oriented waste management strategy                                                                                                                                                                                     | - Number of LGUs with the mechanisms of receiving service-users feedback                                                                                                       |
| 1.3.3 Training and exposure to interested LGUs in Shkodra and Lezhe in waste management planning                                                                                                                                                                             | - Number of LGUs that involve community groups in service co-production (e.g. Roma and SWM, or service users taking on themselves certain service provision related functions) |
| 1.3.4 Support to a selected number of interested LGUs in the elaboration of waste management plans                                                                                                                                                                           | <b>Efficiency level</b>                                                                                                                                                        |
| 1.3.5 Establish and support regional Inter LGU expert group on waste management, support to advanced LGUs to take a coaching role for others                                                                                                                                 | - Number of projects supported from the Dldp grant scheme related to the improvement of service infrastructure \ Number of LGUs benefiting (specifically in SWM area)          |
| 1.3.6 Proactive coordination with other programmes/initiatives working on this topic (e.g. RDP regarding regional development planning, CoE project regarding territorial planning)                                                                                          | - Availability of training manual and training modules on SWM                                                                                                                  |
| 1.3.7 Capacity development to interested LGUs in project cycle management, including public procurement (local governments, Qark, possibly civil society and private sector) (in rotating venues, possibly divided in 2 events)                                              | - Number of people (including women)\ LGUs trained on SWM                                                                                                                      |
| 1.3.8 Develop final procedures and criteria and establish competitive fund and transparent communication to potential applicants                                                                                                                                             | - Number of experts (including women)\ LGUs involved into inter-LGU expert group on SWM                                                                                        |
| 1.3.9 Organize 2 rounds of project selection and implementation in the frame of the competitive fund (1 <sup>st</sup> round mid 2010 / 2 <sup>nd</sup> round 2011): total expected projects 20-30 maximum                                                                    | - Number of people (including women)\ LGUs trained on service management related matter (SWM, procurement, standards, cost-recovery schemes, etc.)                             |
| 1.3.10 Capacity development, information and build experience to access other fund (regional, national, international) (possibly establish Inter LGU expert group, in close coordination with other programmes); support to advanced LGUs to take a coaching role for others | - Number of LGU's introducing OSS with the support of Dldp\ Costs of OSS introduction package                                                                                  |
| 1.3.11 Proactive coordination with other programmes/ initiatives working on this topic (e.g. CoE programme on HRM and Inter-LGU cooperation, RDP regarding competitive fund)                                                                                                 | - Number of LGU councillors involved in awareness training on service performance monitoring issues\ LGUs covered with councillors awareness training                          |
| 1.3.12 Innovative communication and information approaches are applied by LGUs enhancing transparency and easy access to quality information related to services for all citizens (mainstreaming the info and communication component)                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                |



| <i>Hierarchy of objectives</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <i>Indicators (Means of verification)</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
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| <b>Output 1.4</b> (suggest replacing communication that is to be mainstreamed into other outputs with the gender specific output to reflect adequately on the gender component that gained prominence in Ddp). <b>E.g. Improve capacities of women to participate in local governance process</b> | <b>Effectiveness level</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Number of women elected from those trained\ participating in the “women in politics” network</li> <li>- Increased budget sensitivity towards gender (Verification mean - Budget content analysis applied as a survey tool)</li> <li>- Number of women initiatives suggested and approved by local councils (Source of verification – LGU Council meetings minutes)</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Generic Activities – to be elaborated</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <b>Efficiency level (just some examples)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Availability of “women in politics” network in the region</li> <li>- Number of experts\ municipalities included into the inter-LGU expert group on mainstreaming gender</li> <li>- Number of women experience exchange meetings</li> <li>- Number of women trained in different skills related to local governance process\ Number of men trained in gender sensitivity</li> <li>- Number of women initiatives supported (women reaching women, women reaching vulnerable) and number of people reached</li> <li>- Number of LGU officials and councillors involved in gender awareness training\ LGUs covered with councillors awareness training</li> </ul> |
| 1.4.1                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 1.4.2                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 1.4.3                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 1.4.4                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 1.4.5                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Output 1.5. Qark capacities to coordinate inter-LGU cooperation are enhanced</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <b>Effectiveness level</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Number of inter-LGU initiatives in service provision (and number of LGUs involved) initiated by Qarks\ established with the support of Ddp grant fund</li> <li>– Maintenance of the inter-LGU working groups by Qarks</li> <li>– Number of issues raised\ decisions made by Qark Councils on IMC related issues</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Generic Activities</b> (need to be reconsidered in the view of more active role of Qark in coordination and IMC)                                                                                                                                                                               | <b>Efficiency level</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 1.5.1 Training to Qarks in IMC issues                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 1.5.2 Support Qarks in organising inter-LGI exchange in IMC issues                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 1.5.3 Organize in cooperation with Qarks selected events depending on the evolving policy development related to IMC (specifically in service                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

| <i>Hierarchy of objectives</i>                                                                                                                                                               | <i>Indicators (Means of verification)</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
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| <i>provision)</i>                                                                                                                                                                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Number of people (including women) in Qarks trained in grant fund management and IMC issues</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>1.5.4 Management of the competitive fund by Qarks supporting inter-LGU cooperation</b>                                                                                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Number of inter-LGU exchange events organised\ hosted by Qarks</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>1.5.5 Support Qarks in elaborating and promoting tools\ manuals related to IMC in service provision issues</b>                                                                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Number of IMC\ regional development policy related events and number of LGUs participating (including the level)</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>1.5.6 Proactive coordination with other programmes/initiatives working on this topic (RDP on cooperation with Qarks, CoE project on inter-LGU cooperation...)</b>                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Number of tools\ manuals related to IMC issued (owned or co-owned) by Qarks</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Outcome 2. Good practices are shared at national level in cooperation with strengthened associations, thus impacting law and policy-making and their implementation at national level</b> | <p><b>Impact level (outcome to goal contribution)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Instances of introduced\ adjusted\ changed policies, laws, regulations related to the areas targeted by Dldp at national level</li> <li>– Availability of endorsed by relevant national structures guidelines\ manuals related to the areas targeted by Dldp at national level</li> </ul>                                                               |
| <b>Output 2.1. Suggest to reformulate it towards improving capacities of LGUs to represent and advocate their interests at the national level</b>                                            | <p><b>Effectiveness level</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Number of analytical papers compiled and released on specific issues to Dldp concern</li> <li>– Number of national level events supported on specific issues to Dldp concern\ Their attendance - level and LGUs numbers</li> <li>– Fees payment dynamic among LGUs targeted by Dldp to LGU Associations</li> <li>– No. of LGUs applying for the best practices award</li> </ul> |
| <b>Generic Activities (will depend on the formulation of the output)</b>                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Outputs 2.2. Suggest to formulate it around national dissemination and experience exchange</b>                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Generic Activities (will depend on the formulation of the output)</b>                                                                                                                     | <p><b>Efficiency level</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Number of publications at the national level (mass media, professional, LGU Associations) on good governance innovations promoted by Dldp</li> <li>– Number of inter-LGU national exchange events supported\ attendance and</li> <li>– No. of LGU's who replicate and use experiences and good practices from Shkoder and Lezhe LGUs</li> </ul>                                    |
|                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
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| <i>Hierarchy of objectives</i> | <i>Indicators (Means of verification)</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
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|                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Proactive participation and contribution of AAM/AAC in existing structures (decentralisation expert group, interministerial group on decentralisation, parliamentary commissions,,,) and extending lobby and advocacy channels (media, public hearings...), at regional level active membership of AAM/AAC of regional and international networks and programmes (f.e. NALAS, EU) where they represent and lobby for LGU interests</li> <li>- No. of relevant inputs provided by Associations</li> <li>– Coordinated approach, no overlapping, possible joint activities and initiatives</li> </ul> |

**Annex 4 Recent international projects related to local development in Northern Albania**

| <i>Donor</i>             | <i>Project</i>                                                                                                                            | <i>Period</i> |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| EC                       | Regional Plan for Shkoder-Lezhe                                                                                                           | 2005-2020     |
| WB and SOROS             | Developing Enterprise Locally through Techniques and Alliances (Delta) Project                                                            | 2005 – 2015   |
|                          |                                                                                                                                           | 2005 – 2015   |
| UNDP                     | Promoting Local Development through the Millennium Development Goals                                                                      | 2005          |
| Germany/GTZ              | Program Economic Development and Employment Promotion (Component: Support regional development in the regions of Shkodra and Lezha).      | 2010-2015     |
| Germany/GTZ              | Economic Promotion in Northern Albania                                                                                                    |               |
| Swiss Cooperation        | Decentralization and Local Development Program (DLDP I) Shkodra Region 2006-2009                                                          | 2006 - 2009   |
| Swiss Cooperation        | Decentralization and Local Development Program Shkodra & Lezhe Region DLDP II                                                             | 2010-2013     |
| Swiss Cooperation Office | Benefits from cross border management of natural resources. Experiences from the SDC/REC Balkan Transborder Projects                      | 2000-2008     |
| EC & UNDP                | Integrated Support for Decentralization Project                                                                                           | 2008-2012     |
| Austria / ADA            | Integrated rural regional development of Kelmend/North of Albania                                                                         | 2004 – 2007   |
| Italian Cooperation      | ART GOLD Western Balkans (Albania - phase 2)                                                                                              | 2009-2011     |
| Italian Cooperation      | ART GOLD Albania implemented by UNDP                                                                                                      | 2006 - 2008   |
| GEF, WB                  | Strategic Action Plan for Shkodra Lake Albania & Montenegro                                                                               | 2006-2007     |
| USAID                    | Local Governance Program in Albania (LGPA)                                                                                                | 2007-2011     |
| World Bank               | Community Works II                                                                                                                        | 2004-2008     |
| TEULEDA                  | SWOT Analysis for Shkodra Region                                                                                                          | 2009          |
| OSI/ LGI                 | Developing Enterprise Locally through Techniques and Alliances (Delta), follow-up                                                         | 2008–2010     |
| ADA/SDC                  | Regional development program in northern Albania                                                                                          | 2011-2014     |
| CoE, LGI, OSCE           | Local Government Leadership Program                                                                                                       | 2006          |
| OSF, LGI, WB             | Development of Delta webpage                                                                                                              | 2004–2006     |
| GTZ                      | Modernization of Municipal Services in Selected Partner Towns                                                                             | 2002–2005     |
| UNDP                     | Support to Strengthening Local Governance and Decentralization for Regional Development in Albania (Regions Kukes, Vlora and Gjirokaster) | 2006 - 2007   |