

Skills for Jobs (S4J)

Albania

Report of a Mid-term Review and Forward-looking Exercise

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List of Abbreviations

ADA	Austrian Development Agency
AQF	Albanian Qualifications Framework
DACH	Acronym for Germany (D), Austria (A) and Switzerland (CH)
DC dVET	Donor Committee for dual Vocational Education and Training
DU	Development Unit
ETF	European Training Foundation
EU	European Union
GIZ	German Technical Cooperation
I(C)T	Information (and Communication) Technology
IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession (a financing mechanism of the EU)
MFC	Multi-functional Centre
MoFE	Ministry of finance and Economics
MRM	Monitoring and Result Measurement
NAES	National Agency for Employment and Skills
NAVETQ	National Agency for Vocational Education, Training and Qualifications
NESS	National Employment and Skills Strategy
ProDoc	Project Document
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SD4E	Skills Development for Employment
S4J	Skills for Jobs
TOR	Terms of Reference
ToT	Training of Trainers
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VET	Vocational Education and Training
VSD	Vocational Skills Development
WBL	Work-based Learning

Introduction

The economic and social development of Albania is hampered by a lack of skilled labour force at the one hand and a high rate of youth unemployment at the other.

Against this backdrop, the reform of the vocational training and employment system ranks high on the agenda of the government. With support from the international donor community Albania has made significant progress in modernising the VET system and infrastructure. A new VET law was approved in February 2017 and a series of promotional campaigns helped improving the image and perception of vocational training. The enrolment rate in VET is increasing from year to year and the debate on its quality has gained momentum.

Swiss support plays a key role in the reform process and contributes in particular to the improvement of labour market orientation and the governance of the VET system. To this end, SDC is funding two complementary projects to strengthen the VET sector in Albania. Through the Skills Development for Employment Programme (SD4E), implemented by the UNDP, the VET policy framework and its governance and financing mechanisms are improved. The Skills for Jobs (S4J) project, implemented by Swisscontact, works at public provider level supporting the conceptual development and modernisation of 6 VET schools and 1 Vocational Training Centre with a focus on the introduction of innovative teaching and learning approaches, the involvement of the private sector in training planning and delivery, and the development of vocational guidance and placement services at provider level.

The S4J project has achieved substantial and tangible results, despite the fact that its main phase has started only in May 2016. Taking into consideration that the first main phase of the project comes to an end in February 2019, the Embassy in Tirana mandated a team of one international and one national consultant to perform a mid-term review with a strong forward-looking focus. The main objectives of the mandate were to:

- Assess the progress, results, and possible shortcomings of the project so far
- Identify main activities still to be done in the remainder of the phase
- Elaborate ideas and recommendations for the envisaged second phase of the project.¹

A one-week field mission of the two consultants, comprising a workshop with the project team, a series of interviews with the key stakeholders, and visits of a VET school and a VET centre, was conducted in April 2018.² The following report presents the results of the field mission and the documentary analysis in three parts:

- Part I summarises the review findings regarding the progress the project made in its first two years of implementation
- Part II presents the views of the reviewers on what the main activities of the project should be in the remainder of the current phase
- Part III compiles the reviewers' reflections and recommendations regarding the envisaged second phase of S4J.

The reviewers would like to thank the project team and the stakeholders interviewed for their openness, strong support, and the trustful cooperation.

¹ The detailed terms of reference are attached in annex 1

² The agenda of the field mission is attached in annex 2

Part I: Review

Part 1 of the report follows closely the questions formulated by SDC in the TOR for the review part of the assignment.³

1. Assessment of relevance

In general terms, the S4J project is highly relevant:

- It is fully **in line with the Albanian government's policy in the field of skills development** outlined in the National Employment and Skills Strategy 2014 – 2020 (NESS)⁴. It also corresponds to the new law No. 15/2017 on “Vocational Education and Training in the Republic of Albania” that aims at a VET system that responds to labour market needs, provides quality services, and guarantees equal opportunities for all its students.⁵ The interview with the Deputy Minister of Finance and Economy, who is in charge of the reform of the national VET system, confirmed the importance of the S4J-supported VET schools as pilots for enhanced labour market orientation and increased quality of training provision in particular with regard to practical skills. The contributions of S4J to the necessary changes in the VET system are perceived, recognized and appreciated by the government at different levels, i.e. MoFE and NAVETQ.
- The project is also **in line with SDC's new education strategy**. It promotes strong involvement of the private sector in training delivery (apprenticeships) and school governance, implements new ways of teaching and learning, develops capacities of management and staff of VET schools and centres, and facilitates the transition from training to employment by introducing career guidance and job placement approaches (development unit at school level). All these are issues that SDC's education strategy strongly supports.⁶ Furthermore, S4J's approach fully corresponds with outcome 3 of SDC's country strategy Albania that aims at “employability: young people benefit from labour market oriented vocational education and training and better job placement”.⁷
- By improving the quality of skills development services in Albania and making the VET schools and centres more responsive to the needs of the labour market **S4J supports both, the economy and the society**. It provides the labour force the companies need, in particular in sectors of economic importance for Albania, and it helps making VET a recognized and promising option for those young people who do not want or are not able to follow an academic pathway or who are already out of the education system and need skills development to find employment and income. With its envisaged gender-sensitive approach the project is expected to contribute to increasing participation rates of female students and trainees in VET schools and centres.

However, the **Logframe** of the project, which summarises its **design** in a nutshell, **lacks clarity**. According to the project team and other stakeholders interviewed during the review mission the inconsistencies of the Logframe are primarily a result of instructions and interventions by the previous government. While the original design of S4J had envisaged a sector-based approach in order to

³ The TOR are attached in Annex 1

⁴ See Republic of Albania, Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth: Employment and Skills Strategy 2014 – 2020 – higher skills and better jobs for all women and men, Tirana, February 2014

⁵ Republic of Albania Assembly, Law No. 15/2017 on Vocational Education and Training in the Republic of Albania, Article 2 Purpose of the Law.

⁶ See SDC: The SDC's Education Strategy – Basic Education and Vocational Skills Development, Berne 2017

⁷ Swiss Cooperation strategy Albania 2018 – 2021, page 15

respond to the skills needs of important growth sectors the government's policy to allocate specific VET schools or centres to specific donors obliged the project to follow a school-based approach. Furthermore, the previous government insisted on the establishment of centres of excellence which contradicted S4J's intention to develop good practice models for replication. Fortunately, the weaknesses of the Logframe did not prevent the project team from developing a meaningful strategy and delivering impressive results. Nonetheless it is important highlighting the shortcomings of the Logframe because of the following reasons:

- The Logframe is an official document against which the project implementation will be measured. To avoid possible confusion and problems for the project and its implementers it is important that its inconsistencies are eliminated.
- The Logframe and its indicators are the basis for the project's MRM system. Lack of clarity and inconsistencies of the indicators result in unclear figures and reporting.

The following **weaknesses of the Logframe** have been identified by the reviewers:

- The expected impact or overall goal of the project aims at decent jobs for 60% of the envisaged total number of 9,500 graduates of training courses supported and improved by S4J. This is a feasible goal for the first main phase. But neither the logframe nor the ProDoc outline a **long-term strategy** that goes beyond the first phase. Is the first phase meant to be a pilot phase to develop and prove good practices that will later on be rolled out with the intention to trigger systemic change and modernize the national VET system? There are some indications in the ProDoc that give reason to believe that this was the vision of the designers. However, this is not reflected in the Logframe. On the contrary: the Logframe consistently uses the term "centres of excellence" for the VET schools and the training centre supported by S4J. But developing them into real centres of excellence would make them unsuitable as blueprints for the modernization of "normal" schools and centres in the country.
- Furthermore, there is a lack of clarity with regard to the **target groups** of the project. The ProDoc mentions the high youth unemployment as a key problem and the need to include un- and underemployed young people, including disadvantaged and vulnerable groups.⁸ According to the Logframe, S4J aims at supporting 5,000 students in VET schools and 4,500 trainees, i.e. mainly unemployed (young) people, in VET centres. This seems to be well-balanced. But taking into consideration that the training in VET schools has a minimum duration of two years (basic level) and in most cases of four years, whereas the training courses in the VET centres usually have a duration of 3 to maximum 6 months reveals that the main emphasis is placed on the VET schools. In other words: the project design favours young students who are in initial VET and less those young people who already dropped out of the system and who are unemployed or underemployed. This could be justified with the argument that modernizing the initial VET system and making it more labour-market oriented helps preventing **future** youth unemployment. However, this requires a clear strategy of scaling-up and systemic change that the project design – see above – is missing.
- As mentioned above, the project design gives preference to VET school students rather than to the un- and underemployed in short courses of the VET centres. This implies a certain **risk for the expected impact** that is not adequately considered in the Logframe: graduates from VET schools who complete the full four-year cycle get the so-called state matura, which grants access to University. In other words: it cannot be taken for granted that they will look for a job when they graduate from the VET schools. They may also go to University or leave the country for better-paid jobs abroad.

⁸ Annex 3 provides some figures on youth unemployment in Albania.

- There is a problem with the project's **impact indicator No. 1** that needs revision. It currently stipulates that 60% of the graduates supported by the project should be in a decent job 12 months after completion of the training. This indicator lacks disaggregation by gender. Furthermore it has to be considered that not all participants receive the same level of support (see below under effectiveness). In order to be able to clearly attribute the achieved impact to the project's activities the indicator should distinguish employed graduates who received full support from those who graduated from courses not directly supported by the project.
- Finally, **outcome 1 and its related indicator 1** have to be revised. They both refer to the **use** of market-oriented formal respectively non-formal training programmes. It is not clear whether this indicator refers to successful users, i.e. graduates, or to **all** users including drop-outs and those students who will still be enrolled at the end of phase 1. This has to be clarified and disaggregated figures be provided that clearly distinguish graduates, drop-outs and students still enrolled.

2. Assessment of effectiveness

The S4J project reports already at this early stage **impressive achievements at outcome level**, which will be summarized and analysed below:

- Under **outcome 1**, the project - according to its Operational Progress Report for the period May 2016 to December 2017 and a Factsheet published by S4J in March 2018 – has supported a total number of 2,765 VET school students in formal and 3,205 VET centre trainees in non-formal education and training. These **figures represent 55% of the target figure for formal and 71% of the target figure for non-formal education and training**. However, these figures are too generic and do not adequately reflect the project's achievements. As mentioned above, this indicator does not specify the level of support the beneficiaries receive. In the case of the VET schools **all** students who enrol are automatically registered as beneficiaries regardless of the occupational area (or direction, as it is called in Albania) they choose. Since only some of the directions at the VET schools are directly supported by S4J with modern equipment, teaching aids, and ToT, a significant part of the registered beneficiaries can only be considered **indirect beneficiaries** insofar as they benefit of the general upgrading of the school environment, better management and better image of the school. The same applies to the VET centre supported by S4J where not all of the courses are directly supported by the project. And even between the directions supported by S4J – tourism, construction, ICT, textile – the level of support seems to differ with a clear preference for tourism and ICT. The graphics in annex 2 – copied from the project's early impact evaluation – clearly show the different impact of the project for direct beneficiaries (treated group) and indirect beneficiaries (control group). Taking into consideration that the outcome explicitly refers to young people who receive training “based on new ways of inclusive learning” the figures presented by the project have to be put in perspective. However, the distinction between direct and indirect beneficiaries will become less and less important since the project in the meantime has started to gradually extend its services to almost all directions offered in its partner schools.
- With regard to the **gender parity target** the results so far are mixed. In the non-formal training courses of the VET centre the female participation rate of 43% is clearly above the set target of 30%, whereas the current proportion of 15% of female students in the VET schools is still far below the envisaged 30%.⁹ The project therefore started a campaign in the feeder schools to increase female enrolment in the VET schools.

⁹ Annex 5 provides detailed figures of female students in the six VET schools

- As regards the **drop-out problem in the VET schools** it is too early for conclusions. However, it seems that the envisaged decline is slower than expected.¹⁰ That is why the project, in cooperation with a Swiss partner, has developed a comprehensive package of activities to be implemented mainly by the DUs in order to mitigate the problem.¹¹
- Although the quantitative results so far have to be put in perspective, this is no reason to be concerned. It can be confirmed that S4J has brought about **significant and notable changes in the way teaching and learning takes place in its partner schools**. This has been highlighted by directors, teachers, students, and also by the employers the review team has talked to. It begins with the general appearance of the schools, the equipment of labs and class-rooms, the student-centred, technology-supported and individualized learning approach (blended learning), and comprises well-trained and motivated teachers and practical skills training at the workplace. These are all important improvements and innovations that help making VET an attractive option for young people in Albania. And this new image of S4J's partner schools will most probably increase their enrolment figures step-by-step thus allowing the project to meet and most probably exceed the envisaged target figures.¹²
- The most striking achievements of the project are reported under **outcome 2**. In only two years the project has managed to get **235 companies** on board who offer work-based practical skills training for **704 VET school students** in the framework of S4J's so-called **apprenticeship scheme**. In a country with very limited tradition of work-based learning this is a great success. But it is not alone the high number of participating companies, which already exceeds the envisaged target of 180 by far; it is also the fact that the project has helped establishing a culture of communication and cooperation between the VET schools and their local business environment that generated a certain level of commitment of the companies, which materialized not only in apprenticeships but also in sponsorship of equipment, in active participation in school boards, and in the foundation of the so-called Albanian Alliance for Apprenticeships.

The **strong involvement of the private sector** that S4J has triggered in its partner schools could contribute to **improved governance of the national VET system**. The new VET law highlights under Article 5, which refers to the fundamental principles of the system, the principle of governance and financial autonomy of the VET providers (article 5b) and the principle of cooperation in particular with the social partners who should be "involved in all levels of the VET system" (article 5d). The partner companies of S4J are not only involved in training delivery by providing work-based learning to VET school students. According to the project team they also support curriculum development, contribute to the schools' financial autonomy by providing equipment, and participate in school boards which support the overall school management. All these are valuable experiences and good practices the national authorities can take advantage of when elaborating and approving the by-laws to the new VET law and setting the frame for a reformed governance of the VET system with stronger participation of social partners and the civil society.

The contribution of the S4J project to **poverty reduction, social inclusion and/or reduction of vulnerabilities** seems to be less significant than it could be. The main reason is the above-mentioned fact that the S4J design – as a result of clear instructions received from the Albanian government - gives clear preference to the improvement of initial VET offered in the VET school system.

¹⁰ Detailed figures of drop-out rates in the six VET schools are presented in annex 6

¹¹ For further details see the S4J Operational Progress Report 01.05.2016 – 31.12.2017, page 13

¹² The figures presented in annex 7 – taken from the students' evaluation report 2017 – seem to indicate that the image of the S4J-supported schools has already increased. The percentages of students who opted for S4J-schools as their first choice continuously increased over the last four years.

Consequently, S4J currently supports 6 VET schools and only 1 VET centre. Since the clientele of VET schools are graduates of compulsory education, un- or underemployed young people are excluded from this opportunity. They are the main target groups of the VET centres, which receive less attention of S4J.

On the other hand it has to be considered that the **learning approach** introduced by S4J in the VET schools is much **more inclusive** than the traditional teacher-centred approach the schools used to apply. It can be expected that the traditionally **high drop-out rate of the VET schools will decrease** in S4J's partner schools. Moreover, the increased quality of training in the S4J-supported schools will significantly **improve the employment perspectives** of its graduates who mainly come from poorer strata of society, i.e. in a mid-term perspective the project will definitely contribute to poverty reduction of graduates and their families. And even for the target group of the unemployed the project does more than the figures mentioned above suggest. It supports the six VET schools in designing and offering short courses for unemployed people, i.e. the intensive support the six VET schools receive will gradually also benefit a growing number of unemployed people. Since merging VET schools and VET centres into multi-functional centres (MFC) remains a key objective of the Albanian government¹³, this will play a more important role in the near future and allow the VET schools supported by S4J serving both main target groups in a more balanced way.

As regards the effectiveness of S4J in terms of **system development** the project team highlights that the project has supported the elaboration of the new VET law, in particular the design of the so-called development units. In relation to apprenticeship, it has to be stated that the project still works on an island; bridges to the mainland have not yet been built and are not even envisaged in the Logframe. This is mainly a result of the Albanian government's policy to assign specific VET schools or centres to a specific donor. Consequently, there is a "GIZ island", an "EU island", and the "S4J island" in the VET landscape of Albania, which all develop their specific approaches and are not systematically coordinated by the national authorities.

For S4J this imposed set-up had some advantages because it allowed the project developing and implementing its own innovative approach and proving its feasibility and success. But it also resulted in limited efforts of the project to disseminate its good practices beyond its own boundaries and to help shaping the VET reform process in the country, thus contributing to the sustainability of its own achievements. This can be well illustrated with an example in the field where S4J undoubtedly has its most significant achievements: involvement of the private sector. The project has managed to conclude bilateral agreements with more than 200 companies but has not yet made an effort to get business associations involved as partners.

This reservation of S4J with regard to policy development may also be caused by the fact that its SDC-financed sister project SD4E is tasked with interventions at the macro level. However, it will be a major challenge for the remainder of the phase and in particular of the envisaged second main phase to find ways to better link the good practices and innovations developed by S4J with the reform debate of the mainstream system.

3. Assessment of efficiency

As mentioned above, the different donor projects supporting VET schools in Albania all work mainly on their own islands. **Synergies are not (yet) systematically explored and used** in the country because

¹³ According to information got from government officials, MoFE intends to merge the currently 35 VET schools and 10 VET centers to 15 – 20 so-called multi-functional centers (MFC), offering both, formal vocational education and non-formal skills training.

of lack of coordination by the government and the donor agencies. Nonetheless, S4J has collaborated and exchanged experience with other donor projects at various occasions. The project team reports the following activities:

- Main project phase' planning workshop, which was organised during its inception phase where besides other Swiss supported projects, GIZ, and Kulturkontakt participated. The same is true for the project's official kick-off event and launching of new ways of inclusive learning approach: GIZ, ETF, Kulturkontakt, DEKRA participated.
- For the design of the training courses in tourism and hospitality the project has made use of the curricula developed by ADA/Kulturkontakt.
- With GIZ there has been cooperation in the field of ToT and the development of a provider-based graduate tracer system
- No direct collaboration has taken place with the EU IPA project that supported several other VET schools in the country and developed a concept for the envisaged so-called multifunctional centres (MFC); however, it was agreed that S4J supports providers to become multi-functional centres.
- The project made use of the National Skills Needs Survey conducted by the sister project SD4E, supported their analysis of WBL schemes by providing information on the apprenticeship scheme, and teamed up with them to develop a Concept Note on Schools of Excellence (NAVETA, ETF and Kulturkontakt were involved also in the last workshop);
- S4J teamed up with British Council to support an Albanian Delegation of VET practitioners to participate in a VET regional exchange among VET practitioners in Sarajevo in 2017 and with other donor-funded projects to support the regional VET and employment Fairs in 2016 (Vlora region) and 2018 (Shkodra Region with IPA-EU);
- Participated in 11 meetings of donor and implementing agencies organized by different ministers and donors;
- Engaged with the World Bank to present the Apprenticeship model – World Bank is considering the possibility to include apprenticeships in the new project it will fund;
- Contributed to the DACH+ meetings;
- Contributed in the formulation of the key messages from the donor/project community to the new government;
- Participated in the coordination meetings of SDC-funded Skills Development (related) projects (Helvetas, UNDP, Swisscontact);
- Participated in the UNDP project's technical working groups.

The approaches and strategies applied by the S4J project are **cost-efficient**:

- The involvement of companies in the delivery of practical training in the apprenticeship scheme helps saving a lot of money for the VET schools and S4J. Instead of equipping the VET schools with expensive labs and machinery to enable them to offer state-of-the-art practical training, the major part of the practical training takes now place in companies and the money saved for equipment can be used to improve the infrastructure and the learning and teaching aids.
- Shifting a major part of the training from the school or the centre to companies allows a significant increase of their yearly intake. With a well-organised management system a school or centre can easily duplicate the number of students with almost the same amount of staff.
- The close cooperation with business partners resulted in sponsorships received from nine companies so far, mainly in terms of equipment, which allowed the schools to use their own money for other purposes.
- The equipment of teachers and students with computer devices, the development of digital learning materials and the use of virtual learning platforms, although high investments in the

beginning, allow multiple, individualised and very cost-efficient use of these materials in the next couple of years.

- The training of a group of master trainers for ToT, who are available for further training of their colleagues, is a very cost-efficient approach, also with a view to a possible future scaling-up of the S4J approach. According to the project team, there are currently 49 master trainers in the training process.

Assessing the **cost-benefit ratio** of S4J is almost impossible because of the early stage of the project. An ex-ante assessment based on the expected deliverables is hindered by the above-mentioned lack of a long-term strategy. Furthermore, there are a number of factors which have to be taken into consideration and which are difficult to assess at this stage. A most common indicator for measuring the cost-benefit relation in VSD projects is the average cost for the training of beneficiaries. In the specific case of S4J this indicator does not deliver reliable results because of the following reasons:

- As mentioned above, the figures of beneficiaries are too generic because the level of support they receive – and therefore the cost of training – is completely different. Furthermore, the envisaged target figures do not distinguish graduates, drop-outs and students still enrolled.
- On the other hand it has to be considered that the focus of S4J is on upgrading the partner schools and centres and introducing new ways of learning. Since the investments in equipment, capacity building and new approaches will also benefit future cohorts of students beyond the current phase, it would be misleading measuring cost-benefit only with the number of students trained or graduating in the first phase.
- Furthermore, it is likely that the envisaged second phase will put major emphasis on scaling-up the approach developed by S4J and on supporting its adoption by the national authorities in the framework of the current reform process of the VET system. The more schools or VET centres adopt the S4J-approach, wholly or in part, the better the cost-benefit relation in the future.

4. Assessment of sustainability

Assessing the sustainability of a complex programme like S4J at such an early stage is difficult. The following reflections are rather a weighing up of possible risks and opportunities that may hinder or foster the sustainability of the many innovations S4J has introduced so far.

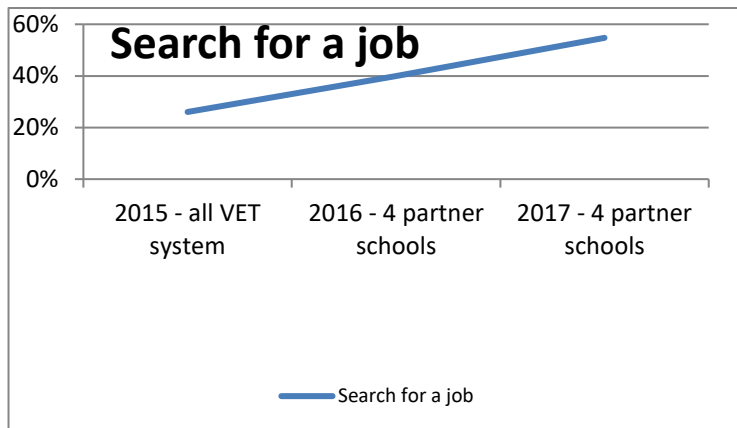
Sustainability in the case of S4J has to be assessed at **different levels**:

- There is the **technical equipment**, in particular modern IT-equipment, which has been provided by S4J. Here the question (and the potential risk) is whether or not the schools will be able to maintain this equipment and replace and modernise it if and when the need arises. The answer to this question depends on various factors. First of all, the apprenticeship scheme, introduced by S4J, reduces the schools' need to spend a lot of money for machinery. The savings can be used to maintain and replace the IT-equipment for learning purposes. Furthermore, the new VET law foresees a certain financial autonomy that – amongst other advantages – would allow the schools generating income and using it for purchasing equipment. However, the rules and regulations, i.e. the by-law, are still in the making, and it is not sure to what extent the financial autonomy will be granted. And even then it is not sure that all schools will have sufficient power and creativity to make use of it and generate income for example by offering tailor-made short courses to companies and their staff. But besides generating income through service provision the schools also have the opportunity to raise funds or in-kind donations in particular from their local business environment. S4J already proved that this is a feasible strategy, at least to a certain extent. And finally it can be hoped

that the government, in recognition of the significant advantages of the S4J-approach, would provide sufficient budget to assure that the new ways of learning can be continued.

- Secondly, there are the **capacities of the staff** – directors and teachers – that have been developed and have to be sustained as far as possible. A major risk here is the possible replacement of one or more of the directors by the new government. However, the S4J-approach seems to be strongly anchored within the teachers and also in the school-boards and is appreciated at national government level. This gives reason to believe that a new director would not be able to reverse the introduced changes and innovations. Another risk is the possibility that some staff leave the schools for better-paid jobs. This risk can be mitigated by training new staff under the system of ToT developed by S4J and by internal peer-to-peer learning. The pool of almost 50 master trainers S4J is about to develop is a key prerequisite to assure continuous capacity building beyond the life-cycle of the project.
- The so-called **Development Units (DU)** are a major innovation shaped and introduced by S4J at their partner schools. They play a key role in particular for the schools' relation with the local businesses and for the successful labour-market integration of the students. According to the S4J model developed for the DU their services are provided by teachers who are released for a certain amount of hours from their teaching duties for this purpose. Several stakeholders interviewed during the review mission expressed their doubts that this approach would be sustainable. Also from the reviewers' point of view a professional, i.e. full-time coordination of the DUs might become necessary to assure they accomplish with the ambitious objectives assigned to them.
- Last but not least there is the **learning approach and in particular the apprenticeship scheme** developed by S4J whose sustainability is crucial for the long-term success of the project. In this regard it is decisive that the project helps establishing a **legal framework conducive to work-based learning** that incentivises both, the companies and the young people and their parents, to opt for this training modality. The opportunity is there because the new VET law explicitly mentions dual VET in its article 22 as a modality of training delivery that permits acquiring qualifications recognised in the Albanian Qualifications Framework (AQF). However, the respective by-law with rules and regulations is still missing.

In this context another **risk** has to be mentioned that could undermine the companies' commitment and interest in apprenticeships and prevent the S4J-approach to be scaled-up. Should many of the **graduates of the apprenticeship scheme opt for university or for a better-paid job abroad** instead of remaining with the company that has trained them, the affected companies may withdraw from the scheme and could prevent others from joining in. None of the students interviewed during the mission said s/he wanted to stay with their training company as their first choice. On the other hand, the graphic on the page overleaf taken from the project's MRM system shows a remarkable increase of students who want to search for a job after graduation.



This
the
young

risk could be
mitigated by shifting
focus more on
people from the

target group of the unemployed. However, this would require non-formal training of longer duration, which has financial implications. In any case, it is important that the project closely monitors the decisions the first batch of VET school graduates of the basic cycle take in summer 2018. Will the majority remain at school in order to acquire the state matura or will at least some of them opt for a job in their training company?

Another important factor for paving the way to a sustainable scaling-up of the apprenticeship scheme is the **cooperation of S4J with the private sector**. So far, the S4J partner schools have concluded bilateral contracts with the training companies. This is okay for a pilot initiative. But for scaling-up and institutionalising the approach it is necessary to get the organised private sector on board. With the foundation of the Albanian Alliance of Apprenticeships the project has made a first step in this direction. But more steps will have to follow, e.g. closer cooperation with the associations of the sectors the project currently focuses on.

5. *Résumé and lessons learnt*

The S4J project is highly relevant and works both effectively and efficiently. Despite the relatively short period of implementation it has already achieved impressive results, in particular with regard to new teaching and learning approaches and to private sector involvement and the promotion of apprenticeships. Due to the relatively early stage of implementation its impact in terms of system development is still limited; however, its potential to play a key role in the national VET reform debate and to help shaping and modernizing the future VET system in the country, making it both, more labour-market oriented and more inclusive, is huge.

The few weaknesses the reviewers could identify are mainly related to the overall design of the project as it is reflected in the Logframe. As a result of the then policy context and of interventions by the former government a clear strategy beyond the first phase is missing. Furthermore, the impact and outcome indicators are imprecisely formulated, which causes problems for the MRM system and the reporting.

The main **lessons learnt** so far for SDC and its implementing partners are the following:

- The innovative teaching and learning approach introduced by S4J is highly welcomed by some teachers (gradually buying-in from the mass), students, parents, and companies. There was little or no resistance to change in the partner schools. Apart from financial implications a transfer of the S4J-model to other VET schools in the country would not be a major problem.
- Apprenticeships (or company-based learning) are a feasible approach in Albania, at least in modern sectors of the economy where the companies in average are bigger and the skills needs higher. If well prepared, it is not necessary to pay the companies (like other

implementers did or still do). On the contrary, companies are not only prepared to accept apprentices free of charge but also to pay them at least modest remuneration. Moreover, some companies are willing to support the VET schools with equipment. Establishing direct bilateral contacts with local companies seems to be a key success factor.

- VET can become a (more) attractive pathway for graduates of compulsory education – if and when the schools are well equipped and offer attractive programmes with realistic employment perspectives. In order to do so, it is crucial for schools to proactively establish business relations and analyse and respond to the demand of the local labour markets.
- The DUs are an important new feature for VET schools to become more demand-driven and to provide the mix of services that the students need for successful transition from school to work.

Part II:

Reflections and Recommendations for the Remainder of the Current Phase

This second part of the report refers to the main actions and necessary changes to existing activities recommended for implementation during the remainder of the current phase. Four different groups of activities have to be distinguished:

1. Activities related to the original project planning, i.e. pending issues that still need to be done or that derive from current activities
2. Activities to mitigate shortcomings or problems, identified in the context of the MTR
3. Activities in response to changes of the context
4. Activities to pave the way for the envisaged second phase

6. *Activities related to the original project planning*

- **Consolidation of current activities:** many activities of S4J envisaged for the current phase are still under implementation and need further efforts and fine-tuning. Furthermore, documentation and analysis of experience gained so far is an on-going issue. This is particularly important for the apprenticeship scheme developed by S4J, which has rapidly grown in quantitative terms but may need a thorough analysis of how quality and the smooth collaboration between VET school staff and in-company instructors can be assured.
- **Gradual extension of S4J approach to all directions of the six partner schools:** the S4J team has realised that focussing on only some of the directions offered in the partner schools is difficult and may have a discriminatory effect on those students who are not directly supported. It is also in contradiction to the outcome indicator that considers **all** students of the schools as beneficiaries. Therefore, the project has already started to gradually extend its services to (almost) all directions in a more equal manner. This process needs to be continued.
- **Gradual introduction of S4J approach to new partner schools:** since autumn 2017 S4J gradually introduces its approach in two more VET schools in Albania (in Gjergji Canco, Tirana and Hamdi Bushati, Shkoder). This process is still under way and will keep S4J busy for the whole remainder of the phase (and probably beyond). The support provided to the two additional schools is – intentionally - less intensive compared to what S4J has done in the original pilot schools. It is therefore important that the team closely monitors and analyses which components of the model make the difference and which are maybe less important for replicability in the context of further extension of the S4J model.
- **Development and implementation of a training concept for in-company instructors (mentors):** the project has been extremely successful in acquiring host companies for apprenticeships. In order to assure the quality of the company-based training – and also to provide an incentive to the partner companies – capacity building of the in-company instructors (or mentors) is a must. The project is already about to develop and launch a respective ToT-programme with support from a competent Swiss partner. This should be a key activity of the remainder of the phase, which could be enriched with advisory services for company owners or managers provided via Swisscontact's Senior Expert Service.

- **Development and implementation of soft and life-skills modules:** according to the Skills Needs Analysis conducted by UNDP many companies complain the lack of soft skills amongst their staff. S4J therefore is about to develop and introduce in the partner schools a package of training modules with a focus on soft skills. This is an important initiative for the remainder of the phase that could be made even more relevant by broadening the concept of soft skills to life-skills, encompassing skills for learning, for employability, for personal empowerment, and for active citizenship.
- **Development and implementation of an entrepreneurship training module:** Despite the great success of S4J's apprenticeship scheme it remains a fact that for graduates of the VET schools, in particular for those from other directions than ICT and T&H, wage-employment will not be the most likely job opportunity. For many of them self-employment as a freelance craftsman is a more realistic perspective. Introducing entrepreneurship training at S4J's partner schools is therefore on the agenda of the project for the remainder of the phase but is still in its infancy. Here, exchange of experience and close cooperation with the SD4E, the RISI and the Swiss EP projects is a must.
- **Increasing the female participation rate:** while the project is very successful in reaching its general target figures of beneficiaries, it lags behind with regard to the female participation rate in particular in the VET schools. Strong efforts will be needed during the remainder of the phase to accomplish with the set target. The envisaged "meet every girl" campaign in the 9th grade of the feeder schools is a meaningful activity that is likely to bring about increased female enrolment.
- **Tackling the drop-out problem:** Drop-out remains a major problem of the VET schools, despite the innovations introduced by S4J. The team recognises the importance of the issue and has already developed a detailed strategy to reduce the drop-out rates in close cooperation with the DUs. The proposed activities outlined in the operational progress report¹⁴ are meaningful and comprehensive but will definitely request significant inputs from both, the project team and the VET school staff, for the remainder of the phase.

7. Activities to mitigate shortcomings or problems

The most important operational weaknesses and shortcomings of the implementation process of S4J – female participation, drop-out problem, lack of soft skills and entrepreneurial skills, rapid quantitative growth of apprenticeship scheme with quality control lagging behind - have already been recognised by the project team. As mentioned in the section above, appropriate mitigation strategies have been developed and (are about to be) launched. All these issues are on the agenda of the team for the remainder of the phase. There are only a few additional activities the reviewers deem necessary:

- **Revision of Logframe:** as mentioned in the review part, the S4J logframe shows some significant weaknesses. First of all, it lacks a long-term strategy that reaches beyond the current phase. This is an issue that should (and has to) be discussed and clarified in the context of the preparation of the second phase and the elaboration of the ProDoc. Since the project team has a vision of how the project should be further developed this is probably not a major problem. At a more technical level, the logframe indicators at impact and outcome levels are imprecise. Taking into consideration that the project performance is measured against these indicators the reviewers recommend to revise the indicators that refer to the beneficiaries.

¹⁴ See S4J Operational Progress Report p. 18

The figures of beneficiaries should clearly distinguish graduates, drop-outs, and students still enrolled, and they should be gender-disaggregated. Furthermore, a distinction should be made between beneficiaries who received direct support and those who benefitted only indirectly (as long as this difference still plays a role in the VET schools). The revision of the indicators has to be done in accordance with SDC and the government.

- **Adaptation of the MRM system and reporting:** a revision of the logframe and its indicators has implications for the project's MRM system that has to deliver the respective M&E data. It is the impression of the interviewers that the MRM system established by the project already delivers most of the data that are necessary to monitor the achievement of the proposed revised indicators. In particular the regular student surveys are a very good tool for this purpose. Similar studies should also be undertaken for the VET centre trainees. If the project additionally conducts regular tracer studies as envisaged, all the necessary information can be made available. Furthermore, a revision of the logframe indicators also implies an adaptation of the reporting towards the donor and the GoA. This refers to operational progress reports as well as to information presented to the project steering committee.

8. Activities in response to changes of the context

A project has to adapt the implementation process to changes of its political, economic or social context, if and when necessary. The most relevant changes for S4J at **policy level** are the assumption of office of the new government in 2017 with the transfer of the vocational training agenda to the Ministry of Finance and Economics (MoFE), and the passing of the new VET law No. 15/2017. Both, the new government and the new law, facilitate the implementation and further development of S4J. The new government is keen to push the VET reform and interested to take advantage of the innovations introduced in S4J's partner schools. And the new VET law supports apprenticeships as a modality for obtaining qualifications recognized by the AQF, favours the involvement of civil society and private sector, envisages more (financial) independence for the VET schools, and re-emphasises the merging of VET schools and VET centres into so-called multi-functional centres. Furthermore, the law foresees a significant restructuring and delegation of responsibilities to two national agencies, the National Agency for Employment and Skills (NAES) and the National Agency for Vocational Education, Training, and Qualifications (NAVETQ). However, the new VET law only provides a framework; the many by-laws (26) that regulate its enactment are still in the making or have not yet been approved.

Against this backdrop the following **activities** are recommended for the remainder of the phase:

- **Intensified dialogue with national authorities:** while the political constellation under the previous government required a low-profile approach, the new government and the restructuring of responsibilities provide a window of opportunity that S4J should take advantage of. The dialogue with MoFE and the two agencies should be intensified and lessons learnt by S4J made better known to them. This should be done in close collaboration with the sister project SD4E and in accordance with SDC.
- **Analysis of MFC-models developed by the EU-IPA project and GIZ:** according to the MoFE deputy minister in charge of VET the government intends to gradually merge the existing VET schools and VET centres into multi-functional centres. The two VET schools and the VET centre in Vlora that S4J supports are among the first to be merged. GIZ (in Kamsa) and the EU-IPA project (in Elbasan) have developed models for MFCs that will be used as blueprints for future MFCs. It is recommended that S4J studies these two examples in order to prepare for the envisaged merging.

Other important changes took place in the **donor community** and require action from S4J. SDC is about to renew the UNDP mandate for the implementation of a final phase of SD4E. And the EU commission has launched a tender for the implementation of a technical assistance project to support the implementation of the National Employment and Skills Strategy (NESS). Furthermore, the Koblenz Chamber of Crafts is about to launch a project, with German government funds, to support and strengthen the Albanian chambers with a particular focus on apprenticeship training.

The following **activities** are recommended:

- **Joining forces with SD4E:** the new (and final) phase for SD4E is about to be approved by SDC, with a far-reaching mandate to build capacities of the national policy actors in the field of VET and active labour market policies. This project with its mandate at macro and meso levels is complementary to S4J's micro level approach and could play a decisive role in converting lessons learnt by S4J into public policy. Close cooperation between the two projects is of mutual benefit and should be institutionalized. In addition to the coordination platform established by the Swiss Embassy regular bi-monthly or quarterly meetings at team-leader level, ideally chaired by SDC, are recommended.
- **Seeking alliance with new EU project:** as mentioned above, the new EU project to support the NESS implementation is currently tendered and will most probably commence in October 2018. The project will work directly with – and under control of – the GoA to help implementing public VET policy. Its terms of reference have a clear focus on capacity building and the further dissemination of the MFC approach.¹⁵ There is some overlapping with the SD4E mandate and many points of contact to what S4J does. It is therefore recommended (for both SDC-sponsored VET projects) to proactively seek alliance with the new project in order to use possible synergies and to avoid duplication of efforts and confusion at the level of the GoA and its agencies.
- **Follow-up of Koblenz Chamber of Crafts project initiative:** the envisaged project to support the Albanian chambers is still at a very early stage and no further information available. It is recommended to follow up its further development, e.g. by using SDC contacts to the German embassy, in order to assure that the S4J apprenticeship approach is adequately considered and the emergence of a competing model avoided. In this regard the DC dVET should be involved in further activities of donor harmonization in the field of apprenticeship.

9. Activities to pave the way for the envisaged second phase

Towards the end of a project phase it is important to pave the way for the next phase in order to assure smooth transition and minimise disruptions. In the case of S4J this is difficult because – as mentioned in previous sections of this report – the project does not have an official long-term strategy that reaches beyond the current phase. The following recommendations are therefore based on the **assumption that the focus of a second phase will be on scaling up and sustainability of the S4J approach, and on systemic change**, i.e. the development of a regulatory framework for VET conducive for further dissemination and long-term sustainability of the S4J innovations. This is also the essence of the reviewers' recommendations for the second phase, outlined in the following part III of the report.

To pave the way for a second phase with such a focus the following **activities** are recommended for the remainder of the current phase:

¹⁵ An excerpt of the terms of reference is attached in annex 8.

- **Assessment of experiences gained with the VET centre in Vlora:** with the gradual establishment of MFCs in the country and the merging of the two S4J-supported VET schools in Vlora with the local VET centre the short courses for unemployed people, which so far have been a kind of stepchild for S4J, will play a more prominent role in the second phase of the project. Despite the impressive number of beneficiaries the project has reached with the short courses up to now, the team seems to know little about what exactly happens in the courses, what the impact of the S4J support is and where the graduates end up. It is therefore recommended to analyse the experiences with the VET centre in Vlora as well as with short courses offered by the six pilot VET schools in order to be able to develop an evidence-based concept for short courses in the MFCs to be supported in the second phase.
- **Analysis of experience made with the transfer of the S4J model:** the proven S4J model, developed with the six pilot VET schools, is currently extended to two more schools; however, with less intensive direct support. With a view to the envisaged future up-scaling of the S4J approach to other VET schools (or multi-functional centres) in the country it is of utmost importance that the experience gained with the replication is carefully analysed and documented.
- **Analysis of the key success factors of the model:** comparing the experience gained and the impact realised in the four pilot and the two new schools as well as an analysis of the impacts of the model on different groups of beneficiaries (direct and more indirect beneficiaries) will allow identifying the key success factors of the model. Which features of the S4J approach make the difference and which are less important for successful replication? Such an analysis is an essential prerequisite for successful scaling up in a second phase.
- **Elaboration of “transfer packages”:** to facilitate the adoption of the S4J approach by other VET schools or MFCs “transfer packages”, covering the different components of the model, should be developed. These packages should include detailed descriptions of the respective components, manuals, guidelines, good practice examples, check-lists and other useful instruments according to the case. Taking into consideration the workload the project team already has, it is maybe too ambitious to compile these packages already during the remainder of the phase. But it is important to start already now with a thorough documentation of the different components and the experience made.
- **Preparation of staff to act as “ambassadors” of the model:** from the reviewers’ point of view the role of the project team will have to change in a second phase towards a more coordinating and facilitating function. The up-scaling, i.e. the transfer of the model to other schools and MFCs, will have to gradually be taken over by experienced staff of the pilot schools, i.e. directors, teachers, DU staff. It is therefore necessary that already at this stage the project prepares a core group of staff for this role. The extension of the pilots to two more schools is a great opportunity to test this approach. The team could already start identifying those teachers who would be interested in and capable of playing the role of “ambassadors” of the S4J approach. Furthermore, it would be useful to start clarifying with the relevant national authorities and the school directors the administrative implications of such an approach.
- **Involvement of organised private sector in apprenticeship:** for good reasons S4J has based its apprenticeship scheme on bilateral contacts with companies. So far, this approach has proved to be very successful. However, if the project in its second phase is expected to contribute to the development of a regulatory framework conducive for its apprenticeship approach the organised private sector can no longer be by-passed. Otherwise the project runs the risk that the regulatory framework for apprenticeships would be shaped by other actors without proper

consideration of the S4J approach. It is therefore recommended that the project team uses the remainder of the phase to explore opportunities for a (gradual) involvement of the organised private sector in the S4J apprenticeship scheme. This could be done, for instance, by establishing an advisory body with representatives of the most concerned sector associations or by opening the membership of the Albanian Alliance for Apprenticeships to private sector organisations.

Part III:

Reflections and Recommendations for a Second Phase of S4J

This final part of the report compiles reflections, ideas and recommendations for the envisaged second phase of S4J. It is not meant to be a comprehensive proposal but rather an input for further discussion within the group of actors to be tasked with the elaboration of the ProDoc. SDC, the project team and the main stakeholders have to discuss and decide in a participatory approach which of the following ideas and recommendations are meaningful and should be considered and further elaborated in the framework of the ProDoc.

As mentioned in the previous part the reviewers propose for the second phase a **focus on scaling-up** of the S4J model and on triggering **systemic change** that facilitates **sustainability** and the **mainstreaming** of the S4J innovations. These three issues – scaling-up, sustainability and systemic change – are closely interlinked. Scaling-up triggers systemic change if and when a critical mass is reached, and systemic change boosts scaling-up and facilitates sustainability. However, all this requires a sound and proven model. Therefore the further **consolidation** of the S4J model remains a key issue also in the second phase. The good practice developed in the pilot schools needs to be deepened, fine-tuned and enriched with additional features to make the model complete. In other words: the six pilot VET schools have to be maintained as innovation labs of S4J and trailblazers for scaling-up. The following section briefly outlines the major issues proposed for the consolidation process before recommendations for scaling-up, systemic change and sustainability are presented.

10. Consolidation of the S4J model

- **Analysis of phase 1 and lessons learnt:** proper consolidation of the model in a second phase requires a thorough understanding of its success factors, shortcomings and limitations. It is therefore recommended to analyse the results and impact of phase 1 in order to get a clear idea of what needs to be improved, changed or additionally done in the second phase to consolidate the model. This is a continuous activity for a learning organisation and should start already in the remainder of the current phase as proposed in part II of this report. It also implies exchange of experience with other donor-funded projects and with the GoA for mutual learning purposes.
- **Lifting all pilot schools up to the same level:** not all 6 pilot VET schools of S4J will already be at the same level of quality service delivery at the end of the first phase. It remains a major task of the second phase to gradually develop the schools that joined the programme at a later stage. This also implies the gradual extension of the S4J support and approach to all directions offered in the pilot schools.
- **Adapting the S4J approach for short courses:** the key innovations of S4J have mainly been developed and successfully applied in the VET schools and less in the VET centre in Vlora. Based on the results of the study on the S4J impact at the VET centre and its graduates - recommended in part II of this report as an activity still for the remainder of the first phase - the S4J approach has to be adapted for short courses. This is important not only for the VET centre S4J supports but also for the 6 VET schools, which in the future - as a result of the envisaged merging into MFCs - will have to offer short courses for different target groups.

- **Supporting the establishment of MFCs:** according to the MoFE the currently 35 VET schools and the 10 VET centres of the country will be merged into 15 – 20 MFCs. The two S4J-supported VET schools in Vlora and the VET centre will become one of these new institutions. Other S4J pilot schools may also be affected sooner or later. This process has to be supported by the project in order to assure a proper adaptation of the S4J approach to the new institutional context. It implies studying the different models already developed by the EU-IPA project and by GIZ - recommended already in part II of this report as an activity for the remainder of the first phase – and, moreover, close cooperation with the envisaged new EU project to support the NESS implementation and the establishment of MFCs on behalf of the GoA.¹⁶
- **Introduction of vocational orientation:** some of the S4J pilot schools already collaborate closely with the general education schools at their location, e.g. by offering “open door days” to young students and their parents. The envisaged “meet every girl” campaign that aims at increasing the enrolment particularly of girls is another important example. However, in the second phase the collaboration should be institutionalised and the S4J approach enriched with the development and introduction of vocational orientation in the feeder schools of the MFCs. Apart from the above-mentioned open-door-days in training institutions vocational orientation usually implies short internships in companies to get a taste of working life and general information regarding different occupational areas, jobs, and related career opportunities, etc. Thus, awareness can be raised amongst pupils and their parents for the VET schools as an attractive alternative to academic pathways and the enrolment figures can be increased. Furthermore, it helps pupils and their parents making informed choices regarding available training offers, which reduces frustration and drop-out and facilitates smooth transition processes for graduates of compulsory education. Since vocational orientation takes place in the last or the last two grades of compulsory education – although with involvement of staff from training providers, public employment service and representatives of the world of work – this additional feature of S4J has to be negotiated and agreed upon with the Ministry of Education and the local school authorities. There is significant experience in vocational orientation available in Switzerland for the project to take advantage of.
- **Anchoring of the model in its local context:** S4J has supported its partner schools in successfully establishing bilateral contacts with key local stakeholders like general education schools, local authorities and in particular local companies. This is most probably one of the key success factors of the project. In the second phase this approach should be further developed by establishing **local round tables** with all stakeholders involved in the **school-to-work transition process** of young people: feeder schools, VET schools/MFCs and other training providers, companies and local business organisations, public employment service, local authorities, youth organisations. These round table meetings should take place regularly, ideally chaired by the local government, to exchange information in order to get to know the needs of the different stakeholders and to improve the complementarity of their programmes and efforts with the aim to facilitate a smooth transition of all young people from school to work as well as the provision of the skilled labour force the local economy needs.

¹⁶ See annex 8

11. *Scaling-up of the S4J model*

The extension of the S4J approach to other VET schools and MFCs requires the following **key activities**:

- **Agreement with government and other donor projects:** the transfer of the S4J approach to other VET schools/MFCs requires an agreement with the GoA regulating the terms of the transfer process like staff involvement of the current S4J pilot schools, financial and human resources implications and selection criteria for the schools to be addressed. Furthermore, other donor projects, in particular the GIZ and the envisaged new EU projects, have to be consulted in order to assure a maximum of complementarity and synergies. This negotiation process, ideally chaired by the GoA, has to start immediately upon approval of the second phase. The selected schools should get involved in the negotiation and planning process as early as possible.
- **Capacity building for transfer:** in parallel to the negotiations with the GoA and the selection process capacities for the transfer have to be developed. This refers to the compilation of transfer packages and preparation of staff of the current pilot schools (teachers, directors, DU staff). These two activities should already be started in the current phase, as proposed above in part II of the report; but most likely the process will have to be continued and fine-tuned in the second phase. Unlike in the current phase the transfer should not be done directly by the project team but by staff of the pilot schools and of the national agencies NAES and NAVETQ. The project team should rather play a supporting and facilitating role. This implies capacity building for staff of the two agencies and external experts they might deploy for the transfer process. Involving the national agencies and building their capacities is also an important step to trigger systemic change and to assure sustainability.
- **Supporting the extension of the S4J approach to new MFCs:** following the above-mentioned capacity building – which will require significant resources and efforts of the project team – the transfer activities, to be implemented by the national agencies and staff of the pilot schools, will have to be accompanied and supported – logistically, financially and by providing expertise and advice if and when the need arises. This also implies thorough documentation of the transfer process and participative evaluation and sharing of lessons learnt with the two agencies and other stakeholders involved.

12. *Systemic change and sustainability*

To trigger systemic change, i.e. the development of a regulatory framework that facilitates the scaling up and the long-term legal and financial sustainability of the S4J approach, and to foster its **appropriation** by the main stakeholders, the following **key activities** are proposed:

- **Alliance with other donors and donor projects:** if different donors and their projects are engaged in the same area and policy debate sustainable systemic change requires accordance amongst the donor community. For S4J, as a project with a clear focus on the micro level, alliances with other projects more directly involved in the current VET policy debate and reform are indispensable. Only in accordance with other influential donor projects the VET reform can be shaped towards a system that takes advantage of the good practices developed by S4J and assures its sustainability. The most important partners for S4J in this regard are the sister project SD4E, which has a clear macro level and policy

mandate, and the envisaged new EU project tasked with technical assistance for the implementation of the NESS. Furthermore, ETF plays an important advisory role at government level. In particular with a view to the necessary regulation of apprenticeships in Albania alliances with GIZ and ADA are recommended. For this purpose, the involvement of the DC dVET should be considered. S4J should proactively approach all these partners, even already in the current phase, to identify common ground and to join forces with them to pave the way for a VET reform in line with the successful innovations introduced by S4J.

- **Policy dialogue with the government:** communicating the successes and advantages of the S4J approach to the government, i.e. MoFE and the two relevant agencies NAES and NAVETQ, is a key requirement for shaping the reform debate. Although S4J operates at the micro level, there are possibilities beyond the steering committee meetings to keep the GoA regularly posted on the project's activities and progress, e.g. with invitations to events, informative leaflets etc. The capacity building of staff of the two agencies to prepare them for the transfer of S4J innovations to other VET schools and MFCs is another powerful instrument for advocacy. As far as direct policy dialogue about the VET reform is concerned, this is primarily a task of SDC and of the UNDP-implemented SD4E project. In this context regular exchange between the two projects and SDC is important in order to assure that the lessons learnt by S4J are adequately fed into the policy dialogue.
- **Involvement of the (organised) private sector:** one of the key features of S4J and probably its most important success factor is the strong involvement of the private sector, i.e. of local companies, at different levels: from participation in school boards to sponsoring and – most important – direct training delivery through internships and apprenticeships. This strengthened role of the private sector in training delivery, which is the backbone of the S4J approach, needs to be adequately reflected and covered in the reformed VET system that is currently in the making. To this end, S4J has to get the private sector involved in its advocacy for a respective systemic change. The many bilateral contacts established with local companies and the launching of the Albanian Alliance of Apprenticeships are important assets but will not be sufficient. In addition, the project will have to get the organised private sector on board. In this regard collaboration with the envisaged project of the Koblenz Chamber of Crafts is recommended.
- **Cooperation of the DUs with the public employment service:** The DUs are another important feature and innovation of S4J that needs to be further developed and better linked with the public employment service. The restructuring of the NAES is currently under way. S4J should use the second phase to jointly develop with the NAES a concept for improved collaboration between the DUs and the local labour offices, which would benefit both sides. In the ideal case, the placement services of the DUs can be integrated with the public employment service under the NAES while keeping its institutional autonomy as part of the VET school or MFC.

13. Expected results

Based on the above reflections the following **results** and indicators can be formulated for the second phase:

Impact:

Public training providers in Albania supply the labour market with skilled workforce that contributes to sustainable and inclusive economic development of the country¹⁷

Key indicators: (youth) unemployment rate and income increase (gender disaggregated); employers' satisfaction; productivity gains

Outcome 1:

Multifunctional Centres (MFC) gradually take advantage of the S4J-introduced innovations and deliver labour-market oriented quality training

Key indicators: number of MFCs that adopt the S4J approach and number of beneficiaries; employment rate of graduates of short courses¹⁸

Outcome 2:

The private sector is adequately involved in VET governance and plays an important role in training delivery

Key indicators: important role of private sector clearly stipulated in the legal framework; number of apprenticeships

Output 1:

Consolidated S4J approach established in 6 pilot VET schools

Key indicators: enrolment figures, drop-out rate, employment rate and income increase of graduates (gender disaggregated); employers' satisfaction

Output 2:

Concept and capacities for transfer of S4J approach to other VET schools/MFCs are developed and successfully applied

Key indicators: number of staff from pilot schools and NAES and NAVETQ capacitated for transfer; level of appropriation of the S4J approach by the two agencies; number of VET schools/MFCs reached and capacitated

Output 3:

Concept for legal and financial framework of the S4J model discussed and agreed upon with main stakeholders

Key indicators: by-laws that support the key features of the S4J

¹⁷ The impact formulation is aligned with the impact proposed in the draft ProDoc for the final phase of the SD4E project

¹⁸ NB: by the end of the second phase the MFCs or VET schools that will adopt the S4J approach will only have very few graduates of the VET school programmes whose labour market integration could be measured

Annex 1:

Terms of references

Contract no. 81054619 (B Mandate)

Mid Term Review and Forward Looking Exercise

I. Context

The economy of Albania has maintained limited but positive growth since the recent global financial and economic crisis. The overall industrial and trade performance is characterized by a lack of competitiveness due to the constraint in specialized and skilled labour force, and a large informal economy. The moderate GDP growth has not yielded employment.

Against this background, there is strong political will and commitment to pursue the reform on vocational training and employment. Albania has made progress in the implementation of employment and Vocational Education and Training (VET) reform actions which started to produce results in improving youth employment and more young people chose VET (youth unemployment is in a decreasing trend: 33.2% in '15 to 26.4% in 2016). The Government of Albania's high commitment is underlined by an increase of public budget for VET (over 49% increase in funding – including the EU sector budget support), the approval of a new VET law and a series of promotional campaigns to improve the image and perception. The enrolment rate in VET is in an increasing trend from year to year and the debate on its quality has gained momentum.

II. Swiss support to VET sector

Responding to development and political priorities, a substantial part of the Swiss support has targeted the modernisation and the improvement of labour market orientation of the VET sector.

Currently, SDC is funding two complementary projects to strengthen VET sector in Albania. Through the Skills Development for Employment Programme (SD4E), implemented by the UNDP the VET policy framework and its financing mechanisms are improved. Whereas the Skills for Jobs (S4J) project, that is implemented by Swisscontact, works at public provider level: 2 VET schools and 1 Vocational Training Center in Vlora; 1 VET school in Lezha, 1 VET school in Berat; 1 VET school in Tirana and 1 VET school in Shkodra.

Since the start of the S4J project a positive momentum in the VET sector has been witnessed and a conducive terrain for its implementation has been present. The project has achieved substantial and tangible results, despite the fact that its main phase has started only in May 2016. The project implementation has advanced well along the three project components: VET offer, employment relations, and labour market insertion. Some of the results achieved so far by the project include:

- *Evidence-based and participatory selection of sectors, regions and providers.* Identification of sectors (hospitality and tourism, ICT, textile and construction) with potential for creating more and better jobs for young people.
- *Better perception of vocational education.* The project joined forces with SD4E to support the Government of Albania's "I Choose VET" 2016 campaign and the organisation of the National Skills Fair 2016 and 2017. This resulted in a substantial increase of the enrolment rates.
- *Quality of VET offer improved* in 4 public VET providers through the application of the new ways of inclusive learning (NWolL): i) 153 teachers capacitated on the application of NWolL; ii) 4 new career centres provided services to 701 students and 63 businesses; iii) tracing system

for VET students became operational; iv)1 twinning agreement between a Swiss (IDM Thun) & Albanian VET school (Vlora) has been concluded; v) all teachers and admin staff (115 people) trained on the newly developed e-school management platform.

- *Cooperation between private sector companies and VET providers has been established* focusing on one-to-one business relations. Regional VET networks composed of private sector employers and VET providers established with 158 students enrolled in apprenticeships and 302 in gradual skills development schemes. At 4 Swiss targeted VET schools in Vlora, Lezha and Berat, private sector has financed over CHF 0.5 mio.

III. Objectives and scope of work

Given that this project phase will come to an end in February 2019, the Embassy in Tirana mandates a team of consultants to perform a Mid Term Review with a strong Forward Looking focus. The main objectives of the mandate are to:

- Assess the project based on the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) evaluation criteria (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency,, impact, sustainability);
- Provide recommendations for the remainder of the current phase;
- Advise on the design of the second phase, as well as on the possible future activities.

Through this mandate, the Embassy of Switzerland is looking for responses to the following guiding questions¹⁹:

Review

I. Assessment of relevance

- To which extent the objectives of the S4J project are consistent with the demands and the needs of the target groups (including gender-specific requirements)?
- To which extent the objectives of the S4J project are consistent with the demands and the needs of Albania (institutions respectively society) as well as the national sector policies and strategies of Albania?
- To which extent the design of S4J project is adequate to achieve the goal and objectives (definition of the target groups; choice of approach and operational elements; articulation of components; choice of partners; consistency with SDC policy and experience?)

II. Assessment of effectiveness

- To which extent the planned objectives at outcome level have been achieved taking into account their relative importance. If possible distinguish the quality and quantity of results achieved?
- To which extent the S4J project contributes to poverty reduction, inclusion and/or reduction of vulnerabilities?
- To which extent the outcomes achieved contribute to improved governance from a system perspective?
- To which extent the good practices and initiatives in dual VET on the ground will be complemented with reform actions to embed them in the system?
- To which extent the outcomes achieved contribute to gender-specific results?

III. Assessment of efficiency

- To which extent the project has made use of possible synergies with the SD4E project and other similar donor activities in the country?

¹⁹ With a specific emphasis on the assessment of sustainability aspect. Please note that the contracting agency does not expect answers to all these questions, but they are rather meant to guide the mandate.

- To which extent the relation between resources (mainly financial and human resources) and time (e.g. delays compared to planning) required and results achieved is appropriate (cost-benefit ratio-CBR)?
- To which extent the approaches and strategies used by the S4J project are considered efficient (cost-efficiency)?

IV. Assessment of sustainability

- To which extent the positive results (outputs and outcomes) will be continued beyond the end of the external support? Considering also potential risks in the context.
- To which extent the implementing partner is capable to carry on the activities? Capacities include technical, financial capacity, human resources and importance of the activity for the organisation?
- To which extent the dVET efforts are scalable and can be embedded into the Albanian education system?

Remainder of the current phase

- What are the lessons learnt for SDC and its implementing partner?
- What are the possible implication that the new VET law has generated for the project? Please have a look at the changes and new elements it brings about, and analyze to what extent these might have an impact on the S4J project
- What are the main actions/changes to existing activities recommended for implementation during the remainder of the current phase?

Forward looking

- How can the school level experiences be better used to inform and influence policy making and the national reform actions?
- How to better scale experiences from S4J?
- How should the second phase of the project look like?
- What kind of approaches and initiatives should continue during the second phase? Are there recommendations to change / adapt certain of those approaches?
- How the sustainability of the project can be ensured? What measures should be taken to ensure the sustainability of project interventions (in existing schools / potential new schools)?

These guiding questions might serve to broadly structure the MTR exercise and the resulting report.

IV. Responsibilities

The Mid Term Review and Forward Looking mission will be conducted by a team composed by one international consultant accompanied by a local one. The overall responsibility will be with the international consultant who will be the team-leader. The international consultant will have a contract with the Embassy of Switzerland in Tirana, and in the capacity of team leader will hire the local consultant. Also an interpreter (English-Albanian-English) will be hired by Embassy of Switzerland, on need basis, to facilitate the communication during this mission. The international consultant will report to the Embassy of Switzerland in Tirana.

V. Documentation to be provided

The consultants shall receive the following documents in electronic/hard form:

- Terms of Reference.
- Swiss Cooperation Strategy with Albania 2018-2021.
- Credit proposal and Additional credit, as well as Reports related to the S4J project, Yearly Plan of Operations and concept notes and other documents produced by the project in this phase.
- Credit proposal, as well MTR Report and Reports related to the SD4E project-implemented by UNDP-Albania.
- Documents related to national policy framework.
- Compendium of the VSD (vocational skills development) providers in Albania.
- Outline of the structure of the final report for this mandate.
- Template of the assessment grid for the evaluation of the SDC projects.
- Other documents upon request.

VI. Tasks and methodology

The consultants are expected to:

- Comment on the ToRs and provide for comments the outline of the report
- Conduct a conference call with the Embassy and S4J project management team to develop a common understanding on the scope of work.
- Review the existing material related to VET and employment sector.
- Gain information on the national policy framework in Albania.
- Have a briefing session with the Embassy of Switzerland in Tirana.
- Gain information on the different initiatives/experiences ongoing in the area of skills and jobs in Albania.
- Conduct workshops with S4J team to kick off and agree on communication lines; to analyse the achievements, drawbacks and pending issues for each project component; as well as to brainstorm on the preliminary ideas for the second phase.
- Conduct individual and/or group discussions with the key partners including central government and public VET providers.
- Conduct field visits at least to two regions where the S4J project operates.
- Have a debriefing session in Tirana to present the preliminary findings, lessons learnt and recommendations.

The exercise's methodology aims at fostering a participatory approach so as to nurture a reflection from the project team. The program of the field mission will be elaborated by the consultants in collaboration with Swiss Embassy in Albania.

VII. Deliverables

The consultants will give a feedback on the ToRs, as well as will provide with a presentation of the first findings for the debriefing. A draft report will be provided two weeks following the end of the mission. Based on the feedback of Embassy of Switzerland on the draft report the consultants will deliver a final report, which is the main product of this mandate. The report will be structured along the main objectives of the exercise. The document will not exceed 20 pages (plus annexes), and will include an executive summary.

The consultants shall not disclose to third parties the information made known to him/her under this mandate without an explicit authorisation of the Swiss presence in Albania. It is not in the responsibility of the consultant to promise any kind of future activities with financial consequences for Switzerland.

VIII. Work time schedule

The field mission is planned to take place during the period 9-13 April 2018 and the mandate last until 30 June 2018, latest. The contractual assignment will encompass:

	International Consultant (Time Frame)	Local Consultant (Time Frame)
Preparation, review program, documentation, desk study, quality assurance. <i>Week 9-14</i>	5	4
Mission to Albania, including the travel time and briefing/debriefing in the Embassy of Switzerland in Tirana. <i>Week 15</i>	7	7
Analyses of the new VET law implications for S4J. <i>Week 13-15</i>	1	1
Preliminary report. <i>Week 17</i>	7	5
Reserve day <i>Week 22-26</i>	1	1
Final Report. <i>Week 26</i>	5	2
Total	26 Days	20 Days

Embassy of Switzerland

Tirana-Albania

As per 18.03.2018

Annex 2:

Mid Term Review of Skills for Jobs (S4J) project

Field Mission in Albania

Suggested Detailed Agenda

Team Leader: Wolfgang Schlegel

Local Consultant: Dritan Mezini

Timing	Activity	Venue	Participants
<i>09/04/2018</i>			
08:00-09:00	Briefing	Embassy of Switzerland	Consultants Philipp Keller-Dty HoM, Silvana Mjeda-NPO
10:00-10:45	Kick-off workshop with the S4J team	Swisscontact	Consultants Silvana Mjeda S4J team
11:00-12:30	SWOT analysis (1 st phase)	Swisscontact	Consultants S4J team
12:30-13:30	Lunch Break		Consultants
14:00-15:30	Brainstorming (2 nd phase)	Swisscontact	Consultants S4J team
16:00-17:30	Internal brainstorming and wrap-up	TBD by the Consultants	Consultants
<i>10/04/18</i>			
Starting from 08:30-	<i>Government</i> – Deputy Minister	Tirana	Consultants
	<i>Donors:</i> EU, UNDP, GiZ, ADA		
	<i>Private Business:</i> Interviews with 2 – 3 reps.		
17:30-18:00	Internal wrap-up		Consultants
<i>11/04/18</i>			
	Site visit in Vlora	Shkolla Pavaresia	Consultants

	Site visit	Shkolla Tregetare	Consultants
	Site visit	Vocational Training Center	Consultants
17:30-18:00	Internal wrap-up		Consultants
<i>12/04/18</i>			
	Interview Time	TBD	Consultants
	Interview Time	TBD	Consultants
	Preparation Time		Consultants
14:00-16:00	Preliminary findings	Swisscontact	Consultants S4J team
16:30-18:00	Internal wrap up Preparation for WS		Consultants S4J team
<i>13/04/18</i>			
08:30-	Preparation for WS		Consultants S4J team
14:30-16:30	Workshop	Embassy of Switzerland	Consultants Dajna Sorensen Philipp Keller Silvana Mjeda Eno Ngjela S4J (2-3 people)
17:00-18:00	Debriefing	Embassy of Switzerland	Consultants Philipp Keller Silvana Mjeda

Annex 3:

Data on youth unemployment in Albania

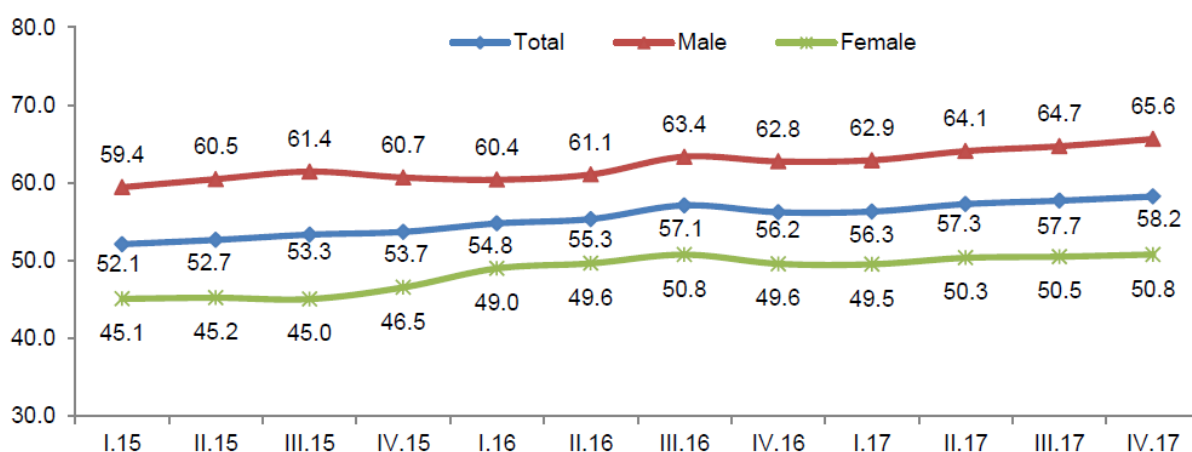
Employment & Unemployment Rate (age 15-64 years)

Tab. 2 Employment Rate, Q.1/14 - Q.4/17

Age	Sex	Q.1.2014	Q.2.2014	Q.3.2014	Q.4.2014	Q.1.2015	Q.2.2015	Q.3.2015	Q.4.2015	Q.1.2016	Q.2.2016	Q.3.2016	Q.4.2016	Q.1.2017	Q.2.2017	Q.3.2017	Q.4.2017
15 years and over	Total	41.5	44.4	45.8	45.6	45.6	45.8	46.3	46.7	47.5	48.4	49.9	49.1	49.2	50.0	50.7	51.2
	Male	48.3	52.2	52.7	52.3	52.5	53.0	54.1	53.4	53.1	54.0	56.1	55.4	55.6	56.7	57.7	58.2
	Female	34.9	37.1	39.2	39.3	39.0	38.9	38.5	39.9	41.9	42.8	43.7	42.8	42.7	43.4	43.8	44.2
15-64 years	Total	47.1	50.5	52.3	52.1	52.1	52.7	53.3	53.7	54.8	55.3	57.1	56.2	56.3	57.3	57.7	58.2
	Male	54.4	58.7	59.7	59.2	59.4	60.5	61.4	60.7	60.4	61.1	63.4	62.8	62.9	64.1	64.7	65.6
	Female	39.9	42.7	45.4	45.4	45.1	45.2	45.0	46.5	49.0	49.6	50.8	49.6	49.5	50.3	50.5	50.8
15-29 years	Total	25.8	27.5	30.5	29.2	28.9	28.6	30.4	31.1	32.1	31.6	33.5	32.5	33.0	33.6	33.5	34.9
	Male	30.2	32.8	35.4	33.7	33.6	35.1	38.0	36.3	36.5	34.8	37.9	35.9	36.9	38.4	39.2	39.7
	Female	21.1	22.1	25.5	24.5	23.9	21.6	21.9	25.2	27.0	28.0	28.4	28.6	28.4	28.1	26.9	29.7
30-64 years	Total	59.4	62.9	64.1	64.5	64.4	65.4	65.4	65.6	65.7	66.8	68.5	67.8	67.5	68.6	69.3	69.4
	Male	69.4	73.5	73.7	74.0	74.4	75.3	74.9	74.6	73.0	74.8	76.7	77.0	76.6	77.8	78.1	79.0
	Female	50.0	53.2	55.3	55.9	55.4	56.6	56.3	56.9	58.6	59.2	60.6	58.9	58.7	60.0	60.9	60.3

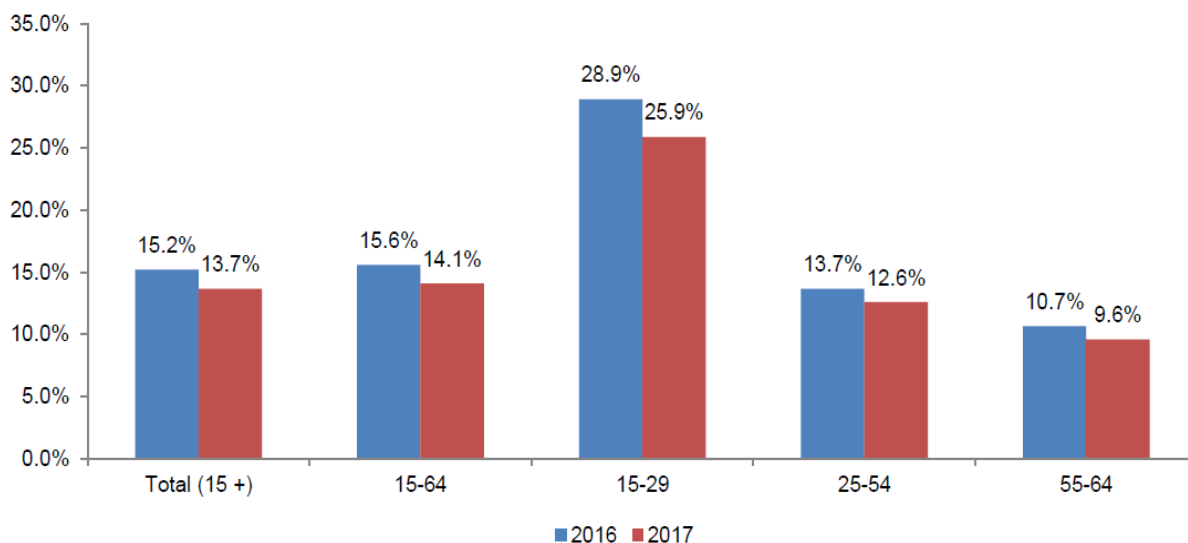
Source: <http://www.instat.gov.al/media/3839/lfs-q4-2017.pdf>

Fig. 2 Employment Rate, population aged 15 to 64, Q.1/15 - Q.4/17



Source: <http://www.instat.gov.al/media/3839/lfs-q4-2017.pdf>

Fig.1 Unemployment rate by age-groups



Source: <http://www.instat.gov.al/media/3979/press-release-labour-market-2017.pdf>

Albania Youth Unemployment Rate (2012-2018)

Youth Unemployment Rate in Albania decreased to 24.60 percent in the fourth quarter of 2017 from 26 percent in the third quarter of 2017. Youth Unemployment Rate in Albania averaged 28.98 percent from 2012 until 2017, reaching an all-time high of 34.20 percent in the second quarter of 2015 and a record low of 23.60 percent in the first quarter of 2012.



Albania Youth Unemployment Rate

This page provides - Albania Youth Unemployment Rate- actual values, historical data, forecast, chart, statistics, economic calendar and news. Albania Youth Unemployment Rate - actual data, historical chart and calendar of releases - was last updated on May of 2018.

Actual	Previous	Highest	Lowest	Dates	Unit	Frequency	
24.60	26.00	34.20	23.60	2012 - 2017	percent	Quarterly	NSA

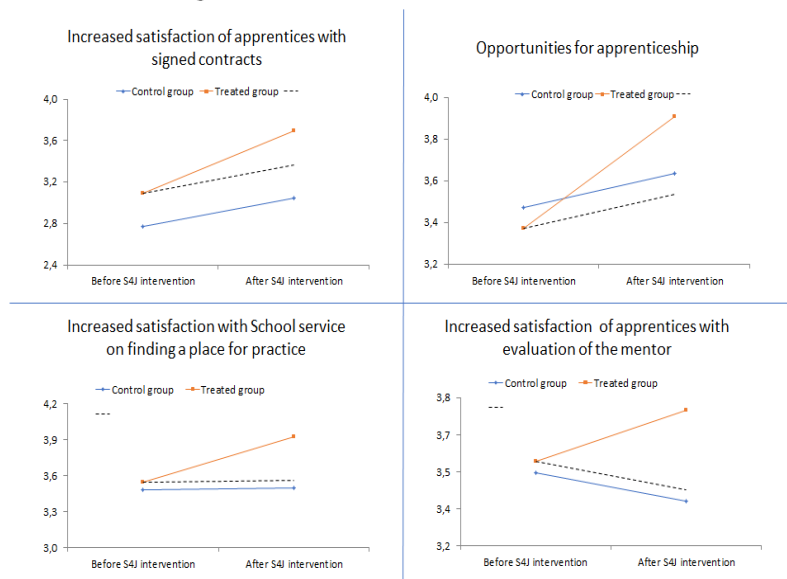
Source: <https://tradingeconomics.com/albania/youth-unemployment-rate>

Annex 4:

Project impact on direct and indirect beneficiaries

The graphics below were developed by the S4J team based upon the results of the 2017 survey amongst students of six VET schools. The so-called treated group are students of the ICT and Tourism & Hospitality directions, the control group are students of all other directions.

Early impact evaluation



Annex 5:

Female students in S4J-supported VET schools in April 2018

School	Direction	Total	Girls	% Girls
Kolin Gjoka	Economic	179	82	46%
	Business Administraction	25	12	48%
	ICT	142	29	20%
	Tourism & Hospitality	147	44	30%
	Socila Services	22	16	73%
	Total	515	183	36%
Hamdi Bushati	Confection	71	35	49%
	Tourism&Hospitality	238	31	13%
	Economic	163	33	20%
	Total	472	100	21%
Pavarsia	Auto	163	0	0%
	ETN	101	0	0%
	Hidro	90	0	0%
	Mechanic	181	0	0%
	ICT	129	32	25%
	Total	664	32	5%
Gjergji Canco	Electronic	180	0	0%
	Electrotecnic	416	0	0%
	ICT	327	24	7%
	Total	923	24	3%
Kristo Isak	Agriculture	20	8	40%
	Economic	38	20	53%
	Food technology	5	1	20%
	Social Services	13	8	62%
	Tourism&Hospitality	144	31	22%
	Total	220	68	31%
Tregtare	Economic	82	25	30%
	Toursim & Hospitality	245	31	13%
	Total	327	56	17%
TOTAL		3121	463	15%

Source: Administrative data from VET schools, provided by S4J

Annex 6:

Drop-out rates in S4J-supported VET schools April 2018

No	Institution	Students October 2017	Students April 2018	Number drop-out September 17 - April 18	% drop-out
1	Kolin Gjoka	548	515	33	6%
2	Pavarsia	724	664	60	8%
3	Tregtare	360	327	33	9%
4	Kristo Isak	238	220	18	8%
5	Gjergji Canco	960	923	37	4%
6	Hamdi Bushati	510	472	38	7%
	Total	3340	3121	219	7%

Source: Administrative data from VET schools, provided by S4J

Annex 7:

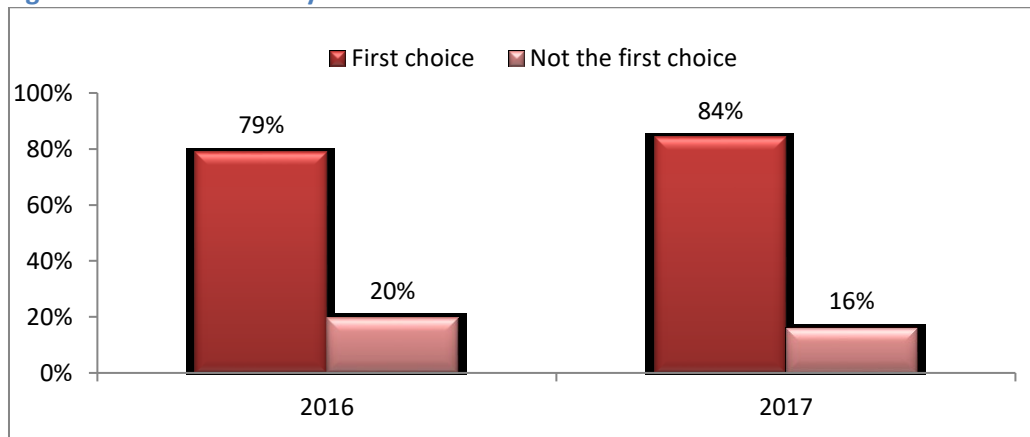
Attractiveness of S4J-supported VET schools

The text below is an excerpt from the report of the survey amongst students of six S4J-supported VET schools in 2017. (see: S4J, Evaluation Report Students, page 22f)

School environment

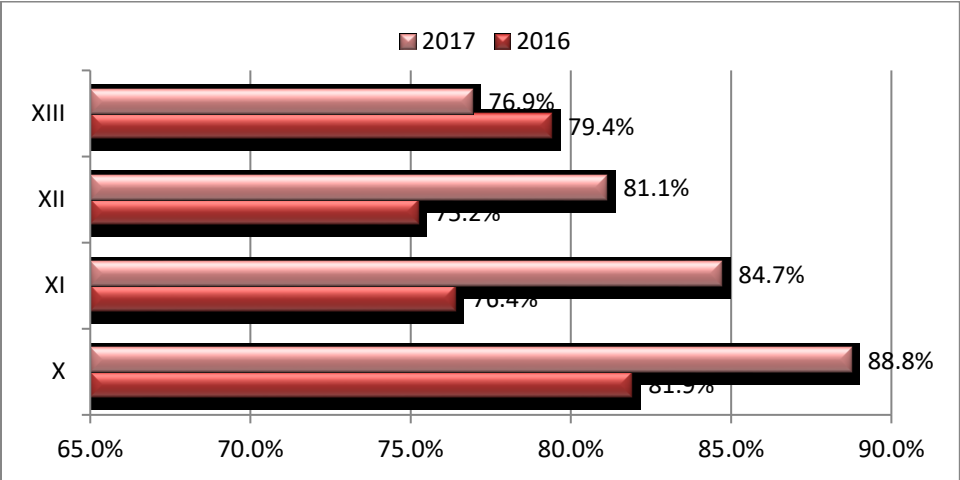
Students were asked (in both censuses) if the current school they were enrolled was also their first choice. Overall, 84% of students interviewed in December 2017 declared that the school was their first choice. Compared to the 2016 survey data, there is an increase with 5 percentage points of students whose decision to study in the vocational school was their first preference (choice).

Figure 1 Was this school your first choice?



Within students attending 10th class (enrolled in the first year of Vocational School), compared to the year 2016, in 2017 there is an increase by 6.8 percentage points of self-selection of the vocational school as the first choice. Among students attending the 13th class this gap is negatively skewed, which means that students enrolled in years prior 2016 were mostly influenced by others to choose the VET school.

Figure 2 Percentage distribution of students whose school was the first choice, by class attended



The top three most important factors that influenced the students' decision to choose their school include: 1) Family/Friends (66 % of students); 2) school offers the programs that I like (48 %); 3) the prospect of employment in the future (41 %).

Annex 8:

Excerpt from the Terms of Reference for the Technical Assistance Project to Support the NESS

(NB.: This project is currently tendered by the European Commission and is envisaged to commence in October or November 2018.)

OBJECTIVE, PURPOSE & EXPECTED RESULTS

2.1 Overall objective

The present technical assistance assignment is to contribute to the implementation of the NESS 2020, whose wider objectives include foster decent job opportunities through effective labour market policies and offer quality vocational education and training to youth and adults promoting social inclusion and territorial cohesion:

2.2 Purpose

This contract aims to build the capacities of the MoFE, its subordinate institutions and partners to coordinate and implement national reforms in the context of the National Employment and Skills Strategy 2020 (NESS). These include reinforcing both the implementation of the new legislation and coordination mechanisms on policy design, monitoring and reporting.

2.3 Results to be achieved by the Contractor

Expected result 1:

Sustainable structures and mechanisms for the monitoring of NESS 2014-2020 targets and measures, and SRC performance indicators are in place, including a visibility plan, guaranteeing the participation of social partners and civil society organizations. .

Expected result 2:

National Agency for Employment and Skills (NAES) staff at the regional and local level have acquired the necessary skills for the management of public VET institutions.

Expected result 3:

A comprehensive VET management and information system has been developed, and serves the needs of policy makers, responsible institutions and other relevant stakeholders.

Expected result 4:

The capacities of all staff in employment offices country-wide are enhanced in order to implement the New Service Model.

Expected result 5

Coaching capacities of employment service staff and NGOs are enhanced with the aim to support directly a minimum of 200 beneficiaries that belong to disadvantaged groups (e.g. young and female jobseekers, people with disabilities, Roma and Egyptians) into employment or self-employment.

Expected result 6:

Impact of ALMPs is assessed regularly, and these programmes are re-designed (if necessary) with a view to enhance their coverage, efficiency, effectiveness and impact in line with local needs, resources and capacities.

Expected result 7:

A National VET Provider Development Plan, including a roadmap and overall investment plan, is developed and serves as the basis for further investments by both the Government and donors until 2020 and beyond.

Expected result 8

Six multifunctional VET centres are operational, in addition to the existing ones supported by GIZ and the IPA 2013 VET project.

Expected result 9:

Responsible staff of Development Units within all public VET providers are trained to a) liaise with local businesses and ensure the placement of students in work based learning schemes; b) implement continuous professional development of VET teachers/instructors at the providers' level; c) promote vocational education and training in the local communities; d) ensure the implementation of the tracing system; and e) provide career guidance to students.

Expected result 10

Vocational qualifications offered by public and private VET providers comply with nationally agreed criteria and qualifications, which are part of the AQF.

Expected result 11

The Ministry, NAES and NAVETQ raised awareness on VET and employment opportunities, NESS2020 reform measures and system wide changes through a targeted communication strategy.