



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
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Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC



UNITED NATIONS
ALBANIA



FINAL REPORT

LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

01.06.2017 – 31.07.2021



OCTOBER 2021



Leave
No One
Behind



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GENERAL INFORMATION

This is the final report of the Leave No One Behind (LNB) programme providing a summary of its main achievements during the implementation period of June 1st, 2017 – July 31st, 2021.

The LNB programme, financed by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), is a four-year programme (2017-2021) implemented by UN agencies under the management of UNDP. The implementation arrangements are formalized through a Standard Administrative Agreement on May 31, 2017, covering the period of June 1, 2017 – July 31, 2021, inclusive of a two month no cost extension. Its main goal is

“ to empower the vulnerable persons in Albania to have equal access to public services and opportunities, to have a voice in public decision-making affecting their lives.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Government of Albania is committed to address social protection and inclusion, with a particular focus on the most marginalised groups with high proportions of them living close to the poverty line. As of 2015 the Government of Albania has adopted a range of significant strategies and action plans as part of social protection reform and has built the relevant legal framework with the vision of providing integrated social services to all vulnerable groups and persons in Albania and ensure their social inclusion.

While the social protection reform is being rolled out, its effective implementation is slow and challenged by lack of adequate structures, limited human resources in terms of staffing and technical capacity, low levels of coverage, weak mechanisms for inclusivity and underfunding.

LNB programme, a four-year programme (2017-2021) funded by SDC and implemented by UN agencies under the management of UNDP is a response to government's efforts to social inclusion of VGs. Its main goal *is to empower the vulnerable persons in Albania to have equal access to public services and opportunities, to have a voice in public decision-making affecting their lives.*



LNB has complemented the government's efforts to roll-out the social protection reform with a focus on strengthening the social care service provision at local level. It is a multilevel intervention targeting community, local government and national policy-making levels by adopting a holistic and reinforcing support approach with technical assistance, capacity building, advocacy, research, and grant funding.

LNB has contributed to the achievement of the following results:

- (i) **Empowerment of VGs at community level to demand responsive and inclusive social care services:** Vulnerable groups particularly R&E, PwDs, youth and women and their CSOs are empowered with information, knowledge and advocacy skills on their rights and entitlements to social services and are actively engaged at local and national level in advocacy forums and public consultation mechanisms (*Forums of PWDs, Participatory Gender Budgeting Network, Local Partnership Models on SRH and Rights, Local Social Dialogue Groups, National Advocacy Platform-Youth Voice Network*) to demand their rights and influence policy planning and decision making which resulted in improved and inclusive local policies (i.e. inclusive local social care plans, establishment of new social care services) responsive to the of the vulnerable communities. More than 83,000 R&E, PWDs, women, youth and parents engaged in forums and debates with local authorities on issues of concern such as access to social care services, employment, health and inclusive education.

- (ii) **Strengthened capacities of local governments in planning, budgeting and delivering adequate social care services including innovative services at local government level:** All municipalities developed and costed social care plans and 36 of them (60%) were supported by LNB.

25 municipalities (40%) implemented several innovative services for VGs with the potential of scaling up in other municipalities enabling access to quality social care services to over 17,000 R&E, PWDs, women, youth and children: *Swiss model of integrated social services for R&E, inclusive education for vulnerable children, community based services for children with disabilities and PWDs, family outreach and home visiting model to ensure access to health services to VGs, community based model for integrated SRH services for VGs including vulnerable youth, emergency services in the context of Covid -19 for all VGs.*

- (iii) **Further elaboration of policy and legal framework on SP and SI supported with establishment of public funding mechanisms at national level:** National institutions (MHSP, MOEF, MESY, INSTAT) advanced their cross-sectoral cooperation in consolidation and further development of the legal and regulatory policy framework on social inclusion and social care reforms in Albania, the design and use of the standardized data collection systems and data sharing protocols for monitoring and analysis of national social inclusion policies and strategies. Recognising that the achievement of social inclusion and social protection requires concerted and well targeted financial investments in the social sector over the longer-term, the LNB programme has provided valuable technical support and advice to the government linked to its development of state funding mechanisms for social inclusion. This includes support for the establishment of the Social Fund, the Social Enterprise Fund, the measures to support/ prevent out of school children and Social Housing Programmes. It is positive to note that the level of central government funding announced to be allocated via the Social Fund in year 2020 is double the budget foreseen in year 2019, the first year of the Social Fund's operation.

LNB was implemented in a complex context challenged by polarized politics, earthquake in November 2019, COVID-10 pandemic which had an overall negative impact on the overall socio-economic situation and particularly in the public finances creating difficulties for investments and budgetary increases for social protection programs, while the number and population segments of VGs increased as well as their needs. The programme adjusted and tailored the contents of its activities to respond to COVID-19 needs and was flexible in shifting its modus operandi from physical /face to face activities to the new reality of physical distancing, remote online working, monitoring, counselling of families, teachers and children relying extensively on technology and ensuring delivery of activities as planned.

LNB built synergies with projects implemented by UN agencies, other donors and CSOs to maximize resources and streamline coordination for ensuring reach-out of VGs with responsive and inclusive services. LNB programme results also contributed to supporting Albania's progress in achieving the SDGs, which are part of the UNDAF and responsive to the national SDG priorities.

Gender balance has been ensured through equal representation of women and girls in participation in project activities and accessing inclusive services along engendered local budgets with good governance and transparency principles showcased in program activities and promoted with relevant stakeholders at central and local level.

Institutional partnerships were consolidated at central and local level with relevant stakeholders and continuous consultations and coordination mechanisms are in place to ensure their commitment not only in implementing the interventions, overcoming sectorial barriers, but also ensuring their sustainability.

Partnership with CSOs representing and working with VGs were key in reaching out diverse VGs with advocacy and service delivery, mobilizing citizens and VGs' activism and ensuring accountability of government at central and local level as well. The feedback received from partners and the final-user beneficiaries was entirely consistent in its positivity as to the continued high level of relevance of the goals and approaches of the LNB programme to the needs of their organisation and to addressing the needs of Albania regarding inclusion.

While progress has been made to build the capacities of national institutions to develop the policy and regulatory framework and instruments for social protection and inclusion, their operational capacities to implement, coordinate, monitor and evaluate policies, strategies, and instruments, need further strengthening.

Additional capacity building and organizational development will be necessary for the local governments to manage and implement social protection, social care, and the social inclusion policy agenda at local level, improve standards, quality and outreach of service provision, develop new services and new social policies as well as to monitor social policy implementation and the evolution of VGs' needs

As the social protection reform moves from the roll-out phase to the scaling up and consolidation phase, another key priority over the next years at central and local level relates to enhancing of knowledge management, learning, and sharing capacity, exchange of "best practices" between and across municipalities as well as further strengthening and adequate resourcing of public funding mechanisms at national and local level. The decentralized model of social services for vulnerable groups, the development of social care plans, the establishment of the social fund and other local financing models and streams developed together with LNB partners proved adequate and are a good basis for the long-term sustainability of the results across Albania.

CHAPTER 1: Introduction

1.1 Context

Albania has made notable progress in the last three decades in establishing a democratic state, functioning market economy, while upholding a strong ambition to join EU. It received EU candidacy status in June 2014 and in March 2021 EU decided to open access negotiations with Albania acknowledging its commitment in undertaking and implementing a series of reforms that are significant steps in the EU accession process, including economic development, social protection (SP) and social inclusion (SI), public administration, territorial organization and administration, local government and decentralization, regional development, public financial management, justice system, fight against corruption and organized crime.

Albania has sustained positive economic growth rates averaging to 2.5% in the last decade and moved up from one of the poorest countries in Europe to a middle-income country. Human Development Index (HDI) ranks the country in the high human development category at 69th position out of 189 countries. Nevertheless, Albania has one of the lowest GDP/capita rates in the Western Balkans region at US\$ 5,215¹, whereas its Inequality Human Development Index (IHDI) marked a loss of human development of 10.9%² due to inequality in all three dimensions of the HDI (long and healthy life, access to knowledge and a decent standard of living).

Despite economic growth, the country has experienced a significant loss of population with 43%³ of population (1.4 million) living outside the country due to unemployment, low wages, poverty, limited social protection and the low level of provision of social services.

Poverty headcount⁴ was halved during 2002-2008 to 12.4% in 2008 to increase to 14.3 % in 2012, reaching 18 % among women⁵ and 20.1 % among children. The Survey on Income and Living Conditions conducted by INSTAT as of 2017 in compliance with EU standards shows a slight decrease of population at risk of poverty rate (i.e., living below the poverty line threshold) from 23.7% (682,000 persons) in 2017 to 23%⁶ (659,000 persons) in 2019, but above EU average of 16.8%. Population at risk of poverty or social exclusion also marked a slight decrease from 51.8% (1,490 million persons) to 46% (1,360 million persons), while almost double of EU average at 22%, where the most economically deprived groups are R&E, PWDs, rural women and children, who are subject to further marginalization, vulnerability, discrimination and social exclusion.

In the last two years Albania faced two devastating crises in quick succession negatively impacting its economic development: i) the earthquake in November 2019 which displaced over 17,000 people and economic losses estimated to 7.5 percent of GDP and ii) the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown in spring 2021 and its continuing restriction measures for over a year causing over 50,000 job losses and worsening the economic and social situation in the country.

Several assessments conducted by international organizations and UN agencies (World Bank⁷, UNDP⁸, UN Women⁹, UNICEF) on the social and economic impact of COVID-19 on Albania's population concluded that the pandemic exacerbated poverty, inequality and vulnerability experienced by families and their children,

1 <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD?locations=AL>

2 http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr_theme/country-notes/ALB.pdf

3 World Bank (2016), Migration and Remittances Factbook: at <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/23743/9781464803192.pdf>

4 Measured on consumption by LSMS (Living Standards Measurement Survey)

5 INSTAT (2015), LSMS

6 INSTAT (2021), SILC

7 World Bank (2020), Western Balkans Regular Economic Report, An Uncertain Recovery No 18 at <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/34644>

8 <https://www.al.undp.org/content/albania/en/home/library/poverty/rapid-needs-assessment.html>

9 <https://albania.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2020/12/the-impact-of-covid-19>

and it also expanded the notion of vulnerability in terms of number and range of marginalized people with more unemployed men and women, people depending heavily on the informal economy, victims of domestic violence forced to live with the perpetrators, women providing care to others, limited access to social services due to lock downs and restriction measures particularly healthcare and limited or no access to technologies.

In 2020 due to the COVID-19, poverty¹⁰ is estimated to have increased by 1 percentage point, equivalent to 28,000 new poor. The Government took a series of response measures including increased social assistance benefits, wage subsidies, credit guarantees to ease salary payments, tax deferrals and working capital for businesses, which are estimated to have prevented a further poverty increase of about 1.8 percentage points. World Bank assessed that GDP contracted at 8.4% in 2020, the recession and economic support measures pushed government debt over 81.3% percent of GDP^{11 12} and public revenues slumped to 26.7 per creating difficulties for investments and budgetary increases for social protection programs which were already limited in terms of the number of staff, technical competency and funding prior to the above crises.

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic changed the structure of the overall planned budget for 2020 significantly. Expenditure increased by ALL 30.1 billion (around EUR 240.8 million) or 5 per cent of GDP. The decisions on budget cuts and reallocations were taken rapidly and lacked prior analysis of the population groups 'needs as well as the gender perspective. The overwhelming pressure was to prioritise the immediate needs related to the public health emergency and to strengthen prevention and safety measures which led to budget cuts for public investments, including the advancement of gender equality.¹³

The Albanian Government has undertaken and is implementing a full-fledged reform to strengthen the social protection of vulnerable groups and support their social inclusion through a set of policy documents: the National Strategy on Social Protection 2015-2020 extended until 2023 with the support of the LNB programme, the Social Inclusion Policy Document 2016-2020, the National Action Plan for the Integration of Roma and Egyptians 2016-2020 extended until 2025, the National Action Plan for Persons with Disabilities 2021-2025 and the National Action Plan for Child Protection 2015-2020, the Strategy on Social Housing 2016-2025 updated in 2021, the cross-sectorial National Strategy For Gender Equality 2021-2030 approved quite recently. The Law on Social Care Services, adopted in 2016 marked a significant step towards a modern social protection system, which is being rolled out across the country.

While the policy and legal framework on SP and SI is in place and further elaborated with the vision of providing integrated social services capable to ensure the inclusion of all vulnerable groups and persons in Albania, their overall funding remains modest averaging in the last four years at 9.3% of GDP vs 28%¹⁴ in EU countries. Cash transfers constitute about 95% of social protection sector's overall budget, while the social services budget amounted to 0.40% of the whole government budget in 2018 when stripped of cash transfers¹⁵.

Limited funding leads to low coverage of public services for VGs' needs in terms of range of services and geography: 34% of municipalities lack provision of any social care services, 62% of municipalities lack services for elderly and 61% of municipalities lack services for PWDs and the services available are more concentrated in large urban areas¹⁶. The same study conducted in 2021¹⁷ revealed that 42,553 individuals benefit social care services nationwide, of which 63% are members of families in need, followed by children with disabilities with

10 <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/albania/overview#3>

11 World Bank (2020), Western Balkans Regular Economic Report, An Uncertain Recovery No 18 at <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/34644>

12 <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/457181588085856454/pdf/The-Economic-and-Social-Impact-of-COVID-19-The-Country-Notes.pdf>

13 Budget choices in a time of pandemic: Advancing gender equality or holding it back? UN Women Albania <https://albania.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2021/05/budget-choices-in-a-time-of-pandemic-advancing-gender-equality-or-holding-it-back>

14 Eurostat, Expenditure on Social Protection 2006-2016

15 Review of local budget spending on social care services (2018, 2020) LNB

<https://www.al.undp.org/content/albania/en/home/library/poverty/a-review-of-local-budget-spending-on-social-care-services.html>

<https://www.al.undp.org/content/albania/en/home/library/poverty/review-of-local-budget-spending-on-social-care-services---2020.html>

16 State Social Services (2019) , Needs assessment for Social Services in Albania (LNB)

17 State Social Services (2021) , Mapping of Social Services in Albania (LNB)

9% and Elderly with 5%. A total number of 493 social services are provided in Albania by 339 public, non-public, and mixed institutions, however most of the services are concentrated in Tirana, Durrës, Shkoder, Elbasan and Vlorë. 21% of municipalities lack provision of any social care services, 59 % of municipalities lack services for elderly, 29% of municipalities lack services for children with disabilities and 71% lack services for adults with disabilities.

In the last years, the Government of Albania has made efforts to match the policy commitments on SP and SI with increased government funding. Positive developments are the establishment of several funding mechanisms to address SP and SI as of 2019 such as the Social Fund, the Social Enterprise Fund, the School Drop-out Prevention programme, the Social Housing Programme, but their resourcing is not proportional to the evolving needs, numbers and diversified typology of the vulnerable groups which have further increased with the earthquake and COVID-19 Pandemic.

1.2 Intervention logic

The Joint UN programme “Leave No One Behind” (LNB) aims to empower the vulnerable persons in Albania to have equal access to public services and opportunities, to have a voice in public decision-making affecting their lives. LNB builds on the solid policy and legal framework for social inclusion set up in previous UN projects, supports the central and local government in the effective roll-out of the social services reform and social inclusion measures across Albania, to benefit all marginalized and vulnerable persons. It is closely aligned with national policies, needs and priorities linked to the promotion of social inclusion and the reduction of the number of persons at risk of poverty or social exclusion. The LNB programme specifically focuses on the strengthening of social care service provision, as part of the wider development of the social protection system in Albania.

Under the umbrella of LNB programme, the UN Agencies *continue* to support GoA in implementing interventions that aim at strengthening intersectoral and cross-sectoral vertical cooperation between central and local governments as well as intra-governmental cooperation in delivering, monitoring, collecting data and reporting delivery of specific social inclusion measures. This is one of the gaps within the current Social Protection sector which LNB is seeking to address in order to maintain GoA's commitment to mainstream the SDGs as expressed in the National Strategy for Development and Integration 2016-2020 (NSDI).

LNB programme is clearly designed with a focus on the principle of “Leave no one Behind” in terms of the identification of the ‘left behind’ communities and vulnerable population in Albania, marginalized and vulnerable families, women and men, and PWDs, and the R&E communities. With regard to the global policy framework for international development, the “2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, and LNB's contribution to supporting Albania's progress in achieving the SDGs, LNB identifies linkages related to its contributing to SDGs 1-5 (no poverty, zero hunger, good health and well-being, quality education, gender equality), to SDG 10 (reduced inequalities), and to SDG 11 (sustainable cities and communities). In addition, LNB Midterm review report also identified LNB's contribution to supporting SDGs 16-17 (peaceful and inclusive societies, global partnership).

LNB programme focuses on three interlinked outcomes:

- Empowered persons with disabilities, Roma and Egyptians, and vulnerable women, to request and have access to social services, as a pre-condition to improve their lives
- Enabled municipalities to effectively manage the provision of rights-based social services and promote social inclusion
- Strengthen capacities of national institutions to implement their policy framework, to fund and provide social services

These are being achieved through an array of interventions at national and local level contributing to the achievement of all three outcomes and their deriving nine outputs. Since service delivery is realized mostly at local level, the project's interventions focus largely on local level service provision. Two of the three outcomes reflect this thrust: (1) persons in need of benefiting from social protection measures are empowered by the project to demand and obtain meaningful access to the system and to contribute themselves to their social inclusion, and (2) municipal service providers have enhanced capacities to provide better services and to promote social inclusion. The third outcome reflects the project's concern with anchoring its interventions at system level: furthering development and implementation of policies relevant to social inclusion, including related funding.

LNB provides direct technical support to municipalities to fulfil obligations linked to the provision and management of social care policy and services at the local level. This benefits all municipalities in the country through provision and use of methodologies linked to the planning, mapping and monitoring of local services along with tools, guidelines and training materials to support detailed policy implementation as well as specific support provided to selected municipalities to pilot test different mechanisms at the local and/or regional level, so as to learn practical lessons prior to facilitating their wider roll-out and scaling up in the next years.

The measures target vulnerable women, youth, R&E people and people with disabilities, by working closely with municipalities and relevant line ministries, under the close partnership with MoHSP. Attention is paid to building capacity and transferring knowledge created through UN agencies' interventions to the municipalities and the national institutions involved.

The provision of tailored and customized capacity building support responding to the real needs and priorities of partners ensured that knowledge transfer and the quality of outputs is high. The main programme instruments ensure knowledge transfer, ownership and embeddedness of social service models, standards and procedures by national authorities, LGUs and service providers (CSOs).

The strengthening of organizations (for social services provision, adapting and monitoring policies, providing financial support), the introduction and improvement of coordination mechanisms between institutions at central and local level, and the development of capacities of individuals (service providers, policy makers, beneficiaries of social services, etc.), together with strengthened governance, participatory policy, monitoring capacities, and willingness to innovate and adapt the policy, are expected to have effects beyond the project's duration.

LNB has a clear strategy on identifying and sharing good practices with a potential for scaling up among LGUS and service providers such as models of service delivery, policy dialogue and advocacy forums / participatory mechanisms to support local decision-making, which could also evolve into regional networks and a national platform to promote awareness, dialogue, and advocacy linked to social inclusion / protection.

1.3 Synergies with development partners

The LNB Programme relies on UN agencies' technical expertise and know-how in the country for greater impact and outreach by focusing on the municipal level and its linkage to the national level. The explicit positioning of activities within the DoA Programme of Cooperation benefits by supporting priorities already agreed by Government and the UN and minimizes stand-alone activities requiring special procedures. The use of the UN SDG Acceleration Fund – in support of the DoA approach – further incentivizes UN cooperation and strengthens its policy and advocacy voice vis-à-vis partners. Programming remains result-oriented to ensure that engaged UN agencies have a clear value-added contribution to activities.

LNB has further consolidated its partnership with the strategic partners and development partners at national and local level. The participating agencies closely cooperate with the focal points in Ministry of Health and the Social Protection, Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth, Ministry of Finance and Economy, INSTAT to coordinate and implement interventions in target areas and ensure that the target groups are supported in

a holistic way. In particular cooperation with MHSP is strengthened on interventions targeting persons with disabilities leading to assignment of structure/focal point in line ministries to coordinate, monitor and report on measures and actions for persons with disabilities at national level.

Cooperation with municipalities has been positive ensuring engagement of staff in capacity building process, and adherence to the agreed responsibilities in the joint Memorandum of Understanding and Letter of Agreement. Tailored and coordinated assistance is provided by participating agencies and their local partners to local governments ranging from integrated approach in service delivery in 6 municipalities¹⁸ to maximize the impact of interventions to multifaceted support to 27 municipalities¹⁹ in 5 main areas of support: social policy (design/planning/monitoring); institutional development; capacity building of beneficiaries; advocacy and awareness raising; community social care services. Three of these municipalities²⁰ benefited directly from the specialized support of CSO Ndihme Per Femijet (NPF) in addressing social inclusion challenges for R&E people. This has contributed in setting up information sharing systems, networking, joint monitoring in target locations, communicating objectives and results in joint activities with local authorities and local development partners, etc. LNB has adopted a systemic approach in capacity building on social care planning ensuring geography coverage when planning the intervention.

The LNB programme has successfully contributed to capacity building and organisational development of national and local government structures and service providers including CSOs, which will be an on-going process to consolidate the achieved results and scale-up of good practices. To this end, the programme's institutional partnerships with relevant stakeholders are being further consolidated at central and local levels, and continuous consultation mechanisms are in place to support the transfer of the project results to be embedded within the partners' organisation.

LNB has coordinated and collaborated closely with all concerned UN agencies, SDC and other donors. The programme strengthened coordination with other programmes and organizations working in the disability area such as World Vision (e.g. joint activities in Dibra), and several UNDP Programmes such as STAR 2 Programme, UNDP Youth for Employment Programme (disability employment funding), and the Joint SDG - Improving Municipal Social Protection Service Delivery programme. LNB and its contribution to the development of social care services legal and administrative framework is specifically referenced in the EU's programme action acknowledging the strong role played by the UN in Albania in promoting social inclusion and social service reforms.

¹⁸ Permet, Ura Vajgurore, Diber, Korce, Tirana and Lezha

¹⁹ Berat, Bulqizë, Dibër, Durrës, Fier, Fushë-Krujë, Korçë, Kukës, Lezhë, Lushnje, Përmet, Pogradec, Prrrenjas, Sarandë, Shijak, Shkodër, Tiranë, Ura Vajgurore, and Vlora, Puke Roskovec and Kamez

²⁰ Lezhe, Fier and Kruje

CHAPTER 2: Programme implementation

Impact level implementation

Goal: Vulnerable persons and groups are empowered to have equal access to public services and opportunities to have a voice in public decision-making affecting their lives and hold them accountable.

The Government of Albania's commitment to social inclusion and protection is embodied in a set of policy documents mentioned above. Their monitoring and assessment provide evidence of some progress in the SP and SI areas, although limited and still challenged by lack of necessary implementing structures and human resources, clear lines of responsibilities in policy implementation, and underfunding²¹.

Incremental progress is noted in the following areas where LNB has made its contribution as well:

- **Improved access to inclusive public services by vulnerable groups: 192,351** vulnerable people at country level including **14,858** persons with disabilities and **15,872** Roma & Egyptians improved access to a range of public services: community based social services, specialized services for persons with disabilities, integrated social services, health and inclusive education. Quality of services has started to ameliorate as well due to capacity development of **8,352** local level professionals to provide inclusive services. Biannual satisfaction survey on service provision to VGs shows an increase by 4.5%.²²
- **Municipalities strengthened institutional and organizational capacities in planning, budgeting and delivering social care services including innovative services** responsive to the needs of the most marginalized and left behind communities: 61 municipalities developed and costed social care plans and 36 of them (60%) were supported by LNB, while their funding remains the main challenge.
- **25 municipalities (40%)²³ implemented several innovative services for VGs** with the potential of scaling up in other municipalities: *Swiss model of integrated social services for R&E, inclusive education for vulnerable children, community based services for children with disabilities and PWDs, family outreach and home visiting model to ensure access to health services to VGs, community based model for integrated SRH services for VGs including vulnerable youth, emergency services in the context of Covid -19 for all VGs.*
- **Further elaboration of policy and legal framework on SP and SI supported with establishment of relevant public funding mechanisms subject to positive evolution and diversification:** Four funding mechanisms are established at central level as of 2019 and accessible by local governments: The Social Fund, The Social Enterprise Fund, The Social Housing Programme and school drop-out prevention programme. The budgetary allocation for these funds has increased and even doubled on annual basis and funding from local sources marked a slight increase from 1.2% in 2017 to 1.7% in 2019 and 2020²⁴, although all funding sources remain inadequate and limited in addressing the needs of the VGs at local level and their social and economic reintegration. Moreover, their resourcing is affected by two crises in succession that have hit Albania in the last two years (the earthquake and COVID-19), which shifted focus on emergency needs.

²¹ EU Progress Report on Albania 2019 and 2020

²² Satisfaction Survey on Service Provision to Vulnerable Groups, UNDP, LNB 2018 and 2020

²³ Supported also by LNB and its grant scheme for innovative projects

²⁴ Review of local budget spending on social care services (2018, 2020):

<https://www.al.undp.org/content/albania/en/home/library/poverty/a-review-of-local-budget-spending-on-social-care-services.html>

<https://www.al.undp.org/content/albania/en/home/library/poverty/review-of-local-budget-spending-on-social-care-services---2020.html>

Outcome level implementation

LNB support through training, advocacy, research and technical assistance has empowered VGs communities to demand their rights and hold accountable duty-bearers of their responsibilities and capacitated local government to design, budget, implement and monitor social inclusion policies at local level and central government to further elaborate the SP and SI policy framework and funding mechanisms, along with setting up a standardized data collection protocols for their monitoring and evaluation. LNB support yielded positive results in achievement of programme outcomes and contributing to overall goal.

Concrete results are achieved at several levels:

- (i) **community level:** Vulnerable groups particularly R&E and PwDs and their CSOs are empowered with information, knowledge and advocacy skills on their rights and entitlements to social services and are actively engaged at local and national level in advocacy forums and public consultation mechanisms (Forums of PWDs, Participatory Gender Budgeting Network, Local Partnership Models on SRH and Rights, Local Social Dialogue Groups, National Advocacy Platform-Youth Voice Network) to demand their rights and influence policy planning and decision making which resulted in improved and inclusive local policies (i.e. inclusive local social care plans, establishment of new social care services) responsive to the needs of the vulnerable communities. Local Social Dialogue Groups have also played an important role into explaining the social care plans to the different CSOs and community groups. More than 83,000 R&E, PWDs, women, youth and parents engaged in forums and debates with local authorities on issues of concern such as accessibility to public facilities, access to quality social care services, employment, health, inclusive education. During COVID-19 lockdown, vulnerable groups were supported with information on preventive measures on COVID-19 as well as emergency support and online counselling;
- (II) **local government level:** Municipalities are capacitated to plan, budget, provide and monitor rights-based local social care services as foreseen in the Social Protection Strategy and the Law on Social Care Services. They have strengthened their capacities in operationalizing social inclusion policies at local level by developing and costing social care plans which respond to the needs of vulnerable men and women. Almost 60% of municipalities (36) have developed social care plans with LNB support and have already approved them. (A series of innovative community based social service models and tools have been developed and piloted in 25 municipalities improving quality and standards of services (e.g. Swiss model of integrated social services for R&E, inclusive education for vulnerable children, community based services for children with disabilities and PWDs, family outreach and home visiting model to ensure access to health services to VGs, community based model for integrated SRH services for VGs including vulnerable youth, emergency services in the context of Covid-19 for all VGs). 12 municipalities have upgraded their social care facilities and standards of services for PWDs with LNB support. 17,000 R&E, PWDs, women youth and children benefit quality social care services
- (III) **policy level:** National institutions (MoHSP, MoEF, MoESY, INSTAT) advanced their cross-sectoral cooperation in consolidation and further development of the legal and regulatory policy framework on social inclusion and social care reforms in Albania, the design and use of the standardized data collection systems and data sharing protocols for monitoring and analysis of national social inclusion policies and strategies along with establishment and operationalization of state funding mechanisms to support social inclusion and social care focused on vulnerable groups and persons namely the Social Fund, the Social Enterprise Fund, the measures to support/ prevent out of school children and Social Housing Programmes. The Social Fund was launched for the first time by MHSP in March 2019 to support LGUs develop/ extend social care services at the local level. From the two open calls for the social fund during 2019 - 2021, 21 LGUs were selected for the award of funding with a total of US\$ 3,393,483.

Outcome 1:

The vulnerable population requests and receives adequate social services from local authorities that support their social inclusion and holds them accountable

LNB contributed to the further empowerment of vulnerable people through awareness raising and information on their rights and entitlements, developed their skills in advocacy and lobbying for inclusive social services, improved their capacity to demand and access local c as well as participate in social planning, budgeting and monitoring processes and hold duty-bearers accountable to their mandate and commitments.

LNB main achievements under this outcome are as follows:

i) **Vulnerable people empowered with information and knowledge on their rights and entitlement to public services, protection against discrimination and Covid-19 safety measures:**

- Over 83,000 vulnerable people²⁵ reached out and sensitized through a series of awareness campaigns, media spots, information sessions and audio-visuals on their social and economic rights, how to demand them and information on availability and accessibility of public services and related budgets.
- 400,000 parents sensitized through media spots on children's registration in the 1st grade.
- Early Warning System (EWS) for school drop-out mainstreamed at national level through setting up the school EWS monitoring/inspection platform and 51 teachers' professional networks.
- 63,630 people informed on preventive measures and emergency services during COVID-19 lockdown.

ii) **Advocacy networks, forums and platforms established in 25 municipalities and their capacities strengthened in advocacy on social inclusion, participation in policy planning, budgeting and monitoring.** Over 1,800 members were actively involved in public consultations voicing vulnerable groups' needs and demanding their prioritization in local and national development plans and budgets. 476 issues were raised and 30% addressed in annual policy planning:

- *Forums of PwDs, in 5 municipalities²⁶*, engaged in advocacy and lobbying actions with public institutions at local level for improved accessibility to build environment, public services (transport, health, employment, education), access to assistive devices and better disabilities assessment;
- *Local Social Dialogue Groups (LSDGs) in 12 municipalities*, facilitated public dialogue between local authorities, vulnerable groups and CSOs working with them in adequately accounting vulnerability issues in the social care plans; LSDGs were the main forum to discuss the financial needs for the social care plans with the donors or organizations operating in the respective municipalities. LSDGs were also an important group that helped municipality in mobilizing and providing support to vulnerable families during COVID19 lock down.
- *Participatory Gender Budgeting Network in 12 municipalities²⁷*, facilitated participatory budgeting processes and good governance at local level and supported engagement of vulnerable people including 3000 vulnerable women to articulate their needs and priorities in budget planning to better respond to their integration in society;
- *The National Advocacy Platform "Youth Voice"*- a network of youth CSOs organizations lobbied for addressing youth issues at local level and advocated for Sexual Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) in 16 municipalities and monitored youth agenda in four municipalities²⁸;
- *Young Reporters Network* engaged in dialogue on social protection and social inclusion policies, advocated and ethically reported on social inclusion issues in the media;

²⁵ 9,232 persons with disabilities, 10,977 Roma and Egyptians, 5,330 youth, 6,314 women, 9,500 children and parents

²⁶ Diber, Ure Vajgurore, Permet, Lezhe, Pogradec

²⁷ Vlora, Bulqiza, Lezha, Prrenjas, Gramsh, Kruja, Librazhd, Berat, Saranda, Permet, Shijak, Malesi e Madhe

²⁸ Tirana, Pogradec, Durres and Maliq.

- *Local Partnership Models on SRH and Rights and Youth Policies and Strategies* monitored youth plans at local level;
- 60 youth activists in three municipalities²⁹ contributed on monitoring the implementation of local social service policies, using *peer to peer learning and field reporters' methods and lobbied for improving the social services for youth at local level*. Health mediators on SRH from R&E communities in four municipalities³⁰ monitored the implementation of social services at the local level, engaged in awareness raising campaigns on SRH and on respecting COVID-19 pandemic restriction measures and also involved in the implementation and monitoring of the Plan of Action of the Roma and Egyptian Strategy 2016-2020.

iii) CSOs working nationwide with VGs improved their management, technical and advocacy skills

- OPDs/CSOs working with PwDs (Help the Life Association, Albanian National Association of the Deaf, Albanian Disability Rights Foundation) strengthened their capacities to design, pilot and introduce innovative services for diverse needs of PwDs such as independent living support services for PwDs with intellectual disabilities, information and counseling services in sign language via WhatsApp for the deaf community, employment of persons with disabilities through social enterprises.
- 13 organizations of and for PwDs, strengthened their leadership, organizational, management, technical and advocacy skills. 12 OPDs implemented small scale projects involving 1.167 persons with disabilities in strategic development, capacity building through training and awareness raising, networking and advocacy activities, and service provision to complement advocacy activities for a greater impact.

iv) Vulnerable people receive adequate social services enabling their social inclusion

- 4,895 Roma and Egyptians in extreme marginalization status, 25% of R&E population in 3 municipalities benefitted from an inclusive package of integrated social services (*psychological and social support to children and their families*, access to quality education and support to enrollment in school, referral to access vocational training and employment, *support to economic development of the families through income generation schemes* and community development activities, public awareness on social services and health);
- 626 children and youth with disabilities and their families (at least 1800 mothers) in 23 municipalities³¹ provided with upgraded community based social care services. The support for parents remain crucial to maintain children's progress achieved by service providers' professionals, especially for mothers who are often the primary caregivers for children with disabilities.
- 56 children of the Blind Students Institute benefitted adequate education services following: a) the provision with assistive technology for materials production in braille, literature books audio-recording, curricula delivery and learning; and b) the capacity building for 10 staff members on effectively using the assistive technology and applying international standard teaching methodologies for visually impaired;
- 15,266 youngsters from under privileged strata of society including R/E are supported with the community-based model of integrated Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) services facilitated by 68 health education teams established in 12 regions and provided with information on SRH and preventive measures on COVID 19 pandemic;
- 80 women in critical situation in 5 municipalities are being provided with temporary sheltering up to 72 hours, and with psycho-social services; 90% of them with children.
- 7 families (approximately 30 people) are being provided with temporary sheltering and psycho-social services in 2 municipalities due to civil emergency. In response to earthquake of November 2019, the community centre of Kruja is transformed into a shelter/ kindergarten for 50 children aged 3 – 6 years old.

²⁹ Pogradec, Korca and Kruja

³⁰ Korça, Berat, Elbasan and Shkodra

³¹ Shijak, Kruje, Diber, Permet, Pogradec, Korce, Ura Vajgurore, Vlore, Maliq, Sarande, Bulqize, Lushnje, Roskovec, Puke, Shkoder, Kamez, Durres, Mat, Prenjas, Patos, Malesi e Madhe, Belsh, Klos

v) Development of a series of knowledge products and resources on quality and accessibility of social services by VGs setting baselines for monitoring and providing evidence for informed interventions in advocacy and capacity building of vulnerable groups and CSOs working with them.

- Two satisfaction surveys (baseline and endline) on quality and availability of social services to VGs across 15 municipalities highlighted that Roma, Egyptians and PwDs receive inadequate quality and limited availability of social services. The endline survey showed a slight increase of service satisfaction by 4.52%³²;
- An analysis on the level of knowledge of PwDs on their rights, entitlements, participation in decision-making and their capacities to claim social care services provided evidence of a low level of awareness and participation³³;
- A capacity needs assessment of 28 CSOs working in disabilities identified gaps in their leadership, organizational and management capacities, and advocacy and lobbying skills³⁴;
- Research study³⁵ on *"Fostering the social inclusion of young people with disabilities in Albania"*³⁶ focusing on gaps, quality and outreach of social services for youth with intellectual disabilities and other neurological or developmental disorders highlighted the discrimination, insufficient services, and the mistreatment of this target group;
- Online Peer Education (PE) Plan addressed youth needs³⁷ and problems on Sexual Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR).
- A Rapid Needs Assessment on the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on Roma and Egyptian Communities in Fier, Krujë, and Lezhë.³⁸

Outcome 2: *Municipalities effectively manage the provision of rights-based social services and promote social inclusion*

LNB supported the municipalities and service providers to further develop their organizational and professional capacities to plan, manage and provide rights-based inclusive social services in line with the obligations of the Law on Social Care Services through technical assistance, trainings, coaching and mentoring, promotion of best practices, study tours, exchange visits as well as development of knowledge resources and tools.

LNB main achievements under this outcome are as follows:

i) Municipalities strengthened capacities in designing, planning and budgeting social inclusion policies and services through participatory and public consultation processes:

- 36 municipalities (60%) developed and costed social care plans;
- 25 municipalities prepared budget briefs on social care services;
- 17 municipalities benefitted financial support for delivering social services from the LNB grant scheme mechanism created to model and pave the ground for the establishment of the national social fund³⁹;

32 <https://www.al.undp.org/content/albania/en/home/library/poverty/a-satisfaction-surveyon-social-services-.html>

33 https://adrf.al/images/publications/UNDP_Raport_vleresimi.pdf

34 <https://www.al.undp.org/content/albania/>

35 31 interviews with persons with intellectual disabilities (aged 16 to 37 years old), their parents, service providers, and government officials in Tirana

36 Conducted in partnership with Worcester Polytechnic Institute WPI/USA

37 Rapid polls via Instagram and Facebook used to identify main topics (Sexual and Reproductive health services, online services and counselling, information dissemination through online interactive tools, Inter generational solidarity and mental health)

38 <https://www.al.undp.org/content/>

39 the national social fund (operational since 2019) mirrors the structure and the eligibility criteria of the LNB grant scheme mechanism

- 21 municipalities mapped⁴⁰ social care services delivery in their territories;
- 14 municipalities developed youth-responsive budgeting;
- 12 municipalities conducted participatory gender budgeting and 5 municipalities applied Gender Responsive Budgeting and integrated it in Medium Term Budget Program (MTBP) 2021-2023;
- 14 municipalities developed guiding documents on outsourcing and procurement of goods and services to implement the social care plans;
- 5 municipalities developed social housing plans.
- 3 municipalities developed accessibility action plans

ii) Municipalities and public service providers strengthened capacities in managing and providing inclusive quality social care services:

- 40 out of 57 trained municipalities use MIS-SHKH platform;
- 25 municipalities manage and implement innovative social care and community-based services: Swiss model of integrated social services for R&E, inclusive education for vulnerable children, community-based services for children with disabilities and PWDs, family outreach and home visiting model to ensure access to health services to VGs, community-based model for integrated SRH services for VGs including vulnerable youth, emergency services in the context of Covid -19 for all VGs.
- 11 municipalities⁴¹ upgraded their facilities and implements standards of service provision for PWDs;
- 5,644 municipal staff and service providers in 47 municipalities enhanced their skills to plan, budget and implement the legal and policy framework on social care and social inclusion and deliver quality inclusive social services;
- 2,683 school teachers, assistant teachers, headmasters, and psychologists nationwide trained on inclusive education;
- 3,500 doctors, nurses, social workers, psychologists, community mediators and activists strengthened their capacities on SRH and on the rights of VGs to access health services;

iii) Development of a series of methodologies, standards and protocols to support, and standardize implementation of the Law on Social Care Services:

- Guidelines and training materials for NARU specialists, Social Workers and Social Administrators on Needs Assessment, Development of the Local Social Plans and Case Management,
- Guideline Package on the Functioning of Professional Networks of Assistant Teachers;
- Guideline for joint activities between assistant teachers, subject teachers and parents of children with disabilities⁴² Guidelines on the Preparation of the Municipal Housing Plans;
- Standard Operating Procedures on MIS use;
- Guidelines and Standards for the Universal Progressive Home Visiting;
- Standards of Care for Municipalities and Municipal Workers and Standard Operations Procedures Manual (SOP-M) for managers, social workers, service providers responsible for case management in provision of social care services⁴³ for children and families with considerations also to COVID 19;⁴⁴

⁴⁰ Coverage and distribution of social care services in their territories, types and quality of available services, and sustainability of services

⁴¹ Shijak, Kruje, Diber, Permet, Korce, Ura Vajgurore, Vlore, Maliq, Roskovec, Puke, Shkoder

⁴² <https://www.ascap.edu.al/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Bashkepunimi-me-prinderit-e-FAK.pdf>

⁴³ A broad definition of 'social care' is used to include health, adult social care, children's services, housing, police, criminal justice, education and social security services managed and financed at local level by municipalities or administrative units

⁴⁴ <https://childhub.org/sq/webinar-e-mbi-mbrojtjen-e-femijeve/fuqizimi-i-familjes-ne-kontekstin-e-pandemise-covid-19-webinar-shqiphttps://childhub.org/sq/webinar-e-mbi-mbrojtjen-e-femijeve/fuqizimi-i-familjes-ne-kontekstin-e-pandemise-covid-19-webinar-shqip>

- Working Protocols⁴⁵ for Municipal Staff (NARUs and Social Workers) in the situation of COVID-19 to ensure quality family assessment and counselling,
- Protocol on the Functioning of Public and Non-Public, Non-Residential Centers Providing Services for PwDs during natural disaster period and COVID-19;

vi) Development of tools and mechanisms to facilitate inter-institutional cooperation and coordination to provide inclusive social care services:

- MIS Module and MIS-SHKSH platform designed and connected to the various e-data government platforms;
- EMIS/SMS system designed and operational for identifying out of school children through cross-sectorial cooperation (MOESY, Mol, MHSP);
- Online network of development professionals and community centers for children with disabilities established and functional in 8 municipalities facilitating peer exchange of methods and techniques for the provision of online specialized social services in the context of COVID-19;
- Out of school children reintegration mechanisms (intersectoral groups) established in 4 municipalities;
- 61 professional networks of assistant teachers established across the country along with a database of assistant teachers;
- Online training platform on key areas for home visiting operational;
- Online knowledge hub for social workers to access training and information.

v) Documentation, dissemination and promotion of best practices in social care services provision for vulnerable groups across the country:

- 15 best practices in social care services provision for vulnerable population at local level identified through a national competition and showcased at national level to promote their effectiveness, reach-out and scale up;
- 12 best practices respectively one on integrated social services for R&E and 9 for community based services for PwDs, one on inclusive education and one on home visiting rolled out in 25 municipalities serving as well as resource centers for other municipalities;
- Good practices on inclusion services of PwDs⁴⁶ implemented in 10 municipalities disseminated and promoted through 11 video-documentaries⁴⁷;
- A series of in-country and abroad exchange activities⁴⁸ (study tours, intra-municipal showcase exchange visits) with a multiplier learning effect promoted among municipal staff good models of inclusive social services: two study tours in Switzerland on integrated social services model, 4 exchange visits on integrated social services implemented in three municipalities, 4 exchange visits in community-based services in 5 municipalities on advanced methods to work with children with disabilities; 24 regional exchange meetings on Early warning System to prevent dropout; and 15 joint activities of Assistant Teachers and Community Centres for students with disabilities also documented in a publication⁴⁹; 11 decision makers participated in a professional exchange between new EU member states and accession countries on social inclusion; LNB staff is being exposed to info generated from the SDC network on poverty and wellbeing.

⁴⁵ Developed by the welfare staff of municipalities of Tirana and Shkodra with national partners. Staff of six municipalities trained on their implementation.

⁴⁶ Lushnje, Pogradec, Sarande, Shijak, Diber, Permet, Ure Vajgurore, Durres, Prrenjas, Tirane

⁴⁷ The Community Centres in Lushnja, Pogradec, Sarande, Shijak, Diber, Permet, Ure Vajgurore, Durres, the Mobile Services in Prrenjas, the Deaf Students Institute and the Blind Students Institute in Tirana

⁴⁸ 49 exchange activities organized

⁴⁹ <https://www.ascap.edu.al/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Manuali.pdf>

vi) Key strategic partnerships built with public education institutions to strengthen the social protection workforce through pre-service⁵⁰ and in-service⁵¹ formal and online education:

- Faculty of Social Sciences reviewed the curriculum of bachelor degree program on social work in three public universities (Tirana, Shkodra and Elbasan) to prepare the social workers for the new system of social care services and established the online Platform on Social Protection and Social Services⁵² providing updated information and resources⁵³ on social protection and social services to professionals and students of social work;
- Partnership is established with ASPA on training municipal staff on social services and disability issues;
- The Quality Assurance Agency of the Pre-university Education and Accreditation Training Program Committee of MESY accredited training curricula⁵⁴ on education of assistant teachers for children with disabilities⁵⁵;
- The School of Social Work of the University of Lucerne provided support/training to professionals in community centers on best practices to work with children with disabilities.

vii) Development of a series of knowledge products and resources on social services, budget spending and key poverty-risk-factors:

- *"A Needs Assessment for Social Services in the 12 Regions of Albania"* and *"A Mapping of Social Care Services in Albania"* conducted respectively in **2019 and 2021**. These baseline studies analyze service distribution, beneficiaries, providers, and funding modality, show geographical disparities in service delivery and unequal coverage of vulnerable groups;⁵⁶
- *"A Review of Local Budget Spending on Social Care Services"* in **2018 and 2020**. These surveys perform a financial review of 15 target LNB Municipalities and explore the existing social service budgets and expenditures at local level.
- *"Gender Responsive Mapping of Linkages between Social Inclusion and vulnerabilities"* on 15 target municipalities. The survey measures poverty and social exclusion at the local level based on Eurostat methodology, using as the basis the EU-SILC questionnaire.

Outcome 3:

National institutions implement their policy framework for ensuring social inclusion and adequately fund social services through improved data collection system, developed capacities and empowered target groups

LNB contributed to strengthening the capacities of national institutions in developing and implementing the regulatory and policy framework on social inclusion as well as in the design and use of the standardized data collection systems for their monitoring and evaluation. National institutions through LNB support internalized and consolidated practices of inter-institutional and cross-sectoral cooperation as well as participatory consultations with a wide spectrum of stakeholders (ministries, municipalities, CSOs) in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of legal and policy framework on SI and SP.

⁵⁰ 600 students are expected to graduate from social work bachelor degree in 2022-2024

⁵¹ 330 practicing social workers have benefited from trainings

⁵² www.sociale.al

⁵³ social protection and social services policies, laws, standards, protocols, work manuals, relevant research reports as well as announcements on professional development opportunities in the field of social services

⁵⁴ <https://trajnime.arsimi.rash.al/Moduls/ModuleMesues?AgjensilID=2094>

⁵⁵ 60 heads of assistant teachers' professional networks have been trained as trainers on the training package

⁵⁶ <https://www.al.undp.org/content/albania/>

LNB main achievements under this outcome are as follows:

i) Development and consolidation of legal and regulatory framework on social inclusion through participatory processes:

- Law on Social Housing along with thirty (30) Decisions of the Council of Ministers on its implementation; and the Law on Youth;
- 19 Decisions of the Council of Ministers on the implementation of the Law on Social Care Services;
- 6 Regulatory Acts on the Law on Social Enterprises;
- 1 Decision of the Council of Ministers and 3 draft by-laws⁵⁷ on the implementation of the Law 93/2014 on inclusion of and accessibility for persons with disabilities,
- The Decision of the Council of Ministers on “Protocol on the Functioning of Public and Non-Public, Non-Residential Centers, Providing Services for Persons with Disabilities, during and after the Natural Disaster Period”;

ii) Monitoring and evaluation of social policy documents:

- Mid-term review of the National Action Plan on Persons with Disabilities 2016-2020;
- Evaluation of the National Action Plan for Children 2016-2020;
- Mid-term review of the Social Housing Strategy 2015-2025 and its National Action Plan 2015-2025;
- Monitoring of the Social Inclusion Policy Document 2016-2020;
- Monitoring and evaluation framework of National Social Protection Strategy 2015-2020;
- Evaluation of the National Youth Action Plan 2015 – 2020;
- Progress report on the implementation of the Albania-EU Policy addressing the inclusion of Roma and Egyptian national minorities in the framework of Albania’s integration into the European Union.
- Annual progress reports for the Action Plan of the Social Protection Strategy

iii) Development of new social policy documents and action plans in close consultation with relevant target groups:

- The Sector Strategy of Education 2021-2026 along with action plan and budget,
- National Action Plan for Persons with Disabilities (NAPPWD) 2021-2025;
- Action Plan of the Social Protection Strategy – 2019-2023, which was costed and accompanied by a clear M&E plan

iv) Capacity strengthening of INSTAT to design and use standardized data collection mechanisms for monitoring of social inclusion national policies and strategies:

- INSTAT conducted the Income and Living Conditions Survey (SILC)⁵⁸ aligned with EU standards and linked to indicators on social inclusion, vulnerability and poverty;
- INSTAT integrated in its system the first time the Children, Adolescents and Youth Wellbeing Indicators (2016-2018). This official publication also includes a comprehensive list of SDGs indicators.

⁵⁷ Decision of the Council of Ministers (DCM) on personal assistant services;
Draft- DCM on the rules, procedures and criteria for the provision of the services related to independent living;
Draft- DCM on the rules, procedures and criteria for the provision of the services to enable supported decision-making;
Draft - Minister’s Instructions on the training for personal assistant services;

⁵⁸ In 2017, 2018 and 2019, <http://www.instat.gov.al/media/6544/income-and-living-conditions-in-albania-2017-2018.pdf>
<http://www.instat.gov.al/en/themes/social-condition/income-and-living-conditions-in-albania/publication/2021/income-and-living-conditions-in-albania-2019/>

- INSTAT conducted SILC+ to understand the peculiarities of female poverty in Albania and to map social vulnerability of women and girls in 15 municipalities. The survey measured poverty and social exclusion at the local level using the Eurostat Survey on Income and Living Conditions (SILC) methodology and technology for data collection.
- INSTAT adopted an intersectional approach for the upcoming census including questionnaire sections related to persons with disabilities, gender-biased sex selection, and minorities including R&E communities following a series of public consultations.

v) Capacity strengthening of national institutions (MHSP, MEYS and MoEF) to develop and operationalize state funding mechanisms for SP and SI:

- The Social Fund launched by MHSP in 2019 to support LGUs to develop or extend social care services. 21 municipalities have benefited to date and its budget doubled in 2020: 200 million ALL in 2020 vs 100 million ALL in 2019 ALL.
- The Social Enterprise Fund launched by MHSP in 2019 to support social entrepreneurship. Its budget doubled for MTBP 2020-2022: 537,740,000 ALL vs 250,000,000 ALL for the MTBP 2019-2021.
- The School Drop-out Prevention Programme launched by MEYS in 2019 for the academic year 2019-2020 with a budget of 50 million ALL to support annually 1,200 children with education grants out of whom 600 children from vulnerable families. 27 out of 61 municipalities in Albania applied for this fund and 37 (80%) of 49 beneficiary children in risk of dropping out are from the LNB target municipalities.
- The Social Housing Programme launched by MoEF in 2018 marked in 2019 a slight increase of 1.3% with an allocated budget of about 720 million ALL. A report "Budgeting of SDG 11 Indicators" developed to assist the Department of Housing of Ministry of Finance and Economy in linking the mid-term budgeting process (MTB) with the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goal Indicator (SDG) 11.1.1.

CHAPTER 3: Gender Equality and Good Governance

The LNB programme is oriented by two cross-cutting themes: governance and gender equality, as an articulation of human rights principles.

3.1 Gender Equality

Gender equality has been at the core of LNB design and implementation not only by promoting gender equality and engendering social inclusion in policy making, but practically ensuring it by providing equal access to women and men, young girls and boys in LNB activities and resources (information campaigns, trainings, consultation meetings).

LNB has established a gender disaggregated data collection system for its activities which are regularly reported in its semi-annual and annual reports and PMF showing that women and girls have been equally represented and actively participated in LNB activities: 50% of beneficiaries of the Swiss model of Integrated social Services implemented in three municipalities are women, 50% of participants engaged in gender participatory budgeting consultations implemented in twelve municipalities are women, 50% of representatives of vulnerable groups involved in planning and budgeting of social care plans in 36 municipalities are women. Women also represent the largest beneficiaries of LNB capacity development activities: e.g. 65% of municipal staff trained on the new legislation on social care services; 77% of education staff on inclusive education, 90% of service providers.

LNB cooperated closely with the department of SI and GE at MHSP, specialists of Gender Equality and Domestic Violence at municipality level and (women) municipal counsellors, women groups and CSOs to mainstream gender in social services planning, budgeting, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

3.2 Good Governance

LNB design, management and implementation was guided by the principle of good governance promoting participatory decision-making, public transparency and accountability. During the design phase the programme was consulted with a wide spectrum of stakeholders: governmental institutions, municipalities, public service providers, CSOs working with vulnerable groups and donors.

LNB implementation promoted good governance at local and central level by establishing and supporting policy dialogue, public consultation and accountability mechanisms (Forums of PWDs, LSDGs, Participatory Budgeting Network, The National Advocacy Platform “Youth Voice”, *Young Reporters Network*) ensuring that the voice of the most vulnerable men and women (R&E, PWDs, youth, vulnerable women) is heard and the concepts of responsive service delivery, social inclusion, participatory decision-making, public consultation are mainstreamed in policy planning, budgeting and monitoring as well as legislation drafting and review (e.g. development of local social care plans and budgets, youth plans and youth responsive budgets, Pre-University Education Strategy, monitoring of implementation of NAPWD implementation, Law on Social Housing, Law on Youth, etc).

LNB programme management provided a model of good governance by promoting transparency, accountability and information sharing mechanisms such as the reporting procedures to the Steering Committee, the management procedures of the grant fund for innovative projects/services (*grant manual, application procedures, assessment procedures*), dissemination of LNB activities, outputs, results, knowledge products on UNDP website⁵⁹, social media as well as in print, consultation meetings with multiple stakeholders on policy issues, coordination and regular information sharing with other partners and donors to build synergies in

⁵⁹ LNB Programme webpage under UNDP Albania

the same or related areas (e.g. SDC funded projects such as VET, Strong Municipalities, Youth for Employment Programme, EVAW, Joint SDG Fund on Municipal Social Protection Service Delivery Programme).

3.3 Monitoring and Evaluation

LNB management conducted regular monitoring and evaluation of programme activities to assess progress, ensure quality of activities and inter-agency coordination and identify bottlenecks and challenges to improve programme implementation.

LNB utilized a set of key tools to support programme monitoring and steering:: i) Performance Monitoring Framework based on programme's logical framework; ii) Annual Work Plans and Semi-annual and Annual Reports, iii) programme's budget; iv) on site field visits; v) regular internal monitoring and meetings, internal quarterly reports, vi) analysis of risks and updated risk log; vi) the Annual Steering Committee review of the programme's progress and results, discussion and endorsement of the LNB Annual Report and next Annual Work Plan.

An external evaluation took place in January-February 2020 with the aim to identify the project's successes and challenges, and to contribute to the planning of the next project phase. Main findings provided evidence on the LNB progress and its main achievements along with recommendations on way forward. The external evaluation rated highly satisfactory its relevance to the country's needs, and the progress towards its achievements. Furthermore, the evaluation concluded that overall, the alignment of LNB with national/local policies and needs is a major factor contributing to the sustainability of results. The holistic approach of the LNB programme, addressing macro, meso and micro level, also contributes to sustainability. In addition, valuable technical support/ advice has been provided to government partners linked to its development of funding mechanisms for social inclusion, the results of which are integral to building national/local financing capacity to ensure the long-term sustainability of the programme results.

3.4 LNB contribution to the SDGs

LNB with its support at community, municipality and policy level and close partnership with central and local authorities as well as CSOs and donors has contributed to Albania's progress in achieving the SDGs, particularly SDGs 1-5 (no poverty, zero hunger, good health and well-being, quality education, gender equality), SDG 10 (reduced inequalities), and SDG 11 (sustainable cities and communities) and SDGs 16-17 (peaceful and inclusive societies, global partnership).

LNB is clearly designed and guided by the principle of "Leave no one Behind" in the identification and active involvement of the 'left behind' communities and vulnerable population in Albania, marginalized and vulnerable families, women and men, PWDs, and the R&E communities, which are the main target groups and beneficiaries of the programme.

CHAPTER 4: Major challenges and Mitigation strategy

LNB during its implementation faced a series of challenges, but successfully managed to mitigate and address them.

Political challenges: Political polarization on main reforms such as election reform, judicial reform as well as election campaign in first quarter of 2021 impacted longer term sustainable development policy-making. The last quarter of 2020 and the first quarter of 2021 witnessed a decrease in the focus of municipalities on the social service delivery as they engaged in more administrative work for the preparations of the national election on 25 April 2021. Despite the polarized political context at central and local level, LNB staff kept a sharp focus on delivering its planned activities at local level in close cooperation with its partners and relevant municipal staff ensuring that vulnerable groups receive adequate services.

Economic challenges: Two major sequential crises occurred half-way of LNB implementation: the devastating earthquake in November 2019 and the COVID-19 outbreak and lock down in March 2020 along with the rapid increase of the number of COVID-19 cases in second half of 2020, which had a significant negative impact on the overall socio-economic situation and particularly in the public finances creating difficulties for investments and budgetary increases for social protection programs which were already limited prior to the above crises.

The social services do not rank high the hierarchy of municipal priorities. The budgets for social services are still minimal in real terms, and in some cases, the budget earmarked for social services and implementation of Local Social Care Plans have been transferred to covering pandemic emergencies.

LNB ensured coordination among various stakeholders (municipalities, civil society, donors), which was and is instrumental to maximize resources and complement limited local budgets, reach out and support with public services the most vulnerable groups.

Institutional Capacities: The capacities and resources of public administration in charge of social protection and social services remain limited at all levels, both in terms of the number of staff, technical capacity and financial allocations. This was more striking during COVID 19 pandemic lockdown where public administration at central and particularly at local level showed weak disaster management capacities to identify vulnerable segments and respond to their needs quickly. It was noted also an unclear division of roles between national and local government which is a pre-requisite for a well-coordinated and targeted response in emergency situations creating difficulties to transfer the integration social service model to targeted municipalities, which faced increased demands from the R&E communities for a broad range of social services (health, education, social, economic). LNB maintained persistent communication and coordination with beneficiary municipalities to ensure that those most in need received adequate support.

Social issues. COVID-19 pandemic expanded the typology of vulnerable groups beyond Roma and Egyptian communities with the elderly, particularly those living alone, people with chronic disease, women victims of gender-based violence, unemployed persons, people suffering from mental health and depression, and rural youth and widened the existing gaps, inequalities. Various assessments⁶⁰ carried out during the pandemic reaffirmed that access to basic services and social services has been a challenge for the most vulnerable communities, whereas the existing social services have limited capacities and specialized services are absent in rural areas. The municipal social care services lacked any additional financing to cope with the pandemic and increase their outreach and had to re-orient their approach by coordinating with service providers from the civil society sector and international donors to respond to the demands of multiple vulnerable groups. The municipalities were mentored to adjust to the new reality and were supported with research resources and

⁶⁰ (UN Women, Terre Des Home, Save the Children, World Vision, LNB/NPF etc.)

data⁶¹ on the most severely affected groups of men, and women and were provided with relevant participatory tools like participatory budgeting and gender responsive budgeting for ensuring that needs of women and especially the most vulnerable are accounted in the response measures. During the early days of response to the earthquake that hit Albania on 26 November 2019, LNB team had a series of consultations and coordination meetings with Swiss Humanitarian Aid (SDC/HA) that implemented an 'Emergency Cash Pilot for Families Affected By Earthquake in Bubq, Albania', with the support of 'Bashkti të Forta' (Strong Municipalities, BtF) project, implemented through local partner Helvetas and the Swiss Embassy in Albania.

Implementation modalities. The programme activities were carried in a challenging context caused by the COVID-19 pandemics particularly in 2020, with restricted mobility and other preventive measures applied at country level, which resulted in limited options for field consultations and direct coaching of public administration. Nevertheless, the project was flexible in shifting its modus operandi from physical /face to face activities to the new reality of physical distancing, remote online working, monitoring, counselling of families, teachers and children relying extensively on technology and ensuring delivery of activities as planned. Moreover, the programme adjusted and tailored the contents of its activities to respond to COVID-19 needs.

61 Un Women 2021, Rapid Gender Assessment of COVID-19, Gender analysis of the Government budget-cuts and reallocations

CHAPTER 5: Lessons Learnt and Way Forward

5.1 Comprehensive legal framework on SI and SP and capacity building is not sufficient if it is not accompanied with the political willingness of the decision-makers at central and local level to commit adequate funding and capacity development strategy to enable its implementation.

LNB has contributed to further elaborating the legal and policy framework on SP and SI as well as advocated for complementing its implementation with adequate funding at central and local level and supported capacity development of relevant partners to facilitate their functions. While initial progress is made in adoption of financial mechanisms (Social Fund, SE Fund, school drop-out financial mechanism, Social Housing programmes), their replenishment is insufficient and there is lacking a political willingness to match commitments deriving from policies with funding and targeted capacity development.

Advocacy with policy makers should continue on increased funding to fully respond to citizens' needs including emergency situation needs, establish NARUs and provide with adequate staffing, support services provided by public and non-public service providers.

5.2 The institutional and organizational development capacities of the different range of partners require sustained and reinforcing support with training, coaching and mentoring to create a critical mass of capacities to enable implementation of social protection and inclusion policy.

Capacity building and organizational development needs to continue for governmental partners at central and local level and tied to clearly-defined strategic policy objectives and should come in various forms ensuring coherence and complementarity (training, mentoring, coaching and supervising). Thematic ToTs coordinated with ASPA remains an effective approach to ensure sustainable capacity building of the governmental partners and scale up across governmental structures along with promotion as knowledge and learning resource centres the partners who demonstrate high absorption capacity to implement effectively the SI and SP policies.

The government should develop a comprehensive plan for building the capacity of all line ministries and local governments to implement the actions outlined in SP and SI policy documents.

Increased support for capacity building in social care plans and budgeting as well as MIS operationalization at municipal level is imperative to collect data and populate the system for enabling delivery of responsive social care services to the most vulnerable.

5.3 Institutional policy collaboration and coordination (horizontal and vertical) across policy sectors and tiers of government creates a conducive environment for better policy implementation.

Despite efforts at central and local level to coordinate and translate implementation of key SI and SP policies/strategies, coordination and cooperation across sectors and tiers of government was not linear and holistic. MHSP needs to strengthen its leadership role at central government level, (notably in the context of the revision of the Policy Document on Monitoring Social Inclusion) to effectively coordinate the social inclusion policies of its key partners, as a holistic set of actions, and as basis to promote greater integration of policy delivery and outcomes and maximize effectiveness of interventions.

At local government level, LGUs need to strengthen the operational capacities of local partners on social inclusion and cooperate with other local and regional partners on information exchange, co-sharing of facilities/ services, as well as in the piloting and scaling up of policy and operational initiatives.

There is need to strengthen the inter-institutional and cross-sector policy consultation dialogue mechanisms between central and local tiers of government, as equal partners in delivering social inclusion.

5.4 Monitoring, assessment and evaluation of social protection policies is key to measure progress and identify gaps and should be supported with functional standardized data management systems to support evidence-based analysis and operational capacities to use these systems.

The implementation of key social protection and social inclusion policies completed their cycle by 2020, yet there were bottlenecks in their regular monitoring and (mid-term) evaluation to inform their progress due to lack of full-fledged operationalization of the social protection and inclusion policy Management Information Systems (MIS), lack of standardized data collection and intersectional approach by INSTAT in the areas of SI and SP, weak capacities of institutions at central and local level to use data have hampered adequate monitoring and evidence-based analysis.

It is necessary to strengthen the role of MHSP and ministries to undertake regular progress monitoring, periodic reporting and assessment of their policies and ensure the full functionality and operation of the three pillars of its Social Protection MIS, as an integrated system to administer social support.

Support to INSTAT and line ministries should continue to develop national capacities for disaggregated data collection and processing to enable monitoring and assessment of SI and SP policies along with adoption of an intersectional approach in data collection for measuring impact of policies on different population groups.

At local government level, it is necessary to strengthen LGUs capacities to administer the Social Protection MIS, report on social inclusion policy action plans of the central government, and develop skills to administer and utilize data in an efficient manner for their subsequent policy-making.

5.5 Partnership with CSOs is key in reaching out diverse VGs with advocacy and service delivery, mobilizing citizens' activism and ensuring accountability of government at central and local level.

LNB partnered with CSOs representing and working with diverse VGs (PWDs, R&E, rural youth and women) to reach them out with information, awareness raising on their rights and entitlements on social inclusion services as well as strengthening their organizational and advocacy capacities, enhancing their service delivery capacities and establishing public consultation mechanisms where their constituents were empowered to demand their rights and hold local government accountable.

While the visibility and activism of CSOs in their targeted communities is increased, yet more support is needed to overcome fragmentary approach in terms of target group needs and advocacy, strengthen CSOs institutional, organizational and advocacy capacities, establish and expand their networking within and beyond their targeted communities for a more active and streamlined coordination, advocacy and community participation in planning, budgeting and monitoring social inclusion policies and holding government accountable.

Capacity strengthening of CSOs in service delivery in compliance with established standards is of paramount importance to access municipal funding and respond to the needs of their constituents.

5.6 Knowledge management, learning and sharing is instrumental to building sustainability and scaling up of the results.

LNB contribution to knowledge management, learning and sharing is multi-dimensional. It ranges from setting up participatory and advocacy mechanisms of policy dialogue, pilot-testing of innovative and integrated social care models at local level to identification of lessons learnt, documentation and showcasing and dissemination of best models and practices of social care models in and out of country facilitating knowledge sharing and learning among partners as well as encouraging the scaling up of the results across the country to magnify the benefits for vulnerable groups and ensure sustainability of results.

By 2020, LNB identified 25 best practices in social care models delivery and financing mechanisms across the country with a high potential to be scaled up and easily “absorbed” by interested LGUs at a faster pace in 2021 and beyond. In addition, in and out of country study tours, peer exchanges and research on best practices by academia proved to be effective tools in facilitating and enhancing learning and experience sharing across local, regional and national partners (government/ administration, social service providers, civil society partners), which should be supported in the future.

Support should be provided to scaling up of actions to develop policy dialogue and advocacy forums/ participatory mechanisms to support local decision-making, which could also evolve into regional networks and a national platform to promote awareness, policy dialogue and advocacy linked to social inclusion/ protection. There is a good potential to share and support the transfer of good practices and models of services delivery between LGUs and/or service providers, notably in similar socio-economic or geographical environment.

5.7 Flexibility in implementation strategy, consultative and approach and close cooperation with partners is essential in mitigating impact of external challenges.

LNB programme demonstrated organizational and operational flexibility to quickly adapt to changing working context due to external events (polarized politics, local elections in June 2019 and national elections in April 2021, the aftermath of the earthquake in November 2019 and global health pandemic during 2020) and resultant policy impacts along with good understanding of the evolving emergency needs of the beneficiaries.

LNB managed to mitigate the overall impact of external events by coordinating its work closely with its partners at local level and ensuring staff presence on site.

LNB succeeded to adjust its modus operandi in the context of COVID-19 by being flexible in rapidly shifting from physical/ face to face activities to a reality of physical distancing and remote online working, but maintaining a sharp focus on supporting the most vulnerable in close coordination with local government, partners and national government and supported development of new protocols on service delivery to respond to emergency needs of COVID 19 pandemic.

This approach supported positive relationships across diverse stakeholders and should continue to ensure delivery of services to the most vulnerable (PWDs, R&E, children, youth, women) through development of technological solutions to enhance equity and social inclusion along with capacity development of service providers to deliver these services on-line.

5.8 Decentralized models of social services are relevant to the needs of the intended beneficiaries

The LNB support to design decentralized models of social services, develop social care plans, and operationalize the social fund, is highly relevant to the needs of the LGUs to be able to provide quality inclusive social services as envisaged in the policy and legal framework, for the intended beneficiaries.

5.9. Building synergies between the LNB programme and the EU IPA funding action for Social Inclusion is important to increase effectiveness of actions and avoid duplications.

In relation to the EU IPA funding to assist Albania in the areas of “Employment, Social Protection and Social Inclusion”, the EU conducted consultations during the design phase with the established donors in Albania in the area of social inclusion. The LNB programme is specifically referenced in the EU’s programme action, along with the strong role played by the UN in promoting social inclusion and social service reforms acknowledged. Hence, there are clear potential synergies that will be developed between the LNB programme phase 2 and the upcoming EU action.

CHAPTER 6: Communication and Visibility

Please see **Annex 1** attached, as well as the link below to a Brochure, which provides a quick glimpses of publications and audiovisuals produced during the first phase of LNB implementation (2017-2021):

<https://www.al.undp.org/content/albania/en/home/library/poverty/brochure-leave-no-one-behind.html>

CHAPTER 7: Overview of financial Delivery

Overall financial delivery (disbursed and committed) till July 31st 2021 is 100%.

	Funds allocated in USD	Disbursed	Total Disbursed and Committed USD	Total Disbursed and Committed USD in %
UNDP	5,648,113	5,648,113	5,648,113	100
UNICEF	1,567,410	1,567,410	1,567,410	100
UNW	622,354	622,354	622,354	100
UNFPA	394,322	394,322	394,322	100
Totals	8,232,199	8,232,199	8,232,199	100

Abbreviations:

ASPA	Albanian School of Public Administration
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DCM	Decisions of the Council of Minister
DoA	Designation of Authorities
EMIS	Education Management Info System
EU	European Union
EVAW	End Violence Against Women
EWS	Early Warning System
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GE	Gender Equality
GoA	Government of Albania
HDI	Human Development Index
INSTAT	Albanian Institute of Statistics
LGU	Local Government Units
LNB	Leave No One Behind
LSDG	Local Social Dialogue Groups
MIS - SHKSH	Management of Information Systems – Sherbime te Kujdesit Shoqeror
MoESY	Ministry of Education Science and Youth
MoFE	Ministry of Finance and Economy
MoHSP	Ministry of Health and Social Protection
Mol	Ministry of Internal Affairs
MTBP	Mid Term Budget Plan
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NAPPWD	National Action Plane on Persons with Disabilities
NARU	Needs Assessment and Referral Unit
NPF	Organization Help for Children
NSDI	National Strategy for Development and Integration
OPD	Organization of Persons with Disabilities
PE	Peer Education
PMF	Performance Monitoring Framework
PwD	Persons with Disabilities
R&E	Roma and Egyptians
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals

SE Fund	Social Enterprise Fund
SRHR	Sexual Reproductive Health Response
SI	Social Inclusion
SILC	Statistics on Income and Living Condition
SOP-M	Standards of Operation Procedures Manual
SP	Social Protection
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
STAR 2	Supporting Territory and Administrative Reform
ToT	Training of Trainer
UN	United Nations
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USD	United States Dollar
VGs	Vulnerable Groups
VET	Vocational Education Training
WB	World Bank

Annexes

Annex 1: Communication and Visibility

Throughout phase one of LNB programme implementation, achieved results, new models of social services, and different news and messages were disseminated extensively through traditional and digital media, aiming to showcase innovative and best practices, raise awareness on rights and available services, as well as voice beneficiaries' needs. Various studies, fact sheets, briefings, manuals, videos and brochures were produced on important findings and processes, which were published in LNB-related websites and spread further through postings in various media platforms.

Social media offered a good alternative to go straight to the targeted audience in real time, especially in the unprecedented circumstances created by COVID-19 pandemic. Social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram and YouTube were used to reach out direct beneficiaries and the wider public, whereas platforms like Twitter and LinkedIn were mostly used to reach out stakeholders and international partners. The main headlines featured high-level forums; various awareness-raising activities on rights and services of vulnerable communities; several series of trainings for municipality staff on social care plans; modelling of integrated social services and coaching for employment; quality and inclusive education; disability issues; and project proposal writing and budgeting of social care services

Journalists' trips were another form to highlight programme results and raise awareness on pressing issues. So, a training of journalists from different media outlets in the country on ethics of reporting for people with disabilities coupled with a visit to the Multifunctional Center of Pogradec. In return, a series of media coverage highlighting progress and challenges faced at local level in provision of social care services was echoed widely in the local and mainstream media channels. A 30-member network of journalists comprising both graduating and new journalists, was trained on social protection, poverty, social policies issues and international standards, as a mean to engage them into open and constructive dialogues with state and other public institutions on social protection and social inclusion issues. Several short stories were published by them on a dedicated column established (<http://pozitivi.org/category/te-rinjte>).

Video stories and documentaries were another important communication tool to portray success cases, best practices, and spread the news. As such, processes such as the selection of best practices in the provision of social care services which culminated with a national competition, was simultaneously held in person and livestreamed on Facebook to allow for a wider audience. All best practices were as well summarized in a catalog, while the entire process was portrayed in a short video documentary to ensure further spread. The support provided to the winning municipalities of LNB's small grants for fostering innovative social care services was, as well portrayed in a series of video documentaries to ensure better dissemination to the relevant stakeholders and beneficiaries. Voices of women who participated in the local budget planning, highlighting key results of the Gender Responsive Budgeting process in all targeted municipalities, were also portrayed in series of short videos (10). Piloting of the integrated social services in the selected municipalities was also documented in short video stories, distributed and shared on all above -mentioned social media platforms. The online Youth-PEER education/trainings on COVID19 sessions, targeting young people especially, high school students who returned to schools, as the most in danger to be exposed to new coronavirus and transmission of the virus among the older population and most vulnerable groups, were livestreamed/posted in Facebook for wider participation and awareness-raising.

Links of all important monitoring and assessment reports and studies, guidelines and manuals, fact sheets, briefings, and video stories produced during the first phase of LNB implementation, were summarized in a brochure for easy of reference, and published in the LNB website:
<https://www.al.undp.org/content/albania/en/home/library/poverty/brochure-leave-no-one-behind.html>.

Annex 2: Performance Monitoring Framework: “Leave No One Behind” July 2021

Table 1: Impact (Overall Goal)

Strategy of Intervention	Indicators	Baseline	Targets	Value of indicator as of January 2021	Sources, Means of Verification, Frequency and Responsibility	Comments	Assumptions and risks
Vulnerable persons and groups are empowered to have equal access to public services and opportunities, to have a voice in public decision-making affecting their lives and hold them accountable.	1. Evolution of human development and diminishment of social exclusion as reflected in authorities' reporting on the Social Inclusion Policy Document 2015-2020 and SILC indicators.	Low level of social inclusion in the main areas defined in SIPD, SILC and HDI indicators: At Risk of Poverty or Social Exclusion Indicators is 51.8 % in 2017. 2017: HDI: 0,785 IHDl (Inequality Human Development Indicator): 0,706	Improved social inclusion in main areas defined in SIPD, SILC and HDI indicators	Slight progress in implementation of SIPD due to lack of necessary structures and clear line of responsibilities in policy implementation At Risk of Poverty or Social Exclusion (AROE) Indicators is 49 % in 2018 (SILC); 46.2 % in 2019. Progress is made in providing inclusive services to R&E with an improved overall rating 3.85 in 2019 vs 3 in 2018. Marked progress is made in reaching strategic goals related to inclusive education with 13,583 children enrolled in pre-university and compulsory education and social protection which has reached out over 2,000 families with inclusive services in the last two years.	Verification Sources • Social Inclusion Policy Document 2015-2020 and SILC indicators. • EU Progress Report 2018 • SILC Indicators 2017 and 2018 (released in December 2019); • NAPIRE 2017, 2018 • UNDP Assessment Report on NAPIRE 2019. • NHDRs in 2017 and 2019 • Reports from the Albanian ministries, LGUs and INSTAT • Reports of multilateral agencies and other bilateral donors • Studies and reports from Academia, specialized CSOs • Project reports and records Frequency Annually Responsibility Project Team M&E Consultant	At Risk of Poverty or Social Exclusion Indicator refers to the individuals who are at risk of poverty or severe materially deprived or living in a household with very low work intensity. NHD Report 2019 highlights “A shrinking middle class, high levels of informal and vulnerable employment, gaps in social protection, emigration of skilled and young workers, and perceptions of inequality before the law make inequality issues particularly pressing in the region”	

Strategy of Intervention	Indicators	Baseline	Targets	Value of indicator as of January 2021	Sources, Means of Verification, Frequency and Responsibility	Comments	Assumptions and risks
Vulnerable persons and groups are empowered to have equal access to public services and opportunities, to have a voice in public decision-making affecting their lives and hold them accountable.	2. The framework conditions for social care service provision, including funding evolve positively as compared to the situation of 2017.	Incomplete Legal framework for Social Funding (VKM pending) Per cent of LGUs funding/ budget for social care services: 1.1% in 2016 and 1.2 in 2017	VKM for Social Funding is approved and implemented in LGUs Annual Increase by 2% of SF	VKM for Social Funding methodology approved dt. 20.03.2019 Social Fund 2019, 100,000,000 MHSP LNB Programme 2019, 15,505,264 ALL MHSP SF 2020 - 200 million ALL ¹ in process LNB SF 2020, 10,000,000 ALL Per cent of LGUs funding/ budget for social care services 1.5 % in 2018 and 1.7 % in 2019 and 2020	DCM of Social Fund LNB SF 2020, 10,000,000 ALL MHSP SF 2020 in process Review of local budget spending on social care services 2020		

¹ This is indicative amount reported by MHSP officials in the working group discussions.

Table 2: Outcomes

Strategy of Intervention	Indicators	Baseline	Targets	Actual level of progress	Sources, Means of Verification, Frequency and Responsibility	Comments	Risks (External Factors)
Outcome 1: The vulnerable population requests and receives adequate social services from local authorities that support their social inclusion.	1.1 The number of vulnerable population that receive adequate social services by targeted municipalities and relevant organizations (CSOs/ service providers).	1.1 Number of documented beneficiaries that receive SS in 2017. Baseline 2018: 29,978 in 18 targeted municipalities	1.1 Biannual increase of documented beneficiaries by 7% in at least 10/15 targeted municipalities.	MIS not operational yet In 2020: 91,443 beneficiaries, in 18 targeted municipalities, out of which 63,630 (69,6 %) have received emergency services to cope with consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and the earthquake of November 2019 Excluding beneficiaries of emergency services that addressed consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and the earthquake of November 2019 the number of beneficiaries in 18 targeted municipalities is: 27,813 in 2020 decreased by 7.22% - see comment	Verification Sources - Management Information System (MIS) of State Social Services. - Trust in Government Annual Survey 2015. - Biannual satisfaction surveys organized in project municipalities. (2018 and 2020) - Project records/ reports - Observations and reports of target groups and their organisations. Frequency Annually Responsibility Project Team M&E Consultant	MIS not operational yet Baseline established by Satisfaction Survey (SS) 2018 Level of progress 2020 established by SS 2020. "The decline has mainly resulted from the interruption of programs that could not be provided because of the COVID-19 pandemic and earthquake in November 2019." SS 2020	Assumption: The measuring of the achievements requires that data on the satisfaction with social services is available annually. Risk: There is a risk that only very selected representatives of the target groups actively participate in project activities. In order to prevent this, the project will involve communities whenever possible.

Strategy of Intervention	Indicators	Baseline	Targets	Actual level of progress	Sources, Means of Verification, Frequency and Responsibility	Comments	Risks (External Factors)
	1.2 Satisfaction with social services received by R&E and persons with disabilities in the target municipalities of intervention (sex-disaggregated data).	1.2 Level of satisfaction by VGs (M & F) with SS in targeted municipalities: 1.48 in 2018 (Likert scale, ranging from 1 (very dissatisfied) to 5 (very satisfied)).	1.2 Biannual improvement by 2% of satisfaction level of VGs (M & F) with SS in at least 10/15 targeted municipalities.	1.2 1.55 in 2020 an increase of 4.52 percent from the year 2018, in 18 targeted municipalities			
	1.3 Improved and expanded provision of social services by municipalities throughout Albania.	1.3. Number of beneficiaries receiving SSs in Albania in 2017.	1.3. Annual increase of number of beneficiaries receiving social services recorded in the national database by 5 %.	1.3 MIS not yet operational. LNB results: 37,000 received quality social care services			
	1.4 Increased coverage of needs of Roma and Egyptians by non-financial assistance (housing, health, education, employment etc.) in targeted municipalities.	1.4. Existing number and types ² of SS provided at local level in targeted municipalities in Albania: 7 types of social services: Pre-social services, services in community centers, services in residential centers and shelters, services in emergency situations,	1.4. Increased number and types of SSs provided at local level in targeted municipalities in Albania.	1.4. In 2020, 7 types of social services; Increased number of SSs provided at local level in targeted municipalities in Albania: 31 number of SS with: integrated social services for R&E; new models of community-based services for children with disabilities;			

2 Law 121/2016 type of social service: Pre-social services, services in community centers, services in residential centers and shelters, services in emergency situations, alternative care services to children without parental care, specialized services, and telephone or online services

Strategy of Intervention	Indicators	Baseline	Targets	Actual level of progress	Sources, Means of Verification, Frequency and Responsibility	Comments	Risks (External Factors)
		alternative care services to children without parental care, specialized services, and telephone or online services. 25 number of SS: Information, Counseling, Referral, Food, Clothing, Health services Counseling, Speech therapy, Physical therapy, Vocational training, Financial support, Asset support for starting a business, Legal aid, Education, Referral to other centers, Transportation to other centers, Entertainment activities, Awareness-raising activities, Connections with community activists, Development therapy, ABA art therapy, ABA therapy, work therapy, emergency services, YourStory.		emergency services (food and sanitary packages); online speech therapy; specialized home services for children with disabilities; online social services for R&E.			

Strategy of Intervention	Indicators	Baseline	Targets	Actual level of progress	Sources, Means of Verification, Frequency and Responsibility	Comments	Risks (External Factors)
	1.5 Number of issues/concerns raised by target groups addressed in annual planning and budgeting of social services in target municipalities.	1.5 Number of issues/concerns/recommendations raised by VGs in annual planning/budgeting. at targeted municipalities: 35 issues raised/supported (2 pre-school programmes for Roma, social care planning, 2 youth&SRH and 31 issues raised by women in consultation processes, Tirana municipality)	1.5 30% of issues/concerns addressed in annual planning and budgeting at targeted municipalities.	1.5 476 issues raised and 30% addressed in annual planning. (76 issues raised in 9 main categories ³ during planning/budgeting for GRB by VGs, in 9 new municipalities 30% fully addressed and 43% <i>partially addressed</i> . 332 issues raised in 7 areas of social services ⁴ and 15% ⁵ addressed in 48 municipalities Local Social Plans; 30 issues raised and addressed in planning for SHR in 13 new municipalities; 3 in pre-school programmes for R&E addressed			

- ³ Employability, information, emergency, access, social services, environment, transport, health and education services, agriculture, (multi-disciplinary services, parenting program, incentives for women entrepreneurs/ groups).
- ⁴ Pre-social services, services in community centers, services in residential centers and shelters, services in emergency situations, alternative care services to children without parental care, specialized services, and telephone or online services.
- ⁵ These include support through SF and new models of community-based services.

Strategy of Intervention	Indicators	Baseline	Targets	Actual level of progress	Sources, Means of Verification, Frequency and Responsibility	Comments	Risks (External Factors)
Outcome 2: Municipalities effectively manage the provision of rights-based social services and promote social inclusion.	2.1 Improved capacities, organization development and quality management of service providers, and effective planning and budgeting.	2.1.a Limited number of public service providers that implement standards of service provision, new services, needs assessment, planning and budgeting for service provision: 4 municipal public service providers (PG, Saranda, Lushnje, Bulqiza) in 2017 implement standards for service provision for PWDs Health and education public service providers in 11 LGUs apply health and pre-school standards Social welfare staff in 11 LGUs apply needs assessment and planning of social care services	2.1.a Increased number of public service providers that implement standards of service provision, new services, needs assessment and planning and budgeting: 9 service providers	2.1.a 61 LGUs informed on the new MTBP format 2019-2021 and GRB; 12 municipal public service providers (Shijak, Ura Vajgurore, Diber, Permet Maliq, Korce, Kruje and Vlora +baseline) implement standards for service provision for PWDs 9 municipalities apply GRB in their local MTBP (2020) 46 (baseline included) municipalities apply needs assessment and planning of social care services 13 new LGUs budgeting for youth Health education team established in 33 municipalities 4 municipalities applying new standards for home visits	Verification Sources • Data provided by MIS (State Social Services), MSWY. • Data provided by RO-MALB, MWSY. • Data collected in the framework of the project's monitoring. • Satisfaction Survey 2018 and 2020 • Observations and reports of target groups and their organisations. • Studies and reports of specialised civil society organisations. • Record of participatory planning and budgeting of services at local levels. Project data. Frequency Annually Responsibility Project Team M&E Consultant	Publications; Local Action and Budgeting Municipality budgets and data formats fulfilled per each Municipality	Assumption: Municipalities do actively participate in the project's implementation. Risk: The cooperation of local authorities with CSOs is ineffective and inefficient.

Strategy of Intervention	Indicators	Baseline	Targets	Actual level of progress	Sources, Means of Verification, Frequency and Responsibility	Comments	Risks (External Factors)
		2.1.b 850 staff trained and apply standards of service provision, new service provision, needs assessment and budgeting and planning: 25 in disability service provision standards in 2017 200 in pre-school education 279 in health service standards 70 municipal staff in social care planning 276 municipal staff in participatory budgeting 119 persons trained in Primary Health Care PHC in 2017	2.1.b At least 100 trained staff of service providers applies standards of service provision, new services, needs assessment, planning and budgeting.	2.1.b. Initiated and on-going 60 professional staff (92% F) capacitated in service provision for PWD in nine centers (10 LGUS) 16 of them provided with TOT 858 municipal staff trained on planning and budgeting for social care services 613 municipal staff and regional office staff are trained on use of MIS for SS 776 women are engaged on trainings and awareness meetings related to GRB 145 budget and finance staff from 61 municipalities informed/mentored (25) on GRB application in MTBP 2019-2021 38 social workers from 3 municipalities trained on counseling for employment; 32 social workers trained for implementing the model of integrated social services.			

Strategy of Intervention	Indicators	Baseline	Targets	Actual level of progress	Sources, Means of Verification, Frequency and Responsibility	Comments	Risks (External Factors)
				CB 1389 education staff trained on inclusive education. 166 representatives of education institutions trained OOSC 292 health service providers trained in SRH 180 health personnel trained on home visiting standards 500 Assistant Teacher in the Pre-University Education trained on their role, 40 of them were trained in a TOT			
	2.2 Qualitative and quantitative evolution of the services and role of non-public service providers.	2.2.a Number of non-public service providers and typology of services provided. 121 service providers in 18 municipalities 50.41 % non-public (typology of services as per baseline 1.4) 2.2.b Perceived quality of services provided by non-public service providers: 1.65 in 2018	2.2.a Biannual increase in typology of service provision by non-public actors by 2%. 2.2.b Improved perceived quality of service provision on biannual basis by 5%	2.2.a 98 social service providers in 2020. 41.84% non-public providers Typology of services increased as per 1.4 indicator progress 16% 2.2.b Perceived quality of services provided by non-public service providers: 1.73 in 2020 increased by 5.5%			

Strategy of Intervention	Indicators	Baseline	Targets	Actual level of progress	Sources, Means of Verification, Frequency and Responsibility	Comments	Risks (External Factors)
Outcome 3: National institutions implement their social inclusion policy framework for ensuring social inclusion and adequately fund social services through improved data collection system, developed capacities and empowered target groups.	3.1 Progress in implementation of social inclusion national policies and strategies especially: 3.1.a Social Inclusion Policy Document 2015-2020 (SIPD): Number of regulations and instructions on social inclusion measures that involve two or more target ministries (cross-sectoral, issue-based approach)	3.1.1. Limited progress in implementation of SI national policies and strategies in particular: Strategy of Pre-University Education Decentralization of services Development of secondary legislation of law on social care services 3.1.a Three (SIIG) + other regulations by other ministries DCM on statistics DCM on social Fund	3.1.1. Improved reported progress in implementation of SI national policies and strategies in particular 3.1.a Eight in 2020	3.1 MESY budgeted 50 million ALL for academic year 2019-2020 for supporting out of school children. MESY allocated an education grant for supporting on annual basis around 1,200 children, out of whom 600 children from vulnerable families are eligible for scholarships.; 27 out of 61 municipalities in Albania have applied for this fund.	Verification Sources - Data and reports of Albanian ministries (MSWY, MUD). - Data collected in the framework of the project's monitoring. - Studies and reports of specialized civil society organization. - Reports of multilateral agencies and other bilateral donors. (Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Reports) Frequency Annually Responsibility Project Team M&E Consultant		Assumption: Competent ministries are prepared to engage in a continued policy dialogue with the project's implementing agencies. Risks: The impossibility for additional funding for social services and social inclusion. Slow implementation of the national policy framework.

Strategy of Intervention	Indicators	Baseline	Targets	Actual level of progress	Sources, Means of Verification, Frequency and Responsibility	Comments	Risks (External Factors)
	3.1.b Social Protection Strategy 2015-2020): % of population with access to 'standard package' of social care services 3.1.c National Action Plan on Persons with Disabilities 2016-2020 (NAPD);	3.1.b 0.2% of population have access to standard package of services 3.1.c.1 One in 2016	3.1.b Annual increase by 1%	Mid-term Implementation Report on the National Action Plan for the Right of the Child 2016-2020" published Children, Adolescents and Youth Wellbeing Indicators 2016-2018, including a comprehensive list of SDGs indicators published	Assessment of NAPRE Progress Report, UNDP 2018		Elections lead important staff turnover that hinders swift implementation.
	3.1.c.1 Number of new legal amendments drafted to align with Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and international/national standards on persons with disabilities.		3.1.c.1 Six in 2020	3.1.a 6 DCM for social care services law (including social fund) A financial framework designed for SE "On the forms of supporting social enterprises, through subventions". - Youth Law approved - Youth Action Plan 2015-2020 review consultations initiated National Action Plan on Elderly 2020-2024 approved Social Protection Strategy reviewed and expanded to 2023			
	3.1.c.2 Number of components of Action Plan PWDs implemented	3.1.c.2 0 components (interventions) implemented in 2017	3.1.c.2 15 components implemented until 2020				
	3.1.d National Action Plan for Roma and Egyptians (2015-2020) (NAPRE); Level of implementation of National Action Plan on Roma and Egyptian Integration.	3.1.d Rated 1 of an estimated rating of 1 to 5 (UNDP assessment of NAPRE progress on basis of ROMALB data).	3.1.d Rated at least 3 (2020)				

Strategy of Intervention	Indicators	Baseline	Targets	Actual level of progress	Sources, Means of Verification, Frequency and Responsibility	Comments	Risks (External Factors)
	3.1.e National Strategy for Social Housing 2015-2025 (NSSH); Number of legal acts related to implementation of legal framework to social housing strategy.	3.1.e 0 in 2017	3.1.e Six in 2020	3.1.c M&E report on NAPPWD and NAPCH implementation. To support the regular (annual) monitoring of Child Rights Agenda a DCM is approved on 26.10.2018 A DCM of the disability law on personal assistance approved in Dec. 2019 Protocol on the Functioning of Public and Non-Public, Non-Residential Centers, Providing Services for PwD, during Natural Disaster Period, due to the epidemic COVID-19. 3.1.c.2 (20%) Three interventions for PWDs implemented: 1. Improved access to information for blind students and community 2. Blind Institute functioning as resource Centre.			

Strategy of Intervention	Indicators	Baseline	Targets	Actual level of progress	Sources, Means of Verification, Frequency and Responsibility	Comments	Risks (External Factors)
				3. CB for public service providers at municipality level; M&E of the NAPPWD conducted; A new model of service for independent living for PwD over 21 years old designed and piloted; Six new models of community-based services for persons with disabilities designed and being implemented; Accessibility promoted; Participation of PwD promoted through awareness raising; CB of DPOs conducted. 4. National stakeholders supported to identify gaps and challenges in the area of accessibility for PwD 5. Coordination of MHSP and NAIC to improve the accessibility of the ministry website for PWD			

Strategy of Intervention	Indicators	Baseline	Targets	Actual level of progress	Sources, Means of Verification, Frequency and Responsibility	Comments	Risks (External Factors)	
				6. CB for disability Focal Point at central and local level 3.1.d NAPIRE Rated 3.85 in 2019 vs 3 in 2017. Marked progress is made in 2 out of 5 strategic goals: i) in pre-university and compulsory education with 13,583 enrolled Roma boys and girls and ii) social protection where over 2,000 families are supported with social services. Moderate progress is made to social housing and mini-mal progress is made to Roma employment. Progress in civil registration is constant. 3.1.e Law on Social Housing adopted 2018. - 30 draft legal acts/ by-laws on social housing drafted and consulted (22 approved and 8 pending approval)				

Strategy of Intervention	Indicators	Baseline	Targets	Actual level of progress	Sources, Means of Verification, Frequency and Responsibility	Comments	Risks (External Factors)
	3.2 Evolution of the funds for social services, including for Roma and persons with disabilities, made available at national level.	3.2.a Per cent of funds committed for VGs (including R&E, PWDs) from central government budget: 0.32 % in 2016, 0.23% in 2017. 3.2.b Per cent of funds committed for VGs (including R&E, PWDs) by targeted municipalities: 1.1 % in 2016, and 1.2% in 2017 .	3.2.a Annual increase of central government's budget for social services by 2%. 3.2.b Annual increase of targeted municipalities budget for social services by 4%.	3.2.a Per cent of funds committed for VGs (including R&E, PWDs) from central government budget: 0.23% in 2018, 0.21% in 2019, 0.20% in 2020 3.2.b Per cent of funds committed for VGs (including R&E, PWDs) by targeted municipalities: 1.5% in 2018, 1.7% in 2019, 1.7% in 2020			
	3.3 Establishment of state funding mechanism for social enterprises development;	3.3 Lack of state funding mechanism for SE development in 2016. Draft by-law on financial framework for the operationalization of social enterprises in process	3.3 State funding mechanism established and operational.	3.3 DCM The fund budgeted for Social Enterprises was 537,740.000 ALL for the MTBP 2020-2022 The Fund subsidizes: Social Enterprises Activity; New job positions enabled for the employment of disadvantaged groups; Social and Health Securities of disadvantaged groups employed in Social enterprises.			

Table 3: Outputs per Outcome

Outputs	Indicators	Baseline	Targets	Actual Level of progress	Sources, Means of Verification and Frequency	Comments	Risks & Assumptions
Outcome 1: The vulnerable population requests and receives adequate social services from local authorities that support their social inclusion and holds them accountable.							
Output 1.1 Marginalised and vulnerable persons and groups throughout Albania and in selected municipalities are empowered to request social inclusion.	1.1.1 Extent/level of participation of vulnerable population in the consultation process of planning and budgeting of social services.	1.1.1 Low level of participation of VGs in consultation processes of planning and budgeting of social services: 5-7% of participants represent VGs in targeted LGUS (2017) 10% of youth from VGs represented in consultation meetings.	1.1.1 Increased level of participation of VGs in consultation processes of planning and budgeting of social services in targeted LGUS: 20% of participants represent VGs	3100 persons (50% women, who represent VGs) involved in public participatory budgeting consultations and GRB in 17 municipalities (12 municipalities involved in participatory budgeting and 5 in GRB) 30% (50% women) representatives of VGs are involved in planning and budgeting for SCP in 36 municipalities 212 staff from 45 municipalities involved on consultation process for the implementation of the Law on Social Housing Youth budgeting estimate 25% of young people reached out by activities are from vulnerable groups (R&E, disabilities, young key populations	Verification Sources Data collected in the framework of the project's monitoring, especially from LGU and from CSO. Preliminary Monitoring reports from partners during consultation processes of planning and budgeting (reports to be finalized in Jan 2019) Frequency Semi-annually and annually Responsibility Project Team M&E Consultant		Risks Assumptions: Target groups are interested in their empowerment and participate in the project. The requesting of services does not lead to disappointment, because service providers cannot satisfy expressed needs.

Outputs	Indicators	Baseline	Targets	Actual Level of progress	Sources, Means of Verification and Frequency	Comments	Risks & Assumptions
Outcome 1: The vulnerable population requests and receives adequate social services from local authorities that support their social inclusion and holds them accountable.							
	1.1.2 Extent of issues/ needs raised by vulnerable population and addressed in planning and budgeting of social services in pilot municipalities	1.1.2 Number of issues/ concerns/ recommendations raised by VGs in annual planning/ budgeting. (at targeted LGUs: 17 issues raised in annual planning and 3 issues addressed in budgeting. 4 issues supported (pre-school programmes for Roma, social care planning, youth and SRH)	1.1.2. At least 30% of issues/ concerns addressed in annual planning and budgeting.	476 issues raised and 30% addressed in annual planning.			
Output 1.2 Roma, Egyptians and persons with disabilities throughout Albania and in selected municipalities are supported in their access to specific services.	1.2.1 Number of cases of requests by Roma and Egyptians and their organisations for improved service provision.	1.2.1 No of cases of requests by R&E and their CSOs submitted in 2017 at country level and targeted LGUs.: 0 cases	1.2.1 Annual increase by 10% of number of cases of requests submitted by R&E and their CSOs at country level and targeted LGUs.	1.2.1 LNB results In three targeted LGUs – annual requests increased by 96% 114 in 2018 224 in 2019 At least 4 Roma organizations have contributed to improved service provision through the LSDG groups.	Verification Sources • Data collected in the framework of the project's monitoring, especially from local LGU and from CSO. • ROMALB	Midline Survey 2020	Assumption: Target groups are interested in their empowerment and participate in the project. Risk: Requesting services leads to frustration, because service providers cannot satisfy expressed needs.

Outputs	Indicators	Baseline	Targets	Actual Level of progress	Sources, Means of Verification and Frequency	Comments	Risks & Assumptions
Outcome 1: The vulnerable population requests and receives adequate social services from local authorities that support their social inclusion and holds them accountable.							
Output 1.3 The capacity of groups of Roma, Egyptians and persons with disabilities as well as CSOs and researchers is improved in holding municipal service providers accountable.	1.2.2 At least 7 grant fund projects, a majority of them for Roma and persons with disabilities, are realised every year starting in 2018.	1.2.2 Lack of projects addressing specific services for R&E and PWDs.	1.2.2 At least 20 projects are funded and implemented realised by 2020.	20 projects for SS for R&E and PwD implemented by 2020	Frequency Semi-annually and annually Responsibility Project Team M&E Consultant	No activity planned in year 1 and 1 st half of year 2	Risk: The supported projects are only punctual measures that do not contribute to sustainably improved social inclusion
	1.2.3 At least 8 social services facilities are rehabilitated for providing new quality services.	1.2.3 Existing number of rehabilitated social services facilities for providing quality services: 5 (2017)	1.2.3 At least 13 social services facilities are rehabilitated and operational for providing quality services in 2020.	1.2.3 12 (baseline included) social services facilities rehabilitated and operational (<i>Kruja not yet operational due to the earthquake</i>)			
	1.3 Policy dialogue mechanisms and monitoring mechanisms with participation of CSOs, community members in place and functional.	1.3 Existing number of policy dialogue mechanisms established and operational in 21 LGUs: Policy dialogue on disability established in 4 LGUs in 2017 Policy dialogue on health established in two LGUs (Durrës and Shijak)	1.3 Policy dialogue and monitoring mechanisms established and functional in at least 40 LGUs in 2020.	1.3 0 public hearing sessions prior to the participatory budgeting (PB) meetings to inform the public on gender responsive participatory planning and budgeting in Tirana, Korca and Shkodra 60 public hearings prior to the PB processes (2020) Policy dialogue on SCP in 35 LGUs LSDG operational in 12 LGUs	Verification Sources • Data collected in the framework of the project's monitoring, especially from local service providers (private and public) and from CSOs. Frequency Semi-annually and annually		Assumption: Interlocutors representing civil society, persons receiving social services and civil society organizations are interested in cooperating with local authorities in view of improving social service provision and social inclusion in general.

Outputs	Indicators	Baseline	Targets	Actual Level of progress	Sources, Means of Verification and Frequency	Comments	Risks & Assumptions
Outcome 1: The vulnerable population requests and receives adequate social services from local authorities that support their social inclusion and holds them accountable.							
		Policy dialogue on education established in 7 LGUs (Lezha, Rroksvec, Fushëkruja, Shkodra, Vloja, Elbasan, Berat)		Youth Voice Network Organizations (national) with branches in 15 LGUs Local partnership mechanisms for health set up in 18 LGUs Four policy dialogues on out of school children in 4 LGUs 65 (72% F) representatives of municipalities trained on how to monitor the distribution of social care services	Responsibility Project Team M&E Consultant		Risk: The cooperation of local authorities with civil society organizations is ineffective and inefficient.
Output 1.4 Vulnerable and marginalised persons and groups, including Roma and persons with disabilities, participate in the monitoring of the implementation of national policies and strategies relevant for social inclusion	1.4.1 Number of vulnerable group representatives trained in monitoring of social inclusion policies and strategies.	1.4.1 Lack of trained VGs representatives in monitoring of SI policies and strategies: 0	1.4.1 At least 100 VGs members (at least 30 women) trained in monitoring	1.4.1 60 (50% F) youth activists trained on how to monitor youth policy implementation 76 children (48 boys and 28 girls) up to 18 years old trained on the monitoring of the NAPCH 90 (50 % F) PwD trained on monitoring legislation of PwD LSDG members in 12 municipalities (32 are representatives of VGs) are trained in services mapping and monitoring of social care plans.	Verification Sources • Data and reports of Albanian ministries. • Data collected in the framework of the project's monitoring. Frequency Semi-annually and annually Responsibility Project Team M&E Consultant		Assumption: Central authorities and target groups representatives are interested in joint monitoring activities Risk: The assessment of monitoring data by representatives of target groups are not taken into consideration by authorities' assessment of policies.

Outputs	Indicators	Baseline	Targets	Actual Level of progress	Sources, Means of Verification and Frequency	Comments	Risks & Assumptions
Outcome 1: The vulnerable population requests and receives adequate social services from local authorities that support their social inclusion and holds them accountable.							
	1.4.2 Number of occasions in which representatives of the target groups participate in the monitoring of national policies.	1.4.2 Low number of reported occasions in which VGs have participated in monitoring of national policies: 6 occasions 2017	1.4.2 Increased number of reported occasions in which VGs representatives have participated in monitoring of national policies: 8 in 2020.	1.4.2 8 occasions for SHR monitoring groups in 3 municipalities: Durrës, Permet, Fier 30 occasions for youth in 15 municipalities 1 occasion for NAAPWD (2016-2020) monitoring and mid-term evaluation in 4 municipalities (Shkoder, Vlore, Tirana, Korce) 3 consultations for Social Protection Action plan 2019 – 2022 4 consultations for Monitoring youth engagement in 4 municipalities			
	1.4.3 Number of (approved) recommendations made by representatives of the target groups taking part and involved in monitoring/ making decisions (by disaggregated data).	1.4.3 Low number of (approved) recommendations made by representatives of the target groups taking part and involved in monitoring/ making decisions (by disaggregated data) in 2016/2017	1.4.3 Increased number of (approved) recommendations made by representatives of the target groups taking part and involved in monitoring/ making decisions (by disaggregated data): in 2020: 10%	1.4.3 6 issues for SHR - (Adolescent health & sexuality, HIV/AIDS - Peer Education, - Adolescent development, - Budgeting for and with Young People - Advocacy on ICPD/SRH) - Recommendation related to 8 action areas included in the government evaluation report of the NAAPWD.			

Outputs	Indicators	Baseline	Targets	Actual Level of progress	Sources, Means of Verification and Frequency	Comments	Risks & Assumptions
Outcome 1: The vulnerable population requests and receives adequate social services from local authorities that support their social inclusion and holds them accountable.							
		5 recommendations approved (3 for Roma pre-school programme, and two on youth friendly services and SRH)		1 approved recommendation budgeting for OOSC is operational and accessed by 27 municipalities Recommendations of LSDG and functioning mechanism of SCP have all been taken into considerations. 5 issues under the Declaration signed by the Tirana Municipality and "Youth Voice" network are taken into consideration and included in Tirana Local Youth Strategy (2019-2023)			

Outputs	Indicators	Baseline	Targets	Actual Level of progress	Sources, Means of Verification and Frequency	Comments	Risks & Assumptions
Outcome 2: Municipalities effectively manage the provision of rights based social services and promote social inclusion.							
Output 2.1 Municipal and non-public service providers are strengthened in their capacity for providing and monitoring social services and promoting social inclusion.	2.1.1 Number of social service providers (public and non-public) participating in training, conferences, etc.	2.1.1 Low number of social service providers (public and non-public) participating in training, conferences. It is estimated that around 4,000 staff of public social service providers are trained in social inclusion, social protection, health, education	2.1.1 150 representatives (at least 30% women) of all 61 Albanian municipalities trained.	2.1.1 51 (90% women) professional public social service providers capacitated. 843 (65% F) municipal staff trained on the new legislation on social care services 250 municipal staff trained on how to use the set of tools that supports the NARUs 613 social services staff in 57 LGUs and 11 regional State Social Services trained on MIS CB 1300 education staff trained on inclusive education 166 representatives of education institutions trained OOSC 180 health personnel trained on home visiting standards 957 Assistant Teacher in the Pre-University Education trained on their role, 40 of them were trained in a TOT 292 health service providers trained in SRH 72 representatives of 12 municipalities have received technical assistance/ mentoring in applying GRB within MTBP 2021-2023 34 social services staff trained on project management	Verification Sources • Data collected in the framework of the project's monitoring, especially from local LGUs and from CSOs and from organisations providing training. • Annual surveys Frequency Semi-annually and annually Responsibility Project Team M&E Consultant		Assumption: Service providers are interested in increasing their capacities, in developing the quality of services, and in adopting new types of services. Risk: The innovation of services cannot be made sustainable.

Outputs	Indicators	Baseline	Targets	Actual Level of progress	Sources, Means of Verification and Frequency	Comments	Risks & Assumptions
Outcome 2: Municipalities effectively manage the provision of rights based social services and promote social inclusion.							
	2.1.2 Number of service providers (public and non-public) supported in their organisational development.	2.1.2 Low number of the service providers (public and non-public) supported in their organisational development. 11 LGUs (510 staff) supported in organizational development. 25 CSOs supported in organizational development.	2.1.2 The service providers of 20 Albanian municipalities supported in their organisational development.	2.1.2 9 public service providers supported in its organizational development. 35 LGUs supported on their organizational for Social Services 13 DPOs (30 participants) supported in better playing their advocacy and lobbying role 42 CSOs and youth clubs' representatives, supported through trainings and technical expertise for SHR			
	2.1.3 Number of operational mechanisms for cooperation between LGU and target groups in the field of social services	2.1.3 Existing number of operational mechanisms for cooperation between LGU and target groups in the field of social services: in 2016/2017: 5 Four local partnership mechanisms on health set up in 4 LGUs One participatory budgeting in 1 LGU (Tirana)	2.1.3 At least 10 municipalities have established functional mechanisms for cooperation between LGU and target groups in the field of social services.	2.1.3 12 functional mechanisms for planning e budgeting for SS – LSDG (48 participants from VGs (50F)). 11 Local partnership mechanisms for health in 11 municipalities 4 intersectoral groups in 4 LGUs involving representatives of policymakers to identify cases of out of school children (OOSC) An online network of professionals of development and community centers for children with disabilities operating in 8 municipalities	Review of local budget spending on social care services 2020		

Outputs	Indicators	Baseline	Targets	Actual Level of progress	Sources, Means of Verification and Frequency	Comments	Risks & Assumptions
Outcome 2: Municipalities effectively manage the provision of rights based social services and promote social inclusion.							
	2.1.4 Number of relevant organisations supported by LGUs to provide adequate social services at local level for R, E, PWDs.	2.1.4 Existing number of organizations supported by LGUs to provide adequate SS at local level for R,E and PWDs: No baseline data can be collected. No data available for this baseline; however, there are a number of organisations that are supported by LGUs to provide social services.	2.1.4 Increased number of organizations supported by LGUs to provide adequate SS at local level for R, E and PWDs: 7 in 2020	2.1.4 8 organizations supported by LGUs to provide adequate SS at local level for R, E and PWDs in 2020		LGUs lack data on municipal financial support provided to organizations for social services provision. Nevertheless, there are ad hoc cases when LGUs co- fund organizations for social services provision in partnership with donors in framework of technical support programs (EU-UNDP Reload, Sida, etc).	

Outputs	Indicators	Baseline	Targets	Actual Level of progress	Sources, Means of Verification and Frequency	Comments	Risks & Assumptions
Outcome 2: Municipalities effectively manage the provision of rights based social services and promote social inclusion.							
Output 2.2 Social services that have demonstrated their effectiveness are scaled up	2.2.1 Number of good practices divulged annually.	2.2.1 Existing no of good practices disseminated; 3 in 2016	2.2.1 At least 10 good practices are disseminated every year.	2.2.1 27 good practices disseminated	Verification Sources - Data produced in the framework of the project's implementation. - Catalogue of 15 best practices in social care services provision in Albania Frequency Semi-annually and annually Responsibility Project Team M&E Consultant		Assumption: There are good practices in Albania worthwhile being disseminated. Risk: The divulgation of good practices do not result in a change of practices.
	2.2.2 Number of addressees of the divulged good practices.	2.2.2 Existing number of addressees of the divulged practices: 5 (PWD community centres) in 2017	2.2.2 All Albanian social services (public and non-public) reached out.	2.2.2 All Albanian social services reached out. 15 good practices identified and divulged in 61 LGUs through social media.			
	2.2.3 Change of practice in service provision.	2.2.3 Existing number of good practices in service provision that are applied/ scaled up: 4 in 2017 in 2 LGUs. (disability)	2.2.3 50% of the practices divulged result in scaling-up, in changes of service provision in at least 10 Albanian municipalities.	2.2.3 12 good practices are applied in 12 municipalities (1 <i>Integrated Social Services</i> for R&E implemented in 3 LGUs and 9 for <i>PwD in 9 municipalities</i>)			
	2.2.4 Number of exchange activities (study tours, intra-municipal showcase exchange visits) and/or best practices forums organised through project support.	2.2.4 0 in 2017	2.2.4 At least four exchange activities (study tours, intra-municipal showcase exchange visits) and/or best practices forums organised through project support.	2.2.4 49 exchange activities organized 4 exchange visits related to community services for children with disabilities organized. (11 community centers in 11 LGUs involved/56 participants); 1 learning studies held in Switzerland related to SS for children and families/30 participants from 8 municipalities;			

Outputs	Indicators	Baseline	Targets	Actual Level of progress	Sources, Means of Verification and Frequency	Comments	Risks & Assumptions
<i>Outcome 2: Municipalities effectively manage the provision of rights based social services and promote social inclusion.</i>							
Output 2.3 A grant scheme is set up for municipalities to introduce innovative social services that draw on community mobilisation.	2.3.1 The mechanisms of the grant scheme are in place (grant assessment guidelines and evaluation commission).	2.3.1 No grant scheme mechanism available in 2017	2.3.1 Grant mechanism established and operational Grant assessment guidelines and evaluation commission available in end of 2017.	4 exchange visits related to integrated social services (three municipalities Kruja, Lezha and Fieri, 46 municipal staff participated); 24 regional exchange meetings to share experience, discuss challenges and lessons learnt on Early warning System to prevent dropout;			
				15 joint activities of Assistant Teachers and Community Centres for students with disabilities in four municipalities/90 participants			
	2.3.2 Number of calls for submitting proposals are realised in a transparent manner.	2.3.1 0 in 2017	2.3.2 At least two public calls issued until 2020	Grant guidelines are in place	Verification Sources Data produced in the framework of the project's implementation. Frequency Semi-annually and annually Responsibility Project Team M&E Consultant	No activities planned in year 1 and first half of year 2.	Assumption: Projects are submitted in sufficient numbers and quality. Risk: The supported projects are only punctual measures that do not contribute to sustainably improved social inclusion.
				Two public call issued, and 120 municipal staff trained on writing proposals in partnership with ASPA 39 municipal staff trained on project management and financial reporting (from 18 winning municipalities)			

Outputs	Indicators	Baseline	Targets	Actual Level of progress	Sources, Means of Verification and Frequency	Comments	Risks & Assumptions
	2.3.3 Number of proposals approved and implemented.	2.3.3 0 in 2017	2.3.3 At least 20 proposals approved and implemented by LNB grant scheme until 2020.	18 proposals approved/17 LoA signed and being implemented			
Outcome 3: National institutions implement their policy framework for providing social services and adequately fund social services.							
Output 3.1 The Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth and other competent Ministries are supported in their implementation of policies and strategies and legal framework relevant for social inclusion and in plans for funding and in the adaptation of policies and strategies based on monitoring data.	3.1.1 Number of service providers (state institutions) supported on policy and law implementation.	3.1.1 Five (5) service providers (state institutions) supported on policy and law implementation in 2016.	3.1.1 Fourteen (14) service providers (state institutions) to be supported on policy and law implementation.	3.1.1 16 state institution supported. 1. Blind Student Institute (CB + technology) 2. MoHSP (to implement NAPPWD 2016-2020; bylaws for the law on Social Care Services, Social Fund modalities and bylaw on SE; Social Protection Strategy; one bylaw of Law 93/2014 on Inclusion of and Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities approved; Guidelines for the universal progressive home visiting; Protocol on the Functioning of Public and Non-Public, Non-Residential Centers, Providing Services for PwD, during Natural Disaster Period, COVID-19.	Verification Sources • Data and reports of Albanian ministries. • Data collected in the framework of the project's monitoring. • Studies and reports of specialised civil society organisations. • Reports of multilateral agencies and other bilateral donors. • Annual Reports on SI. Frequency Semi-annually and annually Responsibility Project Team M&E Consultant		Assumption: Authorities are receptive for external support and can absorb it effectively. Risk: Elections affect structure and staffing of responsible ministries/institutions.

Outputs	Indicators	Baseline	Targets	Actual Level of progress	Sources, Means of Verification and Frequency	Comments	Risks & Assumptions
Outcome 3: National institutions implement their policy framework for providing social services and adequately fund social services.							
				3. MoFE supported to draft 30 by-laws on social housing (30 approved) MFE- supported to link the budgeting process of PBA with the implementation of the SDG 11.1 target 4. Council of Ministers supported in drafting a Decree for Result Indicators that will facilitate the monitoring and reporting of the Children Agenda till 2020 by the MoHSP. 5. INSTAT capacitated to upgrade technology for data collection to perform SILC, enrich the child-focused indicators, and data collection on vulnerable youth and elderly and include data collection on disabilities, R&E and gender biased sex selection in the methodology of Population and Housing Census 2020; Children, Adolescents and Youth Wellbeing Indicators 2016-2018, including a comprehensive list of SDGs indicators.			

Outputs	Indicators	Baseline	Targets	Actual Level of progress	Sources, Means of Verification and Frequency	Comments	Risks & Assumptions
Outcome 3: National institutions implement their policy framework for providing social services and adequately fund social services.							
				6. MoEYS reviewed Law on Pre-University Education with regard to inclusive education; Youth Law approved, and the review of Youth Action Plan 2015-2020 in process; Midterm monitoring report for NCHRA till 2020 approved; Mid-term Implementation Report on the National Action Plan for the Right of the Child 2016-2020” 7. Institute of Public Health and Directorates of Public Health supported with inclusive programs to prevent HIV&AIDS 8. SSS supported on data analysis for needs assessment of SS 9. Mol, MoESY, MoHSP signed a new agreement on OOSC. 10. ASPA (Albania School of Public Administration) CB of municipal staff involved in social services and disability issues. 11. ASCAP Assistant Teacher training			

Outputs	Indicators	Baseline	Targets	Actual Level of progress	Sources, Means of Verification and Frequency	Comments	Risks & Assumptions
Outcome 3: National institutions implement their policy framework for providing social services and adequately fund social services.							
				12. University of Tirana/ Faculty of Social Sciences Online Platform on Social Protection and Social Services 13. Ministry of Interior 'Out of school' the joint three ministry agreement 14. Institution of Prefecture (12) 'Out of school' support 15. Regional Education Directories (38) 'Out of school' support 16. Regional Health Directories (36) 'Out of school' support			
	3.1.2 Evolution of the quality of management of social inclu- sion and social services. Progress in implementa- tion of SI demonstrated in the Annual reports on SI 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020.	3.1.2 No Annual Report on SI available.	3.1.2 Progress in Improved quality of management of SI and SS pro- vision	3.1.2 MIS on Social Services is operational		Report on SI is not available	

Outputs	Indicators	Baseline	Targets	Actual Level of progress	Sources, Means of Verification and Frequency	Comments	Risks & Assumptions
Outcome 3: National institutions implement their policy framework for providing social services and adequately fund social services.							
Output 3.2 The establishment of state funding mechanisms that support the development and scaling-up of innovative social services is supported.	3.1.3 Standardized data collection system on monitoring of social inclusion policies and strategies established and operational	3.1.3.1 Lack of standardized data collection system on monitoring of social inclusion policies and strategies (SIIG)	3.1.3 Standardized data collection system on monitoring of social inclusion policies and strategies implemented	3.1.3 Capacity building and technology provided to INSTAT for SILC			
	3.1.4 Number of civil servants trained in monitoring and data collection on social inclusion policies in partnership with ASPA and other partner training institutions.	3.1.4 0 in 2017 No child related indicators identified in the national statistics plan	3.1.4 At least 150 civil (at least 30% women) servants trained	3.1.4 Child focused indicators module approved 229 health personnel (30% F) trained in 4 four regions on holistic care of children focusing on the most vulnerable. 81 (82% F) civil servants, disability focal point trained in partnership with ASPA			
	3.2.1 Number of LGUs that fund services through Social Fund.	3.2.1 0 in 2017	3.2.1 At least 10 LGUs fund services/projects through SF	3.2.1 21 municipalities supported by MoHSP ⁶ and 17 municipalities ⁷ supported by LNB	Verification Sources • Data collected in the framework of the project's monitoring	Social Fund operational	Assumption: Authorities are receptive for external support and can absorb it effectively.
	3.2.2 Social Enterprise funding mechanism developed	3.2.2 Draft by-law on financial mechanism for SE in process	3.2.2 SE funding mechanism operational and accessible	3.2.2 6 regulatory acts for SE endorsed The fund budgeted for Social Enterprises was 537,740,000 ALL for the MTBP 2020-2022	Frequency Semi-annually and annually Responsibility Project Team M&E Consultant		Risks: Elections affect structure and staffing of responsible ministries/institutions.

⁶ 25 project-proposals supported, in 21 municipalities.

⁷ municipalities from the first call (2019), and 10 municipalities from the second call (2020).

Annex 3: Risk Log – July 2021

Risk	Probability	Impact	Mitigation Strategy
<i>Risk related to the achievement of results, strategic dimensions, socio-political and economic aspects.</i>			
The achievement of objectives may be faced with difficulties: - National elections scheduled on 25 April 2021 might lead to decreased focus on social service delivery, involve central and local government administration in the campaign affecting their availability and causing potential delays as well as incur potential changes in the governmental structure at central level; - At local level, municipalities lack clear political and social programs due to uncompetitive local elections held in June 2019 and more than 50% of them have been subject to leadership and senior management changes affecting their commitment to the interventions and willingness to involve civil society organisations in the provision of social services. - Municipal staff lack motivation as staff turnover is common practice following local elections leading to loss of knowledge and capacities and slow implementation. - Earthquake in November 2019 and COVID 19 outbreak have shifted local resources in emergency and recovery efforts as well disrupted the normal service delivery by municipal staff. - Lack of qualified/eligible staff at local level for providing specialized services, which is also aggravated by migration of in-service local qualified people to large urban areas or abroad as well COVID 19 outbreak;	medium local level: high central level: medium	medium medium medium	Temporary delays will be overcome by working closely with our partners at central and local level. - At local level, cooperation with municipalities is to be well prepared. The project's approach and what municipalities can expect and what they are to contribute is to be thoroughly communicated. Should there be doubts about a municipality's willingness to actively support and contribute to the implementation of activities for Roma and persons with disabilities, the project management may take the decision not to cooperate with this municipality. Such a decision will only be taken after attempts to convince the partner municipality, in co-operation with central government representatives and with civil society actors have not resulted in the municipality's willingness to engage in the joint endeavour. - Coordination efforts should take place with municipalities to adapt to COVID situation to adapt and re-model delivery of their services. - The risk of staff turnover or lack of qualified staff at local level for specialized services cannot effectively be addressed by the project. Still, the support to organisational development and capacity building is a means to anchor innovation and capacity strengthening at institutional level, thus allowing newcomers to adopt practices and skills introduced by the project.

Risk	Probability	Impact	Mitigation Strategy
- At central level mainly by the MoHSP which has to strengthen its position and role in inter-institutional coordination for SI/social services, and increase funding for social services and address inadequate/understaffed structures weak capacities, and lines of institutional responsibilities to ensure the timely initiation and adoption of the necessary legal amendments (secondary legislation) that enable effective implementation of reforms in the social sector. - The laws and secondary legislation are key to codify the eligibility criteria and the procedures for social services provision and hence prevent revisions based on statistical evidence and on evidence from the project's monitoring and evaluation. - The tense political situation and focus on election and judicial reforms can shift the spotlight away from social inclusion policies and reforms. - Economic recession due to COVID 19 outbreak is expected to increase public debt and shrink public funding to social care services/social protection system - COVID-19 pandemic has introduced restriction measures in travel and meetings with the beneficiaries and stakeholders which might impact implementation of planned activities			- At central level, the project has little leverage to convince ministerial partners to contribute to the endeavour's success. Nevertheless, continued advocacy, sustained dialogue and support , especially to the MoHSP, also in the project's steering committee is an important instrument for policy dialogue, should prevent such a risk. The project will make a constant claim and provide evidence of the relevance and benefits of the suggested initiatives. The absence of increased funding for social services, though, are to be considered as a separate risk for which the project does not entirely depend on its ministerial partner. - UN will argue, in front of the MoHSP mainly, but not exclusively, in favour of increasing funding for social protection system and coordinate efforts to pool and maximize available resources and provide flexible regulatory solution for codifying the eligibility criteria and procedures for social services, in order to allow improving social services criteria and procedures and take remedial action flexibly. - Technology and on-line platforms will be used for organizing meetings, discussions, trainings and public events.

Risk	Probability	Impact	Mitigation Strategy
The achievement of objectives may be faced with difficulties due to inefficient and ineffective cooperation with target groups, e.g. Roma, and NGOs providing services. An even stronger risk may come from the unwillingness of target groups to cooperate. Also, public opinion may be negatively influenced by municipal leaders and key community figures.	medium	high	- In order to interest target groups and organisations representing them and / or providing services for them, communication with them and with municipal opinion leaders is to start early, it is to be diligent, and it is to explain well the purpose and the approach of the project. Whenever possible, successes already obtained in the field of social inclusion, are to be demonstrated. - Negative influence on the public opinion can also be mitigated by the engagement of stakeholders in decision-making and awareness raising activities to establish well informed populations.
A specific risk may concern the cooperation with Egyptians. Unlike the Roma, they are less of a visible group, they often do not live in the same neighbourhood, and their needs may not be the same as those of the Roma. Nevertheless, the need for supporting Egyptian's social inclusion and access to social services remains uncontested. Access to them and the possibility to identify adequate forms of improving social services for them, may not be evident, and there is a risk that no consensual forms can be identified.	high	medium	- No experiences with the non-participation of Egyptians in projects supporting their participation in society were made yet. Nevertheless, specific communication strategy will be developed targeting Egyptian groups, its goal is to be the explanation of the project's purpose and the direct benefits for the Egyptians.

Risk	Probability	Impact	Mitigation Strategy
Sustainability is at risk, if - Authorities do not durably integrate innovations introduced by the project into their operations (e.g. mechanisms for participation of target groups); - Projects realised in the framework of the grants fund are not provided with budgets for continued operations (maintenance, etc.) - Beneficiaries and their representative CSOs do not actively exercise their right to demand provision/ continuation of provision of adequate social services and hold governmental authorities accountable.	medium	high	- Sustainability is to be prepared – by supporting the durable integration of changes introduced by the project into municipalities’ provision of social services (e.g. through well preparing structures and staff for their task, support for organizational and capacity development to design, budget and implement social care plans and through information to beneficiaries to demand services), and by requesting viability plans from projects financed by the grants fund (e.g. budgets for maintenance, including the source of their funding). Also, the commitment of partners will be constantly monitored, and the partners are informed that the project might be stopped if they do not provide their foreseen contribution. - Beneficiaries and their CSOs will be capacitated to demand their rights, monitor the quality of service provision and lobby for budget increase.
Scaling-up of successfully introduced innovations introduced may be at risk, if - local authorities cannot be convinced in the necessity and their interest to improve services - potential beneficiaries do not see their interest in participating in innovating social services.	low	medium	- Scaling-up is to be realised with the support of central authorities who can contribute to the preparedness of municipalities to replicate good practices identified and tested elsewhere. And scaling-up of projects for specific target groups (Roma, Egyptians) and persons with disabilities) is to be facilitated by a careful selection of municipalities and the beneficiaries – those willing to introduce the innovation proposed by the project. A means to support preparedness of these actors consist in the demonstration of successes already achieved in the field of social inclusion.
The project may duplicate or overlap with other activities (initiated/implemented by other agencies/donors).	low	medium	- Within the rather small donor community active in Albania, coordination must be ensured, including with the support of competent authorities.

Risk	Probability	Impact	Mitigation Strategy
Reputational risks			
The promotion of services for specific target groups may affect the Albanian population's perception of the support provided, especially the perception by groups of the population who are not beneficiaries but who consider to be in need of support they do not receive.	medium	medium	- The project, especially when making visible interventions (e.g. by activities facilitated by the grant fund) is to communicate well – not only with the target groups and the service providers, but also with the neighbourhoods: Persons and groups not directly targeted by the intervention are to be informed, if possible and suitable also included in the project, e.g. by making a community centre accessible not only to those mainly targeted.
Fiduciary risks			
Fraud and corruption, e.g. regarding the provision of services by mandated parties and the management of the grant scheme for realising innovative projects for Roma, Egyptians and persons with disabilities.	low	high	- Strict UN management of financial resources used internally and invested in all activities, including the fund for projects, prevents financial mismanagement. All mandated parties are closely monitored by - Annual audits further ensure the quality of the project's financial management.

