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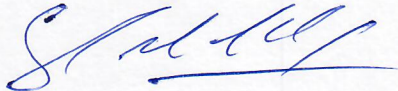
Joint Programme title:	End Violence Against Women in Albania Phase II
Outcome(s):	Cooperation Framework Outcome 4: Gender Responsive Governance ▪ Output 4.1: End Violence Against Women and Children ▪ Output 4.2: Addressing Gender Stereotypes and Harmful Norms and Practices Project outcomes: 1. Women and girls enjoy more effective preventive measures against violence in Albania 2. All women survivors and those at risk are better protected from all forms of violence and have equitable access to services in Albania 3. Responsible institutions and actors implement national policies and legislation on VAW in a more comprehensive, inclusive and coordinated way in Albania 4. The justice system demonstrates increased accountability and effectiveness in addressing all forms of violence against women
Duration	30 months + 26 months
Anticipated start and end dates:	Start: January 2023 End: 31 st December 2027
JP Team: Lead PUNO: PUNOs:	UN Women UNDP, UNFPA
Fund management modality: (Parallel; Consolidated; Pass-through)	Pass-through
» Managing Agent: (Consolidated only)	
» Administrative Agent: (Pass-through only)	Albania SDG Acceleration Fund Phase II, administered by the Multi Partner Trust Fund Office. Focal point: Mari Matsumoto mari.matsumoto@undp.org Fund Portfolio Manager (Development)
» Convening Agent: (Pass-through only)	UN Women
Total estimated budget:	SEK 24,000,000.00, estimated \$ 2,300,00.00 +

	SEK 13,000,000.00, estimated \$ 1,381,949.61 (UN Rates of Exchange as of October 2025).
Out of which:	
» Funded	SEK 24,000,000.00, estimated \$ 2,300,00.00 + SEK 13,000,000.00, estimated \$ 1,381,949.61
» Un-funded	0
Source of funds:	
» Donor	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) represented by the Embassy of Sweden in Tirana

The **legal basis** for the joint programme is the Legal Annex for the signed United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (2022-2026). It refers to the cooperation or assistance agreements or other agreements that are the existing legal basis for the relationship between the Government of Albania and each Participating UN Organization.

Declaration of commitment and signatures

By signing this Joint Programme document, all signatories commit to work together in a spirit of partnership to achieve the results identified in the **results framework, work plan and budget**.

Co-Chairs of Steering Committee	
Government Name of Representative: <i>Evis Sala</i> Signature:  Name of Ministry or Department: <i>Ministry of Health and Social Welfare</i> Date:	United Nations Country Team Name of Representative: <i>Ingrid Macdonald</i> Signature:  Name of Organization: <i>UN Resident Coordinator Office</i> Date:
UN Organizations	
Name of Representative: <i>Michele Ribotta</i> Signature:  Name of Organization: <i>UN Women</i> Date:	Name of Representative: <i>Randi Davis</i> Signature:  Name of Organization: <i>UNDP</i> Date:
Name of Representative: <i>Manuela Bello</i> Signature: 	

Name of Organization: UNFPA
Date:

1. Executive Summary

In recent years, Albania has made progress in improving its legal, policy and institutional framework to end domestic violence and violence against women (VAW). Comprehensive legislation has been adopted to ensure coordinated response from all relevant government agencies to domestic violence. Positive developments at the institutional level include expansion of the Coordinated Referral Mechanisms (CRMs) in all 61 municipalities of Albania, improvements in the local information system for registration of cases of domestic violence (REVALB), and more recently a threefold increase of the monthly cash payments for survivors of domestic violence under protection orders. The Government of Albania has also continuously demonstrated willingness to address violence against women: in the most recent High Level Panel on the 30th Anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, Albania committed to ensure that by 2030, 100% of municipalities provide specialized services for women and girls experiencing violence through comprehensive protection, better institutional response and stringer policy alignment with CEDAW and Istanbul Convention. Albania also committed to further advance the institutionalization of gender responsive budgeting: by 2030, the country aims achieve at least 90% GRB coverage in ministries and municipalities, with sustained annual increases in gender equality investments and full public accountability on SDG 5.c.1.¹

Despite progress, violence against women continues to be a significant challenge in Albania. According to the 2018 National Survey on Violence against Women and Girls in Albania, the prevalence of violence against women remains high: one out of three women, had experienced violence over the 12 months prior to the survey². The number of cases reported to authorities continues to be very low compared to the actual number of women who experience violence (4591 in 2018³, 4629 in 2019, 4701 in 2020, and 5312 in 2021⁴). During the lockdown period in 2020, the number of calls to the national counselling hotline tripled compared to the same period a year prior, but the number of domestic violence reports to the police was lower than in previous years for the same period⁵. While a comprehensive national survey has not been conducted since 2018, several data points reveal a persistent patriarchal culture and deeply rooted social norms that treat violence against women as acceptable fact of life. Phone calls to the national hotlines have steadily increased and are over 4,000 each year.

¹ <https://webtv.un.org/en/asset/k1q/k1qh7dyayo>

² National Population Survey: Violence Against Women and Girls in Albania, INSTAT, Albania, 2019
<http://www.instat.gov.al/media/6123/publication-violence-against-women.pdf>

³ Administrative data shared by the General Directorate of State Police with file No. 185/1, date: 31.01.2022, addressed to the Center for Civic Legal Initiatives.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ According to a Gender Rapid Survey, 16% of women have felt more unsafe at home as a result of the pandemic; 23% reported that conflict between adults in their home has become more frequent since the pandemic; 29% of women respondents think physical harm, harassment and abuse has gotten worse since the start of the pandemic; 79% believe that the experience of verbal and/or physical abuse at the hands of a partner has become worse during the pandemic. This was in addition to 51% of the entire survey respondents who believed that these forms of violence are common in their communities, thus confirming previous survey results on the prevalence of violence. Measuring-shadow-pandemic-Albania, UN Women, 2020, <https://data.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/documents/Publications/Measuring-shadow-pandemic-Albania.pdf>

The main gaps and the relevant causes of the persistency of violence against women include challenges in preventing such violence; ensuring effective protection of victims and the availability of services; prosecute cases of violence; and adopting policies and laws aligned with international standards and best practices on VAW.

The partners in this proposal, UN Women, UNDP and UNFPA are well placed to respond to the above — building on successful activities and deliverables that have been conducted during the second phase of the project. These include:

- The recently established Femicide Watch, which has enabled regular and comparable data collection according to international standards on femicides in Albania.
- The costing of services for survivors of gender-based violence at the local level, which has led in increased budgetary allocations for VAW survivors on two municipalities.
- The strengthening of the CRM including through regional and peer-to-peer exchanges, and further enhancing the Network of Local Coordinators Against Domestic Violence through biannual meetings.
- Awareness raising initiatives, that have reached communities across Albania to enhance understanding of violence against women and reporting mechanisms.
- Strengthened engagement of men and boys and faith based organizations.
- Continuous policy support, including to the Criminal Code and the initiation of drafting the new Law on Violence against Women, which will have a broadened scope and will be aligned with international standards, including the EU gender equality acquis, and recent recommendations by human rights treaty bodies.

The UN JP Phase II has been successful overall in the implementation of its activities. Data from the second Annual Report indicates that the UN JP has achieved or is on track to achieve the vast majority of its objectives, with 2 outcome indicators achieved, 2 on track, 1 partially on track and 1 off track, and 18 output indicators achieved and 6 on track, out of 24 output indicators in total. However, the UN JP Steering Committee noted multiple persisting challenges to successfully achieving the overall objective of the intervention, i.e. to ensure that women and girls in Albania live a life free of violence. Some of these challenges include:

- Delays in institutional processes pertaining to legal reforms, specifically the development of a new Criminal Code and the Law on Domestic Violence.
- Continuous issues with reliability and coherence of data on violence against women.
- Continuous need for service provision and capacity building of the local Coordinated Referral Mechanisms.
- Judicial and territorial reforms, which have decreased the number of courts available across the country, have negatively impacted the extent to which survivors of violence can access the justice system.
- Limited effectiveness of the judiciary when it comes to implement existing legal obligation on violence against women, as highlighted in the recently published court monitoring reports and the first femicide watch report.
- Persisting stereotypes around women's rights and violence against women continue to limit long-term changes in mentalities at the community level, especially in rural areas, where violence against women continues to be normalized and where survivors refrain from reporting cases.

Building on the best practices developed during the UN JP implementation and addressing the persisting challenges highlighted in the donor report, and in consultation with the Steering Committee of the UN JP, Sida agreed to extend the timeframe and financial ambition of the project with a focus on achieving the following results:

1. Women and girls enjoy more effective preventive measures against violence in Albania – continuation of selected activities within this outcome
2. All women survivors and those at risk are better protected from all forms of violence and have equitable access to services in Albania - continuation of selected activities within this outcome
3. Responsible institutions and actors implement national policies and legislation on VAW in a more comprehensive, inclusive and coordinated way in Albania - continuation of selected activities within this outcome
4. Added outcome result focused on the judiciary: The justice system demonstrates increased accountability and effectiveness in addressing all forms of violence against women

These efforts are directly aligned with and contribute to the implementation of the National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021-2030 and the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF 2022-2026), especially UNSDCF Outcome 4 on gender responsive governance and output 4.1 on Ending Violence Against Women and Children. The intervention will aim to target all women and girls survivors of violence in Albania, with a focus on women and girls experiencing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination including LGBTI women, women with disabilities and Roma and Egyptian women. The project will also work with men and boys as key agents of change when it comes to promoting gender equality, as well as civil society organizations and national institutions.

The UN Agencies will work closely with national partners including the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Interior, State police, selected municipalities, National Human Rights Institutions, media, civil society and grassroots organizations, amongst others.

This proposed intervention draws from the findings and recommendations emerging from the evaluation report of the JP EVAWIA Phase I, leveraging lessons learned and aiming to replicate best practices. The project is planned to last for 30 months with a 3-months inception period which will be utilized to:

- Select municipalities: carry out consultations with stakeholders including the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare and civil society organizations; complete a mapping of existing and past interventions on VAW at local level; carry out assessment of CRMs to identify which municipalities to prioritize in the context of the intervention (to be led by UNDP). The project will focus on up to ten municipalities.
- Select responsible parties: develop TORs and carry out selection of the key project partners.
- Finalize Performance Monitoring Framework: finalize indicators and finalize baseline data collection and target setting, as well as finalize the budget.

The extension of the proposed intervention draws from the analysis of the achievements of the past years, remaining challenges as noted in GREVIO's 2024 Thematic Report, UPR, CEDAW, the 2024 annual report of the program, as well as analysis and reports conducted by partners and CSOs funded under the

programme and anecdotal evidence from close collaboration with national and local level public institutions. In addition, the extension draws upon the updated Country Gender Profile for Albania (forthcoming, by UN Women/UN Albania with EU support) which identifies progress made and persisting challenges when it comes to addressing violence against women in Albania.

The project extension will therefore follow a two-track approach, on one hand replicating successful practices, and on the other addressing remaining gaps in the legal and institutional response to VAW. The project extension is planned to last for 26 months.

2. Situation Analysis

In recent years, Albania has made progress in improving its legal, policy and institutional framework to end domestic violence and violence against women (VAW). Comprehensive legislation has been adopted to ensure coordinated response from all relevant government agencies to domestic violence. Positive developments include expansion of the Coordinated Referral Mechanisms (CRMs) at the local level in all 61 municipalities of Albania, improvements in the local information system for registration of cases of domestic violence (REVALB), and more recently a threefold increase of the monthly cash payments for survivors of domestic violence under protection orders.

Despite progress, violence against women continues to be a significant challenge in Albania. According to the 2018 National Survey on Violence against Women and Girls in Albania, the prevalence of violence against women remains high: one out of three women, had experienced violence over the 12 months prior to the survey⁶. The COVID 19 pandemic has resulted in a noticeable rise in specific indicators associated with VAW and exacerbated existing tensions and safety issues for many women. Based on research conducted by UN Women, about 51% of women in Albania think that the experience of verbal or physical abuse at the hands of a partner is common for women in their community, and 79% of women thought that this had gotten worse during the pandemic. While most women in Albania felt that their safety was not significantly impacted by COVID-19, the study indicates that the pandemic has negatively impacted safety concerns for the most vulnerable women who had already been facing hardships. Further, the study suggests that food insecurity, loss of income and unemployment, have worsened concerns and experiences of safety, and have had a negative impact on women's overall well-being⁷.

Women survivors of violence belonging to marginalized groups continue facing multiple challenges in fully accessing and benefiting from the full set of services they are entitled to, including social services, economic assistance, education, health and employment. Research supported by UN Women in 2018 demonstrates that women with disabilities, Roma and Egyptian women and women from the LGBTQI+ community experience the same forms of violence as other women, compounded with additional forms of violence and discrimination due to their disability, sexual orientation or belonging to cultural minorities in Albania.⁸ However, this violence is barely identified or reported. According to data from the REVALB system, between January 2023 and July 2025, out of 1932 cases of domestic violence reported in the system, 31 cases referred to violence against Roma and Egyptian women, and 10 against women with disabilities. Reported cases of violence against non-nationals were 7, and there were no cases reported against LGBTQI women.

⁶ National Population Survey: Violence Against Women and Girls in Albania, INSTAT, Albania, 2019
<http://www.instat.gov.al/media/6123/publication-violence-against-women.pdf>

⁷ <https://albania.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-03/Measuring-shadow-pandemic-Albania.pdf>

⁸ https://www.adrf.al/images/publications/Raporti-Dhuna_ndaj_Grave_Vajzave.pdf

Women from marginalised groups are not informed about reporting options, largely dependent on the perpetrator, and completely lack support services that would help them live self-sufficiently.⁹ Even when services are available, women from this groups have difficulties in accessing them either because they are inaccessible (for example for women with disabilities), or because of persisting prejudice and stigma among service providers.

Building on this analysis, this project document aims to target all women and girls survivors of violence and improve prevention, service provision and the overall policy framework on violence against women. The project also builds on an analysis of gaps and root causes of violence against women along the four key pillars of the Istanbul Convention, which is an essential basis developing an adequate and comprehensive response to gender-based violence.

The Joint Programme's Phase II original situational analysis correctly identified the structural drivers of VAW — including entrenched gender norms, under-resourced local services, fragmented data systems, and gaps in legislation — and remains the foundation for this updated document. Additionally, the continuation of the intervention is anchored in a strong commitment by Albanian authorities, both the executive and legislative branch, to continue on the path of reforms. Examples of such commitment include the strengthening of the Department for Gender Equality within the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, which has recently been fully staffed and functional; the acceleration of legal reforms including the Law on Violence Against Women, to be aligned with international and EU standards; and the preparation of an action plan for the implementation of the CEDAW Concluding Observations (2023), taking active steps to implement those recommendations that were highlighted as 'priority' by the Committee. Also the GREVIO, in its latter thematic report from 2024, commended Albanian authorities as well as civil society organizations for their strong willingness to embrace new instruments and procedures, even experimental ones, to better protect women.

The project extension is further grounded in the new EU Directive on combating violence against women and domestic violence¹⁰, the first EU-wide legal instrument aiming to tackle VAW and which Albania will have to align with on its path towards integration.

Lastly, the intervention builds on momentum from the recent justice reform, which creates an opportunity to address the role of courts on protecting women survivors of violence. Such shortcomings were noted as priority recommendations in the recent GREVIO thematic report, latest CEDAW concluding Observations as well as acknowledged during the programme Steering Committee meeting in April 2025.

The project extension will continue to address the gaps and root causes of violence against women along the four key pillars of the Istanbul Convention, which is an essential basis developing an adequate and comprehensive response to gender-based violence. Such gaps include the following:

Prevention of violence against women:

- **Lack of a comprehensive legislative system to address all forms of violence, including stalking, harassment, and sexual violence:** the current legal framework does not create space for victims

⁹ Evaluation Report: Violence against women and girls from disadvantaged communities- An overview of the phenomenon of violence against women and girls from Roma, LGBT and disability communities in Elbasan, Vlorë and Shkodra municipalities, developed by Albanian Disability Rights Foundation, Roma Women Center and LGBTI Alliance with the support of UN Women and EU, 2018

¹⁰ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=OJ:L_202401385

of these other forms of violence to benefit from protection and prevention measures, as well as from services normally available for victims of domestic violence. Despite numerous revisions of the DV Law, more recently of the Criminal Code and other policies and strategies, there is no overarching law on addressing all forms of violence against women. The existing law still prioritizes domestic violence. Therefore, in the framework of the UNJP support is already being provided to the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare to revise the existing DV Law in a more comprehensive way and in full alignment with CEDAW recommendations and international standards. The program will continue to support the Albanian government in these efforts.

- **Limited focus on early education on gender equality and healthy lifestyles:** topics related to gender equality, elimination of VAW, sexual education, and others are not taught comprehensively in the education system, including tertiary education and some of these topics remain still taboo for both educators and parents. Equally, there is limited focus on engagement of men and boys in preventing violence.
- **Deeply rooted gender stereotypes and harmful social norms** persist, including persisting toxic masculinity and widespread sexism, as well as a widespread acceptance culture around VAW: despite the increased efforts to increase awareness around VAW, some, including women, still justify violence and particularly domestic violence. This is exacerbated for women from disadvantaged communities, such as Roma and Egyptian women, women with disabilities, women from LGBTI communities, migrant women and others, whose level of reporting of violence is very low. In addition, there is a lack of ability to recognize other forms of violence beyond domestic violence- which also limits the extent to which victims and survivors of these other forms of violence seek support. Despite significant efforts by civil society, international organizations, the Albanian government and other stakeholders to address deeply rooted norms throughout the implementation of the UNJP, social acceptance of violence is still high, especially domestic violence. Women from disadvantaged communities, such as Roma and Egyptian women, women with disabilities and women from the LGBTIQ+ community are at heightened risk. Additionally, as noted in the GREVIO thematic report “the stigma that surrounds sexual violence and rape results in extremely low reporting rates, which is amplified by the existence of only one, insufficiently operational rape crisis centre in the country.”¹¹
- **Perpetrator rehabilitation programmes are neglected among institutions and are rarely seen as part of the systemic solution to GBV:** even though enrollment of perpetrators in these programmes is mandatory to be included courts’ orders for protection measures, there is a lack of such programmes in many areas of the country, which makes the relevant legal provision non applicable in practice.¹² Despite efforts to establish perpetrator programs there is a need to expand the existing services and establish new ones, particularly for perpetrators of sexual violence crimes.¹³

Protection of victims and service provision:

¹¹ <https://rm.coe.int/grevio-s-first-thematic-evaluation-report-on-albania/1680b1a0ca>

¹² There are only two CSOs offering rehabilitation programmes: in Tirana and Shkodra.

¹³ <https://rm.coe.int/grevio-s-first-thematic-evaluation-report-on-albania/1680b1a0ca>

- **There is a low level of reporting of cases of violence against women:** according to the 2018 National Survey on Violence against Women and Girls in Albania, one out of three women, or 34 percent, had experienced violence over the 12 months prior to the survey.¹⁴ However, in the year of the survey (2018), the number of reported cases of domestic violence to the Police was just 4591.¹⁵ In 2019, 4629 cases were reported to the police, in 2020, it was 4701 cases, and 5312 in 2021.¹⁶ In addition, the reports of other forms of violence, such as sexual violence remains very low: in 2018, 92 women were reported as victims of sexual crimes; in 2019, 127 and in 2020, 114 women.¹⁷ These number remain low compared to prevalence of these forms of violence¹⁸ and are even lower when it comes to reporting of violence against women from minority groups such as women with disabilities, Roma and Egyptian women, LGBTQI women and others. There has been no national survey measuring perceptions on violence against women since 2018. However, evidence and experience on the ground by several stakeholders, show that violence against women in its various forms continues to be widespread, with cases of femicide continuing to plague society. There has been a sustained increase in the reporting of cases of VAW through the national hotline with a total of 4,658 calls in 2024, compared to 3,871 calls in 2023. More cases of violence were reported through the REVALB system (775 in 2024, compared to 621 in 2023). The Femicide Watch was established jointly with the Ombudsperson of Albania, the first one in the region following the global methodology developed by UNODC and UN Women for data collection, and the first comprehensive assessment of femicide cases in the country published in December 2024 (UN JP Annual Report 2024).
- **Lack of execution and monitoring of measures protecting victims of violence:** in recent years there have been improvements in the legislation as well as institutional response to provide adequate protection to many women¹⁹. However, the number of cases for which Protection measures (PO/IPO) are requested remains low compared to reported number of cases. An analysis of data made public indicates that the ratio of requests to the courts by the Police on issuing of protection measures vis a vis reported cases of violence varied from 53% to 61% during 2014-2021.²⁰ In addition, there is lack of information on implementation and monitoring of protection measures by the Police and local authorities, which are required to collaborate and conduct regular monitoring of protection measures.
- **The government's gaps in response to GBV becomes more evident in times of emergency, as it was the case through the COVID-19 pandemic.**²¹ During the lockdown period in 2020, the number

¹⁴ <http://www.instat.gov.al/media/6123/publication-violence-against-women.pdf>

¹⁵ Administrative data shared by the General Directorate of State Police with file No. 185/1, date: 31.01.2022, addressed to the Center for Civic Legal Initiatives.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Women and Men in Albania, 2021, INSTAT

¹⁸ According to the national survey on GBV in 2018, 2,4 % of women over 15 had experienced non-partner physical and sexual violence during the same year as the survey.

¹⁹ These include the introduction of Orders for Preliminary Immediate Protection Measures (OPIPM), which are issued by the Police for immediate protection until a court hearing (which may take up to 48 hours).

²⁰ Analysis of data made public by the Police

²¹ According to a Gender Rapid Survey, 16% of women have felt more unsafe at home as a result of the pandemic; 23% reported that conflict between adults in their home has become more frequent since the pandemic; 29% of women respondents think physical harm, harassment and abuse has gotten worse since the start of the pandemic; 79% believe that the experience of verbal and/or physical abuse at the hands of a partner has become worse during the pandemic. This was in addition to 51% of the entire survey respondents who believed that these forms of violence are common in their communities, thus confirming previous survey results on the prevalence of violence. Measuring-shadow-

of calls to the national counselling hotline tripled compared to the same period a year prior, but the number of domestic violence reports to the police was lower than in previous years for the same period. CSOs monitoring of the local response to DV during lock-down in 11 municipalities revealed not only a disturbing rate of violence against women and children, but also a gloomy situation of the general capacity of duty bearers to provide services in immediate response to violence and to ensure women's access to services and help²².

- **Lack of adequate budgeting for service provision and over-reliance on international organizations for technical and financial assistance:** in 2021, only 6 specialized services were supported by the State budget, accounting for 26% of the budget allocated for social services. In addition, as acknowledged by the Government, these services have limited human resources, infrastructure and do not effectively apply international and national standards.²³ Overall, the majority of services for victims of VAW, as well as human trafficking and rehabilitation of perpetrators of GBV are provided by CSOs, which rely on international organizations and donors for financial support.
- **Limited accessibility of services:** In 2022, the Albanian Disability Rights Foundation (ADRF) conducted a study on accessibility of services for women with disabilities survivors of violence. The four shelters that were assessed as part of the study resulted inaccessible for women with disabilities both in terms of the physical space, as well as in terms of the accessibility of information for women with disabilities. In the framework of the EVAWIA Joint Programme Phase I, and as part of the regional programme on EVAW funded by the European Commission, UN Women has supported more than 1,500 women with services including psycho-social counselling, economic reintegration, free legal aid, information, referral amongst others. At least 200 women belonged to marginalized groups. Such interventions have confirmed that women from marginalized communities experience additional challenges both in terms of prevalence of violence, but also in terms of their ability to access services and be informed about most appropriate avenues for reporting. Despite the efforts made during the implementation of the UN Joint Programme thus far, laying the foundations for addressing accessibility of services for survivors of violence in this category, they continue to face challenges. GREVIO's latest report calls upon Albanian authorities to ensure inclusion of intersectionality more intentionally into the policies addressing gender-based violence and guarantee services, including those offered by NGOs are well funded.²⁴ Furthermore, CEDAW's latest concluding observations note lack of awareness by women from marginalized communities of their rights as a key challenge to be addressed.
- **Capacities and functioning of Coordinated Referral Mechanisms (CRMs) and service provision:** Coordinated Referral Mechanisms have been established in 61 municipalities, though capacities differ, with some CRMs relying on support from international organizations and CSOs. Challenges remain in case management, data collection, and coordination, particularly in newer CRMs or

pandemic-Albania, UN Women, 2020, <https://data.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/documents/Publications/Measuring-shadow-pandemic-Albania.pdf>

²² GADC & AWEN Network (2020). Monitorimi i punës së mekanizmatve të koordinuar të referimit gjatë periudhës pandemike COVID-19. See: <https://www.gadc.org.al/media/files/upload/Raporti%20Final%20i%20Perbashket%20UnW%20COVID-19.pdf>

²³ A recent monitoring visit of the Ombudsperson in NSVDV and Lilium Center revealed that the treatment of victims of domestic and sexual violence in both institutions posed serious infringement of relevant standards adopted on the functioning of these centers.

²⁴ <https://rm.coe.int/grevio-s-first-thematic-evaluation-report-on-albania/1680b1a0ca>

those with frequent changes in Local Coordinators against Domestic Violence (LCDVs). Service providers may have limited capacity to offer integrated support to women victims of violence across sectors. Knowledge of legal obligations, collaboration processes, and reporting requirements should be strengthened to support a more effective coordinated response to gender-based violence.

Prosecution of cases:

- **Remaining incompatibilities of criminal legislation with international standards:** despite significant improvements in recent years, the Albanian Criminal legislation still needs to be brought fully in line with international standards. The definition of rape, which currently remains forced-based needs to change to consent-based, according to the Istanbul Convention, General Recommendation of CEDAW Convention²⁵ and jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights.^{26 27} Other forms of violence such a female genital mutilation (FGM), child marriage, forced abortion, violence against women in politics/elections and others need to be introduced or revised accordingly in the criminal legislation. More recently, The Albanian authorities have committed to an overhaul of the Criminal Code. Project partners have continued to build consensus around the needed changes. The timing is right to see the efforts to fruition. In addition, the programme is supporting the comprehensive revision of the current DV Law. Addressing remaining recommendations from various international bodies and increasing its alignment with EU standards, specifically the EU directive on Ending Violence Against Women (2024)²⁸, is of utmost importance and partners will continue to build consensus around these efforts.
- **Limited legal and psychological support to victims during the investigation and prosecution of cases of VAW:** women victims of violence do not always benefit from legal provisions that allow for compensation. According to GREVIO's assessment report to Albania in 2017, there was no available information to indicate that any victim of violence against women, including domestic violence, ever instituted or benefited from such proceedings.²⁹ A state compensation scheme available to victims of violence against women in Albania has yet not been established, as required by the Istanbul Convention.³⁰ While the new intersectoral strategy for victims of criminal offenses include provisions for compensation of victims of gender-based violence, women victims of violence do not always benefit from legal provisions that allow for compensation. The inclusion of a gender perspective in the strategy addresses one of the key UPR recommendations from 2019 and meets standards from the Istanbul Convention. It is now important to ensure women have access to such compensation not only on paper, but in practice as well. Monitoring of court cases by CSOs showed that women rarely had access to psychological support during the case

²⁵ General Recommendations No.35 on Gender-based violence

²⁶ Standards of the ECtHR are mandatory on Albania, according to its Constitution

²⁷ MC v. Bulgaria, ECHR, 2014, https://www.coe.int/t/dg2/equality/domesticviolencecampaign/resources/M.C.v.BULGARIA_en.asp

²⁸ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2024/1385/oj/eng>

²⁹ Baseline Evaluation Report on Albania of the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO), 2017

³⁰ Shadow Report of the Center for Civic Legal Initiative and the Monitoring Network submitted to the UPR third cycle of review on Albania, 2019 http://www.qag-al.org/ang/publication/upr_shadow_report_eng.pdf

adjudication. In addition, UNDP's 2024 study on "Access to Justice in Albania" highlights that victims of domestic violence are required to obtain a protection order before they can access legal aid – a requirement that poses a barrier for survivors to effectively access support services, as many survivors fear escalating the situation further.

- **Risks of lower access to justice for victims of VAW following the new judiciary territorial organization:** Challenges of women victims of violence to access justice may exacerbate in view of a recent reform proposal on a new territorial distribution of first instance courts and reduction of their number from 22 to 12, which would require women victims of violence to participate in court hearings taking place in districts far from their residence.³¹ Previous concerns on the impact of the centralization of first instance courts at the regional level have come to fruition with the justice reform nearing its end. However, the accompanying process of digitalization may address risks of lower access to justice. It is important to support the process of digitalization with a view to helping survivors of violence access services.
- **Lack of due diligence to effectively prosecute VAWG cases:** During investigation and prosecution, the judicial system faces challenges to protect, and guarantee the rights of victims of crime, including victims of VAW. Because of the trauma they have been through, in a gender blind justice system, victims of VAW run the risks of revictimization. Based on information from CSOs working in the field and data analysis from the General Prosecution Office, there is some improved performance of the prosecution offices and courts³². Yet, the much lower ratio of registered investigations v. reported cases of domestic violence (38% in 2018, 28% in 2019 and 32% in 2020)³³ puts into question the effectiveness of investigations through these years. The latest CEDAW concluding observations (2023) focus particularly on shortcomings in the justice system. The report noted with concern insufficient resources to implement the law on free legal aid as well as the lack of proper investigation, evidence collection and forensic facilities and capacities, which results in lengthy delays in legal proceedings and revictimization of women.³⁴ As such it recommends strengthening awareness-raising and capacity-building on women's rights and gender equality for judges, prosecutors and police officers to eliminate gender bias and stereotyping and on gender-sensitive investigation and interrogation methods and include gender-responsiveness in their performance evaluations.
- **Need for capacity building of police officers.** Significant efforts have been made to train police officers in handling cases of domestic violence. A variety of stakeholders, with support also from civil society organizations, have established good practices in this regard. As noted in the latest GREVIO report, Albanian authorities have taken concrete steps to offer training on different forms of violence, including sexual violence, in addition to improving facilities for receiving victims in several police stations.³⁵ Police remain the first point of contact for most reported domestic

³¹ <http://klgj.al/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/NJË-HARTË-E-RE-GJYQËSORE-.pdf>

³² Annual reports of the General Prosecution Office, https://www.pp.gov.al/Dokumente/RAPORTE_T_PROKURORIT_T_P_RGJITHSH_M/

³³ Based on the calculation of data provided by the Government of Albania Action Plan on the execution of a domestic violence judgment of the European Court of Human Rights (Tërshana Albania), [https://hudoc.exec.coe.int/eng#f%22fulltext%22:%22Tërshana%22,%22EXECIdentifier%22:%222DH-DD\(2021\)746E%22%22](https://hudoc.exec.coe.int/eng#f%22fulltext%22:%22Tërshana%22,%22EXECIdentifier%22:%222DH-DD(2021)746E%22%22)

³⁴

<https://docstore.ohchr.org/SelfServices/FilesHandler.ashx?enc=u3YoFvbWoQUBDtDg1srsD5wPCyx0ix%2Fz23oB%2BUJmuy18SyM74ec9txr%2FJ3bhAFuUnI9P%2BFma9vNeNRt1wZH1%2Fw%3D%3D>

³⁵ <https://rm.coe.int/grevio-s-first-thematic-evaluation-report-on-albania/1680b1a0ca>

violence cases and immediately coordinate with Local Coordinators against Domestic Violence (LCDVs) for risk assessment, issuance and execution of Orders for Provisional Measures of Protection (OPMPs), Immediate Protection Orders (IPOs), referral to necessary services, and monitoring of Protection Orders (POs). However, the frequent rotation of police representatives in the Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MTTs), combined with the increased responsibilities assigned to SPZs who are not trained on their DV-GBV roles, along with the recent revocation of the dedicated positions in charge of juvenile protection and domestic violence in police stations, is affecting the effectiveness of risk assessment, investigation, enforcement of judicial decisions, and monitoring of DV-GBV cases involving POs. This highlights the need to expand the number of facilities and train police officers on all forms of violence, particularly rape and sexual violence.

- **Low capacity of prosecutors and judges:** Capacities to address violence against women are particularly low in the justice system. Despite the formal obligation of their participation and contribution to the functioning of the CRMs, their actual coordination with other actors is minimal and their preparedness to apply the law is in need of improvement. Many lack specialized training on gender-based violence, leading to poor case handling, reliance on stereotypes, and failure to apply relevant legal standards.³⁶ One of the key 2024 UPR recommendations included strengthening specialized gender-based violence units in the courts, the Office of the Public Prosecutor and the police.³⁷
- **Weak coordination between justice actors:** Poor communication and information-sharing between police, prosecutors, and courts hampers case continuity and timely prosecution. Monitoring conducted by CSOs showed that women are not informed about case developments, with digital tools rarely used.

Integrated policies:

- **Lack of a comprehensive legal framework and system to address all forms of VAW (including violence and harassment in the workplace and violence against women in politics):** while Albania has made important progress, including through the adoption of comprehensive legislation to ensure coordinated response from all relevant government agencies to domestic violence. However, the country continues to lack a comprehensive legislative system to address all forms of violence, including stalking, harassment, and sexual violence. While Albania's legislative framework has significantly improved since the program started there are several important and timely developments to fill remaining gaps, that the program will leverage throughout its implementation:
 - The overhaul of the Criminal Code, represents an opportunity to close the gap on definition of rape and other GREVIO, UPR, CEDAW, EU report recommendations.
 - The midline evaluation of the National Strategy for Gender Equality (2021-2030) presents an opportunity to take stock of its implementation and support the government in drawing lessons learned for the remainder of the implementation period.
- The revision of the Law on Gender Equality, with UN Women support, presents another opportunity to strengthen the legal framework. In addition, the ongoing revision of the current

³⁶ <https://rm.coe.int/grevio-s-first-thematic-evaluation-report-on-albania/1680b1a0ca>

³⁷ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/upr/al-index>

Domestic Violence Law into a law aligned with international standards and EU requirements and it presents an opportunity to strengthen and broaden the legal framework on Domestic Violence.

- **Limited financial and human resources in the gender equality machinery:** improvements have been made at the national and particularly at the local level. However, the existing national gender machinery remains under-resourced (both financially and in terms of human resources), resulting in limited effectiveness and implementation capacity of the system³⁸. In this context, the creation of a dedicated department to address these issues within the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare is a positive development which highlights the strong willingness by national authorities to invest and improve gender equality and gender mainstreaming.
- **Lack of a synchronized system for data collection:** data limitations related to GBV remains a persisting issue, and it's linked to challenges in the entire statistical system. The system is characterized by a significant gap between the data and information collected by institutions on the one hand, and the indicators required for monitoring international commitments to gender equality and tackle GBV. There is a lack of a synchronized system for data collection, which is currently inconsistent and not sufficiently rigorous, making it difficult to monitor the same GBV indicator over time. Data is mainly collected on domestic violence while other forms of violence are often categorized in generic terms as sexual crimes. In addition, there are limitations in the capacities of stakeholders to regularly collect data and use it for policy making. Finally, there is little formal evidence about the ways in which marginalized women and girls are affected by violence.
- **Limited funding for VAW activities:** the legal and institutional framework on gender responsive budgeting has improved and the main expenditures at the central level are dedicated to three national centers (for victims of DV, victims of trafficking and sexual violence), the national counselling hotline, and support to a few CSOs which offer services at the local level. In addition, a few municipalities have applied and benefited from the Social Fund for establishment of emergency shelters, mainly as part of community centers, through a competitive process. However, these funds, together with the economic aid provided to women victims of violence are not sufficient and remain far from the real financial needs, which have been lately detailed in the new National Strategy on Gender Equality and its Action Plan (2021-2030). At the local level, planning and expenditures on VAW services remain very limited and difficult to track as such funds are often included in the overall budget planning on social protection, making it difficult to identify real expenditures for services to survivor of violence.
- **Need to address limited effectiveness and monitoring implementation of the existing legal framework.** Albanian authorities have developed a generally robust legal framework, with few gaps as noted above. Despite this and a general willingness by Albanian authorities to address shortcomings, the existing legal framework is not fully implemented, a concern raised by different stakeholders, most recently noted in CEDAW's concluding observations as well as the Steering Committee meeting of the programme. While the revision of the Domestic Violence Law is

³⁸ According to a 2021 Evaluation Report of the Implementation of the NSGE 2016-2020, conducted by the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, its Sector on Policies and Strategies on Social Inclusion and Gender Equality (PSSI) is composed of five staff members, including the head of section. But, in addition to gender equality, the structure deals with minorities' rights, diversity, LGBTI+, persons with disabilities, child rights etc. Similarly, the gender equality focal points in other ministries are also entrusted with additional tasks, while the local level gender equality officers often serve both as Local Coordinator for Domestic Violence and Child Protection specialist.

underway, a key challenge remains the need to ensure that the legal framework is coherent and fully implementable. This requires not only the drafting of new by-laws but also the systematic revision and alignment of existing protocols and procedures with the provisions of the revised law. These efforts are essential to avoid inconsistencies and ensure the effective application of the law, which would otherwise be limited in its practice.

UN Women, UNDP and UNFPA have already worked jointly to address these challenges and have implemented the United Nations Joint Programme (UNJP) End Violence Against Women in Albania (EVAWIA) since January 2019, thanks to the generous contribution of the Government of Sweden. Building on this intervention and on the lessons learned and good practices that emerged, the UN Agencies proposes a new Phase of the Joint Programme and its cost extension which will aim to achieve the following results:

5. Women and girls enjoy more effective preventive measures against violence in Albania
6. All women survivors and those at risk are better protected from all forms of violence and have equitable access to services in Albania
7. Responsible institutions and actors implement national policies and legislation on VAW in a more comprehensive, inclusive and coordinated way in Albania
8. **The justice system demonstrates increased accountability and effectiveness in addressing all forms of violence against women**

Beyond the recently concluded Joint Programme, the three agencies have a long history of collaboration when it comes to fighting violence against women. Past initiatives include efforts to improve access to justice for survivors of violence; promoting the availability and accessibility of social services and social inclusion, promoting sexual and reproductive health for all, working with youth and other populations that are historically marginalized. The new United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) includes a dedicated output on Ending Violence Against Women and Children, which well-positions UN agencies to work jointly in this thematic area. In addition, the UN agencies jointly and successfully cooperate in other projects including the Leaving No One Behind Joint Programme, the EU for Gender Equality Joint Programme and the regional PBF-funded regional joint programme "Strengthening the role of youth in promoting increased mutual understanding, constructive narrative, respect for diversity, and trust in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Serbia, and Kosovo (1)", which is part of CF output 4.2 on Addressing Harmful Social Norms and Stereotypes.

In addition, the project complements and builds synergies with other ongoing interventions that address directly or as secondary results violence against women, both joint and bilaterally implemented, such as "EU for Gender Equality II – Gender Equality Facility in Albania" implemented by UN Women and supported by the European Union, the "Empower Women for Rural Development in Northern Albania" implemented by UN Women and supported by AICS, the regional programme "EU4 Gender Equality – Women's Economic Empowerment and Ending Violence Against Women" implemented by UN Women and UNDP, and the "Reduce gender based violence and harmful practices through gender responsive governance" supported by AICS and implemented by UNFPA. Areas of synergy include:

- Ensure geographical coordination and avoiding overlaps between the municipalities covered by the UN JP EVAW and other interventions. For example, there will be no geographical overlaps between the intervention on VAW conducted by UNFPA and supported by AICS and the geographical focus of the UN JP EVAW. Similarly, the UN Women

municipalities supported through the UN JP will not be the same ones supported through AICS. In addition, both UN Agencies will identify opportunities to replicate best practices and tools between interventions on preventing and addressing violence against women and girls, including the replication of the Be a Man clubs; replicating the costing of services for VAW at local level; and enhancing the effectiveness of the Coordinated Referral Mechanisms.

- Leverage best practices in terms of costing VAW services and developing and costing Local Gender Action Plans, including specific objectives dedicated to addressing violence against women, to support services for survivors, prevention and awareness raising activities, and more.
- Complementary thematic focus. The regional programme EU4 Gender Equality – Women’s Economic Empowerment and Ending Violence Against Women, implemented by UN Women and UNDP, does not have country-level activities and has a specific focus on addressing technology facilitated violence. In this context, the UN JP will provide a good platform to collect and disseminate best practices on addressing technology-facilitated violence.
- Leverage cross-programmatic expertise: the EU for Gender Equality II – Gender Equality Facility in Albania aims to promote gender mainstreaming in the context of EU accession across policy sectors. Applying that expertise in the field of violence against women and girls will support alignment of ongoing reforms with the EU gender equality acquis.

Each of the three agencies has its own unique comparative advantage when it comes to addressing violence, as explained in **Annex E: Comparative Advantages of Participating UN Agencies**. Leveraging such collaboration, and in the spirit of enhancing synergies and avoiding duplications, the JP will aim to complement and build synergies with other programmes to enhance impact and results of UN-wide efforts to end violence against women in Albania.

This proposal builds on the UNJP on EVAW, Phase I, the EU funded Regional Programme on EVAW, EU4GE Regional Programme on Women’s Economic Empowerment and Ending Violence Against Women and other initiatives that have led to tangible results in addressing violence against women, both as stand-alone project and as complements to initiatives led by the Government of Albania in the area of VAW. These include:

- Increase in economic aid to survivors of violence
- Increase availability of free legal aid
- Ensure that municipalities include, as part of their staff, a full-time local coordinator for domestic violence
- Financially support the national hotline for reporting violence against women
- Support the set-up and functioning of the LILIUM, a crisis management centre for survivors of sexual violence
- Gender responsive budgeting remains central to the overall planning and design of state budget, noting an increase of the total budget allocations for gender equality to 9% in the next MTBP 2022-2024 compared to 8 % in the previous year
- Increased allocations to addressing VAW as part of the NSGE 2021-2030: 50% of the NSGE budget is dedicated to EVAW, compared to the 33.9% allocated in the previous one. The funding gap for EVAW was also reduced to 15% compared to 64% in the previous NSGE.
- Paving the way for the Albanian government to regulate measures against tech-facilitated violence against women.

- Experimenting with innovative engagement methods to addressing VAW.
- Continuing to engage with men and boys as actors of change.
- Increased capacities of the members of the Coordinated Referral Mechanism to deliver basic and specialized services to all survivors of VAW using a multi-sectoral approach.

In addition, the second JP Phase and its extension builds on the work done directly with survivors of violence. Many of the CSOs involved in the first phase of the programme and in the regional project have conveyed the needs and priorities of survivors of violence through meetings, consultations and reports, which have been considered for developing this proposal. In addition, the proposal builds on the findings and lessons learned of the UNJP Phase I Evaluation Report, which included comprehensive consultations with CSOs and grassroots organisations providing direct services to victims, including to women and girls from disadvantaged communities. Individual meetings and a consultation was organised with key CSOs working in the area of gender equality and VAW and National Human Rights Institutions prior to the finalization of the proposal to validate the areas of focus of the intervention. Additional consultations will be organized during the inception phase of the project.

3. Rationale and theory of change

The proposed programme aims to address several if the above-mentioned causes that hinder efforts towards: (i) prevention of all forms of VAW; (ii) effective protection and provision of adequate services for survivors and (iii) development and implementation of effective and integrated policies on VAW. The theory of change of the proposed programme is built on the assumption that successful interventions to fight violence against women have to be comprehensive and multi-sectorial, covering all key measures that have proven to work in Albania and other countries. The international human rights framework on gender equality and EVAW, and particularly the Istanbul Convention, are the basis of the following theory of change:³⁹

If

- Women and girls enjoy more effective preventive measures against violence in Albania;
- Women survivors and those at risk are better protected from all forms of violence and have equitable access to services in Albania; and
- Responsible institutions and actors implement national policies and legislation on VAW in a more comprehensive, inclusive and coordinated way in Albania **and in line with international and EU standards;**
- **The justice system demonstrates increased accountability and effectiveness in addressing all forms of violence against women**

Then

Women and girls in Albania will live a life free from all forms of violence against women, have agency, voice and choice to exercise & enjoy their human rights.

Because

- CSOs and NHRIs promote accountability of service providers, including in the justice system, and have increased capacities to influence the GEWE agenda
- Men and boys are included in VAW prevention and existing perpetrators' programmes are strengthened

³⁹ <https://rm.coe.int/coe-istanbulconvention-brochure-en-r03-v01/1680a06d4f>

- State and non-state actors (CSOs, UN system, private sector, donors) are systematically engaged in prevention and protection of survivors of VAW and in raising overall awareness on EVAW
- Service providers and local response mechanisms to DV, including the coordinated mechanisms have increased capacities and tools to provide basic and specialized services to all survivors of VAW and inform women and girls about VAW reporting mechanisms
- State and non-state actors have strengthened capacities and resources to establish long-term rehabilitation and reintegration services for victims of VAW
- State institutions and actors have increased knowledge to improve the legal framework and policies on VAW so that they are comprehensive of prevention and protection measures for victims of all forms of violence and are in line with international **and EU** standards
- State and non-state actors at national and local level have improved coordination mechanisms in addressing VAW.
- **Judges and prosecutors are better prepared to investigate, prosecute and hold perpetrators to account.**

Some important **crosscutting principles** driving the proposed programme include:

- Mainstreaming of priorities and needs of rural women and women from disadvantaged communities, ensuring an intersectional approach throughout the programme;
- Reaching out to men and boys to ensure real transformative changes of patriarchal norms and practice;
- Using innovative approaches in preventive, capacity building and other interventions;
- Extending and strengthening partnerships with all possible actors, which directly or indirectly are responsible to address VAW especially at the local level.

A detailed description of outcomes, outputs and activities is available in **Annex A: Results Framework**. To achieve the planned results, UN Agencies will partner with existing and new stakeholders that include, but are not limited to, the following:

Government of Albania:

- Ministry of Health and Social Welfare
- State Police
- Ministry of Justice
- Ministry of Interior
- Ministry of Youth
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Finance and the Economy
- Selected municipalities
- Select Courts

Civil Society Organisations

Others:

- National Human Rights Institutions
- Albanian Parliament
- Media

A detailed overview of the partnership approach and project partners is available in **Annex D: Partnerships**.

Key assumptions and risks include:

Assumptions	Risks	Mitigation
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✓ There is already solid groundwork/actions to build up upon in the field of VAW in Albania; ✓ The obligation to implement the NSGE 2021-2030 will leverage government's availability to collaborate for the proposed programme; ✓ There is continuous international support, but also accountability in the area of VAW (in the context of EU accession, UN Human Rights Mechanisms, GREVIO) ✓ Institutions are generally open to work collaboratively across different levels to end VAW ✓ Collaboration with CSOs will continue to be effective and efficient ✓ Existing capacities of CSOs on monitoring and supporting human rights are solid and will continue to be strengthened ✓ There are solid existing capacities and openness of institutions to comply with and implement human rights standards ✓ Donors will continue to be interested in supporting GBV related interventions ✓ Stakeholders are willing to integrate perpetrators' programme as part of interventions on VAW as part of the latest legal provisions ✓ It will be possible to leverage existing best practices in different aspects of the proposed intervention (perpetrator programs, etc) ✓ The Government of Albania at central and local level will allocate funds to work on preventing VAW, providing services to survivors, and	<i>Resources-related risks:</i> ✓ Lack of funding opportunities; ✓ Public financial resources are allocated for emergencies rather than specifically for GE or using a gender-mainstreaming approach, which will be deprioritized (covid, economic crisis etc.) ✓ Lack of interest to invest on perpetrators' programme ✓ Continuous limitations in allocation of human resources in key institutions ✓ Diminished visible impact of the proposed intervention due to lack of focus in all key priority areas on EVAW, conditioned by the available funding. The programme will therefore not tackle all pillars of the Istanbul Convention nor address all recommendations emerging from the JP evaluation but just the most critical and urgent ones, where the Implementing Partner have the highest comparative advantage. <i>Public opinion-related risks:</i> ✓ VAW continues to be socially acceptable and traditionally harmful norms still persist; ✓ Public resistance towards progress in the GE agenda; ✓ Lack of self-regulatory mechanisms for the media; ✓ Push back against GEWE in the region, anti-gender narrative ✓ Lack of public understanding of the gendered dimension of violence ✓ Harmful social norms, resistance and anti-gender narrative <i>Judiciary-related risks:</i> ✓ Slow progress of the judicial reform and difficulty to	<i>Resource related risks:</i> ✓ Conduct joint resource mobilization efforts including seeking government contributions to the programme ✓ Integrate gender-responsive budgeting principles at the national and local level to increase public funds for EVAW initiatives. ✓ Support the inclusion of perpetrators' programmes in national and local plans and are recognized as an effective model for prevention. ✓ Continue to advocate for increased level of funding for service provision for survivors of violence, especially those experiencing multiple forms of discrimination ✓ Work with the newly established department of gender equality to enhance their capacities for gender mainstreaming and addressing gender based violence. <i>Public opinion related risks:</i> ✓ Continue to support CSOs in countering anti-gender narrative through strategic political communication ✓ Continue to implement long term, targeted and evidence based awareness raising campaigns linking gender equality with community well being. ✓ Continue to engage faith based organizations and community leaders as allies to address EVAW. ✓ Continue collaborate with the media especially in the context of the 16 days of

continuing to improve its framework in line with international standards. The Joint Programme is well-aligned with the National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021-2030, which has been costed and for which the Government of Albania is expected to provide funds. This would further contribute to the implementation of the proposed areas of interventions of this Joint Programme. In addition, the work foreseen in this JP with civil society and national human rights institutions will increase their lobbying to the government to ensure adequate budgetary allocation for the implementation of key priority areas for EVAW. ✓ Justice sector institutions are open to more closely collaborate with the programme partners.	collaborate with members of the judiciary due to increased workload as the result of removal a high number of judges and prosecutors from the system; ✓ High caseload due to restructuring of the justice system puts cases of domestic violence in the backburner ✓ Lack of capacity and understanding by judges and prosecutors of the specific needs of VAW survivors during adjudication of cases can undermine results. <i>Political risks:</i> ✓ Volatile political climate and upcoming local elections, which diverts the focus of local government partners; ✓ Political polarization impacting parliament's ability to push forward the GE and EVAW agenda. ✓ The GE agenda is deprioritized by political actors	activism and other major campaigns to promote accurate information and counter misinformation, including engaging wide audiences and identify influencers, sports personalities, private companies, students and youth and others. <i>Judiciary related risks:</i> - Established a new outcome of the UN JP dedicated to working with the judiciary. - Establish strong partnership with the Ministry of Justice and the School of Magistrates and conduct capacity building on new laws (Criminal Code and DV Law especially) <i>Political risks:</i> - Maintain non-partisan and norm-based communication and connect the EVAW agenda with social cohesion and good governance - Continue to engage Women Alliance of Parliamentarians, relevant Parliamentary Committees and other women's caucus
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The intervention is fully aligned with, and directly contribute to, priorities of several existing UN and government commitment in the country, including: the **United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2022 – 2026**, particularly Outcome C2 on Gender-Responsive Governance, outputs 4.1 on Ending Violence Against Women and Children and 4.2 on Addressing Stereotypes and Harmful Social Norms and Practices; the **National Strategy on Gender Equality and Action Plan 2021 – 2030**, particularly Policy Area III “- Reducing all forms of harmful practices, gender-based violence, and domestic violence”, the recently approved **EU Directive on violence against women** and the **EU Gender Action Plan III (GAP III)– 2021-2025**, thematic area “Ensuring freedom from all forms of gender-based violence”. In addition, this intervention contributes to achieving Sustainable Development Goal 5 on Gender Equality and target 5.2 “Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation”.

The intervention will build upon and leverage the **key lessons learned** from the previous phase of the Joint Programme 2019-2022. The Evaluation of Phase I highlighted several recommendations for future programming in this area, including:

- The importance to continue working with civil society organizations for service delivery, accountability and advocacy;
- More strategic interventions to address comprehensively all forms of violence against women;
- Include strategies to better target women from disadvantaged communities;
- Further build the capacities of key public actors at national, regional and local level addressing GBV;
- Continue supporting local stakeholders in addressing complex cases of violence, including from marginalized communities.
- Importance of capitalization of best practices in effectively preventing and managing cases of violence through an inter-disciplinary approach of local response mechanisms, supporting sustainability and increasing government ownership and commitment in this area.
- Addressing in a comprehensive way other forms of violence against women, including stalking, harassment, and sexual violence (GREVIO, 2017) will remain key.
- CRMs are understaffed and under resourced, and not tailored to address all forms of gender-based violence and all groups of persons in need. Therefore, the consolidation of multi-sectorial and institutional networks supporting cooperation between different CRMs, central governments, CSOs and other service providers, was a key result and enabler of the EVAWIA UNJP and remains key for the follow-up UNJP.
- Importance to continue working with civil society as a strong partner for ensuring service provision as well as advocate for legal and policy changes in the area of VAW

Overall, the evaluation concluded that the JP was relevant and contributed to key national and international commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment. Key lessons learned include:

- The importance to provide evidence base to understand conditions of vulnerability for women and improve advocacy accordingly
- Organize consultations with different stakeholders through the implementation process of the programme to identify areas in which increasing coordination is needed or to identify smaller initiatives and best practices to be brought within the programme to complement or expand efforts already initiated
- Continue to foster partnerships with experienced CSOs and promote cross sectorial response and partnerships to be able to address both prevention and protection aspects of VAW.
- Continuing with the provision of a "cross-sectorial coordinated response model of action to tackle VAW" was very effective because it distributed the responsibility of tackling GBV across all the actors in the system, created cross-efficiencies and promoted dialogue and sharing of expertise.
- The framework and monitoring systems need to continue to support the process of assessing and comparing delivery approaches across municipalities.
- Implement new and innovative pilots help to consolidate new best practices and involve new stakeholders

- Ensure complementarity with other ongoing initiatives implemented by the UN agencies added value to the programme results and increases the impact and outreach of stakeholders and communities.
- Intersectional approaches remain key to interventions addressing human rights along with a stronger understanding of the needs of each group.
- Building on existing initiatives, and particularly pilots that are focused on awareness raising and work with perpetrators.
- Engage with the public officials as implementing partners helps ensure government ownership and responsibility in implementing and institutionalizing reforms.
- Obligatory training in SOPs, protocols, and REVALB still requires further government ownership and leadership to ensure that the capacity development of all responsible institutions is sustained, particularly amid the clear risk of staff turnover. Institutionalization of the training curricula means that the support provided can be sustained.
- Financing essential services, such as those for survivors of violence requires interventions within the broader framework of all social protection, including the needs of persons with disabilities (particularly mental disabilities) and other vulnerable groups. More reflections and efforts are required to improve the current services in ensuring the provision of accessible and adequate services for all categories.

4. Steering and management arrangements

The existing **Steering Committee (SC)** is established to provide strategic oversight and guidance for the JP team for the implementation of this intervention. The SC oversees the JP's implementation and advises the UN JP team on all necessary strategic decisions based on the JP's initial plan and budget, as well as monitoring data. It will provide policy guidance and recommendations regarding the JP's strategy and objectives, receive and comment on annual reports, approve annual plans of operation and reports. The SC will meet at least twice a year and as needed. The SC will be composed of Sida's representative, the UNRC senior representatives of the participating UN agencies, a senior representative of the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, a representative of the EU Delegation to Tirana, a LGU representative and at least one representative of CSOs. Every effort will be made to link the SC to both the government-led coordination structures that address GB-VAW, and the UN Delivering as One structures. Secretariat functions are provided by UN Women.

A Technical Team will also be established, composed of representatives of each PUNO, to guide project implementation, coordinate implementation of interventions and ensure that results are delivered timely and efficiently. The Technical Committee will meet at least 4 times per year. Meetings of the Technical Committee will be called by the Leading Agency, which will also be responsible for documenting the proceedings of the meetings. Progress updates will be provided by all UN agencies one week prior to the Technical Committee meeting. The proposed JP will be implemented through the modality of the DaO mechanism, under the framework of the UN Albania Cooperation Framework 2022-2026, with the joint participation of three PUNOs, including UN Women, UNDP and UNFPA, which are highly involved in gender related issues and VAW. These Agencies will work in close partnership with relevant governmental bodies at the central and local levels, and CSOs. Implementation of the JP will be integrated into the overall architecture of the DaO approach, ensuring that activities are coordinated with Outcome 4 output 4.1 and 4.2 deliverables, in support of the Cooperation Framework 2022-2026. The JP log frame provides for the general framework and indicative deliverables that will be further fine-tuned and annualized in relevant annual work plans over a time frame of 30 months plus cost extension of 26 additional months.

UN Women will be the lead PUNO for the overall implementation and coordination of the JP, responsible for the effective management of JP resources and accountable for the delivery of results. UN Women will engage relevant staff and expertise to ensure effective coordination, quality assurance, monitoring and reporting. This will include a UN Joint Programme Coordinator, a project officer, and additional support staff, including communications capacities and monitoring and reporting support. Each participating UN agency will implement activities as defined in the JP joint work plan, drawing on Agencies responsibility identified in the JP results framework (Annex A), and on their comparative advantage reflected in Annex D.

The JP will ensure a cohesive and coordinated UN approach through internal coordination mechanisms in strategically targeting municipalities to ensure a critical mass of support and increased chance of success. It will ensure strategic integration and cohesion with other UN agencies as well as with development partners working in Albania in the areas of social inclusion and protection, public administration and local governance.

In terms of **communication**, the project will seek to raise awareness on the impact of violence against women and girls in Albania and hold duty bearers accountable for their commitments to ending violence against women. In this respect, various communications and advocacy initiatives will be carried out to increase the project's visibility and raise awareness about violence against women, including targeting the most excluded groups of women. Human interest stories, testimonials by project partners and beneficiaries, communication assets showcasing key results and media briefs will be regularly shared through UN Albania, UN Women, UNDP and UNFPA's country, regional and global websites, social media channels as well as partners' and donor's websites and platforms. The project also includes dedicated activities for communications and awareness raising, including advocacy efforts on harmful practices, as well as supporting national awareness raising campaigns such as the 16 days of activism to end violence against women, and engage media through improved media reporting around VAW.

All communication and visibility products will comply with Sida and UN Albania SDG Acceleration Fund Phase II as well as PUNOs' visibility guidelines.

5. Fund management modality

The overall budget for this JP is funded by Sida, and will be allocated through the Albania SDG Acceleration Fund Phase II. The JP results framework (Annex A) provides the general framework and indicative deliverables that will be funded through Sida's contribution alone. The Steering Committee will serve as the authority to provide strategic direction and oversight on the JP and provide relevant justification and advice to the One UN Joint Executive Committee for fund allocation decision making. The Administrative Agent is responsible for administering funds received in the SDG Acceleration Fund. Each Participating UN Organization retains programmatic and financial responsibility on the use of funds allocated from the Albania SDG Acceleration Fund Phase II.

The funds for the implementation of the JP will be allocated through the Albania SDG Acceleration Fund Phase II structure. As the three participating UN Agencies (UN Women, UNDP and UNFPA) have agreed to utilize the ongoing Albania SDG Acceleration Fund Phase II, where the UNDP Multi-partner Trust Fund Office acts as the Administrative Agent (AA), the funds assigned to these PUNOs under the JP Document will be channeled through the SDG Acceleration Fund Phase II. When making the final decision for allocation, the One UN Joint Executive Committee will request the signed joint annual workplans and request for funds.

The Administrative Agent will: (1) prepare and sign a Standard Administrative Arrangement with Sida; (2) charge a standard administrative agent fee of one per cent (1%) of the total contribution made to the Albania SDG Acceleration Fund for this JP, for its costs of performing the AA's functions.

The Lead PUNO and Participating UN Organizations will: (1) assume full programmatic and financial responsibility and accountability for the funds transferred by the Albania SDG Acceleration Fund Phase II for this JP; (2) deduct their indirect costs on contributions received according to their regulations and rules, including direct programme charges, considering the size and complexity of the JP. Each PUNO will deduct 7% overhead costs of the total allocation received for the Agency.

A clear breakdown of roles and responsibilities is available in the results framework (Annex A) as well as in the description of agencies' comparative advantages (Annex E).

6. Monitoring, learning, and reporting

Monitoring and evaluation are integral parts of programme management. They will be conducted in accordance with the UNSCF 2022-2026, and especially Output 4.1 on ending violence against women and children, as well as Sida's Regional Strategy for the Western Balkans and Turkey. The monitoring and reporting processes for the proposed JP will involve gathering data to make timely and informed judgments and assessments of progress, including among others, the identification of strengths and weaknesses of the implementation of the JP.

The purpose of the JP's monitoring and evaluation (M&E) is fourfold: (1) **JP steering**: data is collected and processed in view of central dimensions of the JP's steering –both at the strategic and operational level; (2) **quality assurance**: detailed information on the JP and its context, and on the JP's implementation for continuous monitoring; (3) **learning**: data is collected for the programme's own learning, to improve interventions of similar actions by other actors, and to develop capacities of its implementers and target groups. Effective and efficient learning from JP data and experience requires that lessons learned be identified and communicated in appropriate forms; (4) **accountability**, including reporting: monitoring data and findings will be continuously use evidence to answer questions and provide explanations for decisions and the achievement of results at all levels of programming.

Monitoring is a continuous task of JP management. It provides both quantitative and qualitative data, and it is based on indicators defined in the log frame. Whenever suitable, beneficiaries will be involved in monitoring activities. This especially applies to the level of local service provision. However, CSOs shall also be involved in the monitoring of performance by central and local government actors.

Monitoring data will be collected and processed mainly by the UN Agencies involved in the implementation of this JP. However, all other stakeholders will also be involved in programme monitoring –as observers of context and implementation. Data is then made available to the SC. Monitoring data will also provide an important basis for evaluations and reviews of the programme –both internal and external ones.

The fields of observation covered by the JP's monitoring include:

- (1) **Context:** the institutional, social and economic conditions under which the JP is being implemented will be observed in order to allow for seizing opportunities (for involving additional actors, for supporting interesting local initiatives, etc.), for reacting to newly emerging risks, for adapting the policy dialogue led with authorities, etc.
- (2) **Results:** the regular monitoring of and reporting on achievements is based on evidence provided by monitoring data, mainly the indicators defined in the results framework.
- (3) **Efficiency:** the JP's efficiency will be assessed primarily financially, comparing budget with expenditures. Additional dimensions of efficiency (but not only) can be observed by also monitoring the quality of cooperation between the involved actors and processes necessary for implementing the JP.
- (4) **Cooperation:** the many actors involved in the JP at different levels requires intense, continued, and sometimes punctual cooperation between them. The monitoring of the quality of these types of cooperation (in the field, at the level of the Steering Committee, among the implementing actors (UN organizations, CSOs, municipal services, etc.) can support the understanding of the JP regarding qualitative dimensions.
- (5) **Processes:** the quality of processes of the JP's implementation, e.g., the introduction of new practices for providing social services at the local level, will be monitored to have a more complete, and again, qualitative understanding of the implementation of the JP.

The main instruments for monitoring are:

- (1) The **JP's results framework**, which will allow for assessing progress in the implementation, achievement of objectives and foreseen outputs and outcomes. The indicators and target values defined by the different outcomes and outputs are the main means for assessing the JP's effectiveness and impact.
- (2) **An annual work plan (AWP)** sets out activities to be implemented by each Agency, along with associated budgets/resources in line with the Results Framework. It will describe in detail the required inputs and the expected results within the given timeframe. In addition, AWP's will provide information on contributing partners. The JP's AWP will be approved by the SC and will be the basis for programmatic activities throughout the year.
- (3) **An annual JP progress report** will be prepared jointly by the participating UN Agencies and shared with the SC and Sida along with the updated workplan for the following year.
- (4) **JP budget** (structured in line with the results framework) and its comparison with actual expenditures. This will allow for assessing the utilization of financial resources, delays in expenditures and shortages of funds if disbursements are made rapidly;
- (5) **(Joint) field visits** of members of the SC will allow for observations that can contribute to their understanding of the context, of the conditions under which the programme is implemented, and of the programme itself; these will importantly feed into the SC deliberations.

7. Sustainability:

Sustainability of results will be pursued through a series of approaches that intend to improve Albania's prevention and response to VAW. These include: (1) Full alignment with national and local policies and strategies: the proposed intervention is aligned with the strategic priorities of the National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021-2030, and, to the extent possible, it will support the implementation of measures against gender-based violence foreseen in the Local Gender Action Plans developed by targeted municipalities, signatories of the European Charter for Equality of women and men in local life. (2) Investments in actors, processes and persons: the strengthening of organizations (for service provision,

monitoring and adapting policies, funding services, etc.), the introduction and improvement of mechanisms for cooperation between actors (at central and local government levels as well as between the two levels, state and civil society, recipients and providers of social services, civil society and national human rights institutions), and the development of capacities of individuals (service providers, policy makers etc.), should have effects beyond the duration of this second phase of the JP. (3) The continued support to developing standard economic reintegration for survivors of violence would have lasting impact on the extent to which survivors can successfully live a life free of violence and contribute to Albania's socio-economic life beyond the timeframe of the JP. (4) Building synergies with other donors and projects supporting the prevention of and response to VAW is of paramount importance in order to maximize the use of financial resources for lasting interventions and avoid duplication. The JP will coordinate closely with other ongoing intervention in the area of Gender-Responsive Budgeting and the EU-funded Gender Equality Facility project (EU for Gender Equality project), to ensure maximum cross-fertilization of results especially when it comes to promoting budget allocations to gender equality and women's empowerment at central and local level, and ensuring that gender is mainstreamed across policy sectors. (5) Building on and scaling up the good practices that emerged from the Phase I of the Joint Programme. These include the financial support to the national helpline, the increase of economic aid for survivors of violence, enhancing municipalities' support to CSOs, integrating DV coordinators as part of the municipalities' teams, promote legal aid to all survivors of violence and increase the availability of emergency shelters such as the LILIUM center. Whilst the project could have also included more prominently elements such as early childhood education and GRB, the limited funding available would not allow to cover these areas. However, the Ministry of Finance and the Economy as well as the Ministry of Education will be engaged in the implementation of the project as part of awareness-raising efforts and to ensure coordinated policy development and implementation. In addition, the costing of DV services at local level has led to increased financial allocations to such services.

In the context of the outcome on prevention, the work with men and boys and on awareness raising seeks to promote behavioural changes that will last beyond the timeframe of the project. Working with actors at the local level is also amongst the key priorities for the EVAW JP Phase II, as well as increasing capacities of service providers to respond to cases of women and girls from marginalized groups. Finally, as mentioned above, the activities focused on policy change and alignment of national frameworks with international standards will have a lasting impact on addressing EVAW in Albania. The JP has been developed in full alignment with the strategic priorities of the National Strategy for Gender Equality (2021-2030), and many of the planned activities will require funding from the Government of Albania in line with its commitments in the National Strategy. The purpose of the JP is to complement such efforts.

The extension of UN JP EVAW II seeks to increase joint resource mobilization efforts to enhance funding for violence against women, including from public sources, through direct government contributions to the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks, as well as other potential donors based on upcoming opportunities.

The initial implementation phase of the UN Joint Programme revealed that several areas of work continue to need support. These include continuous capacity building support for the functioning of the Coordinated Referral Mechanism, as evidenced by the most recent report in 2023. In addition, despite some increase of public funds dedicated to services for survivors of violence, recent reviews, including the GREVIO report for Albania, indicate the crucial role that civil society organizations continue to play in providing such services and support women survivors of violence through legal aid and representation, shelter, medical support, employment support etc. Women experiencing multiple forms of discrimination, for instance women with disabilities, are particularly vulnerable to violence and face additional obstacles to access services.

While recognizing these needs, the project extension will retain a reduced level of support to capacity building for the CRMs at local level and to the direct support to civil society organizations (transfers to CSOs are projected to decrease by 63% in the project extension), opting for a more sustainable approach. The UN JP extension will:

- Provide support to the most effective partners delivering services as well as the most strategic/urgent services and target population;
- Leverage other ongoing interventions and replicate best practices, tools and models. This includes working with municipalities to develop, monitor and cost Local Gender Action Plans, to ensure adequate focus on services for survivors of violence against women.
- Leverage other interventions that support scale up of gender responsive social services as part of social care plans, including those addressing VAW cases
- Leverage other sources of funds to sustain best practices to address VAW including the Femicide Watch.
- Work closely with relevant institutions that accredit training material on EVAW.
- Continue foster networking and peer-to-peer exchange between members of the CRM.

Ongoing reform processes will also support the sustainability of the intervention. For instance, the new DV Law, currently being supported by the UN Joint Programme implementing agencies, is set to include all forms of violence following several years of advocacy efforts by UN Agencies, local CSOs and international bodies (CEDAW, Istanbul Convention and others). Due to its wider scope, more resources will be needed to implement the law. This is consistent with the commitment recently announced by the GoA on the margins of the UN General Assembly 80th session, i.e. to ensure that all municipalities in Albania will provide the full range of services to survivors of gender-based violence by 2030, and to sustain and expand the application of gender responsive budgeting. As part of the project extension, UN will support the development of sub-legal acts and it will conduct the costing of the legislation as one strategy to ensure the sustainability of the efforts made through UNJP and other programming. Complementary to this, the revisions to the Criminal Code and the Gender Equality Law, all of which are being supported with technical expertise by the UN JP, indicate government's willingness and commitment to push forward the GEWE agenda, and specifically increasing efforts to combat all forms of violence. The added outcome 4 of the UN Joint Programme, focused on the judiciary, will help follow up from key activities conducted during the initial implementation of the intervention such as the monitoring of courts, which revealed that working with the judiciary is essential to ensure that cases of violence are properly addressed in the justice system and that the laws are actually being implemented in practice.

Project partners will continue to foster deep working relationships especially with the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, and the recently established department for gender equality and will support the capacities of the department to address violence against women. In addition, strong partnerships with Parliament, NHRIs and other institutions and continuous advocacy by the UN JP and partners, including Sida and other key members of the international community such as the EU Delegation, will support alignment of key legislation with international standards including EU negotiation benchmarks, which will support sustainability of results.

Programme Goal: Women and girls in Albania will live a life free from all forms of violence against women, have agency, voice and choice to exercise & enjoy their human rights.

Outcomes	Outcome Indicators	Baseline ⁴⁰ / Target	Achievement as of December 2023	Achievement as of December 2024	Update January 2025 - July 2025	Data Sources Means of Verification, Frequency and Responsibility	Proposed new/adjusted indicators for project extension until December 2027
Outcome 1: Women and girls enjoy more effective preventive measures against violence in Albania.	Indicators O1.1: Number of policies/procedures that demonstrate alignment with CEDAW and Istanbul Convention ⁴¹ O1.2: Number of CSO recommendations addressed by government/reflected in legal, policy and regulatory framework on VAW.	Baseline O1.1: 13 (Source: EVAWIA Phase I final PMF report) O1.2: 14 (HRDC reports) Target: O1.1: 4 new policies or procedures in place aligned with CEDAW and Istanbul Conventions O1.2: 2 more recommendations addressed in legal, policy and regulatory frameworks	O1.1: 0, on track O1.2: 0, on track	O1.1: 0 O1.2: 2: Directorate of GE within the Ministry following CSO advocacy, ASP and disability-related data in REVALB	O1.1: 3 . Three sexual harassment policies have been finalised and introduced in workshops with the municipalities of Skrapar, Berat, and Malësi e Madhe on 9 and 22 September O1.2: 0 . Projected by end of project: recommendations to DV Law	Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, Ministry of Justice CSO reports, updated and/or amended frameworks Frequency: Annually Responsibility: UN Project Teams	O1.1: Slight reformulation of the indicator as: "Number of policies/procedures that demonstrate alignment with CEDAW and Istanbul Convention" Revised target: 1 more O1.2: Maintain indicator. Revised target: 2 more Added indicator O1.3: Resources jointly mobilized by project partners to address VAW. Baseline: 150,000 UK pounds; Target: 500,000.00 USD Added indicator O1.4: Be a Man Club methodology institutionalized by the Ministry of Education. Baseline: No. Target: Yes
Outcome 2: Women survivors and those at risk are better protected from all forms of violence and have equitable access to services in Albania	Indicators O2.1: Number of DV cases addressed through the CRMs ⁴² O2.2: Whether there is an approved model for socio-economic reintegration O2.3: a) Number of domestic violence cases/ violence against women cases reported to the police; b) share of reported cases of VAWG to authorities for which protection orders are issued	Baseline: O2.1: 450 (2020) (UNDP, CPD) O2.2: Not in place O2.3: a) 5,214; b) 56.6% (Source: Albanian State police) Target: O2.1: 500 (annual) O2.2: Yes – an approved model is in place for socio-economic reintegration O2.3: a) 0.1% increase in number of cases reported, b) 56% of reported cases are accompanied by a protection order	O2.1: 621 O2.2: Not in place O2.3: 5,064 domestic violence cases reported and 2,730 protection orders issued (53.9%), no change.	O2.1: 775 O2.2: Not in place O2.3: 5,445 cases reported (increase of 7% from baseline), and 2,934 protection orders issued (53.9%)	O2.1: 378 O2.2: No O2.3: Data available at the end of the year	REVALB. Official reports of Ministry of Health and Social Welfare Police reports CSO reports Frequency: Annually Responsibility: UN Project Teams	O2.1: Maintain indicator and target O2.2: Adjust indicator to Existence of an approved model by the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare. Target: Yes O2.3: Maintain indicator. Revised target: 8% increase from baseline and 57% of PO issued Add indicator O2.4 Availability of certified module on EVAW by accredited public institution. Baseline: No Target: Yes Add indicator O2.5: Availability of protocol to

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⁴⁰ All baselines refer to 2022, unless otherwise stated

⁴¹ Derived from UN Albania Cooperation Framework Indicator 4.1A: Number of laws and regulations, based on international human rights norms and standards, developed with UN support to: a) Eliminate violence against women and girls (EVAWG) including harmful practices (HP); b) promote equal access to sexual and reproductive health (SRH) care, information and education

⁴² Cooperation framework indicator 4.1B: "No. of DV cases addressed through CRMs"

⁴³ Derived from UN Albania Cooperation Framework Indicator 4.1A: Number of laws and regulations, based on international human rights norms and standards, developed with UN support to: a) Eliminate violence against women and girls (EVAWG) including harmful practices (HP); b) promote equal access to sexual and reproductive health (SRH) care, information and education

	1.1c: Number of monitoring reports developed by CSOs on the judiciary monitoring on addressing cases of VAW. 1.1d: Number of reports submitted by NHRIs and/or CSOs to improve the existing legislation on VAW, in line with GREVIO and CEDAW recommendations as a result of programme support 1.1e Number of CSOs with increased capacities in strategic litigation	Target: 1.1a 11 CSOs working on addressing VAW benefit from capacity building efforts 1.1b: At least 2 new advocacy initiatives (annually) 1.1c: 2 monitoring reports on the judiciary issued by CSOs 1.1d: 3 reports submitted to improve VAW legislation 1.1e: 1 CSO with increased capacities in strategic litigation	1.1b: 5 advocacy initiatives, on track 1.1c: 0 1.1d: 2 1.1e: 0	1.1d: 2 CSO reports submitted to improve legislation in line with intel' standards: GEL report and UPR shadow report 1.1e: 0	1.1e: TBD	1.1d: 2 CSO reports submitted to improve legislation in line with intel' standards: GEL report and UPR shadow report 1.1e: 0	1.1d: Discontinue indicator as as UN JP will not work on this item 1.1e: Discontinue indicator 1.1f Additional indicator 'Number of VAW cases referred/addressed through faith based organizations'.
Output 1.2: Men and boys are included in VAW prevention and existing perpetrators' programmes are strengthened	Indicators: 1.2a Number of perpetrators supported by the programme 1.2b Number of men and boys engaged in shaping non-harmful narratives 1.2c Number of new initiatives and/or existing ones scaled up targeting the engagement of men and boys in addressing VAW	Baseline: 1.2a: 0 1.2b: 250 1.2c: 15 Men Engage clubs nationally Target: 1.2a: 10 perpetrators supported 1.2b: 250 men and boys engaged annually 1.2c: 5 new schools per year developing the clubs	1.2a: 0 1.2b: 1,184, men and boys engaged by the UN JP 1.2c: 5, Be a Man Club initiative scaled up to another municipality (Kavaja).	1.2a: 28 perpetrators supported 1.2b: 780 men and boys engaged through the UN JP, with support by the Government of the UK 1.2c: 5 new clubs established in Patos, Cerrik, Klos, Rrogozhine, and Kavaja Institute for Juveniles, with support by the Government of the UK.	1.2a: 20 cases and 26 sessions 1.2b: 734 1.2c: 15 active clubs	Activity reports CSO reports Frequency: Semi-annually Responsibility: UN Project Teams	1.2a: Adjust formulation. Number of perpetrators receiving JP support who have not used violence one year after completing the session. Target: 100% 1.2b: Maintain indicator Revised target: 50 annually 1.2c: Maintain indicator Revised target: 8 more clubs
Output 1.3: State and non-state actors (CSOs, UN system, private sector, donors) are systematically engaged in prevention and protection of survivors of VAW and in raising overall awareness on EVAW	Indicators: 1.3a Number of interactions through social media 1.3b Number of media forums organized to raise awareness on ethical reporting on VAW 1.3c Number of awareness raising initiatives conducted with and by: - CSOs - Private sector - Government (central and local level) 1.3d Number of media professionals trained to report in accordance with journalism and international reporting standards related to GB-VAW 1.3e: Number of people participating in VAW awareness raising activities (disaggregated by sex)	Baseline: 1.3a: Over 3,000,000 interactions (EVAW/A phase I report) 1.3b: 3 1.3c: 2 (IWD and 16 days) 1.3d: 32 journalists trained on ethical and legal standards for reporting on GB-VAW and privacy protection of victims and guidelines for media on better addressing the issues of GE&VAVG revised (Source: EVAW/A Phase I end of project report) 1.3e: 1,681 people (EVAW/A Phase I report) Target: 1.3a: At least 3,000,000 interactions on social media	1.3a: 221,327 1.3b: 1 media forum 1.3c: 61 awareness raising activities conducted 1.3d: 14 media professionals 1.3e: 2,430 people were reached by UN and implementing partners through awareness raising activities, of which at least 1,577 women (65%), 18 Roma women and 13 women with disabilities, achieved.	1.3a: 3 additional media forums organized in 2024. 1.3c: 38 activities planned and conducted during the 16 days of activism, including by CSO partners, private sector and in partnership with the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare. 1.3d: 43 media professionals (including 2 men) with increased capacities to report cases of VAW.	1.3a: TBD 1.3b: no updates/activity completed 1.3c: no updates, more will be done in 16 days 1.3d: no updates/activity completed 1.3e: no updates, more will be done in 16 days	Social media analytics (including re-shares, viewers, interactions), event reports (including sign up sheets) and exhibit reports (sign up sheet etc) Media forum agendas and sign-up sheets Frequency: Semi-annually Responsibility: UN Project Teams	1.3a: Maintain indicator. Revised target: 500,000 interactions 1.3b: Discontinue indicator as UN JP will no longer support this activity 1.3c: Maintain indicator. Revised target: 5 per year 1.3d: Discontinue indicator as UN JP will no longer contribute to this work 1.3e: Maintain indicator. Revised target: 100 per year

olicies and legislation on VAW in a more comprehensive, inclusive and coordinated way in Albania

Output 3.1: State institutions improve the legal framework and policies on VAW so that they are comprehensive measures for prevention and protection of victims of all forms of violence and line with international standards and EU commitments	Indicators: 3.1a Number of advocacy activities conducted on CEDAW concluding observations pertaining to VAW 3.1b Training modules on implementation of GBV legislation available for professional education institutions 3.1c Number of institutions/partners with increased capacities to implement policies in compliance with ILO C 190	Baseline: 3.1a: 0 3.1b 2 - ASCAP (teacher training on GBV as part of the CSE) 3.1c: 3 (DoPA, ASP, Ministry of Defence) Target: 3.1a: At least 1 advocacy activity 3.1b: 1 more 3.1c: 9 partners including 7 private sector companies	3.1a: 1 3.1b: 1 module is being piloted in target municipalities for educational professionals and also other members of the CRM. It will be finalized and shared with the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare in early 2024, on track. 3.1c: 0	3.1a: 1 3.1b: Module delivered in Administrative Units in Tirana, Elbasan, Vlorë, Himara, Delvinë, Saranda and the commitment of the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare to institutionalize it. 3.1c: 21 institutions/partners with increased capacities to implement the ILO C190: 20 private sector companies (signatories of the Women Empowerment Principles) and the Anti-Discrimination Commissioner	3.1a: no update/activity completed 3.1b: no update 3.1c: no update/activity completed	Data collected in the framework of the project's monitoring. Project reports. Frequency: Semi-annually Responsibility: UN Project Teams	3.1a: Revise indicator to 'Number of laws/by-laws on EVAW that the UNIP supports through technical assistance and inputs in line with CEDAW and other international standards'. Baseline: 1 (Criminal code), Target: 2 more (DV Law and Family Code) 3.1b: Discontinue indicator 3.1c: Discontinue indicator
Output 3.2: State and non-state institutions and actors (CSOs, donors, UN Agencies, public oversight bodies and members of the referral mechanisms) at national and local level have improved coordination in addressing VAW	Indicators: 3.2a Number of parliamentary committee/subcommittee meetings/hearings/debates/constituent meetings on GB-VAW 3.2b Number of cross-municipal, cross-border multi-stakeholder networking and exchange initiatives 3.2c Number of monitoring reports on NSGE implementation prepared	Baseline: 3.2.a: 10 meetings/hearings/debates of parliamentary committee/subcommittee on GB-VAW took place (Source: EVAWIA Phase I report) 3.2.b: 8 (Source: EVAWIA Phase I report) 3.2.c: 1 Target: 3.2.a: At least one per year 3.2.b: At least 1 initiative per year 3.2.c: 2 reports (2023, 2024)	3.2a: 2 3.2b: 1	3.2a: 2 debates on digital violence held by Parliament with support of UN JP. 3.2b: 3 meetings held in 2024: two of the Network of Local Coordinators Against Domestic Violence and one of the Network of the members of the Coordinated Referral Mechanisms in Berat, Skrapar, Polican, Dimal and Kukove (2 of the meetings with support from the Government of the United Kingdom) 3.2c: 1 report produced in 2024.	3.2a: no updated, one will be done prior to project end date 3.2b: 1 meeting held with support from the Government of the United Kingdom, 1 meeting with support of UNIP. 3.2c: No update, one in progress	Parliament website and reports Meeting agendas and reports NSGE monitoring report Frequency: Semi-annually Responsibility: UN Project Teams	3.2a: Maintain indicator and target. 3.2b: Moved indicator under output 2.1 3.2c: Discontinue indicator

Added output 3.3: Data users and producers have increased capacities to collect coherent evidence on VAW	Added indicators: 3.3a: Number of data users who demonstrate improved knowledge and skills in collecting coherent evidence on VAW	Baseline: 17 (pre-survey conducted with the Local Coordinators against Domestic Violence) Target: 35				Project reports, REVALB system, pre-and post-survey for users	
Added outcome 4: The justice system demonstrates increased accountability and effectiveness in addressing all forms of violence against women.							
Added output 4.1: Judges, prosecutors, and other legal professionals have enhanced their capacities to address violence against women	Indicators: 4.1a: Number of judges and prosecutors and other members of the judiciary with increased capacities to address VAW 4.1b: Number of judges acting as champions of GE (speaking out about gender justice, promoting and supporting other women judges etc.)	Baseline: 4.1a: 0 4.1b: 0 Target: 4.1a: at least 20 (disaggregated by sex) 4.1b: at least 2 (by sex)				Project reports, pre-post assessments, official gazette	

Annex B1: Original project budget and Updated Workplan for Project extension

Original budget

Description	Total Sida contribution (\$)	UN Women				UNFPA				UNDP														
		2023	2024	2025	Total UN Women	2023	2024	2025	Total UNFPA	2023	2024	2025	Total UNDP											
Outcome 1: Women and girls enjoy more effective preventive measures against violence in Albania																								
Output 1.1: CSOs and NHRIs promote accountability of service providers, including in the justice system and have increased capacities to influence the GEWE agenda	\$	33,000	\$	52,000	\$	3,000	\$	88,000	\$	30,000	\$	25,000	\$	20,000	\$	75,000	\$	22,400	\$	23,600	\$	10,000	\$	56,000
Output 1.2: Men and boys are included in VAW prevention and existing perpetrators' programmes are strengthened	\$	35,000	\$	60,000	\$	25,000	\$	120,000	\$	20,000	\$	12,500	\$	7,500	\$	40,000	\$	18,000	\$	18,000	\$	9,000	\$	45,000

Output 1.3: State and non-state actors (CSOs, UN system, private sector, donors) are systematically engaged in prevention and protection of survivors of VAW and in raising overall awareness on EVAW	\$	67,500	\$	72,500	\$	2,000	\$	142,000	\$	20,000	\$	20,000	\$	20,000	\$	20,000	\$	60,000	\$	36,000	\$	36,000	\$	18,000	\$	90,000
Total outcome 1	\$	716,000	\$	135,500	\$	184,000	\$	30,000	\$	350,000	\$	70,000	\$	57,500	\$	47,500	\$	175,000	\$	76,400	\$	77,600	\$	37,000	\$	\$191,000
Outcome 2: All women survivors and those at risk are better protected from all forms of violence and have equitable access to services in Albania																										
Output 2.1: Service providers and local response mechanisms to DV have increased capacities and tools to provide basic and specialized services to all survivors of VAW and inform women and girls about VAW reporting mechanisms	\$	102,000	\$	150,000	\$	15,000	\$	267,000	\$	10,000	\$	10,000	\$	10,000	\$	10,000	\$	30,000	\$	104,400	\$	79,400	\$	37,700	\$	221,500
Output 2.2: State and non-state institutions have strengthened capacities and resources to establish a long-term rehabilitation and reintegration services for all victims of VAW	\$	120,000	\$	145,000	\$	-	\$	265,000	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-	\$	46,408	\$	45,408	\$	23,235	\$	116,051
Total outcome 2	\$	933,551	\$	222,000	\$	295,000	\$	532,000	\$	15,000	\$	10,000	\$	10,000	\$	10,000	\$	30,000	\$	150,808	\$	125,808	\$	60,935	\$	\$ 331,551
Outcome 3: Responsible institutions and actors implement national policies and legislation on VAW in a more comprehensive, inclusive and coordinated way in Albania																										
Output 3.1: State institutions improve the legal framework and policies on VAW so that they are comprehensive of prevention and protection measures for victims of all forms of violence and live with international and EU standards and commitments	\$	19,000	\$	19,000	\$	-	\$	38,000	\$	17,000	\$	15,000	\$	10,000	\$	42,000	\$	40,800	\$	40,800	\$	20,400	\$		\$	102,000
Output 3.2: State and non-state institutions and actors (CSOs, donors, UN Agencies, public oversight bodies and members of the referral mechanisms) at national and local level have improved coordination in addressing VAW	\$	30,000	\$	28,366	\$	-	\$	58,366	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-	\$	13,600	\$	13,600	\$	6,800	\$	34,000
Total Outcome 3	\$	240,366	\$	49,000	\$	47,366	\$	96,366	\$	17,000	\$	15,000	\$	10,000	\$	42,000	\$	54,400	\$	54,400	\$	27,200	\$		\$	102,000
Grand total for outcomes and outputs	\$	1,889,517	\$	406,500	\$	526,866	\$	978,366	\$	45,000	\$	97,000	\$	82,500	\$	67,500	\$	247,000	\$	281,608	\$	257,808	\$	125,135	\$	\$ 664,551
Project management costs	\$	58,571	\$	76,888	\$	38,444	\$	173,902																		
Communications	\$	11,646	\$	11,646	\$	5,823	\$	29,114																		

[illegible]

Budget for Project extension

[illegible]

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[illegible]

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3.1.8: Support development of relevant multisectoral protocol on the management of effective cases where women/girls with intellectual disabilities (UNDP)	Reflected in outcome ²
3.1.9: Boost further the partnership with ASPA, School of Magistrates, Academy of State Police aiming to include in their training curricula, certified training modules on GBV related legislation (UNDP and UN Women)	To be continued
3.1.10 Organize policy Dialogue with Agencies responsible for Training and Accreditation for Health and Social Care providers (QKEV, Health Operator) and State Social Service on the Capacity Development Plan for service providers. (UNFPA)	Not to be continued as part of UN JP
3.1.11: Boost partnership with ASCAP and Teacher Training faculties to improve the teacher training curricula to include modules on GBV and related legislation. (UNFPA)	To be continued
3.1.12: Implement EU roadmap on child/forced and early marriage including advocating for the changes in the age of consent in	Not to be continued as part of UN JP.

Output	Activities	Notes	Outcome 4: The justice system demonstrates increased accountability and effectiveness in addressing all forms of violence against women.									
			Budget (USD) amount UN Women					Budget (USD) amount UNDP				
			2025	2026	2027	2025	2026	2027	2025	2026	2027	Grand total
Output 3.2: State and non-state institutions and actors (CSOs, donors, UN Agencies, public oversight bodies and members of the referral mechanisms) at national and local level have improved coordination in addressing VAW	partnership with NHRI (UNFPA)											
	3.2.1: Organize networking opportunities amongst members of the referral mechanism (UNDP and UN Women)	Merged with activity 2.1.5										
	3.2.2: Organize a national conference on EAW and the implementation of relevant provisions in the NSGE (UN Women)	Completed - Not to be continued within the UN JP										
	3.2.3: Organize a study visit to exchange on best practices on VAW (UN Women)	Placed in Outcome 2										
	3.2.4: Support the Albanian Parliament in reactivating its GE mechanisms and exercising a more increased monitoring role of government's actions in fighting all forms of VAW (UN Women)	To be continued										
Output 3.3: Data users and producers have increased capacities to collect coherent evidence on VAW	3.3.1 Enhance data collection at local level for VAW - Review data collection methodologies on VAW and develop proposal for their harmonization (UNDP)	New activity										
Total for the outcome			\$ 15,000.00	\$ 50,600.00	\$ 27,000.73	\$ 7,000.73	\$ 57,002.87	\$ 35,420.00	\$ -	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 205,025.90
			Budget (USD) amount UN Women					Budget (USD) amount UNDP				
			2025	2026	2027	2025	2026	2027	2025	2026	2027	Grand total

Output 4.1: Judges, prosecutors, and other legal professionals have enhanced their capacities to address violence against women	4.1.1 - Capacity development of members of the judiciary including judges, prosecutors, bailiffs, forensic experts and others about international standards related to investigation and prosecution of cases of VAW, in close collaboration with the School of Magistrates (UN Women and UNDP)	New activity	These costs for this output cover the fees for the experts (appr. 25 days), as well as the logistical arrangements for the trainings with the School of Magistrates. Costs are calculated based on UN rates and UN Long term Agreement with service providers. In addition, the activity covers grants for responsible parties/implementing partners.					\$ 9,999.26	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 15,850.00	\$ 15,850.00				\$ 91,700.00
	4.1.2 Support the establishment of a network of judges and prosecutors to act as champions of gender equality and EVAW in the justice sector, jointly with the school of magistrates (UN Women)	New activity		\$ 30,800.00	\$ 10,000.00											\$ 40,800.00
	4.1.3 Establish collaboration with the High Inspectorate of Justice and other judicial governing bodies to ensure regular inspections of courts practice in the area of VAW (UN Women)	New activity		\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00											\$ 10,000.00
	4.1.4: Support implementation of the recommendation from the CSOs on the monitoring of court's judgement and practices and activities of prosecutors in the area of VAW (UN Women)	New activity		\$ 12,000.00	\$ 22,000.00	\$ 20,000.00										\$ 54,000.00
				\$ 21,999.26	\$ 87,800.00	\$ 55,000.00	\$ 15,850.00	\$ 15,850.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 196,500.00
Total outcome				\$ 21,999.26	\$ 87,800.00	\$ 55,000.00	\$ 15,850.00	\$ 15,850.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 196,500.00

Programme total										\$ 63,328.33	\$ 333,400.00	\$ 189,000.73	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 203,165.17	\$ 108,870.00	\$ -	\$ 73,735.00	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 1,044,499.23	
Direct Project Management costs																				
Staff																				
Communication and visibility																				
Office costs																				
Total DPMC										\$ 1,300.00	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 5,490.84	\$ 32,945.04	\$ 32,945.04	\$ -	\$ 16,500.00	\$ 16,000.00	\$ 15,300.00	
Total programme and DPMC										\$ 64,627.59	\$ 378,091.00	\$ 273,383.73	\$ 13,490.84	\$ 241,107.91	\$ 141,815.04	\$ -	\$ 90,238.04	\$ 76,000.00	\$ 1,278,754.15	
Support costs 7%																			\$ 89,512.79	
1% MPTF																			\$ 13,682.67	
Coordination Levy																			\$ 13,682.67	
Grand total programme																			\$ 1,381,949.61	

Outcome 1: Women and girls enjoy effective preventive measures against violence in Albania											
Output	Activities	Notes	UN Women			UNDP			UNFPA		
			2025	2026	2027	2025	2026	2027	2025	2026	2027
Output 1.1: CSOs and NHRIs promote accountability of service providers including in the justice system and have increased capacities to influence the GEWE agenda	1.1.1: Raise capacities of women's grassroots organizations to meaningfully influence gender equality laws and policies in Albania following up from CEDAW and GREVIO recommendations on EVAW (UN Women)	Completed- not to be continued within the UN JP EVAW II									
	1.1.2: Collaborate with NHRIs and CSOs to strengthen their role in monitoring authorities measures on VAW. (UN Women)	Completed- not to be continued within the UN JP EVAW II									
	1.1.3: Support CSOs to conduct regular monitoring of court's judgement and practices and activities of prosecutors in the area of VAW (UN Women)	Moved to output 4									
	1.1.4: Work with FBO in target municipalities to enhance prevention of VAW cases (UNFPA)	To be continued									
	1.1.5 Update Data and Evidence on Gender Biased Sex Selection (UNFPA)	Not to be continued within the UN JP									
Output 1.2: Men and boys are included in VAW prevention and existing perpetrators' programmes are strengthened	1.2.1: Implement SOPs and guidelines on reintegration of perpetrators based on international practices (targeting perpetrators in prison and outside) and raise awareness for the establishment of perpetrator programmes (UN Women)	More funds to be mobilized through joint RM efforts									
	1.2.2: Pilot SOPs on perpetrators (UN Women)	Not to be continued within the UN JP									
	1.2.3: Strengthen Be a Man Club initiative at national level endorsing the methodology in partnership with the MoE (UNFPA)	To be continued									
	1.2.4: Implement the Boys on the Move non-formal curriculum designed for unaccompanied and separated male adolescents displaced by conflict, covery or related causes (UNFPA)	Not to be continued within the UN JP									
	1.2.5: Address toxic masculinities in everyday practices and identify men role models across sports, arts and other fields to increase awareness on positive masculinities (UN Women)	Completed- not to be continued									

Outcome 2: All women survivors and those at risk are protected from all forms of violence and have equitable access to services in Albania

Output 2.1: Service providers and local response mechanisms to DV have increased capacities and tools to provide basic and specialized services to all survivors of VAW and inform women and girls about VAW reporting mechanisms	2.1.1: Carry out innovative capacity building activities, including mentoring and coaching with key service providers at the national and local levels from the social services, police, health, education, employment and local DV coordinators and improve overall coordination to address all forms of VAW at local level and provide integrated services for all women and girls (UN Women, UNFPA and UNDP)	To be continued																	
	2.1.2: Enhance police officers' capacity to effectively respond to cases of gender-based violence, while ensuring coordination with the Swedish Police and the Community Policing Programme (UNDP, UN Women)	New activity																	
	2.1.2: Support capacities of central and local authorities to improve VAW standards of service provision <i>and coordinate and monitor the implementation of the VAW components of the MSGE</i> . (UN Women)	Completed - Not to be continued within the JN JP																	
	2.1.3: Conduct an assessment of CRM functionality across all 61 municipalities in collaboration with Ministry of Health and Social Welfare and relevant institutional partners (UNDP)	Completed - Not to be continued within the JN JP																	
	2.1.4: Support the regional coordination of CRM members and provide capacity building through regional trainings (UNDP, UN Women)	To be continued																	
	2.1.5: Support DV Coordinators network through peer-to-peer learning and identifying champions (UNDP)	To be continued																	
	2.1.5.1 Exchange visit to Sweden	New activity																	
	2.1.6: Support relevant central and local state authorities in establishing relevant response mechanisms that address effectively other forms of violence (UNDP and UN Women)	Merged with activity 2.1.4																	
	2.1.7: Support the consolidation of LILUM Center services at Vloja Regional Hospital for sexual violence victims, under the leadership of the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (UNDP)	To be continued																	

Outcome 3: Responsible institutions and actors implement national policies and legislation on VAW in a comprehensive, inclusive and coordinated way in Albania

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Outcome 4: The justice system demonstrates increased accountability and effectiveness in addressing all forms of violence against women.

Annex C: Lessons Learned from JP Phase I

The proposed UNJP will reflect on lessons learned from previous programmes in the area of gender equality and ending violence against women. In particular, some of the key lessons learned during the implementation of UNJP on EVAW 2019-2022, identified in its evaluation report will particularly guide the implementation process. These include:

- Providing evidence base to understand conditions of vulnerability for women and improve advocacy accordingly;
- Organize consultations with different stakeholders through the implementation process of the programme to identify areas in which increasing coordination is needed or to identify smaller initiatives and best practices to be brought within the programme to complement or expand efforts already initiated
- Continue to foster partnerships with experienced CSOs and promote cross sectorial response and partnerships to be able to address both prevention and protection aspects of VAW.
- Continue with the provision of a “cross-sectorial coordinated response model of action to tackle VAW” was very effective because it distributed the responsibility of tackling GBV across all the actors in the system, created cross-efficiencies and promoted dialogue and sharing of expertise.
- The framework and monitoring systems need to continue support the process of assessing and comparing delivery approaches across municipalities.
- Implementing new and innovative pilots helps to consolidate new best practices and involve new stakeholders
- Ensuring complementarity with other ongoing initiatives implemented by the UN agencies address value to the programme results and increases the impact and outreach of stakeholders and communities.
- Intersectional approaches remain key to interventions addressing human rights along with a stronger understanding of the needs of each group.
- Building on existing initiatives, and particularly pilots that are focused on awareness raising and work with perpetrators.
- Engaging with the public officials as implementing partners helps ensure government ownership and responsibility in implementing and institutionalizing reforms.
- Obligatory training in SOPs, protocols, and REVALB still requires further government ownership and leadership to ensure that the capacity development of all responsible institutions is sustained, particularly amid the clear risk of staff turnover. Institutionalization of the training curricula means that the support provided can be sustained.
- Financing essential services, such as those for survivors of violence requires interventions within the broader framework of all social protection, including the needs of persons with disabilities (particularly mental disabilities) and other vulnerable groups. More reflections and efforts are required to improve the current services in ensuring the provision of accessible and adequate services for all categories.

Annex D: Partnerships

The proposed programme will leverage partnerships which have proven to be successful in previous programmes on EVAW in Albania (particularly the latest UNJP on EVAW supported by the Government of Sweden, and EU funded regional programme on EVAW), as well as developing new partnerships based on best practices from other countries.

These approaches include:

- Strong and equal collaboration with both government and non-government partners;
- Engagement of CSOs, which will be considered strategic partners as they support UN agencies in the implementation of capacity building and awareness raising activities, and benefit from continuous technical support provided by these agencies, including to networks of CSOs;
- Prioritize work at the local level and engage not only members of CRMs but also of service providers across sectors; at the same time, the project will continue strengthen existing and new strategic partnerships with actors at the central level. (e.g. particular focus will be placed on the education sector at the central level, which has not been a partner in previous programmes, but requires transformative change of its education policies in the area of gender equality and elimination of VAW);

The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare and CSOs will remain an important UNJP partner as the collaboration will focus primarily on coordination of activities that support the implementation of the NSGE 2021-2030, particularly activities at the local level. In addition, the programme will involve partnerships with other line ministries and independent institutions.

Coordinated Referral Mechanisms, including service providers from the police, justice, education, health, employment and social services will continue to be key partners in targeted municipalities. To this aim, UN agencies will collaborate simultaneously with municipalities and local departments of respective services in targeted municipalities to ensure that all actors have adequate knowledge about their legal and policy obligations in the area of VAW and capacities to fulfill these obligations.

Women rights' organizations are equally important partners of the UN on the achievement of all intended results, based on a mutual exchange of support and experience. On the one hand, women's rights organizations provide UN agencies with key insight information from the field, which we have been able to channel and reflect in many interventions related to support for improvement of legislation, policies and services in the areas of GBV. On the other hand, the UN provides women rights' organization with the necessary capacity support and accountability tools to ensure an effective and coordinated response to GBV, and often to fill in the gaps in government actions when needed, with the ultimate goal to ensure women victims of violence are protected and benefit from the services they are entitled to.

The EVAWIA programme will also continue to bolster its partnerships with NHRIs. Particularly, support will be provided to the People's Advocate in its mandate to monitor provision of services for victims of VAW, including monitoring visits in various institutions; and to the Commissioner for the Protection against Discrimination in its new role to monitor the Law on Gender Equality.

Below is an overview of the key project partners and their proposed strategic engagement:

Stakeholders	Level of project's impact on stakeholder	Level of stakeholder's influence on the project	Opportunities/ In which outcomes can stakeholder be engaged	Risks/How could the stakeholder hinder the project	Capacity gap of stakeholder	Strategy for engagement

Ministry of Health and Social Welfare	High	High Ministry of Health and Social Welfare is a key authority in planning and coordinating government's response to VAW, including improvement of legislation and service provision. The Ministry also plays an important role in supporting capacities strengthening of CRMs. The NSGE 2021-2030 clearly identifies all interventions where Ministry of Health and Social Welfare has a leading or coordinating role in implementation of its planned interventions, which are in line with this proposal.	Directly involved in all Outcomes	Passive engagement in the implementation of activities, where the active role of Ministry of Health and Social Welfare is important due to low political will to prioritize the GE&VAWG (also as a consequence of merging these issues with health)	Lack of financial resources (no dedicated budgetary program for GE&VAWG) Lack of professional human resources (small staff part of GE Sector, not all of them are equipped with the needed knowledge) Slow reaction or no reaction due to many long bureaucratic procedures (to organize an awareness activity/campaign, or to get the approval for planning an intervention in terms of services, to organize a team for discussing on a new legislative change, etc.) Inability to act according to work plans (chaotic requirements, frequent new emerging priorities) Coordination and design of functional responsibilities	The strong link of the programme with priorities of NSGE 2021-2030 the implementation of which is direct responsibility of the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare will be used as a leverage to prompt this institutions' commitment The programme will also try to address issues related to funding of services through other programmes on GRB and social services.
State Police	High	Medium State Police's role is particularly important in protection of victims of VAW. They are the main authority where violence is reported and required to take immediate protection measures, including risk analysis. Their role also continues for the monitoring of protection orders in collaboration with local coordinators.	Outcomes 2, 3	Insufficient collaboration from State Police department dealing with VAW and unavailability of police officers at the local level for capacity building due to workload	Gender stereotyping among the police Lack of capacity to conduct proper risk assessment and to take urgent protection measures according to the legislation Lack of coordinated data collection	Work will be based on the long term collaboration and good relations with State Police, which in general are very interested for capacity building support. Particularly on-the-job trainings which have been proven successful in some municipalities will be further replicated
Ministry of Justice	medium	Medium Ministry of Justice role and responsibilities are multi-folded, including initiating legal amendments of the legislation on	Outcomes 1, 3	Limited priority given to the need to improve legislation on VAW, including criminal legislation Lack of allocation of funding for legal aid for women victims of	Lack of information and awareness about international standards on VAW legislation Lack of funding to provide secondary legal aid to women victims of VAW Complex procedures to obtain legal aid	Advocacy and technical support will take place in collaboration with CSOs to raise awareness about needed legislative

		VAW, provision of free legal aid for victims of violence, execution of protection orders, involvement in the implementation of perpetrators programmes, and others.		VAW, including for CSOs which are licensed and supposed to receive government funding; lack of funding for psychologists needed in court proceedings		amendments in accordance with Istanbul Convention and other international standards. The programme will create synergies with other programmes focused on increasing access to justice and legal aid to address challenges related to legal representation of women victims of violence.
CRMs	High	High CRMs are the backbone of the Albanian management system of cases of violence. Composed of service providers from all key sectors, CRMs are responsible for all steps of case management, starting with identification of cases, provision of immediate protection and support to victims to continue with the implementation of protection orders and provision of long-term rehabilitation services.	Outcome 2	Lack of commitment from DV Local Coordinators, who are the key actors in coordinating the work of CRMs, due to their workload and the fact that they cover more than one function in municipality.	Lack of political commitment from mayors of municipalities, particularly of those with recently established CRMs to empower and support CRMs; Lack of capacities of local DV coordinators and other members of CRMs to perform their duties in accordance with legislation; Lack of local budgeting for services for victims of VAW to allow CRMs offer services as per the legislation requirements; Lack of regular and coordinated data collection on case management	UNDP and UN Women have been working with a considerable number of CRMs either directly or through partner CSOs. Both modalities have proven to be effective, modalities will be used depending on the local capacities of the selected municipalities and their full commitment for taking ownership for their engagement in making CRMs fully effective and operational. Good practices of the previous EVAWIA UNJP with CRMs will be used and lessons learned from previous experience with CRMs will guide the work of Agencies. Other

						CRMs will also be engaged as well through the support the UNJP will be given to the network of LDVCs across 61 municipalities which will serve as a platform for peer to peer learning and support
CSOs	High	High CSOs are considered as key partners of the government in provision of services to victims of violence, including long-term rehabilitation services. They also play an important role in awareness raising and monitoring of government's response to VAW.	All outcomes	CSOs that work on advocacy and monitoring may be hesitant to be very proactive to avoid possible confrontation with the government	Lack of capacities of CSOs that offer service provision to ensure adequate implementation of approved standards on services; Often CSOs which engage in advocacy and monitoring are also involved with service provision, which does not allow them to dedicate sufficient time and resources to both aspects of VAW response. Lack of co-funding from CSOs on joint projects; Possible conflict of interest for CSOs which may receive state funding to engage in advocacy and monitoring activities	As in previous interventions, CSOs will remain the one of the main partners on the implementation of the UNJP's activities. However, additional technical support will be involved on issue that require specific expertise
NHRIs (People's Advocate, Commissioner for Protection from discrimination)	Medium	Medium NHRIs with their independent monitoring role are key in increasing government's accountability in addressing violence against women. They also play an important role in monitoring service delivery to ensure adequate standards, in accordance with international and national legal frameworks.	All outcomes	Lack of human resources to ensure meaningful collaboration and participation in joint activities Possible change of leadership of the People's Advocate	Lack of active engagement from NHRI to become more active in monitoring provision of services for victims of violence (PA) and play a more active role in monitoring the GE equality legislation and initiate ex officio investigation gender-based discrimination cases (CPD) Lack of focus on issues related to accountability of public officials for failure to fulfill their duties Lack of human and financial resources	UN agencies have very good collaboration with PA, which is expected to continue under the proposed programme. On the other hand, collaboration with the CPD need to be further strengthened. The recent responsibility to monitor the implementation of the anti-discriminatory legislation in the area of GE will be used as a leverage.

Albanian Parliament	Medium	Low Albanian Parliament is responsible to ensure the adoption of adequate legislation in the area of VAW, in accordance with international standards. The Parliament plays also an oversight role in government's actions.	Outcome 3	Non-reestablishment of the sub-committee on GE and VAW	Lack of a structure within the current parliament dedicated to GE issues Lack of interest on VAW Lack of knowledge among members of the parliament on GE and VAW framework	UNJP will continue to advocate for the re-establishment of a parliamentary body on GE and VAW, which in the previous legislation proved to be an effective gender sensitive body for monitoring government's measures in the area of VAW and proposing important improvements in the legislation.
School of Magistrates, judges, prosecutors, High Inspectorate of Justice (HIJ)	Medium	Medium The School of Magistrate is responsible for continues training of members of the judiciary to ensure judges and prosecutor have the necessary capacities to consider cases of violence.	Outcome 3	Slow progress with vetting process and lack of interests among members of the judiciary in capacity building on VAW due to workload	Gender stereotypes among members of the judiciary	EVAWIA UNJP has built solid ground for the continuation of the support to be provided to all these actors. Cooperation with School of Magistrates will be further strengthened in this UNJP through supporting SM in leading the efforts to increase professional capacities of judiciary officials through certified trainings. The developed commentary of the DV will serve as a leverage.
Media	Medium	Medium Media has an important responsibility to raise awareness on gender equality and elimination of violence and ensure ethical reporting which does not inflict further victimization	Outcome 1/prevention	Victimization of women survivors on TV; perpetrates, rather than tackles, gender stereotypes	Lack of capacity to report on VAW following a human rights based approach and in line with best practices	Engagement of journalists, especially women journalists, in media forum; raise awareness about the non-discrimination chapter of the broadcasting

		of survivors of violence				code, increase capacities of journalists to report on VAW following best practices
Academia	Medium	Medium Academia plays a role in generating data, analysis and recommendations on root causes of violence against women and provide recommendations, particularly at the need for change on the behavioral level.	Outcome 2			Engagement of academia and involve young people in school through innovative campaigns; engagement of ASPA to institutionalize gender equality modules

Annex E: Comparative advantages of UN Participating Agencies

UN Women is the United Nations' Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. A central part of its mandate is to end violence against women and girls everywhere.⁴⁴

In Albania, EVAW has been among UN Women's key interventions, through regional and national programmes focused solely on addressing violence against women, as well as by including components addressing violence in the contexts of other projects and engaging the most marginalized groups. In addition, UN Women has been leading advocacy efforts to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in Albania, including the annual, national 16-days campaign and the HeforShe campaign. Thanks to its normative mandate, UN Women provides technical expertise to national actors and National Human Rights Institutions to promote the alignment of the national policies and legal framework with international standards on Violence Against Women, as well as support to monitoring and reporting on key international and regional human rights instruments.

Across its interventions, UN Women has developed a strong partnership with women's organizations providing them with technical and financial support to influence and advocate for improved legislations on VAW and providing services to victims and survivors.

UNDP Albania has been a trusted partner to the GoA with its support in promoting and enforcing gender equality agenda in the country with its contribution to the adoption of new or amended

⁴⁴ See UN Women Strategic Plan 2022-2025: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2021/09/un-women-strategic-plan-2022-2025>

policies and laws to bring them in line with international standards. Improvement of Domestic Violence Law, Criminal Code, Criminal Procedure Code, Free Legal Aid Law, policy and procedures to prevent and handle harassment, sexual harassment and violence in workplace among public administration officials and academic institutions are some examples.

UNDP Albania has been instrumental in creating the enabling environment to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls through functional institutional response mechanisms at municipal level. During the last decade, with UNDP support, 37 local Coordinated Referral Mechanisms (CRMs) are established and further strengthen that ensure effective integrated specialised support services to gender violence survivors. With UNDP support, LILIUM Center is the first state run one stop center providing integrated support services to sexual violence victims setting forth a good model to be replicated in other regions in the country.

Partnering with CSOs and National Human Rights institutions UNDP contribution has been key in engaging in nationwide campaigns combating gender stereotypes and raising awareness of women, men, boys and girls in preventing violence against women and girls.

UNFPA is the best qualified UN agency in Albania to support government's efforts towards universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights enabled by evidence and population expertise, focusing on empowerment of women, young people – especially adolescent girls, and older persons, including in humanitarian settings. A critical part of UNFPA's mandate is gender equality, with a main focus on fostering an enabling environment for human rights, especially reproductive rights and gender equality. Empowering vulnerable groups, women, young people, and key populations to exercise their right to quality reproductive health services and education is among the top priorities. As a key social determinant of health, gender equality and the empowerment of women are central to achieving universal access to reproductive health.

In Albania, UNFPA has been instrumental in strengthening the Multi Sectoral Response to GBV through Essential Guidelines and Standard Operating Procedures including GBV in Civil Emergencies and initiated the training of 195 health and social care providers on SoPs for Health and Psycho-Social Care Response to GBV involving 7 municipalities and State Social Services in 4 regions.

UNFPA is a key partner of INSTAT and Institute of Public Health to collect and disseminate gender - disaggregated data with focus young people, very vulnerable key population and older persons. To mention just a few the national report "Adolescent and Youth Abuse in Albania - In-depth analysis" provided more evidence why investing in Comprehensive Sexuality Education including GBV modules in and out of school are vital to educating young people and addressing all forms of gender based violence.

UNFPA is the lead agency to address harmful practices of child marriage, gender biased and sex selection (and in some countries genital female mutilation) that fundamentally undermine the achievement of SDG5. It has provided the evidence for policy dialogue and advocacy for policy and legal reform and the need for a holistic social norms and behavior change communication.

Addressing gender social norms and stereotypes by engaging boys and men through a comprehensive approach is also one of the key strategic interventions of UNFPA at national, regional and global level.

Annex F: Extended context analysis

In recent years, Albania has made progress in improving its legal, policy and institutional frameworks to end violence against women (VAW). This Annex explains in greater details such improvements, following the four pillars of the Istanbul Convention: Prevention, Protection, Prosecution and Integrated Policy Advice.

With regards to the **legislation**, comprehensive legislation has been adopted to ensure coordinated response from all relevant government agencies to domestic violence. The Law on Measures Against Violence in Family Relations of 2006 (DV Law), and its subsequent amendments in 2018 and 2020, is aligned with CEDAW and the Istanbul Convention. The Law includes provisions for better protection of women and children in situations of immediate danger; adding preliminary protection measures by the police; more effective judiciary procedures; and extension of protection to victims of violence who are not necessarily cohabitating but involved in an intimate relationship with their perpetrators. Amendments of 2020 refer primarily to the requirement for the courts to remove the perpetrator from the house⁴⁵, the obligation for perpetrators to enroll in perpetrators' rehabilitation programmes and others. In addition, the Criminal Code, as amended in 2020, criminalizes psychological violence in family relations and including intimate or former intimate partners - regardless of cohabitation - in the category of victims of domestic violence. These amendments also impose harsher punishment for perpetrators of domestic violence.

Secondary legislation has also been developed *inter alia* to ensure better functioning of the local system of management of cases of violence, coordination among members of the local referral mechanism, adequate budgeting for services, procedures to conduct an effective risk assessment of cases of violence, and regular monitoring of protection orders. The most recent legislation addresses the situation created as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic for specific measures during state emergencies both with regards to protection and services for victims of violence.

At the **policy** level, in 2021 Albania launched its new National Strategy for Gender Equality (NSGE) 2021-2030. The new Strategy includes very comprehensive measures and planned resources to address many of the shortcomings in the current response to GBV. Other important and recently developed policies which address or should address gender-based violence among disadvantaged communities, include the National Action Plan on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2025, the National Action Plan for Equality, Inclusion, and Participation of Roma and Egyptian in Albania 2021 – 2025, the National Action Plan on LGBTI+ persons 2021-2027 and the National Action Plan against Trafficking in Persons (TIP) 2021-2023.

Positive developments at the institutional level include expansion of the Coordinated Referral Mechanisms (CRMs) at the local level in all 61 municipalities of Albania, improvements in the local information system for registration of cases of domestic violence (REVALB), and more recently (in January 2022) a threefold increase of the monthly cash payments for victims of domestic violence under protection orders (and human trafficking) from 3000 ALL to 9000 ALL (around 85 USD).

Despite progress, which is the result of support from various international organizations and donors, including UN agencies, Government of Sweden and the European Union, there are many remaining challenges, particularly with regards to the implementation of the improved legislation and policies. According to the latest National Survey on Violence against Women in 2018, conducted by the National Statistics Office (INSTAT), 1 out of 3 (or 36.6 percent) women 'currently' experienced violence and 2 out of 3 (or 61.8 percent) women (those who were never been married and never lived with a male partner, but had been involved in a relationship with a male without living together, such as dating or engaged) 'currently' experienced dating violence.⁴⁶ A more recent study amongst youth in Albania found that almost 1 out of 10 girls respondents have been forced to perform sexual intercourse for the first time against their will. Women are almost three times more likely, as compared to men, to be forced to perform sexual intercourse due to fear from their partner/former partner. Two out of three respondents that have experienced violence, reported that did not seek any type of help, regardless of the type of violence they experienced due to the lack of trust at different institutions (police and other services), feeling of shame and confusion, as well as fear of damaging their family's reputation. The same study found that 1 out of 10 respondents (12 per cent women and

⁴⁵ Except for the cases when the perpetrator is minor, a person with disability or an old person

⁴⁶ National Population Survey: Violence Against Women and Girls in Albania, INSTAT, Albania, 2019
<http://www.instat.gov.al/media/6123/publication-violence-against-women.pdf>

5 per cent men) have reported that at least once, photos/videos or other materials with sexual content were used to blackmail them.⁴⁷

The main gaps and the relevant causes of these problems (immediate, underlying and root causes) are discussed in more detail below, along the four key pillars of the Istanbul Convention, essential for an adequate and comprehensive response to gender-based violence (prevention, protection, prosecution and coordinated policies). This analysis is based on different recourses, including:

- Recommendations of human rights mechanisms addressed to Albania that remain very relevant (CEDAW Concluding Observations 2016 and the list of issues as sent to the Albanian Government on March 2022; GREVIO First Baseline Assessment Report 2017 as well as Urgent recommendations sent from the Committee of Parties in January 2018, and the Conclusions for the implementations of recommendations from Albania, 2021; Universal Periodic Review (UPR) on Albania 2019)
- Input received from, and reports developed by, Albanian women's rights organizations working in the area of GBV, which are key partners of UN agencies in the fight against GBV and have "hands-on" experience on the ground with regards to government's performance and service provisions for victims of GBV.
- Reports of National Human Rights Mechanisms (NHRIs), such as the Albanian Ombudsperson and Commissioner for the Protection from Discrimination, which have been engaged in independent monitoring processes in the area of GBV and/or other relevant areas.
- Evaluation report of the NSGE and Action Plan 2016-2020 and other government sources that provide an adequate assessment of the Albanian context when it comes to violence against women.

i. Prevention:

In recent years, there has been an increase of visibility of messages against violence against women. Yet, the issue continues to receive far less attention than it deserves from the public, media and government, despite being one of the main human rights concerns in Albania. Most of **awareness raising** activities take place in the context of international campaigns and with the support of international organizations and donors, and very limited government funding is dedicated to this issue. There is a general lack of interest among the population on the topic and some, including women, still justify violence, particularly domestic violence. This is exacerbated for women from disadvantaged communities, such as Roma and Egyptian women, women with disabilities, women from LGBTI communities, migrant women and others, whose level of reporting of violence is very low. The focus of current efforts to raise awareness is mainly focused on domestic violence, with other forms of violence such as sexual violence and rape, stalking, harassment, child and forced marriages receiving less attention both from a legal and institutional perspective. In general, women continue to have limited information on the means for legal redress and services available when suffering/becoming victims of gender-based violence. There is a lack comprehensive analysis on the main reasons that drive such a high level of violence: while socio-economic challenges are cited as a justification, women from all socio-economic backgrounds experience violence, including women in politics.⁴⁸

Another serious gap in the area of prevention is the lack of progress with regards to **early education on gender equality**, which is key to ensure that future generations are free from gender-based violence. Topics related to gender equality, elimination of VAW, sexual education, and others are not taught comprehensively in the education system, including tertiary education and some of these topics remain still taboo for both educators and parents. Equally, there is limited focus on prevention

⁴⁷ Intimate partner violence and sexual violence among young people in Albania, AWEN, 2021 https://awenetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/AWEN-Dhuna-EN-pages-web_compressed.pdf

⁴⁸ First Assessment Evaluation Report, GREVIO, 2027

work with men and boys, where Albanian CSOs and international organizations remain the main contributors in relevant interventions.

Finally, **perpetrator rehabilitation programmes** are neglected among institutions and donors and rarely seen as part of the systemic solution to GBV. Despite enrollment of perpetrators in these programmes is mandatory to be included courts' orders for protection measures, lack of such programmes in many areas of the country makes the relevant legal provision non applicable in practice.⁴⁹ In fact, a monitoring of the court of the district of Tirana during 2021 revealed that in spite of 30% of persons convicted for domestic violence are alcohol abusers and drug users, in none of these cases the court ordered enrollment in alcohol or drugs rehabilitation programmes.⁵⁰ Even for the existing rehabilitation programmes, there is a lack of monitoring mechanisms to assess their effectiveness.

Causes: All these and other gaps in prevention measures are rooted in harmful gender stereotypes and strict gender roles, which are reinforced by misogynistic attitudes and behaviors even among high level officials (for example during elections) or through media outlets. Violence against women is justified and accepted as normal. Sexuality is considered a taboo and while a strong feminist movement plays an essential role in advancing gender equality, the feminist movement in Albania has traditionally not been strong. Disadvantaged women are more affected by violence and lack access to services due to intersecting forms of discrimination they continue to experience.

ii. Protection:

When it comes to protection mechanisms and availability of services for survivors of violence, several gaps persist, starting with the **reporting of cases of violence**. Despite some increase in recent years, the number of cases reported to authorities continues to be very low compared to the actual number of women who experience violence.⁵¹ According to the 2018 National Survey on Violence against Women and Girls in Albania, one out of three women, or 34 percent, had experienced violence over the 12 months prior to the survey.⁵² However, in the year of the survey (2018), the number of reported cases of domestic violence to the Police was just 4591.⁵³ In 2019, 4629 cases were reported to the police, in 2020, it was 4701 cases, and 5312 in 2021.⁵⁴ Number of reports of other forms of violence, such as sexual violence remains very low. For example, in 2018, 92 women were reported as victims of sexual crimes; in 2019, 127 and in 2020, 114 women.⁵⁵ These number remain low compared to prevalence of these forms of violence⁵⁶.

Police remains the main authority receiving reports on cases of violence against women, while the level of reporting to other providers of services including Local Coordinators against Domestic Violence (LCDV) appointed in Municipalities and to other members of the Coordinated Referral Mechanisms (CRM) is very low.

The low level of reporting is attributable to several factors, including prevailing gender stereotypes that normalize violence even among women, lack of trust in the judicial system, lack of information about protection mechanisms and very importantly lack of legal aid and other services that would help women to come forward and report violence. Many of them report violence only when it escalates to life threatening levels.

⁴⁹ There are only two CSOs offering rehabilitation programmes: in Tirana and Shkodra.

⁵⁰ Monitoring Study: Judicial system and protection of the rights of victims of gender-based violence and victims of domestic violence, 2021, Human Rights in Democracy Center, <https://www.hrdc.al/index.php/al/sherbime/studime>

⁵¹ According to INSTAT Pc-Axis Population data, in 2018, the overall number of women in the respectively corresponding age group (20-74) among Albania's population was 1,008,533. See: <http://databaza.instat.gov.al/pxweb/en/DST/>

⁵² <http://www.instat.gov.al/media/6123/publication-violence-against-women.pdf>

⁵³ Administrative data shared by the General Directorate of State Police with file No. 185/1, date: 31.01.2022, addressed to the Center for Civic Legal Initiatives.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Women and Men in Albania, 2021, INSTAT

⁵⁶ According to the national survey on GBV in 2018, 2,4 % of women over 15 had experienced non-partner physical and sexual violence during the same year as the survey.

With regards to **protection measures for victims of violence**⁵⁷, in recent years there have been improvements in the legislation and in the institutional response to provide adequate protection to many women, including the introduction of Orders for Preliminary Immediate Protection Measures (OPIPM), which are issued by the Police for immediate protection until a court hearing (which may take up to 48 hours). However, data tracking these measures is not made available by the Police and monitoring reports of CSOs indicate that police started to issue OPIPM only in February 2020, despite the fact that the relevant legal provisions that were adopted in 2018.⁵⁸ Risk assessments – a key tool for measures to prevent further violence, including extreme forms such as femicide – do not take place regularly and consistently around the country, and despite efforts to train the police on relevant procedures, there are still knowledge and technical gaps among the police.⁵⁹

In terms of protection Measures (PO/IPO) issued by the Courts, the number of cases for which PO/IPO are requested remains low compared to reported number of cases. An analysis of data made public indicates that the ratio of requests to the courts by the Police on issuing of protection measures v. reported cases of violence varied from 53% to 61% during 2014-2021.⁶⁰ A further significant reduction occurs on the number of actual requests accepted by the Court: from 2014 to 2017 a large number of cases – around 60% of the proceedings for PO/IPO – were dismissed with no final court decision.⁶¹ The situation has not been very different in more recent years. In 2020, there were 4701 reports of domestic violence, 2836 requests (60%) brought to the Court for protection measures and 1596 (56%) accepted by a court order.⁶² Furthermore, out of the 1596 Court Orders, the Bailiffs Office informs that in 2020, 566 executive protection orders were registered for execution, out of which 189 IPO and 339 PO.

In addition, there is lack of information on implementation and monitoring of protection measures by the Police and local authorities, which are required to collaborate and conduct regular monitoring of protection measures. In 2020, the removal of the perpetrator from the household became a mandatory measure for courts. However, because perpetrators often do not have alternative accommodation, there is some hesitation in implementing such decision.

Femicide (i.e., killing of women) is also not effectively prevented. Women are the main victims of murders in family relations. In 2020, out of 52 homicides, about 13.5 percent were killings within family relations (article 79/c of the Criminal Code), with 88.9 percent of victims being women.⁶³ In 2021, 20 women were killed by their spouse or other members of their family, six women in 2020, 12 in 2019, and 11 in 2018.⁶⁴ These numbers do not include the women killed by non-partners or non-family members. In addition, different institutions often provide diverging figures on prevalence of violence, highlighting the need to increase data harmonization and regular data collection.

In terms of **services available to women victims of violence**, according to government data, there are around 22 specialist support services for victims of gender based violence, including a national counselling hotline, 11 emergency shelters at municipal level, a state run National Shelter for Victims of DV (NSVDV), a National Shelter for Victims of Trafficking, a Shelter for LGBTI+ persons, state run crisis management center for sexual violence (Lilium), and two rehabilitation programmes for

⁵⁷ The Albanian legislation on domestic violence includes three types of protection measures - Protection Orders (PO) and Immediate Protection Orders (IPO) issued by the Court and Orders for Preliminary Protection Measures (OPPM) issued by the police and subject to review by the Court within 48 hours, linked with the risk assessment procedure

⁵⁸ Monitoring Report on the implementation of the 2018 amendments to the Law No. 9669, 18.12.2006: On Measures against Violence in Family Relations for the period January 2019-December 2020, Centre for Civic Legal Initiatives, Tirana, August 2021, http://www.qag-al.org/ang/publication/report_law_monitoring.pdf

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Analysis of data made public by the Police

⁶¹ Shadow Report of the Center for Civic Legal Initiative and the Monitoring Network submitted to the UPR third cycle of review on Albania, 2019 http://www.qag-al.org/ang/publication/upr_shadow_report_eng.pdf

⁶² Data analyzed based on information made public by the Police and Ministry of Justice Annual Statistics <https://www.drejtesia.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Vjetari-2020-i-plote-per-publikim-l.pdf>

⁶³ INSTAT (2021). Women and Men in Albania.

⁶⁴ INSTAT, <http://www.instat.gov.al/media/8713/burra-dhe-gra.pdf> Data collected by UN Women on Femicide also.

perpetrators.⁶⁵ The majority of these services are established, managed or supported financially by CSOs and international organizations. Only 6 specialized services were supported in 2021 by the State budget with an approximate amount of ALL 39 million (around 367,000 USD) or 26% of the budget allocated for social services. In addition, as acknowledged by the Government, these services have limited human resources, infrastructure and do not effectively apply international and national standards.

Overall, most services for victims of VAW, as well as human trafficking and rehabilitation of perpetrators of GBV are provided by CSOs, which rely on international organizations and donors for financial support. The government's support to them is limited and hampered by lack of funds and clear and transparent contracting procedures. Furthermore, these services (with the exception of Lillium Center) are serving mainly to victims of domestic violence, and few of them to victims of trafficking, excluding women and girls, victims of other forms of violence. There are also challenges with regards to accessibility, availability and quality of services provided by both public and non-public service providers, which need to be delivered based on approved international and national standards, as well as to be tailored according to needs of victims/survivors of different groups. Despite support from the United Nations Joint Programme on EVAW 2019-2022 and donors' support to the area of anti-trafficking in some areas of the country, long-term reintegration services are limited, leading women to relapse into the cycle of violence. Women from rural and disadvantaged communities in particular are more affected due to lack of information and very often lack of access to these services. The institutional gap in response to GBV becomes more evident in times of emergency, as it was the case during the COVID-19 pandemic.⁶⁶ During the lockdown period in 2020, the number of calls to the national counselling hotline tripled compared to the same period a year prior, but the number of domestic violence reports to the police was lower than in previous years for the same period. CSOs monitoring of the local response to DV during lock-down in 11 municipalities revealed not only a disturbing rate of violence against women and children, but also a gloomy situation of the general capacity of duty bearers to provide services in immediate response to violence and to ensure women's access to services and help⁶⁷. However, UN agencies and other international organisations intervened rapidly with direct support services through partner CSOs. The government was also very open to collaboration, which resulted with the adoption of a normative framework to respond to the situation and ensure continuation of services. In addition, in March 2020, the government approved the granting of a double payment of economic aid to existing beneficiaries. Among the 63,508 recipient families, there were 482 victims of domestic violence with protection order/immediate protection order.

Causes: Several factors impact the effective implementation of protection measures and provisions of services to women victims of violence. Based on information received from women CSOs, some of the reasons for the difference between number of cases reported and those on which protection orders are requested, include institutionalized misogyny, lack of knowledge about relevant legislation and the role of the police, lack of human resources, and social pressure and fear of retaliation from perpetrators, especially in small communities. Similarly, among the main reasons why cases do not go through the legal system is the lack of support to the victims to provide evidence, including medical

⁶⁵ Evaluation report of the NSGE and Action Plan 2016-2020

⁶⁶ According to a Gender Rapid Survey, 16% of women have felt more unsafe at home as a result of the pandemic; 23% reported that conflict between adults in their home has become more frequent since the pandemic; 29% of women respondents think physical harm, harassment and abuse has gotten worse since the start of the pandemic; 79% believe that the experience of verbal and/or physical abuse at the hands of a partner has become worse during the pandemic. This was in addition to 51% of the entire survey respondents who believed that these forms of violence are common in their communities, thus confirming previous survey results on the prevalence of violence. Measuring-shadow-pandemic-Albania, UN Women, 2020, <https://data.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/documents/Publications/Measuring-shadow-pandemic-Albania.pdf>

⁶⁷ GADC & AWEN Network (2020). Monitorimi i punës së mekanizmit të koordinuar të referimit gjatë periudhës pandemike COVID-19. See: https://www.gadc.org.al/media/files/upload/Raporti%20Final%20%20Perbashket_UnW_COVID-19.pdf

report⁶⁸, lack of psychological assessment reports⁶⁹, and lack of legal aid. According to a recent monitoring report of the activity of Tirana district court during 2021, only 41 per cent of victims of domestic violence were represented by a lawyer during court proceedings for protection orders, of which 60 per cent of cases were represented by CSOs, 38% by private lawyers and only 2% by lawyers appointed by the State, based on the 2017 Legal Aid Law.⁷⁰

Lack of appropriate resources (funds, human, infrastructure) to establish general and specialist support services around the country is one of the main reasons for shortcomings in service provision. Particularly, lack of funding affects the establishment of several services and their availability around the country even for key and strategic services for immediate protection such as emergency shelters and the national counselling hotline. In addition, lack of knowledge among providers of services about national and international standards affects the quality of these services. Women's rights organizations are better equipped with knowledge and experience on case management to fill in the gaps from public services, but they depend largely on donor's support and receive limited government funding, which affects services' sustainability.

On the other hand, women lack information about reporting and services as information is not harmonized nor centralized. Particularly affected are women in remote rural areas, women with disabilities and Roma and Egyptian women, for whom the information about services is largely inaccessible. Lack of access to these services is also a serious issue for women from disadvantaged communities, particularly for women with mental disabilities, as well as rehabilitation programs for perpetrators with mental health problems.

There continues to be limited civil and criminal accountability among law enforcement and other officials when they fail to comply with legal obligations regarding protection of women from violence, even in extreme cases when women have lost their life as the result of negligence from authorities to take seriously reports of threats and provide adequate protection measures. Furthermore, there is reluctance to focus on accountability related actions among key stakeholders, including CSOs and National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs).

iii. Prosecution:

Despite significant improvements in recent years, the Albanian Criminal legislation still needs to be brought fully in line with international standards. In particular the definition of rape, which currently remains forced-based needs to change to consent-based, according to the Istanbul Convention, General Recommendation of CEDAW Convention⁷¹ and jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights.⁷²⁷³ Other forms of violence such as female genital mutilation (FGM), child marriage, forced abortion, violence against women in politics/elections and others need to be introduced or revised accordingly in the criminal legislation.

During investigation and prosecution, the judicial system faces challenges to protect, and guarantee the rights of victims of crime, including victims of VAW. Because of the trauma they have been through, in a gender insensitive justice system, victims of VAW run the risks of revictimization. Based on information from CSOs working in the field and data analysis from the General Prosecution Office, there is some improved performance of the prosecution offices and courts⁷⁴. Yet, the much lower ratio

⁶⁸ Although the Court is required to request evidence from other institutions (Article 15 of the Law on Domestic Violence), in practice this does not take place, and the burden of proof remains mainly with the victims (these are civil proceedings).

⁶⁹ A monitoring of decisions of Tirana District Court on protection measures during January-June 2020, revealed that in only 11% of cases such assessments were prepared.

⁷⁰ Monitoring Study: Judicial system and protection of the rights of victims of gender-based violence and victims of domestic violence, 2021, Human Rights in Democracy Center, <https://www.hrdc.al/index.php/al/sherbime/studime>

⁷² Standards of the ECtHR are mandatory on Albania, according to its Constitution

⁷² Standards of the ECtHR are mandatory on Albania, according to its Constitution

⁷³ MC v. Bulgaria, ECHR, 2014, https://www.coe.int/t/dg2/equality/domesticviolencecampaign/resources/M.C.v.BULGARIA_en.asp

⁷⁴ Annual reports of the General Prosecution Office, https://www.pp.gov.al/Dokumente/RAPORTE_T_PROKURORIT_T_P_RGJITHSH_M/

of registered investigations v. reported cases of domestic violence (38% in 2018, 28% in 2019 and 32% in 2020)⁷⁵ puts into question the effectiveness of investigations through these years.

CSOs report that protection measures for victims of DV and other forms of VAW during a criminal investigation are not always effectively implemented due to several reasons, including a certain practice from the police in some districts, where the victim is expected to approve the initiation of investigation, which is not a legal requirement.⁷⁶ Often there is a prolongation of investigations which compels sometimes victims to withdraw from the process. Victims are also expected to provide evidence, but they face difficulties in this regard due to lack of legal counselling, lack of proper expert examination including forensic evidence, difficulties in providing evidence for psychological violence and others.⁷⁷

A recent monitoring study of the district Court of Tirana noticed improvements in terms of the length of investigations for such cases compared to previous years. However, the monitoring process also revealed that not all court orders have a gender sensitive approach. For example, in some of these court decisions, the Court uses some attenuating factors on the final conviction which are not in conformity with the Istanbul Convention as well as the Albanian legislation, such as repentance of the perpetrator, reconciliation of relationship between the victims, the socio-economic situation of the family and others.⁷⁸

Victims of VAW do not benefit adequately from legal aid, despite improvements in the state legal aid system. In 2020, out of a total of 4100 cases that benefited primary legal aid (legal counseling) 157 were victims of domestic violence.⁷⁹ For 2021, out of 8002 cases benefiting primary legal aid (5644 directly and 2059 online or through the phone) 259 were victims of domestic violence. As for secondary legal aid (court representation) and/or exemption from court fees, this includes 65 victims of domestic violence.⁸⁰ These are very low numbers compared to reported cases of violence and the overall beneficiaries of legal aid. Even when legal aid is provided, it is mainly offered during civil proceedings for protection orders and not criminal proceedings, although victims of DV are entitled to be represented by a lawyer, based on the Criminal Legislation and Free Legal Aid law. Obtaining fee waivers and payments for court fees and experts' fees remains very difficult.⁸¹ CSOs report that victims without access to legal aid are more likely to withdraw their case, failing to understand the importance of a protection order, finding it difficult to collect evidence or, submitting to the court's harmful conciliation practices (which was common until the 2018 amendments of the Law on Domestic Violence).⁸²

In general, women victims of violence do not benefit from legal provisions that allow for compensation. According to GREVIO's assessment report to Albania in 2017, there was no available information to indicate that any victim of violence against women, including domestic violence, ever instituted or benefited from such proceedings.⁸³ The situation does not seem to have changed in this

⁷⁵ Based on the calculation of data provided by the Government of Albania Action Plan on the execution of a domestic violence judgment of the European Court of Human Rights (Tërshana Albania),

[https://hudoc.exec.coe.int/eng/#f%22fulltext%22:%22Tërshana%22,%22EXECIdentifier%22:%22DH-DD\(2021\)746E%22](https://hudoc.exec.coe.int/eng/#f%22fulltext%22:%22Tërshana%22,%22EXECIdentifier%22:%22DH-DD(2021)746E%22)

⁷⁶ Based on Article 24 of the 2016 Law on Domestic Violence, amended, the police ipso facto is required to refer all reported cases of violence for investigation to the Prosecution Office and the later to initiate investigation for cases of domestic violence and sexual violence *ex officio*

⁷⁷ Submission of the Monitoring Network against Gender Based Violence to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on the execution of the judgement Tërshana v. Albania, developed with the support of UN Women, January 2022 (not yet published)

⁷⁸ Monitoring Study: Judicial system and protection of the rights of victims of gender-based violence and victims of domestic violence, 2021, Human Rights in Democracy Center, <https://www.hrdc.al/index.php/al/sherbime/studime>

⁷⁹ Annual report of the Free Legal Aid Department of the Ministry of Justice of Albania, 2020, https://ndihmajuridike.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/RAPORT-VJETOR-MBI-VEPRIMTARINË-E-DNJF_RIPUNUAR...pdf

⁸⁰ Data from the Monitoring Report of the Ombudsperson on the situation of VAW in Albania 2020-2021 addressed to the Albanian Parliament, January 2022 (unpublished)

⁸¹ Common Country Analysis, UN Country Team in Albania, 2020; Albania Country Gender Equality Brief, UN Women Albania, 2020

⁸² Stakeholder Report for the United Nations UPR, submitted by the Advocates for Human Rights and Human Rights in Democracy Center, 2019

⁸³ Baseline Evaluation Report on Albania of the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO), 2017

respect since 2017, which in part is due to lack of legal advice to women to submit requests for compensation and high court and expert fees, on which women find it difficult to be exempted, despite being entitled to, based on the legal aid legislation.⁸⁴ A state compensation scheme available to victims of violence against women in Albania has yet not been established, as required by the Istanbul Convention.⁸⁵

Challenges of women victims of violence to access justice may exacerbate in view of a recent reform proposal on a new territorial distribution of first instance courts and reduction of their number from 22 to 12, which would require women victims of violence to participate in court hearings taking place in districts far from their residence.⁸⁶

Causes: Limited capacities of judicial officials with regards to implementation of improved legislation and international jurisprudence in the area of VAW is one of the main reasons for gaps in this sector. During the past five years, because of the ongoing justice reform and uncertainties caused by the vetting process of judges and prosecutors, there have been limited capacity building activities targeting the judiciary. Now this has become an urgent necessity. Furthermore, the new accountability mechanisms within the judiciary established in the context of the judicial reform have yet to be put in motion for investigating and monitoring cases of failure from relevant authorities to provide adequate protection to women victims of violence resulting in serious harm, including femicide.

As in other areas, at the root of problems in the justice sector remain lack of willingness of authorities to conduct timely and effective investigations and existing gender stereotypes among judicial police and prosecutors.

iv. Coordinated policies

As a party to the Istanbul Convention, Albania is required to implement comprehensive and coordinated policies involving government agencies at the central and local levels, CSOs as well as parliamentarians, local counselors, national human rights institutions. The aim is that policies to prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence are carried out at all levels of government and by all relevant agencies and institutions. Issues related to integrated policies, such as legislation to address all forms of violence against women, institutional capacities and coordination, funding, data collection and challenges of women facing intersecting forms of discrimination are crosscutting and relevant to all other measures related to prevention, protection and prosecution. In this regard, Albania has made important progress, including through the adoption of comprehensive **legislation** to ensure coordinated response from all relevant government agencies to domestic violence. However, the country continues to lack a comprehensive legislative system to address all forms of violence, including stalking, harassment, and sexual violence. The current legal framework does not create space for victims of these other forms of violence to benefit from protection and prevention measures as well as from services normally available for victims of domestic violence. The coordinated referral mechanisms rarely manage and deals with cases of non-family and non-partner violence, although the prevalence of many of these forms of violence remains high (see information on non-partners violence above⁸⁷). In the context of the EVAWIA UNJP 2019-2022, a dialogue involving a wide range of relevant state and non-state actors started on the need for legal improvements of the national legislative framework that would holistically and comprehensively address all other forms of gender based violence.⁸⁸ Similarly, the legislation on election and political

⁸⁴ Communication by the Albanian Monitoring Network Against Gender-Based Violence regarding the execution of the judgment in the case *Tërshana v. Albania* (Application No 48756/14) in accordance with Rule 9.2. of the Rules of the Committee of Ministers regarding the supervision of the execution of judgements

⁸⁵ Communication by the Albanian Monitoring Network Against Gender-Based Violence regarding the execution of the judgment in the case *Tërshana v. Albania* (Application No 48756/14) in accordance with Rule 9.2. of the Rules of the Committee of Ministers regarding the supervision of the execution of judgements

⁸⁶ <http://klgj.al/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/NJË-HARTË-E-RE-GJYQËSORE-.pdf>

⁸⁷ Studies conducted by UN Women in several municipalities of Albania in 2018 and 2019 indicate high level sexual harassment of women and girls in public spaces and very low reporting rates, <https://albania.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2019/05/sexual-harassment-gender-based-violence-in-albania>; <https://albania.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2018/10/sexual-harassment-and-other-forms-of-gender-based-violence-in-urban-public-spaces-in-albania>

⁸⁸ EVAWIA UNJP reports, funded by Sida.

parties fails to address violence against women in politics, which as recent studies have shown, continues to be very present in Albanian society, particularly during elections. A media monitoring initiative to identify forms of violence against women and gender stereotypes during the 2021 national elections, revealed that the social media landscape in Albania is generally hostile for women in politics and may impact their engagement.⁸⁹

Improvements are needed also in the labour legislation in view of the recent ratification from Albania of ILO Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190) which aims at preventing and eliminating violence and harassment in the world of work. A gap analysis has shown that the legal framework, although advanced, still needs improvements with regards to the definitions, inconsistencies among the terms used in different laws and the need to integrate violence and harassment in specific areas such as occupational safety and health. Furthermore, the EVAWIA UNJP 2019-2022 supported development of policies and procedures that safeguard the workplace from harassment, sexual harassment and all forms of violence in several state and educational institutions such as Ministry of Defense, Department of Public Administration and University of Tirana. There is a need to scale up this good practice in other legislative, executive and judiciary bodies⁹⁰.

As for **institutional mechanisms** to address violence, improvements have been made at the national and particularly at the local level. However, the existing national gender machinery remains under-resourced (both financially and in terms of human resources), resulting in limited effectiveness and implementation capacity of the system. According to a 2021 Evaluation Report of the Implementation of the NSGE 2016-2020, conducted by the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, its Sector on Policies and Strategies on Social Inclusion and Gender Equality (PSSI) is composed of five staff members, including the head of section. But, in addition to gender equality, the structure deals with minorities' rights, diversity, LGBTI+, persons with disabilities, child rights etc. Similarly, the gender equality focal points in other ministries are also entrusted with additional tasks, while the local level gender equality officers often serve both as Local Coordinator for Domestic Violence and Child Protection specialist. For the first time in 2021, Albania was able to establish CRMs in all its 61 municipalities, years after the adoption of the DV Law in 2006. But these mechanisms have different level of capacities and the majority rely on international organizations and CSOs. According to a recent monitoring report of the People's Advocate, there are several shortcomings with regards to management of cases, data collection, coordination and cooperation among members of the CRMs, including the Police, particularly in the recently established CRMs, which have not yet been consolidated.⁹¹

In general, service providers from different sectors (police, social services, health, education, judiciary) continue to face limited capacity in providing both emerging and long-term integrated services to women victims of violence. Often these providers lack knowledge on their legal obligation with regards to reporting and services, as well as collaboration modalities to ensure an effective coordinated response to cases of GBV, as required by the legislation.

Institutional response mechanisms for prevention and effective protection of other forms of violence, beyond DV, are totally lacking. The need for legal and policy framework providing for effective institutional response mechanisms at local level is, therefore, imperative.

Data limitations related to GBV remains a persisting issue, and it's linked to challenges in the entire statistical system. The system is characterized by a significant gap between the data and information collected by institutions on the one hand, and the indicators required for monitoring international commitments to gender equality and tackle GBV. There is a lack of a unified system for data collection, which is currently inconsistent and not sufficiently rigorous, making it difficult to monitor the same GBV indicator over time. Data is mainly collected on domestic violence while other forms of violence

⁸⁹ Monitoring Report: Violence against women during elections (VAWE) and gender bias in media coverage of the 2021 elections in Albania, Observatory for Children and Youth Rights with the support of UN Women, Albania, November 2021.

⁹⁰ EVAWIA UNJP reports, funded by Sida.

⁹¹ Monitoring Report of the Ombudsperson on the situation of VAW in Albania 2020-2021 addressed to the Albanian Parliament, January 2022 (unpublished)

are often categorized in generic terms as sexual crimes. More regular data on prevalence of violence needs to be collected and analysed, as well as studies on the economic cost of gender-based violence. **Funding** remains a delicate issue in the overall response to VAW as well as within gender equality context in Albania. The legal and institutional framework on gender responsive budgeting has improved and the main expenditures at the central level are dedicated to three national centers (for victims of DV, victims of trafficking and sexual violence), the national counselling hotline, and support to a few CSOs which offer services at the local level. In addition, a few municipalities have applied and benefited from the Social Fund for establishment of emergency shelters, mainly as part of community centers, through a competitive process. However, these funds, together with the economic aid provided to women victims of violence are not sufficient and remain far from the real financial needs, which have been lately detailed in the new National Strategy on Gender Equality and its Action Plan (2021-2030). With regards to social fund, there is limited capacities of municipalities to absorb and apply them adequately for victims of GBV and limited supervision on how the funds have been used. In this context, adoption of Social Plans at the local level are key conditions to apply for the social fund, which means that municipalities must be very carefully planning priorities linked with efforts to address VAW as part of these plans.

At the local level, apart from some main municipalities, planning and expenditures on VAW services remain very limited but also difficult to track because it is often included in the overall budget planning on social protection, making it difficult to identify real expenditures for services to survivor of violence. The main tracked expenditure in most municipalities is the salary of gender equality/local DV coordinator staff. Overall, the majority of services for victims of gender-based violence, as well as human trafficking and rehabilitation of perpetrators of GBV are provided by CSOs, which rely on international organizations and donors for financial support. The government's support to these organizations, which ultimately are more specialist and, in most cases, have the capacities needed to offer quality services, is limited and hampered by lack of funds and the absence of clear and transparent contracting procedures. In December 2021 the Council of Ministers Decision no. 768 date 15.12.2021 "On social services and other types of specific services for which CSOs have the right to participate in public procurement process, and of the detailed rules for their procurement" was approved, which is expected to enable CSOs receive public funding for provision of services. However, awareness on the existence of the new DCM and specific information on its application into practice is necessary

Causes: There are several reasons for gaps in integrated policies in Albania, including lack of political will to address in a comprehensive way all forms of violence against women and allocate more financial resources in this area. Institutional capacities and effective coordination are affected not only by lack of knowledge but also motivation among government officials working in the area of GBV. This issue is combined with lack of accountability and civil responsibility among members of local coordinated referral mechanism and other local providers of services who fail to comply with their legal obligations. On the other hand, civil society organizations, while being more invested in-service provision, are not very active in playing a stronger monitoring and advocacy role to influence government's policies, including budgetary commitment in the area of gender-based violence. Harmful gender stereotypes, discrimination and stigma against women from disadvantaged communities lay at the core of their challenges in accessing services.

Lastly, across these three areas, there is limited information and studies available on violence affecting **women from rural areas** and **women from disadvantaged communities**, facing intersecting forms of discrimination. Data is not collected and disaggregated regularly. A 2018 evaluation report showed that women and girls from Roma, LGBTI+ and disability communities do experience violence, though this is barely identified or reported. Forms of violence against them are quite the same as those experienced by other women and girls, but they experience additional types of violence, related to stereotypes, tradition, culture and health, social or economic status. Women from these groups are not informed about reporting options, are economically dependent on the

perpetrator, and lack access to support services that would help them live self-sufficiently.⁹² Violence against elderly women is another very problematic aspect of the broader issue of violence against women and it is almost not considered in previous interventions supported by the government and international institutions. There is no age disaggregated data and no information on the scale of violence among these groups, which remain very vulnerable to both physical and psychological violence. Provision of services to migrant women and asylum seekers who have been victims of violence, including through their identification during pre-screening procedures is also an issue that requires immediate attention. Therefore, the proposed programme will adopt an intersectional approach across all its three key pillars of intervention both in terms of carrying out activities and providing services for women and girls facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and also collect and monitor the programme's impact on the most vulnerable segments of the population.

Annex G: Environmental screening

Project Information

<i>Project Information</i>	
1. Project Title	United Nations Joint Programme to End Violence against Women in Albania, Phase II
2. Location (Global/Region/Country)	Albania

Part A. Integrating Overarching Principles to Strengthen Social and Environmental Sustainability

QUESTION: How Does the Project Integrate the Overarching Principles in order to Strengthen Environmental Sustainability?

Briefly describe in the space below how the Project mainstreams environmental sustainability

1. Could the programme offer opportunities for positive contributions to an environmentally sustainable development? Which are these opportunities? Which of them are most relevant to address? Has the programme been adjusted to enhance these opportunities?

In March 2022, the 66th Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) focused on the priority theme "Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes". According to the latest report of the UN Secretary General, gender inequality coupled with climate change and environmental crisis represent the greatest sustainable development challenge of the present time. Barriers that prevent developing gender responsive actions include lack of data, the assumption of 'gender neutrality' for the issue of climate change, and low level of women's engagement in decision-making processes.

In Albania, despite the important progress made on promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, the deadly 2019 earthquake in Albania inflicted disproportionate consequences on the most vulnerable segment of the population especially rural women, women survivors of violence, single mothers, Roma and Egyptian women, women with disabilities and all other marginalized groups.

Participating UN Agencies of this Joint Programme have accumulated ample experience in addressing the needs and vulnerabilities of women and girls suffering from disasters and environmental crisis. A Post Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) conducted in Albania by UN Women following the deadly

⁹² Evaluation Report: Violence against women and girls from disadvantaged communities- An overview of the phenomenon of violence against women and girls from Roma, LGBT and disability communities in Elbasan, Vlora and Shkodra municipalities, developed by Albanian Disability Rights Foundation, Roma Women Center and LGBTI Alliance with the support of UN Women and EU, 2018

earthquake of November 2019, points out the disproportionate impact of the earthquake on women and girls in the affected areas. Their economic empowerment will stagnate as they will be pushed further towards traditional roles and activities, including caretaking for children and elderly, family members with disabilities and engaging in agriculture to support their household. They also have less mobility to search for casual jobs, which further aggravates the inequality gap and constrains their ability to recover quickly and to build back better.⁹³ Women and girls in these communities are faced also with the impact of COVID 19 pandemic, which is expected to further widen gender inequalities and exacerbate their socio-economic situation and exacerbating any existing vulnerabilities.

Analyses and evidence shows that women and girls are at risk of increased exposure to intimate partner violence due to tensions in the home in the face of dwindling family resources and under confinement conditions, while the economic impact can place women and girls at higher risk of sexual violence and exploitation.⁹⁴ Moreover, women are hit harder by economic impacts caused by the earthquake and COVID-19 because they are more often engaged in short-term, part-time or informal employment which offers limited social security, pension and health insurance. In addition, women are also faced by unequal burden of care leading to increased vulnerability of COVID-19 transmission and they have low access to life-saving health information, especially women and girls most left behind. And finally, policy response mechanisms often do not incorporate gender analytical data or gender-responsive plans.

In this context, the proposed Joint Programme aims to address violence against all women and girls, including those most vulnerable to climate and environmental crisis. The Joint Programme is also coordinated and builds on the results of the Earthquake recovery support project, which is currently implemented and aims to, inter alia, placing the needs of women and girls at the centre of disaster risk reduction efforts. The Joint Programme will aim to create an enabling policy environment to address all forms of violence against women, including during emergency situations, and ensure availability of services for all women and girls in Albania, including those living in rural areas who are most vulnerable to climate change. The project will also address persisting social norms and stereotypes and improve prevention of all forms of violence against all women and girls, which would have positive results when it comes to violence against women in the context of climate change. In addition, civil society partners already engaged in the Earthquake Recovery project will be involved in the inception phase of the project and will take part in consultations. Which will ensure that the perspective of women and girls most affected by climate change and environmental disasters is included in the final project document.

2. Could the programme have any negative impacts on the environment, including the climate, or increase vulnerability to disasters? What are the current and projected impacts of climate change and other environmental degradation in the area where the programme is operating?

The JP itself is not expected to have negative consequences on the environment. The selection of specific municipalities where the project will be implemented will be based on a mapping of existing interventions and existing best practices that could be replicated and further scaled up. Municipalities where the Earthquake Recovery project is being implemented, specifically its component on addressing gender-based violence, will be considered as potential locations for implementation of the project.

⁹³ Albania Post-Disaster Needs Assessment, Tirana, February 2020

⁹⁴ Case Management, GBVIMS/GBVIMS+ and the COVID-19 pandemic, <https://www.unfpa.org/resources/case-management-gbvims-gbvims-and-covid-19-pandemic>

3. Are environmental concerns and opportunities addressed in management plans for the programme's implementation, monitoring and evaluation?

The project will pay particular attention to respecting environment when it comes to transportation, energy efficiency, printing and other activities that may negatively impact the environment.

4. Does the leading agency have capacity for environmental management, in terms of staff capacity, policies, guidelines, environmental management system?

UN Women is the lead UN agency for the overall implementation and coordination of the JP. UN Women has recently increased its experience and capacity to work on the issue of climate change and the environment through the implementation of the Sida component of the Earthquake recovery project. In addition, the Agreed Conclusions of the 66th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women, which focused on **“Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes”**, have generated significant knowledge and research about this issue across the Europe and Central Asia Region. Albania actively participated in the Regional CSW Consultation that took place in February 2022 on this topic.

SP Attachment 1. Environmental Risk Screening Checklist

Checklist Potential Environmental Risks	
Principle: Environmental Sustainability: Screening questions regarding environmental risks are encompassed by the specific Standard-related questions below	
Standard 1: Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Natural Resource Management	
1.1 Would the Project potentially cause adverse impacts to habitats (e.g. modified, natural, and critical habitats) and/or ecosystems and ecosystem services? <i>For example, through habitat loss, conversion or degradation, fragmentation, hydrological changes</i>	No
1.2 Are any Project activities proposed within or adjacent to critical habitats and/or environmentally sensitive areas, including legally protected areas (e.g. nature reserve, national park), areas proposed for protection, or recognized as such by authoritative sources and/or indigenous peoples or local communities?	No
1.3 Does the Project involve changes to the use of lands and resources that may have adverse impacts on habitats, ecosystems, and/or livelihoods? (Note: if restrictions and/or limitations of access to lands would apply, refer to Standard 5)	No
1.4 Would Project activities pose risks to endangered species?	No
1.5 Would the Project pose a risk of introducing invasive alien species?	No
1.6 Does the Project involve harvesting of natural forests, plantation development, or reforestation?	No
1.7 Does the Project involve the production and/or harvesting of fish populations or other aquatic species?	No
1.8 Does the Project involve significant extraction, diversion or containment of surface or ground water? <i>For example, construction of dams, reservoirs, river basin developments, groundwater extraction</i>	No
1.9 Does the Project involve utilization of genetic resources? (e.g. collection and/or harvesting, commercial development)	No
1.10 Would the Project generate potential adverse transboundary or global environmental concerns?	No
1.11 Would the Project result in secondary or consequential development activities which could lead to adverse social and environmental effects, or would it generate cumulative impacts with other known existing or planned activities in the area? <i>For example, a new road through forested lands will generate direct environmental and social impacts (e.g. felling of trees, earthworks, potential relocation of inhabitants). The new road may also facilitate</i>	No

<i>encroachment on lands by illegal settlers or generate unplanned commercial development along the route, potentially in sensitive areas. These are indirect, secondary, or induced impacts that need to be considered. Also, if similar developments in the same forested area are planned, then cumulative impacts of multiple activities (even if not part of the same Project) need to be considered.</i>		
Standard 2: Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation		
2.1	Will the proposed Project result in significant ⁹⁵ greenhouse gas emissions or may exacerbate climate change?	No
2.2	Would the potential outcomes of the Project be sensitive or vulnerable to potential impacts of climate change?	No
2.3	Is the proposed Project likely to directly or indirectly increase social and environmental vulnerability to climate change now or in the future (also known as maladaptive practices)? <i>For example, changes to land use planning may encourage further development of floodplains, potentially increasing the population's vulnerability to climate change, specifically flooding</i>	No
Standard 3: Community Health, Safety and Working Conditions		
3.1	Would elements of Project construction, operation, or decommissioning pose potential safety risks to local communities?	No
3.2	Would the Project pose potential risks to community health and safety due to the transport, storage, and use and/or disposal of hazardous or dangerous materials (e.g. explosives, fuel and other chemicals during construction and operation)?	No
3.3	Does the Project involve large-scale infrastructure development (e.g. dams, roads, buildings)?	No
3.4	Would failure of structural elements of the Project pose risks to communities? (e.g. collapse of buildings or infrastructure)	No
3.5	Would the proposed Project be susceptible to or lead to increased vulnerability to earthquakes, subsidence, landslides, erosion, flooding or extreme climatic conditions?	No
3.6	Would the Project result in potential increased health risks (e.g. from water-borne or other vector-borne diseases or communicable infections such as HIV/AIDS)?	No
3.7	Does the Project pose potential risks and vulnerabilities related to occupational health and safety due to physical, chemical, biological, and radiological hazards during Project construction, operation, or decommissioning?	No
3.8	Does the Project involve support for employment or livelihoods that may fail to comply with national and international labor standards (i.e. principles and standards of ILO fundamental conventions)?	No
3.9	Does the Project engage security personnel that may pose a potential risk to health and safety of communities and/or individuals (e.g. due to a lack of adequate training or accountability)?	No
Standard 4: Cultural Heritage		
4.1	Will the proposed Project result in interventions that would potentially adversely impact sites, structures, or objects with historical, cultural, artistic, traditional or religious values or intangible forms of culture (e.g. knowledge, innovations, practices)? (Note: Projects intended to protect and conserve Cultural Heritage may also have inadvertent adverse impacts)	No
4.2	Does the Project propose utilizing tangible and/or intangible forms of cultural heritage for commercial or other purposes?	No
Standard 5: Displacement and Resettlement		
5.1	Would the Project potentially involve temporary or permanent and full or partial physical displacement?	No
5.2	Would the Project possibly result in economic displacement (e.g. loss of assets or access to resources due to land acquisition or access restrictions – even in the absence of physical relocation)?	No

⁹⁵ In regards to CO₂, 'significant emissions' corresponds generally to more than 25,000 tons per year (from both direct and indirect sources). [The Guidance Note on Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation provides additional information on GHG emissions.]

5.3	Is there a risk that the Project would lead to forced evictions? ⁹⁶	No
5.4	Would the proposed Project possibly affect land tenure arrangements and/or community based property rights/customary rights to land, territories and/or resources?	No
Standard 6: Indigenous Peoples		
6.1	Are indigenous peoples present in the Project area (including Project area of influence)?	No
6.2	Is it likely that the Project or portions of the Project will be located on lands and territories claimed by indigenous peoples?	No
6.3	Would the proposed Project potentially affect the human rights, lands, natural resources, territories, and traditional livelihoods of indigenous peoples (regardless of whether indigenous peoples possess the legal titles to such areas, whether the Project is located within or outside of the lands and territories inhabited by the affected peoples, or whether the indigenous peoples are recognized as indigenous peoples by the country in question)? <i>If the answer to the screening question 6.3 is "yes" the potential risk impacts are considered potentially severe and/or critical and the Project would be categorized as either Moderate or High Risk.</i>	No
6.4	Has there been an absence of culturally appropriate consultations carried out with the objective of achieving FPIC on matters that may affect the rights and interests, lands, resources, territories and traditional livelihoods of the indigenous peoples concerned?	No
6.5	Does the proposed Project involve the utilization and/or commercial development of natural resources on lands and territories claimed by indigenous peoples?	No
6.6	Is there a potential for forced eviction or the whole or partial physical or economic displacement of indigenous peoples, including through access restrictions to lands, territories, and resources?	No
6.7	Would the Project adversely affect the development priorities of indigenous peoples as defined by them?	No
6.8	Would the Project potentially affect the physical and cultural survival of indigenous peoples?	No
6.9	Would the Project potentially affect the Cultural Heritage of indigenous peoples, including through the commercialization or use of their traditional knowledge and practices?	No
Standard 7: Pollution Prevention and Resource Efficiency		
7.1	Would the Project potentially result in the release of pollutants to the environment due to routine or non-routine circumstances with the potential for adverse local, regional, and/or transboundary impacts?	No
7.2	Would the proposed Project potentially result in the generation of waste (both hazardous and non-hazardous)?	No
7.3	Will the proposed Project potentially involve the manufacture, trade, release, and/or use of hazardous chemicals and/or materials? Does the Project propose use of chemicals or materials subject to international bans or phase-outs? <i>For example, DDT, PCBs and other chemicals listed in international conventions such as the Stockholm Conventions on Persistent Organic Pollutants or the Montreal Protocol</i>	No
7.4	Will the proposed Project involve the application of pesticides that may have a negative effect on the environment or human health?	No
7.5	Does the Project include activities that require significant consumption of raw materials, energy, and/or water?	No

⁹⁶ Forced evictions include acts and/or omissions involving the coerced or involuntary displacement of individuals, groups, or communities from homes and/or lands and common property resources that were occupied or depended upon, thus eliminating the ability of an individual, group, or community to reside or work in a particular dwelling, residence, or location without the provision of, and access to, appropriate forms of legal or other protections.