

UNITED NATIONS SUPPORT TO SOCIAL INCLUSION



SUMMARY OF INTERVENTIONS

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Summary of interventions - UNSSIA

Basic Information:

“United Nations Support to Social Inclusion in Albania” UNSSIA

UN partner agency: UNDP, UNFPA, UNWOMEN, IOM, UNICEF, UNODC, UNAIDS

This information provides a summary of the intervention’s main achievements during the implementation period: **January 1 – December 31 2015**

Strategic Review and Outlook

Main results achieved and implementation performance of the project/programme.

Over the years, the role of the UN has been fundamental in providing policy guidance and technical expertise for the development of a coherent and efficient policy framework on social inclusion and protection, which is aligned with normative international standards and human rights principles. In advancing the agenda of social inclusion and social protection in Albania, the UN agencies are playing a broker and facilitator role allowing for wide participation of and consultation with all key stakeholders.

The UNSSIA interventions support the Albanian Government to ensure that social inclusion is mainstreamed through sectorial policies, action plans, results frameworks and budget exercises. The strategic intent centers on narrowing the inequity gaps faced by the most vulnerable groups through specific targeting; consolidating coverage and improving the quality of services; as well as improving the overall planning and budgeting to ensure more effective and efficient utilization of resources in the provision of social services.

UNSSIA interventions focus on strengthening of the monitoring framework and creating mechanisms to ensure that analysis are rigorous and in compliance with the EU standards. The new administrative-territorial configuration presents a new opportunity to take stock of the social and economic situations of exclusion faced by vulnerable communities and families as well as those at risk. Thus, in 2016 the UNSSIA participating agencies will continue to analyze and discuss further with the national partners innovative ways to maximize capacity development efforts to ensure greater outreach of vulnerable groups’ delivery within the new Local Government Units (LGUs).

Chapter 1: Introduction

The project “UN Support to Social Inclusion in Albania” aims to assist effective elaboration and implementation of the Government of Albania's new Strategy for Social Inclusion and Social Protection. It supports the Albanian Government to prepare an extended dialogue with social partners in the country, and with the European Commission. UNSSIA supports the development of capacities of Albanian institutions at central and local levels for advancing the national social inclusion agenda with a view to ensure that government policies and programmes are consistent and coherent in achieving the maximum possible effect for the social inclusion of people at risk.

Paying particular attention on the equity and social inclusion dimension, and based on information and up to date data gathered, the programme supported the development of the Social Inclusion Policy Document; Health Promotion Strategy (2015-20) and Social Housing Strategy (2015-25). The programme paid special attention to the support for the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (PWD). The national action plan for PWD is being developed and support to local government is pursued through the establishment and functioning of services for PWD. In addition, civil society and citizens’ participation as rights holders in national social inclusion processes has been supported through several capacity building initiatives.

Update of the stakeholder analysis

Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth (MoSWY) is the main implementing partner of UNSSIA at national level. Naturally the Programme has active interaction with other sector ministries (health, education, justice, interior) and other entities involved, as far as their mandate covers locally-offered services to the vulnerable and/or marginalized populations.

Under the aspiration of having Albania join EU, MoSWY is strongly committed to “a socially inclusive transformational agenda that stipulates the rights and duties of every citizen”. As a reflection of this commitment, the MoSWY developed a new Social Inclusion Policy Document 2016 - 2020 that will become part of the overall National Strategy for Development and Integration. MoSWY is responsible for overall coordination and monitoring of social inclusion policies and has been given the authority to develop the strategy in coordination with other line ministries and interested institutions. Thus the Social Inclusion policy Document combines elements of sector strategies that can be considered fostering inclusion of people or groups of people at risk.

Very critical is the role of the Ministry of Urban Development as the main institution mandated to carry out all the functions for addressing housing problems of population based on their economic

and social status. The process of developing the new Social Housing Strategy, the Ministry of Urban Development (MUD) has been nourished by the development of the Social Inclusion Policy Document, which has identified the social housing as a priority policy area that needs to be developed in support of vulnerable groups. The support of the political leadership was also key in taking this strategy forward. The role of the Prime Minister's Office has been prominent in the support provided to the development of the two abovementioned policy documents.

Local government units now have bigger responsibility to provide services to a bigger population in an expanded geographical area. The decentralization reform will extend new responsibilities in the area of social services. As key stakeholders in public service delivery at local level they were and will remain central in ensuring more integrated programmes on the ground that benefit directly the socially excluded groups.

Civil society organisations have played an important role advocating for more inclusive policies that ensure the implementation of human rights principles. Examples of civil society and citizens pressure groups that hold government, decision-makers and service providers to account are not many. However, there have been cases of strong voice of civil society and citizens' activism (development of action plan for persons with disabilities, SIPD document, R/E action plan, etc.) and public opinion pressure which positively illustrate the influential changes a strong civil society can introduce in the democratic society.

Regarding donor support to the social inclusion promotion agenda, SDC, the EU Delegation, and SIDA are the key partners. Their support in policy development, capacity building and demonstrative projects is fundamental for pushing forward the country's social inclusion agenda.

Chapter 2: Outcomes¹ achieved for 2015

Description of achievement 2015 of outcome indicators measured against baseline and target values (if available) and reflecting quantitative and qualitative dimensions of the achievement

UN work in this area ensures that the rights of the most vulnerable social groups, including children, women, people living in poverty, the elderly, the disabled, Roma and Egyptian minorities, victims of human trafficking, etc., are equally implemented through legislation, inclusive policies, social

¹ An Outcome is the likely or achieved short term and/or medium-term effect of an intervention's outputs against the logical framework or an equivalent Results Framework. The progress report must document changes at both population and organization/institution level (including behavioral changes).

protection mechanisms and special interventions. Specific UN actions focus on generation of knowledge on vulnerability and social exclusion, development and promotion of the required national policy framework and relevant legal, administrative and financial instruments in shaping both central and local service delivery policies and practice.

Main Achievements

- The national policy framework in this area has benefited from the UN support for the development of several policy documents, relevant action plans and monitoring and evaluation frameworks, namely: Policy Paper for Social Inclusion 2014 – 2020 including a set of national indicators on social inclusion based on qualitative analysis on the most vulnerable categories of the population; Social Protection Strategy 2015–2020 with a costed action plan articulating the need to harmonize the different instruments of social protection, recognizing that cash alone cannot address the complex needs of vulnerable families and children; National Action Plan on Health Promotion 2015-2020; New Social Housing Strategy; Action Plan on Persons with Disabilities (2016 – 2020); and alignment of the Health and Reproductive Health Strategic Document and budgetary frameworks to the principles and targets of SI. The work conducted under the policy framework is aligned and will be implemented in tandem with the Territorial and Administrative Reform and the National Crosscutting Strategy for Decentralization and Local Governance. Besides the provision of technical advice, UN participating agencies, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNAIDS, UN Women, UNODC, and IOM have facilitated the consultative processes on the policy formulations ensuring participation of all relevant stakeholders, including vulnerable groups.
- Legal, administrative and financial instruments for social inclusion have been developed through UNDP support, including secondary legislation to improve the Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities. In addition, UN Women provided technical support to the MPs, members of the Parliamentary Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, on the draft Labor Code reinforcing a series of gender related recommendations on improved women’s access to labor market, equal work treatment between women and men, reinforced social protection measures in labor relations for women and men, enjoyment of maternity and paternity leave, reduction of harassment at the work place, etc.
- Knowledge has been produced for evidence-based policy-making on the situation of those most at risk of social exclusion such as women, men, youth and children (girls and boys) belonging to the most vulnerable groups, namely people with disability, Roma and Egyptians, elderly, victims of

trafficking and unaccompanied minors. Maps of vulnerabilities as per the different administrative divisions have been developed by UNICEF for use as a social protection planning tool by the central and local administrations.

- Inclusive local plans for persons with disabilities (PWD) in Lezha, Lushnja and Progradec clearly stipulate the needs of PWD and provide guidance support for the implementation of the interventions towards the fulfillment of their rights. Two direct infrastructure (demonstrative) projects are being implemented namely the establishment of the day care centre for PWD in Lushnja and the workshop for the vocational training of the Deaf Students national Institute. These projects are finalized by December 2015.
- Roma and Egyptian local CBOs became a reliable partner for fighting discrimination and furthering Roma and Egyptian social inclusion at local and central levels in the regions of Tirana, Durres, Lushnje, and Berat as result of the partnership forums established with participation of municipality representatives, local Roma CSOs and regional offices of Education, Social State Services and Health.
- Participatory budgeting process supported by UN Women in the municipalities of Tirana, Fier and Berat resulted in recommendations to render social services at the local level more responsive to women. The Municipal Councils, proposed the use of municipal funds to supplement financial assistance in support of women and families in need, construction of ramps to facilitate access for women and men with disabilities, provision of support services for women and children in multi-functional centers and application of a soft loan criteria for social housing especially for divorced and widow women. Up to 40% of the 2016 municipal budget was committed by the municipal authorities towards the completion of the actions proposed in these recommendations.
- Capacities of selected local government units have been strengthened on different social inclusion and social protection issues, namely identifying the needs of people with disability, people living with HIV; monitoring and reporting towards the indicators of the new Action Plan for Integration of Roma and Egyptian communities; identifying and responding to Child Protection issues; and participatory budgeting on issues that affect women.
- The MoSWY and its pertinent institutions, including the National Employment Service, Social State Services, Social Insurance Institution, Labour Inspectorate, etc., are being supported towards establishing harmonized procedures and data collection standards aiming to produce a solid database for social programs, disaggregated by sex.

Chapter 3: Output delivery and their contribution to Outcomes

COMPONENTS AND RESULTS		
Specific objective 1	Description deliverable 2015 as per AWP	Progress till December 2015
Component 1: KNOWLEDGE GENERATION for evidence-based social inclusion policies		
<p>EXPECTED RESULT 1 Better identification and targeting of vulnerable and marginalized groups through periodic generation of reliable information and approximation of data gathering mechanism with EU standards.</p>	<p>1.1 Analysis of social exclusion drivers in Albania: People with disabilities, Roma and Egyptians, Youth and Third age.</p>	<p>The secondary analysis of the 2011 Census re. PwD, Roma and Egyptians, Youth, and Elderly in Albania followed by the qualitative analysis of the social exclusion profiles of these groups contribute to the expansion of the knowledge base of the vulnerable groups in Albania. The studies are completed, validated by INSTAT and launched in 2015. (UNDP, UNFPA)</p>
	<p>1.2 Participatory preparation of social exclusion profiles: Roma; Vulnerable Women; PwD; PLHIV; Victims of Trafficking; Drug Users and Prison Populations</p>	<p>Social exclusion profiles on Roma and Egyptians, PwD; Victims of Trafficking, Elderly are completed and published. While focusing on the barriers to social inclusion of these target groups, the analysis provides comprehensive information on the assistance and services provided, level of participation and the equalization of opportunities which is valuable for the formulation and monitoring of social inclusion policies. (UNDP, IOM, UNFPA)</p>
	<p>1.3 Cross country regional knowledge transfer on social inclusion / gender equality promoted through exchange forums, peer reviews of government and civil society partners with Western Balkan countries aspiring to join the EU</p>	<p>Technical expertise is provided to guide the Government to shift from protective measures and services to social-reintegration services and policies for women. The intended technical expertise is in line with EU2020 perspective of “Increased Social Inclusion through Development of Labour Market and Social Welfare,” ensuring coherence with the European strategic planning frame in line with the new financial planning period of EU Assistance (IPA 2014-2020). Also, the Draft law on Social Enterprises is assisted in line with EU practices and legal frameworks on social re-integration. The draft approved by the inter-ministerial working group is consulted in two meetings with representatives of civil society and international partner organizations and yet shared. (UNWOMEN)</p>

Specific objective 2		
Component 2: POLICY MANAGEMENT: Capacities of MoLSAEO strengthened to coordinate, monitor and evaluate the implementation of the Social Inclusion and Protection Strategy and its policies on a national scale		
EXPECTED RESULTS 2 The decision-makers, managers and staff of MSWY are able to plan, coordinate, mainstream and monitor the implementation of the new Social Inclusion and Protection Strategy and all other sector related policies	2.1 Social Inclusion Policy Document 2015-2020 (including Indicators, Baselines and Targets for Social Inclusion Policies 2014-2020) is finalized and endorsed by the government; a policy paper for the transformation of the "Ndihma Ekonomike" into a social re-integration programme.	<p>The Policy Paper for Social Inclusion 2016 – 2020 (SIPD) is adopted in December 2015. The SIPD ensures the development of quality public welfare service system, and proposes numerous ways of how to achieve this goal. The Policy Document 2016 – 2020 is an integral part of the National Strategy for Development and Integration (NSDI), and contains a set of national indicators on social inclusion based on qualitative analysis on the most vulnerable categories of the population. SIPD lead to improvements in the ways social inclusion is linked to government policies and Albania’s EU accession process. (UNDP)</p> <p>The assessment/policy paper of the employment potentials of the economic aid beneficiaries, including the evaluation of how close claimants are to the labor market drew policy–relevant conclusions and policy implications for stimulating new sources of employment and provided concrete recommendations to policymakers for the implementation of the social re-integration programmes targeting social assistance (ndihma ekonomike) recipients. Taking into account the priority recommendations identified by the policy paper, another UNDP programme – the SD4E – is currently supporting the development of an inclusive action plan for social reintegration of the beneficiaries of the economic aid. (UNDP)</p>
	2.2 Technical assistance for M&E framework, implementation and reporting on the Social Inclusion Policy provided to MoSWY.	The SIPD glossary developed. It includes theoretical concepts, and methodological and statistical terminologies used in social housing and social inclusion across all the domains: poverty reduction and social protection; employment and skills; education and training; health; basic needs; and social participation and human rights. (UNDP)
	2.3 By-laws of the law on Inclusion of and Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities elaborated through consultative process and capacities of the national coordination,	UNDP supported the process of formulation and decision making of four new by-laws for the implementation of the Law on Inclusion of and Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities: The Decision No. 708, dated 26/8/2015 of the Council of Ministers on the types and frequency of data

	<p>monitoring and reporting institutions on disabilities developed.</p>	<p>collection and the way data is used to report on persons with disabilities from state central and local responsible authorities; The Decision No. 48, dated 21/01/2015 of the Council of Ministers of the Regulation for the Functioning of the National Council on Disabilities; The Order No. 12, dated 09/02/2015 of Prime Minister's Office on the Establishment of the National Council on Disabilities; The Decision No. 460, dated 27/05/2015 of Council of Ministers on the approval of the Initial Report on the Implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Decision no. dated 23/12/2015 of Council of Ministers on the Measures for the Removal of Environmental and Physical Barriers in the Public Services Provision. In reply to the necessity for undertaking changes in the national legislation to ensure conformity with the CRPD, TORs for two local consultancies were drafted and agreed with MoSWY, one to propose arrangements enabling independent living and supported decision-making for persons with disabilities, and the other one to review Albanian legislation for conformity to the CRPD and other recently adopted legislation.</p>
	<p>2.4 The National set of harmonized indicators on gender equality are reviewed and endorsed to ensure better vertical data flow.</p>	<p>Harmonized procedures and data collecting standards are introduced in the MSWY and pertinent institutions, including National Employment Service, Social State Services, Social Insurance Institution, Labour Inspectorate. The data mapping exercise helped to define key gender related indicators and concrete administrative data, disaggregated by sex that are required to feed first, monitoring and evaluation of national policies and actions, evidence-based policy and decision-making, shaping better services to right holders and reinforcing the accountability of duty-bearers. As a result, disaggregated data according to the National Set of Harmonized Indicators are now mandatory for institutions to report to MSWY in a structured flow and standard form.</p> <p>Capacity building is provided to specialist and staff within target institutions to operationalize data in using the new software that allows for data interpretation and comparison. Such standardized administrative data will serve INSTAT to proceed with calculation of this important social and gender related indexes.</p>

		<p>The National set of harmonized indicators on gender equality is used to set the base of data of INSTAT annual publication Women and Men in Albania 2015. These data provides policy and decision makers with evidence to shape better and more responsive government policies and services to socially excluded groups of men and women. (UNWOMEN)</p>
<p>Specific objective 3</p>		
<p>Component 3: POLICY MANAGEMENT – vertically: Capacities of MSWY to ensure that Social Protection component (cash assistance + disability allowances + care services) of the Social Inclusion and Protection Strategy is responsive to diverse range of rights holders (Complementing Social Care Reform)</p>		
<p>EXPECTED RESULT 3 Social protection mechanisms (supported by UNICEF under the integrated social care reform) are socially inclusive for the all range rights holders of social services and gender equality</p>	<p>3.1 Development of training packages, guidelines and manuals for all regions’ Needs Assessment Commissions on how to address specific challenges of exclusion (territorial and group-specific dimensions, and gender equality dimensions)</p>	<p>Guidelines and protocols for the Prevention of Transmission of Infective Agents from Mother to Child, have been developed and endorsed by the Albanian Ministry of Health. 2015 has been characterized by intense efforts towards integration of youth friendly services in the basic package of PHC. National key stakeholders were engaged intensively throughout the year in discussing the current context on youth friendly services and in developing scenarios for the integration of these services within PHC and the establishment of YFS in other settings. (UNFPA)</p> <p>Three local networks/forums are created in Elbasan, Shkodra and Vlora with participation of civil society, local government and department of health in regions. New elected members of councils in the three new municipalities are engaged and involved on the joint planning and implementation of activities at local level. Each forum has established a social media account for interaction among them. (UNAIDS)</p> <p>Work for developing the training package and guideline for case managers on how to address victims of trafficking needs started; Document was revised and finalized incorporating feedback received by stakeholders. Translation, proof reading and editing of training package and guideline for social workers assisting VOTs is under process. (IOM)</p>

	<p>3.2 A system of child welfare indicators is in place and helps measure regularly child poverty and deprivation (data to comply with EUROSTAT guidelines and policies)</p>	<p>The interactive web based map of child indicators has been updated by Child Rights Observatory based on the collected data, displaying disaggregated information on child situation in the country. The challenge still remains in the future to establish this mechanism within the nationally owned capacities, e.g. INSTAT. Based on these information, child rights situation analyses fact sheets have been developed for 61 municipalities. This constitute the first data instrument disaggregated at this level in the country, to become advocacy tools in improving child welfare indicators collected and reported at the recently established municipalities. Furthermore, local actors and the Child Rights Observatory have put together their efforts in reporting on the new wave of massive emigration of Albanians. Monitoring and reporting procedure is being established by the CRO to keep track of the phenomenon. Similarly is the work being done in monitoring and reporting of the Albanian returned in the country, a category currently vulnerable towards exclusion and poverty. Such data leads the advocacy of local actors to facilitate access of families and children in basic services. (UNICEF)</p>
	<p>3.3 Gender responsive social budgeting and planning criteria introduced in design and monitoring of social service delivery.</p>	<p>Assessment of planning and budgeting in two municipalities Fier and Berat has initiated covering the methodology, information, data, implementation and reporting of social services. Technical assistance was provided to the municipalities of Fier, Berat and Tirana to prepare budgeting and planning of social services for consultation with citizens. (UNWOMEN)</p>
	<p>3.4 National assessment on synergies of existing coordination and referral mechanisms for women victims of trafficking and violence conducted.</p>	<p>Assessment report on the synergies between the referral mechanisms for victims of trafficking and for victims of domestic violence prepared and consulted with all stakeholders in spring 2015. Report was published and distributed to relevant stakeholders in August 2015. (IOM)</p>
<p>Specific objective 4</p>		
<p>Component 4: POLICY MANAGEMENT – across sectors: Capacities of line ministries to operationalize the provisions of the Social Inclusion and Protection Strategy in their policies</p>		

EXPECTED RESULT 4

Line Ministries policies have an explicit inclusion dimension and result in tangible improvements in the lives of the most marginalized

4.1 Participatory self-assessments/reviews of sectoral policies and financing / entitlement regimes from the perspective of the provisions of the new Strategy for Social Inclusion and Protection - with at least three line ministries (e.g. education, health, housing/transport)

The newly developed Social Housing Strategy (SHS) and its Action Plan (2015 – 2025) pays particular attention to the housing needs of low-income families and especially vulnerable groups and aim to provide them with available, accessible, affordable and quality housing solutions. The document contribute to the development of the social housing sector and what’s more important will serve the needs of the most vulnerable and excluded groups in Albania. The document is drafted, costed and consulted widely with all key stakeholders and interest groups, but is yet to be adopted by the prime minister's office. The SHS will be implemented in tandem with the National Strategy for Development and Integration (NSDI), the Territorial and Administrative Reform (TAR), and the National Crosscutting Strategy for Decentralization and Local Governance (NCSDLG). In addition UNDP supported MUD to develop a set of appropriate tools for the implementation and monitoring of the Social Housing Action Plan. Additional support in 2015 included technical assistance to (a) assessing the existing data regarding housing needs of vulnerable groups; (b) conducting a Housing Needs Assessment of vulnerable groups in the 61 newly established municipalities; and (c) establishing a reliable system for collecting and updating housing needs data at national and local level. (UNDP)

The National Action Plan on Health Promotion has been drafted in 2015. The working group established with an Order of the Minister of Health has been working intensively to reflect the findings of the assessment of the previous strategy of health promotion and to reflect new developments (SDGs; Health Sector Reform / Universal Health Coverage) and to create linkages with the Health Sector Strategy and NSDI. The National Action Plan on Health Promotion (2016 - 2020) will be finalized and launched within the first quarter of 2016.

The Reproductive Health (RH) Strategic Document has been drafted and has been validated through consultative meetings with health care professionals and civil society organizations. Based on the feedback received, the working group of experts will work to finalize the Strategic Document and the relevant activities under it, in the first quarter of 2016. The RH Strategic Document will reflect guiding principles and orientations as provided in the European Action Plan towards Improved Sexual and

		Reproductive Health and Rights 2017-2021. This strategic document will reflect health sector priorities as articulated in the Health Sector Strategy and in the NSDI. (UNFPA)
	4.2 Priority policy actions for social inclusion identified, costed and action-planned for at least three sectoral line ministries through evidence based policy making mechanisms and targeting sectoral reforms for social inclusion results (e.g. health, education, housing/transport)	<p>The group of experts representing the Albanian Ministry of Health, Institute of Public Health and the Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth, have completed this very important analysis. In the center of analysis are Reproductive Health Strategy and Health Promotion Strategy. Two particular objectives within these strategies have been selected for the purpose of the analysis. The report has generated key recommendations which will serve as advocacy messages and will influence the process of costing and budgeting the activities planned under the newly developed Reproductive Health Strategic Document and National Action Plan of health Promotion 2016 – 2020. (UNFPA)</p> <p>The Action Plan (APPWD) on Persons with Disabilities (2016 – 2020) is developed and is being consulted. The plan addresses problems faced by persons with disabilities, promote inclusion, prevent discrimination and eliminate barriers in accessing services and rights. This Action Plan is an integral part of SIPD and is being developed in cooperation with organizations of and for persons with disabilities, the international community and local government units. The priority fields follow those identified in the European Disability Strategy. The APPWD is developed and broadly consulted with all key stakeholders and interest groups in December 2015. (UNDP)</p>
	4.3 Comprehensive Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities-CRPD implementation capacity development intervention package developed and delivered (building on prior work) at national, regional, local levels and across sectors	Our support for the social inclusion of people with disabilities in society goes towards eliminating barriers in accessing services and rights. Improved skills for the 25 members of National Council on Disability Issues, and government focal points on disability issues, including the elimination of barriers in accessing services and rights, resulted in concrete inputs to the New Action Plan on Persons with Disabilities which is being developed with UNDP support. UNDP also worked to further encourage development of local initiatives to reduce inequalities and promote social and economic inclusion for vulnerable groups. For this UNDP provided capacity support interventions for 119 local government representatives from six local

		government units and for profit and non-for-profit partners to design inclusive local plans for persons with disabilities. As a result, three Inclusive local plans were developed for persons with disabilities in Lezha, Lushnja and Progradec providing guidance support for the implementation of the interventions towards the fulfilment of their rights. In addition, a capacity building activity, specifically a five-day induction training was designed and delivered for the staff of the Albanian Ministry of Defence who work in the day-care centre for children with disabilities of military families. The training aimed at increasing staff knowledge and understanding of disability human rights, informing them on service provision standards and the application of the latter in their daily work. The participants were also trained in setting up individual education plans for children with disabilities. (UNDP)
Specific objective 5		
Component 5: POLICY IMPLEMENTATION by regional and local governance mechanisms to implement inclusive policies		
EXPECTED RESULT 5 Capacities of governance mechanisms at local levels assessed and developed. Local level social inclusion policy responses are costed and partially financed with a view to eventual integration in local, regional development planning and budgeting.	5.1 Social Inclusion action plans developed in three local government units (in connection with social care reform of UNICEF in Tirana, Elbasan and Durres)	Tors developed. The start of this activity is awaiting the approval of the SIPD (UNDP)
	5.2 Participatory social impact assessment Methodology introduced in the Ministry of Urban Development; and National and local actors engaged in investment programming trained on social impact assessment	Methodology developed and introduced in the Ministry of Urban Planning and Housing; A set of appropriate tools for the implementation and monitoring is in place. (UNDP)
	5.3 Demonstrative projects developed and implemented to accommodate the needs of persons with disabilities for education and integration respectively in Municipality of	Two demonstrative projects are being implemented namely the establishment of the day care centre for PWD in Lushnja and the workshop for the vocational training of the Deaf Students national Institute. Following the approval of the Local Action Plan for PWD UNDP supported the improvement of community services through the reconstruction of a

	Lushnja and Tirana institute for deaf students.	daycare centre for at least 25 children with severe disabilities in Lushnje, a project which is just about to start in January 2016. Also, UNDP helped Tirana Deaf Pupils Institute to re-establish three workshops thus providing opportunity for quality vocational education to at least 40 hearing-impaired students. Both demonstrative projects are finalized by December 2015. (UNDP)
Specific objective 6		
Component 6: Demand – Civil Society Marginalized groups capacities enhanced to exercise their rights to equal access to services		
EXPECTED RESULT Improved policy dialogue among the relevant institutions at all levels to support the inclusion of the most vulnerable communities. Civil society networks able to effectively claim and demand services and rights for constituents	<p>6.1 Advocacy work through parliamentary commission hearings on National Strategy Implementation and its gender equality results</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parliamentary Commission for EU Integration • Parliamentary Commission for Labor Social Issues and Health • Parliamentary Commission for Legal Affairs and Human Rights • Ad hoc parliamentary groups 	<p>The association of People Living with HIV (PLWH) has advocated with members of parliamentary commission of health and social affair. An advocacy agenda has been prepared together with the Friendly group of the women in parliament which will follow up on the recommendations of the hearing session. (UNAIDS)</p> <p>UNFPA and United States Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy (ACPD) organized a meeting with Health and Population Parliamentarian Group in September 2015 to introduce SDGs. Another meeting has been organized to draw attention on the need for advocacy on health and population issues. The work has focused on strengthening capacities of parliamentarians on understanding current issues as well as advocacy about population related issues. (UNFPA)</p>
	6.2 Training and advocacy support to Youth Cross Disability Forums at local levels on CPRD obligations	Albanian Cross Disability Youth Forum is enlarged and its network is strengthened due to the support provided to 130 young people from Berat, Fieri, Shkodra and Vlora for the development of their knowledge, skills and confidence in becoming active citizens and promoting their voice to policy makers. As a result, the Central Election Commission improved access to voting by issuing provisions for physical accessibility and by appointing 12 persons with disabilities, one for each regional election office. (UNDP)
	6.3 Expansion of civil registration of Roma and Egyptian communities supported through network of partners	Access to justice is advocated and implemented from UNDP in partnership with national NGOs through provision of fee legal aid to 165 Roma and Egyptians families in 3 municipalities. (UNDP)

	<p>6.4 Community mediation and public health institutions accountability oversight for enhanced access of Roma/Egyptian populations and other at risk groups to health services</p>	<p>The training process has been completed in the districts of Gramsh, Skrapar, Kolonje and Korçe. The training curriculum has been revised reflecting the revised Basic Package of Primary Health Care Services. The overall training process has been accredited by the National Center for Continuous Medical Education with a total number of 67 credits. Each training course has included 14 sessions, 5 hours each session, with a total of 56 training sessions. Number of primary health care providers trained in each of the four districts is: 26 health providers in the district of Korça, 34 in the district of Kolonja, 27 in the district of Skrapar and 31 in the district of Gramsh. In the implementation of this training program have been actively engaged Ministry of Health Structures centrally and at the district level, Health Insurance Fund, Primary Health Care Providers and other government and non-government organizations. (UNFPA)</p> <p>Advocacy activities have been ongoing by the department of health in the region of Shkodra and Elbasan. The focus has been young people, women especially pregnant women and at risk communities (IDU, MSM) which resulted in the increase of number of people tested on HIV and other related STI. Joint activities are undertaken by Department of Health and civil society in both regions. Department of health are also part of the local forums created. (UNAIDS)</p>
	<p>6.5 Roma and Egyptian women grass roots formations trained and supported to monitor implementation of inclusion policies at local level. At least two initiatives of Roma Egyptian grassroots' formations supported.</p>	<p>Efforts to increase the social inclusion of Roma and Egyptians have included recommendations to support membership in community groups and organizations and the strengthening of the civil society networks to effectively claim and demand services. UNDP promoted the human rights of Roma and Egyptian women to engage them in social change activities in four regions (Tirana, Berat, Lushnja and Durrës). In addition UNDP facilitated forums of 40 Roma women activists to advocate for the uptake of their rights. They met with deputy ministers of Social Welfare, Interior, Education and Justice to address issues and concerns. (UNDP)</p>
	<p>6.6 Innovative ideas in support of citizen's access to information and monitoring introduced and implemented.</p>	<p>UNDP worked in raising awareness about the potential and capabilities, often not recognized, of deaf children. Under "With Innocence on" slogan and cooperation with Deaf Students Institute and a media company, UNDP promoted the talent of deaf children whose drawings were adapted in</p>

		<p>designs and printed in high-end clothing. The event brought together Albanian reporters, opinion makers, psychologists, singers and other media personalities, who joined the call to promote disability rights. A video reportage to promote the talent and skills of children was produced and aired during runaway, as well as on local TV channels. The event was heavily reported in national and international media and especially on social platforms (UNDP).</p> <p>With UNDP support, a technical roundtable discussion was organised to identify potential barriers but also innovative opportunities for an improved access to justice and ultimately bridge the gap between vulnerable citizens and the justice system. Participants included representatives from the Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth, Ministry of Justice, academia, human rights monitoring bodies in Albania, as well as Non-Governmental Organizations specialized in providing free legal assistance to vulnerable groups (UNDP).</p>
	<p>6.7 GRB tool introduced in two municipalities as monitoring and reporting mechanisms on social service delivery</p>	<p>Social services in municipalities of Tirana, Fier and Berat went through a thorough assessment from a gender perspective. Findings and recommendations fed the participatory budgeting meetings between citizens and municipality representatives in these municipalities. The intervention in early 2015 produced: an increased information and understanding of municipality representatives on socially responsible budgeting and an increased dialogue between citizens and municipalities on local planning and budgeting of social services.</p> <p>The municipality of Tirana committed to set up in 2016 the women councillor commission as an advocate group for equitable social services, planning and budgeting in the municipality, allocation of funds for women entrepreneurship in the municipality area, and tax break for women and girls in need and beneficiaries of social support services.</p> <p>Municipality of Fier allocated funds for housing support for (i) widow women and women head of household; (ii) support to the Center for children with disabilities and for visually impaired people; (iii) support to the Centre for the women victims of violence; support the Youth Centre run by “New Epoca” organization. The Municipality allocated about 40% of 2016 in</p>

		<p>response to concrete recommendations proposed by women and men during the participatory budget meetings. Such recommendation ensure that municipal funds go towards better housing services, referral mechanism to DV, multifunctional centers, school and kindergarden restauration, friendly infrastructure for people with disabilities, etc.</p> <p>In Berat, municipal budget lines are assigned for: (i) supporting women victims of violence community centre and DV coordinating mechanism; (ii) supporting through economic aid families in need; (iii) supporting the multifunctional sports centre for youth, girls and boys; (iv) social housing for women and men in need; (v) supporting “Daily Centre LIRA” for children with disabilities. (UNWOMEN)</p>
	<p>6.8 Local NGOs providing services to persons with disabilities enabled to provide professional support, and assess & monitor the implementation of the rights of PwD.</p>	<p>The communication skills of 20 children diagnosed with autism specter disorders are improved as a result of the UNDP supported 10-day training for 12 professionals on assessing and developing communication skills. (UNDP)</p>

Chapter 5: Lessons Learnt

Good practice and innovations working with key partners, beneficiaries, interagency collaboration, but also obstacles and difficulties

- The culture of cross-sectoral collaboration is still weak and bringing different ministries to the same discussion table requires special efforts. The UN is undertaking a facilitator role in engaging different Ministries such as Social Welfare and Youth, Urban Development, Health, Education, and Interior to plan, coordinate and take action in improving the situation regarding the vulnerable population.
- The new territorial configuration will require an adjustment to UNSSIA's work to align with the timeframe of amalgamation of the existing LGUs into bigger ones, stronger advocacy to ensure that the needs of the vulnerable groups are prioritized in the new municipalities' agenda, and a more strategic approach to dissemination of data and capacity building, especially in the delivery of social services. The establishment of a well-developed government support programme for LGUs in cooperation with development partners and civil society is crucial.
- There is a lack of disaggregated and comparative statistical data on the effectiveness of specific anti-discrimination measures and programmes for the vulnerable groups. This limits formulation as well as evaluation of appropriate government policies and programmes, which calls for immediate concerted and coordinated action to strengthen the country's capacity to generate, analyze and manage reliable social qualitative and quantitative information for evidence-based policy making.
- The Social Housing Strategy recommends changes to the existing institutional structure that supports the social housing sector. Further work is needed to model the institutional set-up and potential cooperation among actors in this area. Public-private partnerships should be explored as potential options of a renewed institutional framework for social housing delivery.
- The cooperation with civil society should be an essential part of the Government's strategy for creating a sustainable welfare society today and tomorrow.

Challenging aspects of the overall UN contribution/support

- The present challenges faced by the Government of Albania involve securing welfare and inclusion, quality of public sector services and, therefore, cohesion in society. Several disadvantaged groups continue struggling to find housing solutions, employment and proper health services, and also

struggling with the problems of adjusting socially and coming to terms with society at large.

- The existence of a data system is key to better formulation as well as evaluation of appropriate local government policies and programs for the vulnerable population, which bring about an immediate need for concerted and coordinated action to gather, consolidate and review qualitative and quantitative data in all SIPD priority sectors such as employment, education, health, housing and justice.
- The decentralization process and the amalgamation of municipalities is not accompanied by capacity building strategies to ensure as much as possible the realization and implementation of the national and local strategies. While it will take time to reorganize LGUs – develop data systems, define competencies and responsibilities, the emphasis can be placed on increasing the capacities of central-level officials and preparing their interventions at the local level.