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Sida Decentralised Evaluation

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Evaluation of Swedish Support to the One UN in Albania for gender equality work 2012–2017

Final Report

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**Final Report
June 2017**

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

AWEN	Albanian Women Empowerment Network
AWP	Annual Work Plan
CCR	Coordinated Community Response
CEC	Central Elections Commission
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women
CLCI	Center for Legal Civic Initiatives
CPD	Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DDPFFA	Department of Development Programming, Financing and Foreign Aid
EC	European Commission
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
HACT	Harmonised Approach to Cash Transfers
HQ	Headquarters
IPRO	Immovable Property Rights Office
IOM	International Organization for Migration
JAWP	Joint Annual Work Plan
KEQ	Key Evaluation Question
MDG	Millenium Development Goal
MARDWA	Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development, and Water Administration
MEDTTE	Ministry of Economic Development, Tourism, Trade and Entreprise
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
MoSWY	Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MP	Member of Parliament
MPTF	Multi-Partner Trust Fund (Office)
MTBP	Mid-Term Budget Programme
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NSDI	National Strategy for Development and Integration
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PMO	Prime Minister's Office
PoC	Programme of Cooperation
RBM	Results-Based Management
RC	Resident Coordinator

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

RCO	Resident Coordinator Office
SAA	Standard Administrative Arrangement
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Economic, Social and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WPE	Women's Political Empowerment

Executive Summary

The main objective of this evaluation was to assess the comparative advantages and disadvantages of the One UN Coherence Fund as a channel for Swedish support for gender equality in Albania. The evaluation was planned and implemented in accordance with OECD/DAC quality standards and evaluation criteria, and followed an utilisation-focused approach.

Evidence was collected and corroborated through a desk review, interviews and focus group discussions, including a one-week mission to Albania. The main findings are presented below.

Relevance of the gender-related outputs

- The Programme of Cooperation (PoC) was developed through a participatory process involving Albanian stakeholders. The outcomes and outputs of the results framework were also informed by previous work and lessons learned, alongside a review from a gender perspective.
- The gender-related outputs are aligned with the strategic priorities of the Albanian government, as identified in national strategies and action plans.
- The use of the Coherence Fund as a channel for Swedish support was informed by previous experience and in line with Swedish policy objectives. The gender-related outputs fell largely within the overall thematic focus of Swedish support for gender equality in Albania.
- The results orientation of the gender-related outputs improved over time. However, a theory of change justifying the approach and strategy was largely missing.
- The work on gender equality has been responsive to the Albanian government's requests and changing circumstances. Lessons learned are identified in progress reports, reviews and evaluations but have not been systematically integrated with planning and programming.

Achievement of results and factors influencing effectiveness

- The UN has supported the Albanian Parliament, the Central Elections Committee (CEC), the Ombudsman, and the Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination (CPD) in becoming more active in promoting women's political empowerment, addressing discrimination and monitoring international obligations.
- UN support has played an important role in the further development of key national policies, action plans and laws on gender equality and women's rights, alignment with international treaties, and the development of capacities and tools

for gender mainstreaming. A particularly tangible result is the mainstreaming of gender into the government's Mid-Term Budget Programming (MTBP).

- UN support has been critical for developing, expanding and monitoring multi-disciplinary services to domestic violence victims. Information campaigns are likely to have contributed to public awareness-raising on gender-based violence.
- The UN has contributed to a wide range of activities in support of women's economic empowerment. However, given the lack of clear linkages between these activities, its support comes across as fragmented.
- The EU accession process and related policy and legal developments have created an enabling environment for the UN's work on gender equality. The UN also has several comparative advantages that have been capitalised on.
- Results in several areas have been held back by political obstacles, leadership changes in counterpart ministries (with resulting changes in priorities), and limited government resources and capacities, especially at the local level. The short-term, activity-oriented nature of UN support has compounded the situation.
- The PoC implementation structure and Coherence Fund modality have positively influenced the achievement of results, including by ensuring UN responsiveness, coordination and cooperation. At the same time, they appear to have contributed to a focus on short-term deliverables rather than long-term outcomes and a fragmented approach to the work on gender equality.

Efficiency of the Coherence Fund as a modality for promoting gender equality

- The output working group structure put in place to manage and coordinate the planning of activities in support of gender-related outputs has not been consistently operationalised and has seen varying levels of government participation.
- The Joint Executive Committee has had a limited role in ensuring a strategic UN-Albanian government dialogue on the use of Coherence Fund resources, including Swedish funding.
- There is scope for further improving the quality of the annual work plans (AWPs) and PoC annual progress reports, including the need to differentiate between levels of results and clarify UN agencies' contribution and influence. Separate reporting to the Swedish Embassy has been inconsistent.
- The system for financial management and control of Coherence Fund resources is well developed and operationalised by an experienced trust fund entity that ensures financial control and transparency.
- Sweden has been the most significant contributor to the Coherence Fund but the relative importance of its role in funding gender-related outputs is not clear. Most donors are using alternative financing modalities.
- Sweden's influence on strategic and operational priorities for UN gender equality work has been limited, largely due to the lack of well-functioning and inclusive dialogue mechanisms.

Contribution to outcomes and impact

- Progress in achieving gender-related outputs has been mixed and is generally difficult to substantiate. The most tangible results appear to have been achieved in the areas of gender-based violence and gender mainstreaming.
- UN work on gender equality has contributed to formal, systemic change through policies and laws. However, the effect on public awareness, cultural norms and societal practices cannot be established.
- Sustainability has been promoted through the UN's contribution to changes in policies, laws, regulations and systems, such as the Coordinated Community Response (CCR). However, sustainability could be improved through more systematic capacity-building within government, state institutions and civil society organisations (CSOs).

Alternative financing modalities

- Different financing modalities have their advantages and disadvantages, depending on the criteria used. A formalised, joint UN gender equality programme appears to be a good option for future support that could address some of the concerns regarding the Coherence Fund.

Conclusions

Swedish support through the One UN Coherence Fund has been largely relevant to Albanian priorities and obligations and the needs of the main beneficiary institutions. However, the effectiveness of Swedish support is difficult to ascertain, given changes in outputs and indicators. Significant results have mainly been achieved in relation to the work with public oversight bodies, gender mainstreaming and gender-based violence. Coherence Fund management and coordination arrangements have not been consistently operationalised, nor have they allowed for adequate Swedish and Albanian government participation and strategic dialogue, which has affected the efficiency of the support. Impact and sustainability are most visible in the formal, systemic changes achieved through new policies and laws.

Recommendations

1. The Swedish Embassy is advised to consider positively the option of providing support through a theme-based, joint UN gender equality programme that is directly aligned with the PoC 2017-2021, but formalised in a programme document similar to the one developed for the Swiss contribution to the UN promoting inclusive social policy.
2. The Swedish Embassy should actively seek opportunities for networking and informal policy dialogue with key government and state agencies, and should strengthen its dialogue with the EU delegation as it advocates for a stronger stance on gender equality in the new sector programme support structure.

3. The Swedish Embassy should encourage the UN to develop a partnership strategy for CSOs that emphasises the need for more long-term, strategic relationships, support for organisational capacity-building, and joint policy advocacy and dialogue.
4. Should the Swedish Embassy decide to continue to channel its support through the Coherence Fund, specific requirements on reporting, annual reviews and dialogue mechanisms should be defined in a memorandum of understanding (MoU). Specific goals for strategic dialogue should also be identified and agreed, and consequently incorporated in the results framework on which Sweden's contribution is based.
5. Swedish support should be programmed using a multi-year planning and budgeting framework that ensures sufficient support continues to be provided until the intended results have been achieved.
6. To promote sustainability, Swedish support should be geared towards capacity development of Albanian actors at central and, even more importantly, local levels. An exit strategy should be devised from the outset, if possible including a government funding commitment.
7. As a general principle, Swedish support should facilitate the *implementation* of gender-related policies, laws and action plans that seek to bring about real improvements in terms of women's access to resources, and changes to societal attitudes, cultural norms and practices that currently exclude or discriminate against women.
8. The potential use of the Swedish resource base should be explored to enhance Swedish value-added.

1 Introduction

1.1 BACKGROUND

Sweden's development cooperation with Albania aims to support reforms that will guide the country further towards EU alignment and membership. Gender equality has been treated as both a cross-cutting issue and an objective in its own right. In addition to mainstreaming gender in the development cooperation portfolio, Sweden has made specific contributions to promoting gender equality and women's rights.

The Swedish support through the Coherence Fund has been geared towards specific gender-related outputs identified as part of the One UN-Albania Programme of Cooperation (PoC) 2012-2016, and the following PoC for the period 2017-2021. While these outputs have changed over time, Swedish support has remained focused on four broad areas: strengthening public oversight bodies, gender mainstreaming in government, addressing gender-based violence, and increasing women's economic empowerment. Sweden has contributed SEK 44,9 million to the UN's work in these areas during the period 2012-2017.

1.2 EVALUATION OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

The purpose of the evaluation is to provide an independent assessment of Swedish support for gender equality through the One UN Coherence Fund, as a basis for informed decision-making on the best way forward for future support. As specified in the terms of reference (ToR), the objective of the evaluation is to identify "the comparative advantages and disadvantages of the financing modality for the achievement of results, including by assessing the internal and external factors that influence the achievement of results". The evaluation covers the period 2012-2017 and is mainly confined to the gender-related outputs to which Swedish support has been directed.

1.3 STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

The report is divided into six sections. Following this introduction, Section 2 summarises the evaluation methodology, including the overall approach taken, evaluation questions, information sources, and constraints and limitations. In Section 3, a brief overview of Swedish support is provided. Section 4 constitutes the main part of the report. Structured in accordance with the key evaluation criteria, it questions and presents the evaluation team's observations, analysis and findings. The conclusions of the evaluation can be found in Section 5. Finally, in Section 6, recommendations are made to the Swedish Embassy on the modality for future support.

2 Methodology

2.1 OVERALL APPROACH

The evaluation has been planned and implemented in accordance with **OECD/DAC quality standards and evaluation criteria**. The methodology was first outlined and agreed in the evaluation Inception Report and has been further adapted and refined throughout the evaluation process.

In line with the quality standards and the ToR, a **utilisation-focused approach** was applied. In practice, this meant that several consultations were held to identify key issues, explore shared (or diverging) interests, and plan the evaluation process. During the main phase of the evaluation, stakeholders were encouraged to identify factors influencing the effectiveness and efficiency of Swedish support, assess the sustainability of the results achieved, and provide recommendations for the future. The Swedish Embassy also had an opportunity to comment on the draft evaluation report.

The comparative advantages and disadvantages of different financing modalities were analysed with the help of an **assessment framework**, inspired by the work of Alonso and Glennie (2015)¹. Some criteria were taken from the principles of effective partnership agreed at the Monterrey Consensus on Financing for Development (2002) and subsequent global conferences and summits, as well as the aid and development effectiveness agenda. The assessment of impact and sustainability draws on the **conceptual framework on institutional and organisational change** adopted by Gender at Work,² an international network of gender experts.

¹ See ECOSOC/Development Cooperation Forum, Assessing the suitability of different development cooperation modalities for greater effectiveness and impact post-2015. Development Cooperation Forum Policy Briefs. March 2015, No.6.
http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/newfunct/pdf15/dcfrok_brief_impact.pdf

² Kelleher, D. and Rao, A., *What is Gender at Work's Approach to Gender Equality and Institutional Change?*

2.2 EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The evaluation has been designed based on the following **key evaluation questions (KEQs)**. These “umbrella” questions incorporate all the initial questions from the ToR as well as additional issues deemed necessary to investigate in order to make an adequate assessment of the **OECD/DAC criteria for relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability**. The key questions and sub-questions also form the basis of the **Evaluation Matrix**, presented in Annex 1, which contains the assessment criteria/indicators and the assessment method/sources used.

- KEQ 1: How appropriate were the “gender outputs” and related initiatives for achieving the expected PoC outcomes? (Relevance)
- KEQ 2: What are the most significant “gender results” to which Sweden has contributed, and under what circumstances were they achieved? (Effectiveness)
- KEQ 3: How efficient was the Coherence Fund as a modality for promoting gender equality, joint UN action and national ownership? (Efficiency)
- KEQ 4: To what extent has the support for gender equality contributed to the achievement of the PoC’s overall outcomes and ambition? (Impact and sustainability)

KEQ 5: What alternative cost-efficient financing modalities could be considered for providing targeted support (in collaboration with the UN?) for gender equality beyond 2017?

2.3 INFORMATION SOURCES

The key findings of the evaluation are derived from a **desk review** of documents and semi-structured **interviews and focus group discussions** with internal and external stakeholders. This included a one-week mission in Albania (Tirana and Dures). As per the OECD/DAC quality standards, the key findings and conclusions are evidence-based, either by objective evidence or by evidence corroborated through several sources.

Documents collected and reviewed as part of the evaluation include:

- UN programme documents (PoC), results framework and annual reports
- Progress reports to the Swedish Embassy (narrative and financial)
- Agreements and exchange of letters between the UN and the Swedish Embassy
- AWP for the years 2012-2017/18
- Guidelines and regulations for the Coherence Fund
- ToRs for PoC management and coordination bodies
- Meeting minutes (e.g. Joint Executive Committee)
- Independent reviews and evaluations
- Government policies, strategies and action plans
- Other publications on gender equality in Albania

A full list of the documentation collected and reviewed is attached as Annex 2.

Key informants were identified based on suggestions made by the Swedish Embassy and through a rudimentary stakeholder analysis carried out during the inception phase. Several names were added during the course of the evaluation to ensure broad coverage and, especially, to ensure that the views of external stakeholders were appropriately represented.

The interviews and focus group discussions were all semi-structured and based on interview guides developed for different categories of informants. In total, the evaluation team conducted interviews with 43 individuals (35 women and 8 men). A breakdown of the key informant interviews is provided below.

Category of informant	# Interviewed	Interview location
UN organisations	16	Tirana and by Skype
Central government and state agencies	9	Tirana
Representatives of municipalities	7	Tirana and Durres
Albanian NGOs	5	Tirana and Durres
Development partners (donors)	6	Tirana and by Skype
Total	43	

A full list of the individuals interviewed is attached as Annex 3.

2.4 CONSTRAINTS AND LIMITATIONS

The evaluation team did not face any major constraints during the data collection process. The results and mechanisms of the PoC and the One UN Coherence Fund are generally well documented, and requested material was shared in a timely manner. Most of the key informants were eager to be interviewed and share their views with the evaluation team in an open and frank manner. Skype and phone interviews were organised with those who were not available during the mission in Albania, or who, for other reasons, could not meet in person.

A majority of the questions from the ToR are related to the **efficiency** criterion, and discussions with the Swedish Embassy confirmed that this criterion was to be the focus of the evaluation. According to the DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance, efficiency measures the outputs – qualitative and quantitative – in relation to the inputs. However, a proper (cost-) efficiency analysis would require measuring the benefits of Swedish support in monetary terms or some other metric. Such an analysis was not possible within the limited scope and time frame of this evaluation. Instead, in line with the ToR, the efficiency criterion was assessed through a qualitative assessment of the PoC/Coherence Fund management and coordination arrangements, quality assurance mechanisms, and financial management system.

3 The evaluation object

3.1 COUNTRY CONTEXT

Since its first multi-party election in 1991, Albania has undergone a remarkable transition – from centrally planned totalitarian regime to democratic state and market economy. The reform process is driven to a large extent by the country's ambition to join the European Union. In June 2014, Albania was granted EU candidacy status.

By the end of 2015, Albania had achieved or made **significant progress towards most Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)**, including those relating to gender equality. Improvements have been recorded in women's access to education and health services, their participation in the labour market, and women's political empowerment. At the same time, significant **disparities** in income and human development persist across regions, population groups, and between women and men. Women have still significantly **lower labour market participation rates, salaries, and access to assets, including property**. They also continue to be **under-represented** in local councils, in leadership roles in public administration, and in political parties. **Domestic violence** remains a serious problem.

New legislation, policies and action plans with a specific focus on gender equality have been adopted in several areas. This includes the *National Strategy and Action Plan on Gender Equality 2016-2020*,³ the *National Action Plan on involvement of men and boys as partners to women and girls in challenging gender stereotypes and combating gender based violence (GBV)*, the *National Action Plan for Women's Entrepreneurship 2014-2020*, and several other sectoral and thematic strategies encompassing elements relating to gender equality. However, the national gender 'machinery' – the institutional mechanisms put in place to coordinate the implementation of legislation, policies and action plans – remains weak.⁴

³ Replacing the *National Strategy and Action Plan for Gender Equality, Reduction of Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence 2010-2015*.

⁴ UN Women and UNDP (2016), *Gender Brief – Albania*.

3.2 SWEDISH DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION WITH ALBANIA

The focus of Swedish development cooperation with Albania has been on supporting reforms for EU alignment and membership. Gender equality has been treated as a **cross-cutting issue** and an **objective in its own right**. In the 2009-2012/13 country strategy,⁵ “Increased participation of women in the political and administrative spheres” was a specific objective of Sweden’s support for democracy and human rights. The strategy stipulated that Sweden should focus on measures that would enhance the capacity of the government and civil society to implement gender equality legislation, support the collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated statistics, and provide opportunities for civil society to monitor gender equality and other human rights. Gender equality was also singled out as a dialogue issue, with an emphasis on the need for strengthening the national gender machinery.

In the current *Results Strategy for Sweden’s Reform Cooperation with Eastern Europe, the Western Balkans and Turkey 2014-2020*,⁶ gender equality is seen as an element of Swedish support to enhancing democracy, human rights and rule of law. The expected results include:

- A reduction in **gender-based violence**, hate crimes and human trafficking;
- Improvements in partner countries’ fulfilment of their **international and national commitments** on human rights, gender equality (including the EU’s strategy for equality between women and men) and non-discrimination;
- **Women will have greater power** to shape society and their own lives.

The regional strategy emphasises that Swedish support should contribute to ensuring that gender equality issues are given greater political priority, strengthening women’s and girls’ opportunities to exercise their rights, altering gender-stereotypes and unequal gender roles, and engaging men and boys in building a more gender-equal society.

In practice, gender equality has been promoted through mainstreaming efforts in bilateral projects with Albanian government ministries, support to Albanian NGOs

⁵ Government Offices of Sweden (2008), *Strategy for development cooperation with Albania, January 2009-December 2012*.

⁶ Government Offices of Sweden (2013), *Results strategy for Sweden’s reform cooperation with Eastern Europe, the Western Balkans and Turkey 2014-2020*.

via Swedish framework organisations and Albanian NGO networks, and cooperation with international organisations, particularly through support for the One UN Coherence Fund.

In 2016, the Swedish Embassy developed an *Action Plan for Gender Mainstreaming 2016-2018*,⁷ building on the *Sida Gender Action Plan for Gender Mainstreaming 2016-2018*. In this context, the Swedish Embassy has established the following targets:

- Increased contributions in support of gender equality as a principle and significant objective in all sectors;
- Gender equality is given special priority in the environment, climate and resilience, productive/non-social sectors, and;

Gender equality is a priority in dialogue with Albanian partner organisations.

3.3 THE ONE UN-ALBANIA PROGRAMME OF COOPERATION

Albania is one of eight pilot countries for the “One UN initiative”. Since 2007, the UN has been operating in accordance with the “Delivering as One” approach, which aims to improve UN system-wide coherence based on the principle of four ‘Ones’ — one leader, one programme, one budgetary framework, and one office. The “one programme” element has been operationalised in successive Programmes of Cooperation (PoC), with the PoC 2012-2016 being the focus of this evaluation. The PoC 2017-2021 guides the current programming cycle.

The overall goal of the PoC 2012-2016 was “to promote sustainable and equitable development, social inclusion and the adherence to international norms and fulfilment of international obligations, in support of the integration of Albania into the EU”. Endorsed by the 20 participating UN organisations, the PoC 2012-2016 had four focus areas (governance and rule of law; economy and environment; regional and local development; and inclusive social policy). It originally contained a results framework with 11 outcomes and 41 outputs and an indicative budget of USD 132 million (60 per cent unfunded by January 2012).⁸ In 2014, following a mid-term

⁷ Swedish Embassy, *Action Plan for Gender Mainstreaming 2016-2018*, updated 27 October 2016.

⁸ UN (2011), *Government of Albania and United Nations Programme of Cooperation 2012-2016*.

review, the results framework was revised, leading to a reduction in the number of outcomes (to four) and outputs (to 15).

The PoC 2012-2016 has been operationalised through annual work plans (AWPs) developed for each of the outputs. The AWP have been implemented in cooperation with and by line ministries, public oversight bodies, municipalities, and NGOs. The Department of Development Programming, Financing and Foreign Aid (DDPFFA), within the Prime Minister's Office, coordinates the Albanian government's participation in the PoC.

As outlined in the PoC 2012-2016, the management arrangements for the PoC originally comprised the following:

- A **government modernisation committee** serving as the highest-level policy, coordination and decision-making authority of the government in the programme, determining strategic priorities and reviewing progress.
- A **Joint Executive Committee (JEC)**, which is mandated to take executive decisions on AWP based on guidance provided by the Government Modernization Committee, and allocated resources from the Coherence Fund (see below).
- The **UN Country Team**, led by the **UN Resident Coordinator**, tasked with managing the overall implementation of the PoC from the UN side, and supported by several *inter-agency committees*, including the operations management team, the communications team, the Results-Based Management (RBM) advisory committee, and the gender theme group.
- **Output working groups**, which are technical committees with roles and responsibilities directly related to the achievement of a specific output. Their responsibilities include the joint coordination and design of relevant activities identified in the AWP, the monitoring and reporting of each AWP, as well as resource mobilisation and the preparation of requests for funds from the Coherence Fund.
- **Outcome coordinators**, who were assigned to ensure that the work of the output working groups is coordinated and that it contributes directly to the overall outcome.

Roles and responsibilities are further detailed in the PoC 2012-2016 and in separate ToRs. Following the mid-term review in 2014, **outcome working groups** were added to the structure, replacing the RBM Advisory Committee.

3.4 THE GENDER-RELATED OUTPUTS

During the period 2012-2017, Swedish support was allocated to three sets of “gender-related” outputs in the PoC results framework. In 2014, following the mid-term review of the PoC, the initial five outputs were merged into four. The bridge funding provided for 2017 has been earmarked for two outputs of the PoC 2017-2021. Nevertheless, the thematic scope of these outputs has remained largely the same, i.e.

gender-based violence, public oversight and election bodies, gender mainstreaming, and women's economic empowerment.⁹

First grant 2012-2014	Second grant 2015-2016	Third grant 2017
Output 1.1.1: Public oversight bodies including Parliament, the Ombudsman, and the anti-discrimination commissioner have the capacity to implement appropriate policy frameworks to ensure transparency and accountability of government	Output 1.3: Mandated line ministries and state institutions ensure that their practices and policies effectively prevent and address violence (against women and children) in society	Output 1.1: Constitutional, ministerial and independent mechanisms are reinforced to identify and report human rights violations and enable evidence-based policy making and response
Output 1.1.2: Civil Society and media facilitate public demand for human rights, gender equality, access to justice and compliance with international legal instruments including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women	Output 3.1: Parliament and electoral institutions have the capacity to perform core functions	Output 2.5: Capacity of institutions and service providers to implement legislation and normative standards on Elimination of Violence against Women and other forms of discrimination
Output 1.2.5: State institutions and local governments have the technical capacity to mainstream gender issues into legislation, strategies, policies and budgetary processes, and to implement a women's economic empowerment strategy	Output 3.2: Line ministries and public service delivery institutions are able to mainstream gender by conducting gender-responsive planning, budgeting and evidence-based policy making at all levels	
Output 4.1.5: Action taken at national and local level to implement improved	Output 4.3: National and sub-national government units have the capacity to generate	

⁹ Women's economic empowerment is not covered by the two outputs of the PoC 2017-2021 and no Swedish funding has therefore been allocated to this thematic area in 2017.

legislative and policy framework on combating gender-based violence

and strengthen investments in **employment and livelihood opportunities**, especially for youth and **women**

Output 4.4.1: Key state institutions and social partners are capable to develop and implement, in a fair and inclusive manner, employment policies and programmes that meet international standards

3.5 THE UN COHERENCE FUND

The One UN Coherence Fund was established in 2007 with the aim of streamlining, simplifying and increasing harmonisation and predictability of resources for the PoC. It pools contributions from donor agencies into a common fund, from which allocations are made to UN organisations on the basis of AWP and accompanying funding requests.

Over the years, the Coherence Fund has been replenished with contributions from Sweden, Switzerland, Spain, Netherlands, EU, Norway, Austria, Finland and two UN global funds.¹⁰ Since 2012, Sweden and Switzerland (the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, or SDC) have been the only external donors to the Coherence Fund.¹¹

The Swedish contribution is channelled through the UN Coherence Fund, based on a Standard Administrative Arrangement (SAA). The soft-earmarking to gender equality has been acknowledged in successive SAA cover letters. During the period 2012-2017, the top recipients of Swedish funds were **UNDP and UN Women**. Allocations were also made to UNFPA, IOM, UNICEF and UNESCO.

¹⁰ Delivery Results Together and Expanded DaO Funding Window.

¹¹ <http://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/AL100>

The Administrative Agent for the Coherence Fund is UNDP. UNDP's **Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office** in New York is responsible for the financial administration of the Coherence Fund, as set out in the 2012-2016 Coherence Fund Guidelines and related MoUs. For the PoC 2017-2021, a revised ToR for the Coherence Fund has been established.

4 Observations, analysis and findings

4.1 RELEVANCE OF THE GENDER-RELATED OUTPUTS

Finding 1: The PoC was developed through a participatory process involving Albanian stakeholders. The outcomes and outputs of the results framework were also informed by previous work and lessons learned, along with a review carried out from a gender perspective.

The PoC 2012-2016 is based on the UN Common Country Programme Document 2012-2016 and informed by the previous One UN Programme 2007-2011. The strategic direction and outcomes of the UN Common Country Programme Document 2012-2016 were identified at a UN country team retreat in 2011. This retreat was followed by a series of consultations with line ministries, civil society and development partners. Subsequently, the draft document was presented to and endorsed by the Government Modernization Committee, and approved by the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA and UNICEF.

The UN did not produce a UN Common Country Assessment or similar document, which is typically the first step in the identification of strategic priority areas and the formulation of an UN development assistance framework (UNDAF). However, the formulation of PoC 2012-2016 drew upon a 2010 internal evaluation of the One UN Programme 2007-2011, which included a number of lessons learned. The outputs of the 2012-2016 PoC were identified based on further consultations with all 19 UN agencies (and IOM), and between them and relevant line ministries, civil society and development partners. The results framework was subject to peer review, including by a gender expert.

As conveyed by the cover letter to the SAA for the first Swedish contribution to the PoC 2012-2016, the decision to target Swedish funds at specific gender-related outputs was reached at a meeting between representatives of the Swedish Embassy and the UN gender theme group in 2011. The “soft-earmarking” through exchange of letters was

modelled on a similar arrangement used by the Dutch Embassy and SDC. Contrary to the procedure followed for the first two grants, the Swedish Embassy asked the UN to prepare a concept note as a basis for the third grant, which was provided as bridge funding for the first year of activities under the PoC 2017-2021.

Finding 2: The gender-related outputs are aligned with the strategic priorities of the Albanian government, as identified in national strategies and action plans.

There is a close match between the intended gender-related outputs and the National Strategy for Development and Integration (NSDI) 2007-2013.¹² The latter contains a separate section on gender equality and prevention of domestic violence. The strategic priorities for this area can be summarised as follows:

- Improve and enforce the legal and institutional framework on gender equality
- Increase the representation of women and girls in decision-making processes
- Strengthen the economic position of women
- Eliminate gender gaps in education
- Support vulnerable women and girls, e.g. victims of violence and trafficking
- Improve the response of the health system to the needs of women/girls and men/boys
- Prevent domestic violence and protect and offer justice and support to victims

These priorities are also shared by the *National Strategy and Action Plan on Gender Equality 2016-2020*,¹³ the former *National Strategy and Action Plan for Gender Equality, Reduction of Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence*, as well as the current NSDI 2015-2010.

Finding 3: The use of the Coherence Fund as a channel for Swedish support was informed by previous experience and is in line with Swedish policy objectives. The gender-related outputs fell largely within the overall thematic focus of Swedish support for gender equality in Albania.

All three Swedish grants to the gender-related outputs of the PoC have been channelled through the Coherence Fund. Sweden has been one of the leading supporters of the Delivery as One principles of the UN and has provided support through One UN funds in several pilot countries (Rwanda, Mozambique, Tanzania, Vietnam). In Albania, Sweden provided un-earmarked contributions to the Coherence Fund starting in 2009.

¹² Republic of Albania Council of Ministers (2008), *National Strategy for Development and Integration 2007-2013*. March, 2008.

¹³ Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth (2016), *National Strategy and Action Plan on Gender Equality 2016-2020*.

As in other countries, the fund was expected to strengthen the Resident Coordinator (RC) system, which was under-resourced at the time, and enhance planning, the results orientation and general performance of the UN.

The focus and scope of the gender-related outputs matched the priorities identified in the Swedish country strategy 2009-2012/13 and *Results Strategy for Sweden's Reform Cooperation with Eastern Europe, the Western Balkans and Turkey 2014-2020*. This is reflected in the common emphasis on enhancing women's political participation, gender mainstreaming, addressing gender-based violence, meeting international and national commitments on gender equality, monitoring of these commitments by civil society, etc. The theme of women's economic empowerment is covered by the gender-related outputs but not explicitly referred to as a result or priority in the Swedish country strategy or the regional strategy. However, it is obviously a requirement if women are to achieve the same power as men in shaping society and their own lives, one of the goals set out in the above-mentioned Results Strategy.

Finding 4: The results orientation of the gender-related outputs improved over time. However, a theory of change justifying the approach and strategy has been largely missing.

The original PoC results framework was fragmented, with too many narrowly defined outputs with unclear aims. The framework was revised in connection with the 2014 mid-term review of the PoC, resulting in a more limited set of outcomes (4) and outputs (15) with corresponding indicators, baselines and targets. In most cases, the revised indicators and targets are expressed in quantitative and gender-sensitive terms and meet the SMART criteria. What is missing, especially from the PoC 2012-2016, is a clear theory of change. In the PoC 2017-2021, a narrative explaining the underlying rationale and strategy accompanies each outcome statement, but there is no reference to assumptions and risks. It is not evident that the activities identified for each output during the AWP process are necessary or sufficient to achieve the desired outputs, and on what basis they have been identified.

Finding 5: The work on gender equality has been responsive to the government's request and changing circumstances. Lessons learned are identified in progress reports, reviews and evaluations but not systematically integrated in subsequent planning and programming.

According to interviews with government stakeholders, the activities identified through the annual work planning process are relevant to their needs and responsive to changing circumstances. It is felt that UN agencies are flexible and willing to incorporate their suggestions.

The generic ToR developed for the output working groups stipulates that such groups should identify lessons learned as part of the work planning and reporting process. In addition, the outcome coordinator has an explicit responsibility to ensure that lessons learned across outputs are synthesised and incorporated in the PoC annual progress reports. Lessons learned are presented in the PoC 2012-2016, the annual progress reports, and the gender reports to the Swedish Embassy. They are also identified in a series of reviews and evaluations, including the 2014 mid-term review of the PoC, the

2015 final evaluation of the PoC 2012-2016, 2016 UNDP and UNFPA country programme evaluations,¹⁴ and a regional thematic evaluation of UN Women's work on gender-based violence.¹⁵ In addition, a detailed assessment of the functionality of the Coordinated Community Response (CCR) mechanism has been carried out, with a view to improving quality and providing recommendations for the expansion of this mechanism to additional municipalities.

Nevertheless, there is no explicit requirement or process as part of the annual work planning that ensures that lessons learned are systematically taken into account. Most of these lessons are generic in nature and relate to practices that "should continue and be replicated". No concrete examples of how lessons learned have been incorporated into annual work plans have been identified.

4.2 RESULTS AND FACTORS INFLUENCING EFFECTIVENESS

The results achieved with the support of Swedish funding through the Coherence Fund are reported on in the annual PoC progress reports and in separate "gender reports" to the Swedish Embassy. So far, the Swedish Embassy has received three such reports, covering the periods 2012-2013, December 2014-July 2015, and July 2015-July 2016. Interviews, external evaluations, and other publications collected as part of this evaluation have served to corroborate results. For the most significant results reported, the original sources of information have been sought.

4.2.1 Strengthening of public oversight bodies

This section accounts for the achievements in relation to output 1.1.1 (2012-2014), output 3.1 (2015-2016), and output 1.1 (2017).

Finding 6: The UN has contributed to the Albanian Parliament, the CEC, the Ombudsman, and the CPD becoming more active in promoting women's political empowerment, addressing discrimination and monitoring international obligations.

The UN has contributed to capacity-building of the Women's Alliance in Parliament, including in the areas of strategic and operational planning. The Alliance has organised

¹⁴ UNDP (2016), *Assessment of Development Results: Evaluation of UNDP Contribution to Albania* and Clark and Bello (2015), *UNFPA Country Programme Evaluation 2012-2016. Final Evaluation Report*.

¹⁵ Susino (2017), *Evaluation Report of the Programme Preventing and addressing violence against women and girls in Albania, Mexico and Timor Leste*.

hearings and consultative meetings to discuss and advocate for legal amendments on gender equality. Concrete proposals, informed by research conducted by the UN, have been made to reform the electoral code to reinforce the gender quota in local elections. Support has also been provided to the Alliance of Women Councillors in several municipalities. The Alliance created in the Tirana municipality has created a Gender Equality Commission with the responsibility for review of all municipal decisions through a gender perspective.

The **Central Elections Commission (CEC)** has strengthened its capacity to implement and enforce the gender quota. During the 2013 national elections, CEC fined all political parties that did not meet the deadline for applying the quota. Following the national elections in 2013, women accounted for 18 per cent of MPs, up from 16 per cent in 2009, and occupied one-third of cabinet posts.¹⁶ In 2017, women constitute 24 per cent of MPs (33 women MPs) and 50 per cent of ministers.¹⁷ Significant UN support was provided in the preparation and organisation of the 2015 local elections, which took place in the wake of significant reform of the country's territorial-administrative structure. In addition to gender and elections training for CEC staff and CSOs, the UN supported the monitoring of women's participation in elections, political campaigns and corresponding media coverage. For the first time, the CEC, with UN support, was able to capture detailed gender-disaggregated statistics on voters, candidates and commissions. The turnout of eligible voters was 47 per cent, of whom 42 per cent were women. Despite the 50 per cent nomination quota for local councils, only 35 per cent of council members elected were women. Meanwhile, 16 out of 61 municipalities nominated women for the position of mayor; nine were eventually elected. None of the political parties competing in the elections were led by a woman.¹⁸ The CEC has prepared a draft amendment to the electoral code to reinforce the provision on gender quotas. It is unlikely that this amendment will be passed by Parliament before the June 2017 national elections, due to the current political turmoil.

In 2016, the **Ombudsman** presented its first ever CEDAW¹⁹ Shadow Report to the UN Committee on CEDAW, identifying areas where it can play a crucial role in improving the monitoring of the implementation of CEDAW recommendations. More than 80 per

¹⁶ Central Election Commission, www.cec.org.al, and Prime Minister's Office www.kryeministria.al

¹⁷ Parliament of Albania, <https://www.parlament.al/deputetet/aleanca-e-grave-deputete/> and Prime Minister's Office www.kryeministria.al

¹⁸ Central Election Commission, http://www.cec.org.al/Portals/0/Documents/CEC%202013/Barazia_gjinore/kuota_gjinore_kanidimet_Zgjedhjet_%20Vendore_%202015.pdf

¹⁹ Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Violence Against Women

of the Ombudsman's recommendations were incorporated into the CEDAW committee's Concluding Observations on Albania. The Ombudsman has subsequently prepared, through a consultative process, a follow-up action plan (still in draft form) to guide implementation efforts.²⁰

The support to the **Commission for Protection from Discrimination** (CPD) has focused on increasing visibility and outreach to vulnerable communities. An online gender-disaggregated database has been established and a source guide developed, providing guidance on how to address gender discrimination in the private sector. The CPD has been able to address discriminatory practices towards women in the legal review process, and has issued a formal decision against the practice of marking birth certificates of children born out of wedlock as discriminatory against children and their unwed mothers. The CPD handled 15 complaints in 2011, compared to 172 new cases in 2014, plus 12 *ex officio* cases, but only nine related to gender discrimination. In 2015, the CPD handled nine complaints on gender; four were related to pregnancy.²¹

CSOs supported by the UN have carried out campaigns, advocacy and community mobilisation activities on gender equality in the context of elections and the local budgeting process, and pursued strategic litigation in connection with human rights abuses experienced by women. This has enabled the establishment of case law on women's rights. A monitoring study of court decisions prepared by UNDP-supported CSOs prompted the Supreme Court to scrutinise domestic violence legislation and prepare its own report. The expectation is that this will lead to changes and improvements in judicial practice in upholding women's rights and bringing domestic violence perpetrators to account.

4.2.2 Gender mainstreaming

This section accounts for achievements related to output 1.2.5 (2012-2014) and output 3.2 (2015-2016).

Finding 7: UN support has played a critical role in the further development of key national policies, action plans and laws on gender equality and women's rights, alignment with international treaties, and capacities and tools for gender mainstreaming. A particularly tangible result is the mainstreaming of gender into the government's Mid-Term Budget Programming (MTBP).

²⁰ Based on information presented in PoC progress reports and validated by the final PoC 2012-2016 evaluation, as well as interviews with the Ombudsman.

²¹ www.kmd.al

Several initiatives to strengthen the **policy and institutional framework** on gender equality were supported by the UN during the evaluation period, in particular: an assessment of the *National Strategy on Gender Equality, Reduction of Gender-based Violence and Domestic Violence 2011-2015*; the development of the *National Strategy and Action Plan on Gender Equality 2016-2020*; gender mainstreaming in the *National Action plan for Youth 2015-2020*; and the integration of sex-disaggregated, gender-sensitive governance targets in the draft *NSDI 2015-2020*. The UN also worked to strengthen the capacities of employees working to implement gender equality in line ministries and local government units.

The UN furthermore supported the **incorporation of CEDAW provisions** into the national legal framework. Specific amendments to the criminal code were made to ensure that domestic violence, sexual harassment and rape within marriage or other civil unions are criminalised, reflecting important recommendations from the CEDAW treaty body. The UN also conducted research and provided technical assistance for the preparation of the fourth periodic report on CEDAW and the *Beijing+20 National Report*. Relevant legislative amendments were proposed and consultations held regarding mainstreaming gender equality in the context of justice system reform, in line with Istanbul Convention provisions.

Based on a 2012 Council of Ministers decision, MoF/MoSWY²² have developed joint instructions on **mainstreaming gender** in the government's **MTBP**. Guided by this instruction and complementary training, the number of gender-sensitive MTBPs has gradually increased. During the MTBP period 2016-2018, 16 out of 84 MTBPs across 10 ministries and one independent state institution have integrated gender equality-related objectives, outputs and associated costs.²³ According to interviews with MoF staff, this number has since increased to 24 in the MTBP period 2017-2019. The UN also supported gender-responsive planning and budgeting of local services in selected municipalities. An amendment has recently been proposed to the local finance law that makes gender-based budgeting a mandatory requirement for all local government units.

The **Albanian State Police** and the State Police Academy have been a target for UN support for gender mainstreaming. The resulting cooperation has led to updated training curricula on gender-based violence, Training of Trainers capacity-building, and the adoption, in 2015, of a harmonised policy to address harassment and sexual harassment cases within the police. The latter has been followed by a series of police staff training

²² Ministry of Finance/Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth

²³ Ministry of Finance (2017), *Medium Term Budget Plan 2017 – 2019*.

sessions across Albania. According to interviews, a total of 500 police officers were trained in 2015 and 2016.

Other notable results achieved under this output include:

- The further enrichment of **sex-disaggregated statistics** through the improvement of INSTAT's annual publication *Women and Men in Albania*.
- Amendments to the law on registration of immovable properties strengthening **women's property rights**. This has been followed by public awareness-raising and capacity-building within Immoveable Property Registration Offices and notaries in major districts, carried out in cooperation with civil society.
- The mainstreaming of gender into **anti-trafficking** training curricula, linked to the *National Strategy Against Trafficking in Persons*, followed by a series of training seminars for around 100 people.

The establishment of an Albanian Women in Science Network.

4.2.3 Gender-based and domestic violence

This section accounts for the achievements in relation to output 4.1.5 (2012-2014), output 1.3 (2015-2016), and output 2.5 (2016-2017).

Finding 8: UN support has been vital in developing, expanding and monitoring multi-disciplinary services to domestic violence victims. Information campaigns are likely to have contributed to public awareness-raising on gender-based violence.

The evaluation period saw a further expansion of the **Coordinated Community Response (CCR)** mechanism that extends multi-disciplinary services to domestic violence victims. Following secondary legislation adopted in 2011, this is the normative model for all local government units in Albania. Services are provided through a network of municipalities, the local police, courts, public prosecutor and bailiff offices, medical centres, educational and employment centres, and CSOs. As of 2017, nearly half (29) of the existing 65 municipalities have functioning CCRs.²⁴ About two-thirds of municipalities reporting a response to domestic violence are UN-supported. To strengthen existing and new CCRs, the UN has recently helped develop a standard operating procedure for multi-sectoral responses to domestic violence.

Online tracking of domestic violence cases was established in 2014 with UN support, to ensure follow-up of reported cases at all levels. The number of cases reported to the

²⁴ Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth (2016), *National Strategy and Action Plan on Gender Equality 2016-2020*.

police increased from around 3,000 in 2013, to 3,100 in 2014, 3,900 in 2015 and 4,100 in 2016.²⁵ In 2005, only 94 cases were reported. UN support has been provided for the training of police officers and other CCR stakeholders in domestic violence, including the role and responsibilities of the police, legal frameworks and regulations, and standard procedures for handling domestic violence cases.

The UN has also supported the state-run **National Shelter for domestic violence victims**, which provides rehabilitation and reintegration programmes. According to UN reports, more than 50 per cent of sheltered victims have been successfully reintegrated into society through employment, social housing and other support and empowerment measures. During 2015, the National Shelter accommodated 26 women. Interviews indicate that existing shelters are too few in number and cannot meet the increasing demand.

Prevention has been another focus of the UN's work. Support was provided for the development of the *National Action Plan on involvement of men and boys as partners to women and girls in challenging gender stereotypes and combating gender-based violence*, which was adopted in 2013. The implementation of this plan has been promoted through several campaigns (e.g. UNiTE to End Violence against Women, 16 days of activism against gender violence, the HeForShe initiative, school theatre festivals, etc.). According to a recent evaluation,²⁶ these campaigns are perceived as having a positive impact on the target population, thanks to innovative and creative collaborations with CSOs.

4.2.4 Women's economic empowerment

This section accounts for the achievements in relation to output 1.2.5 (2012-2014) and output 4.3 (2015-2016).

Finding 9: The UN has contributed to a wide range of activities in support of women's economic empowerment. However, given the lack of clear linkages between these activities, UN support comes across as fragmented.

One of the most tangible results in this area was the adoption of the **National Action Plan for Women Entrepreneurs 2014-2020**. The Plan was developed by Ministry of Economic Development, Tourism, Trade and Enterprise (MEDTTE) with the support of the UN. One early result was the creation of an inter-ministerial Working Group of

²⁵ There are still challenges in ensuring full utilisation of the online system and consolidating data across all local CCR municipalities.

²⁶ UNDP (2016), *Assessment of Development Results: Evaluation of UNDP Contribution to Albania*.

Women Entrepreneurs, which, according to interviews with government staff members, is convened on a regular basis. Subsequently, support has been provided for a dedicated women's business centre within the Albanian Investment Development Agency, along with a range of pilot initiatives. A review of policy gaps is currently being supported by the UN, with a view to developing sector-specific action plans.

At the local level, a series of training courses, workshops, fairs, and coaching sessions have been conducted for **vulnerable women in rural areas** to build skills in collecting, processing and marketing local and handicrafts, as well as developing sustainable partnerships and designing business plans for social enterprises run by women. The initiative has reached some 90 women and their families in six rural areas, and has reportedly resulted in full-time employment for all of the women.

Other outputs/initiatives supported by the UN in this area include:

- An economic literacy programme conducted for 170 vulnerable women in five regions
- The piloting of Women's Cluster Models in two communes
- The design of a subsidy scheme for women engaged in agro-processing in rural areas
- A national advocacy strategy to promote women's role in agriculture
- The establishment of a Competitive Fund for Women Entrepreneurs in Tirana
- Adoption of the Women's Empowerment Principles by 11 private companies in Tirana
- Several studies e.g. on women's labour force participation and wage returns, challenges and opportunities for female entrepreneurs, women's labour rights, regulatory frameworks of private employment agencies, women on company boards and in senior positions

4.2.5 Drivers and constraining factors

As illustrated above, Swedish support through the Coherence Fund has contributed to a wide range of initiatives and results. Some results appear to have been more significant than others. The evaluation team has identified factors (drivers) that have enabled or constrained successful results, based on PoC progress reports, external evaluations, interviews and focus group discussions.

Finding 10: The EU accession process and related policy and legal developments have created an enabling environment for the UN's work on gender equality. The UN also has several comparative advantages, which have been capitalised on.

Drivers **contributing to the achievement of results include:**

1. The **EU integration and accession process** and related reforms that have emphasised human rights among vulnerable groups as a key challenge for Albania to address. However, as indicated below, gender equality appears to have become a lower priority in this process in recent years.²⁷
2. The relatively **comprehensive and expanding policy and legal framework on gender equality** that provides a stepping stone for capacity-building and policy dialogue. Examples include the 2008 law on gender equality, successive national gender equality strategies and action plans, legal provisions for gender-responsive budgeting, revision of the criminal code, etc.
3. The UN's **sustained presence** in Albania that has contributed to building trust and **partnerships**, building on past results in a long-term and consistent way. The significant gains achieved in addressing gender-based violence, for instance, are the result of work dating back more than a decade.
4. The provision of **international and national gender expertise** by the UN. Interviews revealed that experts and technical advice made available by the UN have been vital in producing legal amendments, strategies, action plans, major reports (such as the CEDAW shadow report), guidelines and capacity-building on gender-responsive budgeting, etc.
5. **Flexibility in UN programming** that ensures responsiveness to new developments and emerging needs and priorities. One example is the opportunity, arising from territorial reform and decentralisation, to expand the CCR mechanism to the entire country. Flexibility also allows the UN to satisfy urgent government demands that may not be driven by long-term objectives (see below).
6. The UN's **convening role** and strategic focus on **building partnerships**. As explained above, the work relating to gender equality is carried out in cooperation and through networking with a broad range of central and local government agencies, public oversight bodies, and CSOs. A recent example was in Durrës, where the UN, in cooperation with an Albanian CSO, brought together lawyers, notaries, IPRO staff and other actors in a joint effort to identify gender-related gaps in the legal and administrative framework on property rights, and advocate for change.
7. The continuous **advocacy of the UN** that takes place at different levels, both formally and informally. This has been a decisive factor in the progress made in

²⁷ Gender equality is also not explicitly a part of the EU agenda/accession process and acquisition harmonisation hence reducing EU leverage on attainment of outcomes.

gender-responsive budgeting, women's participation in elections, and challenging gender stereotypes.

8. The benefits derived from the **Delivery as One agenda**, including the ability to pool resources, strengthen coordination and complementarity, and communicate with one voice. This driver is further elaborated on below.

Finding 11: Results in several areas have been held back by political events, leadership changes in counterpart ministries, related changing priorities, and limited government resources and capacities, especially at the local level. Short-term and delivery-oriented UN support has compounded the problem.

Factors holding back results include:

1. **Election campaigns and post-election uncertainties** have delayed national, sectoral and cross-sectoral strategies and the passing of legal amendments, including those affecting gender equality. Local elections reportedly created a pause that delayed the planning and realisation of important programmes, policies or legislation.
2. **Leadership changes** in line ministries (e.g. MoSWY, MoF, MoJ) and state agencies (e.g. CEC), including as a result of elections, which have slowed the momentum of cooperation and necessitated renewed policy dialogue. The 2015 local elections had a similar effect on municipalities.
3. Repeated **delays in important reforms** due to political turmoil. This has affected the pace of reforms as well as the impetus for gender equality work, since government and the EU alike have focused on what are deemed to be higher priorities (e.g. justice reform).
4. **Lack of human and financial resources.** As noted previously, the gender equality machinery is severely under-resourced. Despite legal provisions, the gender focal point system has not been implemented across line ministries and local government. Key government actors, such as in the MTBP unit of MoF and the gender equality unit of MoSWY, are also under-staffed.
5. **Limited commitment, capacities, and resources at the level of local government** for the implementation of gender-related policies, laws and action plans. Raising awareness and sensitising local-level decision makers have become important priorities for expanding gender-based budgeting and the CCR mechanism. Recent territorial reforms have added to this challenge. For instance, interviews indicated that Durres municipality has quadrupled in size without a proportionate increase in budget.
6. The **pressure to deliver quick and demonstrable results** at the cost of long-term capacity-building. Support tends to be delivered directly by UN organisations and often comes in the form of consultancy, organisation of events (training, workshops, launches, etc.), and publications. This type of assistance does not necessarily address the actual capacity constraints and organisational development needs that exist among Albanian government counterparts.
7. The **lack of a strong CSO sector** that could exert pressure on government (i.e. increase demand for reform). The tendency of the UN to use CSOs as delivery agents, or to support only short-term projects, as opposed to building the capacity of CSOs, compounds the problem.

4.2.6 Influence of PoC implementation structure and the Coherence Fund modality

The management and coordination arrangements of the PoC and the Coherence Fund are dealt with at length in chapter 4.3. The following is a summary account and qualitative analysis of how management and coordination arrangements have either supported or blocked desired results.

Finding 12: The PoC implementation structure and Coherence Fund modality are likely to have aided the achievement of results, including by ensuring UN responsiveness, coordination and cooperation. At the same time, they seem to have contributed to a delivery focus and a fragmented approach to the work on gender equality.

- Swedish support through the Coherence Fund has been soft-earmarked for the agreed gender-related outputs, but the specific allocation and use of funds have been left to the discretion of the UN. This has contributed to flexibility in UN programming and responsiveness to emerging needs and priorities.
- The annual work planning (AWP) process and the output working groups that form part of the management and coordination arrangements of the PoC have prompted UN organisations to improve coordination and cooperation. This has helped to clarify roles, avoid overlaps, and identify complementarities, which has been especially important in a cross-cutting area like gender equality.
- The government's participation in the AWP and output working groups has also helped to ensure UN responsiveness and a degree of national ownership. However, it has not led to a high-level, regular and strategic dialogue.
- Programming has been largely based on the AWP process. This process has been activity-oriented in nature, favouring short-term results at the cost of long-term capacity-building.
- Swedish funding has been spread across several UN agencies and other implementation agencies at both central and local levels. This has reduced accountability for the achievement (or indeed, non-achievement) of outputs.

4.3 EFFICIENCY OF THE COHERENCE FUND IN PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY

4.3.1 Effectiveness of coordination mechanisms

The management and coordination arrangements of the PoC and the Coherence Fund are set out in the PoC 2012-2016 and related guidelines and ToRs. This section assesses the functioning of these arrangements and the implications for government ownership, dialogue, capacity development, results-based management and Swedish value-added.

The management and coordination arrangements were designed through consultations in the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) and sought to address major concerns relating to the previous country programme cycle 2007-2011, such as the workload regarding work planning and reporting, the lack of involvement of line ministries, and the lack of joint implementation (once the AWP have been completed). As reflected in the PoC 2012-2016, the new management and coordination arrangements involved a system of co-chairing by the UN and government at both AWP (technical, output) and

PoC (strategic, outcome) levels, where legal documentation is being signed off by both parties.

Finding 13: The working group structures put in place for managing and coordinating the planning of activities in support of gender-related outputs have not been operationalised in a consistent manner and have seen varying levels of government participation.

Technical output level management and coordination was assigned to **output working groups**. These groups were established for each of the five original gender-related outputs. When output 1.1.1 and 1.1.2 were merged into output 3.1 in 2015, the number of output working groups was reduced from five to four.

According to the 2011 generic ToR, output working groups are composed of representatives of the implementing partners and UN agencies, with roles and responsibilities directly related to the achievement of a given output. However, the specific composition of these groups has not been formalised. In practice, the involvement of Albanian counterparts in the work planning process appears to have varied across outputs. MoSWY and MEDTTE have been most closely involved; their deputy ministers also sign the annual work plans. MoSWY is the main implementing partner in the area of gender-based violence and gender mainstreaming and signs the corresponding work plans; MEDTTE assumes a similar role with regard to women's economic empowerment. Notably, the AWP's relating to the strengthening of public oversight bodies have not been signed by any Albanian counterpart.

Contrary to the requirements of the output working group ToR, there are no minutes from the meetings, and interviews give somewhat contradictory information as to how often meetings have been convened and which agencies have participated. The same is true of the **outcome working groups**, which were created following the 2014 mid-term review, replacing the RBM Advisory Committee. In contrast, the **UN gender theme group** has been very active, as evidenced by meeting minutes and the large number of written inputs it has contributed to various strategies, processes and meetings, e.g. the *National Strategy and Action Plan on Gender Equality 2016-2020*, a CEDAW committee pre-session, EC progress reports, a UN gender position paper, the PoC, etc.

Finding 14: The Joint Executive Committee has had a limited role in ensuring a strategic UN-Albanian government dialogue on the use of Coherence Fund resources, including Swedish funding.

At the strategic level, government ownership has been ensured through consultations on the PoC, the endorsement of the PoC by the Government Modernisation Committee, and participation in the **Joint Executive Committee (JEC)**, which constitutes the steering committee of the PoC. However, participation in the JEC has been limited to the PM's staff. In addition, the discussions conducted in the JEC relating to gender equality and the use of Swedish funds has had an operational rather than a strategic focus. This can be explained partly by the nature of government representation and partly by the fact that Swedish funds were already earmarked for certain outputs. Under the new PoC 2017-2021, the UN will renew its efforts to engage with the government at a more strategic level, including by inviting representatives of line ministries to become

members of the JEC and ensuring more broad-based stakeholder participation in the outcome working groups.

4.3.2 Quality of Annual Work Plans and reporting

The main responsibility for quality control of the AWP, inputs to mid-term reviews and the annual PoC progress reports rests with the outcome coordinators (i.e. heads of agencies). The Resident Coordinator Office (RCO) also employs an RBM analyst who reviews all reports.

Finding 15: There is scope for further improving the quality of the AWP and PoC annual progress reports, including by clearly distinguishing between different levels of results and by clarifying UN agencies' contribution and influence. Additionally, separate reporting to the Swedish Embassy has been inconsistent.

The AWP are based on a standard format consisting of a cover page, a short narrative, and a work plan with details on commitments agreed, deadlines, responsible parties, budget, source of funding and inputs. The total budget per agency, a sample monitoring tool, tables with unfunded plans/commitments and total funding gap per agency, are attached as annexes. In the work plans reviewed by the evaluation team, there are no apparent overlaps between activities and some UN agency interventions (especially with regard to gender-based violence), have been complementary. This is also the impression gained from interviews. However, the reporting format does not clearly convey the priorities, the strategy by which the outputs should be achieved, or the hierarchy of results achieved. Most of the initiatives are described in very generic terms (“support to”, “women’s access to property entitlement is improved”, “voter education”.) that would require a separate set of indicators in order for the reports to be truly descriptive or meaningful. The merger of outputs and the ambition to make them more strategic in nature seem to have made the task of monitoring progress more difficult. In all the work plans reviewed by the evaluation team, the monitoring tool table has been left blank.

The **PoC annual progress reports** are prepared for a public audience. A narrative is provided describing the initiatives supported and results achieved, the challenges faced, and the way forward. The reporting was initially done on an outcome-by-outcome basis. The 2015 report includes, for the first time, a narrative of the results achieved under each output. The results framework is reproduced in the 2014 and 2015 reports, which provide information on progress made against annual targets using the indicators established for the output. In generally, the reporting has become more detailed and results-oriented from year to year.

The stand-alone **gender reports to the Swedish Embassy** do not have a standard format. The first report covering the years 2012-2013 provides a snapshot of progress made by output, and identifies challenges and emerging priorities. There is no report for 2014. The second and third report (covering the periods December 2014 to July 2015 and July 2015 to July 2016) are more detailed. None of the reports include a systematic assessment why some goals were achieved while others were missed, or how much progress was made in meeting the defined output indicators.

4.3.3 Financial management and control

The PoC budget is reflected in the Integrated Resource Framework (Common Budgetary Framework), which also serves as a tool to track programme disbursement. As indicated above, the Coherence Fund was established to cover the funding gaps within this framework and enable the pooling of mostly un-earmarked donor funds to the PoC.

Finding 16: The system for financial management and control of Coherence Fund resources is well developed and operationalised by an experienced trust fund entity that ensures financial control and transparency.

The process of allocating funds from the Coherence fund has been formalised through written guidelines and a standard format for the **Request for Funds**. The 2012 guidelines for the Coherence Fund specify how allocations are determined and the criteria used to assess a Request for Funds. For each of the three main criteria (eligibility, performance and exceptional priorities), a number of sub-criteria exist. Any Request for Funds should include a self-assessment against each of these criteria. According to the self-assessments attached to the Request for Funds from the Swedish contribution, all requests comply with the criteria. This implies *inter alia* that a Request for Funds is based on signed AWP, that the amount of the request matches the funding gaps determined in the AWP, a minimum of 70 per cent of commitments made the previous year have been implemented, sufficient progress towards targets has been achieved, and that 80 per cent of the resources allocated from the previous tranche have been spent.

The administrative agent for the Coherence Fund is the UNDP. The contributions to the Coherence Fund are received by UNDP's New York **Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTF Office)**, which administers more than 100 funds and joint programmes worth more than USD 800 million per year. The MPTF Office plays a treasurer role, ensuring that contributions are properly accounted for, apportioned, and reported on. It also provides quality assurance based on a set of key performance indicators. The MPTF Office operates partly through the UNDP office in Albania, to which certain administrative responsibilities for the Coherence Fund have been delegated.

Funds from the Coherence Fund are released by the MPTF Office on the basis of a request from the UNDP office in Albania. The request is submitted through the UNDP's financial system and accompanied by a checklist confirming that all required documents, including the signed JEC minutes, have been received. Once the MPTF Office has processed the request, the funds are transferred to specific UN agency accounts. The administrative fee of the MPTF office amounts to one per cent of the total contribution.

Each UN agency head is accountable to his or her CEO or governing body for any resources received, according to the financial regulations and rules of the agency concerned. UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and UN Women have agreed to apply the harmonised approach to cash transfer (HACT). As indicated above, the activities funded by the Swedish contribution are subject to direct execution (DEX), implying that no cash is transferred to the implementing partner (government). This decision is based on

a macro-assessment of Albania's public financial management system, carried out in 2009 and 2015. According to interviews, micro-assessments of selected government ministries are planned for 2017.

Financial reports are prepared mid- and end-year by the administrative agent/UNDP office in Albania and verified by the MPTF Office. This involves certain financial tests to ensure that the data is correct and balances are achieved. The annual financial report on the Coherence Fund is included as an annex to the PoC annual progress report. Data is provided on sources and uses of funds, partner contributions, interest earned, transfer of funds, and expenditure and financial delivery rates. On the MPTF online gateway,²⁸ real-time data on commitments, deposits, budgets, transfers and expenditures is available to the public.

Use of the funds is audited individually by each UN agency in line with agency-specific external and internal auditing procedures and HACT procedures.

4.3.4 Swedish value-added

Finding 17: Sweden has been the most significant contributor to the Coherence Fund but its relative importance as a funder of gender-related outputs is not clear. Most other donors are using alternative financing modalities.

Sweden is the largest contributor over time to the Coherence Fund. Over the period 2007-2016, some USD 8,7 million in Sida funds were granted (23 per cent of total contributions). Since 2012, the Coherence Fund has had five sources of funding, as illustrated in the table below.

Contributor/partner 2012-16	Deposits (USD '000)	Share of total
Sida	4,576	39%
SDC	3,775	32%
Delivering Results Together ²⁹	3,117	27%
Expanded DAO Funding Window ³⁰	217	2%
EU	16	<1%
Total	11,701	100%

²⁸ <http://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/AL100>

²⁹ A fund established in 2013 by the UN Development Group to help cover funding gaps of Delivering as One (DaO).

³⁰ The Expanded Delivering as One Funding Window for Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (EFW) was established in 2008 by the UNDG with the support of Spain, Norway and the United Kingdom. It is a multi-donor funding mechanism providing resources for nationally led programming processes to help UN Country Teams to Deliver as One.

For the years 2012-2014, financial data on total budget/expenditures is broken down for outcomes only. In 2015, the only year for which output data is available, Sida's share of the total budget of the four gender-related outputs was 21 per cent. There is no information in the 2015 PoC progress reports on other funding sources allocated to these outputs. The source and proportion of other income sources is also not presented.

The total amount of non-core funding allocated to the Coherence Fund has declined sharply since 2013, averaging about USD 2 million per year. In 2015, Coherence Fund deposits constituted eight per cent of the total PoC budget of USD 24 million and 12 per cent of total core resources (amounting to USD 17 million). This means that 88 per cent of the non-core/other funding to the PoC was channelled to UN agencies through other means than the Coherence Fund. According to the draft 2016 PoC progress report, UN agencies had a total of 18 funding sources last year, with Sweden and Switzerland the only donors to choose the Coherence Fund as their preferred financial modality. The SDC has allocated USD 8 million to the Coherence Fund for the period 2017-2021 (soft-earmarked to the "social inclusion" outcome).

The desk review and interviews conducted for this evaluation revealed several reasons behind the sharp decline in Coherence Fund income sources, including:

- Cuts in aid budgets among Albania's (former) major donors
- Shifting priorities (e.g. towards conflict and post-conflict countries)
- Waning interest in UN reforms after initial enthusiasm and a tendency to favour individual agency funding arrangements
- Bilateral donors wanting to have more control over the use of funds (although the EU has recently launched general budget support programmes in Albania in an attempt to increase Albanian ownership and accountability)

Finding 18: Sweden's influence over strategic and operational priorities for UN gender equality work has been very limited, largely due to the lack of well-functioning and inclusive dialogue mechanisms.

Interviews indicate that Sweden's ability to capitalise on its contribution to the Coherence Fund and influence the work on gender-related outputs has been limited. The Swedish Embassy's covering letters to the SAA encouraged the UN to establish a mechanism for dialogue between the government, the UN and Sweden, and identified two central issues for discussions:

- Ownership processes in the programme, how ownership of the problems and solutions identified in the PoC targets is understood in society, and how these problems and solutions are systematically analysed within the PoC at the programme and project level
- UN agency efforts to continue improving the organisational systems and practices to mainstream gender equality.

In practice, during the first two years of the PoC, the Swedish Embassy participated in some of the output working group meetings. However, this participation is inconsistent and has not been sustained. At one point, the Swedish Embassy asked to be included as an observer in the JEC, but this request was turned down by the RCO. Another request

to join an outcome-level discussion on the joint AWP for 2017 was similarly rejected for unclear reasons.

Nevertheless, the Swedish Embassy conducts regular, informal talks with individual UN agencies, in particular UNDP and UN Women, and is often invited to various events, e.g. the launch of publications funded under the gender-related outputs. UN agencies also recognise Sweden as a role model when it comes to promoting gender equality. However, beyond funding, Swedish expertise and resources have not been tapped to any great extent.

4.4 CONTRIBUTION TO OUTCOMES AND IMPACT

Measuring outputs and in particular, the impact of Swedish support for gender equality work through the Coherence Fund, is difficult for several reasons. First of all, the outputs and accompanying indicators have been revised twice between 2012-2017. Secondly, financial data on the relative size of Sweden's contribution to gender-related outputs over the same period is not available. Thirdly, there is no clear and consistent narrative on the linkages between initiatives, outputs and outcomes, which makes it difficult to establish causality and the influence of the UN's contribution to higher-level results.

4.4.1 Realisation of outputs

Finding 19: Progress in achieving gender-related outputs has been mixed and is generally difficult to substantiate. The most tangible results appear to have been in addressing gender-based violence and gender mainstreaming.

The table below provides an extract of the results framework presented in the draft 2016 PoC progress report. It presents a summary of the progress made against the indicators, baselines and targets adopted in 2014 for the gender-related outputs to which the second Swedish grant was allocated.

#	Indicator	2012 Baseline	2016 Target	Result
1.3	Mandated line ministries and state institutions ensure that their practices and policies effectively prevent and address violence (against women and children) in society			
	Existence of obligatory core curriculum for police, social workers, health practitioners and magistrates on gender-based violence and trafficking	Police: No Social workers: No Health practitioners: No Magistrates: Yes	Curriculum exists for all groups	Standard operating procedures for multi-sectoral response to gender-based violence have been developed and integrated into the obligatory curriculum for all groups
	Coverage of mechanisms for tracking, reporting and addressing violence against women (and children)	Functioning CCR mechanisms: 30% of municipalities	Functioning CCR: 50% of municipalities	CCRs established in nearly 50% of municipalities
	Proportion of men and women who think that abuse or violence against women is not acceptable or tolerable	59% of men and boys, and 80% of girls (2013 'Fjale Burri' opinion survey)	65% of men and boys 85% of girls	62% of men and boys and 75% of girls (2016 'Fjale Burri' opinion survey)

3.1 Parliament and electoral institutions have the capacity to perform core functions			
Public perception of trust in Parliament, election management bodies, political parties	Parliament: 24% (2013 Opinion Poll Trust In Governance)	Parliament: 24% (?)	Parliament: 27% (source?)
# of parliamentary sessions and hearings for oversight of human rights and gender equality obligations	2	3	At least 2 parliamentary sessions, 4 hearings and 2 discussions (UN Women records)
3.2 Line ministries and public service delivery institutions are able to mainstream gender and conduct gender-responsive planning and budgeting and evidence-based policy making at all levels			
# of national policies with gender-specific objectives and indicators	1	4	3 (National Strategy on Gender Equality 2016–2020, National Programme of Official Statistics 2017–2021, and National Strategy for Development and Integration 2015–2020)
# of ministries and public institutions with gender equality objectives and targets in national planning and budgeting	0	6	12 line ministries, 1 independent institution (Albanian State Police), 5 municipalities
4.3 National and sub-national government units have the capacity to generate and strengthen investments, employment and livelihood opportunities, especially for youth and women			
Net number of new enterprises created, and proportion owned by women	8,650 (2013)	10,000	<u>2015 data:</u> 16,731 new businesses 1,520 (11.6%) owned by women

The table confirms that the most significant progress and results were achieved in terms of the UN's response to gender-based violence, with the expansion of the CCR mechanism and efforts related to gender-responsive budgeting. In other areas, including capacity-building of public oversight institutions and women's economic empowerment, results were either modest or are not possible to verify given inadequate indicators and/or means of verification.

It is possible that real but intangible results have been achieved (as argued by several interviewees) with regard to changing attitudes to gender-based and domestic violence following multiple campaigns supported by the UN. However, this is not evident from the 2016 'Fjale Burri' opinion survey, which shows only a minor change in attitudes. On the other hand, interviews also indicate that women's groups advocating gender equality and women's rights have been strengthened. Moreover, the UN's significant support for the development of policies, strategies and legal amendments is not fully reflected in the results framework. Neither are the results of the work with the CEC, Ombudsman and CPD captured, although, contrary to what is claimed in the 2015 final evaluation of the PoC 2012-2016, the results achieved in this respect cannot be substantiated by progress reports or related available data. For instance, in 2015, the

CPD handled nine complaints on gender and four related to pregnancy, which is roughly the same as in 2011.

4.4.2 Nature of results and impact

Finding 20: UN work on gender equality has contributed to formal, systemic change through policies and laws. Any effect on public awareness, cultural norms and practices cannot be established.

The conceptual framework on institutional and organisational change adopted by Gender at Work,³¹ a prominent international network of gender experts, differentiates between systemic and individual change in four spheres:

- Policies and laws (formal, systemic change)
- Women's access to resources (formal, individual change)
- Women's and men's consciousness/knowledge and awareness (informal, individual change)
- Informal cultural norms and exclusionary practises (informal, systemic change)

While the UN's approach to gender equality has covered all of these areas, the most tangible results have been achieved with in changes to policies and laws. As described above, the UN has contributed to the development of the *National Strategy and Action Plan on Gender Equality 2016-2021*, gender mainstreaming in the *National Action Plan for Youth 2015-2020*, the integration of sex-disaggregated, gender-sensitive governance targets in the draft *NSDI 2015-2020*, the *National Action Plan for Women Entrepreneurs 2014-2020*, etc. Systemic regulatory change can also be detected in the work on gender mainstreaming of MTPBs, and women's property rights in particular.

Improvements in women's access to resources are more difficult to ascertain but are probably limited, given the fragmented and small-scale support for women's economic empowerment. Progress in introducing gender-responsive budgeting across an increasing number of MTBPs and ministries should eventually improve women's access to resources, but this is not yet discernible. It might be argued that women's political empowerment has been reflected in an increase in women MPs, but such progress has been relatively small and certainly below target. At the local level, little has changed in terms of women's representation. Although the UN has launched and contributed to several advocacy campaigns and supported CSOs in this context, the collective impact

³¹ Kelleher, D. and Rao, A., *What is Gender at Work's Approach to Gender Equality and Institutional Change?*

of these initiatives on women's and men's consciousness and informal cultural norms cannot be established.

Turning to organisational change, it is noteworthy that despite UN advocacy and some capacity-building, the national gender machinery remains weak. If anything, the reform of the MoSWY, including the administrative downgrading of the gender equality function, has reduced the focus on gender equality and the potential for leverage on government policies, including outreach to other line ministries. Most government ministries and local government units still lack gender employees/focal points, even though this has been required by the law on gender equality since 2008. The government-led working group on gender equality and domestic violence, in which most of the policy dialogue on gender equality has taken place in the past, is no longer active. The new government system, with its integrated planning and management groups, does not include a policy dialogue platform dedicated to gender equality.

4.4.3 Factors influencing sustainability

Finding 21: Sustainability has been promoted through the UN's contribution to changes in policies, laws, regulations and systems, such as the CCR. Sustainability could be improved through more systematic capacity-building within government, state institutions and CSOs.

Sustainability of results is likely to be greatest in areas where the UN has contributed to the adoption of or changes to policies, laws and regulations. There are also examples of systemic change taking place with the support of the UN, specifically with regard to the development and expansion of the CCR and gender mainstreaming in the MTBP. The final 2015 evaluation of the PoC 2012-2016 notes that the establishment of CCRs in major districts, and their continued operation even after the withdrawal of UNDP support, is encouraging, despite variations in the coverage and efficiency of the CCR.

Reasons for limited sustainability can be traced to the constraining factors influencing results more generally. As explained in chapter 4.2.5, this includes:

- Changes in political priorities
- Lack of human and financial resources in government
- Limited capacity of local government units
- Pressure to deliver quick and demonstrable results

A finding shared by existing evaluations, and supported by the observations of the evaluation team, is that the UN needs to adopt a more systematic approach to capacity development among national stakeholders, including government, state institutions and CSOs. In many cases, UN support has been in the form of external consultants who have led the work on developing policies, strategies, action plans, legal amendments, etc., and taken on the main responsibility for coaching, training and otherwise supporting government staff in implementation of the foregoing. This reliance on UN consultants may have blocked or delayed the development of Albanian expertise and enthusiasm for these policy issues. Several interviewees criticised a tendency for the UN to become increasingly involved in service delivery as the policy and regulatory framework on gender equality has become more developed and no longer requires such involvement. In the meantime, the Swedish government's contribution to UN efforts

continues to be mainly provided through in-kind inputs and not through cost-sharing. The final 2015 evaluation of the PoC 2012-2016 recommends a structured capacity assessment to ensure that capacity development interventions are clearly targeted in support of sector ministries and departments at both national and local levels. However, this recommendation has not yet been implemented.

The UN's contribution to capacity development within local NGOs can also be questioned due to the short-term and delivery-focused nature of grants resulting from open calls for proposals and their accompanying contractual arrangements. Grants are typically given for projects with a duration ranging from six months to one year. According to interviews, Albanian NGOs highly value the UN's financial support and the opportunities that relationships with the UN provide for participation in dialogue. Some of the more mature NGOs also seem to have developed informal, strategic partnerships with UN agencies. At the same time, there is no guarantee of future funding. In addition, existing UN support is not geared towards strengthening the capacity of the NGOs *per se*. All the NGOs consulted during the evaluation identified a need for increased investment in their organisations.

4.5 ALTERNATIVE FINANCING MODALITIES

To answer the question “what alternative cost-efficient financing modalities could provide targeted support for gender equality beyond 2017,” the evaluation has drawn upon an assessment framework developed by Alonso and Glennie (2015).³² Their framework proposes that development cooperation modalities can be assessed in four dimensions, each of which comprises several criteria. The evaluation team has adjusted this framework to fit the Albanian context, revising and adding indicators for assessment. The four overall dimensions remain the same as Alonso's and Glennie's.

The assessment below is informed by the findings and observations of this evaluation, as presented previously in this report. Adjustments to the framework were made during the inception phase of the evaluation, based on the initial desk review and interviews with the Swedish Embassy and the UN RCO. Five alternative financial modalities for future Swedish support have been identified: i) continued support through the Coherence Fund for the gender equality work under the PoC 2017-2021; ii) support for a joint UN sub-programme on gender equality (which existed in the past); iii) a

³² See ECOSOC/Development Cooperation Forum (2015), *Assessing the suitability of different development cooperation modalities for greater effectiveness and impact post-2015*, 2016 Development Cooperation Forum Policy Briefs, March 2015, No.6. www.un.org/en/ecosoc/newfuncnt/pdf15/dcfrok_brief_impact.pdf

programme/project with an individual UN agency, such as UNDP or UN Women; iv) direct bilateral cooperation with a relevant government ministry or state agency, such as MoSWY⁷ and v) an open call for proposals administered directly by the Swedish Embassy or through a consultancy company or other organisation.

Finding 22: Each financing modality has its advantages and disadvantages depending on the dimensions of support envisaged and criteria used. A formalised joint UN gender equality programme appears to be a good option for future support that could potentially address some of the concerns over the Coherence Fund.

It should be noted that the new PoC 2017-2021 seeks to address some of the weaknesses of the former PoC, especially in term of the management and coordination arrangements. In particular, there are plans to expand the Albanian government's participation in the JEC and the outcome working groups. The latter will also include CSOs, development partners and other stakeholders as deemed necessary. The outcome groups are expected to be led by ministers or designated representatives from line ministries. This may contribute to promoting governance ownership and more strategic dialogue. Nevertheless, the scope for targeted support for gender equality is now more limited, given that it has been mainstreamed to a greater extent than in the previous results framework. As a result, the new results framework does not include any obvious gender-related outputs.

The second option of support to a theme-based, joint UN gender programme could help to bridge the “missing middle” that currently exists between the high-level PoC strategic framework and the delivery-oriented annual work plans. Ideally, this type of programme should have a PoC outcome as its overall objective, but this may not be possible since none of the existing outcomes are specifically targeted at gender equality and women's rights. The SDC has recently pledged a continued contribution to the UN's work on promoting social cohesion, for which a separate PoC outcome exists. The Swiss contribution is framed in a project proposal that describes the context, analyses prior results and lessons learned, specifies target groups and geographic focus, presents the intervention logic (including a theory of change, an implementation strategy and a risk analysis), and specifies monitoring and evaluation arrangements and project management mechanisms, etc. Strategic leadership will be provided by a steering committee. It is noteworthy that SDC funding will still go through the Coherence Fund.

A programme or project with an individual UN agency, such as UNDP or UN Women, would be a third option. One existing example is EU support for the government's

implementation of the EU gender equality ‘acquis’,³³ a project that has been partly outsourced to UN Women. Another example is the USAID-UN Women Community-Based Scorecard Project, implemented in collaboration with local NGOs and citizen advisory panels. However, as reflected in the matrix below, a separate UN agency project would not necessarily promote coordination among partners and could even reduce the scope for leveraging results that the combined efforts of several UN agencies could achieve.

Direct bilateral cooperation with a government ministry or state agency on gender equality would strengthen national ownership and Swedish value-added, including the possibility of drawing on the Swedish resource base. It would also increase the scope for monitoring and follow-up on results. The main concern with this option is the limited capacity of the government to absorb donor resources and expertise and its inexperience in directly managing donor-supported projects. According to interviews, the natural counterpart, MoSWY, has previously benefited from direct support but faced a number of difficulties, especially in terms of procurement of goods and services.

An open call for proposals would allow for targeting, promote transparency and make it possible to extend support to an increasing number of local NGOs, most of which face constant resource constraints. Open calls for proposals from NGOs are organised by several Swedish embassies, particularly in Africa. It was not within the scope of this evaluation to assess the experiences of these embassies. However, in general, there is a risk that this mechanism can lead to increasing fragmentation and a focus on short-term rather than long-term results. It should also be recognised that both UNDP and UN Women are organising calls for proposals for delivery of their programmes through CSOs (as service providers) or in support of typical CSO activities, such as awareness campaigns on gender-based violence.

The matrix below provides a systematic, if subjective, assessment of the different financing modalities discussed above, using the criteria agreed during the inception phase of the evaluation. The highest-scoring modality for each criterion is shaded grey.

³³ ‘The term ‘EU gender equality acquis’ refers to all the relevant Treaty provisions, legislation and the case law of the European Court of Justice (ECJ) in relation to gender equality’ (Burri and Prechal, 2008, p.3).

4 OBSERVATIONS, ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Criteria	Coherence Fund	Joint UN gender programme	Individual UN agency project	Bilateral project with relevant ministry/agency	Open call for proposals
<i>Quality of relationship</i>					
National ownership	Promotes country ownership. Government leadership depends on participation in JEC and outcome working groups.	Promotes country ownership if a steering committee or similar is established with adequate government participation	Promotes country ownership if a steering committee or similar is established with adequate government participation	Maximises the potential for national ownership	Is likely to attract proposals primarily from NGOs and UN agencies
Strategic dialogue opportunities	Through the JEC and outcome working groups, provided there is adequate government participation.	Mainly through a programme steering committee and/or annual review meetings	Mainly through a project steering committee and/or annual review meetings	Through a project steering committee, regular consultations, and annual review meetings, but confined to one government agency	Limited opportunities. Thematic discussions could be organised with supported organisations.
Targeted support	Limited opportunities given the lack of gender-focused outcomes and outputs in new PoC and the spread of resources across UN agencies	Could be targeted to specific issues or themes, e.g. gender-based violence, WPE, women's economic empowerment	Maximises the potential for reaching specific stakeholders/groups of women/men on particular issues	Is likely to focus on national-level policy work and capacity-building	Call for proposals could have specific focus on certain themes and issues
Transparency and accountability	Real-time financial data provided by MPTF office. Lines of accountability are likely blurred given multiple implementing agencies.	Additional transparency can be ensured through programme management arrangements. Accountability vested in limited number of actors	Additional transparency can be ensured through project management arrangements. Accountability clearly vested with one UN agency.	More limited transparency given reliance on government systems and reporting. The only modality with accountability clearly vested with government.	Transparency ensured through open call mechanisms and selection procedures. Accountability clearly vested with the applicant organisation
Predictability of resources	Resources committed for one year only (signed AWP)	Offers predictability by committing funds to a multi-year programme plan and budget	Limited predictability if the project is of a limited time duration	Provides the government some predictability but sustainability uncertain	Limited predictability given likely short-term nature of grants
Swedish value-added	Mainly through influencing dialogue in outcome working groups	Mainly through influencing programme scope and dialogue	Mainly through influencing project scope and dialogue	Could offer some opportunities if project is linked to the Swedish resource-base	Limited opportunities

4 OBSERVATIONS, ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

<i>Functionality</i>					
Coordination among partners	Maximises the potential for coordination through the AWP and outcome working groups	Promotes coordination through the links with the PoC and the AWP	Promotes coordination through the links with the PoC and the AWP	More limited opportunities. Can be addressed through Steering Committee mechanism	Limited opportunities for coordination given the nature of projects (stand-alone)
Harmonisation with country systems	Limited opportunities as AWP does not coincide with government budgeting cycle and activities are directly implemented by the UN	Could offer some opportunity for harmonisation through multi-year planning and budgeting	Could offer some opportunity for harmonisation through multi-year planning and budgeting	Maximises the potential for harmonisation with country systems	Limited opportunities for harmonisation since it will mainly support CSO and possibly UN agency projects
Scope for cost-sharing and leveraging additional resources	Potential scope for cost-sharing but Coherence Fund is not favoured by donors.	Limited opportunities given limited UN core resources	Limited opportunities given limited UN core resources	Limited opportunities given government resource constraints	Limited opportunities given ad-hoc nature of projects
Flexibility to reorient activities	Maximises flexibility for UN agencies but Swedish Embassy has limited influence	Programme-based support is responsive to emerging needs and developments	Limited opportunities given rigid project arrangements/LFA	Limited opportunities given rigid project arrangements/LFA	Flexibility to change themes for successive calls for proposals
Transaction costs for Sweden and beneficiary institutions	Low transaction costs for Swedish Embassy and relatively low for beneficiary institutions given UN's leading role in implementation	Relatively low transaction costs for Swedish Embassy and relatively low for beneficiary institutions given UN's leading role in implementation	Low transaction costs for Swedish Embassy and relatively low for beneficiary institutions	Relatively high transaction costs for Swedish Embassy	High transaction costs. Could be lower if outsourced to other organisation/consultancy company
Speed of delivery	Relatively high since activities are directly executed/implemented by the UN	Relatively high since activities are directly executed/implemented by the UN	Maximises the potential for speedy delivery given that single UN agency implementation and DEX	Possibly low given reliance on government systems	Relatively high since activities are CSO/agency implemented
Scope for follow-up/monitoring of implementation and results	Mainly based on UN reporting and potentially through participation in outcome working groups	Follow-up/monitoring through reporting, Steering Committee and informal consultations	Follow-up/monitoring through reporting, Steering Committee and informal consultations	Maximises the potential for follow-up monitoring given direct relationship with government	Follow-up/monitoring mainly based on reporting
Adequate quality assurance	Quality assurance	Quality assurance	Maximises the potential	Limited opportunities for	Quality assurance can be

4 OBSERVATIONS, ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

	through individual UN agency systems	through additional programme management arrangements, if adequately set-up	for quality assurance through additional project management arrangements	Swedish Embassy to exercise quality assurance. Government's quality assurance systems likely to be weak	ensured through standardised formats, systematic review of proposals, and reporting requirements
Swedish visibility	Through social and traditional media and publications with Swedish Embassy logo	Additional visibility can be ensured through more regular policy dialogue	Additional visibility can be ensured through more regular policy dialogue	Maximises the potential for visibility given Sweden's direct engagement and opportunity to draw on Swedish resource base	Good visibility since the call is administered by Swedish Embassy
Level and partner type					
Suitability for support at national level and/or local level	PoC covers both national and local level needs	Can be targeted to specific national-level actors and/or localities	Can be targeted to specific national-level actors and/or localities	Can be targeted to specific national-level actors and/or localities	Maximises the potential for targeting support, especially to the local level, based on thematic focus/eligibility criteria
Partnerships with national/local government/oversight bodies/civil society	Maximises the potential for broad-based partnerships (through the UN) with multiple actors	Provides good opportunities for partnership (through UN agencies) with selected actors	Provides good opportunities for partnership (through UN agencies) with selected actors	Promotes partnership between Sweden and targeted government implementing agency	Limited opportunities for partnership given likely project-focused and short-term nature of grants
Relevance to post-2015 agenda					
Contribution to SDG 5 and related targets	PoC is directly geared towards contributing to the SDGs, including SDG 5	Programme would be directly based on PoC and offer opportunity for multi-partner and target support for the achievement of SDG 5	Project could be centred on SDG 5 but likely to be relatively narrow in scope	Project could be centred on SDG 5 but likely to be relatively narrow in scope	SDG 5 could be used as a theme for the call-off proposal but support is likely to be ad-hoc in nature

5 Conclusions and recommendations

Swedish support to the One UN in Albania has, during the period 2012-2017, contributed to results in four thematic areas: the strengthening of public oversight bodies; promoting gender mainstreaming; addressing gender-based and domestic violence; and promoting women's economic empowerment.

This evaluation has shown that Swedish support has been largely relevant. Gender-related outputs and activities were identified in a consultative manner, with Albanian government participation, and informed by previous work and lessons learned. The themes and issues addressed by the outputs closely matched the priorities of national strategies and action plans, the needs articulated by government and state agencies, and the results singled out in successive Swedish development cooperation strategies. However, the linkages between outcomes, outputs and deliverables/activities have not always been clearly established, partly due to the lack of a convincing theory of change.

Measuring the effectiveness of Swedish support, i.e. the realisation of outputs, is difficult for several reasons, including the fact that outputs and output indicators have been revised twice between 2012 and 2017. At the same time, evidence suggests that Swedish support has contributed to:

- Active improvements in promoting women's political empowerment, addressing discrimination, and monitoring international obligations by Parliament, the Central Elections Commission, the Ombudsman, and the Commissioner for Protection against Discrimination
- The further development of key national policies, action plans and laws on gender equality and women's rights, increased alignment with international treaties, and the development of capacities and tools for gender mainstreaming, including gender-responsive budgeting.
- The development, expansion and monitoring of multidisciplinary services to domestic violence victims.

Women's economic empowerment is an area that has been targeted for support but one in which results are not yet visible. Activities supported in this area come across as fragmented and lacking in clear direction.

A number of positive and negative factors have influenced the achievement of results. Most significantly, the EU accession process and related policy and legal developments have created an enabling environment for the UN's work on gender equality. The UN also has several comparative advantages that have been capitalised on. On the other hand, results in several areas have been held back by political events, leadership changes in counterpart ministries, changing priorities, and limited

government resources and capacities, especially at the local level. Short-term and activity-oriented UN support has compounded the problem.

The efficiency of this support has, in line with the ToR, been evaluated through a qualitative assessment of the PoC/Coherence fund management and coordination structures and mechanisms. These structures and mechanisms have not been consistently operationalised and have seen varying levels of government participation; nor have they permitted any strategic UN-Albanian dialogue on the use of Coherence Fund resources for UN gender equality work. The annual work plan and reporting process have improved over time but have not clearly distinguished between different levels of results; nor has the relative contribution and influence of UN agencies been made clear. However, financial controls appear well-developed and operationalised.

Sweden has been the most significant contributor to the Coherence Fund, but the relative importance of its funding of gender-related outputs is not clear, since the evaluation team did not have access to information on other income sources at this level. Sweden's influence on strategic and operational priorities in UN gender equality work has been extremely limited, largely due to the lack of well-functioning and inclusive dialogue mechanisms.

The impact and sustainability of Swedish support is most clearly visible in the contribution to formal, systemic change through policies and laws. However, sustainability could arguably be improved through more systematic capacity-building within government, state institutions and CSOs. The effect of Sweden's support on public awareness, cultural norms and practices in connection with women's rights and empowerment cannot be established.

As part of the evaluation, five alternative funding modalities were identified: i) continued support, through the Coherence Fund, for gender equality work under the PoC 2017-2021; ii) support for a joint UN sub-programme on gender equality; iii) a programme/project with an individual UN agency, such as UNDP or UN Women; iv) direct bilateral cooperation with a relevant government ministry or state agency, such as MoSWY; and v) an open call for proposals administered directly by the Swedish Embassy or through a consultancy company or other organisation. This assessment shows that each of these modalities has advantages and disadvantages, depending on the degree of involvement envisaged and criteria used. However, continued Swedish support through a formalised joint UN gender equality programme appears to be a good option that could address concerns over the lack of potential for future targeting of support through the Coherence Fund (given its lack of gender-specific outputs). As shown by the comparative assessment of financing modalities carried out for this evaluation, a joint UN gender equality programme is also deemed to be cost-efficient, with relatively low transaction costs.

The above findings and conclusions give rise to the following recommendations:

1. The Swedish Embassy is advised to consider providing support through a theme-based, joint UN gender equality programme that would be directly aligned with

the PoC 2017-2021, but formalised in a programme document similar to that developed for Switzerland's contribution to the UN for promoting inclusive social policy.

2. The Swedish Embassy should actively seek opportunities for networking and informal policy dialogue with key Albanian government and state agencies, while strengthening its dialogue with the EU, urging a stronger stance on gender equality in the new sector programme support structure.
3. The Swedish Embassy should encourage the UN to develop a partnership strategy for its work with CSOs that emphasises the need for more long-term, strategic relationships, builds organisational capacity, and enhances joint policy advocacy and dialogue.
4. Should the Swedish Embassy decide to continue to channel its support through the Coherence Fund, specific requirements on reporting, annual reviews and dialogue mechanisms should be defined in a MoU. Strategic dialogue objectives may also be identified and agreed, and incorporated in the results framework on which the contribution is based.
5. Swedish support should be programmed using a multi-year planning and budgeting framework that ensures that support is sufficient and lasting (until the expected results have been achieved).
6. To promote sustainability, Swedish support should be geared towards capacity development of Albanian actors at the central and, especially, local level. An exit strategy should be devised from the outset, including a government funding commitment if possible.
7. As a general principle, Swedish support should facilitate the *implementation* of gender-related policies, laws and action plans, improve women's access to resources and address the attitudes, cultural norms and exclusionary practices that contribute to female disempowerment and violence against women.
8. The potential of the Swedish resource base, both human and financial, should be fully explored to enhance Swedish value-added.

Annex 1 – Evaluation matrix

Evaluation criteria/KEQs	Sub-questions	Assessment criterion/indicator	Assessment method/sources
KEQ1: How appropriate were the “gender” outputs and related initiatives for achieving the expected PoC outcomes? (Relevance criterion)	• How were the “gender outputs” formulated and selected and on what basis? Were the outputs clear and realistic? • Were related initiatives/activities appropriate for achieving the intended outputs? • How has the UN ensured responsiveness to changing circumstances and emerging priorities? • How does UNCT apply lessons learned? What structure is in place to ensure this happens?	• An explicit and plausible theory of change for the work on gender equality, including clear linkages between “gender outputs” and related outcomes • An inclusive PoC/Coherence Fund management structure that encourages timely discussion, enabling a change of course based on new information • A periodic, structured and systematic assessment of the operational environment, the strategic positioning of the UN, and lessons learned. The result of the analysis is being fed into the JAWP and reporting processes. • Concrete examples of how evaluations and lessons learned are used to improve ongoing work are provided in progress reports (including how institutional memory is developed)	• Review of PoC results frameworks • Review of Coherence Fund guidelines, evaluation management response documents, and minutes from the meetings of the Joint Executive Committee, outcome groups and output working groups • Review of JAWPs and reporting to the Swedish Embassy • Interviews with UN organisations and implementing agencies of initiatives funded by the Coherence Fund
KEQ2: What are the most significant “gender” results to which Sweden has contributed, and under what circumstances were they achieved?	• To what degree does Sweden’s contribution achieve intended results based on the Annual Reports of the PoC and gender reports? • Which are the most important internal and external factors influencing the achievement of	• Extent of achievement of “gender outputs” as measured by change in existing indicators • Extent and nature of changes in the external environment that can be directly linked to the effectiveness of the Coherence Fund • An implementation structure that promotes national ownership and dialogue, effective partnerships, capacity development, and the	• Review of Annual Reports of the PoC and gender reports to the Swedish Embassy – cross-referenced against the JAWPs and the final evaluation of the PoC 2012-2016 • Review of selected publications on gender equality produced by Sida partners in Albania

ANNEX 1 – EVALUATION MATRIX

(Effectiveness criterion)	results? • To what extent do the implementation structure and financial management of the gender-related work plans influence the achievement of results?	institutionalisation of results • Existence of a supportive, results-oriented financial and operational management system that facilitates timely and cost-efficient implementation and achievement of outputs	• Review of Coherence Fund guidelines and minutes from the meetings of the Joint Executive Committee, outcome groups and output working groups • Comparative review of JAWP with budgets and corresponding annual reports/gender reports and financial reports • Interviews with UN organisations and implementing agencies of initiatives funded by the Coherence Fund • Interviews with external stakeholders, e.g. Sida-funded NGOs and journalists
KEQ3: How efficient was the Coherence Fund in promoting gender equality, joint UN action and national ownership? (Efficiency criterion)	• How has the coordination among various partners within the Coherence Fund worked? • To what extent do coordination efforts support the ownership of implementing partners? • Does the structure of the Coherence Fund foster dialogue and interaction between the UN and the Albanian government? • How does the quality assurance system work in the management of the Coherence Fund? • What is the value-added of Swedish support for the Coherence Fund?	• Capacity in place to achieve and report results against the PoC, specifically in the area of gender equality • Formal, inclusive coordination groups meeting at regular intervals and providing opportunities for operational and strategic discussions Level and representativeness of government participation in coordination groups • Reliable UN mechanisms for assessing the capacity of implementing agencies, verifying incoming reports, analysing and managing risks, promoting cost efficiency, and ensuring compliance with Coherence Fund guidelines and related regulations • Size of Swedish contribution as a share of the total Coherence Fund and UN funding of gender outputs • Share of Swedish contribution allocated to administrative and programming costs, respectively	• Comparative review of Coherence Fund guidelines and minutes from the meetings of the Joint Executive Committee, outcome groups and output working groups • Comparative review of JAWPs and reporting to the Swedish Embassy • Assessment of Coherence Fund guidelines, ToR of coordination groups and related reports, templates, etc. • Comparative analysis of PoC/JAWP budgets, data on allocation of the Swedish contribution, and corresponding financial reports • Interviews with UN organisations and implementing agencies of initiatives funded by the Coherence

ANNEX 1 – EVALUATION MATRIX

		Concrete examples of how Sweden's dialogue with the UN and implementing agencies has contributed to results	Fund Interviews with the Swedish Embassy and SDC
KEQ4: To what extent has support for gender equality contributed to the PoC's overall outcomes and ambitions? (Impact and sustainability criteria)	- To what extent have initiatives supported through the Coherence Fund contributed to institutional and organisational change? - To what extent was support geared towards capacity-building of national implementing agencies, and what results were achieved? - What other direct and indirect positive (or negative) effects have been or are likely to be recorded in the longterm? - What are the major factors influencing sustainability?	- Concrete examples of how the initiatives funded have generated changes in policies and laws and women's access to resources – as well as changes in knowledge/awareness and informal cultural norms and exclusionary practices - Existence of clear UN strategy for capacity development, plus systems and tools for assessing and addressing capacity development needs among implementing partners, and corresponding monitoring and reporting arrangements and exit strategies - Concrete examples of how the initiatives funded have made it possible for implementing agencies to carry forward activities and achieve results	- Review of evaluation reports, PoC annual reports, gender reports to the Swedish Embassy, and evaluation reports - Review of PoC, JAWPs and related programme and project documents - Interviews with UN organisations and implementing agencies regarding initiatives funded by Coherence Fund
KEQ5: What alternative cost-efficient financing modalities could provide targeted support (in collaboration with the UN?) for gender equality beyond 2017?	What other modalities exist or could be explored, and what are their comparative advantages and disadvantages?	See separate assessment framework	- Review of Coherence Fund guidelines and related financial management regulations - Mapping and assessment of alternative financing modalities - Interviews with UN organisations and implementing agencies regarding initiatives funded by Coherence Fund - Interviews with Swedish Embassy and other UN development partners - Interviews with selected NGOs

Evaluation questions from the ToR are highlighted in bold.

Annex 2 – List of documents

- Albania One UN Coherence Fund financial reports for 2013, 2014 and 2015.
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- UN Women and UNDP (2016), *Gender Brief – Albania*.
- United Nations (2017), *Project Proposal for a Project promoting Social Inclusion. Leave No One Behind*.

Annex 3 – List of interviewees

#	Name	Position	Organisation
1	Agaraj, Ermira	Chair	Durres Chamber of Notaries
2	Agolli, Elsona	National Programme Analyst	UNFPA
3	Akdag, Erol	Human Rights Advisor	EU Delegation
4	Anastasi, Aurela	Director	CLCI
5	Baraku, Irma	Commissioner	CPD
6	Biba, Denar	Chairman	Central Elections Commission
7	Bozo, Aurela	Project Manager	CLCI
8	Bregu, Enkelejda	Cooperation Officer	EU Delegation
9	Cela, Ardian	Deputy Mayor	Durres Municipality
10	Cela, Erisa	National Programme Coordinator	UN Women
11	Columbia, Rita	Representative	UNFPA
12	Egro, Fabiola	Executive Director	Today for the Future
13	Gavrilova, Vera	Deputy Representative	UNICEF
14	Gjebrea, Elona	Deputy Minister	Ministry of Internal Affairs
15	Gjoni, Albana	Chief of Section	Durres IPRO
16	Greza, Laura	Director	MARDWA
17	Hyka, Aurora	Gender Equality Officer	Durres Municipality
18	Jansson, Birgitta	Head, Development Cooperation	Swedish Embassy
19	Karapici, Adela	Deputy Minister	MEDTTE
20	Katuci, Rezarta	Programme Officer	Swedish Embassy
21	Kitaev, Igor	Programme Specialist	UNESCO Venice
22	Laco Egro, Fabiola	Executive Director	Community Development Center
23	Lako, Entela	Programme Specialist	UNDP
24	Leskaj, Ines	Director	AWEN
25	Mane, Xhesi	Programme Associate	UNDP
26	Matsumoto, Mari	Portfolio Manager	MPTF Office
27	Merotto, Wally	Coordination Officer	UNESCO Venice
28	Mjeda, Silvana	Programme Officer	SDC
29	Nepravishta, Anila	Assistant Commissioner	Albanian Ombudsman
30	Nuri, Elida	Analyst	UNFPA
31	Opre, Gentian	Head of MTBP	Ministry of Finance
32	Papavangjeli, Edlira	Programme Manager	UNDP
33	Paskali, Brunilda	Deputy Mayor	Tirana Municipality
34	Qirjazi, Alpina	Director	Prime Minister's Office
35	Saunders, David	Representative	UN Women
36	Shalsi, Fiorela	National Programme Manager	UN Women
37	Sheshi, Etleva	Head of Gender Equality Sector	MoSWY
38	Shkodra, Fioralba	UN Coordination Specialist	UNRCO
39	Shkurti, Emira	Justice for Children Specialist	UNICEF
40	Teferici Zeqo, Edlira	Diversity Specialist	Directorate of State Police
41	Williams, Brian	UN Resident Coordinator	UN
42	Xhaferaj, Meme	Director of Social Services	Durres Municipality
43	Zinn, Katarina	UN/UNDP Coordinator	Sida, Stockholm



Evaluation of Swedish Support to the One UN in Albania for gender equality work 2012-2017

The main objective of this evaluation was to assess the comparative advantages and disadvantages of the One UN Coherence Fund as a channel for Swedish support for gender equality in Albania.

Evidence was collected and corroborated through a desk review, interviews and focus group discussions, including a one-week mission to Albania in April 2017.

The evaluation concludes that the Swedish support through the One UN Coherence Fund has been largely relevant to Albanian priorities and obligations, as well as to the needs of the main beneficiary institutions. However, the effectiveness of Swedish support is difficult to ascertain, given changes in outputs and indicators. Significant results have mainly been achieved in relation to the work with public oversight bodies, gender mainstreaming and gender-based violence. Coherence Fund management and coordination arrangements have not been consistently operationalised, nor have they allowed for adequate Swedish and Albanian government participation and strategic dialogue, which has affected the efficiency of the support. Impact and sustainability are most visible in the formal, systemic changes achieved through new policies and laws.

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