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# CAPACITY NEEDS AND TRAININGS ASSESSMENT OF ROMA/EGYPTIAN NGOs

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The project aims at the social and economic empowerment of marginalized Roma and Egyptian communities through: participatory planning for infrastructure development, capacity building support for Roma and Egyptian Civil Society Organizations, promote employability and entrepreneurship, support to local and central government institutions towards achieving the objectives set forth in the Decade of Roma Inclusion.

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# I. A NOTE ON CIVIL SOCIETY

Civil society in Albania is reportedly weak, mainly concentrated in urban areas and dependent on external funding. Fuelled by a donor driven approach, NGOs in years have expanded their scope of work. An issue that is reported from the USAID CSO assessment<sup>1</sup> (2011) is the fact that they have a problem in reaching out to their constituents. They have an accountability deficit as beneficiaries and supporters do not demand accountability and transparency and executive boards are rarely engaged. Their sustainability is also often questioned as their human resources are based on donor-funded projects. A report of IDM commissioned by UNDP underlines the citizens' scepticism of civil society, as it is perceived mainly as a source of financial benefits<sup>2</sup>. This is echoed from a TASCOS assessment of 2011<sup>3</sup> that points out that there is a perception that CSOs exist only to benefit the interests of their leaders and staff and that they do not represent grassroots' opinions of the interests of target groups or the general public. The report singles out the lack of tradition of volunteerism for public interests as an obstacle to public involvement and support for civil society.

According to GTZ<sup>4</sup> there are 800 registered NGOs in Albania with approximately 450 out of them being active. They focus mostly in advocacy, and awareness raising on various issues such as environment and children's rights. Some civic movement elements have started to flourish related to some environmental concerns i.e. the alliance against waste that recently forced the call of a referendum to be taking place later in 2013. In terms of delivering services, Albanian NGOs focus mostly on social services but the quality of services is questionable and their coordination with state authorities, particularly in terms of financing and sustained impact is weak.

The European Union remains the largest donor for civil society with a budget of €4.5 million between 2010 and 2011<sup>5</sup>. However, a survey by Human Development Promotion Centre<sup>6</sup> analysing the development of civil society in Albania states that the majority of NGOs in Albania have an imperfect knowledge of EU programmes concerning funding for civil society. Some of them are unaware that the EU even finances civil society and those that are aware of funding opportunities, lack the skills and capacity to submit successful

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<sup>1</sup> USAID: 2011 CSO Sustainability Index for Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia

<sup>2</sup> IDM: Civil Society Index Albania: In search of citizens and impact, 2010

<sup>3</sup> Technical Assistance for Civil Society Organisations, Albania Needs Assessment Report, Updated in 2011

<sup>4</sup> GTZ: Strengthening Civil Society and Democratic Structures in Albania: Lessons Learnt, 2009

<sup>5</sup> USAID: 2011 CSO Sustainability Index for Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia

<sup>6</sup> Third Sector Development in Albania: challenges and Opportunities, HDPC 2007

applications. The survey goes even further and states that most NGOs characterize EU application procedures as highly complex, and feel that in general, they are not prepared to comply with EU requirements related to project management and reporting.

A governmental Agency for the Support to Civil Society, established in 2009 implements also grants scheme that varies between 5,000 to 25,000 USD. The above-mentioned GTZ report points out the lack of a well-coordinated strategy on donor cooperation in the NGO sector.

Considerable resources in terms of training in project cycle management, communications, advocacy and lobbying have been dedicated to increasing the capacities and maximizing the impact of civic work in Albania. All these reports converge that the lack of funding is the main reason for the low sustainability of civil society in Albania and the diversification of funding sources is suggested especially as NGO funds from the state budget are very low whereas the private sector funding to civil society is non-existent.

This brief analysis of civil society in Albania serves as an expose to the following assessment of Roma and Egyptian NGOs as some of the problems they are facing are specific to their ethnic belonging whereas a good part of challenges are similar to what civil society in Albania is currently experiencing.



## II. METHODOLOGY

The methodological approach was similar to the assessment conducted in 2011 in the framework of the Joint Programme EVLC, and examines issues regarding the capacities and performance of the organizations and in the enabling environment that affects their performance. The methodology was further developed around a set of indicators for the appraisal of internal capacities of selected Roma and Egyptians NGOs. Some of the indicators that were taken into consideration included: *legal, logistical, human and financial structures; sustainability, management, project formulation and implementation, partnerships/coalitions<sup>7</sup> as well as project monitoring and reporting strategies. Attention was also paid to community engagement and outreach strategies and involvement in local decision making initiatives.*

Initially, a desk review of existing documentation was conducted to provide a synopsis of the enabling environment. Afterwards, the assessment of Organizational and Individual capacities was carried out with the intention to collect information and articulate a comprehensive analysis and identification of needs for training. Main instruments used for collecting data for this needs assessment were:

- ✓ Interviews and use of semi structured questionnaires – which supported information gathering from the organizations in a non invasive way and to assess their capacities, existing gaps and potential training needs
- ✓ Dedicated field missions to gather first hand information about how they actually operate and view project implementation operations if applicable.
- ✓ Focus groups with activists – to gather their perceptions and challenges and assess their needs for providing better services and representation to their communities.

Furthermore, a combination of core assessment issues which reinforce one another were incorporated in the methodology of this assessment in order to have a clear snapshot of the capacities of the organizations and activists. The assessment included questions on

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<sup>7</sup> UNDP/CDG (2005): Resource Guide: Measuring Capacities: An Illustrative Guide to Benchmarks and Indicators.

the organization design, their performance and SWOT analysis leading to the development of clear training needs of the organizations or individuals (activists) which are more critical for the moment for a desirable performance.

### III. BACKGROUND ON ROMA AND EGYPTIAN NGOS

Roma and Egyptians in Albania represent one of the poorest and most vulnerable strata of the population. During these years of transition, as a result of the collapse of state enterprises and the low education and qualifications as well as victims of discrimination, they were marginalized into a state of extreme poverty. Recent studies show that due to high levels of unemployment, their poverty levels and the gap between them and the majority population is increasing.<sup>8</sup>

Despite the existence of several laws and strategies such as the Law Against Discrimination (2010), the National Strategy on Roma (2003) and the Plan of Action for the Decade of Roma Inclusion (2009), a monitoring report from the European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance<sup>9</sup> points out that the situation of Roma is that of an extreme poverty and social and economic marginalisation. The implementation of these laws and strategies is hampered the lack of investments and a generally low attention to these issues by local government actors. Low media coverage of Roma issues and general lack awareness exacerbate their position and future prospects.

The Ombudsman's report for 2009 on the protection of the rights of Roma community states that they are rarely exposed to the administrative work of local authorities, despite the fact that they have the main responsibility in dealing with their issues. In addition, despite the fact that one of the 12 priorities where Albania's progress towards the EU is anchored relates to Roma as the EU expects that the government and respective institutions to undertake concrete measures to protect the rights of Roma through effective anti-discrimination policies and actions, community representatives observe little progress.

Roma civil society organizations in Albania are not considered to be strong and struggle to assert their influence in the decisions of the public institutions. In addition, their efforts to mobilize significant support from the community they represent are not always fruitful. They

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<sup>8</sup> Gedeshi I., Miluka J., Needs assessment of the Roma and Egyptian communities in Albania, UNDP, 2013.

<sup>9</sup> ECRI Report Albania, 2009

are not always cooperative with one another and as such struggle to set, advocate, pursue and negotiate a common agenda.

Many of Roma and Egyptian NGOs work focus on documenting the needs of the community in terms of housing, health care, employment and social assistance, education and civil registry as they believe that understanding and documenting the issues would orient easily any support process. They often voice their concerns about issues of human rights, discrimination access to social and economic means and their political representation. However, their work – especially at the central level remains sometimes detached from community work, mostly due to lack of funding but also capacities to articulate, formulate and properly present their needs.

The creation of an environment where Roma can be free from discrimination, confident about their future perspectives and celebrate their different cultural backgrounds as proud citizens of Albania is considered as an important aspect. This will have to tackle the prejudices and stereotypical attitudes against Roma and promote real equal opportunities for Roma in all aspects of life including education, employment, health and housing. In this respect, the trust and the spirit of cooperation between Roma and non-Roma NGOs can be nurtured leading up to exchanges and incentives for joint work.

## IV. MAIN FINDINGS

### 1. General Information about the Interviewed NGOs

As mentioned above this assessment is based on the same methodology and approach of an assessment that was conducted at the end of 2011. The difference this time is that in focus were the organisations that are based outside of Tirana and specifically in Berat, Vlora and Korça while in 2011 the focus was more at the Tirana based organisations and some of their branches at the local level. This enabled the revisit of the situation of some of organisations that were reviewed in 2011. Unfortunately, the situation is still similar as they still face difficulties in terms of sustaining their work due to limited financial possibilities. For instance, SFINKSI - the umbrella organization for Egyptian organizations at the national level, established in 2006 still complaints about the lack of funding and is still using the office space of a non-Roma/Egyptian NGO.

From the interviews, it results that Amare Roma is the oldest organization from the group of Roma and Egyptian NGOs selected to be interviewed for this evaluation. This NGO was registered in 2001 but has been active since 1991 while all the rest have been established after 2000. It appeared to be a recurring feature for Roma NGOs that some of the most senior leaders were working together under one organization and then later went on separate ways.

Although almost all of them operate at the local level where they are based, they aim to expand their scope of work in other regions too. However, at this moment this is very much linked to partnership invitations and ad hoc initiatives. One of the organizations in Korca (Amare Roma) had established also a branch in Gjirokastra region and another one (Grate Qendistare) was opening a branch in Tirana with the support of a non-Roma organization. Few NGOs had office premises and in those cases it had been provided by local government structures – regional council, municipality or commune. Nearly all of them rely only on volunteers due to the lack of financial means. From the interviews, it resulted that the work of full time staff was only enabled as a result of on going project implementation. Additional

personnel were mobilised based on project needs.

The mission and objectives of the interviewed organizations were quite broad and they were implementing activities also beyond their main objectives, depending on projects and invitations for cooperation from partners. Newly established organizations and groups led by educated youngsters were also noted in all visited regions.

With regard to networking, Amaro Drom appeared to have activists and networks with several branches. In addition, several organizations and activists are also members of the working and/or technical groups at the respective local government structures. An interesting development that coincided to happen at the same time with the fieldwork of this assessment was the Soros initiative to support the Roma and Egyptian Communities through the establishment of a Federation for Roma and Egyptians. This newly established structure finalized its internal organization through a democratic process in March 2013 and was registered in the court.

## 2. Management and Financial Capacities

The limited financial resources were articulated even more loudly at the local level compared with the biggest organizations based in Tirana. The difficulties are multifaceted, such as lack of information on the organizations that launch calls for proposals targeting Roma and Egyptian communities, lack of capacities to draft acceptable proposals in line with the formats requested from the donors as well as limited organizational capacities to understand, maintain and provide a complete set of administrative documents. It is important to highlight that weak management and financial capacities are often the criteria that these organisations that do not adequately meet when competing for funds from calls for proposals. The unstable financial situation was reported to be the key factor hampering their performance during the last year.

While in Tirana it was more common to see the responsibility for drafting proposals mainly falling to the top management of the organizations, in the targeted regions this was not always the case. Generally their proposals were drafted with external the support of the majority community, friends and volunteers. There were cases when this support was provided by young generation of these communities, more qualified and with previous experience in

drafting proposals. In the cases of newly established organizations by promising young and educated community members, experience in drafting proposals varies and the need for training was articulated unanimously. In addition, drafting the proposals in English was another challenge for the organizations and again they were relying on external help. None of the organizations from all three visited regions appear to have sufficient capacities to draft project proposals and be informed where to look for funds. Furthermore, none of the organizations seemed to have a mid or long term programme as project funding leads their short-term programme and objectives. They refer to the statute of their organizations as a long-term programme with no ending date, while the long-term vision is simply non-existent in all organizations.

All organizations at these regions lack internal regulations for the institutional organization and functioning. Organizations stated that they do not keep regular annual budgets. This was due to the fact that some of the interviewed organizations were newly established (two Roma organizations in Fier that will cover Vlora as well and two in Pogradec) and had not received any funding yet whereas others suffer from irregular or absent funding. Older registered organizations declare their status as passive at the tax office. While a branch of Sfinksi, the Egyptian organization, based in Berat had not received any funding for years. When funding becomes available, finances are maintained either by the director or other internal staff.

During the last three years the main donor organizations that work with Roma community seem to be Terres de Homme, World Bank, Swiss Cooperation, UNDP, UNICEF, Soros, Vodafone and Roma Education Fund. When probed about access to EU funds, several difficulties were mentioned such as the format of application and their recognized weak management and financial capacities especially when competing with other well-established organizations. One of the organizations (Roma Education Association) in Pogradec had participated in the TACSO trainings regarding the latest calls for proposals under IPA and TACSO had facilitated them to enter in partnership with a non-Roma organization for one of the calls. However, the head of the organization seemed to be unclear about the form of partnership and the role of its organization.

Looking at financial management capacities, the maximum budget administered by these organizations is generally low for all organizations. Typically, as stated in the meetings, they often rely on funding related to the implementation of one single activity, but not a full project. The older organizations seemed to be more or less acquainted with the financial reporting to the different donors while the younger ones have no experience yet with donor reporting standards and procedures.

Only a couple of existing NGOs had some information on possible donors and institutions that have an interest to support organizations targeting Roma and Egyptian communities. However, they mostly rely on informal information (word of mouth) regarding new funding opportunities. Internet mailing groups was mentioned as a source of information by one of the newly established organizations in Fier, but others did not seem to be familiar with this. Organizations also lack a clear division of tasks and the staff is mobilised based on the project needs therefore a clear description of tasks is prepared based on the projects they implement. They have no staff and rely on volunteers when necessary, while the majority of the interviewed organizations argued that engaging internal resources and from their network when needed was not an issue. Monitoring and evaluation of the organizations' work is conducted on an ad hoc and activity basis. Board or other network meetings are used to discuss on the needs of the community and how they can address them.

### 3. Technical Capacities

Most of the organizations are working with children, youngsters and women as their main target groups. A couple of newly established organizations planed to target mainly the youth, but others stated that are open to adopt based on funds and projects. The main activities provided seem to be kinder garden and daily centres for children, psycho-social services for cases of domestic violence, vocational education training and child education, assistance with the labour market, higher education and awareness raising.

Based on the self-evaluation, most of the not believe that they have capacities to manage the services as they are not adequately staffed and rely on volunteers to implement their activities. However, it must be said that most of NGOs met during this assessment were



newly established NGOs that have not been able to test their capacities and performance yet.

As it was also the case, from the 2011 assessment most of the organizations provide similar services. Respondents stated that service provision is donor driven and this would depend very much on the funding. However, they did not seem to have a clear vision and future plans and short-term actions and engagements seemed to lead their work for the communities they represent. On a different note, the newly established organizations, in particular the ones led by the younger generation seem to be more eager in terms of reaching out for the needs of their community, but without any clear plan for fundraising their ambitions might be discouraged. In addition, some of the NGOs met were also branches of bigger organizations based in Tirana, like Amaro Drom and Sfinks. Amaro Drom seemed to be well staffed with activists at the selected regions and they all rely on activities delegated from their central office. Furthermore, they did not seem to have been able to implement their own projects.

While the Sfinks branch in Berat reported a poor performance and has not been able to implement any project in the last 3 years. There also seemed to be some leadership and representation issues concerning their central office in Tirana, as a result of internal problems.

#### 4. SWOT analysis

As it can be gathered, the findings lead to a list of problems that organizations are currently facing. They include:

1. Management capacities of the organization
2. Limited access to communication facilities (telephone/fax, internet etc.)
3. Limited capacities of the staff of the organization
4. Limited financial resources
5. Lack of cooperation with other non Roma/Egyptian communities
6. Limited cooperation between Roma/Egyptian NGOs

However, a SWOT analysis conducted provides a more comprehensive overview of the real challenges and opportunities ahead for the Roma and Egyptian NGOs. The table below captures the findings of the SWOT analysis.

<i>Strengths</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Direct linkages with communities they represent;</li> <li>✓ Knowledge of their needs and problematic;</li> <li>✓ Regional NGOs are often the implementers of activities in support of local communities.</li> <li>✓ Newly established NGOs led by educated young people</li> </ul>
<i>Weaknesses</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Better cooperation with local government structures</li> <li>✓ Lack of capacities for a sustainable community support by the NGOs</li> <li>✓ Limited information for available funding</li> <li>✓ Limited capacities to negotiate and partner with bigger and consolidated NGOs</li> <li>✓ Flexible working arrangements discourage qualified staff to stay with the same organization</li> <li>✓ Existence of traditional and conservative leadership</li> <li>✓ Fragmentation between NGOs and also among communities</li> </ul>
<i>Opportunities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Federation of Roma and Egyptian Organization has been recently established and represents an opportunity for improved coordination between organizations to serving better their communities</li> <li>✓ Profilization of services offered by NGOs is a good opportunity to ensure a better coverage and supply of services and introduce themselves towards integration of some services in the government network of social services and daily centres</li> <li>✓ Newly established organizations and young educated leaders might contribute the democratization of the general environment of Roma and Egyptian NGOs, as well as towards quality services and improved representation of the Roma and Egyptian rights.</li> </ul>
<i>Threats</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Donor driven interventions might not always lead the community to the right direction</li> <li>✓ Limited coordination among Roma and Egyptian NGOs</li> <li>✓ Limited negotiation skills to form successful partnerships with consolidated non Roma/Egyptian NGOs not only might continue to hinder their capacity strengthening in project implementation but also will limit their access to funding, in particular EC funding</li> <li>✓ Limited democracy and communication among Roma and Egyptian NGOs</li> <li>✓ Lack of a long term vision from the public institutions towards cooperation with Roma and Egyptian NGOs for reaching out the communities</li> <li>✓ Struggles towards survival and financial recourses might offset human rights from the core mission of the Roma and Egyptian communities</li> <li>✓ Limited cooperation among 'old' and 'new' leadership models might lead to perishing valuable resources (i.e. experience and knowledge of the community development and engagement versus visionary and inexperienced efforts, limited capacities of less educated and traditional leadership versus educated, highly motivated young leaders that might be discouraged and will eventually disconnect from the communities and the cause of human rights).</li> </ul>

## 5. Future prospects

Plans and priorities for the future have not always been clearly articulated by all organizations. Some of the newly established organizations were clearer about their activities, target groups while others offered a very broad description of general support to wide target groups and all areas with no clear plans. Arguably they want to maximise their chances of financing by offering a wide spectrum of services to a variety of target groups.

It is expected that establishment of new organizations by young and educated members of the community might change the general environment of the Roma and Egyptian NGOs. It was also noted that they had the ambition to influence and advocate over the traditional leadership for models of the civil society. This might also lead to a survival competition among them, one group being more skilled and open to learn and develop further their skills towards assisting better their communities and also improve organization management and fundraising, while “older/traditional” organizations have a limited degree of flexibility towards donor’s requests and criteria as well as other issues related to organizations’ capabilities. It remains to be seen what the positive impacts of the newly established organizations will be in this multidimensional environment. Keeping the focus on human rights and minority rights issues, which should be the main objective of their activities, seems to become increasingly difficult in this fragmented environment and stern competition for funding and survival. However, it is crucial to bridge the cooperation among these two generations of leaders and organizations in order to match their skills and experience and also not to ‘construct’ new problems in their environment. In addition, partnership among senior and new NGOs might help the new ones to access funding while working to establish the CVs of their organizations. The need for knowledge transfer and exchange of experience in working with communities between the two groups of organizations will need some facilitation. There is also the need for some recognition of the good work the positive impact that senior organizations have achieved.

## 6. Partnering and lobbying

The interviewers listed Amaro Drom, Roma Active Albania, Help for Children and Institute

for Democracy and Mediation as some of the main partners on the top of the donors that were mentioned above.

When asked to specify the types of relations with the central and local government most of the NGO representatives stated that they had very limited cooperation with the central government focusing mostly on specific community cases. Almost all of them had good cooperation with the local government units, as some of the organizations are members of the working and advisory groups at various levels of local governments (region or municipality). There was a perception that local governments seemed to pay more attention to them (Roma and Egyptian NGOs and respective communities) just before elections.

Representatives from the most consolidated organizations mentioned that local government officials are always invited in meetings with the community, as this is often a practice of their work in the areas that they operate. Some organizations enjoy better access to local government structures and a fruitful cooperation. However many issues need to be addressed to ensure the integration of this community require large budgets for investments in infrastructure, housing and a basket of free social services for Roma and all the population.

## 7. Role of activists

As already mentioned in other sections of the report, older generation of activists have a lower education attainment compared to the new generation. They were generally involved with the community centres, education and support to infrastructure projects. They have been involved by Roma Active Albania, World Vision and recently also with OSCE community action plans. Women activists also mentioned cooperation with Non Roma/Egyptian NGOs targeting women and girls. Whereas the younger activists admitted to have in focus also the employment issues even though they did not seem to have a clear plan/project on how they will achieve this and were sceptical about cooperation with the local structures.

Almost all activists stated that one of the problems the Roma and Egyptian NGOs are facing is the lack of organization and cooperation among them and the communities to be able to articulate their problems better and speak with one voice. The cooperation among the activists nationwide seems to be good though. In addition they see their role as activists better perceived from the communities as they have lost trust in the organizations that are

often perceived as one-man shows.

Activists do not see any benefit in joining any organization, as they do not offer any employment stability and they see these structures as more rigid. According to them, there is little internal democracy, reconfirming the fact that most of the NGOs are led by the so-called 'traditional leaders' with little education.

Furthermore, activists have played an important role in different case management situations for the community members in cooperation with other NGOs and local structures. However, they confirm the need for trainings in case management and ways to advocate for human rights, community development and partnership with different actors.

## 8. Training Needs

Meetings with the two organizations that delivered the trainings for Roma and Egyptian organizations following the assessment of 2011 were also conducted. The intention was to gather their perceptions on the level of interest of the participants on the trainings offered, difficulties faced and other aspects that would be useful for the next round of training following this assessment. In addition, meetings with few NGOs that had participated in the trainings and had received funding from the last call in the framework of the previous UNDP project took place. The findings from these meetings together with the needs assessment have been reflected in the draft Terms of Reference for building the capacities of Roma and Egyptian NGOs, annexed to this report.

It was confirmed by the trainers that the legal and fiscal framework was a topic of high interest for the participants, particularly expressed by the leaders of the organizations. While for others, drafting project proposals and how to communicate with different actors were selected as some of the crucial topics. The lack of qualified staff to drafting the project reports was another observation noted and trainers also noted the lack of cooperation from the NGOs at the grassroots level, particularly evident at the NGOs coming from other regions. There is a need for networking and better coordination among the NGOs, especially as it was noted that several NGOs were implementing similar activities.

The topic of strategic planning was among the most difficult one for the training participants, as despite the good delivery by the trainers, it needs to be further developed and linked with financial management and advocacy sessions. Coaching was also mentioned as a

positive training topic and that would be useful to replicate as it provided a concrete and more practical approach to learning.

The Roma and Egyptian NGOs provide a fragmented picture characterized by traditional leaders and the recent strengthening of the new generation. However, the representation and articulation of the needs and challenges will not have the expected impact if done in a fragmented manner. The ability to speak in one voice was raised. Diversity would be the basis of internal democracy of community representation. They admit that they have to work together in a more democratic mentality so they can speak in one voice and be able to conduct joint advocacy and lobbying by articulating better community needs and issues. One solution can be the conditionality for partnerships between NGOs (i.e. traditional & young).

It is interesting to note that the EU project TACSO has very limited communication and cooperation with NGOs from the community. From 150 NJGOs in TACSOs database – about 12 are Roma and Egyptian. NGOs and in their trainings there have been only 4 NGOs participating from these communities (1 from Durres, 2 from Korca and 1 from Lezha). Trainings need to address issues of inequality, segregation and discrimination specific to the Roma with the intention to bring Roma-related issues up to the political agenda - currently overwhelmingly absent.

At the local level, most projects have come through their headquarters, as it is the case of Amaro Drom, or through standalone activities commissioned by local authorities or as part of projects implemented by other organizations. For the latter, it is interesting to note that no partnership or legal agreement of any kind was signed to regulate these relations – just informal agreements among leaders.

Some of the NGOs have never drafted any project proposal. This was the case in Berat. While the Amaro Drom branch in Berat seemed to have been successful also in securing offices for their organization at the premises of the Regional Education Directorate. They had 3 rooms there at their disposition – free of charge. The organizational secretary seemed to be the key person in charge in this organization. He was young and had received a number of trainings and he was delivering trainings and job counselling for the young

Roma and Egyptians in the framework of the projects they have been implementing for VET programmes. This was one of the best practices of cooperation between two generations where the leader, seemed to be more open and had left more space for this skilled young Roma to also advance his skills. This was the only organization in Berat that was currently implementing projects targeting VET and employment, financed by Swiss Contact. While, they were also implementing a five year project with Roma Educational Found offering supplementary classes to children over 7 years old, approximately about 30 hours of teaching per month. This project will end in January 2014.

Access to health services is identified as a problem from the community. In order to have access they must possess the health booklet, which is quite impossible, as they need to be registered as unemployed and be in receipt of Ndihma Ekonomike.

In this respect training for this purpose would be a welcome topic focusing on understanding the procedures for access to public services through a human rights based approach. Community development and representation in view of Albania's human rights strategic framework accompanied by rights and obligations would be a complementing topic. In addition some detailed information about funding opportunities together with a list of donor organisations' websites would be helpful.<sup>10</sup>

The following topics as the most important where they would need support and assistance:

1. Institutional development and capacity building of the organization.
2. Training on fiscal framework and reporting
3. Fundraising and information about donors
4. Project management and implementation, including reporting (narrative and financial)
5. Communication (including on drafting invitation letters, statements etc).
6. Partnering with different actors (public/non public).
7. Information on public institutions responsible for protection of minority rights
8. Training programmes at the national and inter-regional level designed for activists.
9. Building coalitions for the protection minority rights
10. Preparing for partnerships when applying in consortium
11. Trainings on Human Rights and community case management

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<sup>10</sup> In Annex III is presented a brief on a compendium of good practice of EU funded projects for Roma. Prepared by Brian Harvey in a study commissioned by the Open Society Institute 2010

The need to train NGOs and activists on human rights issues has become apparent, as they need to be trained to present the problems of their communities and try to instil the spirit of cooperation among organisations. They need to prepare concrete advocacy and lobbying plans.

Understanding and getting to work with institutions and forge a sense of partnership with local authorities and business organisations is also a prerogative of success. Trainings should also be provided in a parallel way for the local government units so they can understand the community issues and needs and be able to support them better.

A clear profiling of organisations is necessary as those more experienced and with more capacities can create a service-provider profile for the community. The need for more educated young members of the community has been articulated broadly in the interviews, as they would be able to prepare thematic briefs on the community issues. These young people have to work with all organisations the cooperation with traditional leaders should be mandatory. Any capacity development outlook should aim to keep these young resourceful individuals close to the community as they are the ones who would best collect and represent the community needs in a commanding way with great potential for success. Beyond the traditional training provision approach, scholarships for community members can be awarded based on an articulated priority outlook in support of the community. They can be linked to the students' community engagement by working as activists in an organization that offers services to the community. This can be taken even further in some sort of a practice/internship arrangement.



## V. CONCLUSIONS

The long term and sustainable capacities of Roma and Egyptian NGOs have to be developed to bridge better the needs of the communities they represent with the support they can provide. As such there is a need to go beyond issues of fundraising that tends to have a narrow and shortsighted character. Actually, fundraising as it is the case in the civil society organisations in Albania is becoming a goal per se and is somehow compromising their role and work “for the public benefit”. The truth of the matter is that there is a mutual complicity in this respect that evolves into a vicious circle. As available funds are shrinking, NGOs have no other option to rely on calls for proposals that do not always respond directly to the community, which on the other hand results into an ever-changing scope and profile of the NGOs so they can survive by being flexible to the requirements of various donors and calls. This lack of sustained and targeted capacities leads to a lack of focus and results in uncertainty. Coupled with the limited engagement and cooperating role of governmental structures, particularly at the local level, it results in an ineffective advocacy and little impact. For instance, the reform of social services that is currently underway should benefit from the engagement of Roma and Egyptian NGOs that in cooperation with local authorities can clarify their roles and profile their services so they can respond better to the needs of their respective communities leading to a better coverage and resultative reform. This may prove a useful entry point as community representatives admit of being excluded from decision-making processes.

Interviews point out the need for a new approach for the financial and human resources frameworks and settings with which Roma and Egyptian NGOs work in order to better implement high-impact projects. Their modus operandi needs to better reflect the community needs as well as forge a functional partnership with local authorities.

Joint advocacy campaigns can be initiated where several Roma and Egyptian NGOs get together advocating their cause and raising awareness about their community needs. The establishment of the Federation of Roma and Egyptian NGOs is a welcome development in this respect. Indeed, networking and building coalition has to be encouraged through

training, exchanges, and joint activities and perhaps a national Roma and Egyptian annual convention aiming to celebrate and build on shared values.

Support to civic awareness and Roma mobilization will have to go beyond ad hoc participating mechanisms. Establishment of functional mechanisms for Roma NGO participation and representation in decision making can take place by training Roma NGO representatives to take active part in the implementation and monitoring of regional and national strategies as well as local and national budgeting hearings.

Furthermore, the introduction of facilitating fiscal policies and support programmes that can target the Roma and Egyptian communities such as support to Roma entrepreneurship with reduced taxes, professional trainings and the targeted use of housing fund is something that comes as a recommendation from this assessment.

## VI. WORKS CITED

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# Annexes

## ANNEX 1: List of interviews of NGOs and activists in the targeted regions

### List of Activists

1	Flora Lloshi	R	Community activist	Llakatund/Vlore
2	Sokol Avdiraj	R	Community activist	Llakatund/Vlore
3	Vito Gashi	R	Community activist	Llakatund/Vlore
4	Gentjan Latifi	R	Community activist	Llakatund/Vlore
5	Lindita Hamezaj	R	Community activist	Akerni/Vlore
6	Fatmira Mile	R	Community activist	Akerni/Vlore
7	Kujtime Kazanxhi	R	Community activist	Akerni/Vlore
8	Eni Mile	R	Community activist	Akerni/Vlore
9	Besmir Dalipi	R	Roma language instructor	Berat
10	Zegjine Lika	E	Social services specialist, Berat Municipality	Berat
11	Alime Avdiu	R	Community activist	Morave
12	Klodian Laze	R	Amaro Drom Union Secetry/Activist	Kucove
13	Arben Rushiti	R	Activist/OSCE/RAA and part of R&E young activists	Pogradec
14	Miranda Fejzo	R	Rromani Baxt	Korce
15	Florjan Karafili	R	Grupi keshellimor	Korce
16	Matilda Terolli	R	"Brezi yne per komunitetin" (Our generation for the community)	Korce
17	Erion Jakupi	R	Roma Active Albania	Korce

## List of NGOs

1	Fatos Koci	R	Zeri Rom/Voice of Roma Albania	Fier/Vlore
2	Luljeta Kazanxhiu	R	Gruaja Rome per Zhvillim/Roma Woman for Development	Fier/Vlore
3	Laver Myrteli	R	Romet e Bashkuar/Roma United	Berat
4	Ahmet Sinanaj	R	Amarodrom	Kucove/Berat
5	Isa Kapinova	E	Sfinks	Berat
6	Llazar Palla	R	Ndihme per Femijet/Help for Children	Berat
7	Arjan Kamberi	R	Jetimet ne focus/Orphan children in focus	Berat
8	Ilir Gjoni	R	Shoqata Rome per Arsim/Roma Education Association	Pogradec
9	Agron Lamce	E	Vllazeria Egjyptiane/Egyptian Brotherhood	Starove/Pogradec
10	Arben Kosturi	R	Disutni Albania	Korce
11	Donika Rapushi	R	Amaro Drom	Korce
12	Etleva Tare	E	Qendistaret/ Embroidery	Korce
13	Avni Kallo	R	Amare Roma	Korce
14	Resul Duro	R	Kabaja	Korce
15	Vasilika Rushiti	R	Gruaja Rome ERDELEZI/Roma Woman ERDELEZI	Pogradec
16	Dylber Muhaxhiri	R	Romet per Integrim/Roma for Integration	Pogradec
17	Lumturie Ali		CERA Realiteti i Romeve ne Shqiperi/CERA Roma Reality in	Pogradec

## ANNEX 2: Terms of Reference for a training programme for Roma and Egyptian NGOs

### Terms of references (Draft)

### Development and delivery of a training programme for Roma and Egyptian NGOs and Activists in Berat, Korca and Vlora

#### I. Background

Supporting the Social Inclusion of Roma and Egyptian Communities (SSIREC) project funded through a contribution agreement with European Commission aims to further improve the social inclusion of most vulnerable communities consisting of Roma and Egyptians in Albania, with focus in the regions of Berat, Korça, and Vlora. This is expected to be achieved through the improvement of living conditions of R&E communities through Community Upgrading Projects (CUP), capacity building activities aimed to Roma & Egyptian CSOs, support measures targeting Roma & Egyptian entrepreneurs, and assistance to the Roma Technical Secretariat of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. All of the above will be supported by a comprehensive communication and visibility strategic plan. The methodology selected is based on hands-on support to active participation in community activities and businesses required and selected by the beneficiaries.

The expected project results include the strengthening the capacities of Roma and Egyptian civil society to combat discrimination and improve their successful participation in financial support schemes. In addition the project aims to raise the awareness of R&E community members about policies, strategies and instruments for their social inclusion as well as advocate and promote their acceptance and integration in the mainstream society. The project pays particular attention to building partnerships with non Roma/Egyptian NGOS in preparing and implementing community development projects.

Roma and Egyptian Civil Society involve several non-profit organizations, some of which

have been operating for a long time, and others have been established recently. Most of the organizations are in Tirana and have their branches and activists in other regions. The activities implemented by Roma and Egyptian organizations have a wide range of fields such as awareness raising in the area of health, education, employment services, child protection, youth participation and empowerment, etc.

## II. Capacity Assessment

A capacity and training assessment was conducted for local Roma and Egyptian NGOs and activists in the three target regions, to pave the road for preparing and delivering relevant training programmes and fostering cooperation and partnership with non-Roma/Egyptian NGOs and local communities.

This needs assessment is a follow up to the one that took place in 2011 and that was complemented with a well received training programme. Practical exercises helped participants get a better understanding of running a NGO finance system and obligations with Albanian laws. The feedback pointed out that sharing of experiences seemed to help establish some positive energy among participants. Some suggestions for future trainings included how to set up an organization and employment procedures as well as planning for service delivery. Project planning and management was another topic suggested while trainings on human rights for Roma and Egyptian communities were also deemed as important. Financial management and administration was suggested to be in the focus for future coaching, especially regarding financial procedures, accounting and reporting. Fundraising was reconfirmed as important combining theory with practical exercises whereas further training on advocacy and lobbying would be needed focus on a real case with a concrete process and strategy.

This feedback is supported by the findings from interviews and focus groups. The recently completed assessment points out that the long term and sustainable capacities of Roma and Egyptian NGOs have to be developed to bridge better the needs of the communities they represent with the support they can provide. This lack of sustained and targeted capacities leads to a lack of focus and results in uncertainty. Coupled with the limited

engagement and cooperating role of governmental structures, particularly at the local level, it results in an ineffective advocacy and little impact. Interviews point out the need for a new approach for the financial and human resources frameworks and settings with which Roma and Egyptian NGOs work in order to better implement high-impact projects. Their modus operandi needs to better reflect the community needs as well as forge a functional partnership with local authorities.

Joint advocacy campaigns can be initiated where several Roma and Egyptian NGOs get together advocating their cause and raising awareness about their community needs. The establishment of the Federation of Roma and Egyptian NGOs is a welcome development in this respect and may provide a good entry point for capacity development. Support to civic awareness and Roma mobilization will have to go beyond ad hoc participating mechanisms. Establishment of functional mechanisms for Roma NGO participation and representation in decision making can take place by training Roma NGO representatives to take active part in the implementation and monitoring of regional and national strategies as well as local and national budgeting hearings. Attention has to be paid also to the introduction of facilitating fiscal policies and support programmes that can target the Roma and Egyptian communities such as support to Roma entrepreneurship with reduced taxes, professional trainings and the targeted use of housing fund is something that comes as a recommendation from this assessment.

The following topics were identified as the most important where they would need support and assistance:

- Institutional development and capacity building of the organization.
- Training on fiscal framework and reporting
- Fundraising and information about donors
- Project management and implementation, including reporting (narrative and financial)
- Communications (including on drafting invitation letters, statements etc).
- Partnering with different actors (public/non public).
- Information on public institutions responsible for protection of minority rights
- Training programmes at the national and inter-regional level designed for activists.



- Building coalitions for the protection minority rights
- Preparing for partnerships when applying in consortium
- Trainings on Human Rights and community case management

### III. Objective

The purpose is to recruit a professional company / NGO to work on design and implementation of a capacity development programme for Roma and Egyptian NGOs in the regions of Berat, Korca and Vlora. The key target group for capacity development support will be representatives – leaders, staff and volunteers as well as community activists from the Roma and Egyptian NGOs in these regions.

The overall goal of work is to equip Roma and Egyptian NGOs with a set of skills and competences as identified in the capacity assessment exercise and that they can use in their work in the promotion, advocacy, policy development and service provision for the Roma and Egyptian communities. This consultancy has a two-fold objective:

- # To design training curricula and deliver trainings on a set of issues identified from a needs assessment report;
- # Create opportunities for NGOs to interact by, for example, convening meetings, organizing exchange visits (as agreed with UNDP) in order to promote cooperation, sharing of resources and collaborative promote cooperation, sharing of resources and collaborative action.

### IV. Scope of work

Under the guidance of UNDP SSIREC Programme Manager the company / NGO will conduct and be responsible for the following main activities:

- o Liaise and ensure constant communication/coordination with UNDP project team regarding the all aspects of the assignment;
- o Prepare a work plan with time-table for this assignment and design a specialized

training curricula focusing on the following topics and deliver trainings:

- o Prepare trainings agenda and lead the delivery of trainings (having presenter/trainer/facilitator role);
- o Prepare a full report on the training delivery together with the modules and details on participants as well as training feedback.

## V. Methodology

The consultancy will be delivered in two main phases:

- Phase one will prepare the ground for the training sessions by discussing and agreeing with UNDP about the exact training topics that will be covered and the scope of coaching and mentoring.
- Phase two will consist in the logistic arrangement for the training sessions, development of training modules and identification of training audiences/target participants. During this phase trainings will be delivered following a prior agreement with UNDP about the schedule.
- Phase three will consist in the de-briefing with the UNDP project and final reporting on the training delivery.

## VI. Expected outputs

Under the supervision and guidance of the UNDP Programme Manager, the company / NGO is expected to deliver the following results:

- i) Prepare an inception report outlining the detailed plan of activities for the preparation and delivering the training and present it for approval by UNDP;
- ii) Deliver a number (to be defined by UNDP in accordance with budget provisions) of trainings:
- iii) Design and conduct capacity building workshops, seminars and training programmes to strengthen NGO capabilities for effective contribution, at both operational and

- policy levels.
- iv) Prepare reports for each conducted training prepared, summarizing all relevant information, such as participants structure, participants feedback on delivered training, discussion points, comments, suggestions, including entire any tailored training materials as annex to the report;
  - v) Development and production of print and electronic training materials as agreed with UNDP.
  - vi) Develop, administer with the purpose to then hand-over a manual of training modules for future use. Trainers can use the manual as reference material when conducting training programmes for Roma and Egyptian NGOs
  - vii) A final report on all activities undertaken under this assignment prepared, highlighting main results achieved and proposed recommendations in the area of capacity development for Roma and Egyptian NGOs.

## VII. Suggested Training Topics

The trainings are suggested to take place in the following sets. As it can be noticed some of them are follow up training to those that have already benefited from the first round.

	Possible Themes	No of days
<b>Human Rights/Access to services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding of the concepts, mechanisms and practices of human rights, anti-discrimination (particularly, in relation to multiple discrimination)</li> <li>• Ways to follow up human rights abuses of Roma and Egyptian Communities</li> <li>• Networking and cooperation with public/non public institutions to follow up human rights abuse cases</li> <li>• Access to services and social care</li> <li>• Support better access of the community – offering concrete cases management examples on different areas (access to health care, social assistance, social care, education etc)</li> </ul> <p><i>(NGOs working on social assistance and service providers, peer educators in Roma and Egyptian communities and activists)</i></p>	1-2 days

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<p><b>Human rights trainings for Roma Youth Activists</b></p>	<p>Human rights trainings for Roma activists working to developing Roma communities' rights on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approaches of human rights education, active youth participation and intercultural dialogue;</li> <li>• Project management in youth work, and networking with Roma youth organisations and other relevant institutions and stakeholders on the local and European level;</li> <li>• Advocate for youth issues in/outside the Roma communities;</li> <li>• Communication skills, namely active listening, public speaking, communication with different publics, ability to formulate a problem and communicate it;</li> <li>• Leadership skills, namely the capacity to organise and mobilise young people, to inspire actions against discrimination and facilitate young people to take action against discrimination in a participatory way.</li> </ul>	<p>1day/s</p>
<p><b>NGO Management (follow up)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NGO management and role and responsibilities</li> <li>• Laws governing the work of NGOs</li> <li>• Sustaining inclusive values within the organization</li> <li>• Models for organizational development</li> <li>• Cooperation with different stakeholders and lobbying</li> </ul> <p><i>(In particular of for the newly established NGOs)</i></p>	<p>1day/s</p>
<p><b>Strategic Planning (follow up)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define participatory planning steps</li> <li>• Identifying funding opportunities and get to know the funding agencies</li> <li>• Mapping constituents' needs and how to engage them</li> </ul> <p><i>(Training and practical examples working on development real cases)</i></p>	<p>2 day/s</p>
<p><b>Management Processes (follow up)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Managerial skills</li> <li>• Basic administrative, communication, and organizational skills</li> <li>• Organizational development and restructuring</li> <li>• Documentation and reporting skills</li> </ul> <p><i>(In particular of interest for the newly established NGOs)</i></p>	<p>1 day</p>
<p><b>Human Resources (follow up)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteerism: what is volunteerism and how to recruit, retain and motivate volunteers.</li> <li>• Working with young activists</li> <li>• Human resource and performance management</li> <li>• Employment procedures/staff and consultants contracts (rights and obligations)</li> </ul> <p><i>(In particular of interest for the newly established NGOs)</i></p>	<p>½ day</p>

<b>Financial Resources and Administration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial accounts and taxation system for NGOs –Albanian Legislation and regulations</li> <li>• Basic financial and accounting practices</li> <li>• Annual budgeting, financial planning and management</li> <li>• Financial reporting and audit.</li> </ul> <p><i>( Training and hands on support, in particular for newly established NGOs)</i></p>	1 days
<b>Fundraising</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing a financial/fundraising strategy</li> <li>• Accessing different kind of funds and preparing for application</li> <li>• Developing and maintaining stakeholder relationships</li> </ul> <p><i>(hands on experience, introduce the possible donor organizations, and how to keep informed about new calls for proposals; possibly work using a laptop connected to internet and navigate with them)</i></p>	1 day
<b>Project Cycle and Performance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specialisation of the NGOs in working with people with special needs, children’s rights, primary health care</li> <li>• Project design and proposal writing:</li> </ul> <p><i>Identification of needs and prioritization; Project design and Project Budget; Project implementation; Project management; Monitoring and evaluation and Reporting</i></p>	2 days
<b>Cooperation and Networking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Networking, creating long and short term partnerships and coalitions, including negotiation skills when applying in partnerships</li> <li>• Creating communication bridges between NGOs and Funding agencies, improving visibility</li> <li>• Working with public institutions (national and local level)</li> </ul>	½ day
<b>Advocacy and lobbying</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Networking for impact</li> <li>• Actors, Issues, and Opportunities- assessing the policy environment</li> <li>• Mobilizing for Action - advocacy strategy</li> </ul>	2 days
<b>Community Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with the targeted communities, tips and techniques</li> <li>• Identifying needs and strategies to address</li> </ul>	1 day

## VIII. Timeframe

Activities	Weeks														
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
Phase 1 – Inception report and preparatory work	x	x	x												
Phase 2 – Preparation of modules and delivery of training – Facilitation of the workshops, monitoring and reporting of the training				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			
De-briefing and Drafting of Final Report – handover of training materials to UNDP													x	x	

### ANNEX 3. Summary of key findings from expert’s report on: Making the Most of EU Funds

#### Making the Most of EU Funds<sup>11</sup>

**A compendium of good practice of EU funded projects for Roma, by Brian Harvey**

**Study commissioned by the Open Society Institute 2010**

The purpose of this report was to provide a good practice compendium of EU-funded Roma projects and others working with minority ethnic groups; and to address the programmatic issues arising.

Good practice examples were identified and described, drawing on twelve programmes or funding instruments: EQUAL, CARDS, culture, social exclusion, anti-discrimination, health, Leonardo, both structural funds, PHARE and the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights. Most examples come from the new member states (principally Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Romania and Hungary) and the neighbouring states (western Balkans).

<sup>11</sup> Accessible at: <http://www.romadecade.org/files/ftp/Publications/Harvey%20-%20Making%20the%20Most.pdf>

A number of evaluations have been done of EU-funding instruments for Roma people, principally in the new member states. These were consistent in identifying a number of common problems: many projects were top-down, isolated interventions lacking the proper participation of Roma communities.

Complex applications procedures and subsequent operational controls constituted high entry and continuation barriers to community development organizations. Funding was frequently on an insufficient scale to be impactful, while projects were too widely spread, of too short duration, lacking in sustainability, mono-dimensional, lacking connexions to government policies and institutional structures. Rushed and inadequate planning were followed by poor execution. Evaluations were critical of the lack of strategic focus of projects, the failure to tackle 'hard' issues like discrimination and insufficient evaluation and dissemination.

From this, it was possible to develop a model of good practice: projects characterized by adequate preparation, Roma community stakeholders, a bottom-up approach, empowerment, partnership, multidimensionality, a thematic policy focus, institutional linkages, evaluation, dissemination strategies, addressing root causes, a rights-based approach and dealing with 'hard' political issues.

The over-riding lesson arising from this is the need to improve programme design so as to promote good practice projects. Regrettably, no mechanisms appear to be in place to absorb the critical comments raised by evaluations nor to act upon them across the series of EU programmes which assist the Roma community. But there are a number of ways in which independent funders can compensate for the specific shortcomings of EU programmes, or more positively, support the efforts of Roma organizations to influence programme design.

## Good practice and bad practice

From both the good practice examples and the analysis provided in this report, it is possible to identify the manner in which good practice examples can be developed as below:

<b>Good practice</b>	<b>Bad practice</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adequate preparation</li> <li>• Roma community stakeholders</li> <li>• Bottom-up approach, empowerment</li> <li>• Partnership</li> <li>• Multidimensionality</li> <li>• Policy, thematic focus</li> <li>• Institutional linkages</li> <li>• Evaluation</li> <li>• Dissemination strategies</li> <li>• Transnationality</li> <li>• Innovation</li> <li>• Address root causes</li> <li>• Dealing with 'harder' political issues</li> <li>• Rights-based approach</li> <li>• Legacy</li> <li>• Leadership, capacity development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rushed preparation to meet deadlines</li> <li>• Absence of, or only token consultation</li> <li>• Top-down approach</li> <li>• Lack of statutory - NGO mixture</li> <li>• Monodimensionality</li> <li>• Lack of policy dimension</li> <li>• Absence of connexions to government</li> <li>• Evaluation not carried out</li> <li>• Dissemination not a priority</li> <li>• Isolation from outside world</li> <li>• Absence of new thinking</li> <li>• Addresses symptom of problem only</li> <li>• Addressing only 'soft' social issues</li> <li>• Lack of rights focus</li> <li>• No attempt to leave legacy</li> <li>• No leadership, capacity development</li> </ul>



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Prepared by:  
Elira Jorgoni  
For  
UNDP ALBANIA

Tirana, March 2013







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