

**FINAL EVALUATION REPORT OF
THE UN JOINT PROGRAMME
“EMPOWERING VULNERABLE LOCAL
COMMUNITIES IN ALBANIA”**

NOVEMBER 2013

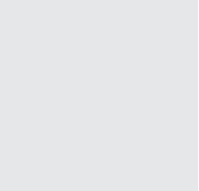
Acknowledgements

This Final Evaluation Report has been directly informed by the opinions and insights of 33 persons including central and local level government officials, representatives of civil society organizations, CBO members and leaders, direct beneficiaries, partners and representatives of international organizations including UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA. The Evaluator is indebted to all of these persons for dedicating their valuable time to contribute to the evaluation process.

The Evaluator would like to express her deep appreciation to UNDP, in particular the Cluster Manager Entela Lako, Programme Manager Anila Shehu and Local Development Coordinators Bledina Bushi, Klodiana Tosuni and Valbona Dervishi, who devoted extensive time to share their valuable knowledge, experience and frank reflections about the implementation of the program and provided extensive support during field visits in Durres, Fier and Tirana.

Without the support and participation of all those involved in the consultation process, this Report would not have been possible. The Evaluator hopes that this report will be useful for UN agencies and program stakeholders in highlighting the important results that have been achieved and in identifying ways for UN agencies to further strengthen support for the vulnerable communities social inclusion programming in the future.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

Empowering the Vulnerable Local Communities is a Joint Program (JP-EVLC) developed in the framework One UN Program in Albania aiming to improve the human security and access to rights and social services of vulnerable Roma and Egyptian minorities, particularly of women and children.

It is implemented during the period July 2010-December 2013 by UNDP, the lead agency responsible for the overall program coordination, management and implementation, UNICEF and UNFPA in close partnership with UNHCR and UNV.

JP EVLC is funded by UN Trust Fund for Human Security with a total budget of 2,749,600.48 USD. The key governmental partners are the MOLSAEO, with the focal point being Technical Secretariat at central level and regional and local authorities in the regions of Tirana, Durres, Fier and Elbasan, which along with the vulnerable communities and beyond living in these areas are the main beneficiaries of JP interventions.

JP EVLC overall goal is achieved through implementation of a series of activities:

1. *Supporting participation of vulnerable communities in local decision-making* - through identification of priorities and preparation of Community Development Plans, implementation of community upgrading projects in partnership with local governments, strengthening capacities and cooperation between Roma and Egyptian NGOs and their respective communities.
2. *Enabling vulnerable communities to access their rights and public services* – through civil registration, community policing, establishing and strengthening a network of Roma Mediators in areas of health, education, and child protection, and facilitating vocational training and employment.
3. *Promoting policies and institutional strengthening for social inclusion of vulnerable communities* – through capacity building and assistance to local and central government institutions and capacity building and partnership strengthening for Roma and Egyptian NGOs.

UNDP, prior to closure of the JP EVLC activities, commissioned in October 2013 its final evaluation *to assess the process, effectiveness, impact, relevance and sustainability of its interventions with regard to enhancing Roma and Egyptian communities' participation in local decision-making, accessing their rights and social/public services as well as to the institutional strengthening of social inclusion.*

Methodology

The evaluation methodology is consultative and participatory in its approach by ensuring participation, engagement and inputs of 33 key project beneficiaries, relevant stakeholders and partners involved in and affected by the implementation of the project including women and men from municipal and rural areas. The main data collection methods are: (i) comprehensive documentation review, (ii) semi-structured key informant interviews with primary and secondary stakeholders, (iii) focus group discussions (where 2 or more respondents were involved) (iv) field visits and (v) observations.

Evaluation took place during the period October 2013-November 2013 and this report represents the findings of the independent evaluation conducted by an external evaluator.

KEY FINDINGS

1. Relevance

It is assessed that JP is highly relevant with national strategic objectives and priorities defined in the inter-sectorial Strategy for Improving Roma Living Conditions (2003) and its Action Plan (2009), Roma Decade National Action Plan (2009). There is evidence that JP has responded to address identified institutional capacity gaps to operationalize and implement the strategic legal framework in place on protection of vulnerable communities in Albania.

JP is fully aligned with UN strategic goal to enhance development results and impact by capitalizing on UN agencies comparative advantage in implementing One UN programme 2006-2010 particularly outcome 2 “on greater inclusive participation in public policy and decision-making,” where Roma and marginalized groups are selected a priority area of joint collaboration under One UN Programme.

JP is quite relevant to respond to vulnerable community needs identified through reliable evidence based research conducted by World Bank, UNDP, UNICEF prior to program design. Community needs were validated with additional research in the course of the program as well as through multi-stakeholder consultation with UN agencies, MOLSAEO, local governments and experts on Roma issues as well as Roma and Egyptian CSOs.

2. Effectiveness

Overall, It is assessed that JP intended activities and outputs have been successfully delivered, despite some delays due to slow start up phase of JP, thus making a significant contribution to the achievement of JP specific objectives and overall goal to improve the human security and access to rights and social services of vulnerable Roma and Egyptian minorities, particularly of women and children.

There is strong evidence that JP, through establishment of 13 functional CBOs, has provided a successful participatory community development model at local level through engagement of vulnerable communities in identifying and agreeing their development

needs and priorities in consultation with local governments. As a result, 20 development priorities packaged into 11 infrastructure upgrading projects have directly contributed to improvement of living conditions of beneficiary vulnerable communities and beyond and provision of social services (health care and pre-school education) in the new or rehabilitated premises.

Access to rights has been facilitated through resolution of over 1703 concrete civil registration cases (administrative and legal), adoption of three legal acts to facilitate the civic registration for Roma and Egyptians as well as training of relevant authorities in civic registration procedures. As a result, social and public services such as health care, employment services, economic aid, access to pension schemes etc. have become more accessible by a number of vulnerable Roma and Egyptian individuals. Training of R/E CSOs in civic registration and their field involvement played a significant role in this direction. JP activities in establishing a network of community policing and health mediators, as well as provision of child protection services through CPUs and multi-purpose center, pre-school education services, early child development counseling and support services and vocational training have contributed in bringing services closer to the needs of vulnerable communities.

JP strengthened the institutional capacities at central and local level to implement and monitor policies targeting vulnerable ethnic communities through development of internet-based reporting and monitoring system of National Action Plan (NAP) on Roma Decade, capacity building of over 150 officials at central and local level in partnership with TIPA on data collection and data entry into the monitoring system as well as setting up functional Regional Committees on Planning and Assessing Social Needs and establishment of Roma Sub-Technical Committees as part of them to review progress and implementation of commitments on NAP on Roma Decade at local and regional level.

3. Efficiency

It is assessed that the management of JP funds has been quite efficient. It has used its financial and human resources strategically and provided good value for money by supporting implementation of a multitude of activities addressing realistic needs and capacity gaps identified during JP design and inception phase through research studies and consultation with stakeholders.

With a total budget of \$ 2,749.600.40, JP provided sustained technical support to a diverse group of stakeholders at central and local level over a three year period. Impressive results have been achieved with strategic use of resources in the amount of 60% of total budget in activities directly benefiting vulnerable communities by supporting participatory community planning and development and access to rights and social and public services, which have led to improved living conditions of vulnerable communities and enabled them to access civil rights and social and public services. It should be noted that in most cases the number of direct beneficiaries of JP interventions is higher than the planned one in the programme document for the same allocated budget.

Competitive bidding procedures for services, matching funding and in-kind contribution for infrastructure projects from LGUs, voluntary work from communities and reliance on highly qualified, motivated and multi-tasking staff have enhanced the efficiency use of resources. Organization of activities in-situ relying on community spaces and voluntary

work from communities and their contribution through self-help activities has been an added value in efficiently implementing many activities.

4. Impact

Overall, it is assessed that JP has made significant positive changes quite tangible and visible at individual, community and institutional level.

Individuals, mainly young women and men, display and articulate a shift in mentality from self perception as a victim of mainstream society to self-perception as an actor of change in partnership with mainstream society institutions and other stakeholders.

Community members acknowledge positive changes in their living conditions through implementation of infrastructure projects as well as improvement in their social life, social interaction and network, community cohesion and cooperation through participation in JP activities like information campaigns and discussions on many social issues, trainings, cultural shows, exchange visits among communities, self help activities and voluntary work.

Vulnerable communities, through JP, have experienced, witnessed been part of a change model that serves as a benchmark for their development and social inclusion in the future and are aware that although they have a long way to go to break their poverty and social exclusion cycle, their participation and cooperation with mainstream society institutions is fundamental.

JP contributed to recognition by governmental institutions at central and local level of communities in search of security and development and brought their social and development issues on their decision-making and policy-making agenda contributing thus to sustainable improvement of these communities' situation and supporting elimination of systemic causes of exclusion. It also strengthened their institutional capacities to implement and monitor policies targeting vulnerable ethnic communities as well as provide minority friendly services particularly in the areas of health, education and employment. JP has contributed to strengthening the capacities of R/E CSOs through their engagement in activities in resolving concrete community issues enabling them to build stronger connections with their communities and better position them to serve and assist their communities in the future.

It is assessed that the interventions of UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA cannot be seen and evaluated as standalone interventions, but rather as complementary in pooling resources, skills, knowledge and expertise to maximize the benefit and impact of their interventions on targeted beneficiaries and stakeholders.

5. Sustainability

Overall, it is assessed that JP has succeeded to a large extent to ensure sustainability of achieved results.

Involvement, consultation and contribution of multiple stakeholders representing central and local government institutions, vulnerable communities, R/E CSOs and other donor

organizations working with vulnerable communities in all phases of JP programme design and implementation have ensured ownership of results.

It should be noted that the sustainability of results at community level is rated quite high. Knowledge, information and capacities built at community level through CBOs and the mediators along with the collective awareness on human rights has not only created a collective awareness on social inclusion, but has generated a sustained collective demand for it along with established work practices how to achieve it.

Governmental institutions have been quite responsive to JP's interventions and recommendations which particularly have led to an enabling policy framework through the adoption of three legal acts which facilitate civil registration for vulnerable communities and access to public and social services.

Development of web-based reporting and monitoring system of NAP on Roma Decade for Roma Technical Secretariat at central level and the setting up of functional Roma Sub-Technical Committees as part of Regional Committees on Planning and Assessing Social Needs at regional level enable mainstreaming the Roma and Egyptian issues into the development programs of local governments.

The main challenge to sustainability of results is assessed capacity retention in public institutions at central and local level particularly in the latter. Staff turnover at local level due to local elections in May 2011 have caused loss of capacities which have hindered the operationalisation of web-based monitoring and reporting of NAP for Roma Decade at local level. It is estimated that 50% of trained local officials in data collection and data feeding into the web-based system have been replaced.

6. Lessons Learnt

JP is an encouraging learning model of social inclusion programming with multiplier effects for a range of stakeholders: central and local governments, CSOs and donors and vulnerable communities. It has demonstrated that the multi-dimensionality poverty and social exclusion of vulnerable communities cannot be addressed by one time piecemeal and fragmentary interventions but require consistent and cohesive multi-sectorial interventions over a long period of time.

Engagement of national and regional institutions in program design and implementation ensures program relevance, institutional political will, commitment and ownership of results.

Recruitment of professional and experienced staff and particularly engagement of qualified Roma and Egyptian individuals in the program management team is essential for building trustworthy relationships with vulnerable communities.

Close cooperation with local governments and bringing them closer to vulnerable communities and their needs is key to allocation of financial and in-kind contribution for infrastructure projects to respond to communities needs and improve their life

Strengthening the capacities of national and local governments and dependant institutions is as important as strengthening the inter-governmental institutions' cooperation in sharing information, experiences and resources.

7. Recommendations

JP has made a significant contribution in improving the human security and social inclusion of vulnerable communities over more than three years in the targeted regions, yet it is a long way to go to eliminate the systemic poverty and social exclusion of vulnerable communities in Albania. It is highly recommended that similar interventions like JP, which adopt a multi-sector, multi-level and multi-layered interventions through multi-stakeholder partnerships and dialogue promoting human-rights based approach should continue to keep up the momentum of trust, awareness, positive attitudes and capacities built at community and institutional level.

Capacity strengthening and institutional support to public institutions at central and local level with regard to social inclusion should continue given the high staff turnover in governmental institutions due to political reasons. It is recommended that follow up technical assistance should be provided by UN agencies, particularly UNDP through EU-funded project on vulnerable communities, to build and strengthen institutional capacities at local level for operationalisation of web-based reporting and monitoring of NAP on Roma Decade.

It is recommended that assistance in the future should focus in integration of Roma and Egyptians in the labor market through self-employment and entrepreneurship by providing grants for start-ups.

Clear and consolidated performance measuring frameworks and M&E systems need to be established prior to implementation of complex interventions such as JP by establishing baseline targets, indicators and data sources to enable program management to effectively measure progress and changes achieved over time.

JP has been a successful innovative intervention for supporting vulnerable communities and it is highly recommended the documentation and dissemination of lessons learnt and best practices from the field for replicating them in other regions with vulnerable communities in Albania and beyond.

UN Inter-agency collaboration has been quite effective at annual work plans and output level at central management level, but not in timely information sharing on the activity implementation and delivery. In the future, it is recommended harmonization of communication strategy on the image of JP as a UN rather than a UNDP Program along with harmonization of monitoring and reporting procedures for a more efficient joint program governance and delivery.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

CBO	Community Based Organizations
CPU	Child Protection Unit
CUP	Community Upgrading Projects
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EVLC	Empowering the Vulnerable Vocal Communities
GoA	Government of Albania
JP	Joint Programme
JPCG	Joint Programme Coordination Group
MoES	Ministry of Education and Science
MoLSAEO	Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities
MTE	Mid-term Evaluation
NAP	National Action Plan
R/E	Roma and Egyptians
RCPASN	Regional Committees on Planning and Assessing Social Needs
TIPA	Training Institute of Public Administration
TLAS	Tirana Legal Aid Services
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNFPA	United Nations Populations Fund
UNHCR	United Nations Refugee Agency
UNHSTF	UN Human Security Trust Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNV	UN Volunteers
VC	Vulnerable Communities

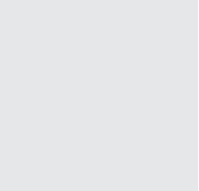
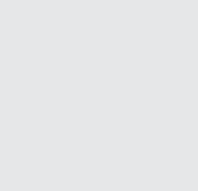


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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

Albania has a resident population of 2.821.972 inhabitants according to census in 2011 with a self-declared number of 11,600 Roma and Egyptian inhabitants, which continues to be debatable. WB Study in 2005 estimates 90.000-150.000 Roma making up 2% of total Albanian population, whereas UNDP study in 2006 estimates a number between 80,000 to 120,000 and UNICEF study in 2012 estimates 15,000 Roma and Egyptians living Albania.

While there is a discrepancy in numbers of R/E population in Albania, research studies provide reinforcing evidence that Roma and Egyptian communities are both marginalized and socially excluded and their living conditions are deplorable with limited access to potable water and sewage system. They are not politically represented in Parliament and have quite limited representation at local government.

Roma and Egyptians suffer massive unemployment with 72% of them unemployed vs. 15.8% of non Roma (UNDP 2006) due to low education, prejudices and discrimination in the labor market. They work mainly in informal sector and 70% of their sources of income are from casual work and self-employment.

Roma and Egyptian average household income is 68 Euro vs. 175 Euro of non-Roma household in the same vicinity (UNDP; 2006), life expectancy for Roma is 10 years lower than that of the rest of population (WB, 2005), illiteracy rate of Roma aged 15 and younger is 55% compared to 2% of non-Roma population (UNDP; 2006) and overall illiteracy rate among Roma is 62% and 24% for Egyptians (WB 2005) vs. 98% for non-Roma. School enrolment rate is very low at 13.5% of Roma children aged 3-5 years (UNICEF, SCA, 2006) and only 5% of children of age group 15-16 pursue high school. Lack of civic registration documents prevents them from accessing public and social services such as employment services, health care services, and enrollment to compulsory education and vocational training, registration as homeless, etc.

It is within this context that the Joint Program on Empowering the Vulnerable Local Communities (JP-EVLC) was developed as part of "One UN" Program, a worldwide program of UN reform known piloted in 8 countries including Albania, which aims to enhance efficiency and responsiveness by bringing UN Agencies together with one program, one budget and one leader, while maintaining the distinct mandates and missions of the different UN agencies.

JP EVLC has been implemented in Albania since July 2010 by UNDP, UNICEF, and UNFPA in close partnership with UNHCR and UNV. UNDP is the lead agency responsible for coordination and project management of the JP-EVLC's implementation.

JP-EVLC, hereinafter JP, is funded by UN Trust Fund for Human Security and the total program budget is 2,749,600.48 USD. It is implemented during the period July

2010-December 2013 in the regions of Tirana, Elbasan, Fier and Durres, including an 8 month extension at no cost.

The overall goal of JP-EVLC is to improve the human security and access to rights of vulnerable Roma and Egyptian minorities, particularly of women and children.

The program was designed to support three main objectives including:

1. *Supporting participation of vulnerable communities in local decision-making* - through identification of priorities and preparation of Community Development Plans, implementation of community upgrading projects in partnership with local governments, strengthening capacities and cooperation between Roma and Egyptian NGOs and their respective communities.
2. *Enabling vulnerable communities to access their rights and public services* – through civil registration, community policing, establishing and strengthening a network of Roma Mediators in areas of health, education, and child protection, and facilitating vocational training and employment.
3. *Promoting policies and institutional strengthening for social inclusion of vulnerable communities* – through capacity building and assistance to local and central government institutions and capacity building and partnership strengthening for Roma and Egyptian NGOs.

JP adopts a cross and multi-sectorial approach with a combination of expertise from UN agencies, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNV and UNHCR, which are best positioned to address the relevant issues.

The main Government partner responsible for coordination of the planned actions is the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (MoLSAEO), Technical Secretariat for Roma, whereas at the regional and local level the authorities of Tirana, Durres, Fier and Elbasan are key partners in implementing the JP activities at the local level.

JP was subject to mid-term evaluation during the period April-July 2012 to assess efficiency, effectiveness, coordination, relevance and sustainability of interventions with regard to enhancing Roma and Egyptian communities' participation in local decision-making, accessing their rights and social and public services as well as the institutional strengthening of social inclusion. Several recommendations were made regarding the revision and update of JP Action Plan, revision of the JP reporting and monitoring procedures and a no-cost extension for at least six months, including the respective re-allocation of resources.

In October 2013, UNDP commissioned an independent evaluation of JP following the closure of most of its activities in the targeted regions.

1.2 Purpose and Scope of the Evaluation

This Final Evaluation aims to assess the process, effectiveness, impact, relevance and

sustainability of the JP with regard to enhancing Roma and Egyptian communities' participation in local decision-making, accessing their rights and social and public services as well as to the institutional strengthening of social inclusion.

Its specific evaluation objectives are:

1. Provide feedback to the participating agencies and national counterparts on the soundness (defined as relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability) and impact of their approach in the JP-EVLC;
2. Provide guidance on the sustainability of program interventions;
3. Evaluate program impact of implemented actions, contained in the Work Plans and Program Log frame;
4. Base on the analysis conducted over the experience of JP-EVLC, extract general lessons learned and recommendations for other projects and donor agencies;
5. Provide the donor with information on impact of their specific support through the joint program, to the vulnerable local communities in Albania

The primary audience of the conclusions and recommendations generated by the evaluation will be the participating UN agencies, Joint Program Coordination Group, UNHSTF and project stakeholders and partners involved in the program implementation.

1.3 Evaluation methodology

1.3.1 Evaluation Approach

The evaluation methodology is in compliance with standard evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability along with two guiding UN principles of human rights based approach and results-based management. The evaluation follows the Standards and Norms of United Nations Evaluation Group, UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation, 2008, UNEG/FN/ETH (2008).

In conducting the evaluation, the Evaluator applied a consultative and participatory evaluation approach by ensuring participation, engagement and inputs of key project beneficiaries, relevant stakeholders and partners involved in and affected by the implementation of the project including women and men from municipal and rural areas. Sampling ensured a cross-section of stakeholders and beneficiaries and is based on: a) geography (ensuring a balanced inclusion of stakeholders and beneficiaries views from the different regions and urban/rural areas within these regions where the JP is implemented; b) stakeholder category (a balanced representation is ensured with regard to different types of stakeholders consulted including governmental, non-governmental, community members and international organizations).

The Evaluator identified the following key evaluation stakeholders:

- UN participating agencies: UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNV;

- Governmental institutions at central and regional/local level: MOLSEAO/Roma Technical Secretariat and regional and local authorities in four targeted regions of Tirana, Durrës, Fier and Elbasan;
- CSOs (Roma and non Roma), CBOs as well as other partners involved in the implementation of activities of EVLC;
- CBO members, Roma community members as direct beneficiaries of program interventions;

33 representatives of the above stakeholders were interviewed: representing accordingly:

- UN Agencies 9 interviewees (8 females, 1 male): UNDP (7), UNFPA (1) and UNICEF (1);
- Governmental institutions 8 interviewees (4 females, 4 males): central government (2), regional and local government (6);
- CSOs 4 interviewees (3 females, 1 male): Roma and Egyptian CSOs (3), non-Roma and Egyptian CSOs (1);
- Direct beneficiaries 12 interviewees (8 females, 4 males): CBO members (6), trainees (6)

List of interviewed key stakeholders is included in Annex 1.

1.3.2 Data Collection Methods

The Evaluator employed a mixed-methods approach to collect data and ensure their accuracy, quality and triangulation including.

- a) comprehensive documentation review;
- b) semi-structured key informant interviews with primary and secondary stakeholders;
- c) focus group discussions (where 2 or more individuals were involved);
- d) field visits;
- e) observations;

A. Documentation Review

Documentation review included a range of program related documentation provided by JP Management at the commencement of the evaluation such as JP document, annual substantive reports, annual work plans, mid-term evaluation report along with other research studies documentation. The list of the documentation reviewed is in Annex 2.

B. Semi-structured Key Informant Interviews with primary and secondary project stakeholders

Reflecting a rights-based approach, the empowerment of the JP's main partners and beneficiaries was ensured through the use of key informant interviews with as many project partners as possible in all four regions and program management team members. A list of framework questions to guide the interviews was developed, adapted and customized according to the role and involvement of the interviewees in the JP. (Annex 3)

C. Focus Group Discussions

Given the large number of stakeholders involved in the program implementation and the limited amount of time available for data collection at regional level, two focus group discussions were used as a means of interviewing multiple beneficiaries at one time (two focus group discussions were improvised with trainees and CBO members).

D. Field visits and observations

Visits to project sites, as primary sources of information, were planned and conducted in 3 out of four targeted regions (Durrës, Fier, Tirana) in close consultation with program management team. These visits provided excellent opportunities to observe the impact of project interventions on the life of the beneficiaries, the attitude and approach of stakeholders and beneficiaries on vulnerable communities' issues and their interactions. The evaluation methodologies used for data collection and analysis were appropriate and adapted to ensure relevance for each stakeholder and regional context. Data triangulation was addressed by interviewing a number of stakeholders at different levels and reviewing a range of documents.

Overview of Evaluation Schedule is in Annex 4.

1.3.3 Risks and Limitations

The following potential risks and limitations were identified that could affect the reliability and validity of the evaluation results:

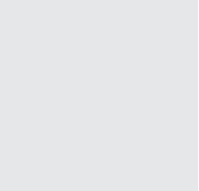
- i) Time was considered a constraint given the large range of partners, stakeholders and beneficiaries, the range of locations (4 regions), the multi-dimension and multi-sectorial interventions in the framework of JP. The Evaluator was careful in selecting a representative sample of stakeholders, partners, beneficiaries, locations and typology of interventions for each region. During the data collection phase, project activities in two regions were closed respectively in Tirana and Elbasan, and this to some extent hindered to reach out as many stakeholders as possible. JP Management facilitated support for data collection in Tirana, Durrës and Fier.
- ii) Evaluation drew on the opinions of the key informants, program manager and local development coordinators involved in the design; implementation and monitoring of JP and their opinions are subject to bias when people are asked to evaluate their performance. To address this issue, the Evaluator relied on multiple sources of information and requested evidence to support the opinions.

1.4 Support and Logistics

During the evaluation process, the Evaluator relied on the expertise and knowledge of program management staff of UNDP, UNICEF, and UNFPA.

JP management staff was consulted on the identified list of stakeholders and data evaluation methodology provided in the Inception Report and facilitated and coordinated meetings and interviews with identified stakeholders at central and local level.

Logistical support in travelling to JP implementation sites was provided by UNDP.



2. EVALUATION FINDINGS

2.1 RELEVANCE

JP is assessed a highly relevant intervention responding to needs of the country, partners and end users. The main findings are as follows:

JP is highly relevant to support national strategic objectives and national priorities defined in strategic documents related to inclusion of vulnerable ethnic minorities.

Albania, has strong ambitions to join EU and has started the process of negotiation of EU Stabilization and Association Agreement since 2003. One of the EU accession criteria is protection of minorities and their social and economic inclusion, which as of 2003, are officially recognized as national priority and endorsed in the comprehensive inter-sectorial National Strategy for Improving Roma Living Conditions. This Strategy focuses on 6 broad areas: (i) education and training, (ii) economy and employment, (iii) poverty reduction and social protection, (iv) health and infrastructure, (v) cultural heritage and family as well as (vi) public order, justice and civil administration.

In July 2008, the Government of Albania joined the Decade for Roma Initiative, which required the development of National Action Plan setting out objectives and targets in 4 main areas including (i) education, (ii) health, (iii) employment and (iv) housing to be implemented and achieved by 2015. In 2009, the Government of Albania with the support of UNDP/UNV updated Strategy's Action Plan and preparation of Roma Decade National Action Plan.

JP is highly relevant to address institutional capacity gaps to operationalize and implement strategic documents and action plans related to inclusion of vulnerable ethnic minorities.

While the strategic frameworks and national action plans on ethnic vulnerable communities are in place as described above, the responsible governmental institutions, MOLSAEO and Roma Technical Secretariat, faced challenges to implement them due to limited institutional capacities and resources to operationalize Roma Strategy and Roma Decade National Action Plan at local, regional and national level, lack of capacities for coordination, data collection and analysis, reporting and monitoring as well as matching funding for these activities.

Progress Report on Roma Strategy in 2007 supported by UNDP indicated low level of implementation due to lack of above mentioned capacities and need for updating Strategy's Action with relevant indicators, monitoring and evaluation frameworks.

JP addressed lack of such capacities at central and local level to support proper implementation, coordination and monitoring of Roma Strategy and Roma Decade National Action Plan.

JP is highly relevant to address vulnerable community needs in targeted regions.

The project responds to evidence-based community needs identified through research studies conducted by World Bank in 2005 “From Social Exclusion to Social Inclusion,” UNDP 2006 “Social Vulnerability of Roma in Albania” and UNICEF and Save the Children 2007 “Educational Situation of Roma children in Albania,” which provide substantial information on the multi-dimensionality poverty and social exclusion of Roma and Egyptian populations in Albania.

Research studies conducted in the course of the first half of the project such as “Needs Assessment Study on Roma and Egyptian Communities in Albania,” “Capacity Assessment of Roma and Egyptian NGOs” and “Rapid Assessment for Accommodating Roma and Egyptian Communities in the Labour Market” provided updated and reinforcing information on the deplorable social economic situation of the Roma and Egyptians in Albania, their social organization and barriers to access civil rights, public and social services and labor market,

In addition, JP identified and validated community needs and priorities in close consultation with UN agencies, MOLSAEO and other relevant institutions, local governments of targeted regions, experts on Roma issues, Roma and Egyptian NGOs and agreed on intervention areas and measures to address the multi-dimensionality of poverty and social exclusion of Roma and Egyptian communities in Albania.

JP targeted four regions in Albania: Tirana, Elbasan, Fier and Durres, which have the highest number of Roma and Egyptian populations estimated respectively at 61% of Roma and 15% of Egyptian population according to data provided by Roma Association Amaro Drom and the Egyptian Association Vellazerimi.

JP is highly relevant to UN strategic goals and UN agencies mandate and their previous work

JP is aligned with One UN Program 2006-2010 particularly with outcome 2 aiming for “Greater inclusive participation in public policy and decision-making.” The situation of Roma and marginalized groups is a priority area of joint collaboration under the One UN Program and JP drew on the expertise, know-how and experience of participating UN agencies to implement the project components in accordance with mandate of each agency:

- UNDP: the institutional strengthening, community mobilization and participatory development planning, access to public benefit schemes and services, community policing and vocational training;
- UNICEF: child protection, children registration, pre-school education access to primary health care services for children including Roma and Egyptian children;
- UNFPA: access to primary health care services by training health mediators, family planning and hygiene, maternal health, promotion of healthy behaviors;
- UNHCR: provide support to UNDP and UNICEF in the area of “stateless” persons supporting registration and vital documentation for the legal recognition of marginalized communities
- UNV: access to services, social inclusion, community mobilization through voluntary work;

JP drew also on experience and lessons learnt from previous projects targeting vulnerable communities implemented by participating UN agencies UNDP (2006, 2007, 2008-2009), UNFPA and UNICEF.

It is assessed that planned and delivered activities and outputs are consistent with the overall goal and attainment of objectives and in compliance with the role and mandate of partners and stakeholders involved.

2.2 EFFECTIVENESS

Overall, It is assessed that intended activities and outputs have been successfully delivered making a significant contribution to the achievement of specific objectives and JP's overall goal to improve the human security and access to rights of vulnerable Roma and Egyptian minorities, particularly of women and children.

2.2.1 Assessment of achievement of objectives

Objective 1: Support the participation of vulnerable communities in local decision-making

It is assessed that JP has delivered the planned outputs under this objective and significant progress is made to support the participation of vulnerable communities in local decision-making. UNDP was responsible for this component and the main results achieved under this objective are the following::

I) Community mobilization for local development

JP has contributed to the establishment of 13 functional CBOs in 13 communities identified as mostly vulnerable and underserved in the four targeted regions. CBOs have played an active role in the Identification of 20 community development priorities mainly in infrastructure and social services and ensured adequate representation of community member perspectives of their needs and priorities.

It should be noted that community members for the first time were brought together to identify and prioritize their needs and present them to LGUs for funding through CBO representatives/leaders. LGUs attended the needs prioritization process at community level and recognized the need for intervention through financial support to two projects in the amount of 20% of project costs and in-kind contribution. JP made a valuable contribution in introducing and establishing the participatory development planning model at local level through the participation of local communities and LGUs.

In addition, JP EVLC contributed to the identification of Roma and Egyptian community needs and areas of intervention through country-needs assessment/feasibility study, which aimed to provide baseline data for National Action Plan for Roma Decade and program interventions. It should be noted that this output was delivered half way the program (February 2012) and affected the setting up of baseline data at the program level as well as a consolidated monitoring and evaluation plan for the JP.

II) Infrastructure projects implemented

JP EVLC supported and facilitated the development and implementation of 20 development priorities packaged into 11 projects in the amount of 675,786 USD, which were consolidated interventions in infrastructure construction or upgrading (road rehabilitation, sewage system construction, bridge construction, construction of multi-functional community centers and rehabilitation of health centers and schools) and ensuring provision of quality social services in rehabilitated premises. It is worth emphasizing women's participation in identifying and prioritizing community needs, which were accounted in the final selected priorities and project development. 9 out of 11 projects directly contribute to provision of social services to community members (particularly women and children) such as health services through health centers and pre-education through kindergartens. Overall, infrastructure projects have improved living conditions of community members and their social community life and the beneficiaries are quite satisfied with these interventions. (Annex 5: List of JP Infrastructure projects completed during 2011-2013)

III) Capacity and partnership opportunities provided for Roma and Egyptian CSOs

JP supported the research "Capacity needs and trainings - Assessment of Roma/Egyptian NGOs" which provided a profile of Roma and Egyptian civil society organizations in the country along with a mapping of their training needs in 7 identified areas: NGO management, strategic management, human resources management, project cycle management, networking, advocacy, community development. 121 R/E CSO members were trained (over 50% women) in the above topics.

JP contributed to strengthening of organizational and management capacities of Roma and Egyptian NGOs to design and implement small scale community projects. Following up the capacity building support provided by JP, 12 R/E CSOs benefited from a grant scheme of 90,000 USD, which provided support to 12 small scale community projects. This also led to strengthening the relationship of these CSOs with Roma and Egyptian communities in identifying the development projects as well as their inter-organizational relationship by creating cohesion, cooperation and partnership among them.

Partnerships between R/E CSOs, governmental institutions and other actors were strengthened through their communication and dialogue in several round tables organized with R/E CSOs and MOLSAEO on discussing a series of issues of concern for these communities. R/E CSOs were consulted and involved in several research studies undertaken by JP on community needs assessment study, NGO capacity assessment study, labour market survey study, where they provided their relevant inputs and insights. They also provided inputs to UN in the UN Country Programme 2012-2017.

This component was implemented by UNDP and UNV, where program staff made valuable contributions in community mobilization and supporting communities to identify and prioritize their development priorities.

**Table 1: Overview of performance Indicators in Objective 1
Support participation of VCs in local decision-making**

Description of Performance Indicator	Planned	Achieved	Comment
Feasibility study on needs of VCs	Year 1.5	Year 3	Delayed delivery impacted setting up of JP baseline data and M&E plan
Establishment of CBOs	8	13	1 CBO per targeted community
Identification, design and implementation of priority community development projects	20	20	Packaged in 11 projects which are fully implemented
Small scale community projects implemented by Roma and Egyptian CSOs	8	12	Fully implemented

Source: JP Substantive Report 2011 & 2012, JP Document and Logical Framework

Objective 2: Enable vulnerable communities to access their rights and public services.

It is assessed that JP has satisfactorily delivered the planned activities and outputs under this objective which have contributed to improved access to civil rights and public and social services. The main results achieved under this objective are as follows:

I) Improved access to civic registration and social and public services

There is strong evidence from JP reports, information from beneficiaries, service providers and partners that JP has significantly contributed to civil registration of targeted community members enabling them to access public and social services. It should be noted that the JP pursued an integrated approach on civil registration by focusing its support services on two main areas of civil registration.

- (I) administrative issues: birth registration, residency transfer, marriage certification, ID cards, homeless registration, jobseeker registration, economic aid registration, pension plan, etc;
- (II) legal issues: divorce, child custody, child adoption, child registration in the court when parents lack documentation or when children are not born in hospital, disability pension, etc;

JP contributed to resolving 1703 civil registration cases, where the highest number of registration in civil registry relates to birth registration of 419 individuals. The most outstanding contribution of JP rests with registrations related to provision of documentation to benefit social services: ID cards: 154 individuals, economic aid : 124 individuals, health cards: 696 individuals, registration as jobseekers: 480 individuals.

Table 2: Overview of Resolved Civil Registration Cases (Individuals and Families)

Type of Registration	No
Birth registration (individuals)	419
Transfer of residency (families)	4
Child custody	-
Registration as unemployed	480
Finalizing divorce in court (couples)	3
Child adoption	2
Certification of marriage (couples)	5
Stateless individuals seeking to regain Albanian nationality	4
Homeless applicants for social housing (families)	5
ID Cards (individuals)	154
Health cards	696
Change of surname	2
Economic aid	124
Pension plan	3
Property cases	1
Children registered in Pre-School Education	34
Children Registered in Public Elementary School	39
TOTAL OF RESOLVED CASES	1703

Source: JP Substantive Report 2012

The number of resolved registration cases is quite high: 1703 vs. 400 planned in the JP document. This is as a result of innovative approach that the JP successfully adopted through combination of several activities:

- (I) awareness raising campaigns for both community members and public officials (civil registry, health centers/maternity homes, employment offices) on importance of civic registration of Roma and Egyptian communities and access to social and public services;
- (II) provision of specialized legal assistance through TLAS for complex registration cases and case referral, a service provider that became reference point for CBO members and Roma and Egyptian NGOs for complex civil registration issues in targeted communities;
- (III) capacity building and on-job training for CBO members, Roma and Egyptian NGOs on registration issues and administrative procedures. 5 Roma and Egyptian NGOs along with CBO members were directly involved in identifying cases through door-to-door visits and case referral to relevant service provider strengthening their institutional capacities and expertise in registration issues and cooperation with relevant service providers and civil registration authorities;
- (IV) capacity building of relevant public officials on registration issues and procedures: 256 staff from maternity homes and civil registry and 200 census officers trained;

It is worth noting the contribution JP made through experts' round table consultations in February 2011 and experiences from the field in adopting supportive legal acts to facilitate birth registration for Roma and Egyptian population namely:

- MOU with Ministry of Foreign Affairs with specialized NGO providing specialized legal assistance to facilitate registration of births occurring abroad with the support of consular services;
- New format of certificate delivery in maternity homes adopted by Ministry of Health, which includes mother's maiden name and ID number;
- New format adopted by Ministry of Interior for the Police Directorate to facilitate registration of children abandoned by mothers;

JP also contributed to raising awareness and building capacities of CBO members, Roma and Egyptian NGOs and public officials in the maternity homes and police directorate on how to implement the newly adopted administrative procedures.

It is assessed that support provided to access civic registration and social and public services by Roman and Egyptian communities is highly effective due to division of responsibility between UNICEF and UNDP in compliance with their expertise: UNICEF focused on child registration, whereas UNDP dealt with broader issues related to civil registration and access to public, social and health protection system. Both agencies were supported by UNHCR for issues of stateless persons. Technical assistance provided by TLAS along with on-job training of Roma and Egyptian NGOs for civic registration issues and their engagement on site to identify unresolved registration cases contributed significantly to the high number of civil registration resolved cases, which is three times higher than the set target.

**Table 3: Overview of performance Indicators in Objective 2.1
Access to civic registration and public and social services**

Description of Performance Indicator	Planned	Achieved	Comment
Baseline disaggregated data on unregistered R and E collected through feasibility study	Year 1.5	Year 2	Delayed and impacted setting up of baseline data
No of people benefit from specialized legal support in various registration processes	400	1703	High number of resolved cases vs planned
No of children registered	200	419	High number of resolved cases vs planned
No of staff trained from maternity home and civil offices	240	256 maternity home 200 civil registry	High number of trained officials vs planned

Source: JP Substantive Report 2011& 2012, JP Document and Logical Framework

II) Community policing introduced in Roma and Egyptian communities through police mediators;

JP has contributed to improve the human security and safety in targeted communities. Awareness campaigns for safer and healthier communities were combined with trainings

of 40 police mediators (49% women) on multi-faceted issues of security and safety in community, home, work, domestic violence and intermediary skills in response to community's request to handle issues impartially.

20 Police officers were trained as well on the social and cultural context of Roma and Egyptian communities and how to work with police mediators.

These activities have built bridges of communication, contacts and trust between police officers, police mediators and targeted vulnerable communities and served as opportunities to bring police officials closer to these communities.

This component was implemented by UNDP availing of its expertise in human security, but it should be noted that issues of personal security were combined with UNFPA's joint awareness campaigns on HIV, alcohol and drugs emphasizing the complexity and interdependence of personal security and community security.

**Table 4: Overview of performance Indicators in Objective 2.2
Community Policing through Police Mediators**

Description of Performance Indicator	Planned	Achieved	Comment
No of police mediators trained (% F)	12	40 (50%F)	High number o trained mediators vs planned
No of trainings to police mediators	3	4	
No of trainings provided to police	2	2	

Source: JP Substantive Report 2011 & 2012, JP Document and Logical Framework

III) Improved access to primary health care services through health mediators and health providers

JP, through expertise provided by UNFPA, provided training to 69 health mediators (57% female and 84% of them below 24 years), who were identified in the community by the field teams working in the targeted regions. Training was based on findings of needs assessment on health issues involving community members and health providers. Trainings focused on reproductive health, HIV/AIDS, disease prevention, hygiene, maternal and child health, drugs and alcohol, health services and rights.

Health mediators were provided with knowledge and skills on health issues enabling them to provide medical advice to their communities, while advocating for better health practices to vulnerable communities.

Training was also provided to over 100 public health officials in the targeted regions on friendly service provision to Roma and Egyptian communities.

It should be noted that door to door screening for immunization status of R/E children was supported along with promotion materials (leaflets, stickers, posters) on immunization, nutrition and protection from most frequent diseases. Outreach and advocacy activities on health issues targeted community at large, women and teenagers through attractive

approaches such as theater based peer education on risky behaviors, child health days, International Youth day, and basic health services (immunization, growth, nutrition) have been intensively supported by JP in cooperation with community members and public health officials.

This component was implemented by UNFPA in close cooperation with UNDP, who identified the mediators and coordinated the activities on ground.

**Table 5: Overview of performance Indicators in Objective 2.3
Access to primary health care services through health mediators and health service providers**

Description of Performance Indicators	Planned	Achieved	Comment
% of children vaccinated under 5	80% (50% F)		no data available in %
No of professional health workers trained in friendly minority services	100	130	High number of trained staff vs planned
No of community health mediators	50 (50 % F)	69 (60% F)	High number o trained mediators vs planned
No of professional health workers trained in identifying Roma and Egyptian children missing immunization services and other child health services	100	100	
% of eligible children under 5 reached through basic child health immunization services	50%		no data available in %

Source: JP Substantive Report 2011 & 2012, JP Document and Logical Framework

IV) Improved child protection through CPUs and multipurpose centers to protect children from abuse, trafficking, neglect, violence and exploitation

JP, through expertise provided by UNICEF with the support of ARSIS-.local NGO, has contributed to improve child protection services from abuse, neglect, violence. trafficking and exploitation through setting up a network of protective services through CPUs in case management and referral in 12 municipalities and multi-purpose center in municipality of Tirana by serving 7 Roma and Egyptian communities in Tirana with 530 children and 467adults.

The multipurpose center in Tirana has provided a range of services by a multidisciplinary team including providing a model of child protection services:

- identification of 276 children in street situation and provision of daily service such as development of action plans and case management and referral for vulnerable children to minimize risks;
- emergency shelter hosting for 72 hours until a permanent solution is found in cooperation with Section of Minors and Domestic Violence at the Police Directorate

and Department of Social Services in case of domestic violence and exploitation and Police Section of Anti-Trafficking in case of internal or external trafficking of children,

- provision of hygienic conditions to 321 children;
- provision of accommodation to 30 children and 7 mothers
- educational support to 27 children with daily supervision in homework and lessons
- provision of preparatory lessons to 31 preschool children and 53 children who are school drop-outs.

170 community visits have been conducted to introduce the center and its services to community, direct and indirect support is provided to families and 410 children in need by a multidisciplinary team comprised of a psychologist, social worker, social animator, doctor, lawyer, who provide services in the community.

**Table 6: Overview of performance Indicators in Objective 2.4
Access to child protection services through CPUs and Multi-Purpose Center**

Description of Performance Indicator	Planned	Achieved	Comment
No of children using services	960 (50% F)	+ 960	
No of families using social services	720	+800	
No of children/families referred to psychological support	361	+ 361	
Municipalities staff increased capacities in case management and referral	12 staff members	12 staff members	

Source: JP Substantive Report 2011 & 2012, JP Document and Logical Framework

V) Improved pre-school education to Roma and Egyptian children to ensure early leaning and access to education

JP, through assistance provided by UNICEF, delivered awareness raising campaign for over 300 Roma and Egyptian families on the importance of pre-school education as an important prerequisite for school attendance and children's future. Pre-school preparatory courses have been provided in Elbasan and Durres (Keneta) in the areas mostly in need of a pre-school facility. 90 children have benefited from activities aiming early and inclusive education and facilitating preparation of children for school. 60 Roma children (25 in Community Center Durres and 35 in Community Center Elbasan) who participated in school preparatory courses are enrolled 100% in first grade.

Early Child Development Centers in Baltez and Saver, Fier, run by Roma NGOs, in close partnership with local and educational authorities, offered pre-school education, provided pre-school parent counseling, and health check-ups. 66 children attended the 2012 academic year and 27 children who completed pre-school education enrolled in school. Children have benefited educational, social and psychological support. 84 children attend daily pre-school centers.

UNICEF assisted the government of Albania to conduct a mapping of Roma neighborhoods in Albania, resulting in the identification of 108 geo-tagged locations with an estimated total of about 15,000 individuals. Location geo-tagging provides data to LGUs on Roma neighborhood demographics, social services and institutions available in the area, access to such services to ensure social protection and services to Roma. This system provides publicly available data to LGUs and public at large ensuring accountability through supervision of institutions.

**Table 7: Overview of performance Indicators in Objective 2.5
Access to pre-school education**

Description of Performance Indicator	Planned	Achieved	Comment
No of children attending kindergarten	100	+ 130	
No of parents trained in parenting skills	500 (50 % F)	540	
No of children enrolled in school	100	100	

Source: JP Substantive Report 2011 & 2012, JP Document and Logical Framework

VI) Improved Minority Friendly employment services

JP, under UNDP guidance, conducted an assessment for accommodating Roma and Egyptians in the labor market, which identified that lack of professional educational and skills was one of the major barriers for their employability. The assessment provided a mapping of vocational courses opportunities, recommendations for employment through on the job training, internships, self employment, micro-credits, as well as recommendations for project assistance to vulnerable communities and public, non-governmental and private institutions to facilitate employment for four targeted specific groups among Roma and Egyptians: unskilled and untrained, previously or recently trained, self-employed and students and university graduates.

JP has adopted an integrated approach in improving employability of Roma and Egyptians through a series of reinforcing and complementary activities: awareness raising campaign on importance of vocational training to acquire professional skills, variety of vocational courses on offer and eligibility criteria, identification on site of interested candidates and their profile matching with vocational training courses based on individual interests, eligibility criteria and employment chances, facilitating enrollment of candidates in public or private Vocational Training Centers and supporting them financially when needed, particularly in private VTCs, subsidizing transportation costs, monitoring their attendance and performance during the course, providing them career advising on how to find employment, providing them with tool kits to facilitate their (self) employment, referring and assisting them in finding internships and employment through Employment Offices, public and private employers or self-employment.

200 Roma and Egyptians, mainly young people unskilled and untrained, have completed vocational courses (traditional and market-oriented) and built their skills as plumber, welder, cook, computer technician, solar panel technician, car mechanics, tailor, hairdresser, graphic designer, etc. Acquisition of professional skills through vocational

training and internships has enhanced their employability. 16 individuals have found employment in public, private sector or started their businesses.

It should be noted that JP targeted university students as well and facilitated internships for 9 of them with public institutions at central and local level providing social services and 4 of them are employed in the public sector.

JP has partnered with other projects such as World Bank project “Small Grants to Start a Business,” where 8 Roma and Egyptians are referred to apply for their business ideas and two already are awarded grants in the amount of 2500 USD to star their businesses. JP has also contributed in improving employment services provided by Regional Employment Offices for unemployed Roma and Egyptians in terms of streamlining procedures to register them as jobseekers, advising and registering them in vocational training courses to learn professional skills to find employment as well as matching and referring them to businesses for employment. Overall, as result of awareness raising among regional Employment Offices and Vocational Training Centers (public, private, non-governmental), there is noted a supportive attitude in the Regional Employment Offices in providing access to employment services to vulnerable communities and better understanding of their cultural context and social constraints.

**Table 8: Overview of performance Indicators in Objective 2.6
Access to minority friendly employment services**

Description of Performance Indicator	Planned	Achieved	Comment
Proportion of people by sex and age in employable age enrolled and completed vocational training courses	300	200	
Vocational training curricula by sector and type of profession		Available	Labour market study

Source: JP Substantive Report 2011 & 2012, JP Document and Logical Framework

Objective 3: Promoting policies and institutional strengthening for social inclusion of vulnerable communities – through capacity building and assistance to local and central government institutions and capacity building and partnership strengthening for Roma and Egyptian NGOs.

I) Roma Technical Secretariat supported through technical assistance to implement priority areas of Cross-cutting National Strategy and the Decade for Roma inclusion

It is assessed that good progress was made to the achievement of this objective through the delivery of planned outputs, yet there is the need for follow up after the completion of the activities of JP.

There is good evidence that JP supported MOLSAEO/Roma Technical Secretariat to develop and establish internet-based reporting and monitoring system of National Action

Plan on Roma Decade in close consultation with local government authorities and civil society organizations along with the structure of information flow to feed the monitoring system and standardized procedures and instruments on data collection and information to be used by LGUs. Although web-based reporting and monitoring system of NAP on Roma Decade is developed and tested for Roma Technical Secretariat in the framework of JP, it is not fully operational.

JP EVLC built capacities at central and local level through a series of trainings delivered in partnership with TIPA on data collection and data entry into the monitoring system. Over 150 governmental officials were trained country-wide and represented a good mix of institutions at central and local /regional level in charge of data collection for Roma and Egyptian communities (Roma Secretariat, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labor, Ministry of Interior, Regional Employment offices, Regional Social Service Departments, Regional Health departments, Regional Education Departments, etc). This approach strengthened the inter-governmental cooperation at regional and national level on data collection on VCs and increased the visibility of Roma and Technical Secretariat, who established contacts at local level through their presence in all the trainings. For the first time, Roma Secretariat had a regional exposure and established contacts at regional/local level.

The monitoring system of NAP on Roma Decade aims to assist the Albanian government to produce annual progress reports on the status of vulnerable communities and impact of measures and interventions undertaken at local and central level. Two monitoring reports are produced to date, but not through the web-based monitoring system developed through JP.

It should be noted that although the web-based monitoring and reporting infrastructure is in place and staff at central and local level are trained to use it, it is not fully operational yet due to a number of subjective reasons:

- (I) it is not obligatory by law for governmental institutions to collect and provide periodically the requested data;
- (II) some of staff trained at local and central level are replaced due to staff turnover at local level and the newly appointed staff is unable to enter the data;
- (III) some technical issues such as clarification on indicators need to be resolved;

The project provided technical assistance in drafting a Decision of Council of Ministers in close consultation with MOLSAEO staff to make obligatory the data collection for monitoring system and web-based reporting for NAP, but its approval is still pending due to elections in June 2013 and new government in place as of September 2013.

II) Roma and Egyptian issues are mainstreamed in the programs of local Government

There is good evidence that the project has contributed to mainstreaming Roma and Egyptian issues into the development programs of local governments. JP is given credit by MOLSAEO/Roma Secretariat and LGUS for providing technical support to establish, reactivate where possible, and make functional the Regional Committees on Planning and Assessing Social Needs and establishment of Roma Sub-Technical Committees as part of them. The committees consist of the representatives of the local institutions that

fall under the priority of the National Action Plan for Roma Decade, namely, education, employment and social protection, housing and infrastructure, health, social inclusion and equal opportunity, and cultural heritage. The committees are fully operational and meet on quarterly basis to discuss on progress made, share upcoming work plans and seek for further consultations on the outputs of National Action Plan for Roma respectively.

Such structures are established also in 6 other regions that are highly populated by Roma and Egyptian populations and provide information to the responsible institutions to report to Roma Technical Secretariat on the implementation of the National Action Plan for Roma Decade through the newly established reporting and monitoring system.

The strengthened local government structures are expected to accelerate the implementation process of National Action Plan for Roma Decade, while streamlining the reporting to the central government.

III) Capacities increased among local and central government officials in order to effectively deal with specific issues of development, security and inclusion related to the target groups of the project

Governmental officials at central and local level acknowledge the contribution of JP to strengthen their individual and institutional capacities to deal with specific issues of development, security and inclusion related to VCs. They report that not only have participated in a series of trainings related to these issues, but have been involved in implementing concrete interventions in participatory development issues, security and social inclusion. In addition to new knowledge and skills learned, they also appreciate the inter-institutional network at central and local level developed through the trainings, which is crucial for problem solving of multi-faceted issues of VCs.

JP organized a study tour with local and central officials as well Roma and Egyptian CSOs in Romania, a member state of Roma Decade initiative, where participants exchanged experiences and became familiar with approaches, strategies and methods to address VC issues. It should be noted that this activity did not fully meet the expectations of participants as it is evaluated as rather theoretical and bureaucratic.

Table 9: Overview of performance Indicators in Objective 3 Promoting policies and institutional strengthening for VCs social inclusion

Description of Performance Indicator	Planned	Achieved	Comment
Monitoring report positively assesses streamlined and operational NAP		yes	Two monitoring reports prepared
Regional and local action plans designed in line with NAP are being implemented		yes	Implementation requires funding
Vulnerable communities represented in local regional coordination committee		yes	Structures set up in 10 regions
Data collection mechanism developed, tested and institutionalized		delivered	Not operational at full capacity

Source: JP Substantive Report 2011, 2012, JP Document and Logical Framework

2.2.2 Major factors influencing the achievement and non-achievement of the objectives

JP is an evidence-based intervention responding to identified needs of vulnerable communities designed and implemented in close consultation with the responsible governmental authority MOLSAEO, with the focal point being the Technical Secretariat for Roma, other governmental agencies at central and local level, vulnerable communities and their representative NGOs. JP was built on experiences and lessons learnt from previous projects implemented by UN agencies (UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNV) targeting vulnerable communities and drew on their expertise to maximize the impact of their intervention.

JP has employed a coordinated multi-sector approach to address the multi-dimensionality poverty and social exclusion of Roma and Egyptians through reinforcing interventions targeting a series of components (participatory development planning, access to civil rights and public services in health, education, community security, child protection, employability, capacity development and improvement of legal framework for social inclusion) at the levels of community, local and central government through partnership building and coordination of efforts and capacities of targeted stakeholders and participating partners.

JP encouraged and ensured participation of men and women from Roma and Egyptian community members by providing adequate opportunities to them to contribute to community development and personal development. In most of activities women representation is ensured at quite satisfactory levels (30%-50%) according to data provided in the reports, but also confirmed by women participants during the interviews. JP succeeded in bringing women out of their homes and provided them opportunities to become actors of change for their families and community.

Diversity and frequency of tools used to reach out and maintain the interest and commitment of the vulnerable communities such as public information and awareness campaigns on the issues of human rights and access to them, human security (personal and community), health, child protection, nutrition, parenting, education, community self-help activities, cultural shows and thematic theater shows where community members were protagonists combined with capacity building activities for CBO members and mediators have positively contributed in empowering communities with information, knowledge, skills and initiatives for community development activities.

JP has relied on highly professional, committed and motivated staff who have been effective in managing and implementing the program activities by bringing on board a range of stakeholders like LGUs, respective communities and NGOs which have contributed respectively funds and in-kind contributions, voluntary work and expertise to support the vulnerable communities.

It should be noted that a few of JP activities and outputs have been affected by delays in delivery due to slow start-up phase of JP, local elections in May 2011 which delayed MoUs agreement and consequently implementation of infrastructure projects as well as losses of capacities built at local and central level in the course of JP due to local elections in 2011 and general elections in June 2013. This has hindered the operationalisation of web-based reporting and monitoring of NAP on Roma Decade at local and central level.

2.3 EFFICIENCY

Overall, it is assessed that the management of program funds has been quite efficient. JP has used its resources strategically and has provided good value for money supporting implementation of a significantly high level of activities

2.3.1 Management of financial resources

With a total budget of \$ 2,749,600.40, JP provided sustained technical support to a diverse group of stakeholders at central and local level over a three year period with a estimated delivery rate of 95.4% until end of November 2013. Given the significant results achieved as described in Effectiveness Section, JP is assessed to be cost-effective.

Table 10: JP Budget Overview

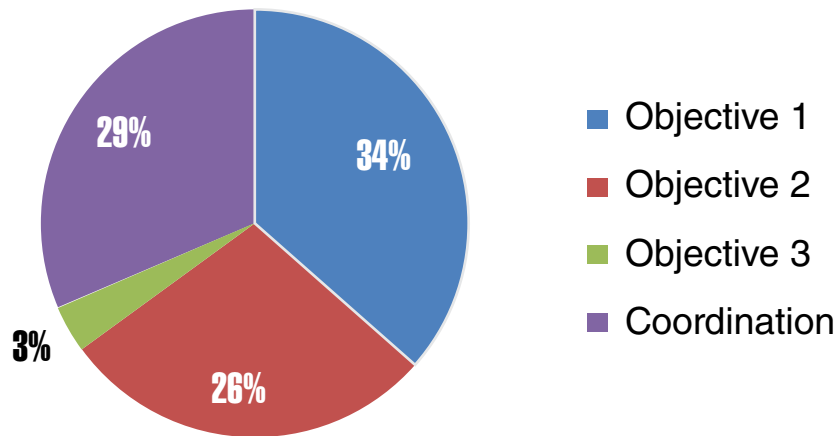
Budget per objective	Agency	Total approved budget USD	Expenditures USD	Delivery rate
1)Support participation of vulnerable communities in local decision making	UNDP	966,200	884,374	91.6 %
2) Access to rights	UNDP	331,300	280,909	84.8 %
	UNICEF	335,008	318,400	95.1 %
	UNFPA	51,050	49,461	96.9 %
Total		717,358	648,770	90.5 %
3) Policies and institutional strengthening for minority inclusion	UNDP	71,900	97,223	135 %
4)Programme coordination	UNDP	824,320	839,299	102 %
5)Administration 7%		180,584	161,286	89 %
TOTAL		2,760,362	2,630,952	95.4 %

Source: UNDP

The division of funds allocated to achieve JP objectives is based on identified needs and priorities at community and institutional level at the stage of project design, which were validated at the start up phase of project implementation phase through stakeholder consultation and additional research studies.

Budget breakdown shows that 34% is spent on objective 1 to support participatory development planning, 26% is spent on objective 2 to improve access to civil rights and public and social services, 3% is spent on objective 3 on policy and institutional strengthening for minority inclusion and 29% is spent on project coordination supporting the activities to achieve the three objectives.

Table 11: JP Budget Breakdown



Funding spent on objective 1 participatory development planning ranks highest at 34%, where 70% of it has directly supported the investment in 11 infrastructure projects, which have had a direct impact in improving the living conditions of vulnerable communities as direct beneficiaries, but also other people living close by and access to social services. It should be noted that fund matching with 20% contribution for infrastructure projects from LGUs along with in-kind contribution and voluntary work from communities has increased the efficiency of these interventions.

26% of funding spent on objective 2 to improve access to civil rights and public and social service, which has made a significant contribution in resolving a high number of civil registration cases (three times the planned number; 1703 vs 400), improved regulations to support civil registration procedures, contributed to building capacities of mediators in human security and health and child protection, contributed to building capacities of public officials in providing minority friendly services in security, health and civil registration and employment issues and contributed to the enrollment of pre-school children in kindergartens and schools and provided services for child protection through support to CPUs and community centers. Almost all the targets in this objective are either achieved or overachieved increasing thus the efficiency of funds used for this objective and reaching a higher number of beneficiaries than originally planned in the JP document. Only 3% is spent on objective 3 on policy and institutional strengthening for minority inclusion, which has been addressed also through other capacity building activities funded under objective 1 and 2.

Overall, most of funding, 60% is spent to achieve objective 1 and objective 2 focusing on activities that have directly benefited VCs: community mobilization, implementation infrastructure projects identified by community members and responding to their needs, community awareness and education on civil rights, capacity building of community members in a series of issues of importance ranging from civil rights, community policing, health, education and vocational training which contributed to improved communities life, improved knowledge on civil rights, improved capacities to access civil rights and social services.

Throughout the JP implementation, JP management staff applied UN procurement procedures (competitive bidding) for contracting services. Advertisements were posted

on UN/UNDP websites and in local and national media and information was provided on technical and financial weight and evaluation of offers. These procedures ensured that the most advantageous technical and economic offers were selected.

Organization of activities in-situ relying on community spaces and voluntary work from communities and their contribution through self-help activities has been an added value in efficiently implementing many activities.

2.3.2 JP Management Structure

29% of funding is spent on JP management at central and local level mainly funding a total of 13 people contracted from the beginning of the program: stationed in 4 regional offices:

- 1 Project Manager, 1 Financial and Administrative Assistant, 1 Civil Registration Coordinator, 1 Driver, 1 International UNV,
- Tirana, Fier, Durres and Elbasan offices: 4 National UNVs and 4 LCD Coordinators;

JP ensured its presence in the targeted regions with two staff members, one of whom UNV. It is assessed that this number is minimum given the high number, frequency and diversity of activities to be coordinated and implemented, time constraints and the immensity of responsibilities and tasks required by the LCDs in serving as experts in community mobilization, managing and coordinating the activities and dealing with a significant number of administrative and logistical matters in 13 geographically sparse communities within the targeted regions and the challenges to work with them, the complex logistics involved in reaching out communities due to lack of vehicles. Only two offices had vehicles, Tirana office which shared the driver with Durres and Elbasan office and Fier office. The two first years of the project, the regional offices had to rely on public transportation

JP has succeeded in recruiting highly qualified, committed staff with excellent organizational and communication skills, adequate experience to work with vulnerable communities, CSOs and local governments ensuring quality services and coordination. The added value in the program management team is the recruitment and engagement of qualified Roma and Egyptian individuals as UNVs, who played a vital role in facilitating access to vulnerable communities, community-led activities, encouraging participation of the community, supporting the process of defining community priorities for the implementation of the Community Upgrading Projects. They not only served as inspiring models for the community, particularly for the young people, but they availed of this opportunity to grow professionally and build self-confidence in serving their community. Staff retention has been challenging as three people have been replaced during the three year of JP implementation at different intervals, but without impacting the delivery of activities. 1 LCD Coordinator in Tirana office in year 2, 1 National UNV in Tirana in year 2, the Project Manager and the project Assistant at the beginning of year 3 has been replaced. It should be noted that staff quality was maintained with the new replacements and no gaps were created in the delivery of activities due to strong support and guidance from the Cluster Manager and team work.

Internal administrative and financial procedures are evaluated as bureaucratic, time-consuming and non-responsive to the dynamics and frequency of program activities on site.

Overall, the role of JPCG is evaluated formal, and to some extent effective in coordination of activities among UN agencies at central level.

2.3.3 Delivery of JP Work Plan

After reviewing carefully the JP document, Logical framework, annual work plans and annual reports, it can be concluded that all planned activities and outputs have been delivered, but some delays have been inevitable.

JP was formally launched in mid April 2010, but it took several months to become operational due to some delays in team recruiting, setting up of regional offices and negotiating and formalizing cooperation agreements (MoUs) with local governments, which were impacted by local elections in 2011. These processes caused some delays in the accomplishment of first and second year targets. Efforts were made to catch up in the subsequent years of 2012, and 2013 and a no cost extension for 8 months was granted until end of 2013 following mid-term evaluation recommendation.

It should be highlighted that slow start up and bureaucratic administrative procedures affected the timely delivery of activity “Feasibility Study on Vulnerable Communities in Albania”, which was originally planned in 2011 to set the baseline data for interventions. This output was basically delivered in February 2012 and hindered the setting up of a monitoring and evaluation plan of the programme with relevant baseline indicators. The lack of a monitoring and evaluation plan has adversely impacted the provision of comparable information in terms of indicators over years, which is crucial to identify progress towards objectives and adoption of corrective measures.

The performance indicators set in the JP programme document and the Logical framework have served as benchmarks to evaluate the achievement of outputs and objectives in this evaluation, but also in JP annual reports. It should be noted that output and activity indicators in the annual works are generic and have not been quantified in numbers for each year and is difficult to assess annual progress to set targets. Lack of JP M&E system with baseline targets, indicators and data sources have hindered program management to effectively measure progress and changes achieved over time.

2.4 IMPACT

Overall it is assessed that JP has brought about significant positive changes quite tangible and visible at individual, community and institutional level. It is assessed that the interventions of UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA cannot be seen and evaluated as standalone interventions, but rather as complementary in resources, skills, knowledge and expertise to maximize the benefit and impact on targeted beneficiaries and stakeholders. There is good evidence that JP has particularly contributed to:

Empowered Individuals with assertive self-perception, attitude, mentality, information, knowledge and skills (UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA)

Individuals, mainly young women and men, through JP support, have developed an assertive self-perception and attitude, high-self esteem, have become reference points for their communities and mainstream society institutions to solve a range of community

issues (security, health, education, child protection) and serve as inspiring role models for other community members. JP has identified and supported individuals with potential for personal development through training activities to enhance their communication, leadership and networking skills, their knowledge and understanding of civil rights and how and where to access them as well as improved their professional skills through vocational training courses. Above all, there is a shift in mentality from self-perception as a victim of mainstream society to self-perception as an actor of change in partnership with mainstream society institutions and other stakeholders.

BOX 1

I remember myself as quite reclusive, did not know who I was and never left my community area. This project completely changed my life. I took part in many activities and trainings organized by the project, where I learnt a lot about our civil rights, how to access them, where to go to ask for them. I learnt about the institutions and established contacts with Ombudsman, Municipality, Employment Office, Police Station, and Vocational Training Centers.

I also attended several vocational training courses and for me it was amazing to explore an unknown world, socialize with other people in the class and in the internships with businesses.

I also had a few part-time jobs and keep working when occasions arise with community or businesses, but what I like best is to serve my community. I have become their reference point, people trust me, rely on me, come to ask for my help where and how to register their children, how to get a health card or ID card, how to enroll children at school.

I raised the issue of potable water with Ombudsman and local government and it was solved. I am the contact point for the municipality and police for our community issues as well as other organizations asking information about community needs.

Panajot Alushi, Community leader, Fshati Rom, Fier

Empowered communities participating and influencing decision-making (UNDP)

There is good evidence that Roma and Egyptian communities, through JP support, mobilized and organized in CBOs and succeeded in identifying, prioritizing and agreeing community development needs, which were “packaged into 11 development projects addressing infrastructure construction or upgrading and access to social services such as pre-school education, primary health services, and community centers. The projects were consulted with local government units, which in some cases agreed to fund 20% of project costs or provide in-kind contribution.

As a result of these experiences, community members have understood that participation of men and women in continuous dialogue with each other and local government in defining their development priorities is key to improve and change their life.

BOX 2

We are not any more “dormant and passive” as we used to be. We are wide awake of our rights, situation and needs and have learned to get together and agree on our priorities and put them forward to local government or other organizations which approach us.

Now we do not feel lost, we know the doors where to knock and make ourselves heard.

Drita Alsushi, CBO member, Fshati Rom, Fier

Improvement of living conditions of targeted communities and beyond (UNDP)

Community members give high credit to JP for improving their living conditions through interventions in upgrading neighborhood infrastructure such as road and bridge construction, sewage system upgrading etc, as well as for building multi-functional community centers to provide social care and health care services. Community members report a cleaner, safer and friendlier environment for their families and display a strong motivation to upkeep it.

Community participation in activities organized in their neighborhoods like information campaigns and discussions on many social issues, trainings, and cultural shows, exchange visits among communities, self help activities and voluntary work have improved their social life, social interaction and network, community cohesion and cooperation.

Vocational training support, internships, life skills training and career advice and referral to micro-credit schemes have improved employability opportunities of Roma and Egyptians in the public and private sector and self employment. Although the number of employed individuals is not very high, still they are good examples of success in their community, as they are providing income for their families and improving their life.

Community members strongly believe that nothing would have changed in their life without JP support, yet they strongly believe now that change is possible, they know a change model which will serve as a benchmark for their development and social inclusion and are aware that they have a long way to go to break their poverty and social exclusion cycle.

BOX 3

Many organizations have come to visit us, talked to us, promised us and nothing happened. We were skeptical about JP, but their staff worked hard to earn our trust, convinced us to cooperate, brought local government officials to listen to our problems and contributed with concrete things. We are very happy with the community center built close to our community, where the new health center is next door. We do not have to go to city in cases of emergency and it is a great help for young mothers and children for check-ups.

I have attended much training with other women from our community and have learnt a lot about our rights to health services, importance periodical check-ups, children nutrition, cooking, employment. I am the representative of the community in the municipality and my challenge now is to raise my voice to solve the sewage system in my community. I already took the initiative with other community members to solve the garbage collection in cooperation with the municipality and now we have a cleaner and safer environment. We have the proof that change is possible, but we have to very active to make changes occur.

Landa Abazi, CBO member, Nishtulla, Durres

BOX 4

Dile is a young Egyptian woman who used to work as a typist in a publishing house. I wanted to learn how to use the Photoshop program, but this course was quite expensive for me. I learned about the vocational training opportunities that this project was providing for young Roma and Egyptians in the Egyptian Women's Forum. I applied and was enrolled in IT vocational training and now I can use the Photoshop in my work and I am promoted. I am very happy, because my dream came true.

Dile Xheka, VTC beneficiary, Kamza municipality

Empowered CSOs with knowledge, skills and experience to assist their communities (UNDP)

JP has capitalized on local knowledge and contacts of Roma and Egyptian CSOs with their communities and have supported them to build their capacities in several ways:

- (I) strengthening their organizational development and management capacities through project cycle management trainings;
- (II) strengthened their project implementation capacities through identification of community needs developed into small scale projects (12), which were funded by JP through micro grants;
- (III) partnered them with legal aid organization TLAS to learn and provide services to community members for civic registration issues to enable access to social and public services. Over 90% of resolved cases with registration issues is carried out by five selected Roma and Egyptian CSOs;

Through engagement of Roma and Egyptian CSOs in JP activities, they developed better connections to their communities, strengthened their capacities in solving community issues and are better positioned to serve and assist their communities in the future.

Improvement of access to civil rights and social and public services (UNDP, UNICEF)

JP is given credit for creating community awareness and understanding on civil rights, importance of civil registration as a pre-requisite to obtain social and public services. JP not only created a demand for support services for civil registration, but also responded to this demand by building local capacities of CBO members and Roma and Egyptian NGOs to facilitate this process resolving a significant number of cases (1703). In addition, JP through UNDP and UNICEF provided specialized legal assistance through TLAS for complex registration cases and contributed to adoption of three legal acts to facilitate the civic registration for Roma and Egyptians and trained public officials in civil registry and maternity homes on implementation of new registration procedures. TLAS reports that as a result of the new legal acts and training of public officials, the number of registration cases has increased significantly in the last two years.

Supportive and responsive institutions at central and local level for vulnerable communities (UNDP)

JP has contributed to a more supportive and positive attitude to Roma and Egyptian communities with regard how public institutions at central and local level perceive and handle their issues. There is evidence that public institutions at central and local level have increased their knowledge and understanding of Roma and Egyptian social economic situations through closer contacts with these communities which have led to better understanding and responding their needs. The model of participatory development planning introduced and implemented by JP has brought parties closer together and has led to the establishment and functioning of Roma Technical Committees at local level.

Roma and Egyptians are defined by public officials “as partners in need for development” who are entitled to access their civil rights and ensuing public and social services”

BOX 5

This project brought to our attention the needs of 500 families in Valias, where 60 of them are Roma and Egyptians. We went to visit them, listened to their problems and agreed with the project to jointly support several interventions: (i) reconstruction of health center which was totally dilapidated, rehabilitation of two roads and upgrading of the school yard. Our municipality contributed 20% of the costs as well provided the technical expertise for the intervention, which have improved community living conditions and access to services. The health center provides 24 hours service and three doctors and three nurses work there.

This experience has provided us with a community development model which we will use for similar community interventions.

Artan Dervishi, Deputy-Mayor, Kamza Municipality

2.5 SUSTAINABILITY

Overall, it is assessed that JP has succeeded to a large extent to ensure sustainability of achieved results through.

Multi-Stakeholder inclusion, participation, commitment and ownership of results

A clear indicator is the support, involvement, consultation and contribution of multiple stakeholders representing central and local government institutions, vulnerable communities and their CBOs, Roma and Egyptian CSOs, other donor organizations working with vulnerable communities in all phases of JP: programme design, their participation and consultation in the planning and implementation of a series of activities such as public awareness campaigns, community mobilization, trainings, workshops, study tour, working group meetings, roundtables and conferences organized throughout the JP. All these activities have served as learning opportunities from and with each-other, where each party has made its contribution for their successful implementation and the achieved results.

Knowledge, information and capacities on social inclusion built at community level

It should be noted that the sustainability of results at community level is rated quite high. Knowledge, information and capacities built at community level through CBOs and the mediators along with the collective awareness on human rights and ensuing public and social services at community level has not only created a collective awareness on social inclusion, but has generated a collective demand for it along with established work practices how to achieve it.

Structures at local level such as CBOs, mediators network in community policing, health and education as well Roma and Egyptian CSOs which were involved in the JP are capable to respond to communities needs for social inclusion as well as quite empowered to resolve their needs with the governmental authorities at local and central level. Their practical involvement in the implementation of program activities and the “learning by doing “ opportunities provided to them to support their communities have strengthened their capacities to provide services to community after the completion of program activities, have increased their access to public institutions and have increased their visibility at community.

Knowledge, information, capacities, supportive policy framework and structures in place to support social inclusion at institutional level

It should be noted that sustainability of results at institutional level is rated good. Knowledge, information and capacities built at Institutional level on social inclusion, human rights and multiculturalism are rated good and have led to supportive institutional attitudes in service provision to vulnerable communities. This is noted particularly in the service provision by local government units and the Employment Offices.

Governmental institutions have been quite responsive to JP’s interventions and

recommendations which particularly have led to an enabling policy framework through the adoption of three amendments which have facilitated civil registration for vulnerable communities. This is considered a breakthrough by service providers and beneficiaries, who report streamlined procedures and institutional support from relevant institutions (civil registry and maternity homes).

MoUs signed with LGUs formalized their willingness and interest not to actively participate in the programme, but also support financially infrastructure interventions at community level and increase the results ownership.

Development of web-based reporting and monitoring system of NAP on Roma Decade for Roma Technical Secretariat at central level and the setting up of functional Roma Sub-Technical Committees as part of Regional Committees on Planning and Assessing Social Needs at regional level have led to mainstreaming Roma and Egyptian issues into the development programs of local governments. Such structures collect and feed data to the established monitoring and reporting system on NAP for Roma Decade.

Knowledge products and models of services available to communities and public

JP has produced a series of knowledge and information products such as training manuals, research studies, information packages, leaflets and fliers that are provided to community members, R/E CSOs that can be consulted and used any time. It has also established service models in pre-school education, early child development, child protection and health protection that can be sustained and replicated in other communities by LGUs.

Coordination among the participating agencies and other donors

UN agencies have ensured that objectives under JP remain a constitutive part of their strategic frameworks and their upcoming projects and are working jointly for realizing their commitment to One UN Programme.

JP has succeeded in linking the program to other initiatives implemented by UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, WB, and UN on promotion of human rights, social inclusion, policies, regional development, youth participation, employment and migration.

Challenges to sustainability

The main challenge to sustainability of results is assessed capacity retention in public institutions at central and local level particularly in the latter. Staff turnover at local level due to local elections in May 2011 have caused loss of capacities which have affected the operationalisation of web-based monitoring and reporting of NAP for Roma Decade. It is estimated that 50% of trained local officials in data collection and data feeding into the web-based system have been replaced.

Government change following the elections in June 2013 and the re-organization of main governmental partner MOLSAEO into Ministry of Welfare and Youth as of September 2013 is expected to cause capacity losses at central level. Recent elections have affected the training of new officials at local level during the period April-September 2013.

Allocation of sufficient funds to support and sustain social inclusion measures and their implementation still needs to be ensured at institutional level at central and local government and remains a challenge to sustain the impact created by JP at central and local level.

2.6 LESSONS LEARNT

- **JP is an encouraging learning model of social inclusion programming with multiplier effects for a range of stakeholders:** central and local governments, CSOs and donors and even vulnerable communities. It has demonstrated that the multi-dimensionality poverty and social exclusion of vulnerable communities cannot be addressed by one time piecemeal and fragmentary interventions, but require consistent and cohesive multi-sectorial interventions (*health, education, employment, security, human rights, institutional support, capacity building*) coupled with multi-stakeholder partnership (*community, governmental institutions at central and local level, CSOs, UN agencies and other donors*), diversity of reinforcing activities for the same purpose (*community mobilization and awareness, public information, capacity building, exchange visits, research*) and appropriate application of multi-facet human security concept over a long period of time.
- **Engagement of national and regional institutions in programme design and implementation ensures programme relevance, institutional political will and commitment** to promote, support and implement social inclusion in policy-making through supportive legal framework and budgetary allocations and consequently ownership and sustainability of results;
- **Recruitment of professional and experienced staff and particularly engagement of qualified Roma and Egyptian individuals in the program management team is essential for building trustworthy relationships with vulnerable communities** and ensuring their participation, commitment and contribution in implementation of planned activities, ownership and sustainability of results. Team cohesion and professionalism have assured effective coordination and communication among stakeholders and partners in the implementation of activities and achieving results, despite staff turnover in the management team.
- **Close cooperation with local governments and bringing them closer to vulnerable communities and their needs, allocation of financial and in-kind contribution for infrastructure projects have all contributed to responding to communities needs and improving their life**, establishing communication and dialogue channels between local communities, local government units and their subordinate institutions. JP has also contributed in establishing a sustainable model of working with vulnerable communities and empowering them, which can be replicated and scaled up in other regions where vulnerable communities live;
- **Strengthening the capacities of national and local governments and dependant institutions is as important as strengthening the inter-governmental institutions' cooperation.**

Institutional capacity building is an on-going process due to staff turnover and governmental changes at local level following the local elections in May 2011 and at central level following general elections in June 2013. Both elections, particularly the local elections in 2011 hindered the operationalisation of the web based monitoring system of National Action Plan of Roma Decade due to staff turnover at local level. Capacity building activities have strengthened the inter-governmental institutional cooperation particularly the cooperation of Roma Technical Secretariat with local government units and their dependant institutions.

- **Active Involvement of R/E CSOs in planning processes, civil registration and community engagement activities, were important not only in implementation of the activities, but increased their organizational capacities** in dealing with vulnerable community issues and are a strong foundation for the sustainability of knowledge, skills and JP results.
- **Establishment of CBO as community forums.** CBOS played a crucial role in mobilizing communities to address their own needs through organization of self-help activities accompanied with leisure/sports events, thus contributing toward increasing human security in Roma and Egyptian neighborhoods.

2.7 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

JP has made a significant contribution in improving the human security and social inclusion of vulnerable communities over more than three years in the targeted regions, yet it is a long way to go to eliminate the systemic poverty and social exclusion of vulnerable communities in Albania.

Important mechanisms and frameworks are in place to support and institutionalize social inclusion of vulnerable communities; yet full sustainability will require continued technical and financial support from UN agencies.

It is highly recommended that similar interventions like JP which adopt a multi-sector, multi-level and multi-layered interventions through multi-stakeholder partnerships and human-rights based approach should continue to keep up the momentum of trust, awareness, positive attitudes and capacities built at community and institutional level.

Capacity strengthening and institutional support to public institutions at central and local level with regard to social inclusion should continue given the high staff turnover in governmental institutions due to political reasons. It is recommended that technical assistance should be provided by UN agencies, particularly UNDP through EU-funded project on vulnerable communities to build and strengthen institutional capacities at local level for operationalisation of web-based reporting and monitoring of NAP for Roma Decade or other projects.

It is recommended that assistance in the future should focus in integration of Roma and Egyptians in the labor market through self-employment and entrepreneurship by providing grants for start-ups.

Clear and consolidated performance measuring frameworks and M&E systems need to be established prior to implementation of complex interventions such as JP by establishing baseline targets, indicators and data sources to enable program management to effectively measure progress and changes achieved over time.

JP has been a successful innovative intervention for supporting vulnerable communities and it is highly recommended the documentation and dissemination of lessons learnt and best practices from the field for replicating them in other regions with vulnerable communities.

UN Inter-agency collaboration has been quite effective at annual work plans and output level at central management level, but not in timely information sharing on the activity implementation and delivery. In the future, it is recommended harmonization of communication strategy on the image of JP as a UN rather than a UNDP Program along with harmonization of monitoring and reporting procedures for a more efficient joint program governance and delivery. It is important to find coherence and synergy with UN agencies as well as other projects that have R/E communities in the focus, in order to maximize resources and joint opportunities.

ANNEX 1

LIST OF INTERVIEWED STAKEHOLDERS

No	Institution/Organization	Name of Stakeholder	Position of Stakeholder	F	M	Date
PROJECT MANAGEMENT UNDP						
1	UNDP	Anila Shehu,	Project Manager	F		31/10/2013
2	UNDP	Entela Lako	Cluster Manager	F		6/11/2013
3	UNDP project Office, Tirane	Valbona Dervishi	Local Development Coordinator	F		24/10/2013
4	UNDP Project Office, Durres	Bledina Bushi	Local Development Coordinator	F		21/10/2013
5	UNDP project Office, Tirane	Fabjola Zeqiri	Administrative Assistant			14/11/2013
6	UNDP Project Office, Durres	Saimir Nasufi	Field Facilitator	M		21/10/2013
7	UNDP Project Office, Fier	Klodiana Tosuni	Local Development Coordinator	F		22/10/2013
GOVERNMENTAL PARTNERS AT CENTRAL, REGIONAL AND LOCAL LEVEL						
1.	MOLSAEO	Ilda Bozo	Director of Cross-Cutting Strategies Directorate	F	F	1/11/2013
2.	Roma Technical Secretariat	Blerina Zoto	Head of Secretariat			1/11/2013
3.	Regional Council, Fier	Astrit Hysa	Director of Social Services Directorate	M		22/10/2013
4	Municipality of Kamza	Artan Dervishi	Deputy Mayor	M		24/10/2013
5.	Commune Qender, Fier	Harilla Mile	Head of Commune	M		22/10/2013
6.	Vocational Training Centers					
	Regional Employment Offices in Tirana	Fatjon Duli	Director	M		24/10/2013
7.	Regional Employment Offices, Durres	Majlinda Mema;	Head of Employment Services;	F		21/10/2013
8.	Regional Education Directorate , Fier	Mirela Emiri	Director	F		22/10/2013
CSOs						
1	IRCA, Durres	Xhesika Korra	Trainer, Mediator	F		21/10/2013
2.	AlbContact Center, Durres	Edlira Pajuni	Administrator	F		21/10/2013
3.	VTC, Fier	Agron Dule	Administrator	M		22/10/2013
4.	TLAS	Raimonda Bozo	Executive Director	F		14/11/2012

BENEFICIARIES					
1	IRCA; Durres	Xhesika Korra	Trainer	F	21/10/2013
2	CBO –Nishtulla, Durres	Landa Abazi	CBO leader	F	21/10/2013
3.	Amaro Drom Nishtulla, Durres	Emilaino Elmazi	Member	M	21/10/2013
4.	CBO Roma Village, Fier	Panajot Alushi	CBO Leader		22/10/2013
5.	CBO Roma Village, Fier	Drita Allushi	CBO member	F	22/10/2013
6.	Romani Baxt, Fier	Fatos Koci	Member	M	
7.	CBO Valias, Kamez, Tirane	Valentina Runga	CBO member	F	24/10/2013
8.	CBO Shkoze, Tirane	Orkida Drizi	CBO leader	F	24/10/2013
9.	CBO Bregu I Lumit, Tirane	Naile Selami	CBO member	F	24/10/2013
10.	VTC Beneficiary, Tirane	Dile Xheka	Trainee	F	24/10/2013
11.	VTC Beneficiary, Tirane	Briselda Reme	Trainee	F	24/10/2013
12.	VTC Beneficiary	Xhekson Xhela	Trainee	M	24/10/2013
UN AGENCIES					
1.	UNFPA	Elsona Agolli	Coordinator	F	5/11/2013
2.	UNICEF	Mirlinda Bushati	Coordinator	F	5/11/2013

ANNEX 2

LIST OF REVIEWED DOCUMENTS

JP EVLC signed project document

JP EVLC First Substantive Report

JP EVLC Second Substantive Report

Pp EVLC Third Substantive Report

Annual Work Plan (AWP) Jul. 2010 – Mar. 2011

Annual Work Plan (AWP) April 2011 – March 2012

Annual Work Plan (AWP) April 2012 – March 2013

JP Logical Framework

JP EVLC Mid-Term Evaluation

National Strategy for Improving Roma Living Conditions

The Decade of Roma Inclusion

Final Report “Empowerment of Vulnerable Communities in Albania”

Needs Assessment Study on Roma and Egyptian Communities in Albania

Capacity needs and trainings Assessment of Roma/Egyptian NGOs

Rapid assessment for accommodating Roma and Egyptian communities in the labour market

Report on Community Awareness Activities on Health issues by Regional Health Directorate, Durrës, UNICEF

Establish services to protect children from abuse, neglect, violence and exploitation through the operation of the Multifunctional Community Centre, Municipality Unit No. 7, ARSIS

UNEG Norms for Evaluation in the UN System

Standards for Evaluation in the UN system

ANNEX 3

GUIDING EVALUATION QUESTIONS

1. Relevance

- To what extent do the objectives and design of the project respond to government development policies and strategies at national and regional level?
- To what extent the objectives and design of the project are in line with strategic goals and priorities defined in UN country programme/One UN Programme of Cooperation?
- To what extent do the objectives and design of the project respond to locally defined stakeholders' needs and priorities?
- How coherent is the project with the development agendas of the different institutions involved and how does this affect the project (positively and negatively)?
- Are the activities and outputs of the project consistent with the overall goal and the attainment of its objectives?
- Are the activities and outputs of the project consistent with the objectives and missions of the different partners involved?

2. Effectiveness

- To what extent are the expected objectives/results of the project achieved? What indicators demonstrate that?
- What are the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives/ results?
- Was the project activities implemented in compliance with the work plan (timing and outputs)?
- How effective were local management structures (e.g. project focal point or any structure within local government such as staff of the municipality) of the project?
- How effective/cooperative/supportive was the participation of different relevant actors (e.g. MOLSAEO, regional and local authorities, VCTs, RECs, , etc.) How are these structures participating in project implementation? How is this participation contributing to progress toward the objectives of the project?
- How efficient was the process by which the Annual work plans were reviewed and approved. How were resources allocated to each site?

3. Efficiency

- Were the project funds managed effectively? How? Could the activities and outputs been delivered with fewer resources without reducing their quality and quantity?
- Have UNDP project management structure, managerial support and coordination mechanisms effectively supported the delivery of the programme?

4. Impact

- What are the changes (positive and negative) produced at institutional/ national/ regional/local/community level?
- What real difference have the activities made to the beneficiaries? What are the most significant changes that this project has supported and generated? How would VCs have been like without the project intervention?

5. Sustainability

- Is the project supported by national/local institutions? Do these institutions demonstrate ownership of the project results, leadership, commitment and technical capacity to maintain/implement the benefits of the project?
- What is the likelihood that the benefits from the project will be maintained for a reasonably long period of time following the end of the project? In how far were the project results institutionalized? What measures have been put in place to ensure sustainability of Project results? What are the key challenges to sustainability?"
- Is there a clearly defined exit strategy and to what extent does it contribute to sustainability?

6. Other Evaluation Criteria

6.1 Partnerships

- How were the partners involved in the design and implementation of the project?
- What value do the different partners bring in the implementation of JP?
- What were the key factors contributing to building good partnerships?

6.2 Gender

- Has the project followed a gender sensitive approach?
- What is the level of participation of men and women in the project?
- Does the project work specifically with women's groups and organizations and is this an effective approach?
- Are there any changes in attitudes and behaviors towards gender relationships among the beneficiaries that can be noted, and to what extent does the project contribute to these changes?
- Are there any actions promoted by the project that support changes in gender relationships?

6.3 Coordination

- Are there specific actions to promote the coordination among different development actors in the context of this project? Which ones?
- Are there examples of good coordination practice emerging from this project that can inform future actions?

6.4 Human Rights

- What are the practical measures taken by the project to guarantee a human rights perspective? Was this approach effective?
- Does the project have a specific inclusion approach?

6.5 Capacity Development

- What are the specific capacity development activities promoted by the project? What are the most significant results of these activities?
- At what level are capacities developed (e.g. national, regional, local, organizational, individual)? What are the main challenges and constraints to developing capacities in the different levels?

ANNEX 4

EVALUATION SCHEDULE

Tasks	Days	Timeframe	Responsibility	Location
Inception Phase				
Documentation review and request for additional documentation	3 days	9-11 October 2013	Evaluator	Tirana
Development of draft inception report	2 days	14-15 October 2013	Evaluator	Tirana
Finalization of inception report following inputs from UNDP/UN agencies	0.5 days		Evaluator	Tirana
Deliverable: Submission of Final Inception Report		17 October 2013	Evaluator	
Key Informant interviews and focus group discussions	8 days	18 October-15 November October 2013	Evaluator	Tirana, Fier, Durrës,
Data Analysis and Reporting Phase				
Data analysis and development of evaluation report	8 days	16 November- 24 November 2013 ; 29	Evaluator	Tirana
Deliverable: Submission of first draft of evaluation report		25 November 2013	Evaluator	Tirana
UNDP to provide feedback		29 November 2013	UNDP	Tirana
Incorporation of UNDP Comments	2 days	2 December 2013	Evaluator	Tirana
Review of final draft by UNDP		5 December 2013	UNDP	Tirana
Incorporation of UNDP comments	1 day	7 December 2013	Evaluator	Tirana
PPT report preparation and	0.5 day	9 December 2013	Evaluator	Tirana
Deliverable: Submission of final evaluation report		10 December 2013	Evaluator	Tirana

ANNEX 5

EVALUATION SCHEDULE

No.	Infrastructure Project Name	Total amount of amended contract ALL
1.	Road Rehabilitation in Roma quarter - Fushe Kruje	4,050,406
2.	Construction of Sewage System - first phase in Roma Village, Qender Commune, Fier	4,561,596
3.	Construction of Multifunctional Center in Levan Commune	8,829,612
4.	Surrounding and Systematization of School Yard Valias, Kamza Municipality	3,135,911
5	Construction of Bridge, Channel Syst., Road rehabilitation, Xhamia Quarter, Peqin	6,525,889
6	Construction of Multifunctional Centre in Cerrik	5,948,044
7	Construction of Community Center in Nish Tulla Quarter, Durres	13,036,880
8	Construction of Community Center in Rrapishte Quarter, Elbasan	12,191,527
9	Reconstruction of Health Center in Valias + two roads	5,848,623
10	Reconstruction of "HOUSE OF COLORS" Tirana	3,276,863
11	Surrounding wall social center ShishTufine	2,876,406
	TOTAL IN ALL	70,281,756
	TOTAL IN USD	675,786

ANNEX 6

LIST OF INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS 2011-2013

PRESENTATION ON KEY FINDINGS

Relevance

- JP is highly relevant with national strategic objectives and priorities defined in several government documents: (Inter-sectorial Strategy for Improving Roma Living Conditions (2003) and its Action Plan (2009), Roma Decade National Action Plan (2009);
- JP responded to address identified institutional capacity gaps to operationalize and implement the strategic legal framework in place.
- JP is fully aligned with UN strategic goal to enhance development results and impact in implementing One UN programme 2006-2010 particularly outcome 2 “on greater inclusive participation in public policy and decision-making”, where Roma and marginalized groups are selected a priority area of joint collaboration under One UN Programme.
- JP is quite relevant to respond to vulnerable community needs identified through reliable evidence based research conducted by World Bank, UNDP, UNICEF prior to program design and validated with additional research in the course of the program.

Efficiency

- It is assessed that the management of JP funds has been quite efficient. It has used its financial and human resources strategically and provided good value for money by supporting implementation of a multitude of activities addressing realistic needs and capacity gaps identified during JP design and inception phase through research studies and consultation with stakeholders. 60% of funds have directly benefited the beneficiaries through upgrading infrastructure projects, community, R/E CSO capacity building and institutional support for responding to vulnerable communities needs

Effectiveness

- There is strong evidence that JP, through establishment of 13 functional CBOs, has provided a successful participatory community development model at local level through engagement of vulnerable communities in identifying and agreeing their development needs and priorities in consultation with local governments.
- 20 development priorities packaged into 11 infrastructure upgrading projects

have directly contributed to improvement of living conditions of beneficiary vulnerable communities and beyond and provision of social services (health care and pre-school education) in the new or rehabilitated premises.

- Access to rights has been facilitated through resolution of over 1703 concrete civil registration cases (administrative and legal), adoption of three legal acts to facilitate the civic registration for Roma and Egyptians as well as training of vrelevant authorities in civic registration procedures.
- Social and public services such as health care, employment services, economic aid, access to pension schemes etc. have become more accessible by a number of vulnerable Roma and Egyptian individuals.
- JP activities contributed in bringing services closer to the needs of vulnerable communities by establishing a network of community policing and health mediators, as well as provision of child protection services through CPUs and multi-purpose center, pre-school education services, early child development counseling and support services and vocational training.
- JP strengthened the institutional capacities at central and local level to implement and monitor policies targeting vulnerable ethnic communities through development of internet-based reporting and monitoring system of National Action Plan (NAP) on Roma Decade.
- 150 officials at central and local level in partnership with TIPA are trained on data collection and data entry into the monitoring system as well as setting up functional Regional Committees on Planning and Assessing Social Needs and establishment of Roma Sub-Technical Committees as part of them to review progress and implementation of commitments on NAP on Roma Decade at local and regional level.

Impact and Sustainability

- JP has brought about significant positive changes quite tangible and visible at individual, community and institutional level. It is assessed that the interventions of UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA cannot be seen and evaluated as standalone interventions, but rather as complementary in resources, skills, knowledge and expertise to maximize the benefit and impact on targeted beneficiaries and stakeholders.
- JP has succeeded to a large extent to ensure sustainability of achieved results through: (i) multi-stakeholder inclusion, participation, commitment and ownership of results; (ii) knowledge, information and capacities on social inclusion built at community level, (iii) knowledge, information, capacities, supportive policy framework and structures in place to support social inclusion at institutional level (iv) knowledge products and models of services available to communities and public.

Main Conclusions and Recommendations

- JP has made a significant contribution in improving the human security and social inclusion of vulnerable communities over more than three years in the targeted regions;
- Important mechanisms and frameworks are in place to support and institutionalize social inclusion of vulnerable communities;

- It is highly recommended that similar interventions like JP which adopt a multi-sector, multi-level and multi-layered interventions through multi-stakeholder partnerships and human-rights based approach should continue to keep up the momentum of trust, awareness, positive attitudes and capacities built at community and institutional level.
- Capacity strengthening and institutional support to public institutions at central and local level with regard to social inclusion should continue given the high staff turnover in governmental institutions due to political reasons.
- It is recommended that technical assistance should be provided by UN agencies, particularly UNDP through EU-funded project on vulnerable communities to build and strengthen institutional capacities at local level for operationalisation of web-based reporting and monitoring of NAP for Roma Decade or other projects.
- It is recommended that assistance in the future should focus in integration of Roma and Egyptians in the labor market through self-employment and entrepreneurship by providing grants for start-ups.
- Clear and consolidated performance measuring frameworks and M&E systems need to be established prior to implementation of complex interventions such as JP by establishing baseline targets, indicators and data sources to enable program management to effectively measure progress and changes achieved over time.
- JP has been a successful innovative intervention for supporting vulnerable communities and it is highly recommended the documentation and dissemination of lessons learnt and best practices from the field for replicating them in other regions with vulnerable communities.
- UN Inter-agency collaboration has been quite effective at annual work plans and output level at central management level, but not in timely information sharing on the activity implementation and delivery. In the future.
- It is recommended harmonization of communication strategy on the image of JP as a UN rather than a UNDP Program along with harmonization of monitoring and reporting procedures for a more efficient joint program governance and delivery. It is important to find coherence and synergy with UN agencies as well as other projects that have R/E communities in the focus, in order to maximize resources and joint opportunities.

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