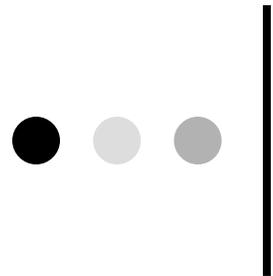


GENDER RESPONSIVE BUDGETING AT LOCAL LEVEL IN CONTEXT OF LIMITED DECENTRALIZATION



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C3 - Center for International Development



Outline of the presentation

- The Case of Albania – caught between political and administrative decentralization
- Why Economic Aid?
- How the study was conducted?
- Main findings
- Key recommendations from the analysis
- Plans going foreword



The Case of Albania – caught between political and administrative decentralization

Albania has initiated a decentralisation process – where the administrative, political and fiscal tasks, competences and resources are transferred to the municipalities and communes.



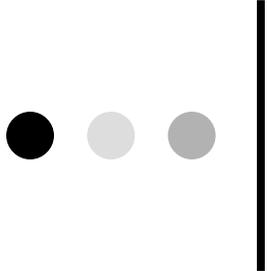
The Case of Albania – caught between political and administrative decentralization (*Cont'd...*)

- Legal framework

- 1) **Albanian Constitution** (November 1998) - stipulating basic constitutional principles related to local decentralisation.
- 2) **European Chart for Local Autonomy** (ratified in 1999).
- 3) **National Strategy for Decentralisation and Local Government** (adopted in November 1999).
- 4) **Law on the Organization and Functioning of the Local Government** in Albania (adopted in 2000).
- 5) **National Cross-cutting Strategy for Regional Development** (adopted in 2007).

- ● ● | **The Case of Albania – caught between political and administrative decentralization** *(Cont'd...)*

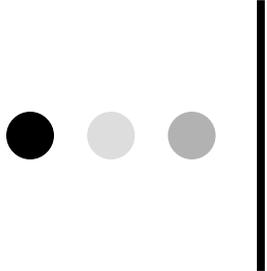
- To date, the **full transfer** of authority has **not been completed**.
- **Division of competencies** between Central and Local authorities **remains unclear** in some areas of policy implementation.
- The **local government units** are **challenged** by this process, because of their **limited resources, capacities and competences**.



Why Economic Aid?

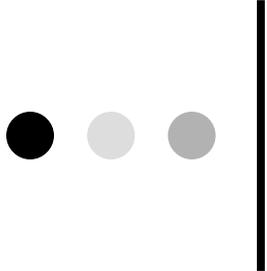
- In 2008, UNIFEM initiated its work on **GRB in four pilot municipalities** in Albania.
- Conducted initial **mapping of women situation**, their **key needs and priorities**, with special focus on **unpaid care work** in the household.
- **Partnerships** were established with **local authorities** and **grassroots NGOs** and consultations were carried out to identify the most important issues facing women at the local level revealing:

women's unequal access to social services – including social assistance for poor women and their families - was a priority, particularly in the poorer regions of the country.



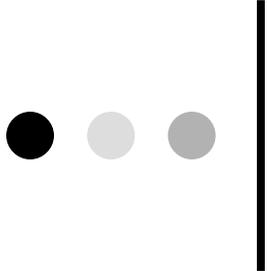
How the study was conducted?

- UNIFEM supported local authorities in two municipalities, Elbasan and Kukës, to conduct a **Beneficiary Analysis of the Social Assistance and Economic Aid Law**.
- The methodology used for the Case Study in both municipalities was as follows:
 - 1) **Desk-top review** of the current Law of Economic Aid, National Strategy on Social Inclusion, National Strategy on Social Protection, and the NSGE-DV.
 - 2) **Interviews with national and local authorities:** State Social Services, Ministry of Labour Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Local Authorities, Social Administrators in local administrative units of the SSS) on the economic aid scheme and process.



How the study was conducted? (*Cont'd...*)

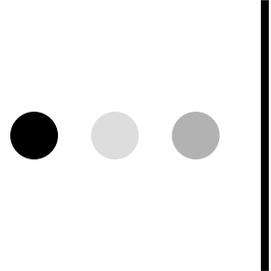
- 3) **Focus group discussions** with local beneficiaries receiving EA in Elbasan and Kukës Municipalities - women heads of households and women member of household receiving EA with support of Local MGO.
- 4) **Review of EA Case Files** in coordination with the Elbasan and Kukës Municipalities.



How the study was conducted? (*Cont'd...*)

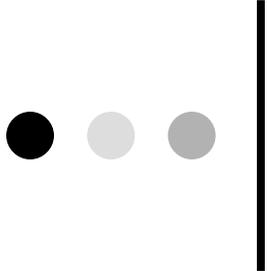
- 5) The analysis was also focused on the **monitoring and evaluation systems of the current EA Law** and those of the abovementioned National Strategies to determine how their impact on women and men is being measured.

- 6) **Interviews with government administrators** working in this field were carried out **to assess the possibility to collect sex disaggregated data** in all the steps of allocation process of EA.



Main findings from the analysis

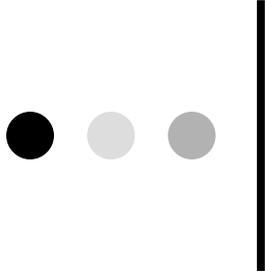
- The **Economic Aid Law** assumes that the **head of household is a man.**
- When women apply as heads of household, **they must prove that they occupy this status with specific documentation.**
- Women can only be heads of households when the woman is:
 - Divorced
 - Widowed
 - Not listed as a dependent in another household
 - Unwed mother



Main findings from the analysis

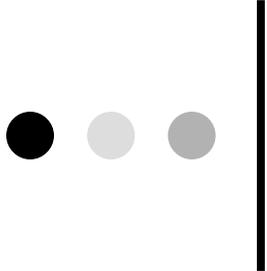
(Cont'd...)

- **Women** whose **husbands are living abroad** but who do not send remittances **are not eligible for EA**, since they do not qualify as heads of household.
- In **Kukës Municipality**, the research found:
 - 1) 2 beneficiary households headed by divorced women;
 - 2) 130 headed by widowed women;
 - 3) 93% of heads of beneficiaries households being men.
- In **Elbasan Municipality**, the research found:
 - 1) 85% of heads of beneficiaries households being men;
 - 2) While in addition to divorced and widowed heads, there were also other categories of female heads who received grants.



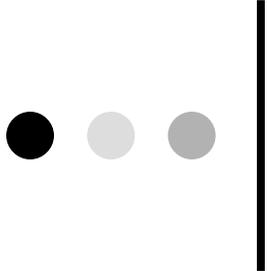
Main findings from focus groups and interviews

- The main concern of women focus group participants was the **small amount of the grant**.
- There was a **clear difference in spending patterns** between families with male and female heads.
- The women in Elbasan and Kukës reported great **difficulty in obtaining the documents** to prove they are heads of households.
- **Lack of understanding** by women and men heads of household with regard to the **economic aid scheme functioning**.



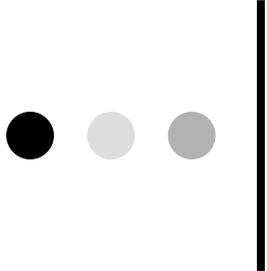
Key recommendations from the analysis

- A heads-of-household approach enshrines an inherent gender bias.
- The **law** should instead **target individuals**, and within this, **their dependents**.
- The **need to expand the categories of female-headed households** who are eligible for NE:
 - ***Women who are divorced but do not have documents** to prove that their husbands do not pay court-ordered maintenance for the children.*
 - ***Women who are separated** from their husbands but **do not have a court decision** to prove this.*
 - ***Women whose husbands have migrated** but do not send regular and sufficient remittances.*
 - ***Abandoned** women.*
 - *Women whose husbands are in **prison**.*
 - *Women whose families are **living under blood feuds**.*



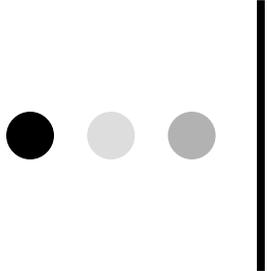
Key recommendations from the analysis *(Cont'd...)*

- **The law should allow alternative documents such as:**
 - **Divorced women:** An affidavit from a municipal worker or city councillor, or a statement made by the woman before the police (avoiding the cost of a notary) stating that the father does not pay maintenance for the children.
 - **Separated women:** A court-issued document or letter stating that the divorce process is underway.
 - **Abused women who have left their homes:** A domestic violence protection order or statement by police, non-governmental organisation or local government office that has provided services to the woman.



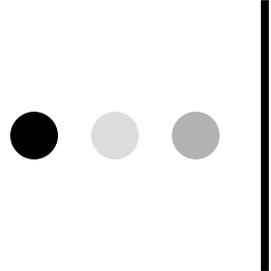
Key recommendations from the analysis *(Cont'd...)*

- **Women whose husbands have migrated and are not sending regular remittances:** A statement by a municipal worker or community leader verifying that the woman has not received payments from her husband.
- **Women living in blood feuds:** A statement of the Qarku or Mayor's office and a signed statement (witnessed) by the husband or police officer.



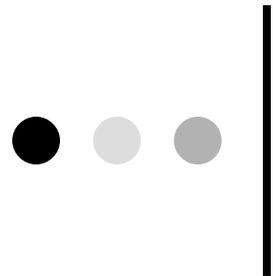
Key recommendations from the analysis *(Cont'd...)*

- **Community work** should be **offered on part-time basis** to allow women for a better reconciliation of professional and family life.
- Women who do community work during work hours should be given **access to free day care or kindergarten services for their children.**
- The **amount of NE should be increased** so that it can lift families out of poverty. The maximum limit should be removed as it discriminates against big families which often have more children.
- The **national government** should **allocate the full amount needed to cover all the beneficiaries** identified by communes and municipalities.



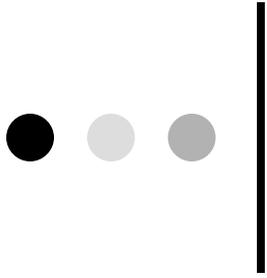
Plans going foreword

- The **recommendations** have been **formally presented to the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities**, as the institution responsible on the Law
- UNIFEM cooperated with MOLSAEO in **integrating key recommendations into the revised Social Assistance/Economic Aid Law**
- UNIFEM is now **working with the government** to ensure that the abovementioned **recommendations are incorporated into the revised law and subsequent policies**



● ● ● | **Plans going foreword** (*Cont'd...*)

- UNIFEM is **expanding research into communes** to determine **how procedure may differ at the village level**
- UNIFEM is **supporting the two municipalities** to improve the **tracking of the status of women**, including vulnerable women
- UNIFEM is **supporting the PM office** in their work on the **revision of the EA Law**
- UNIFEM is **discussing the findings and recommendations** of the study with the **WB** and other **UN agencies** active in this field.



Thank you!