



Evaluation

Mid-Term Evaluation of Austrian Development Cooperation's
Albania Country Strategy 2015–2020 (extended until 2021)

Vol II – Annex

 Federal Ministry
Republic of Austria
European and International
Affairs

 Austrian
Development
Agency

Imprint

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The evaluation was commissioned by the Directorate-General for Development Cooperation of the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs and the Evaluation Unit of the Austrian Development Agency and conducted by



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September 2020

This is an independent evaluation report. Views and conclusions expressed do not necessarily represent those of the contractors.

Contents

Appendix 1:	Evidence Assessment Grid
Appendix 2:	Portfolio Review
Appendix 3:	Case Study on Cross-cutting Issues in Integrated Water Resource Management
Appendix 4:	Theories of Change for the Three Thematic Priority Areas
Appendix 5:	Terms of Reference for This Evaluation
Appendix 6:	Bibliography
Appendix 7:	Survey and Interview Instruments

Appendix 1: Evidence Assessment Grid

Evaluation criteria: Relevance	
EQ1	To what extent does the strategy and its intended results take into account and respond to the specific context in the partner country, particularly Albania’s accession process to the European Union, and the demands of the target population, including the most vulnerable/marginalized?
Indicator/descriptor	<p>Contextual relevance in relation to needs in the context of EU accession, including responding to commitments for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving the quality of public services. • A focus on sustainable development through employment. • Alignment with national good governance reform strategies arising from EU accession <p>Plausible theories of change for addressing EU accession and responding to demands of target populations</p>
Finding 1	<i>1: The Country Strategy is relevant to context and needs, but it provides insufficient analyses of how policies impinge on meeting the demands of the most marginalised. This weakens its relevance for prioritisation among those needs. This is due to the Country Strategy being interpreted as being primarily a statement of the priority thematic areas that can be supported. There is a technical bias that sometimes limits attention to the factors in the political and administrative context that dictate whether approaches to reaching the most vulnerable are relevant and achievable.</i>
Evidence for Finding 1	<p>Interviews: 8, 33, 39, 40, 53, 54, 67, 68</p> <p>Documents reviewed:</p> <p>Republic of Albania, Council of Ministers, <i>National Strategy for Development and Integration (NSDI) 2015-2020</i>.</p> <p>Republic of Albania, Council of Ministers, <i>Albania’s Economic Reform Programme, 2016-2018</i>;</p> <p>Republic of Albania, Council of Ministers, <i>National Strategy for Integrated Water Management, 2018–2027</i></p> <p>Austrian Development Cooperation (2015), <i>Albania Country Strategy 2015-2020 (extended until 2021)</i>, 09/2015.</p> <p>Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs, Directorate-General for Development Cooperation (2016). <i>The future needs development. Development needs a future. Three-Year Programme on Austrian Development Policy 2016–2018</i>, updated 2017.</p>

	<p>Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs, Directorate-General for Development Cooperation (2017). <i>The future needs development. Development needs a future. Three-Year Programme on Austrian Development Policy 2016–2018, updated 2017.</i></p> <p>Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs, Directorate-General for Development Cooperation (2006, reprint 2011), <i>Policy Document-Human Rights, Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs Directorate-General for Development Cooperation.</i></p> <p>Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and International Affairs, Directorate-General for Development (2017), <i>Policy Document-Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls: Implementing the EU Gender Action Plan II 2016–2020.</i></p> <p>Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs Directorate-General for Development Cooperation. (2006, reprint 2011), <i>Good Governance: Policy Document, Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs Directorate-General for Development Cooperation.</i></p> <p>Syspons (2020), <i>Strategic Evaluation of the ADC Engagement on Good Governance (2007–2017)</i>. 03/2020.</p> <p>Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights Statement (17.12.2019), Available at https://www.coe.int/en/web/commissioner/-/commissioner-urges-albania-s-parliament-to-review-bills-which-restrict-freedom-of-expression</p> <p>European Commission (2000), <i>Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 Establishing a Framework for Community Action in the Field of Water policy.</i></p> <p>Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth, Albania (2014), <i>National Employment and Skills Strategy 2014-2020</i>. 11/2014. Available at: https://www.financa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/NESS-ENG-8-1-15_final-version.pdf</p> <p>Republic of Albania Institute of Statistics (INSAT) (2015), <i>Youth in Albania: Challenges in Changing Times</i>.</p> <p>Thomas, Stefan (2019), <i>Policies for human capital development: Albania – An ETF Torino Process Assessment</i>. Available at: https://www.etf.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/publications/policies-human-capital-development-albania-etf-torino</p> <p>Other: Survey Q6, Q7, Q9</p> <p>Observations on triangulation: Findings compare the statements in the Country Strategy itself with (primarily) interview and survey data and (secondarily) relevant issues raised in the documentation reviewed. The majority of interviewees were unaware of the content of the Country Strategy per se, so there was strong emphasis on their interpretation when prodded with questions related to the theory of change.</p>
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Finding 2	2: The Country Strategy is relevant to the EU accession process in terms of alignment with the technical priorities, but implications for prioritisation to achieve Austrian policy objectives are unclear.
Evidence for Finding 2	<p>Interviews: 12, 17, 27, 31, 33, 36, 38, 39, 46, 50, 51, 53, 60, 61, 62</p> <p>Documents reviewed: Austrian Development Agency, Coordination Office Tirana (2018), <i>Semi-annual Strategic Implementation Report, Coordination Office Tirana, Reporting Period: July – December 2018.</i></p> <p>European Commission (2020), <i>Revised enlargement methodology: Questions and Answers.</i> Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/qanda_20_182</p> <p>European Commission (2020), <i>Commission Staff Working Document: Update on the Republic of Albania</i>, 02.03.2020. Available at https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/update-on-the-republic-of-albania.pdf</p> <p>Other: Survey Q5</p> <p>Observations on triangulation: Findings primarily draw on interview and survey data about programming assessed against perceptions of EU accession priorities, references to related processes and stated objectives in documentation. There is clear consensus across these data sources.</p>

Relevance	
Evaluation criteria:	
EQ2	To what extent is the strategy coherent with other ADC strategic documents relevant to Albania, how is coherence being monitored and how are discrepancies being addressed?
Indicator/descriptor	<p>Policy relevance with a focus on whether there is coherence with relation to cross-cutting issues</p> <p>Mainstreaming of social inclusion, gender equality, the environment and climate change</p> <p>Visibility and application of a human rights-based approach</p>

Finding 3	3: The Country Strategy document itself is largely coherent with ADC policy documents (albeit lacking in detail). Strategic coherence with policy documents is largely addressed in the design and/or implementation phases of projects that have already been selected based on their alignment with the thematic priority areas, but the coherence of the thematic portfolios with these policies is not being sufficiently monitored.
Evidence for Finding 3	<p>Interviews: 7, 44, 47, 53, 54, 55, 61, 69</p> <p>Documents reviewed: Austrian Development Cooperation (2015), <i>Albania Country Strategy 2015-2020 (extended until 2021)</i>, 09/2015. ADC (2006, reprint 2011) Policy Document-Human Rights.</p> <p>Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and International Affairs, Directorate-General for Development (2017), <i>Policy Document-Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls: Implementing the EU Gender Action Plan II 2016–2020</i>.</p> <p>Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs Directorate-General for Development Cooperation. (2006, reprint 2011), <i>Good Governance: Policy Document, Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs Directorate-General for Development Cooperation</i>.</p> <p>Federal Austrian Ministry for Integration, Europe and International Affairs (2014), <i>Peer Review of Austria Memorandum 2014</i>, 04/2014.</p> <p>Austrian Development Agency (2019), <i>Evaluation: Environmental and Social Impact Management at ADA</i>, Vol 1-Main Report.</p> <p>OECD (2020), <i>OECD Development Co-operation Peer Reviews: Austria 2020</i>.</p> <p>Other: Survey Q6, Q7, Q8, Q9, Q10, Case Study</p> <p>Observations on triangulation: Findings are primarily based on interview and survey responses about the availability and application of instruments and capacities to ensure the implementation of ADC policy objectives as set out in relevant documentation, as well as a textual analysis of available documentation. The Evaluation Team also observed and analysed instances in interviews where attention to thematic and cross-cutting policies was absent (as an indicator of weak attention to policy compliance).</p>

Evaluation criteria: Relevance	
EQ3	How relevant are the projects implemented to the Strategy in terms of objectives and results? And what potential options for improvement exist?
Indicator/ descriptor	<p>Policy relevance in relation to project specific objectives</p> <p>Plausible theories of change for addressing EU accession and responding to demands of target populations</p> <p>Plausible theories of change taking into consideration institutional factors</p>
Finding 4	4: The objectives of the Country Strategy are highly relevant in relation to achieving results at project level. These are hypothetically aligned with ADC policies, but the theories of change have a "missing middle" regarding how these direct results are expected to actually lead to long-term impacts.
Evidence for Finding 4	<p>Interviews: 17, 22, 39, 46,47, 54, 62, 64</p> <p>Documents reviewed: Austrian Development Agency, <i>Project Fact Sheet: 6532-01/2017 EUSIWM / EU Support to Integrated Water Management - OEZA Kofinanzierung.</i></p> <p>Austrian Embassy Technical Cooperation, Coordination Office Tirana (2018), <i>Austrian Cooperation Strategy – SDG Indicators.</i> Letter to Prime Minister’s Office, Albania. 04.12.2018.</p> <p>Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and International Affairs, Directorate-General for Development (2017), <i>Policy Document-Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls: Implementing the EU Gender Action Plan II 2016–2020.</i></p> <p>Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs, Directorate-General for Development Cooperation (2006, reprint 2011), <i>Policy Document-Human Rights, Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs Directorate-General for Development Cooperation.</i></p> <p>EU Commission (2019), <i>Commission Staff Working Document, Albania 2019 Report.</i></p> <p>Gedeshi, Ilir & King, Russell. (2018), <i>New Trends in Potential Migration from Albania</i>, available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/331571437 New Trends in Potential Migration from Albania</p>

	<p>Cooperation and Development Institute. (2016). Comprehending Albanian migration to Germany in the period 2 014 – 2016. Working Paper “Berlin Process Series” Migration/2/2016. Available at: http://cdinstitute.eu/web/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/ANGLISHT.pdf</p> <p>Other: Survey Q6, Q7, Q8, Q10, Case Study</p> <p>Observations on triangulation: Findings are based on analyses of illustrative projects so as to contrast theories of change (developed in discussions with ADC) with perceptions of a range of interviewees and survey respondents working within or advising on programmes. This has included contrasting the assumptions, stated (or implied) in project documentation and interview responses.</p>
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Evaluation criteria: Effectiveness	
EQ4	What have been the results achieved within the three priority sectors over the evaluated period? How did the Strategy enable these results? Did any unintended effects occur as a result of the Strategy and its implementation, positive or negative? Any missed opportunities?
Indicator/descriptor	Overview of results achieved in the three sectors/themes and overarching issues impinging on effectiveness in achieving results with a particular focus on the different levels of results within the three theories of change in terms of outputs and outcomes , including the plausibility that these will lead to addition positive/negative and intended/unintended outcomes
Finding 5	5: Governance: The Country Strategy has enabled a flexible but rather fragmented process that has led to a range of positive but somewhat inconclusive results.
Evidence for Finding 5	<p>Interviews: 14, 15, 16, 17, 24, 25, 27, 29, 30, 32, 36, 44, 46, 47, 57</p> <p>Documents reviewed: Syspons (2020), <i>Strategic Evaluation of the ADC Engagement on Good Governance (2007–2017)</i>. 03/2020.</p> <p>Other: Survey Q6, Q10</p> <p>Observations on triangulation: Findings are based on a significant number of interview and survey responses, as well as external assessments ADC governance programming in Albania. No contradictory evidence has emerged.</p>
Finding 6	6: IWRM: The Country Strategy is leading to significant results at output level and contributing to capacity development, but outcomes will rely on actions being taken forward by other actors in the future.
Evidence for Finding 6	<p>Interviews: 19, 47, 48, 53, 61</p> <p>Documents reviewed: SETEC Engineering (2018), <i>Final Project Report, August 2018, Consulting Services for Identification & Valuation of Water Supply & Sewerage Systems Assets in Defined Villages in Albania</i>.</p> <p>Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs, Department for Development Cooperation and Cooperation with Eastern Europe. (2009): <i>Policy Document: Water- Water Supply, Sanitation, Water Resources, Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs, Department for Development Cooperation and Cooperation with Eastern Europe</i>.</p> <p>Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs (2009), <i>Strategic Guideline on Environment and Development in Austrian Development Policy Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs Directorate-General for Development Cooperation</i>.</p>

	<p>Other: Survey Q8, Case Study</p> <p>Observations on triangulation: Interviews, document review and survey responses feeding into both the main report and the Case Study exposed strongly contrasting views related to the theory of change. Analyses have emphasised these contrasts, which draws attention to the ways that the perspectives of different stakeholders differ.</p>
Finding 7	7: VET: The Country Strategy has provided guidance for improving the quality and inclusiveness of VET provision according to labour market needs through the development of 'models' that may be scaled up in the future as part of VET reforms.
Evidence for Finding 7	<p>Interviews: 16, 56, 57, 58, 62, 64</p> <p>Documents reviewed: TripleMinds Consultancy Network (2019), <i>Final Report for "Mid-term evaluation of the project Al-Tour: Supporting Quality and Access to Tourism Education and Training"</i>. 15.03.2019</p> <p>UNDP, Thomas Vasseur, Independent consultant "<i>Promoting Inclusive Labour Market Solutions in the WESTERN BALKANS</i>", June 2018;</p> <p>SeeNews Business Intelligence for Southeast Europe (04.04.2018), <i>Tourism direct contribution to Albania's GDP to grow to 9.3% by 2028 – WTTC</i>. Available at: https://seenews.com/news/tourism-direct-contribution-to-albanias-gdp-to-grow-to-93-by-2028-wttc-607756</p> <p>Other: Survey Q7</p> <p>Observations on triangulation: Interviews, survey results and reporting have been compared, while emphasising how these findings relate to national trends. The small-scale of the projects has meant that it has not been possible to confirm the ultimate extent of the perceived contributions to policy change or future prospects for scaling-up effective models. Also, it should be noted that the number of survey respondents with awareness of the VET programming was limited.</p>
Finding 8	8: Volatility and unpredictability in the structures and staffing of Albanian public institutions have constituted major obstacles to effectiveness.
Evidence for Finding 8	<p>Interviews: 12, 14, 17, 36, 39, 43, 44, 48, 60, 67</p> <p>Documents reviewed: Austrian Development Agency, Coordination Office Tirana (2018), <i>Semi-annual Strategic Implementation Report, Coordination Office Tirana, Reporting Period: July – December 2018</i>.</p>

	<p>Other: Case Study</p> <p>Observations on triangulation: Findings are based primarily on interview responses collected from a significant number of respondents, together with some limited documentary evidence. Statements from interviewees were often made “in passing” when discussing the challenges in working towards longer-term effectiveness and sustainability.</p>
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Evaluation criteria:	Effectiveness
EQ5	Which role have different funding instruments used in Albania played in the achievement of results and overall performance? Which associated advantages and disadvantages can be identified for future decision making in this regard?
Indicator/descriptor	<p>Current trajectories in the use of funding instruments with an emphasis on factors related to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current trajectories • Effectiveness in relation to the Country Strategy • Policy alignment • Institutional factors
Finding 9	9: ADC strategy implementation in Albania is moving into a phase where third-party funding is taking centre stage; this raises the risk that efforts to access a greater magnitude of funds may distort decision-making in relation to Country Strategy objectives.
Evidence for Finding 9	<p>Interviews: 12, 19, 51, 52, 53, 55, 57, 60, 66, 68</p> <p>Documents reviewed: Integrated Consulting (2019), <i>Institutionelle Evaluierung der Austrian Development Agency (ADA)</i>. Available at: https://www.bmeia.gv.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Zentrale/Aussenpolitik/Entwicklungszusammenarbeit/Institutionelle_Evaluierung_der_Austrian_Development_Agency_ADA_DE_.pdf</p> <p>Other: Survey Q8, Case Study</p> <p>Observations on triangulation: Findings are based on interview and survey responses collected from a significant number of respondents and limited documentary evidence. As documentation relating to some of the newer, emerging third-party programming was not yet available when the data collection was underway, the Evaluation Team needed to rely upon descriptions of initial plans from interviewees.</p>
Finding 10	10: Support to civil society is essential for demonstrating commitments to supporting the voice of rights holders and raises Austria's visibility, but there is a risk that high transaction costs may lead to deprioritising these instruments.
Evidence for Finding 10	<p>Interviews: 12, 13, 21, 39, 40, 54, 60</p> <p>Documents reviewed:</p>

	<p>Austrian Development Agency, Coordination Office Tirana (2018) <i>Semi-annual Strategic Implementation Report, Coordination Office Tirana, Reporting Period: July – December 2018</i></p> <p>Other: Survey Q7</p> <p>Observations on triangulation: Findings are primarily based on interviews and survey responses collected from (primarily ADA) respondents and focal group discussions with recipients of support from the Small Project Fund, as well as limited findings from document review.</p>
Finding 11	<i>11: Regional projects have a relevant but modest role in ADC support to Albania, but with some notable exceptions are generally not perceived by stakeholders to have major importance.</i>
Evidence for Finding 11	<p>Interviews: 57, 62, 64, 67, 68, 69</p> <p>Documents reviewed: OECD (2020), <i>OECD Development Co-operation Peer Reviews: Austria 2020</i>.</p> <p>Other: Survey Q7</p> <p>Observations on triangulation: Findings are based on interviews and survey responses collected from a large sample of respondents, and limited documentary evidence. All interviewees were asked about ADC regional projects, however only those that communicated awareness and an opinion on such initiatives are referenced above.</p>

Evaluation criteria:	Effectiveness
EQ6	To which extent was ADC's approach effective in relation to the cross-cutting issues (social inclusion, gender equality and environment/climate change) as well as the human rights-based approach (HRBA)?
Indicator/descriptor	<p>Results in relation to cross-cutting issues</p> <p>Evidence of mainstreaming throughout the portfolio</p> <p>Contextual and institutional factors impinging on effectiveness and mainstreaming</p>
Finding 12	12: The ADC approach to gender equality has been relatively rigorous and shows potential for turning outputs into outcomes.
Evidence for Finding 12	<p>Interviews: 12, 15, 17, 18, 21, 47, 52, 53, 58, 59, 61, 65, 68</p> <p>Documents reviewed: Austrian Development Agency, Coordination Office Tirana (2018), <i>Semi-annual Strategic Implementation Report, Coordination Office Tirana, Reporting Period: January – June 2018.</i></p> <p>Austrian Development Agency (2019), <i>Sector Planning Document – Integrated Water Management, Version 12th of June 2015</i> (internal document), cited in <i>Austrian Development Agency Mission Report, Identification of Gender Mainstreaming Entry Points, May 2019.</i></p> <p>EUSIWM (2020), <i>"2nd Annual Progress Report 1st January – 31st December 2019: "EU Support to Integrated Water Management (EUSIWM) Albania IPA 2016".</i></p> <p>Government of Albania, Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth <i>"The national strategy on Gender Equality and Action Plan 2016-2020"</i>, October 2016</p> <p>Other: Survey Q6, Q7, Q8, Q10 Case Study</p> <p>Observations on triangulation: The findings are based on extensive interview and survey responses, supported by highly relevant documentary evidence.</p>
Finding 13	13: Results related to social inclusion have been modest and, although relevant, they are too small in scope and/or scale to be judged as strategically effective.

<p>Evidence for Finding 13</p>	<p>Interviews: 12, 14, 15, 16, 18, 24, 25, 26, 32, 43, 44, 47, 53, 56, 58, 61, 62, 64</p> <p>Documents reviewed: EUSIWM (2020), "2nd Annual Progress Report 1st January – 31st December 2019: "EU Support to Integrated Water Management (EUSIWM) Albania IPA 2016".</p> <p>Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs, Department for Development Cooperation and Cooperation with Eastern Europe. (2009): <i>Policy Document: Water- Water Supply, Sanitation, Water Resources, Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs, Department for Development Cooperation and Cooperation with Eastern Europe.</i></p> <p>TripleMinds Consultancy Network (2019), <i>Final Report for "Mid-term evaluation of the project AI-Tour: Supporting Quality and Access to Tourism Education and Training"</i>. 15.03.2019</p> <p>Other: Survey Q6, Q7, Q8, Q9</p> <p>Observations on triangulation: The findings are based on extensive interview responses, supported by relevant documentary evidence. Survey responses have also been reviewed, but the response rate for this question was rather low.</p>
<p>Finding 14</p>	<p>14: Efforts to mainstream environmental and climate concerns have not yet received sufficient traction or scale to be judged to be effective.</p>
<p>Evidence for Finding 14</p>	<p>Interviews: 12, 14, 18, 19, 45, 46, 49, 51, 55, 61, 63</p> <p>Documents reviewed: Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and International Affairs, Directorate-General for Development (2017) <i>Policy Document-Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls: Implementing the EU Gender Action Plan II 2016–2020.</i></p> <p>Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs, Department for Development Cooperation and Cooperation with Eastern Europe. (2009): <i>Policy Document: Water- Water Supply, Sanitation, Water Resources, Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs, Department for Development Cooperation and Cooperation with Eastern Europe.</i></p> <p>Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs (2009) <i>Strategic Guideline on Environment and Development in Austrian Development Policy.</i></p> <p>Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs (2019), <i>Working Together. For Our World. Three-Year Programme on Austrian Development Policy 2019-2021</i>, Vienna, Austria. 05/2019.</p> <p>Other: Survey Q8, Case Study</p>

	Observations on triangulation: Findings reflect views presented in interviews, triangulated with analyses of relevant ADC policies and the most recent 3YP.
Finding 15	15: There is little evidence that a concerted approach has been mounted to apply a human rights-based approach, though elements exist in the governance portfolio.
Evidence for Finding 15	<p>Interviews: 48, 54 (also overall analysis of prevalence of references to HRBA related factors in interviews more generally)</p> <p>Documents reviewed: Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs, Directorate-General for Development Cooperation (2006, re-print 2011) <i>Policy Document-Human Rights, Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs Directorate-General for Development Cooperation.</i></p> <p>Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and International Affairs, Directorate-General for Development (2017) <i>Policy Document-Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls: Implementing the EU Gender Action Plan II 2016–2020, Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and International Affairs Directorate-General for Development.</i></p> <p>Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights Statement (17.12.2019), Available at https://www.coe.int/en/web/commissioner/-/commissioner-urges-albania-s-parliament-to-review-bills-which-restrict-freedom-of-expression</p> <p>ADC, Evaluation of Environmental and Social Impact Management at ADA, Evaluation Brief #5, May 2019.</p> <p>TripleMinds Consultancy Network (2019), <i>Final Report for "Mid-term evaluation of the project AI-Tour: Supporting Quality and Access to Tourism Education and Training"</i>. 15.03.2019</p> <p>Other: Survey Q6, Q9</p> <p>Observations on triangulation: The findings are based on limited interview and survey responses (but including the Evaluation Team’s interpretation of many other interviews where it was apparent the HRBA had not been considered as an objective), together with more extensive documentary evidence, and project analysis.</p>

Evaluation criteria:	Efficiency
EQ7	How efficiently has the Country Strategy been implemented? Which enabling and hindering factors can be identified in the context? How can related challenges best be addressed in future?
Indicator/descriptor	Efficiency of ADC institutional structures for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project design • Implementation • Monitoring and reporting
Finding 16	16: A major strength in ADC's work has been the ability of the Coordination Office to maintain a flexible, close and collegial relationship with a large range of stakeholders. The Coordination Office has managed a heterogeneous portfolio with dedication and commitment, but is severely overstretched and will need to make difficult prioritisations.
Evidence for Finding 16	<p>Interviews: 9, 12, 14, 16, 17, 19, 21, 25, 27, 32, 38, 39, 42, 46, 47, 48, 57, 59, 62, 63, 64, 65</p> <p>Documents reviewed: Integrated Consulting (2019), <i>Institutionelle Evaluierung der Austrian Development Agency (ADA)</i>. Available at: https://www.bmeia.gv.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Zentrale/Aussenpolitik/Entwicklungszusammenarbeit/Institutionelle Evaluierung der Austrian Development Agency ADA DE .pdf</p> <p>Other: Survey Q6, Q11</p> <p>Observations on triangulation: The findings are primarily based on a substantial number of interview responses from a broad range of stakeholders, along with survey responses and general review of ADC reporting in Albania. Views regarding the role of the Coordination Office were highly consistent.</p>
Finding 17	17: Policy dialogue is essential in light of challenges in Albanian governance and commitments to HRBA, but such engagement is not consistent. At the same time, ADC has a significant and positive role in supporting Albanian government inter-agency cooperation and coordination through the IPMGs.
Evidence for Finding 17	<p>Interviews: 20, 22, 44, 47</p> <p>Documents reviewed:</p>

	<p>OECD (2020), <i>OECD Development Co-operation Peer Reviews: Austria 2020</i>.</p> <p>Other: Survey Q11</p> <p>Observations on triangulation: The findings are based on a limited number of interviews with key counterparts and limited documentary evidence. The fact that IPMGs are relatively new and under development has meant that their role remains unclear to many observers, but data is consistent regarding the constructive role of the Coordination Office in supporting them.</p>
Finding 18	<i>18: ADC thematic advisors encourage a modicum of policy adherence, but input is often (and inevitably) 'too little, too late' in relation to dynamics on-the-ground in Albania. The scope of their inputs is constrained due to the magnitude of their global portfolios.</i>
Evidence for Finding 18	<p>Interviews: 12, 20, 52, 53, 54,</p> <p>Documents reviewed: Austrian Development Agency (2019), <i>Evaluation: Environmental and Social Impact Management at ADA</i>, Vol 1-Main Report.</p> <p>Other: Case Study</p> <p>Observations on triangulation: The findings are based on interviews with ADA staff and analysis of available tools, supported by highly relevant documentary evidence.</p>
Finding 19	<i>19: Civil society projects contribute to important policy objectives and facilitate communicating results in Austria, but the administrative burden is a huge disincentive to pursuing them.</i>
Evidence for Finding 19	<p>Interviews: 12, 21, 39, 40, 54, 60</p> <p>Documents reviewed:</p> <p>Other: Survey Q7</p> <p>Observations on triangulation: The findings are based on interviews of ADA staff and key external stakeholders, focus group discussions with Small Project Fund recipients, survey responses and an analysis of civil society projects' relevance and results.</p>

Evaluation criteria:	Impact
EQ 8	What has demonstrably changed for the target population and groups as a result of the strategy (positive/negative, intended/unintended) – both with a view to the thematic priorities and cross-cutting issues?
Indicator/descriptor	Impact on target populations in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plausible theories of change for contributing to impact • Aspects related to thematic priorities • Impact related to cross-cutting issues
Finding 20	20: The emphasis on capacity development has inherent disadvantages in ensuring selection of projects that can be expected to achieve clear impact due to limited attention to downstream application of the capacities being developed in ways that change the lives of target populations.
Evidence for Finding 20	<p>Interviews: 24, 25, 36, 50</p> <p>Documents reviewed: TripleMinds Consultancy Network (2019), <i>Final Report for "Mid-term evaluation of the project Al-Tour: Supporting Quality and Access to Tourism Education and Training"</i>. 15.03.2019</p> <p>Institute for Democracy and Mediation (2020), <i>Opinion Poll 2019: Trust in Governance Survey Report. Tirana, 2020</i>. p. 11. Available at: https://idmalbania.org/download/7379/</p> <p>UNDP (2019), <i>External Evaluation. Project title: "Support for Innovation against Corruption: Building a Citizen Centric Service Delivery Model in Albania" (ISDA Support Project)</i>. 11/2019. pp. 5, 16, 18. Available at: https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKewiWqNDnoOXpAhUJO8AKHdA8ASIQFjADegQIAxAB&url=https%3A%2F%2Ferc.undp.org%2Fevaluation%2Fdocuments%2Fdownload%2F15527&usq=AOvVaw3GUBrPCPE_O6vnO0KSezQo</p> <p>Austrian Development Cooperation (2015), <i>Albania Country Strategy 2015-2020 (extended until 2021)</i>, 09/2015.</p> <p>Other: Survey Q8, Q9, Q10, Case Study</p> <p>Observations on triangulation: The findings are based on limited interview and survey responses, relevant documentary evidence, and an analysis of project theories of change and results. Notable attention was given to the lack of awareness and examples given by interviewees when asked about ultimate impacts on target populations.</p>

Finding 21	21: Support through small governance and VET initiatives has contributed to positive but modest impacts on lives and livelihoods, with some attention to target populations.
Evidence for Finding 21	<p>Interviews: 39, 58, 64</p> <p>Documents reviewed: Coordination Office reporting refers to this as the “employment/education/migration/social protection/services/rural development nexus”, Austrian Development Agency, Coordination Office Tirana (2018), <i>Semi-annual Strategic Implementation Report, Coordination Office Tirana, Reporting Period: July – December 2018.</i></p> <p>Austrian Development Cooperation (2015), <i>Albania Country Strategy 2015-2020 (extended until 2021)</i>, 09/2015.</p> <p>Institute for Democracy and Mediation (2020), <i>Opinion Poll 2019: Trust in Governance Survey Report. Tirana, 2020.</i> p. 11.</p> <p>UNDP (2019), <i>External Evaluation. Project title: "Support for Innovation against Corruption: Building a Citizen Centric Service Delivery Model in Albania" (ISDA Support Project).</i> 11/2019. p. 5.</p> <p>Other: Survey Q6, Q7, Q9</p> <p>Observations on triangulation: The findings are based on limited interview and survey responses, supported by independent documentary evidence.</p>

Evaluation criteria:	Impact
EQ9	What have been the key enabling and hindering factors for these changes? How have related challenges been managed and how can they be mitigated in future?
Indicator/descriptor	Factors impinging on achievement/non-achievement of impact on target populations
Finding 22	22: Currently there seem to be missed opportunities for emphasising impact through widespread application of a the HRBA and social inclusion lens.
Evidence for Finding 22	<p>Interviews: 21, 60, 64 (also overall analysis of prevalence of references to HRBA related factors in interviews more generally)</p> <p>Documents reviewed: Austrian Development Cooperation (2015), <i>Albania Country Strategy 2015-2020 (extended until 2021)</i>, 09/2015.</p> <p>Government of Albania, Law no. 15/2019 on Promotion of Employment entered into force on 18 April 2019, see https://assets.kpmg/content/dam/kpmg/al/pdf/al-LN-19-4.pdf.pdf</p> <p>Other: Survey Q6, Q7, Q8, Q9</p> <p>Observations on triangulation: The findings are based on limited number of interview and more extensive number of explicit survey responses, as well as an overall analysis of prevalence of references to HRBA and social inclusion related factors in interviews more generally, including attention to where these references have been absent.</p>

Evaluation criteria:	Sustainability
EQ10 & EQ11	<p>To what extent has the Country Strategy and its implementation built-in strategies and measures for sustaining positive effects and change, especially regarding changes of context?</p> <p>To what extent have results brought about lasting change and/or can be expected to continue beyond the duration of the Strategy? What have been the main enabling and hindering factors for sustainability of results and how can they be built on/addressed?</p>
Indicator/descriptor	<p>Sustainability in the design and implementation of the Country Strategy taking into account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ownership (including implications of capacity development focus) • Measures to promote sustainability • Implications of the structure of the portfolio
Finding 23	<p><i>23: The capacity and institutional development foci in the Country Strategy are appropriate for contributing to longer-term sustainability, with some strong trends. However, with many timebound projects sustainability is less certain. Sustainability of results in capacity development within government institutions depends on alignment with broader reform processes and institutional stability.</i></p>
Evidence for Finding 23	<p>Interviews: 12, 13, 16, 17, 26, 36, 38, 42, 44, 47, 61, 62, 63, 64, 66</p> <p>Documents reviewed: UNDP (2019), <i>External Evaluation. Project title: "Support for Innovation against Corruption: Building a Citizen Centric Service Delivery Model in Albania" (ISDA Support Project)</i>. 11/2019. Available at: https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwiWqNDnoOXpAhUJO8AKHdA8ASIQFjADegQIAxAB&url=https%3A%2F%2Ferc.undp.org%2Fevaluation%2Fdocuments%2Fdownload%2F15527&usg=AOvVaw3GUBrpePE_O6vnO0KSezQo</p> <p>Other: Survey Q12, Case Study</p> <p>Observations on triangulation: The findings are based on extensive number of interviews and a limited number of survey responses, supported by limited independent documentary evidence.</p>

Evaluation criteria:	Complementarities and synergies
EQ12	How is Austria's Whole of Government Approach (WGA) reflected in the development, implementation and coordination of the Strategy? What have been enabling and hindering factors for WGA operationalization?
Indicator/descriptor	Whole of government approach in practice related to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination • Policy coherence for development
Finding 24	24: The WGA is aspirational, with systems for achieving coordination and broader ownership of the Austrian development agenda remaining underdeveloped.
Evidence for Finding 24	<p>Interviews: 8, 10, 12, 13, 17, 20, 22, 32, 37, 54, 60, 66, 67, 69</p> <p>Documents reviewed: Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs (2019), <i>Working Together. For Our World. Three-Year Programme on Austrian Development Policy 2019-2021</i>, Vienna, Austria. 05/2019.</p> <p>OECD (2020), <i>OECD Development Co-operation Peer Reviews: Austria 2020</i>.</p> <p>Other: Evaluator observation</p> <p>Observations on triangulation: The findings are based on extensive number of interviews, supported by review of (especially) 3YPs, the OECD peer review and evaluator observation. Attention was noted to where there was a lack of awareness of the role of other Austrian actors in development cooperation.</p>

Evaluation criteria:	Complementarities and synergies
EQ13	What has been and still is ADC's added value and comparative advantage vis a vis other development actors engaged in the country, if any?
Indicator/descriptor	Added value and comparative advantage (conclusions synthesising overall findings)
Finding 25	25: ADC has a unique and valuable niche due to perceptions of trust, technical competence, gender experience/commitment, recognition of the importance of the long-term engagement and its flexible and non-bureaucratic approach.
Evidence for Finding 25	<p>Interviews: 16, 34, 38, 44, 46, 47, 48, 63 (also synthesis of interviews more generally)</p> <p>Documents reviewed: OECD (2020), <i>OECD Development Co-operation Peer Reviews: Austria 2020</i>.</p> <p>Other: Meta findings from the overall evaluative evidence; evaluator observation</p> <p>Observations on triangulation: The findings are based on a number of individual interviews, but primarily a synthesis of a broad range of interview findings and evaluator observation across the evaluation, supported by limited independent documentary evidence.</p>

Appendix 2: Portfolio review

At the start of the evaluation, 36 projects, with a total allocation of 17,088,560.80 Euros, were included in the portfolio of projects funded in Albania.¹

Priority Area	Number of Projects	Allocation in Euros	Percentage of disbursements
Governance and the Rule of Law	17	6,953,588.00	41%
Integrated Water Resource Management	9	7,744,883.80	45%
Labour market-oriented Vocational Education/Employability	5	2,110,089.00	12%
Small project fund	5	280,000.00	2%
Total	36	17,088,560.80	100%

Figure 1: Projects in ADC's Albania portfolio.

ADA defines its financial allocations in Albania against a number of budget lines. The ALB budget line is the country budget line for Albania managed by ADA's Unit Countries & Regions, part of Programmes and Projects International (PPI) at ADA Headquarters. It is the main budget line for the Albania Country Strategy and is thus the focus of this evaluation. The ALB budget line is comprised of the following number of projects:

Priority Area	Number of Projects
Governance and the Rule of Law	10
Integrated Water Resource Management	4
Labour market-oriented Vocational Education/Employability	1
Small project fund	5

Figure 2: Projects in the ALB budget line.

IZW and ZGI are other organisational units which form part of PPI. These other budget lines are not part of the Country Strategy, and the activities and results of these projects do not report formally to the Country Strategy. The other budget lines are:

- ZGI – Civil Society International. The Civil Society International Unit promotes projects and programmes by Austrian civil-society organisations (CSOs) aimed at making a sustainable improvement to living conditions and development prospects of the population in partner countries.²
- IZW – Business Partnerships. The business partnerships component of ADC funding is available to any country that gets Official Development Assistance.

The only ZGI or IZW projects considered in this evaluation are those that fit within the thematic areas of the Country Strategy. They primarily inform aspects of complementarity and synergy and coherence as related to the analysis of the Whole-of-Government Approach.

ADC's regional portfolio relevant to Albania includes 33 projects since the start of the Country Strategy.

¹ Albanian and Regional Project Program Portfolio 26.4 (project portfolio spreadsheet). ADA.

² Funding from the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) <https://www.entwicklung.at/en/ada/funding/>

Priority Area	Number of Projects
Governance and the Rule of Law	25
Integrated Water Resource Management	1
Labour market-oriented Vocational Education/ Employability	7

Figure 3: Regional projects active in Albania.

From the perspective of the funding source measured by contract value, between 2015 and March 2019 nearly 17 million euros came from ADA and 9.27 million euros through third-party funding, including funds from the European Union and from the Swiss Development Cooperation. Three co-funded/third-party projects since 2015 are within the Governance and Rule of Law priority area and two are within Integrated Water Resource Management.

The following interventions have been analysed in the evaluation:

Project number	Priority area	Budget Line	Contract value (EUR)	Project title	Type of Implementing partner	Intervention period
6524-00/2015	Governance and Rule of Law	ALB	125,000	Support and Expansion of the Albanian Treasury System - <i>ADC Co-financing/Third-party funding</i>	Various partners (diverse träger)	15.04.2015 - 14.10.2015
8140-00/2016	Governance and Rule of Law	ALB	900,000	Regional Development Programme in Albania (RDP 3)	Development partner	01.04.2017 - 31.03.2019
8334-00/2016	Governance and Rule of Law	ALB	231,000	Justice without delays	Development partner	01.03.2016 - 31.12.2019
8338-00/2015	Governance and Rule of Law	ALB	88,800	Support to the Government of Albania for implementing the EU Gender Equality acquis	Development partner	01.05.2015 - 31.10.2016
8338-01/2015	Governance and Rule of Law	ALB	180,000	Support to the Government of Albania for implementing the EU Gender Equality acquis - Secondment of a gender expert for UN WOMEN	Development partner	01.05.2015 - 31.10.2016
8345-00/2017	Governance and Rule of Law	ALB	600,000	ISDA Support Project - Innovation against Corruption: Building a Citizen Centric Service Delivery Model in Albania	Development partner	01.05.2017 - 31.12.2019
8347-00/2016	Governance and Rule of Law	ALB	472,000	Improving the living conditions and reintegrating migrant children in Albania	Civil society organisation	01.04.2016 - 30.06.2019
6532-01/2017	Integrated Water Resource Management	ALB	1,500,000	EUSIWM/EU Support to Integrated Water Management - <i>OEZA Co-financing/Third-party funding</i>	Various partners (diverse träger)	01.02.2018 - 31.01.2022
8346-00/2016	Integrated Water Resource Management	ALB	1,271,914.8	Identification and valuation of water supply and sewerage system assets in Albania	Private sector company	21.03.2017 - 20.07.2018
8344-00/2015	Labour market-oriented Vocational Education/Employability	ALB	837,000	AL-Tour: Promote quality of and access to tourism education and training in Albania	Civil society organisation	15.04.2016 - 31.10.2019

Appendix 2: Portfolio Review

2550-11/2016	Governance and Rule of Law	IZW	500,000	SA Cluster Creation for Social Innovations in the Western Balkans	Private sector company	01.06.2016 - 31.10.2018
2550-03/2014	Labour market-oriented Vocational Education/Employability	IZW	200,000	WP-ALB-Naber, strengthening dual training in the Albanian garment industry	Private sector company	01.08.2016 - 31.07.2018
2550-12/2014	Labour market-oriented Vocational Education/Employability	IZW	188,779	WP-ALB-bit media e-solutions GmbH, IT-based education management	Private sector company	1.9.2014 - 31.12.2016
2550-17/2016	Labour market-oriented Vocational Education/Employability	IZW	200,000	WP Improving the qualification of unemployed adults in the Albanian garment industry	Private sector company	01.08.2016 - 31.07.2018
8108-05/2016	Governance and Rule of Law	ZGI	61,000	Second Chance - Opportunity for life	Civil society organisation	01.01.2016 – 31.12.2018
1980-01/2017-SUB01	Labour market-oriented Vocational Education/Employability	ZGI	206,800	2017-2019 Framework Program - SEED Step II - Training and Employment Measures in Albania	Civil society organisation	01.01.2017 – 31.12.2019

Figure 3: Interventions analysed for the evaluation.

There has been an increased importance of third-party funding over the period of the Country Strategy. This has become a significant focus in the evaluation due to what appears to be a dramatic shift towards this modality that was underway at the end of the evaluation. The three largest and most notable projects were the International Monitoring Operation, which has recently begun to be implemented, and initial plans for a vocational education project in collaboration with the municipality of Vienna and a very large potential proposal to the Green Climate Fund.

Appendix 3: Case Study on Cross-cutting Issues in Integrated Water Resource Management

Purpose of the case study:

This case study unpacks the extent and ways that strategic goals related to cross cutting issues have been addressed in ADC's contributions to Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) in Albania. The case study explores the opportunities, obstacles and factors that have impinged on applying cross cutting concerns as these objectives have been mainstreamed.

Object of the case study:

This case study has looked at two specific IWRM programmes that have been initiated within the period analysed in the evaluation¹, while contrasting these with programmes in other sectors that have impinged on generating knowledge and commitment to the three cross-cutting issues emphasised in the Albania Country Strategy, i.e., gender equality, social inclusion and broader concerns related to environmental sustainability and climate change –all of which have been considered within an overarching human rights-based approach (HRBA).

Approach:

Using an adaptation of the contribution analysis applied across the evaluation, the case study analysis has focused on IWRM (triangulated with findings from other parts of the evaluation) to identify the following:

1. Where there have been successes in mainstreaming these priorities in different programming and the factors that enabled these successes.
2. The extent to which tools and procedures for policy advice in programme design, implementation and monitoring have been applied in design and follow-up and with what results.
3. The ways that shifting emphases on different cross cutting issues in Austrian and Albanian policies over the years have influenced these processes, with particular attention to if and how the growing focus on climate change is influencing policy and praxis related to mainstreaming of environmental concerns.
4. Where the three cross cutting issues have failed to gain traction and obstacles have been encountered in promoting these objectives, mapping factors related to: awareness, knowledge/skills in operationalising these objectives, alignment of these issues with Albanian policies/praxis, alignment of these issues with other donor policies/praxis, and procedural issues that make it difficult to draw attention to cross cutting issues.

The interviews sought to record the contributions (often relatively modest) that have been achieved in relation to the very ambitious aims in the theory of change. Interviewees were encouraged to explain their views about what the wider contexts of environmental change/exploitation, progress towards EU accession and the efforts of other donors have meant for the influence of ADC initiatives. This proved highly appropriate given that the small-scale of some IWRM projects and the concentration of programming on capacity development and one 'piece of the puzzle' meant that direct attribution of impacts to ADC support was not possible to measure. Contribution analysis was useful for stimulating reflection on ADC's added value among informants who stressed that they were unsure of what the 'results' were of ADC interventions.

¹ EUSIWM/EU Support to Integrated Water Management (project number 6532-01/2017) and Identification and Valuation of Water Supply and Sewerage System Assets in Albania (project number 8346-00/2016)

Analyses of these findings aims to draw lessons in relation to addressing cross cutting issues within the three thematic priorities and across the strategy as a whole.

Data sources:

Where possible the case study draws on references to the cross cutting issues in IWRM programmatic and operational reporting, including that of collaborating stakeholders. It is recognised, however, that these references in many cases make few or rather superficial reference to cross-cutting issues. Much of the evidence for the case study derives from interviews with stakeholders within the IWRM theme and within ADA more generally. This has been triangulated with findings related to cross cutting issues from the other thematic priorities in Albania.

Findings:

Context

The overall context of the case study is that of the following:

- A growing focus within Austrian development cooperation on climate change adaptation
- Largely weak² attention to climate change among Albanian authorities
- Existence of an ambitious national strategy that recognises (but fails to emphasise) cross-cutting issues³
- Progress with the EU accession process that has increased pressures to address technical gaps in the transposition and implementation of EU directives
- Increased attention to and refinement of gender equality compliance measures in Austrian development cooperation
- Rapidly growing shift to reliance on third-party funding in the portfolio of projects within the Country Strategy in Albania

Each of these contextual factors has influenced the ways that cross-cutting issues are addressed in the Country Strategy in Albania, in some cases including goal conflicts and coherence factors. The Evaluation Team has found that in essence these relate to differing views among various stakeholders regarding whether IWRM is seen as a technical/capacity development input or a ‘soft policy’ issue nudging towards greater concern for environment, climate and equitable access to water and sanitation services. The EUSIWM programme is a clear example of this contrast, wherein some stakeholders see it as an entry point to mainstream concerns about gender equity in the management of water resources, whereas others see it as a very specific technical input to capacitate and enable fledgling Albanian institutions, particularly the National Agency of Water Resources Management (AMBU), to align, transpose and implement the EU acquis for the water sector⁴ in the form of river basin management plans. This divergence would appear to be due to a tendency among some stakeholders to focus their attention on the technical and capacity development tasks *within* a given IWRM intervention, whereas others highlight plausible impacts when those capacities and institutional reforms are utilised in the future.

The Albanian National Strategy for IWRM is clear about the challenges inherent in prevailing institutional structures in the sector. A mix of fragmentation, centralisation, with constantly changing and overlapping institutional mandates and poor quality data make any reform process difficult to implement⁵. A ‘water governance’ approach is promoted, but this governance overwhelmingly emphasises supply aspects, whereas a ‘right to water’ perspective, as implied by various ADC policies,

² Some stakeholders describe this as weakening, as evidenced by the dismantlement of the unit responsible for climate change within the Ministry of Environment and Tourism.

³ Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Water Administration (2017) National Strategy for Integrated Water Resource Management, Version 2.00en, 19 June, 2017, “Skënderbej” Street Building no.6 Entrance no.2 Apartment no. 11 Tirana, Albania

⁴ Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy

⁵ Idem

would require significantly more attention to issues pertaining to differentiated access and use. This ‘messy’ context is perceived by some interviewees as a strong justification for pursuing limited goals pertaining to establishing the basic institutional infrastructure with capacities to transpose and implement the EU Water Directive, with higher level objectives left for ‘someone else’.

An additional overarching contextual finding is related to prevailing uncertainty about how adherence to policies will prevail in projects reliant on third-party funding. A recent global institutional evaluation of ADA⁶ highlighted strong concerns about the implications of third-party funding for strategic clarity and policy compliance. Interviews with ADC stakeholders are clear that strategic alignment should be paramount, but descriptions of practice suggest that control over strategic direction and priorities is being diminished when other funders gain major influence over programming. It is beyond the scope of this evaluation to present evidence regarding the relative influence of ADC versus other funder influence, but it is obvious that it is generating anxiety.

Gender equality in IWRM

ADC’s policies related to gender equality are clear and unequivocal. Within projects ADC minimum standards and gender markers provide a clear and well-defined set of objectives which, combined with clear commitments from the Coordination Office to encourage compliance, have enabled a strong focus and profile.

However, it has been noted that these concerns have been difficult to mainstream in IWRM programming. According to an internal analysis done by UN Women⁷ the following issues need to be considered in IWRM:

- 1) Human Resources management, with the imbalance being very dominant on the local level
- 2) Gender specific water burden
- 3) Routine and obligatory application of the ‘Do-no-harm approach’
- 4) Lack of gender analysis and sex-disaggregated data, including provisions for the coherent collection, analysis and use of sex- and age-disaggregated data
- 5) Lack of civic engagement in water management, including gender sensitive consultation mechanisms
- 6) Equitable service delivery
- 7) Lack of skills for gender analysis and gender mainstreaming
- 8) Application of gender responsive budgeting

Furthermore, interviews show that IWRM is seen as difficult area to mainstream gender due to weak commitments among many stakeholders and a choice of projects which are perceived by some as lacking opportunities to address these concerns. One interviewee stated that there were “No real areas where gender would be addressed in the river basin management planning apart from public consultations and too early to even judge that as public consultations have not begun.” Reporting related to gender for EUSIWM emphasises gender balance in staffing and participation in activities⁸, but contributions to gender equity among water users receive little attention. AMBU does not collect sex-disaggregated data, nor does it undertake gender analysis or impact assessments⁹, and interviews indicate that addressing these deficiencies is not seen to be a priority for EUSIWM. Some key

⁶ Institutionelle Evaluierung der Austrian Development Agency (ADA) 2019

⁷ Sector Planning Document – Integrated Water Management, Version 12th of June 2015 (internal document), cited in Mission Report, Identification of Gender Mainstreaming Entry Points, May 2019, ADC

⁸ 2nd Annual Progress Report: 1st January – 31st December 2019: “EU Support to Integrated Water Management (EUSIWM) Albania IPA 2016”

⁹ Mission Report, Identification of Gender Mainstreaming Entry Points, May 2019, ADC

stakeholders made clear that, even if gender equality was important, it was not their responsibility to address, though there were hopes that Swedish development cooperation would address this in the near future. Most notably, the EU Water Framework Directive is acknowledged by most observers to be gender blind and thus a weak entry point for leveraging attention to gender¹⁰. This in turn has meant that EU commitments to gender in water are perceived to be unevenly pursued. The Albanian National Strategy for IWRM devotes somewhat more attention to gender, but (in the view of the Evaluation Team), these aspects of the Strategy appear to be ‘pasted in’ (with somewhat incongruous references to women’s handicrafts) and are poorly integrated into the main narrative¹¹.

Furthermore, as there are many women working in IWRM related institutions (primarily in mid-level positions) this is seen by some stakeholders interviewed as a sufficient indicator that gender equality has been achieved. There is a general lack of awareness that gendered access and use of water is a ‘problem’. It does not appear that this has been raised as an issue with Albanian partners and some advisors in Vienna.

This exemplifies the risks inherent in assuming a relatively limited perspective on gender equality, focused primarily on gender balance in overall staffing numbers and participation in activities, and which fails to focus on issues of power within relevant institutions (particularly those in local government with responsibilities for IWRM and service access in particular), and among those struggling to access services.

However, where a gender equality lens is applied already in the initial design of programming, it is evident that a gender equality focus is possible even in the ‘difficult’ field of IWRM. The Identification and Valuation of Water Supply and Sewerage System Assets project was planned to gather data regarding gendered access to water and sewerage services in the so-called ‘white areas’, i.e., the isolated rural communities for which there has been little information about service access and where gender inequality is widely perceived to be most acute.

Social inclusion in IWRM

The Identification and Valuation of Water Supply and Sewerage System Assets project exemplifies how gender equality is related to extent to which an overall commitment to social inclusion through access to services is the primary goal in an intervention. This initiative created a valuable evidence base for future efforts to provide more inclusive water and sanitation services to the marginalised ‘white areas’ if the data collection is applied by others in future programming. This is a major ‘if’, however, as ADC has not been involved in possible future capital intensive interventions that may use this data to encourage more socially inclusive services.

Both of these projects illustrate how the IWRM portfolio is seen to contribute to capacities that may, in the future, lead to equitable access to water. However, this is an unproven hypothesis that would depend on engagements and commitments from a range of other actors in applying a ‘no one left behind’ lens¹² when rolling out and applying the institutional reforms and analyses that have been undertaken within this portfolio thus far. Reporting from the EUSIWM programming pays little attention to concerns related to ensuring access to clean water by marginalised or vulnerable populations (apart from passing reference to SDG Goal 6: Ensure access to water and sanitation for all)¹³. This can be seen to be at odds with ADC policy that states that ADC should “Ensure that all user groups, including in particular the economically and socially marginalized groups of the population,

¹⁰ Mission Report, Identification of Gender Mainstreaming Entry Points, May 2019, ADC

¹¹ See Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Water Administration (2017) National Strategy for Integrated Water Resource Management, Version 2.00en, 19 June, 2017, “Skënderbej” Street Building no.6 Entrance no.2 Apartment no. 11 Tirana, Albania, p.69

¹² It can be noted that this perspective is strongly emphasised in the current Three-Year Programme for ADC, Federal Ministry, Republic of Austria, Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs, Working Together. For our World.Three-Year Programme on Austrian Development Policy 2019-2021.

¹³ 2nd Annual Progress Report: 1st January – 31st December 2019: “EU Support to Integrated Water Management (EUSIWM) Albania IPA 2016”

have adequate and affordable access to drinking water and basic sanitation.”¹⁴ This is reflected in some of the portfolio, but not in the largest programme, EUSIWM.

However, even where social inclusion has been reflected in the focus of a project, it is apparent that impacts are only likely to be achieved if ADC’s relatively small initiatives are subsequently taken up and utilised on a broader level. As yet, in these two projects this has not happened. EUSIWM is at too early a stage of implementation and the Identification and Valuation of Water Supply and Sewerage System Assets project has ended but investments using the data produced have not been initiated.

IWRM as related to environmental sustainability and climate change adaptation

As noted above, the strength of ADC commitments to environmental sustainability and climate change adaptation have increased during the Country Strategy period. Even before, policies called for a highly “holistic” approach.¹⁵ It would appear that these cross-cutting issues received relatively little attention at the start of the strategy, but that interest has increased over time.

ADC has made strong commitments to mainstreaming attention to environmental and climate protection with the pledge that “The two cross-cutting issues are Gender Equality and Environmental and Climate Protection. They must be considered at the strategic level and adhered to by all actors in all programmes and projects over the full project cycle.” (p11) ¹⁶. This is not yet apparent in the implementation of the Country Strategy.

Interviews indicate that environmental sustainability and climate change are treated as a set of thematic (rather than cross-cutting) concerns. Central to this, interviewees described their assumptions that IWRM programming may lead to climate adaptation through ecosystem services in the future. Nonetheless, these outcomes are not being directly pursued in current programming. Goals related to environment protection and climate change, as stated in the Country Strategy, are recognised by most stakeholders as relevant for Albania, but these goals are somewhat removed from the foci of the current initiatives within IWRM and may therefore only be directly addressed in the future.

Of notable concern, perceptions vary about the potential to mobilise greater Albanian government commitment and capacity to scale up climate efforts. Most interviewees are sceptical of governmental readiness to invest national resources in the institutional infrastructure required to meet climate change related commitments and lead internationally financed climate programmes due to institutional dysfunctions and lack of political ownership.

Within IWRM programming, the Evaluation Team interprets interview data and reporting as indicating that this has led to an increase in attention to the *plausibility* that IWRM in general and river basin planning in particular are likely to lead to stronger ecosystem services and with that a measure of adaptation to climate change. The Evaluation Team does not question the plausibility of this assumption, but notes that the *probability* of this occurring will relate to the awareness, understanding and commitment of local stakeholders involved in these plans to enhanced ecosystem services. This is uncertain and the dearth of attention to climate change in the Albanian public discourse is cause for concern.

¹⁴ Austrian Development Cooperation (2009) Policy Document: Water- Water Supply, Sanitation, Water Resources, Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs, Department for Development Cooperation and Cooperation with Eastern Europe, p.11

¹⁵ Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs (2009) Strategic Guideline on Environment and Development in Austrian Development Policy.

¹⁶ Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and International Affairs, Directorate-General for Development (2017) Policy Document-Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls: Implementing the EU Gender Action Plan II 2016–2020, Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and International Affairs Directorate-General for Development

New opportunities and challenges are arising for addressing climate change in conjunction with a planning process that has started related to a possible proposal to the Green Climate Fund, for which Austria has become accredited. It is too early to judge whether this initiative will provide a new and more powerful platform for achieving policy objectives, and much will depend on how comprehensive and dynamic Albanian government commitments become.

Cross-cutting issues in the EU accession process

Within AMBU and in EUSIWM in particular the overwhelming focus is on transposing and developing capacities to implement the EU water framework directive¹⁷. This is understandable in the context of the increased intensity of Albania's more concentrated EU accession process and is aligned with ADC's commitment to supporting this process. It must nonetheless be recognised that this does not encourage attention to 'other' commitments to the transposition of EU directives that relate more directly to cross-cutting issues. For example, various informants stressed the importance (and difficulties) in the EU negotiations process related to the Chapter 27 standards on Environment and Climate Change. This appears to be pursued separately from efforts to transpose and implement the EU gender equality acquis¹⁸ and the EU Gender Action Plan II¹⁹. There is thus a lack of coherence between EU water and gender directives that resonates in the debate in Albania about the level of attention to cross-cutting issues in IWRM.

Conclusions and lessons learnt in approaching IWRM with a human rights-based approach

This case study has brought out concerns about the ways that the technical aspects of EU accession in IWRM are pursued, and what the implications are for ensuring parallel attention to EU commitments to 'softer' cross-cutting issues and an overall focus on human rights. This is recognised in ADC policies. However, this evaluation has found that human rights²⁰ commitments are seen as too abstract to attempt to enforce compliance and are addressed in a very limited way and, as one interviewee stated "whenever it makes sense". Compliance is not required. The ADC policy on human rights actually acknowledges this challenge stating "The distinction between human rights and development agendas is becoming increasingly blurred. And yet there remains a discrepancy between the rhetorical acceptance of these close links and the practical implementation and observance of human rights." (p.2)²¹

The interventions have been effective in relation to institutional and human resource capacity development, as well as providing a knowledge base for achieving future outcomes related to strategic policy objectives. The quality of technical assistance provided has, with some exceptions, been seen as being excellent and well adapted to achieving intended results in the Albanian context. However, there has been a failure to identify and retain a focus on specific aspects of reform in the water sector where there could be direct synergies between these reforms and commitments to gender equality and social inclusion in ways that contribute to climate change adaptation. ADC policy for water programming unequivocally emphasises a 'right to water' perspective, but this is not explicitly apparent in the Albanian portfolio²². This has been aggravated by what some observers perceive to

¹⁷ Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy

¹⁸ See Susanne Burri and Sacha Prechal, 2008, EU Gender Equality Law, European Commission

¹⁹ See <https://europa.eu/capacity4dev/articles/eu-gender-action-plan-ii-how-eu-delegations-contribute-gender-equality-worldwide>

²⁰ It can also be noted that the policy for human rights is from 2006, and it may not be prominent in the considerations of all stakeholders as a result, see Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs, Directorate-General for Development Cooperation (2006, reprint 2011) Policy Document-Human Rights, Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs Directorate-General for Development Cooperation

²¹ Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs, Directorate-General for Development Cooperation (2006, reprint 2011) Policy Document-Human Rights, Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs Directorate-General for Development Cooperation

²² "ADC supports a human rights approach according to which access to affordable water supply in sufficient quantity and quality is considered a human right. In practical implementation this means that special efforts must be made to secure basic supply for everyone, to give this task priority and to ensure that the affordability of access to water for all parts of the population is an indispensable criterion..." Austrian Development Cooperation (2009) Policy Document: Water- Water Supply, Sanitation, Water Resources, Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs, Department for Development Cooperation and Cooperation with Eastern Europe, p.7

be a tendency to move on to different sub-sectors and initiatives after projects end, which has in turn limited the extent to which outputs lead to intended policy-relevant outcomes.

Monitoring as part of Environment and Social Impact Management (EGSIM) is applied, but apart from ensuring that there is some brief reference to cross-cutting issues in project documents it is rarely referred to in interviews as a factor in encouraging compliance with cross-cutting objectives. Furthermore, partners often perceive there to be “too many things to mainstream”, which is aggravated by what are perceived as varied levels of clarity in intentions regarding cross-cutting objectives. These findings echo the recognition that EGSIM and related efforts are highly relevant to ADC’s work, but are a “fundamental challenge,”²³ One informant stated that “We know what quota to reach on gender. 85% of projects must meet gender marker 1 or 2. With others it depends on the context “whenever it makes sense”... It isn’t a must.” EGSIM not a replacement for capacity to follow-up and engage with partners on cross-cutting issues that require astute and context relevant dialogue and analysis. One interviewee noted that, “EGSIM is insufficient. Better than nothing. But more just ticking Austrian boxes. Not a driver when the counterpart isn’t skilled or interested. ADA lacks capacity to put together the right package.” The Evaluation Team recognises that steps are being taken to concretise markers for social inclusion more generally, e.g., in 2019 37 new projects were screened for disability inclusion²⁴, but this has apparently not been applied retrospectively to older projects and it is uncertain how consistently this is being applied to third-party funded projects where other financiers’ goals and markers need to be emphasised.

The findings presented here highlight the challenges facing a small donor, such as ADC, when implementing an ambitious policy agenda within a sector that is characterised by a focus on technical solutions to societal problems, and which furthermore is recognised as being institutionally highly fragmented, politically complex, and lacking structures to ensure policy coherence²⁵. In this context, it is not surprising that none of the SDG related results listed in the indicators for the Country Strategy²⁶ appear to have been achieved. Over-ambitious goals have stood in the way of efforts to find strategic entry points for making progress towards policy objectives.

Austrian commitments to overcome discrimination and ensure that ‘no one is left behind’ are recognised, but a non-disaggregated focus on water for ‘all’, has meant that a more granular focus on those that risk being left behind is lacking. Mapping of those left behind in the ‘white areas’ is a highly relevant piece of the puzzle in mobilising stronger commitments to focusing investments on marginalised populations, but it remains uncertain if and how data such as this may come to be applied in investment priorities and decisions.

²³ ADC, Evaluation: Environmental and Social Impact Management at ADA, Vol 1-Main Report

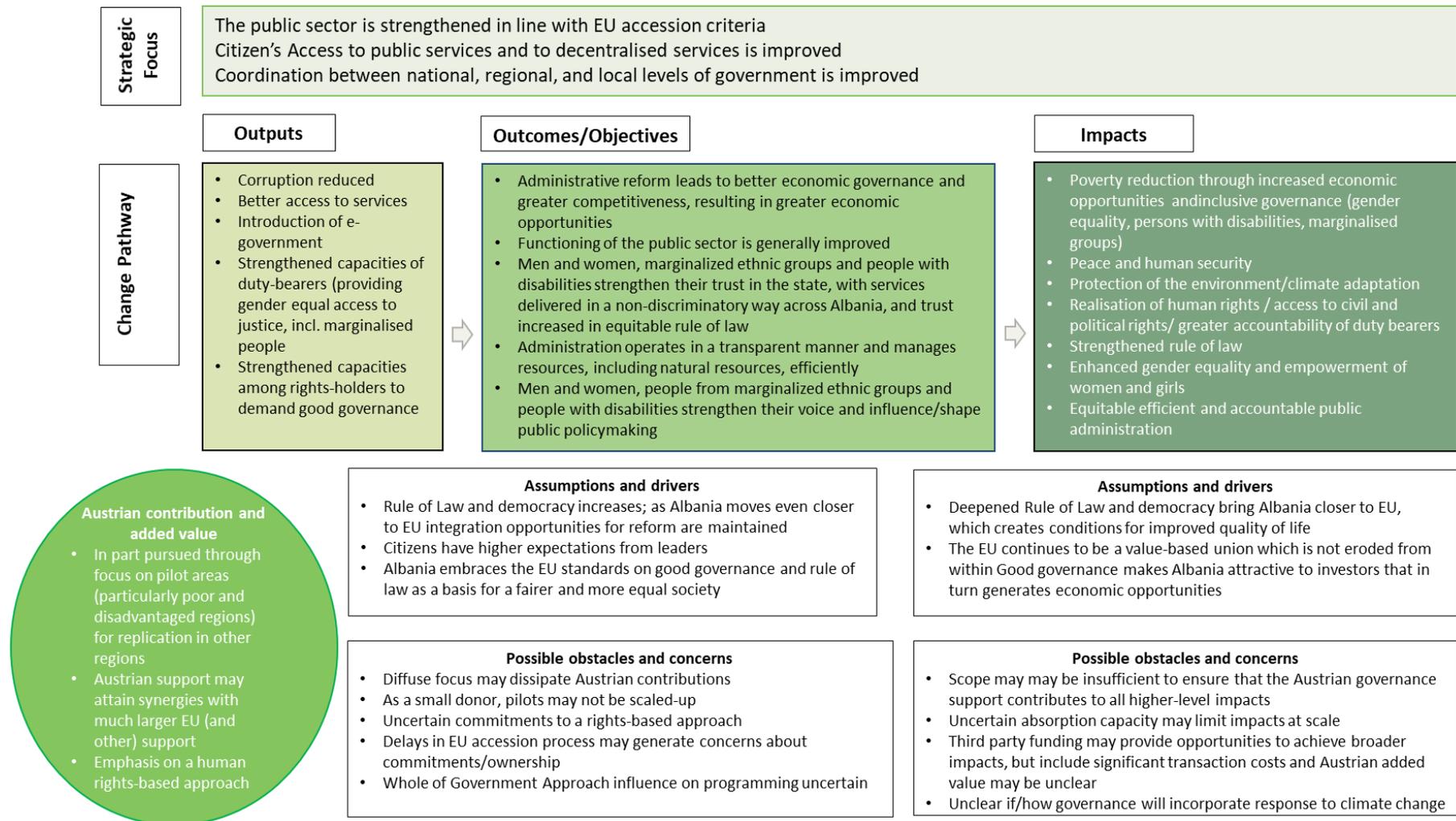
²⁴ Powerpoint presentation The OECD DAC Marker on Disability, Brussels, 5 December 2019, ADA. It can be noted that disability inclusion has not been considered in the IWRM portfolio, despite commitments to this aspect of inclusion in the Country Strategy.

²⁵ The National Strategy for IWRM strongly emphasises these fundamental concerns about the current state of the sector, see Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Water Administration (2017) National Strategy for Integrated Water Resource Management, Version 2.00en, 19 June, 2017, “Skënderbej” Street Building no.6 Entrance no.2 Apartment no. 11 Tirana, Albania.

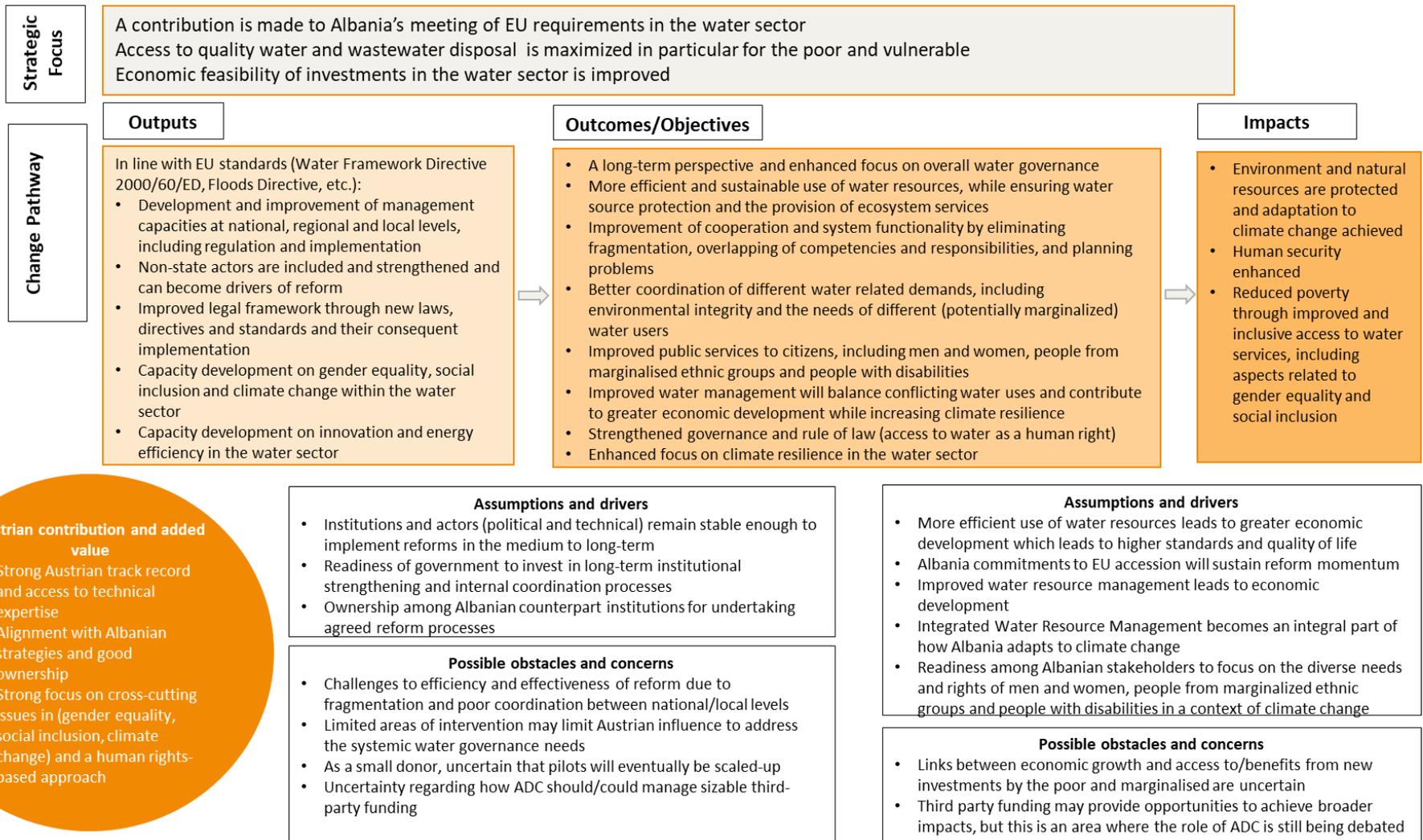
²⁶ These were presented to the Prime Minister’s Office in a memo from the Coordination Office dated December 4, 2018.

Appendix 4: Theories of Change for the three thematic priority areas

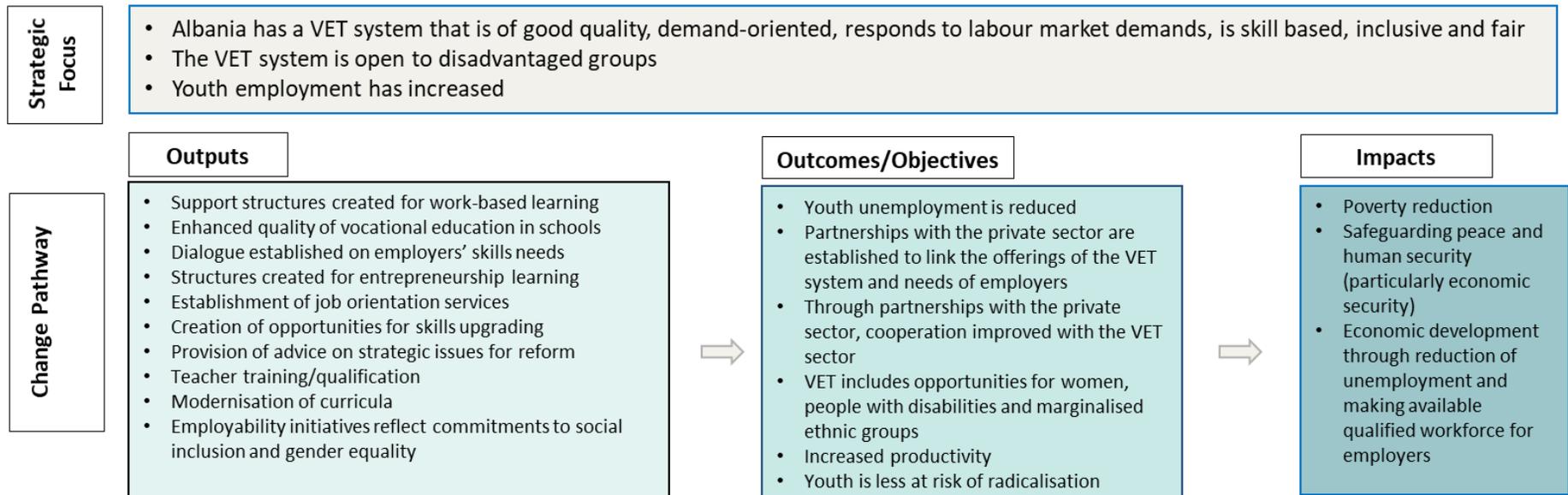
Thematic Focus: Good Governance



Thematic Focus: Integrated Water Resource Management



Thematic Focus: Labour Market Oriented VET/Employability



Austrian contribution and added value

- Strong alignment with Austrian development cooperation priorities
- Long track record and strong reputation with VET in the region
- Strong focus on finding business investors who are prepared to contribute to local development
- Being a small agency creates space for flexibility and innovation
- Potential synergies with regional programming

Assumptions and drivers

- System-level fundamental reforms lead to employment opportunities
- Albanian stakeholders share the understanding of the nexus of VET and economic development

Possible obstacles and concerns

- Whole of Government Approach involves modest coordination function but influence on programming uncertain

Assumptions and drivers

- Greater economic development and equality leads to higher quality of life which leads to greater further economic development
- Albania is committed to EU accession and the accession process continues with the required speed.

Possible obstacles and concerns

- Links between economic growth and access to/benefits (and enhanced social inclusion and gender equality) from new investments by the poor and marginalised are uncertain

Appendix 5:

Terms of Reference for this evaluation

Mid-Term Evaluation of Austrian Development Cooperation's Albania Country Strategy (2015-2020)

Terms of Reference

13 March 2019

1. Background

The Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC) has been active in Albania for over 25 years, with Albania being an ADC focus country since 1992 and in-country presence with an Austrian Development Cooperation Office¹ in Tirana since 1995. Austrian Development Policy's current strategic Three Years Program (3YP) for the period 2019 to 2021 confirms Albania as a focus country and South East Europe as a focus region.² For the region and its focus countries, the 3YP outlines an overall prioritization of sustainable economic development and the strategic orientation of ADC's engagement in the context of the European Union enlargement process and the EU strategy for the Western Balkans.³

Austria's Official Development Assistance (ODA) to Albania between 1995 and 2017 amounted to 134,42 million Euro (EUR) of which 42,85 million Euro were projects/programs funded by the Austrian Development Cooperation.⁴ Since 1995 ADA has funded close to 90 projects and

¹Nowadays referred to as Austrian Development Agency (ADA) Coordination Office (CO), Field Office or Local Office. See <http://start.entwicklung.local/>.

²Bundesministerium Europa, Integration und Äußeres (BMEIA), *Gemeinsam. Für unsere Welt. Dreijahresprogramm der österreichischen Entwicklungspolitik 2019 - 2021*, pp. 18-20.

³Ibid. In February 2018, the European Commission adopted a new Western Balkans Strategy, including six flagship activities and an Action Plan. For relevant EU documents see European Union's *Strategy for 'A credible enlargement perspective for and enhanced EU engagement with the Western Balkans'* and related *Action Plan* at https://ec.europa.eu/commission/publications/enhancing-eu-engagement-western-balkans_en and https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/annex_en.pdf; the European Commission's Indicative Strategy Paper for Albania 2014-2020 (IPA) at https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/key_documents/2014/20140919-csp-albania.pdf and the Regional Cooperation Council's (RCC) South East Europe (SEE) 2020 Strategy at <https://www.rcc.int/files/user/docs/reports/SEE2020-Strategy.pdf>, accessed on 03 January 2019.

⁴Ada Statistics Unit. For more details see also BMEIA/ADA, *Länderinformation Albanien, Juni 2018*. See http://www.entwicklung.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Dokumente/Laenderinformationen/LI_Albanien_Juni2018.pdf Other Austrian ODA actors funding programs/projects in Albania include the Austria Development Bank (OeEB), the Federal Ministry of Sustainability and Tourism (now BMNT), the Federal Ministry of Interior, the Federal Ministry of Justice (now BMVRDJ), the Federal Ministry of Finance, the Ministry for Family and Women Affairs (now BMFSFJ), the Ministry for Education, Science and Research (BMWFW) the Austrian Federal Chancellery and various Austrian States

programs in Albania.⁵ Third party funding/delegated cooperation has gained significance for ADA's portfolio in Albania over the last decade and was one of the factors for the decision taken to keep an ADA coordination office (thereinafter CO) operative in Albania at a time when four other Austrian co-ordination offices in the Western Balkans were closed.

Albania applied for European Union (EU) membership in April 2009 and received candidate status in June 2014. Progress in the EU accession – in particular the opening of accession negotiations – will depend on improvements in several key policy areas related to the rule of law, human rights and democratization.⁶ For the period between 2007 and 2020, the European Union has allocated approximately 1.2 billion Euro (EUR) of development aid to Albania under its Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA).⁷

Albania currently ranks 68th out of 189 countries in the latest Human Development Index (HDI).⁸ In the 2017 Corruption Perceptions Index Albania scores 38 on a scale of 100 indicating the perceived level of public sector corruption on a scale of 0 (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean) and ranks 99th out of 180 countries included in the index.⁹

In 2005, an evaluation of Austria's cooperation with Albania from 1991/1992 to 2004 was conducted - resulting in an evaluation report and an Action Plan for the Implementation of Evaluation Results.¹⁰ In addition, in late 2014 an informal, strategic review process of the Country Strategy Albania 2010-2014 took place during a two-day strategic planning workshop with ADC partners and key stakeholders in Albania's capital Tirana. The workshop resulted in proposals for the strategic direction of the 2015-2020 Country Strategy, with objectives and expected results.¹¹

ADC's strategic orientation for Albania

The current Country Strategy for Albania (thereinafter Country Strategy/CS) was developed in late 2014 and spans over six years (2015-2020).¹² Importantly, it includes also a matrix that outlines objectives, results, indicators and actors as formulated at the time of strategy development.

and Municipalities. For details on Austrian ODA payments to Albania in 2017 see Österreichische ODA-Leistungen an Albanien 2017 nach Modalität, Sektor, Mittelherkunft und Projektträger, http://www.entwicklung.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Dokumente/Projektliste/Laender_Projektliste/Albanien_Projektliste2017.pdf, accessed on 21 February 2019.

⁵ <http://www.entwicklung.at/en/projects/>, accessed on 15 January 2019.

⁶ https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/albania/6953/albania-and-eu_en.

⁷ This sum does not include the *multi-country* funds allocated under IPA I (2007-2013) and IPA II (2014-2020). https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/instruments/overview_en.

⁸ <http://hdr.undp.org/en/2018-update>.

⁹ For more details see Transparency International, available at <https://www.transparency.org/cpi2018> and <https://www.transparency.org/country/ALB>, accessed on 04.01.2019

¹⁰ Both documents are with ADA's Evaluation Unit.

¹¹ No review document as such was produced. The preparatory and workshop documentation, including the proposal document, is with the ADA Evaluation Unit.

¹² For the Country Strategy (available in English and German) go to http://www.entwicklung.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Dokumente/Publikationen/Landesstrategien/CS_Albania_2015-2020.pdf.

The CS stipulates that Austria's development cooperation with Albania will increasingly focus on capacity development, know-how transfer and public administration reform.¹³ The CS identifies

the following overall strategic focus: "1. Support of Albania's EU integration; 2. Promotion of regional cooperation with the Western Balkan countries and Albania's neighbouring EU countries [..]; 3. Support of the reform process in Albania through the development of institutional and human capacities and the promotion of sustainable development and social inclusion, and strengthening the rule of law/ accountability and implementation of human rights principles; 4. Promotion of good governance in the framework of the ongoing decentralisation process to strengthen the planning and implementation capacities of the public administration¹⁴".

The country strategy also defines the thematic priority areas for ADC's operational engagement in Albania: 1. Governance and Rule of Law, 2. Integrated Water Management and 3. Labour market-oriented Vocational Education/Employability. In addition, social inclusion, gender equality and environment/climate change are identified as cross-cutting issues.¹⁵ Last, but not least, the Country Strategy explicitly mentions the human rights-based approach (HRBA) as comprehensive basis for Austrian Development Cooperation. It also refers to several national, regional and international development commitments as part of the Strategy's reference framework.¹⁶ These include, the ADC regional strategy for the Danube Area/Western Balkans Region¹⁷ and Austrian Development Policy's strategic Three Years Programs (3YP)¹⁸ as well EU strategic documents relevant to Albania and the region¹⁹ and, as international commitments, the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)²⁰.

The Strategy also notes that its alignment with the Austrian Federal Ministry of Finance's International Financial Institutions (IFI) Strategy, the Strategy of the Austrian Development Bank (Oesterreichische Entwicklungsbank, OeEB,) on the Western Balkans and the development and sector strategies and priorities of the Albanian government.²¹ Albeit these national, regional and

¹³ Country Strategy, Executive Summary, p. 1.

¹⁴ Ibid, Strategic development goals, p. 5.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ The current Strategy was adopted in 2016. See at http://www.entwicklung.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Dokumente/Publikationen/Strategien/Englisch/EN_Strategy_Danube_area_Western_Balkans.pdf, accessed on 03.01.2019.

¹⁸ The Austrian Development Policy's Three Year Programs (3YP) falling within the time frame of evaluation are the 2013-2015, 2016-2018 (plus 2017 and 2018 updates) and the 2019-2021 3YP. The 3YPs 2013-2015, 2016-2018 (plus 2017 update) are available in English at <http://www.entwicklung.at/en/media-centre/publications/programmes/>. The 2018 update of the 2016-2018 3YP and the 2019-2021 3YP are available in German only at <http://www.entwicklung.at/mediathek/publikationen/strategische-dokumente/>. All documents accessed on 04.01.2019.

¹⁹ It mentions, amongst others, the EU's Development Policy 2014-2020 for Albania, the EU Indicative Strategy Paper for Albania (IPA II) and the 2020 SEE Strategy of the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC). IPA III is envisaged to be part of a set of EU external action instruments under its 2021 to 2027 multiannual financial framework (MFF). The EU's current MFF runs from 2014-2020.

²⁰ See <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>.

²¹ Expressly mentioned in this context are the Albanian national draft development strategy and the 2014-2020 sector strategies, e.g. Cross-sectoral Strategy for Public Administration Reform, National Strategy for Employment and Skills, Public Finances Management Strategy, the National Anti-Corruption Strategy, Social Inclusion Policy Paper.

international strategies and commitments themselves are not the object of this evaluation, they are referred to in the Country Strategy as guidance and relevant to the evaluation, especially regarding relevance, added value, policy coherence and coordination.²² The Country Strategy also expressly foresees a ‘Whole of Government Approach’ (WGA) and a stronger results-orientation to achieve greater Policy Coherence for Development (PCD). To this end, the establishment of an inter-ministerial platform with the participation of parliament and civil society in Austria was launched as well as the conduct of local development performance monitoring in cooperation with Albanian partners and in coordination with international development actors.²³ The strategy also confirmed Austria’s interest, especially as a small donor, in ensuring effective harmonization, coordination and efficient division of labor with all international stakeholders in Albania, including Austrian institutions that apply for EU funds.²⁴

ADC’s Portfolio in Albania since 2015

As noted above, the Country Strategy’s thematic priority areas for ADC’s operational engagement in Albania are: Governance and Rule of Law, Integrated Water Management and Labour market-oriented Vocational Education/Employability while social inclusion, gender equality and environment/climate change are defined as cross-cutting issues.

ADC/ADA net disbursements in Albania from 2015 to 2018 amount to 6,84 million Euro²⁵ (excluding third party funds). Third party funds delegated to ADA and disbursed by ADA in Albania within the same timeframe amount to 2,67 million Euro.²⁶

Since the beginning of the current Albania Country Strategy in January 2015, a total of 36 ADA projects have been running in Albania of which 23 started after the adoption of the CS.²⁷ Out of these 36 projects 17 fall within the priority theme Governance and Rule of Law, nine within Labour market-oriented Vocational Education/Employability and five within Integrated Water management. Five projects are so called Small Project Funds, annually put at the disposal of ADA Co-ordination Offices for the funding of small local projects.²⁸ In terms of contract value of projects running since the start of the Country Strategy the thematic priority areas are represented as follows: 45% Integrated Water Management, 41 % Governance and Rule of Law, 12% Labour market-oriented Vocational Education/Employability and 2% Small Project Fund. In terms of

²² The Austrian Development Policy’s Three Year Programs (3YP) falling within the time frame of evaluation are the 2013-2015, 2016-2018 (plus 2017 and 2018 updates) and the 2019-2021 3YP. The 3YPs 2013-2015, 2016-2018 (plus 2017 update) are available in English at <http://www.entwicklung.at/en/media-centre/publications/programmes/>. The 2018 update of the 2016-2018 3YP and the 2019-2021 3YP are available in German only at <http://www.entwicklung.at/mediathek/publikationen/strategische-dokumente/>. All documents accessed on 04.01.2019.

²³ See Country Strategy, Executive Summary, p. 1.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ This does not include third party funds. Total ODA to Albania between 2015 and 2017 amounted to 25,11 million Euro. ADA Statistics Unit, February 2019.

²⁶ Figures based on data from ADA Statistics and ADA Advisor Albania (for 2018), February 2019.

²⁷ These figures are based on ADA Funding Management System (FMS) data and include figures until the second quarter of 2019. They do not include regional projects. They include projects managed by ADA’s Countries and Units (L&R), Economy and Development (W&E) and Civil Society International (ZGI).

²⁸ Since the beginning of the Country Strategy five small project funds have been put at the disposal of the ADA Co-ordination Office. For 2019, as of 10 March 2019, the small projects to be funded have not yet been selected. In total 28 small projects (all contract value below 20.000 Euro each, generally contract value below 10.000 Euro) have so far been funded: 9 in 2015, 5 in 2016, 6 in 2017 and 8 in 2018. The annual Small Project Fund is limited to max. 100.000 Euro per ADA Co-ordination Office.

contract value, fifteen projects have a volume between 110.000 Euro and 500.000 Euro, seven up to 50.000 Euro, six a contract value between 60.000-100.000, three between 510.000 and 1 Mio Euro, three between 1, 1 Mio Euro - 2 Mio Euro and one above 2 Mio Euro.²⁹

As of March 2019, ADA is funding/implementing six³⁰ projects in Albania, falling within in the following areas: water and sanitation (49%), government and civil society (27%), social infrastructure and services (9%) and education sector (13%).³¹ In terms of the Country Strategy framework this means 49% for integrated water management, 36% for Governance and Rule of Law and 13% Labour market-oriented Vocational Education/Employability.

A look at ADA's regional/global portfolio relevant to Albania shows a total of 33 projects running since the start of the Country Strategy, with the vast majority falling within the framework of Governance and Rule of Law (25 projects), followed by Labour Market oriented Vocational Education/Employability (7 projects) and integrated Water Management (1 project).

From the perspective of the funding source measured by contract value between 2015 and March 2019 nearly 17, 08 Mio Euro came from ADA and 9,27 Mio Euro from third parties (delegated cooperation), including funds from the European Union and the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC). Three of the ADA co-funded third party projects running since 2015 fall within the thematic priorities Governance and Rule of Law and two within Integrated Water Management.

Finally, four Albania projects currently have the status of 'proposed' or 'planned', with the start foreseen between the second quarter of 2019 and the first quarter of 2020.

This evaluation

ADA's Evaluation Unit³² (EVAL) is commissioning a strategic mid-term evaluation of ADC's 2015-2020 Country Strategy for Albania (thereinafter "evaluation"), more specifically, from the second half of 2014, when ADC's preparations to develop a new Albania strategy started, until April 2019. The evaluation is to be conducted by a team of external consultants between April/May 2019 and December 2019/January 2020. These Terms of Reference (ToR) are the main planning document that describes the purpose, scope and main evaluation questions. They are based on existing ADC/ADA guidance on country and regional strategy evaluations and have been drafted through a consultative process with inputs from key stakeholders in Austria and Albania.

²⁹ Based on FMS data. Each small project fund (SPF) has been counted as one here and allocated to the category up to 50.000 Euro due to the fact that each of the projects funded through the SBF is below that volume. As noted above, 28 projects have been funded through the SPF in Albania since the start of the CS. within the relevant timeframe of this evaluation.

³⁰ For the ADA Funding Management Systems (FMS) technically these are seven projects. The 'EU Support to Integrated Water Management', is broken down into two projects, one for the third party funding (European Commission) and a second one for the ADC co-financing. See <https://www.entwicklung.at/en/projects/current-projects/map/country/ALEUSIWM/EU>, accessed on 12 March 2019.

³¹ This categorization reflects the assigned OECD DAC CRS Purpose Codes and not the scope of priority sectors as included in the Country Strategy. For the purpose of the Country Strategy as well as ADA programming (Themes and Quality Unit/T&Q), the thematic areas of government and civil society as well as social infrastructure and services fall within one and the same sector and theme, namely Good Governance and the Rule of Law. For more details on ADA's ongoing and past projects in Albania see <http://www.entwicklung.at/en/projects/all-projects> accessed on 18.01.2019.

³² A subgroup of ADA's Executive Unit of Evaluation and Statistics.

2. Evaluation purpose

The main purposes of this evaluation are learning and steering for better strategic decision making, programming and implementation.³³ The evaluation will be forward looking, formative and improvement-oriented.

The evaluation will provide evidence for institutional learning at the strategic level and help define the future ADC engagement in Albania, with particular attention to Albania's accession process to the European Union and related implications for ADC, including a possible phasing over and options for ADC cooperation at a different level. The timing of this evaluation, two thirds into the strategy's implementation, will allow that its findings, lessons learned and recommendations contribute to developing a possible new Albania Country Strategy for 2021 and beyond. As the current CS is still being implemented until the end of 2020, the evaluation will also help taking stock, reflecting and making adjustments, where needed and adequate, for the remaining implementation period.

The primary users of the evaluation results is ADC's management, more specifically, strategic decision makers, senior management and program (country desk and thematic) staff across relevant departments at BMEIA and ADA (HQ und field). It is expected that the evaluation will also be useful for Austrian ODA actors and ADC partners active in Albania, which meet on a regular basis institutionalized through the Interministerial Session (IMS).

3. Objectives

The main objectives of the evaluation are:

1. To assess the relevance, coherence, complementariness of ADC's strategic framework for Albania and synergies in its implementation;
2. To assess the effectiveness, overall impact and prospects for sustainability of ADC's strategic orientation and its implementation in Albania and identify hindering and facilitating factors;
3. To assess the efficiency and effectiveness of funding instruments, implementation modalities and partnerships used by ADC for its engagement in Albania and identify related good practice and challenges;
4. To identify and help sharpen the comparative advantage and added value of ADC's engagement in Albania.

This strategic evaluation is based on the OECD-DAC framework and standards³⁴ and the ADC guidelines for Country and Strategy Evaluations³⁵.

³³ As background to ADC country strategy evaluations see ADC/ADA, Guidelines for Country and Regional Strategy Evaluations & Reviews of the Austrian Development Cooperation, See at www.entwicklung.at/en/ada/evaluation/.

³⁴ See OECD, DAC Norms and Standards for Evaluating Development cooperation, available at <http://www.oecd.org/development/evaluation/dcdndep/41612905.pdf>. OECD (2010): Quality Standards for Development Evaluation. DAC Guidelines and Reference Series (currently being revised), available at <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>. OECD, DAC Quality Standards for Development Evaluation, available at: <http://www.oecd.org/development/evaluation/dcdndep/44798177.pdf>. For the purpose of this evaluation, 'impact' will be assessed without its broad scale element.

³⁵ See ADA Guidelines for Country and Regional Strategy Evaluation (2016), https://www.entwicklung.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Dokumente/Evaluierung/Evaluierungsberichte/Guidelines_for_Country_and_Regional_Strategy_Evaluations___Reviews_of_the_Austrian_Development_Cooperation.pdf

4. Focus and Scope

The period covered by the evaluation spans from the second half of 2014, when the Albania Country Strategy was developed to April 2019.

The evaluation will help assess whether ADC's strategic positioning in Albania has been and continues to be relevant and coherent and how effective, efficient and impactful this strategy has been implemented and what the prospect for sustainability are. In doing so it will assess design, implementation and monitoring mechanisms, aid modalities, sector impact, added value, national and local/regional, partnerships and donor coordination.

The evaluation will reconstruct the Theory of Change (ToC) for all three priority sectors and the cross-cutting issues. In terms of assessing effectiveness, impact and sustainability, two of the three priority sectors will be selected for in depth analysis during the inception phase. The evaluation will also look at how the crosscutting issues and the human rights based approach have been applied within each and across sectors. Even though ADC's Regional Strategy for the Danube Area / Western Balkans Region is not the focus of this evaluation, the evaluation will take its role in consideration in terms of issues of coherence, complementariness and synergies.

Available evaluative evidence and findings related to ADC's and other donors' engagement in Albania should inform this evaluation. This includes previous strategic evaluations and reviews undertaken by ADC, program/project evaluations and reviews commissioned or conducted by ADA or its implementing partners³⁶ as well as relevant evaluations of other stakeholders.

5. Evaluation Questions

The key evaluation questions to be covered by the evaluation are:

Relevance

1. To what extent does the strategy and its intended results³⁷ take into account and respond to the specific context in the partner country, particularly Albania's accession process to the European Union, and the demands of the target population, including the most vulnerable/marginalized?
2. To what extent is the strategy coherent with other ADC strategic documents³⁸ relevant to Albania, how is coherence being monitored and how are discrepancies being addressed?
3. How relevant are the projects implemented to the Strategy in terms of objectives and results? And what potential options for improvement exist?

³⁶ Around ten ADA project/program evaluations have so far been completed, are ongoing or are planned for the first quarter of 2019.

³⁷ In particular with a view to its strategic development goals, thematic priority areas, cross-cutting issues, implementation and coordination arrangements, its matrix as well as policy coherence for development (PCD), especially ADC's Whole-of-Government Approach (WGA).

³⁸ Such as the 3YP, thematic policies etc.

Effectiveness

4. What have been the results achieved within the three priority sectors over the evaluated period? How did the Strategy enable these results? Did any unintended effects occur as a result of the Strategy and its implementation, positive or negative? Any missed opportunities?
5. Which role have different funding instruments used in Albania played in the achievement of results and overall performance? Which associated advantages and disadvantages can be identified for future decision making in this regard?
6. To which extent was ADC's approach effective in relation to the cross-cutting issues (social inclusion, gender equality and environment/climate change) as well as the human rights-based approach (HRBA)?

Efficiency:

7. How efficiently has the Country Strategy been implemented? Which enabling and hindering factors can be identified in the context? How can related challenges best be addressed in future?

Impact:

8. What has demonstrably changed for the target population and groups as a result of the strategy (positive/negative, intended/unintended) – both with a view to the thematic priorities and cross-cutting issues?
9. What have been the key enabling and hindering factors for these changes? How have related challenges been managed and how can they be mitigated in future?

Sustainability:

10. To what extent has the Country Strategy and its implementation built-in strategies and measures for sustaining positive effects and change, especially regarding changes of context?
11. To what extent have results brought about lasting change and/or can be expected to continue beyond the duration of the Strategy? What have been the main enabling and hindering factors for sustainability of results and how can they be built on/addressed?

Complementariness and Synergies

12. How is Austria's Whole of Government Approach (WGA) reflected in the development, implementation and coordination of the Strategy? What have been enabling and hindering factors for WGA operationalization?
13. What has been and still is ADC's added value and comparative advantage vis a vis other development actors engaged in the country, if any?

Questions can be refined and restructured in agreement with ADA's Evaluation Unit during the inception phase. Any changes need to be explained and adequately reflect the overall purpose and scope of the evaluation.

6. Approach and Methods

The evaluation will use a theory-based approach (TBA)³⁹ to assess and determine ADC's work in Albania. The starting point for this is the reconstruction of a Theory of Change (ToC,) incl. assumptions for the Country Strategy as such and possibly for the priority sectors. The reconstruction of the CS's (implicit) ToC, starting from the Country Strategy and its matrix itself, and the testing of underlying hypothesis and assumptions will provide evidence to inform ADC's future engagement in Albania. It will also help draw conclusions on the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and prospects for impact, sustainability and added value of specific approaches and interventions of ADC's engagement in Albania.

The evaluation will employ a Mixed-Methods approach⁴⁰ to data collection and data analysis, including both quantitative and qualitative methods. A Mixed-Methods design will be used to draw from the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative methods and to improve the internal validity of results through data and method triangulation⁴¹. As such, the evaluation will draw on a range of data sources and data collection methods to ensure the reliability of results, promote impartiality, reduce bias, and ensure that the findings are based on the most comprehensive and relevant information possible. The methods are likely to include the following:

- **Portfolio review** (based on preparatory work and supported by the ADA Evaluation Unit): The portfolio analysis will include the analysis of quantitative and qualitative data and will help understand ADC's engagement in Albania in detail during the timeframe of the evaluation and beyond, as needed;
- **Context analysis:** The context analysis will include a review of relevant literature on Albania. It will also include taking stock of available evaluative evidence related to Albania.
- **Document review:** The document review will include a review of key international/regional/national strategy documents (ADC, regional and country level), program/project related documentation across the three priority sectors.
- **Key informant interviews:** Key informants will include the Austrian Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs (BMEIA), ADA senior and programme managers and thematic experts at Headquarters and at the Coordination Office (CO) in Tirana, as relevant; Whole of Government (WGA) actors, Albanian government and partner institutions, civil society and other implementing partner organizations as well as bi- and multilateral development partners and key international organizations active in Albania, such as the OSCE, UNDP, UN Women. Key informants should be selected in such a way that they adequately cover different stakeholder groups.

³⁹ Weiss, C. H. (1997). Theory-based evaluation: Past, present and future. *New Directions for Evaluation*, 76, 41-55. Funnel, Sue C., Rogers, Patricia J. (2011), *Purposeful Program Theory: Effective Use of Theories of Change and Logic Models*. See also Mayne, John (2015), *Useful Theory of Change Models*, in: *Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation* 30(2), 119-142 and Aspen Institute (ed.) *The Community Builder's Approach to Theory of Change: A Practical Guide to Theory Development*, The Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change available at http://www.entwicklung.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Dokumente/Evaluierung/Theory_of_Change/Aspen_Institute_Theory_of_Change_Guide.pdf.

⁴⁰ Bamberger, Michael/Rao, Vijayendra, Woolcock, Michael (2010), *Using Mixed Methods in Monitoring and Evaluation*, Policy Research Working Paper, The World Bank Development Research Group, Poverty and Inequality Team.

⁴¹ See, for example, Flick, U. (2004): *Triangulation. Eine Einführung*: Springer.

- **Survey:** Based on a standardized online questionnaire, the survey can be an important component in assessing effectiveness, impact and prospects for sustainability in the eyes of the project implementers. Thus, the survey is expected to mainly reach out to ADC implementing partners and possibly government partners.
- **Case studies:** Case studies can contribute to assessing the relevance, effectiveness, impact, sustainability as well as complementariness and synergies. The internal validity of the case studies is of fundamental importance. In the context of this evaluation, (at least) one case study on one of the priority sectors is envisaged.
- **Methods to assess development outcomes:** ADA envisages to apply rigorous methods to assess effectiveness of its interventions. These can include theory based impact evaluation approaches (such as contribution analysis, process tracing or most significant change⁴²) as well as (quasi-)experimental designs⁴³.

Methodological rigor will be weighted significantly in the assessment of proposals. Bidders are therefore invited to question the methodology presented in this TOR and improve on it, or propose an approach that is deemed more appropriate.

7. Evaluation Process

The evaluation will be divided into three phases which each have specific deliverables. Their timely delivery is within the responsibility of the evaluation team.

The evaluation will include visits to Vienna and Albania. A total of three to four visits to Vienna (Kick-Off, Inception Report Presentation and Interviews, Preliminary findings Presentation, Final Draft Report) and one, if needed and as agreed with the ADA Evaluation Unit, two, field trips to Albania are foreseen during the evaluation.

7.1. Kick-off and Inception Phase (May – end June 2019)

During the inception phase one visit to Vienna is planned, for the kick-off meeting.

The first phase comprises of the following actions/deliverables by the evaluation team:

- a. Desk research and a study/desk review of documents and data provided by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA)
- b. Draft inception report (10 pages) that must contain at least the following points
 - Presentation of hypothesis/assumptions on the main evaluation questions;
 - Detailed presentation of the methods to be applied during data collection;
 - Proposed field visits;
 - Theory of Change (ToC);
 - Evaluation Matrix, (showing how each question will be answered through the use of indicators, data collection tools etc.)
- c. Incorporation of the written comments into the draft inception report and submission of the final inception report and completed feedback matrix.

⁴² See for example, Davies, R. and Dart, J. (2005), *The 'Most Significant Change' Technique – A Guide to its Use*.

⁴³ See for example, Howard White and Shagun Sabarwal (2014), *Quasi-Experimental Design and Methods*, UNICEF.

7.2 Data Collection and Interview Phase (June –August)

At the outset of the data collection and interview phase one visit to Vienna is planned: for the presentation of the inception report and key informant interviews.

The second phase starts upon written approval by the ADA Evaluation Unit (EVAL) of the inception report. The main components of the second phase are:

- a. Data collection through interviews and visits of programme sites in Albania. The interviews and site visits will be conducted in line with the plans agreed in the inception report. To guarantee their independence, it is important that the evaluation team conducts and is seen to conduct the field visits in an independent manner.
- b. Survey data, if applicable
- c. Case study briefs, if applicable

7.3. Data Analysis and Submission of Report (September - December 2019/January 2020)

- a. Data analysis und preparation of triangulation matrix.
- b. Submission of the draft report to the ADA Evaluation Unit
- c. Incorporation of the feedback (or else non-incorporation of feedback based on a sound justification) by the evaluation team and submission of the final draft report to the ADA Evaluation Unit,
- d. Incorporation of Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) feedback as relevant by the evaluation team and submission of a final draft report to the ADA Evaluation Unit (two weeks after having received the feedback).
- e. Presentation (power point) by the evaluation team leader in Vienna of the final draft report to the Evaluation Reference Group (and possibly additional key actors) in Vienna.
- f. Incorporation of the written comments by the evaluation team and submission of the final version of the report to the ADA Evaluation Unit for coherence screening.

The evaluation team will build up its work on the relevant standards for evaluations of the OECD DAC⁴⁴ and those of the Austrian Development Cooperation, where applicable⁴⁵. All work needs to be documented by using transparent criteria.

8. Timetable and Deliverables

The Evaluation should start in early May 2019. The inception report is to be finalized by mid-June 2019. The draft report is to be submitted to ADA in September/early October 2019 and the final report the latest in December 2019/January 2020.

The evaluation team is expected to provide the following deliverables:

- Draft and final inception report, including evaluation matrix, interview guidelines, survey questionnaire and draft Theory of Change (ToC);

⁴⁴ Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development/OECD (1992), Development assistance manual: DAC Principles for effective aid, Paris.

⁴⁵ <http://www.entwicklung.at/activities/evaluation/en/>.

- Kick-Off Meeting, Interviews/Focus Group Discussions in Vienna, Preliminary Findings and Final Draft Report Presentations in Vienna;
- Analytical Framework
- Triangulation Matrix
- Codified data from interviews
- Survey data, case study briefs, as applicable
- Feedback matrices
- Draft evaluation report
- Final evaluation report, with Executive Summary in English, German and Albanian

#	Phase	Deliverable	Timeline	Time Estimate (evaluation team)
1	Kick-Off and Inception Phase	Draft Inception Report	Early June '19	20 working days
		Final Inception Report	Mid-June 19	
2	Data Collection and Interview Phase	Field visit to Albania	End-June – Mid-July 19	28 working days
3	Data Analysis and Submission of Report	Triangulation matrix, interview protocols and survey data	Mid-August 19	39 working days
		Presentation of Initial Findings (Power Point)	Early September 19	
		Draft Report	Mid-September 19	
		Presentation of Draft Final Report	End October '19	
		Final Report (Executive Summary in English, Albanian and German)	End December '19/January 2020	

All evaluation products, including the reports need to be written and delivered in English. The Executive Summary of the Evaluation Report needs to be translated and also submitted in German and Albanian.

The inception report must contain an evaluation matrix, analytical framework, draft Theory of Change (ToC) and a draft list of interview partners.

The final report must contain an executive summary and a list of recommendations made by the evaluation. The final report should not comprise more than 40 pages (excluding annexes). The executive summary should summarize key findings and recommendations (three to five pages) and needs to be submitted as part of the final draft report.

The quality of the reports will be assessed according to the following criteria:

- Does the report contain a comprehensive and clear executive summary?
- Were the Terms of Reference fulfilled and is this reflected in the report?
- Are all evaluation questions answered?
- Are the methods and processes of the evaluation sufficiently documented in the evaluation report?
- Does the report present/analyze a theory of change and its underlying assumptions?
- Are the conclusions and recommendations based on findings and are they clearly stated in the report?
- Does the report clearly differentiate between conclusions, lessons learnt and recommendations?
- Are the recommendations SMART?
- Were the most significant stakeholders involved consulted?
- Does the report present the information contained in a presentable and clearly arranged form?
- Is the report free from spelling mistakes and unclear linguistic formulations?
- Can the report be distributed in the delivered form?

9. Management of the Evaluation and Responsibilities

The evaluation will be managed by the ADA Evaluation Unit EVAL, which will also approve the evaluation products, including the inception report and final report.

An Evaluation Reference Group, co-facilitated by ADA and BMEIA Evaluation Units and composed of one or more representative/s from the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (BMEIA), the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) and the Government of Albania, will be established to act as a sounding board, to facilitate and review the work of the evaluation and enhance participation, ownership and learning. They will also serve as an independent validation of facts and findings. The Reference Group will provide inputs and feedback at all stages of the drafting, i.e. Terms of Reference (ToRs), inception report and the draft report.

In the inception phase, all relevant organizational units within BMEIA and ADA will provide – through the Evaluation Reference Group and coordinated through ADA’s Evaluation Unit - basic documentation and information to the evaluation team.

The strategic evaluation of ADC’s country strategy Albania is accompanied by two peer reviewers reviewing the quality of the evaluation throughout the evaluation process. More specifically, the

peer reviewers will comment in writing on the evaluation's ToR, the inception report, the survey questionnaire, interview guidelines and the draft evaluation report.

ADA's Evaluation Unit and the evaluation team will be responsible to ensure independence throughout the evaluation process. Where needed and adequate ADA EVAL will provide support regarding the coordination of meetings.

10. Payment modalities

The payment will be done in three installments. The first installment amounts to thirty percent (30%) of the total contract value and will be settled by ADA after acceptance of the inception report. The second installment, also consisting of thirty percent (30%) of the total contract value will be transferred after the acceptance of the draft evaluation report and the third payment of the remaining 40% of the contract value will be transferred after the submission of all remaining deliverables and the acceptance of the final evaluation report and the related invoice and its acknowledgement by ADA.

11. Logistical arrangements

The evaluation team is responsible for its own logistical arrangements and shall arrange the necessary meetings independently. If a specific need for this is identified during the evaluation process, ADA's evaluation team will work to facilitate travel and other logistical arrangements when needed and as much as possible.

12. Evaluation team

The strategic evaluation should be conducted by a team of evaluators, including at least one national evaluator. The evaluation team should not exceed three persons. The evaluation team must include different gender. The team composition should be detailed in the technical offer, together with a clear division of tasks among all team members.

The team leader should have the following qualifications:

- Track record in leading strategic evaluations during the last 5 years (at least three strategic evaluations conducted), including at least two of which country strategy evaluations, proven by at least one publication to be annexed to the offer.
- Proven experience with theory-based evaluations (at least two evaluations conducted within the last seven years);
- Proven experience with quantitative, multivariate analysis and survey development, proven by at least one writing sample (published or unpublished, to be annexed to the offer);
- Proven work experience in development cooperation and with EU accession countries., including the European Union's Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (If other team member has experience with IPA, this can be waived).
- Proven familiarity with or work experience in Albania and the region.
- Expertise or/and evaluation experience in at least one of the other ADC sector priorities relevant in Albania

- Expertise or/and evaluation experience with the cross-cutting issues relevant to this evaluation.
- Excellent knowledge of English language. Knowledge of Albanian and German language is an asset.

The other team member(s) should have the following qualifications:

- Track record in conducting strategic evaluations, including at least two of which country strategy evaluations in the context of development cooperation.
- Proven experience with theory-based evaluations (at least two evaluations conducted within the last seven years);
- Expertise or/and evaluation experience in at least one of the ADC sector priorities relevant in Albania (different from the sector of expertise of the team leader).
- Proven experience with quantitative, multivariate analysis and survey development, proven by at least one writing sample
- Proven work experience in development cooperation and with EU accession countries, including the European Union's Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance/IPA (If other team member has experience with IPA, this can be waived).
- Expertise or/and evaluation experience with the cross-cutting issues relevant to this evaluation.
- Proven familiarity with or work experience in Albania and the region.
- Excellent knowledge of English language. German language is an asset.

13. Contracting and selection process

For the hiring of the evaluation team, ADA will pursue a direct contracting process. Several experts/companies will be invited to submit a proposal. Furthermore, a call for expression of interest (including the Terms of Reference) will be published in a variety of platforms and networks. Interested candidates/firms should provide a technical offer (maximum 10 pages) and a financial offer (in word and excel format).

Financial offers exceeding 71.000,- EUR net will be excluded from the application and selection process.

The **technical offer** should include the following:

- Brief description of the understanding of the assignment;
- Presentation of a proposed approach and methodology, particularly regarding methods used, possible challenges and how to address them;
- Presentation of a detailed work plan including time schedule and division of tasks;
- Detailed CVs and references of similar assignments of the team leader, the other team member(s) as annex
- Information on and references of similar assignments of the consulting firm (if applicable) as annex

The **financial offer** should follow the following breakdown (in EUR):

- Personnel costs: name of evaluators and support staff, if applicable, estimated number of working days per evaluation phase, fee rate per working day, total amount;

- Travel (Albania, Vienna): travel, accommodation, other costs, if applicable;
- Other costs (for communications, etc.);
- VAT (if applicable). Please note that ADA does not hold a value-added tax identification number (UID).

Criteria that will be used to assess the proposals include:

- Expertise, relevant experience and suitability of evaluation team
- Relevant experience and capacity of consulting firm (if applicable)
- Quality and coherence of the proposal, including methodology, timeline and work plan
- Methodological rigor and adequacy of approach that matches this evaluation's information needs
- Coherence of financial and technical proposal; efficient use of resources.

Please note that personal data included in the proposals (like CVs) will be stored and used by ADA internally during the review of the Proposals.

The consultants must not have been involved in the design, implementation or monitoring of ADC's 2015-2020 Country Strategy in Albania or ADA funded/implemented projects/programmes in Albania during the timeframe that is being evaluated.

Proposals must be submitted by email with "Evaluation - Albania Country Strategy" as subject header **by 9 April 2019, 12 a.m. (noon), CET**, to the Evaluation Unit at the Austrian Development Agency: evaluierung@ada.gv.at

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Appendix 7: Survey and interview instruments

Below are the survey questions asked, followed by a summary of the semi-structured interview guide used.

Survey:

Dear key stakeholder,

We would like to cordially invite you to participate in the survey for key stakeholders of interventions of Austrian Development Cooperation in Albania. This survey is an important part of the Mid-Term Evaluation of Austrian Development Cooperation's Albania Country Strategy (2015-2020).

Your perspective as key stakeholder is crucial. Together with the responses from other stakeholders and data collection through other methods, these perspectives will contribute to gaining a better understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of ADC's development cooperation in Albania. The survey results will contribute to the findings of this evaluation towards the ADC's future operational and strategic approach in Albania. We therefore invite you to be frank with regards to both strengths and weaknesses in your intervention to facilitate learning for ADC.

The information provided within this survey will remain strictly confidential and anonymous and will not be disclosed to any third party. As such, the entries you provide will not be traced back to your individual intervention measure.

The survey is expected to take maximum 10 minutes to complete.

Please send your responses to the survey by May 11, 2020 at the latest.

How to fill out the survey:

The survey consist of 11 questions. We would kindly ask you to answer all the questions that apply to you.

Once you have answered all questions, please press the button "Done". The survey is then complete.

Please note that the depending on your device, Question 6-9 may require that you go to the end of each question and use the scroll bar (left-right) to show all answer options.

Thank you for your input!

1. Declaration of Consent:

This survey for the Mid-Term Evaluation of Austrian Development Cooperation's Albania Country Strategy (2015-2020) was commissioned by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) (Zelinkagasse 2, 1010 Vienna, Austria), and managed by NIRAS Sweden AB in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and in strict confidentiality.

If you participate in this survey and submit your answers at the end of the questionnaire, all the information that you provided in this questionnaire (survey data) will be submitted to NIRAS Sweden AB, who will save and analyse it.

ADA will receive the results of the analysis, for which NIRAS Sweden AB will draw on the survey data. Furthermore, NIRAS Sweden AB is collecting data that are necessary for opening the online survey website. It will further collect information as to whether the survey link that was sent to you was used and passes on this information upon our request.

The processing of data will take place exclusively within the framework of the mid-term evaluation.

Your participation in this survey is voluntary. If you would like to participate, your declaration of consent to the processing of data is necessary, as we otherwise do not have the right to process your information within the framework of this survey under the applicable data protection laws.

You are free to revoke your consent any time by telephone or mail. In the case of revocation, all data processing to this point remains lawful.

I hereby consent to the data processing as described through my participation in the online survey of the Mid-Term Evaluation of Austrian Development Cooperation's Albania Country Strategy (2015-2020)

2. Your gender

- Female
- Male

3. What is your role in development cooperation?

- National level government
- Local level government
- National level civil society organisation
- Local level civil society organisation
- Consultant
- Researcher/academic
- Donor
- Other

4. What sector(s) are you primarily engaged with?

- Governance
- Vocational education and training/employment
- Integrated water resource management/environment
- Other/various

5. Based on your knowledge of the work of Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC), how relevant are these initiatives for supporting the EU accession process?

- Very relevant
- Somewhat relevant
- Not relevant
- No opinion
- Not aware of ADC work in this area

Please specify examples of key areas where ADC is supporting the EU accession process, and/or provide other observations:

6. If you are working on governance issues (if not, please continue to the next question) and based on your knowledge of the work of ADC, to what extent does ADC's work address the following governance issues in Albania?

a. Judicial reform

- ADC is very focused and effective in this area
- ADC addresses some important challenges, but others are missing
- Albania's most important issues in this area are not addressed by ADC
- No opinion
- Not aware of ADC work in this area

Observations:

b. Decentralisation/regional development

- ADC is very focused and effective in this area

Appendix 7: Survey and interview instruments

- ADC addresses some important challenges, but others are missing
- Albania's most important issues in this area are not addressed
- No opinion
- Not aware of ADC work in this area

Observations:

c. Human rights and fundamental freedoms

- ADC is very focused and effective in this area
- ADC addresses some important challenges, but others are missing
- Albania's most important issues in this area are not addressed
- No opinion
- Not aware of ADC work in this area

Observations:

7.If you are working on vocational education and training (VET) issues (if not, please continue to the next question) and based on your knowledge of the work of ADC, to what extent does ADC's work address the following VET issues in Albania?

a. Reform of institutions for vocational training

- ADC is very focused and effective in this area
- ADC addresses some important challenges, but others are missing
- Albania's most important issues in this area are not addressed
- No opinion

Observations:

b. Adaptation of VET provision to labour market demands

- ADC is very focused and effective in this area
- ADC addresses some important challenges, but others are missing
- Albania's most important issues in this area are not addressed
- No opinion

Observations:

c. Initiatives to promote inclusion of vulnerable groups in VET so as to access more and/or better-quality employment opportunities

- ADC is very focused and effective in this area
- ADC addresses some important challenges, but others are missing
- Albania's most important issues in this area are not addressed
- No opinion

Observations:

8.If you are working on integrated water management issues (if not, please continue to the next question) and based on your knowledge of the work of ADC, to what extent does ADC's work address the following integrated water management issues in Albania?

d. Equitable and reliable access to quality water resources for household, agricultural and business use

- ADC is very focused and effective in this area
- ADC addresses some important challenges, but others are missing
- Albania's most important issues in this area are not addressed
- No opinion

Observations:

e. Environmentally sustainable ecosystem management and/or climate change adaptation

- ADC is very focused and effective in this area
- ADC addresses some important challenges, but others are missing
- Albania's most important issues in this area are not addressed

- No opinion

Observations:

f. More effective institutions for managing water resources

- ADC is very focused and effective in this area
- ADC addresses some important challenges, but others are missing
- Albania's most important issues in this area are not addressed
- No opinion

Observations:

9. In your opinion, are ADC initiatives well targeted and have an appropriate strategic focus to achieve significant levels of results that improve the lives of the most vulnerable and marginalized populations in Albania?

g. Are initiatives well targeting?

- Very well targeted
- Somewhat well targeted but missing some vulnerable groups
- Poorly targeted
- No opinion
- Not aware of ADC work in this area

Observations:

h. Are initiatives strategically focused to achieve significant results?

- Very strategically focused so as to achieve significant outcomes
- Some strategic aspects weak or lacking
- Not strategic
- No opinion
- Not aware of ADC work in this area

Observations:

10. In your opinion, to what degree does ADC contribute to gender equality in Albania?

- ADC is playing a major role in promoting and supporting gender equality
- ADC is modestly involved and/or one of many actors supporting gender equality
- ADC is not a significant actor in promoting gender equality
- No opinion
- Not aware of ADC's role

Please specify examples of effective initiatives, and/or provide other observations:

11. Based on your engagement with ADC financed or implemented projects, do you feel that ADC is a donor that is constructive and supportive to work with?

- Very constructive and supportive
- Somewhat constructive and supportive
- Not constructive and supportive
- No opinion
- Not aware of ADC approaches

Observations:

12. In your opinion, have ADC financed or implemented projects been selected and designed in such a way as to generate lasting outcomes in Albania?

Appendix 7: Survey and interview instruments

- Always/almost always adequate to achieve lasting outcomes
- Sometimes adequate to achieve lasting outcomes
- Rarely adequate to achieve lasting outcomes
- No opinion
- Not aware of the prospects for ADC work in this regard

Observations:

Semi-structured interview guide:

Interviewee name, organisation and position	
Interviewer name	
Interview date, time and location	
Type of interview (individual, focal group, face-to-face, telecom)	

Interview number (e.g., 1/ALGP/PA/F)	Interviewee institution codes	Role and relation to strategy codes	Gender codes
	ALGP: Albanian government AUGP: Austrian government OD: Other donor CSO: Civil society organisation PVT: Private sector actor AJ: Academic or journalist OT: Other	PA: Policy maker TA: Technical actor IO: Informed observer	F: Female M: Male
General interview notes			

Evaluation question	Notes on interviewee response
Relevance and coherence	
1.1. To what extent does the strategy, and/or its intended goals and results (described in the theory of change), take into account and respond to the specific context in Albania, particularly Albania's socio-economic and political situation?	Assumptions and extent to which they have proven valid: Austrian contributions, added value and 'niche': Disruptive events and 'surprises': Lessons:
1.2. To what extent is the strategy and its underlying theory of change coherent across ADC and EU strategies relevant to Albania, most notably with regard to EU accession; to what extent is coherence being monitored and divergences being addressed?	Assumptions and extent to which they have proven valid: Austrian contributions, added value and 'niche': Disruptive events and 'surprises': Lessons:
1.3. How relevant are the defined objectives and anticipated results of funded projects to your efforts in relation	Assumptions and extent to which they have proven valid: Austrian contributions, added value and 'niche':

Appendix 7: Survey and interview instruments

to the theory of change emerging from the Country Strategy?	Disruptive events and ‘surprises’: Lessons:
1.4. How is Austria’s Whole of Government Approach reflected in the development, implementation and coordination of programming? What have been enabling and hindering factors for its operationalisation? Has the focus on ‘policy coherence for development’, requiring engagement of the Albanian government and civil society in an inter-ministerial platform contributed to coherence?	Assumptions and extent to which they have proven valid: Austrian contributions, added value and ‘niche’: Lessons:
1.5. How have the strategy and programming reflected a human rights-based approach encompassing (a) gender equality goals, (b) the rights and needs of the most marginalised, and (c) environmental sustainability/climate change?	Assumptions and extent to which they have proven valid: Austrian contributions, added value and ‘niche’: Use of mainstreaming/direct interventions/policy dialogue: Ownership factors: Lessons:
Effectiveness	
2.1. What have been the main results achieved within the Austrian supported initiatives over the evaluated period? How do you see these outputs contributing to higher level outcomes and impacts? How effective are efforts through policy dialogue, direct interventions and mainstreaming respectively?	Assumptions and extent to which they have proven valid: Austrian contributions, added value and ‘niche’: Achievements deriving from the use of mainstreaming/direct interventions/policy dialogue: Major factors contributing to achievement/non-achievement of intended results: Disruptive events and ‘surprises’: With regard to the growing focus on climate change and economic development: Lessons:
2.2. What role, advantages and disadvantages have the different funding instruments used in Albania played in the achievement of results including ZGI; IZQ; 3 rd party funding; regional programming?	Assumptions and extent to which they have proven valid: Austrian contributions, added value and ‘niche’: Major factors contributing to achievement/non-achievement of intended results: Disruptive events and ‘surprises’: Lessons:
2.3. To what extent has ADC’s approach been effective in relation to ensuring attention to and results related to cross-cutting objectives: (a) social inclusion, (b) gender equality, the (c) environment and climate change, and (d) a human rights-based approach. Are these cross-cutting concerns significant drivers in strategic decision-making? Have tools such as EGSIM or those applied by other stakeholders proven effective in ensuring that these issues are addressed?	Assumptions and extent to which they have proven valid: Austrian contributions, added value and ‘niche’: Use of mainstreaming/direct interventions/policy dialogue: Ownership factors: Lessons:
Efficiency	
3.1. How have ADC systems and processes contributed to (or hindered) results and achievement of the objectives of the Country Strategy? At output level? In relation to higher level objectives? Are they efficient?	Assumptions and extent to which they have proven valid: Austrian contributions, added value and ‘niche’: Lessons:
3.2. What does the intervention programming process at ADA – budget lines etc., including monitoring and reporting, contribute to (detract from) implementation of the strategy and the	Assumptions and extent to which they have proven valid: Examples from the use of EGSIM: Austrian contributions, added value and ‘niche’: Lessons:

Appendix 7: Survey and interview instruments

portfolio? Is the monitoring of adequate quality?	
3.3. What has been the influence of the inter-ministerial platform on effectiveness and efficiency of development cooperation in Albania?	Assumptions and extent to which they have proven valid: Austrian contributions, added value and 'niche': Lessons:
Impact	
4.1. What indications are there of change (longer term, positive/ negative, intended/ unintended) for men and women, marginalized ethnic groups, people with disabilities, youth, others, that has been contributed to by projects funded through the Country Strategy?	Assumptions and extent to which they have proven valid: Austrian contributions, added value and 'niche': Disruptive events and 'surprises': Lessons:
4.2. Is a Whole of Government Approach (or other approaches) contributing to synergies that extend beyond direct project outcomes and influence duty bearers? If so, how? Are synergies emerging from links across the Austrian interventions in Albania and regionally?	Assumptions and extent to which they have proven valid: Lessons:
Sustainability	
5.1. To what extent has the Country Strategy and its implementation included strategies and measures for sustaining positive effects and change, especially when faced by unexpected changes (e.g., delays in the accession process, shifting priorities after the earthquake, political tensions)? What evidence is there of emerging sustainability (or lack thereof)?	Assumptions and extent to which they have proven valid: Disruptive events and 'surprises': Lessons:
Additional findings related to Governance/Rule of Law	
6.1. How have initiatives related to governance and rule of law contributed to enhanced economic governance and with that economic opportunities and poverty reduction?	Assumptions and extent to which they have proven valid: Austrian contributions, added value and 'niche': Disruptive events and 'surprises': Lessons:
6.2. How have initiatives related to governance and rule of law contributed to trust among men and women, people with disabilities, people from marginalised ethnic groups (others) in the state and its commitments to non-discriminatory service delivery?	Assumptions and extent to which they have proven valid: Austrian contributions, added value and 'niche': Disruptive events and 'surprises': Expected results and impacts: Potential sustainability: Lessons:
6.3. How have initiatives related to governance and rule of law contributed to access to justice for all, including men and women, people with disabilities, people from marginalised ethnic groups (others)?	Assumptions and extent to which they have proven valid: Austrian contributions, added value and 'niche': Potential sustainability: Lessons:
Additional findings integrated water management	
7.1. How have initiatives related to integrated water management contributed to greater economic investment and development (in various sectors)?	Assumptions and extent to which they have proven valid: Austrian contributions, added value and 'niche': Potential sustainability Lessons:
7.2. How have initiatives related to integrated water management contributed to greater human security	Assumptions and extent to which they have proven valid: Austrian contributions, added value and 'niche':

Appendix 7: Survey and interview instruments

<p>(environmental, health, food, etc.) and adaptation to climate change through stronger natural resource and water governance (through reduced fragmentation and stronger coordination) for men and women, people with disabilities, people from marginalised ethnic groups (others?)</p>	<p>Disruptive events and 'surprises':</p> <p>Potential sustainability:</p> <p>Lessons:</p>
<p>Additional findings labour market-oriented employability</p>	
<p>8.1. How have initiatives related to labour market-oriented employability contributed to greater access of youth to the employment market (and reduced radicalisation)?</p>	<p>Assumptions and extent to which they have proven valid:</p> <p>Austrian contributions, added value and 'niche':</p> <p>Disruptive events and 'surprises':</p> <p>Potential sustainability:</p> <p>Lessons:</p>
<p>8.2. How have initiatives related to labour market-oriented employability contributed to greater access of groups facing discrimination (women, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities) to the employment market?</p>	<p>Assumptions and extent to which they have proven valid:</p> <p>Austrian contributions, added value and 'niche':</p> <p>Disruptive events and 'surprises':</p> <p>Potential sustainability:</p> <p>Lessons:</p>