



# Evaluation

Strategic Evaluation of the ADC Engagement  
on Good Governance (2007–2017)

Vol I – Main Report

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

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# Executive summary

## EVALUATION CONTEXT

Since the 1980s, Good Governance (GG) has been high on the international development agenda. It has equally been a topic of long-standing importance for Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC). Good Governance is anchored in Austrian Law and features prominently in ADC three-year programs as well as country and regional strategies. Beyond the strategic level, ADC GG activities span policy engagement as well as GG interventions on the international, regional and national level. Its overall engagement is guided by the Policy Document on Good Governance first published in 2006. In the period investigated in this evaluation (2007 to 2017), ADC has funded over 800 GG interventions in approximately 60 countries. Interventions in this period span various topics such as rule of law, human rights, democratization and administrative reform. They include interventions focusing on GG as their core objective (core area GG) and interventions seeking to achieve sector-specific outcomes through the promotion of GG in a given sector.

## PURPOSES, OBJECTIVES AND USERS OF THE EVALUATION

With this evaluation, ADC for the first time set out to evaluate its overarching GG engagement on the strategic, policy and operational level. More specifically, the evaluation assesses ADC's engagement since the publication of its GG Policy Document in the period from 2007 to 2017. The primary users of the evaluation are management and GG stakeholders within the Austrian Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs (BMEIA) and within the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) in Vienna and abroad.

The main purposes of this first strategic evaluation were:

- to sharpen the ADC's strategic and operational GG approach to align it with the Agenda 2030,
- to provide evidence for institutional learning on the strategic level as well as
- to inform a review of the existing ADC GG Policy Document and related tools.

As such, the evaluation is formative and forward-looking.

The evaluation was also guided by specific objectives including developing a joint understanding around GG and developing a theory of change for the operational engagement on GG. In addition, it aimed at identifying learnings from ADC's experiences and assessing operational GG approaches along four different criteria. These criteria were Relevance, Effectiveness/Impact<sup>1</sup>, Efficiency as well as Coherence, Complementarity and Coordination.

## METHODOLOGY

For this assessment, Syspons adopted a theory-based design including a contribution analysis. In line with this design, the evaluation developed the first theory of change for ADC's overarching GG engagement with the participation of numerous ADC stakeholders. It utilized a mixed-method approach of data collection spanning among others:

- document reviews of ADC strategies, policies as well as other practical tools,
- exploratory interviews,
- interviews, focus groups and document reviews within the framework of two country case studies in Albania and Uganda,
- an online survey with project implementers of GG core interventions,

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<sup>1</sup> The Terms of References bundled effectiveness and impact into one criterion to emphasize overarching outcomes to which each GG intervention should contribute.

- a validation meeting as well as validation interviews.

Within these data collection methods, the evaluation consulted 170 stakeholders. The findings were synthesized along the assessment grid used in this evaluation and subjected to data, methods and researcher triangulation.

Despite careful triangulation, the evaluation is subject to some limitations. Among others, weaknesses in the quality of monitoring and evaluation data on ADC GG interventions and country strategies limited the ability to triangulate findings on effectiveness/impact through insights from the desk review (*methods triangulation*). The online survey, relying on the self-assessment of project implementers, is subject to respondent bias. This equally limits the ability to use these insights to triangulate country case study findings on effectiveness / impact (*methods triangulation*).

## KEY FINDINGS

### *Relevance*

- **Evolvement of ADC's GG approach:** On a policy and strategic level, ADC's GG approach has not evolved significantly from 2007 to 2017. It is only partly up to date with current academic and international discourse.
- **Relevance in light of ADC strategies:** ADC's operational engagement is highly relevant for its strategies and policies. The thematic advisors on GG play a key role for ensuring the relevance of the GG portfolio in intervention design, while coordination offices mainstream GG principles through the SSA and ensure strategic matching with country strategies.
- **Alignment with the Agenda 2030:** Even though the Agenda 2030 was only introduced towards the end of the period subject to evaluation, ADC's operational engagement on GG is relevant to the Agenda 2030. The approach in the Policy Document and strategic documents has not yet been adapted to the SDGs.
- **Avenues to strengthen relevance:** To increase the overarching relevance of ADC's GG approach and its alignment with frameworks, the following aspects should be considered in the revision of the Policy Document and – if ADA decides to revise it - the Handbook: increased clarity of the GG concept, prioritization of sectors of engagement, coherence with the Environmental, Gender and Social Impact Management Manual as well as a reflection of key international frameworks.

### *Effectiveness / Impact*

- **Effectiveness of core area GG interventions:** ADC made contributions in all three outcome areas of the theory of change: government effectiveness, rule of law, democratic participation. The magnitude of these contributions varies widely between interventions and country portfolios. Across all outcome areas, capacity development of national or local authorities and non-state actors is a cornerstone to achieve objectives.
- **Effectiveness of sector-specific GG:** Based on the limited sample of sector-specific GG interventions analyzed in the case study countries, no systematic differences in outcomes compared with core area GG interventions can be observed. Beyond the difference between the core and the sector-specific GG approach, modalities, scope and budget are important determinants of GG outcomes.
- **Enabling and hindering factors:** Key enabling factors for ADC's GG engagement are creating ownership for GG principles and the quality and duration of cooperation between ADC and its partners. Key hindering factors for ADC's GG engagement are political events which temporarily disrupt stability of the context in which an intervention operates, changes regarding the set-up of partner institutions, as well as lack of personnel at the level of counterparts.

### *Efficiency*

- **Implementation efficiency:** The adequate selection of modalities positively affects the efficiency of ADC's GG engagement. Furthermore, ADC's commitment to long-term partnerships and local partners contributes to efficiency of implementation.

- **Staff capacities:** ADC is understaffed for steering and implementation of the GG portfolio and engagement at policy level. Despite limited human resources, the staff is perceived as highly competent and devoted by implementing partners and other development partners.

#### *Coherence, complementarity and coordination*

- **Synergies between ADC GG interventions:** The extent to which synergies between ADC GG interventions are pursued and contribute to efficiency and effectiveness varies between countries. Uganda constitutes a good practice example for coherence and complementarity within an ADC country portfolio.
- **Coordination:** Coordination with other development partners is a strong point of ADC across the GG portfolio and contributes to fostering efficiency and effectiveness.

### MAIN CONCLUSIONS

**ADC's operational engagement reflects ADC strategies even though the Policy Document and Handbook are seldom used in practice.** ADC's operational engagement is particularly relevant in light of the country and regional strategies. These are the main points of reference for planning and steering ADC's operational engagement. The relevance of the existing Good Governance Handbook for ADA staff and implementing organizations is limited. Notably, contents are too abstract and too long to serve as reference for practitioners. In addition, the fact that the Handbook is only available in German limits its usefulness in the field.

**The ADC GG policy approach and its engagement is currently broad in scope, rendering a specialization of ADC difficult.** ADC's understanding of GG as presented in the Policy Document is broad and covers many (sub-)sectors. Accordingly, ADC's operational engagement is also broad and covers a large array of (sub-)sectors. Limited staff resources within ADC put into question whether strategic and operational follow-up on such a broad area of engagement can be sustained.

**The ADC GG policy approach is no longer fully up to date with international discourses and lacks internal consistency, limiting its relevance within and outside ADC.** ADC's GG Policy Document contains several elements that are still relevant today. Gaps with regard to the international discourse and frameworks include the clear definition of sub-sectors of ADC's GG approach, clarity between the delineation of sector-specific and core area GG, reference to Agenda 2030 and updates in terms of terminology. Furthermore, not all staff members share a common understanding of ADC's GG approach.

**ADC's operational GG engagement in Uganda and Albania is mostly effective.** The country case studies have however shown that the achievement of objectives of GG interventions can be adversely affected by evolving political priorities.

**Scarce staff capacities limit ADC's abilities to engage in strategic and policy discourse and to follow up on operational engagement through staff at ADA headquarters and coordination offices.** Despite these shortages, development partners and implementing organizations perceive ADA staff as highly competent.

**The current quality of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of data and systems on the country and intervention level creates a barrier for results-based steering and management and evaluation of the portfolio.** The quality of results frameworks at country level and at intervention level is heterogeneous. While some ADC country strategies draw their indicators from the sector strategies of the partner government, others compile indicators of individual ADC-financed interventions with highly different levels of ambition. Indicators of country strategies and project documents do not consistently fulfill SMART criteria. In addition, not all evaluations of individual interventions fulfill minimum quality standards.

**The main added value and comparative advantage of ADC's engagement on GG lies in its partnership approach.** The partnership approach is one of the core strengths of ADC and constitutes an important lever for effectiveness and efficiency of GG engagement. In particular, the commitment to long-term partnerships with locally established partners constitutes a strength

because interventions benefit from the networks, expertise and credibility of these partners, and ADC can in turn nurture their organizational capacity development.

**The intentional and strategic use of modalities in GG interventions can increase the implementation efficiency as well as effectiveness at country level.** Synergies between modalities are an important lever for effectiveness and efficiency of ADC's GG engagement. However, synergies are being pursued much more strategically in some country portfolios than in others.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**Recommendation 1:** BMEIA section VII (lead) and ADA should jointly review ADC's GG approach to sharpen it and prioritize areas of engagement based on a participatory discussion of the ToC involving coordination offices. Next to alignment with academic and international discourse as well as strategic considerations, expertise of ADA staff at Headquarters and in priority countries as well as GG expertise of long-standing implementing partners should be factored into the prioritization. The prioritization should maintain a certain space for flexibility.

**Recommendation 2:** BMEIA section VII (lead) and ADA should revise the Good Governance Policy Document to reflect an updated GG approach and catch up on academic and international discourse. Specifically, a revised Policy Document should address political economy analysis, refer to the Agenda 2030 and be consistent with the Environmental, Gender and Social Impact Management Manual. The revision should be done in consultation with relevant partners.

**Recommendation 3:** ADA should decide whether a Good Governance Handbook is needed in the future, in which case the current version should be revised. If ADA opts for a revision, it should ensure that the Handbook becomes more relevant for practitioners. The revision should include shortening it and making it available in English. In addition, it could provide pointers for tried and tested as well as innovative GG measures and include guidance on monitoring and how to deal with instances of bad governance.

**Recommendation 4:** BMEIA section VII (lead) and ADA should jointly devise a strategy for introducing and mainstreaming the revised GG approach within ADC.

**Recommendation 5:** BMEIA section VII (lead) and ADA should strengthen synergies within country-level GG portfolios by prioritizing this aspect in the formulation of future country strategies. ADA should follow up on this at intervention level by identifying relevant linkages to other ADC financed interventions at proposal stage.

**Recommendation 6:** BMEIA section VII and ADA should undertake a capacity needs assessment for GG staff at Headquarters and in selected coordination offices.

**Recommendation 7:** BMEIA and ADA should strengthen results management for GG engagement at country and intervention level. Increased quality assurance of country strategy log frames and indicators in project proposals through ADA should constitute a starting point.

- a. ADA should monitor the quality of cooperation with implementing and political partners to ensure added value of GG interventions even if political priorities evolve.
- b. ADA and BMEIA section VII should revise the theory of change developed for this evaluation in accordance with their updated GG approach and use it as an overarching framework for planning future GG engagement. In doing so, a realistic level of ambition for each intervention should be defined.

**Recommendation 8:** BMEIA section VII and ADA should make potential synergies, between modalities and types of project implementers working towards GG, more explicit in ADC strategic documents and at operational level.

**Recommendation 9:** ADA should continue to engage in long-term partnerships in GG to harness the added value of ADC's GG engagement.

## List of abbreviations

3YP	Three-year program of the Austrian Development Cooperation
ACP/EU	African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States/European Union
ADA	Austrian Development Agency
ADA HQ	Headquarters of the Austrian Development Agency in Vienna
ADC	Austrian Development Cooperation
ADISA	Agency for the Delivery of Integrated Services
APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism
AWP	Annual work programs of the Austrian Development Agency
BIM	Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Human Rights
BMEIA	Austrian Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs <i>(since 2020 Austrian Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs)</i>
BTI	Bertelsmann Transformation Index
CCC	Coordination, Complementarity and Coherence
CPSN	Developing a Child Protection Net (case study intervention Albania)
CPU	Child Protection Unit
CR	Capitalization Report
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DGF	Democratic Governance Facility
EGGS	Environmental, Gender and Social Standards Checklist
EGSIM	Environmental, Gender and Social Impact Management
EQ	Evaluation question
ESIM	Environmental and Social Impact Management
EU	European Union
EVAL	Evaluation Report
EZA-G	Austrian Development Cooperation Act of 2003
FMS	Financial Management System
FR	Final Report
GG	Good Governance
GLO	ADA-funding stream for Global Projects
HRBA	Human rights-based approach
HRCU	The Human Rights Center Uganda
IACA	International Anti-Corruption Academy
ICG	International Crisis Group
ICTJ	International Centre for Transitional Justice
IEG	Independent Evaluation Group
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
INTOSAI	International Organizations of Supreme Audit Institutions
IPA	Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance
IPS	Integrated Planning System
ISDA	Innovation Against Corruption: Building a Citizen Centric Service Delivery Model in Albania (intervention in Albania)

IZW	ADA-funding stream for private sector engagement
JLOS	Justice Law and Order Sector (case study intervention Uganda)
JWESSPS	Joint Water & Sanitation Sector Support Program (case study intervention Uganda)
KOBÜ R	Coordination office report
L&R	ADA-funding stream for countries and regions
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OEAER	<i>Österreichische Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Eigenständige Regionalentwicklung</i>
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OECD-DAC GovNet	OECD Development Assistance Committee Network on Governance
OECD-DAC	OECD Development Assistance Committee
OeEB	Austrian Development Bank
OEIR	<i>Österreichisches Institut für Raumplanung</i>
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PD	Project Document
PFM	Public finance management
PPF	Project Preparation Facility (case study intervention Albania)
PR	Progress Report
PRDP	Ugandan Peace, Recovery and Development Plan
PwD	People with Disabilities
RDP	Regional Development Program (case study intervention Albania)
SALW	Small arms and light weapons
SDC	Swiss Development Cooperation
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals of the Agenda 2030
SETS	Support and Expansion of the Albanian Treasury System (intervention in Albania)
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Reasonable, Time Bound
SSA	Social Standards Assessment
TdH	Terre des Hommes
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UWONET	Uganda Women's Network (case study intervention Uganda)
VM	Validation Meeting
WGA	Whole of Government Approach
WGI	World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators
WSSB	Water Supply and Sanitation Board
ZGI	ADA-funding stream for civil society

# 1 Introduction

Good Governance (GG)<sup>2</sup> is a prominent area of engagement in development cooperation. It is frequently considered a central objective and essential instrument to foster development by numerous development partners (Nuscheler, 2009). The concept has its origins in the 1980s, when economists associated with New Institutional Economics were increasingly pointing to the importance of institutional reform to ensure economic progress and avoid market failure (see e.g. Sundaram & Chowdhury, 2012; Rothenstein & Tannenberg, 2015). The first multilateral agency to promote the importance of governance in 1989 was the World Bank. Inspired by African scholars' analyses on the importance of state-society relations for development, the World Bank interpreted bad governance in a technocratic sense as the root cause of poor economic development in Sub-Saharan Africa (Mkandawire, 2007; Nuscheler, 2009). Consequently, the efficient and effective functioning of public institutions was deemed pertinent to fostering development. This idea gained traction among the development community and expanded into a normative concept of GG that also incorporates political and social components, such as democracy promotion and human rights. Within the international GG engagement this normative conception of GG has been pursued through efforts and interventions that span numerous fields such as the rule of law, administrative reform, public finance management (PFM).

GG has equally been a topic of long-standing importance for Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC)<sup>3</sup> and continues to represent a prominent field of engagement of ADC. Good Governance is specifically referred to by the development cooperation act of 2003 (EZA-G, 2003) and features prominently in ADC strategies. In terms of operational engagement, ADC has funded GG interventions in over 60 countries since the publication of its Policy Document on Good Governance in 2007 which lays out the ADC's GG approach in detail. ADC's Good Governance approach includes both GG as a 'common principle' across ADC's work and as an 'intervention sector in its own right' (see ADA & BMEIA, 2011). This first strategic evaluation examines ADC's GG engagement on the strategic, policy and operational level in the period from 2007 to 2017.

## 1.1 Purpose and objectives

This strategic evaluation of ADC's GG engagement is formative and forward-looking. As specified by the Terms of Reference (ToR) of this evaluation, the **purpose of the evaluation** is threefold:

- (1) To sharpen and focus ADC's strategic and operational approach to GG and its alignment with the Agenda 2030.
- (2) To provide evidence for institutional learning at the strategic level by, among others, identifying enabling and hindering factors for ADC's GG engagement.
- (3) To inform the review and update of existing ADC GG Policy Documents and tools, in particular, the Good Governance Policy Document, ADA's Handbook on Good Governance and its Social Standards Assessment (SSA).

Concurrently, the ToR describe the **main objectives** of the evaluation in the following:

- (1) "To develop a joint understanding around GG."
- (2) To develop a theory of change (ToC) for ADC's operational engagement.

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<sup>2</sup> The term "Good Governance" is increasingly falling out of favor among the academic and development community as it has become associated with a Western-centric, one-size-fits-all model for Governance that disregards context (see e.g. Brinkerhoff & Goldsmith, 2005; Andrews, 2010). For instance, the World Development Report 2017 on Governance and Law barely uses the term Good Governance. Similarly, the Agenda 2030 does not make reference to "Good Governance" but refers to the "building of effective, accountable and inclusive institutions" within SDG 16 among other terms. While recognizing the importance of context-sensitive interventions and strategies, this evaluation nevertheless uses the term "Good Governance" to reflect the prevailing terminology within ADC.

<sup>3</sup> The term Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC) refers to the joint work of the Austrian Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs (BMEIA) and ADA.

- (3) To assess the relevance, effectiveness/impact and efficiency of the different strategic and operational approaches pursued to promote GG.
- (4) To identify lessons learned and good practice from ADC's experience on GG to date."

In catering to these objectives, the evaluation assesses ADC's GG engagement according to OECD-DAC standards and frameworks along four criteria: 1. Relevance, 2. Effectiveness/Impact, 3. Efficiency, 4. Coherence, Complementarity and Coordination (CCC). These criteria do not fully coincide with the OECD-DAC criteria. CCC – not an OECD-DAC criterion – was included due to its particular importance for ADC's Good Governance approach (see ADA & BMEIA, 2011, ch. 5) and ADC's more recent interest in implementing a Whole of Government Approach. Effectiveness and Impact were grouped together within the ToR to reflect the overarching objectives to which an intervention should contribute. For the assessment, the evaluation utilizes the 10 evaluation questions defined by the ToR as refined in the evaluation's inception phase (see chapter 9 of the annex for the ToR).

The evaluation is primarily directed at the ADA management and senior program staff at Headquarters and coordination offices as well as the senior management and relevant GG stakeholders within the Austrian Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs (BMEIA).

## 1.2 Object and scope

The evaluation investigates ADC's GG engagement on the strategic and policy level as well as on the operational level in the timeframe of 2007 to 2017.

With regards to the **strategic and policy level**, all relevant strategic and policy documents are subject of this evaluation. This primarily includes:

- the three-year programs (3YPs),
- country and regional strategies between the years 2007 to 2017,
- the Policy Document on Good Governance published in 2006 and revised in 2011,
- the Handbook on Good Governance published in 2011,
- the Social Standard Assessment Form introduced in 2015<sup>4</sup>.

To reflect the forward-looking character of the evaluation, selected strategic documents and practical tools beyond 2017 were also analyzed. These included the current 3YP, the Environmental, Gender and Social Impact Management (EGSIM) Manual of 2018 and selected country strategies. In addition, ADC's policy engagement on the international, regional and country level such as policy dialog, donor coordination and the participation in the OECD DAC Network on Governance fall within the scope of this evaluation.

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<sup>4</sup> The Social Standard Assessment (SSA) Form was introduced as part of the Environmental and Social Impact Management (ESIM) in 2015 and as such forms part of this evaluation. Notably, it was revised in 2018 to include further questions on environment and gender and became subsumed under the new Environmental, Gender and Social Impact Management (EGSIM) and its checklist (Heuser & Vandenberg, 2019; ADA, 2018). The term SSA is consequently no longer in use within ADC. The evaluation's findings still refer to SSA since this original checklist falls within the period subject to evaluation.

With regards to the **operational portfolio**, the evaluation takes into account relevant interventions that started in 2007 or later and were completed or ongoing in 2017. In line with the ToR (see chapter 9 of the annex), this selection was determined by CRS codes<sup>5</sup>. These are statistical purpose codes allocated to interventions that are also used by ADC to report on aid flows to OECD-DAC. Based on these CRS codes, two types of interventions are distinguished: interventions which aim at promoting Good Governance as an intervention sector in its own right and **sector-specific Good Governance interventions** (i.e. interventions that promote GG in specific sectors such as the water sector).



#### **Interventions as one unit of analysis:**

ADA's GG operational engagement is divided into *projects/programs*. The evaluation bundled individual projects / programs into one intervention in cases where they followed the same intervention logic (i.e. two projects with the same objective and implementing partner but different modality; different project phases), to reflect the strategic overarching objectives of this evaluation. To highlight this clustering process, the evaluation refers to interventions instead of projects and programs.

**Core area Good Governance interventions** which fall under the scope of the evaluation cover 13 topics as defined by CRS codes. They relate to interventions that work in the fields of public sector policy & administrative management, public finance management (PFM), decentralization, anti-corruption and domestic revenue mobilization. Further fields include legal and judicial development, democratic participation & civil society, elections, legislatures & political parties and media & free flow of information. Human rights, women's equality organizations and ending violence against women and girls also fall under the evaluation's scope within core GG engagement.<sup>6</sup>

**Sector-specific Good Governance** interventions that fall under the scope of the evaluation cover 22 topics as defined by CRS codes. They include among others water sector policy & administrative management, social protection as well as energy policy & administrative management. Interventions working on tourism policy & administrative management and rural development also fall under sector-specific GG.<sup>7</sup>

The evaluation **focused on core area engagement**, for which data were collected through desk research, within the framework of two country case studies conducted in Albania and Uganda and

<sup>5</sup> Some interventions within the ADA portfolio have the OECD-DAC marker PD/GG 2 (i.e. participatory development and good governance is identified as a main objective) but are not within the scope of the evaluation, as their CRS code neither corresponds to core-area GG nor sector-specific GG as per the ToR. The evaluation finds that all interventions with an OECD PD/GG 2 marker are potentially relevant for ADC's GG engagement. Therefore, the use and selection of CRS codes for identifying GG engagement should be reflected and potentially adapted to not systematically overlook relevant GG interventions in future evaluations. The exact number of interventions where this was the case is difficult to determine, due to data discrepancies. Per the available ADA project list, the number of projects/programs amounts to at least 5 that have the PD/GG 2 marker but no CRS code that falls within the definition of sector-specific or core-area GG. Data from the ADA Financial Management System suggest that this is the case in more than 35 projects/programs. Examples of these projects include among others the "ESAP2 - Ethiopia Social Accountability Program Phase 2" that aims at strengthening the capacities of citizen groups and government to enhance public service delivery and the project "Community Action for Full Inclusion in Education" that aims to provide children with disabilities with access to the education system.

<sup>6</sup> These topics carry the following CRS Codes: 15110, 15111, 15112, 15113, 15114, 15130, 15150, 15151, 15152, 15153, 15160, 15170, 15180. Notably, no ADC funds were used for Domestic Revenue Mobilizations (15114) between 2007 and 2017. The following CRS codes are part of the GG engagement but were not addressed in the evaluation: 15210 Security system management and reform; 15220 Civilian peace-building, conflict prevention and resolution; 15230 Participation in international peacekeeping operations; 15240 Reintegration and SALW control; 15261 Child soldiers (prevention and demobilization); 51010 General budget support-related aid.

<sup>7</sup> Beyond the 5 topics listed, 18 further topics fall under sector-specific Good Governance. The 22 CRS codes are 11110, 12110, 13010, 14010, 16010, 21010, 22010, 23110, 24010, 25010, 31110, 31210, 31310, 32120, 32210, 32310, 33110, 33210, 41010, 43030, 43040, 72050. Notably, ADC did not disburse funds to 3 of these 22 topics between 2007 and 2017 (i.e. 31310 – Fishing Policy, 32210 – Mining Policy, 33110 – Trade policy). The descriptions of these CRS codes can be found here: <http://www.oecd.org/development/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-standards/dacandcrscodelists.htm>

through an online survey. While sector-specific engagement was investigated through desk research and the two country case studies, it was not covered by the online survey (see chapter 2).

All funding streams of interventions relevant to this core area or sector-specific GG engagement were included in this evaluation. These are: (1) countries and regions (L&R), (2) civil society international (ZGI), (3) global projects (GLO), (4) consulting services for ADC (BER) incl. the framework contract with the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Human Rights (BIM), and (5) third-party funding. The funding streams GLO and BER were particularly relevant in terms of their reflection of ADC's overarching strategic and policy work in the field of GG.

Finally, within the online survey, focus was put on a narrower time period (2012 – 2017) to mitigate a potential recall bias in terms of memory gaps of respondents and on selected funding streams (see section 2.2 for further information).

## 2 Methodology

### 2.1 Evaluation approach and design

The evaluation chose a **theory-based evaluation design**. Theory-based evaluation designs focus on understanding how and under which conditions an intervention produces effects based on a theory of change (ToC). They are particularly suitable for formative purposes. They are also well-suited for volatile and dynamic contexts, which are common in the field of GG, where an intervention's effect cannot be isolated from the influence of other interventions and external factors (Stern et al., 2012). The ToC for ADC's GG engagement lies at the heart of this evaluation design (see chapter 3 of the annex). The evaluation reconstructed this ToC based on a review of ADC's strategic and operational GG engagement and feedback from a participatory process with ADC stakeholders from the headquarters in Vienna and the coordination offices.

Within the theory-based design, the evaluation drew on **contribution analysis** as an analytical approach to investigate the effects of ADC's GG engagement along the reconstructed ToC. This analytical approach developed by John Mayne (2012) allows for a systematic investigation of an intervention's theory of change and its underlying impact hypotheses through formulating and revising a "performance story" based on evidence gathered in the evaluation process. To test and revise the performance story as set out in the ToC, the evaluation used a mixed-method approach for data collection (see section 2.2).

The evaluation systematically collected evidence on the evaluation criteria based on the 10 evaluation questions (EQ) defined in the ToR to this evaluation. These questions are used to structure the findings section of the evaluation. The original EQ were further refined and operationalized in an assessment grid. The original and refined questions as well as their operationalization can be found in chapter 7 of the annex.

### 2.2 Methods of data collection and data analysis

The evaluation adopted a **mixed-method approach to data collection and analysis**. The qualitative data collection methods included desk research, exploratory interviews, key informant interviews, focus group discussions and participatory workshop formats for developing the ToC and for validating the ToC and findings. The quantitative data collection comprised one online survey with project implementers. In total, **170 stakeholders** contributed to this evaluation in different settings. Some of these stakeholders were consulted several times throughout the evaluation.

**Figure 1: Stakeholder participation in data collection**



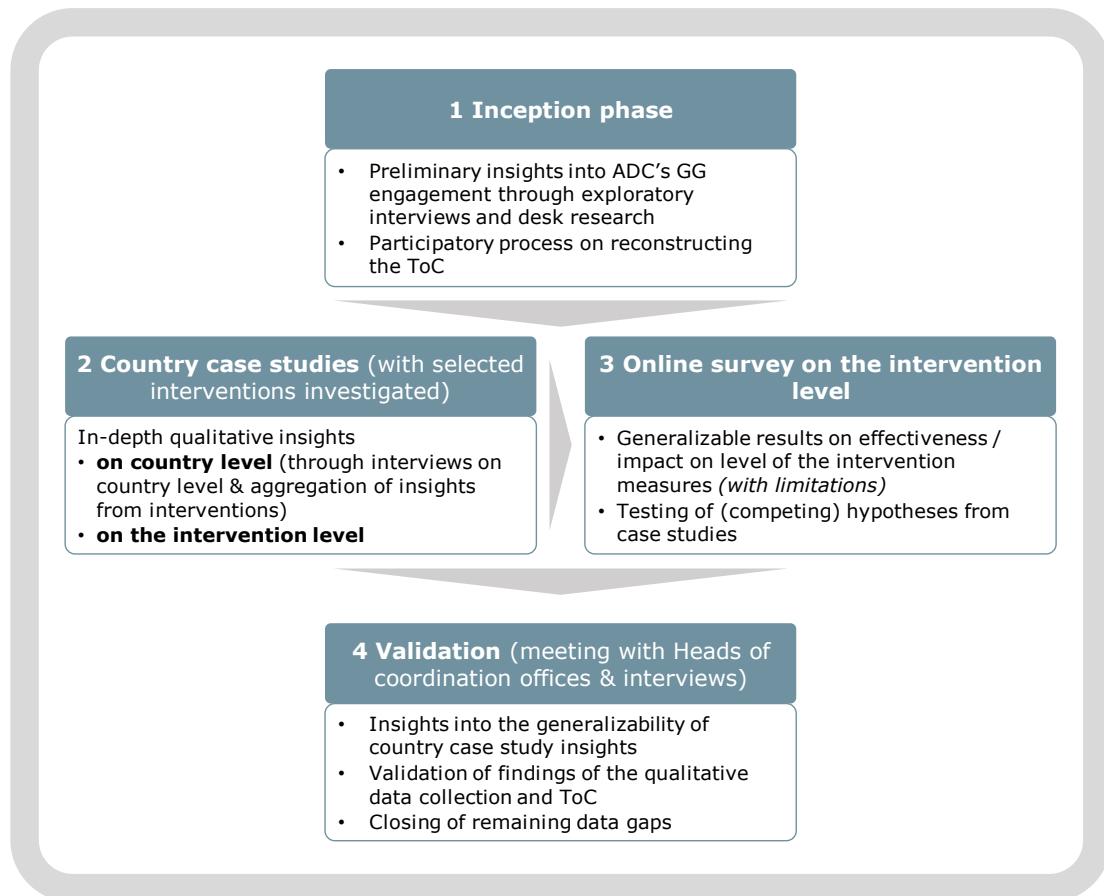
Source: Syspons 2019

The data collection was designed as a **sequential process** in four phases: (1) the inception phase, (2) conduct of two country case studies, (3) conduct of the online survey, (4) validation (see Figure 2). Each of the phases informed the design and data collection instruments used in the next. Thereby,

the evaluation could systematically identify and close remaining data gaps and gather evidence needed for triangulation and validation.

Throughout the phases, the evaluation engaged ADC stakeholders in a participatory and discursive manner to increase opportunities for learning and exchange. Among others, this included the participatory development of the ToC, debriefings and discussions of initial insights from the country case studies and the validation meeting with Heads of coordination offices.

**Figure 2: Sequential process of data collection in four phases**



Source: Syspons 2019

The following paragraphs briefly outline the data collection and analysis process in each of the four phases:

**(1) Inception phase –** As part of the inception phase that took place from February to June 2019, the evaluation conducted **desk research, 15 exploratory interviews** with ADC stakeholders, civil society and development partners **and a participatory process and workshop for reconstructing the ToC** with current and former ADC staff. All preliminary insights informed the evaluation design and choice of data collection methods as well as the formulation of hypotheses that guided data collection.

The desk research comprised a literature review of academic literature on GG, an analysis of GG approaches of other development partners and an extensive review of ADC documents. The review of ADC documents spanned, among others, relevant strategic documents for ADC's GG engagement from 2007 onwards (e.g. 3YPs, country and regional strategies), the Policy Document and Handbook on GG, reports and evaluations and an analysis of available statistical data on ADC's GG engagement. The evaluation also studied sample documentation on interventions to explore if it were feasible to conduct a structured document review for quantitative data collection instead of an online survey. The review showed that the quality of documentation (incl. monitoring data) is mixed, whereby the potential information benefits of a document review for the evaluation criteria are limited. Consequently, the evaluation opted for an online survey for the subsequent data collection.

**(2) Country case studies** – The main **objectives** of the country case studies were to gain qualitative insights on the effectiveness of selected GG interventions on the (1) intervention level and, to a lesser degree, on the (2) country level by analyzing synergies between different interventions and situational results in the country context. Thereby, the country case studies were crucial to gain information on the reconstructed ToC.

The country case studies were selected using a two-tiered purposeful sampling approach (see e.g. Patton, 2015; Yin, 2013; Palmerger & Gingrich, 2013). In a first step, the evaluation chose **Uganda and Albania** as country cases from among the priority countries based on the following criteria:

- Region: Representation of different regions
- Size of (recent) portfolio
- Practical considerations (*i.e. Does a coordination office exist?*)
- Diversity of portfolio
- Complementarity of the two case studies (in terms of their portfolio)
- Strategic considerations (*i.e. What is the strategic importance of GG in the country?*)

In the second step, four interventions were chosen for in-depth investigation in each of the country case studies together with the ADA coordination office. For this, the evaluation prepared country-level ToCs (see chapter 4 and 5 of the annex). The evaluation selected a mix of interventions that reflect key impact pathways within the country ToCs, include core area and sector-specific interventions implemented through a variety of modalities, and are practically and theoretically evaluable (see chapter 4 and 5 of the annex for a respective list of interventions).

The evaluation conducted the country visits to Albania (Tirana, Shkodra and Lezhe municipalities) from July 15 to July 26, 2019 and to Uganda (Kampala) from June 24 to July 5, 2019.<sup>8</sup> As a preparation for the country case studies, the evaluation conducted a **desk research**. The evaluation identified and reviewed all relevant ADC documents (e.g. country strategies, coordination office reports, ADA work programs) on the country level. In addition, it analyzed available documents on each intervention that were provided by ADA (e.g. project documents, progress reports, evaluations). Finally, it researched additional external evaluations and studies that were relevant for a given country context and reviewed developments in renowned governance indices. All findings were used to prepare context analyses which included analyses of GG-relevant developments in the countries, the set-up of the country-level portfolio and project briefs of investigated interventions.

During the country case studies, qualitative data were mainly collected using **semi-structured interviews** as well as **focus groups**. To this end, the evaluation chose interview partners who could provide perspectives on ADC's country level GG engagement and/or individual interventions.<sup>9</sup> As such, interviews and focus groups were conducted with key informants from ADC (coordination office and headquarters), interventions (project implementers, political partners and government representations, civil society), sector experts, and other development partners (DPs). In Uganda the evaluation conducted 28 semi-structured interviews and 1 focus group. In Albania the evaluation conducted 31 semi-structured interviews and 2 focus groups. The primary qualitative data gathered in the country case studies was triangulated with insights from the **desk research** and synthesized to revise the ToC and finalize the survey questionnaire.

**(3) Online survey** – The **objective of the online survey** of project implementers of ADA GG core area interventions was, to gain valid and – to the extent possible - generalizable insights on the effectiveness of the intervention measures (based on self-assessment), a broad validation of the ToC as well as further data on evaluation criteria. As such, the survey addressed the evaluation criteria "Relevance", "Effectiveness/Impact" and "Coordination, Complementarity, Coherence (CCC)" (see Table 1 for topics of the survey and chapter 8 of the annex for the questionnaire). The advantages of the online survey over other means of data collection included the ability to consider

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<sup>8</sup> The country case studies were each conducted by a consultant from Syspons together with a local consultant.

<sup>9</sup> The number of interviews that could be conducted for each intervention varied from 2 interviews to 10 interviews, depending on the availability of relevant interview partners.

a bigger sample of interventions in the data collection and to achieve a broader validation of the ToC. In addition, it allowed for a systematic gathering of data on all evaluation criteria in a level of detail that could not have been provided by a structured document review.

**Table 1: Topics of the online survey**

Topics of the survey
<b>Background information</b>
<b>Objectives of the intervention measure:</b> Placement of individual interventions in the ToC
<b>Self-assessment regarding contribution to objectives:</b> Effectiveness of intervention measures
<b>Means to achieve objectives:</b> Placement of individual intervention measures on the ToC
<b>Enabling and hindering factors for GG engagement</b>
<b>Impact hypotheses:</b> Plausibility of the ToC
<b>Relevance and usefulness of ADC's strategy documents and guidelines</b>
<b>Coherence, complementarity and synergies:</b> Synergies with other ADC GG intervention measures
<b>Coherence, complementarity and synergies:</b> Synergies with other development organizations

The survey was conducted between August 07 and September 02, 2019. It addressed project implementers of GG core area interventions in all priority countries that were ongoing in the period between 2012 and 2017. In addition, interventions had to have a budget of or over EUR 100K and be funded through the funding streams L&R, ZGI, GLO or third-party funding to be included in the target population. In total, 110 interventions were included in the target population<sup>10</sup>. The survey was sent to project implementers (i.e. contractual partners of ADA) of all 110 interventions.

With (partial) responses for 52 interventions, the survey had a response rate of 47.3% (N=110). From the evaluation's perspective, this constitutes a fair response rate.

The survey responses of 52 interventions is largely representative of the target population (N=110)<sup>11</sup>. The survey respondents include interventions that are to a large degree, implemented by civil society and international organizations. Nearly half of the interventions in the sample engage in the field of human rights and women's equality organizations. In terms of their thematic orientation, survey responses are representative. In terms of their geographic coverage, representativeness is also mostly given.<sup>12</sup> Interventions with particularly high budgets of over EUR 1m are slightly underrepresented in the survey responses.

**(4) Validation** – The evaluation presented the preliminary findings and first hypotheses from the country case studies in a validation meeting with Heads of coordination offices as well as ADA staff from HQ in Vienna.<sup>13</sup> Findings and hypotheses for the criteria Relevance, Effectiveness/Impact and CCC were discussed and validated in three parallel discussion groups. Furthermore, participants were given the opportunity to validate the ToC. To address remaining gaps in the evidence that became apparent during the synthesis of the country case study findings, the evaluation conducted 7 **additional key-informant interviews** with stakeholders from BMEIA, ADA and the Austrian Development Bank (OEeB). The Whole of Government Approach (WGA) within ADC

<sup>10</sup> Of these 110 interventions, 44 were consolidated interventions comprising more than one project/program.

<sup>11</sup> The evaluation deemed the sample representative with regards to certain characteristics, if deviation from the population was less than 4%.

<sup>12</sup> Interventions from Albania are slightly overrepresented whereas interventions from "Africa, regional / multi-country" are slightly underrepresented. In the case of some priority countries, no project implementer responded to the survey, albeit being invited to do so. This includes Armenia, Georgia, Macedonia, Moldova and Nicaragua.

<sup>13</sup> During the evaluation's inception phase the opportunity arose to conduct a validation meeting with the Heads of coordination offices during the annual ADA conference. The timing of the conference coincided with the period reserved for the conduct of the online survey. As it was not possible to conduct the survey earlier than originally planned, the evaluation and the ADA evaluation unit agreed to validate the findings from the country case studies.

in general and with regards to ADC's GG engagement was the focus of five of the interviews. The remaining two interviews focused on the validation of other findings of this evaluation.

Throughout the **sequential data collection process**, the evaluation engaged in **data analysis<sup>14</sup> and synthesis** to continuously reflect on the reconstructed theory of change and to ensure a sufficient collection of evidence. Data analysis and synthesis processes were strongly informed by the assessment grid to ensure that the evaluation can provide evidence on the evaluation questions (see chapter 7 of the annex). The first internal synthesis meetings took place during the country case studies between the international evaluator and the respective local expert to synthesize and reflect on observations from the individual case studies. The evaluation conducted an additional internal synthesis workshop after the conduct of case studies. In the workshop, observations from the country case studies were synthesized and compared along the assessment grid. Data gaps and hypotheses were identified and noted for validation in the online survey and/or validation meeting. The final synthesis workshop of the evaluation was conducted after the analysis of the results from the validation meeting and the analysis of the survey data.

To ensure a high reliability of evaluation results, the data were triangulated through **three different forms of triangulation**. First, the evaluation employed a method triangulation and used different methods of data collection complementarily. Furthermore, the evaluation engaged in data triangulation by systematically comparing evidence from different data sources and identifying complementarities and contradictions. Finally, researcher triangulation was used during meetings with local consultants who assisted in the country case studies and during internal synthesis workshops, to reflect observations before judgement was inferred.

All findings in chapter 5 represent triangulated data. Findings were only included if they were assessed as reliable based on the triangulation. A **presentation of evidence** for each finding along the evaluation questions can be found in chapter 7 of the annex.

## 2.3 Risks, mitigation strategies and limitations

This section presents risks encountered in the evaluation, mitigation strategies of the evaluation and limitations of this strategic evaluation. On an overarching level, the evaluation minimized risks to the extent possible through careful triangulation.

**Respondent bias within the online survey** – As a structured document review had been ruled out due to lack of qualitative information, the evaluation together with the ADA evaluation unit decided to conduct an online survey. The online survey bore the risk of a recall bias in terms of memory gaps of project implementers of interventions that had been concluded some years ago. In addition, there was a risk of a low response rate and the risk of respondent bias, as project implementers were asked to assess their interventions. The evaluation mitigated the risks of a recall bias by focusing on interventions that were ongoing in 2012 and the years beyond. The risk of a low response rate was equally mitigated through consistent response rate management. With regards to the respondent bias, the risk could not be fully mitigated in relation to questions of effectiveness. The triangulation of findings with the insights from the country case studies highlights that there is a respondent bias in the assessment of intervention success by the project implementers. Data from the online survey on effectiveness in chapter 5 should consequently be read as a self-assessment only rather than an indication of the overall effectiveness of ADC's GG engagement.

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<sup>14</sup> With regards to the online survey, survey data were then analysed using bivariate methods. These include the use of measures of association, crosstabs and tests for identical distributions, investigating statistical correlations and conditional distributions. Among others, it was investigated whether patterns among the data emerge between countries where interventions were implemented, the funding stream of an intervention, budget groups, CRS codes, modalities and time when interventions were implemented. No conclusive patterns emerged due to the high heterogeneity of both the survey population and the survey sample. The evaluation further analyzed the survey data with a view to validate the theory of change using correlations. Finally, it analyzed whether key characteristics of interventions coincided with intervention success. In the latter two steps of analysis, the correlations did not show clear patterns but revealed a heterogeneous picture.

**Level of insights on the country-level effectiveness/impact –** During the inception phase, the evaluation identified some challenges by obtaining insights on the effectiveness/impact of the portfolios in the two case study countries. It was beyond the scope of the evaluation to investigate all GG interventions in the case study countries. This was mitigated by conducting interviews on the country level using key-informant interviews. Additionally, the findings from the country case studies were triangulated with insights from desk research of available reports from the coordination offices and the country strategies. While this allowed for insights on the country level, these insights were nevertheless subject to some limitations. Only few persons had ample knowledge on the ADC country-level GG portfolio. Furthermore, a small number of country strategies offered data that could be used for triangulating insights on country-level effectiveness. Not all country and regional strategies included results frameworks; in some instances, available results frameworks did not fulfill the SMART criteria. Information provided in the reports of the coordination offices compiles monitoring data of various projects which are of heterogeneous quality regarding results-orientation. Consequently, the insights from method triangulation were limited in this case and evidence on country-level effectiveness was less extensive than the evidence on the effectiveness of interventions.

**M&E data for triangulating findings on the effectiveness of interventions –**

The evaluation faced some limitations regarding the use of data for triangulating the effectiveness of interventions investigated in the country case studies and determining ADC contributions to observed changes. As became apparent in the inception phase, documents and evaluations for individual interventions were of heterogeneous quality. This also applied to interventions that were practically evaluable (e.g. key informants on interventions are still accessible). Documents and evaluations for some interventions investigated in the country case studies only provided limited evidence for triangulation, e.g. because indicators were not SMART, or because the methodological quality of project evaluations was weak. In addition, in the case of support to JLOS, the largest intervention within ADC's core area GG engagement, it was not possible to obtain conclusive information on the financial commitments of development partners. Thereby, it was not possible to determine ADC contributions in proportion to those of other development partners. From the perspective of the evaluation, consistent documentation of financial contributions of all stakeholders to development intervention is warranted to facilitate evaluability. This could be easily remedied by e.g. adjusting the project document template to include financial contributions by other DPs. Overall, while this limited the level of evidence on the effectiveness of some interventions, findings were notably only included in the evaluation, if they were sufficiently triangulation-based on methods, data and/or researchers.

### 3 Good Governance within the international development community

#### 3.1 The concept's evolution

The concept of Good Governance is a prominent area of engagement and of research. It has been both described as a frequent buzzword and mantra among the development community (Cornwall, 2007; Rothstein & Tannenberg, 2015). *Good Governance* focuses on how one 'ought' to govern and thereby transcends governance (i.e. the process of exercising authority or power to "manage the collective affairs of a community" (Gisselquist, 2012, p.4)). In the 1990s and in particular by the World Bank, GG was mainly understood in narrow technocratic terms by equating it with the efficient and effective functioning of formal state institutions (Börzel et al., 2008; Sundaram & Chowdhury, 2012). With the formulation of the Millennium Development Goals, GG has evolved into an increasingly normative concept that incorporates both political and social components (Gisselquist, 2012; Nuscheler, 2009). GG is seen to not only focus on the effective and efficient functioning of the state but also incorporates the promotion of democracy and the respect for human rights. Focus is also put on actors beyond state institutions to non-state actors (Börzel et al., 2008; Sundaram & Chowdhury, 2012; Hackenesch, 2016). As such, GG has become commonly associated with a wide set of elements such as transparency and accountability, property rights, effective and efficient public management, rule of law, human rights as well as democracy and representation.

While certain similarities and patterns do exist among development partners regarding these underlying elements of the concept (see e.g. Sundaram & Chowdhury, 2012; Börzel et al., 2008; Grindle, 2007), a universal definition of GG has not yet been adopted. As a result, no universal measurement of GG exists up to now. Some stakeholders have attempted to create tools for measuring GG through the construction of compound indices covering numerous dimensions associated with the concept. These have, however, not become universally endorsed (see annex chapter 1 for an overview). Beyond definitions, multilateral and bilateral organizations use different terms to describe their GG objectives (see chapter 2 of the annex). For instance, USAID and UNDP frequently use the term *Democratic Governance* to refer to their GG objectives, while bilateral development organizations such as NORAD or the BMZ use the term *Good Governance*. Actors also frequently use *governance* and *GG* interchangeably and adapt elements associated with the concept of GG based on context and use (Gisselquist, 2012; Rothstein & Tannenberg, 2015). Finally, the plurality of approaches renders it difficult to discern a "state-of-the art" approach to GG within the international community. As became apparent during the inception phase of this evaluation, actors from ADC and the international development community lack a shared perception as to which actors are agenda-setters in the field.

Despite the lack of a clear consensus on GG among the international development community, selected studies and strategies seem to be more widely endorsed. These include above all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), or the EU's "New Consensus on Development" from 2017<sup>15</sup>. Within these studies as well as the approaches of some development partners, some more widespread, recent trends in the use and approach to GG can be detected:

- **a stronger focus on political economy analysis** as well as power and plurality of representation (e.g. Sundaram & Chowdhury, 2012; World Bank Group 2017; Grindle, 2007);
- **a shift in terminology away from Good Governance** to highlight that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to governance (e.g. World Bank Group, 2017; UNDP, 2014; Agenda 2030)

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<sup>15</sup> In addition, studies from the OECD-DAC are forthcoming. According to two interview partners, four studies on governance have been commissioned and should be published in 2020. One study focuses on concepts of inclusive governance, the second on governance and gender, the third on governance and conflict and the fourth on programmatic implications of governance.

- **increasing efforts to align to the SDGs**, in particular SDG 16 on Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions by for instance the OECD-DAC GOVNET (according to interviewees);
- and **a frequent framing of GG as instrument for peace, stability and security**, exemplified by the SDGs and the New European Consensus on Development of 2017 (see e.g. Agenda 2030, EU, 2017).

### 3.2 Challenges associated with the concept

On an academic and empirical level, numerous studies on GG have been conducted that deconstruct and analyze the concept in depth. Noting that GG is primarily driven by multi- and bilateral development organizations rather than an empirical concept, academic literature highlights challenges and puts forward recommendations that are also relevant for practice. These are briefly introduced in the following.

Many scholars describe GG as a poorly defined concept that lacks conceptual clarity (Fukuyama, 2013; Gisselquist, 2012; Grindle 2007). The relative lack of conceptual clarity creates challenges for fact-gathering, monitoring and evaluation of GG interventions. Definitions employed by practitioners and academics tend to be unclear on what the concept of GG refers to and how it relates to sub-components, such as rule of law, administrative reform and democratization. These conceptual ambiguities make it difficult to investigate cause and effect relations and thereby lead to unclear empirical evidence (Rudolf & Lohmann, 2013; Grindle, 2007; Gisselquist, 2012; Rothstein & Tannenberg, 2015).

To overcome these challenges, current academic literature recommends that practitioners should consider ways to decrease conceptual ambiguities. Suggestions to this end include distinguishing systematically between elements of the GG concept that should promote the quality of government, quality of democracy or rule of law respectively (e.g. Börzel et al, 2008; Rothstein & Tannenberg, 2015). A further suggestion is to focus analyses and activities on the disaggregated components that are frequently subsumed in the GG concept (e.g. property rights, effective and efficient public management, human rights, democracy, rule of law, transparency and accountability) (e.g. Gisselquist, 2012).

Current academic literature further recommends that practitioners should build on empirical evidence when constructing program theory and practice and also acknowledge ambiguities in the evidence in their theories (e.g. Grindle, 2007; Gisselquist, 2012). Research and practice should contextualize GG interventions by considering distinct requirements and political, economic and social conditions in a given country (Grindle, 2007).

## 4 ADC's Good Governance engagement at a glance

The following chapter provides insights into ADC's Good Governance engagement on the legal, strategic and policy level as well as the operational level. Furthermore, it introduces the theory of change developed as a basis for this strategic evaluation.

### 4.1 ADC's strategy and policy relevant to Good Governance

ADC's legal, strategic and policy framework relevant to its GG engagement spans numerous instruments, such as the development cooperation act, the Policy Document on Good Governance, 3YPs, country and regional strategies. Except for the Policy Document, these instruments are not specific to ADC's GG engagement but provide strategic direction to ADC's overarching engagement. As highlighted in document analyses conducted in the inception phase, **these strategic documents contain relevant references to GG that underline the importance of GG as an area of engagement within ADC throughout the period 2007 to 2017 subject to this evaluation.**

The overarching legal framework for ADC is provided by the **development cooperation act of 2003** (Entwicklungszusammenarbeitsgesetz: EZA-G, 2003). It lays out the main objectives of ADC and its core principles and defines the mandate of the ADA. The centrality of GG for ADC already becomes apparent in the EZA-G. Ensuring peace and human security – particularly through democracy promotion, rule of law, human rights and GG – is one of three central objectives of ADC, the other two being poverty eradication and environmental protection.

Specific guidance on how to achieve this Good Governance objective and on *what ADC does* is provided by the **Policy Document on Good Governance** that was formulated in 2006 and revised in 2011 (ADA & BMEIA, 2011). The Policy Document forms the basis for all of ADC's activities in the field of Good Governance and as such presents a key tool (*ibid*)<sup>16</sup>. It defines Good Governance in accordance with the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States/European Union (ACP/EU) Cotonou Partnership Agreement of 2000:

*"In the context of a political and institutional environment that upholds human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law, Good Governance is the transparent and accountable management of human, natural, economic and financial resources for the purpose of equitable and sustainable development."*

(*ibid*, p. 5)

The key feature of the GG approach are **the sectors of engagement and GG principles that operationalize this definition**. While the sectors lay out the areas of engagement of GG interventions, the principles define aspects that should be observed and mainstreamed in all ADC interventions. Together, sectors and principles should create a clear GG profile for ADC. The Policy Document defines six sectors for core engagement: (1) Human rights, (2) democratization, (3) peace building, (4) rule of law and justice, (5) civil society and (6) administrative reform. The four principles that should be mainstreamed are: (1) Participation, ownership and empowerment, (2) transparency and accountability, (3) (mainstreaming) conflict prevention, and (4) anti-corruption measures (*ibid*). The definition, sectors and principles point to a holistic and normative understanding of GG within ADC that goes beyond technical aspects and includes social and political aspects.

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<sup>16</sup> The policy document on Good Governance is **not a "direct implementation instrument** but provide[s] answers to important questions on the definition of terms, fundamentals and medium-term objectives" (ADA & BMEIA, 2011, p.3).

The approach as outlined in the Policy Document is consistently operationalized by the **3YP<sup>17</sup>**. From 2007 onwards, GG has consistently featured as a priority theme in all 3YPs, even though the terminology used to describe it varied (see Figure 3). In some 3YPs it was additionally named as an important cross-cutting topic. One exception is the current 3YP (2019-2021) where GG is mainstreamed within the focus areas rather than being treated as a stand-alone focus area. Nevertheless, this points towards a continued importance of GG within ADC's engagement overall and continuity in the ADC's approach from 2007 to 2017.

**Figure 3: Good Governance as priority theme in the 3YPs**

2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Democratisation, rule of law, human rights, Good Governance</b>																
		<b>Good Governance</b>														
			<b>Good Governance</b>													
				<b>Governance incl. peace and development, conflict prevention</b>												
					<b>Governance incl. peace and development, conflict prevention</b>											
						<b>Human security, human rights and rule of law</b>										
							<b>Good Governance, human rights, rule of law</b> (differently framed depending on the regional / country context)									
								<b>Mainstreamed within other focus areas</b> (e.g. empowerment of women; peace and security)								

*Source: Syspons 2019 based on analysis of 3YPs from 2005 to 2021*

Similarly, the country and regional strategies<sup>18</sup> consistently reference GG as a core issue addressed within ADC's engagement, even though the importance accorded to GG varies depending on the country or regional contexts. Within most of the country and regional strategies analyzed in the evaluation, GG is defined as a thematic focus area (19 out of 28).

Considering the geographical focus of the ADC GG engagement, ADC's GG engagement was streamlined in the strategy documents in recent years. While GG engagement was listed for 13

<sup>17</sup> The 3YP is the central instrument to define the medium-term policy for the entire ADC engagement and lies within the responsibility of BMEIA. More specifically, it determines priority countries and regions as well as priority themes and sectors. In the past, 3YPs were formulated on a revolving basis, meaning that a new 3YP was formulated to replace an existing one before the end date of the existing strategy was reached. This has recently been adapted with the 3YP 2016-2018 to ensure that 3YPs will be implemented for three consecutive years.

<sup>18</sup> The country and regional strategies build the bridge to the operational level by ideally translating the strategic prescriptions of the 3YP into a programmatic portfolio. In practice, however, country and regional strategies are often valid for a longer period than the 3YPs and the cycles of revising country and regional strategies are not always aligned with the formulation of 3YPs.

countries in the 3YPs for the period 2008 to 2011, it was only listed for eight countries in the documents covering the period 2016 to 2018.

## 4.2 ADA's Good Governance portfolio and practical tools

### 4.2.1 Practical tools

On a portfolio and operative level, ADC's GG engagement is guided by practical tools. Some of these are specific to GG and some include content that is relevant to GG. The **Handbook on GG** created by ADA in cooperation with BIM in 2011 is a practical tool specific to ADC's GG engagement. It provides concrete guidance on implementing the contents of the Policy Document in three areas: (1) GG as cross-cutting issue, (2) GG as intervention sector of ADC and (3) GG in the context of policy dialog and international processes. Thereby, it should function as a sourcebook for ADA staff at Headquarters and the coordination offices, ADC partners and relevant stakeholders within BMEIA (ADA & BIM, 2011).

In addition to the Handbook, **focus papers** provide more in-depth practical and background information specific to GG. Relevant focus papers include the focus paper on Migration and Development, the focus paper on Corruption, the focus paper on Children as Partners in ADC, the focus paper on Parliaments and Poverty Reduction as well as the focus paper on People with Disabilities.

Last but not least, the Social Standards and Safeguards and **Social Standards Assessment Form (SSA)** are not GG-specific but a relevant practical tool for GG. The Social Standards Assessment Form (SSA), a checklist regarding key social standards, was introduced in 2015. Within the SSA, data are collected among others on principles that are related and sometimes identical to the GG principles covered in the Policy Document. These are equality and non-discrimination, participation and inclusion, transparency and accountability as well as empowerment of marginalized groups. Furthermore, it serves to collect information on the human rights-based approach (HRBA) (ADA, n.d.). Since it needed to be filled out by project implementers in all ADA interventions, it became a practical tool to discuss and reflect on GG principles across all interventions (see chapter 5 for findings in this regard). In 2018 the SSA was subsumed under the newly introduced Environmental, Gender and Social Impact Management (EGSIM) Manual. Since then, the revised checklist is called "Environmental, Gender and Social Standards" (EGSS) Checklist. Like SSA, EGSS needs to be completed by project implementers. However, it includes additional questions on the environment and gender that were not yet covered under the SSA.

### 4.2.2 Good Governance portfolio

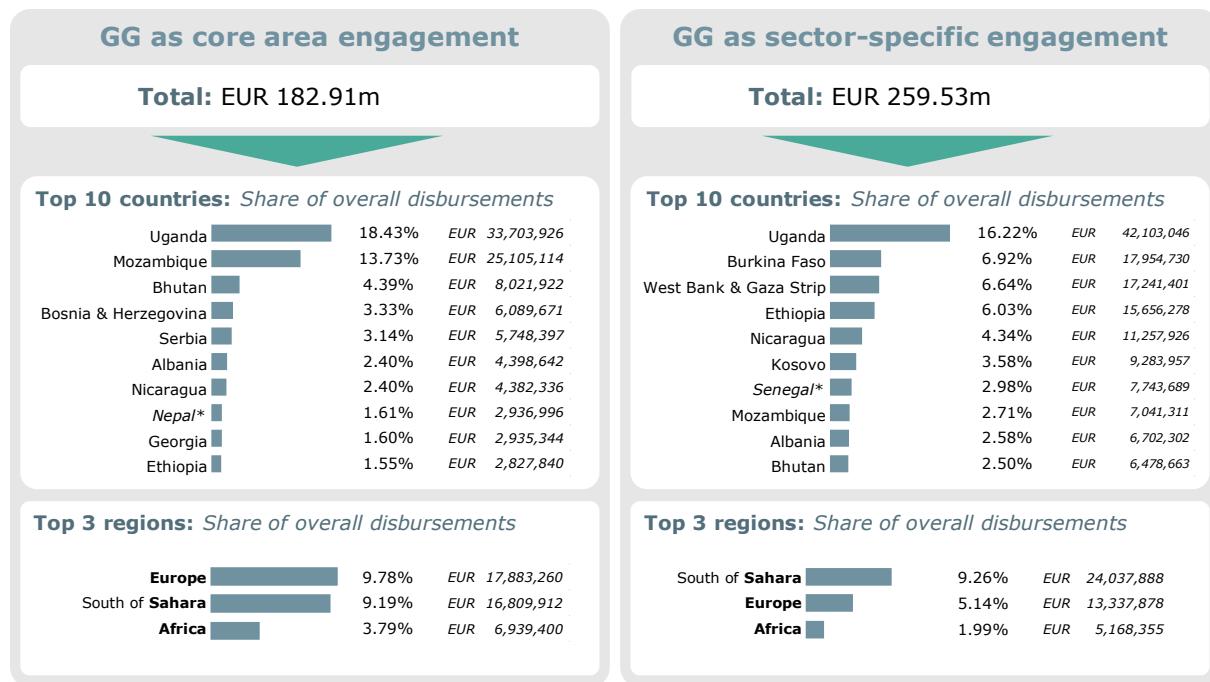
The GG portfolio spans ADA's policy engagement on behalf of ADC as well as GG interventions which aim at promoting GG as a core area of work, as well as sector-specific interventions on the country, regional and global level. With regards to policy engagement, coordination offices actively address GG issues on behalf of ADC in policy dialog and promote coordination in the respective country and regional level. In addition, ADA, on behalf of ADC, participates in the OECD-DAC Network on Governance (GovNet). GG Interventions address numerous dimensions of GG in a host of different settings. For instance, in terms of "global interventions" ADC provided support to the International Organizations of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI) and engaged in capacity development regarding anti-corruption through the International Anti-Corruption Academy (IACA). For implementing the portfolio on intervention and policy level, ADA can draw on the support from BIM through requesting research inputs on issues of GG, human rights and peacebuilding.

Looking at GG interventions between 2007 and 2017 in more depth, disbursements to sector-specific interventions are more prominent than core area GG interventions. Project disbursements for GG core-area interventions amounted to around EUR 182.9m and were implemented in 8 regions and 59 countries between 2007 and 2017. Project disbursements for sector-specific GG amounted to around EUR 259.5m, implemented in 13 regions and 85 countries. ADA's engagement thereby goes

far beyond the 17 countries which were priority countries of ADC between 2007 and 2017 (see Figure 4).<sup>19</sup>

Among priority countries, 8 of the 17 priority countries had GG or a sub-sector thereof as thematic priority in a country strategy between 2007 and 2017. A closer analysis of their annual distributions of disbursements reveals that in most of these priority countries (6 out of 8), disbursements into GG core area interventions were higher in years with GG as a thematic priority. This suggests that country strategies influence disbursement decisions. To what extent they were higher differs strongly between 6% (Uganda) and 346% (Mozambique). Only in two countries (Cap Verde and Montenegro) were disbursements lower in years with GG as a thematic priority (32 and 83% respectively). On average, disbursements were 112% higher in years with GG as a thematic priority.<sup>20</sup>

**Figure 4: Top recipients of core and sector-specific GG engagement<sup>18</sup>**



\*Countries that are not classified as priority countries

Source: Syspons 2019, based on an analysis of ADA portfolio data 2007 to 2017

While both core area and sector-specific GG encompass a wide range of areas of engagement, clear foci can be identified in terms of disbursements made (see Figure 5). More than half of the disbursements (59.07%) flowing into GG core area engagement correspond to one of the following four themes: Legal and judicial development, human rights, public sector policy and administrative management, women's equality organizations & institutions. Narrowing the analysis to priority countries, only four themes account for 77.53% of the portfolio. These are: Legal and judicial development, human rights, public sector policy and administrative management and general budget support. With regards to sector-specific GG, more than half of the disbursements (58.45%) of sector-specific GG correspond to one of the following three topics: Rural development; water sector policy

<sup>19</sup> The data presented on disbursements in ADA's GG portfolio reflect all CRS codes defined as core area engagement. It should be noted that they thereby also reflect areas that are excluded from the evaluation. These are: Security system management and reform; civilian peace-building; conflict prevention and resolution; participation in international peacekeeping operations; reintegration and SALW control; child soldiers (prevention and demobilization); general budget support-related aid.

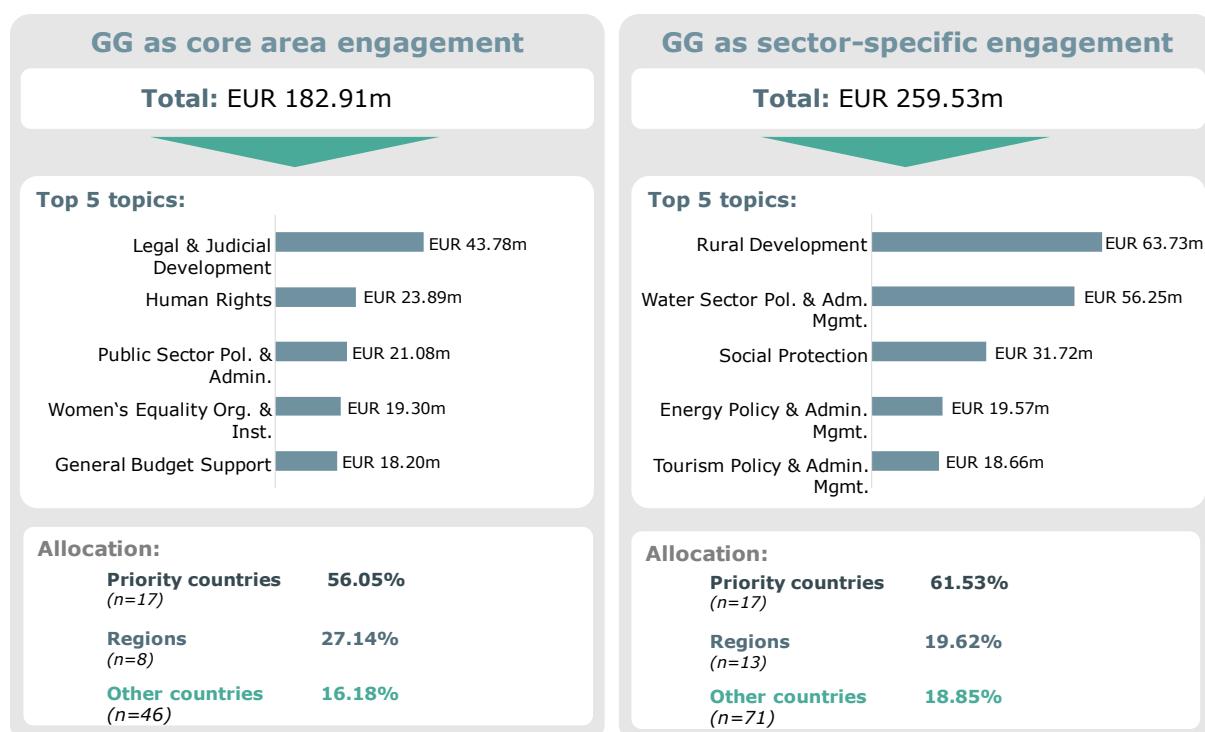
Notably, data on the delegated cooperation are not included in the disbursements as this information was not available in the FMS data made available to the evaluation. Delegated cooperation interventions for core area GG engagement were only implemented in Uganda, Albania and Ethiopia. Consequently, the disbursements for these countries would be different from the numbers indicated in Figure 4.

<sup>20</sup> While this indicates a link between strategic considerations and disbursements to GG interventions, it should be noted that the level of disbursement might also be influenced by the overall budget allocated to a country within a given year.

& administrative management; and social/welfare services. Looking at the sum of disbursements to priority countries, these three CRS codes even amount to 70.65%.

Foci can also be detected in terms of implementation modalities used for the implementation of interventions. The top 3 most prominent implementation modalities in terms of disbursements in both core area and sector-specific GG engagement are: "*Standard*" projects, basket funds/pooled funding as well as contributions to specific-purpose programs and funds managed by international organizations. Within the core area GG engagement, together they constitute 44.57% of all disbursements. They account for 54.28% in the sector-specific GG engagement. "Standard" projects are the most common modality in terms of the volumes of disbursements. They account for 25.81% of all core area GG disbursements and 23.43% of sector-specific GG engagement.

**Figure 5: Overview of ADA's GG portfolio<sup>18, 21</sup>**



Source: Syspons 2019, based on an analysis of ADA portfolio data 2007 to 2017

Beyond trends in disbursements, an analysis of the consolidation intervention list received by the ADA evaluation unit provides more insights into the nature of interventions. According to the consolidated list, the ADA GG core area portfolio between 2007 and 2017 spanned 174 interventions (48 consolidated interventions<sup>22</sup>) with a total budget of EUR 150.5m.<sup>23</sup> On average, an intervention had a budget of EUR 864,840. Within these interventions, the bulk share of interventions was funded through the funding stream countries and regions (70.1%, n=174)<sup>24</sup>. The share of civil society interventions funded through open calls (ZGI) in the priority countries amounted to 21.8% (n=174).

<sup>21</sup> The data on the country level reflect all disbursements that were registered as bilateral disbursements to that country. Disbursements that stem from regional projects or are bilateral/unallocated were not included in this overview of the bilateral flows in GG but were included in the share of "other countries".

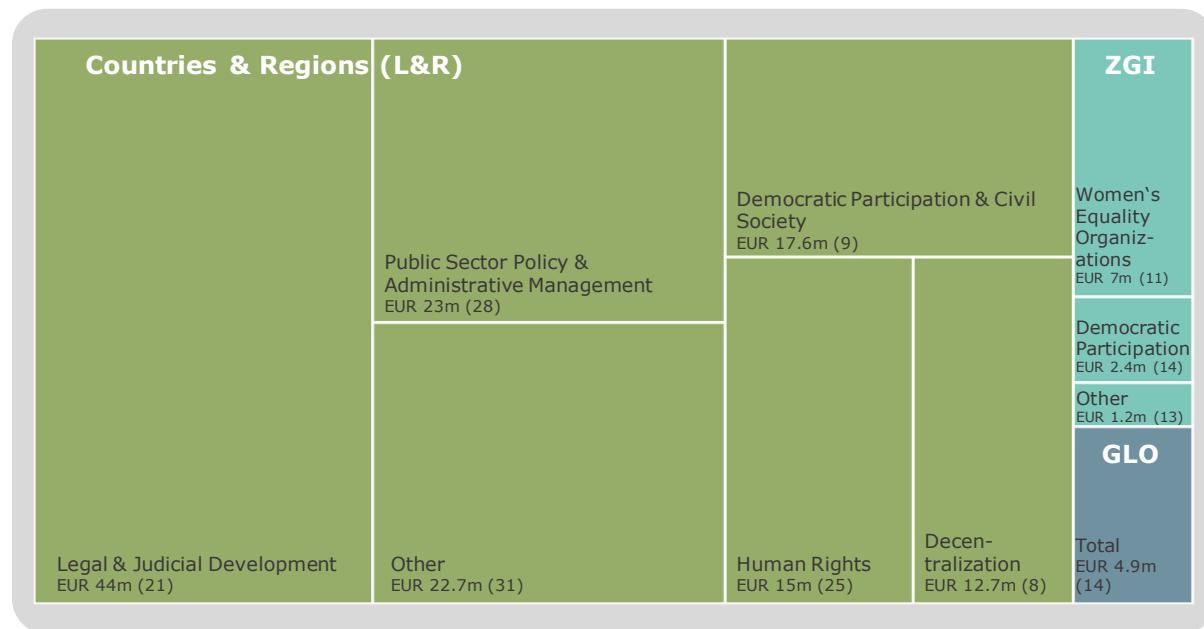
<sup>22</sup> Six of the consolidated interventions have more than one CRS code. Within the analysis in this sub-chapter, however, only one CRS code per intervention was used.

<sup>23</sup> The GG core area interventions referred to here include all ZGI interventions and country interventions that were implemented in the priority countries, all regional interventions as well as all global interventions with a start date between 2007 and 2017. It only includes CRS codes that were subject to this evaluation. For instance, the CRS code General Budget Support is not included in the data.

<sup>24</sup> Within L&R, 70 core area GG interventions were country specific and 52 core area GG interventions were regional initiatives.

Global interventions (GLO) make up the smallest share of interventions (8.1%, n=174) (see Figure 6 for an overview of prominent topics acc. to budgets in the three areas).

**Figure 6: Interventions across funding streams and topics<sup>25</sup>**

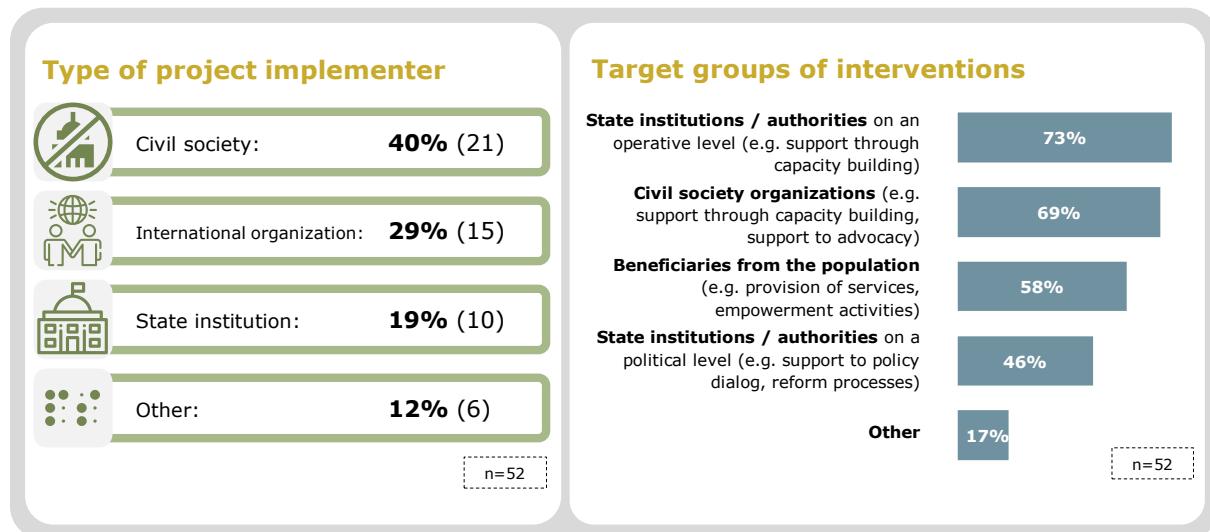


*Source: Syspons, based on an analysis of the consolidated project list (2007-2017)*

Within these interventions, the responses to the online survey provide some indication on the variety of **implementing organizations** and the **target groups**. Civil society (international and national) as well as international organizations make up the majority of project implementers (i.e. contractual partners of ADA) (69%, n=52). Further project implementers include state institutions, higher education institutions, and consortiums of stakeholders as well as other donors. A great variety can also be seen in the target groups of interventions. The most frequently named target groups are state institutions/authorities and civil society organizations to whom interventions provide support through capacity building (see Figure 7). Notably, many interventions address more than one target group.

<sup>25</sup> Within the analysis of the data provided in the consolidated project list, the evaluation noted some inconsistencies. For instance, for the project "Delivering Together in Support of the 2030 Agenda in Ethiopia" (2469-00/2016), the budget as incorporated in the figure is EUR 700,000. Within the FMS data received from the evaluation, it amounts to EUR 350,000. Similarly, the budget for the ISDA support project (8345-00/2017) according to the consolidated project list is EUR 600,000, while the FMS data suggest a budget of EUR 300,000. These potential inconsistencies should be considered when reading the figure.

**Figure 7: Implementing organizations and target groups of interventions**



Source: Syspons, 2019 based on results from the online survey

## 4.3 ADC's theory of change on Good Governance

This evaluation developed the first overarching ToC for ADC's GG engagement. With regards to the GG engagement at country level, a ToC on the governance sector had only been developed in a mid-term evaluation of the Bhutan Country Strategy (Meier et al., 2017). The ToC was developed in a participatory process (see section 2.2) and spans the core area GG engagement<sup>26</sup> as well as the sector-specific GG engagement. With regards to sector-specific GG engagement, the ToC visualizes the intended synergies between the GG core area portfolio and sector-specific GG engagement as well as the mainstreaming of GG principles in sector-specific engagement. The ToC forms the basis for the assessment of effectiveness / impact as well as aspects relevant to CCC.

In the following, a brief overview of the ToC is presented. For a more detailed presentation including a description of the underlying impact hypotheses, see chapter 3 of the annex.

### 4.3.1 Theory of change components

The ToC for GG as core area of an intervention is depicted in Figure 8. It shows that GG is a highly complex area of intervention with many interconnected components.

The overarching **impacts** to which ADC seeks to contribute are derived from the ADC law, the EZAG: poverty reduction in partner countries, safeguarding peace and human security and protection of the environment. The underlying rationale of ADC's GG engagement is that Good Governance contributes to these overarching impacts. Since Good Governance is understood as an umbrella term, it is broken down into more specific intended impacts of ADC's GG engagement.

To contribute to these impacts, ADC seeks to achieve outcomes in **three main outcome areas**: (1) government effectiveness, (2) rule of law and (3) democratic participation and quality of democracy. These outcome areas have been defined based on the literature review conducted in the inception phase with a view to systematically differentiating outcomes related to improving the exercise of political authority (i.e. government effectiveness), access to power through formal mechanisms such as elections and alternative participation mechanisms (i.e. democratic participation), and the rule of law (see e.g. Rothstein & Tannenberg, 2015, Börzel et al., 2008). ADC's theory of change involves **synergies between these different outcome areas**. For example, an improvement of the functioning of public sector institutions (government effectiveness) can favor legal reform (rule of

<sup>26</sup> In line with the Terms of Reference, security management and reform, civilian peace building, conflict prevention and resolution, participation in international peacekeeping operations, reintegration and SALW control, child soldiers and general budget support-related aid are excluded from the evaluation and therefore not included in the theory of change.

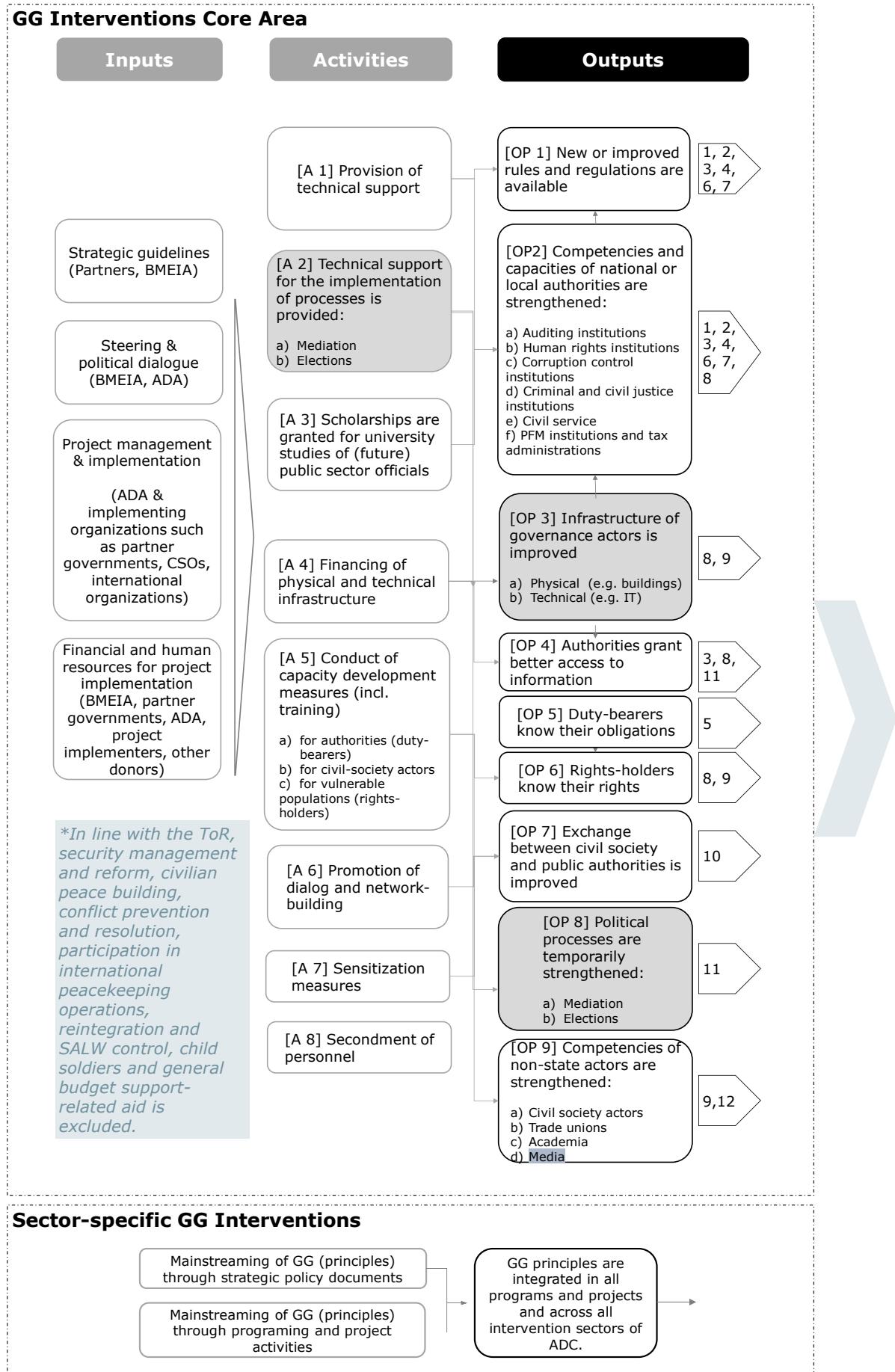
law). Another example is that if rights-holders claim their rights (democratic participation and quality of democracy), this favors an improved access to justice (rule of law).

To achieve the intended outcomes, ADC delivers a range of **outputs** (see Figure 8) which differ among individual interventions. These outputs include, among others, capacity strengthening of authorities or non-state actors, the design of new or improved rules and regulations or the temporary strengthening of political processes. Due to the high level of interlinkages between different aspects of GG, several of these outputs are linked to more than one outcome area.

With regards to the sector-specific GG engagement, the ToC visualizes the hypothesis that sector-specific objectives can be better achieved through mainstreaming GG principles in sector-specific GG interventions. In terms of the GG core area engagement, it depicts synergies at the outcome and impact level. For instance, on the outcome level, improved GG through GG core area interventions should promote the attainment of sector-specific outcomes, while sector-specific outcomes that safeguard GG principles should also, albeit to a lesser effect, influence GG on a general sector-overarching level (see chapter 3 in the annex for further information).

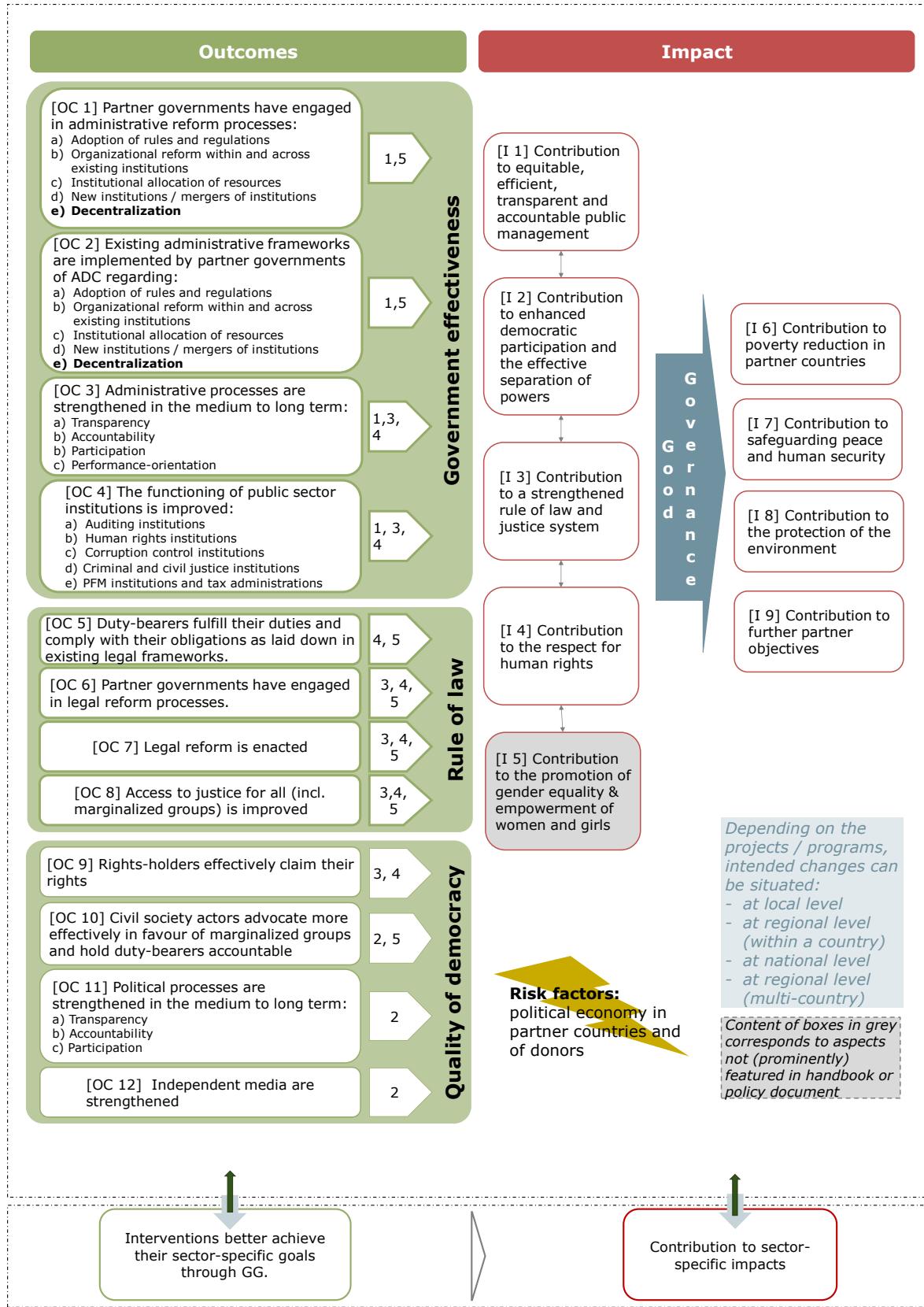
Finally, ADC's participation in political dialog and international processes on GG complements its operational engagement and contributes to achieve its GG objectives.

**Figure 8: Reconstructed theory of change (incl. for GG core area and sector-specific GG engagement)**



#### Policy dialog and international processes on GG

- Multilateral level
- Programming in partner countries
- Budget support
- Policy dialog

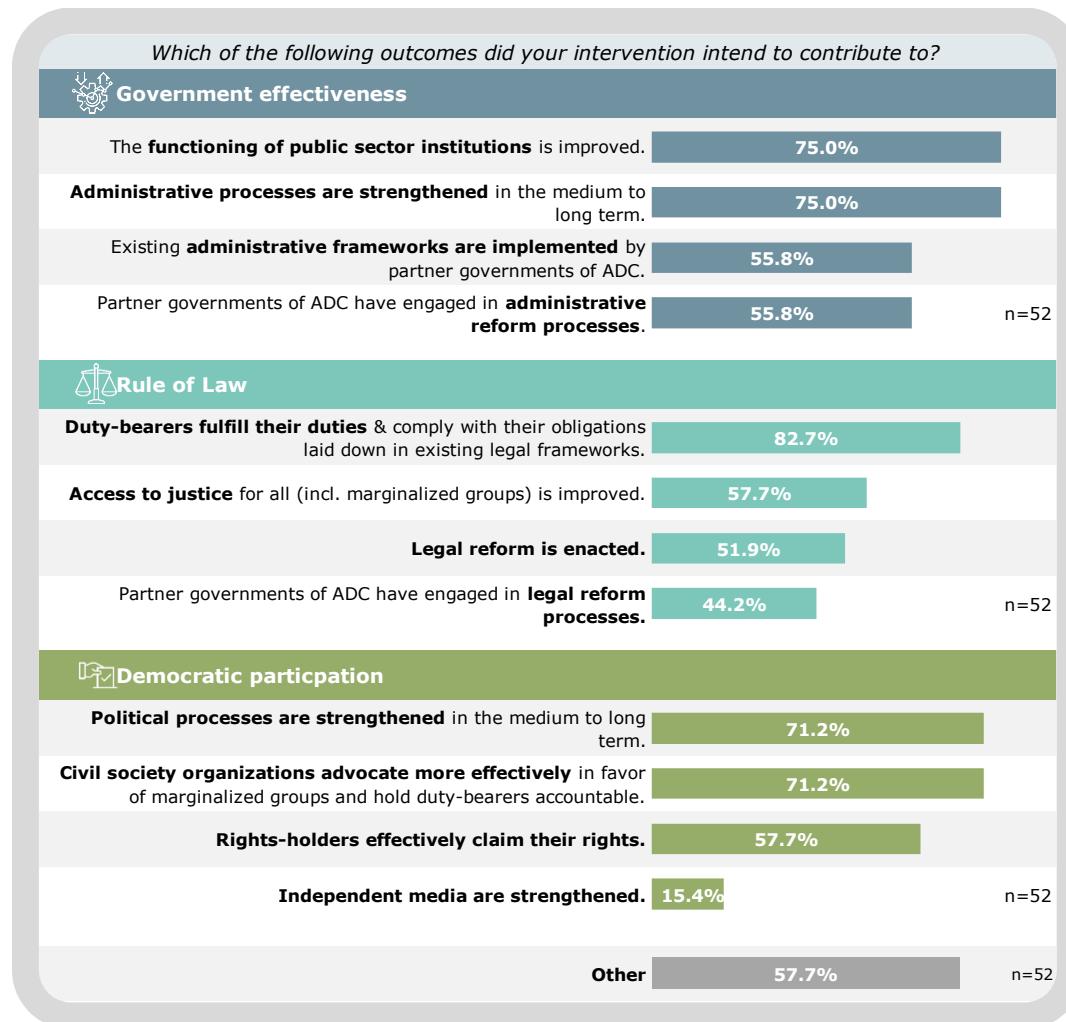


Source: Syspons 2019

#### 4.3.2 The GG portfolio along the theory of change

The results of the online survey provide a picture of the extent to which the different outcomes and outputs of the theory of change are being targeted by the interventions. It shows that the diversity of subjects covered in the ToC is represented in ADC's operational GG engagement. On average, respondents stated that their intervention intended to contribute to seven different outcomes<sup>27</sup>. This underlines the interlinkages between the different elements of the theory of change. It further shows that the typical intervention pursues objectives within more than one outcome area, as each of the three areas has only four outcomes associated with it. Figure 9 shows the share of survey respondents that stated that their intervention intended to contribute to a given outcome. It makes apparent that all outcomes in the ToC - with the exception of "Independent media is strengthened" (15.4%, n=8) and "Partner governments have engaged in legal reform processes" (44.2%, n=23) - are reportedly addressed by more than half of the interventions. More than half of project implementers indicate that their interventions contributed to additional outcomes. An analysis of their responses shows that these other outcomes were largely the objectives as formulated in the project document or additional objectives that lie outside the field of GG. Therefore, the responses did not add new dimensions to the ToC.

**Figure 9: Share of respondents stating that their intervention intended to contribute to a given outcome**



Source: Syspons 2019, based on results of the online survey

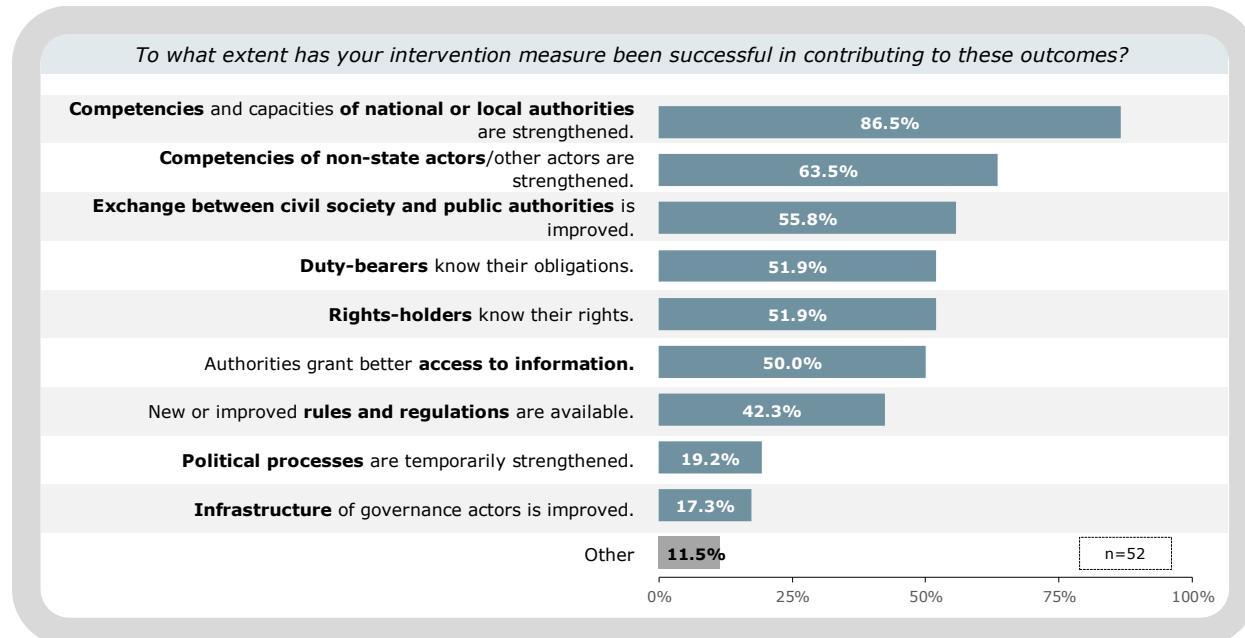
Overall, the outcome which was selected most by respondents relates to duty-bearers fulfilling their duties (82.7%). This is followed by improved functioning of public sector institutions and

<sup>27</sup> 12 are included in the ToC, and respondents also had the possibility to select "other".

strengthened administrative processes (75% respectively). The outcomes related to CSOs advocating more effectively for marginalized groups and for the strengthening of political processes also feature very prominently (71.2% respectively). The high percentages for all but one outcome of the theory of change suggest that respondents have also selected outcomes to which their intervention contributes only indirectly.

The survey results further shed light on the outputs which the interventions intend to deliver to achieve their outcomes. As shown in Figure 10, strengthened competencies and capacities of national or local authorities rank highest in this regard (86.5%, n=52). This is followed by strengthened capacities of non-state actors or other actors (63.5%, n=52) and improved exchange between civil society and public authorities (55.8%, n=52). A few more than half of the interventions (51.9%, n=52) seek for duty-bearers to know their obligations and for rights-holders to know their rights.

**Figure 10: Share of respondents who stated their intervention intended to deliver given outputs**



*Source: Syspons 2019, based on the results of the online survey*

## 5 Evaluation findings

This chapter presents the evaluation findings along the criteria relevance, effectiveness and impact, efficiency as well as coherence, coordination and complementarity (CCC). All findings presented in this chapter stem from triangulated insights based on participating researchers, methods and all available data for a given evaluation question (e.g. interviews during the inception phase, country case studies or evaluations, document sources, online survey). Within the chapter, the report makes no direct references to individual interview sources in order to safeguard the anonymity of interview partners. Statements that are based on the findings from the online survey and /or on the evaluator's valuation are marked as such in the text. The evaluation provided a more detailed account of the findings and sources including anonymized references to all interview partners of the ADA evaluation unit. Chapter 7 of the annex provides a more detailed overview of the available evidence for each evaluation finding.

### 5.1 Relevance

This sub-chapter assesses the relevance of ADC's GG engagement on the legal, strategic, policy and operative level vis-à-vis its internal coherence, alignment to international discourse and development frameworks as well as the needs of partners and target groups

#### 5.1.1 The evolution of ADC's GG approach

**EQ1:** How has ADC's evolving engagement on GG affected the relevance of its work related to GG? What have been the key factors for decisions on ADC's GG engagement/non-engagement in a country/region?

**Finding 1: On a policy and strategic level, ADC's GG approach has not evolved significantly between 2007 and 2017.**

The GG approach comprised in the Policy Document on Good Governance has not been revised since 2007. While its contents have been further elaborated by the Handbook on Good Governance in 2011, the approach

remained constant. On a strategic level, GG has consistently been referenced as an important priority theme or focus area in the 3YPs and country and regional strategies. While the analysis of the documents does not point to a clear change in GG approach, the framing of GG as priority theme in the 3YPs fluctuates over time<sup>28</sup>. Nevertheless, the fluctuation does not point to clear developments in the GG approach.

**Finding 2: The primary factor influencing decisions on the GG portfolio is the matching of a proposed activity with the respective country or regional strategy<sup>29</sup>.**

Country strategies are the main guidepost for decisions about-engagement or non-engagement in a given country. The bottom-up approach in their formulation and the flexibility ensures relevance of GG activities. Accordingly, interview partners described the strategic matching of activities as the strongest determinant for engagement or non-engagement. Notably, the broad collection of topics within these strategies provide room for flexibility for the coordination offices and allow them to remain responsive to national or regional developments as well as to developments in Austrian political priorities. Beyond strategic matching, the following factors were consistently named by ADC stakeholders as determining engagement and/or non-engagement:

- **Catering to the priorities of partners and implementing organizations:** Interventions frequently arise based on the initiatives, needs and interests of the implementing organizations.
- **Key interests and expertise within the ADA coordination offices & HQ:** Particularly the interests and expertise of the Head of coordination office as well as the HQ influence the design, acquisition and shaping of interventions.

<sup>28</sup> The framing was assessed based on the wording of the priority theme and the explanations of GG within the 3YPs.

<sup>29</sup> Country or regional strategies were not available for all countries or all regions for the whole period subject to evaluation.

- **Continuity of existing portfolio:** Within many country portfolios, there is a high continuity in interventions and cooperation with specific implementing organizations. In this sense, portfolios often grow organically.
- **Taking advantage of windows of opportunity:** Coordination offices flexibly react to emerging windows of opportunity which is particularly important in light of ADC's limited resources.

**Finding 3: ADC's GG approach is only partly up to date with current academic and international discourse. Gaps include conceptual clarity, update of terminology and reference to the Agenda 2030.**

A review of academic literature (see chapter 3) shows that the current state of-the art to bring about conceptual clarity around GG lies in defining sub-components and making explicit cause effect relations of the components. This has not yet been done in the ADC Policy Document, as the sectors and principles are not yet precise and the relation between them is not specified.

A further good practice derived from academic literature concerns the need for contextualization of GG interventions and a trend towards political economy analysis. Regarding contextualization, country case studies identified strong partner orientation as well as the knowledge and expertise of implementing partners as a strength of ADC. In addition, ADC's template for the project document foresees an analysis of relevant national and sectoral policies and relevant political, legal and macro-economic frameworks (ADC, n.d.). However, as one interview partner highlighted, the use of this template is not mandatory.

Concerning terminology, the international discourse tends to move away from "Good Governance" to "Governance", a trend which has not yet been taken up by ADC. In addition, since it has not been updated recently, the ADC Policy Document on GG are not yet aligned to the Agenda 2030 and the SDGs.

#### 5.1.2 Relevance of ADC's operational approach for its strategies

**EQ2:** How well are ADC's legal framework, policy and strategic documents and related tools aligned in terms of terminology, approach and focus? How relevant is ADA's engagement on GG in the light of these strategies and policies?

**Finding 4:** While the focus between ADC's legal framework, policy and strategic documents is consistent, terminology and approach are not fully aligned. There are gaps related to the mainstreaming of GG principles and the distinction between GG as an intervention sector and as a cross-cutting principle.

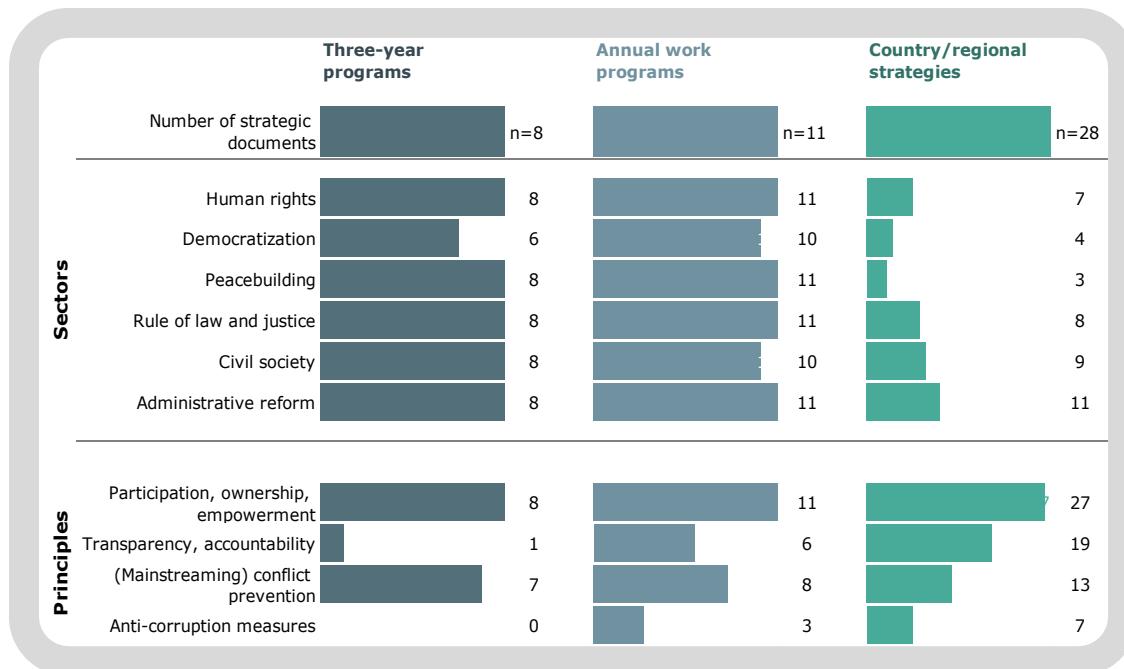
The foci of activities in the 3YPs, country and regional strategies and annual work programs (AWPs) is largely consistent with the sectors of engagement as described in the Policy Document. A narrower focus on select sectors is visible in the country and regional strategies. However, the principles within the Policy Document are only partially taken up in the 3YPs, country and regional strategies and AWPs as well as the SSA. The principle of participation, ownership and empowerment is addressed as a cross-cutting issue in all 3YPs and AWPs and most country strategies. In contrast, anti-corruption measures and transparency and accountability are less frequently referenced in the documents (see Figure 11). This points to gaps in alignment with regards to the focus of sector-specific interventions as well as potential gaps in the mainstreaming of GG principles more broadly.

Regarding the approach, the distinction between GG as intervention sector in its own right and as cross-cutting principle is not always clear. For instance, decentralization is both covered within the sector "Administrative reform" and "Democratization". "Civil society" is both defined as a separate sector and included as a potential area of engagement under "Democratization" (ADA & BMEIA, 2011, p.11-12). The Policy Document differentiates between GG as an intervention sector (operationalized in the sectors of engagement) and GG as a common principle to be mainstreamed (operationalized through the principles). Within the country and regional strategies, GG is either designated as a focal or priority area or as a cross-cutting issue. It is unclear to what extent these descriptions overlap and to what extent they designate different dimensions or aspects of the GG approach. A certain

level of ambiguity in the concept is also echoed by ADC stakeholders as some express that the scope of GG and its sectors are not clearly defined. Furthermore, some ADC stakeholders have different understandings of the division between sectors and principles.

Regarding other policy approaches, the GG approach is coherent with other approaches such as the HRBA and ADC's approach to gender. With regards to gender, ADC stakeholders disagree on whether it should be seen as part of GG or should only be treated as a separate topic.

**Figure 11: Number of strategic documents addressing GG sectors and principles**



Source: Syspons, 2019 based on an analysis of 3YPs, AWPs and country and regional strategies

**Finding 5: ADC's operational engagement is highly relevant and aligned with its strategies and policies. The thematic advisors on GG play a key role for ensuring a relevance of the GG portfolio in intervention design while coordination offices successfully mainstream GG principles through the SSA.**

The thematic advisors have a central role in guaranteeing that principles of the Policy Document are translated into practice. However, the level of involvement by the thematic advisor varies based on the personal relations between the respective ADA staff and the initiative of the Head of coordination office to seek input from HQ. As highlighted by interview partners, ADC staff within the coordination offices does not consult the Policy Document in their day-to-day work and some of ADC's staff members do not have a thorough knowledge of the Policy Document and Handbook. Their main reference framework for their activities are the respective country and regional strategies. In addition, it emerged from the country case studies and the validation meeting that the coordination offices use the SSA / EGSS as a tool for ensuring that GG principles are upheld in individual interventions. Beyond ADC staff, implementing organizations are not yet mandated to reflect the strategic matching of their proposed interventions with ADC strategies in intervention proposals. Within the template of the project document, a specific chapter that focuses on the matching of the proposed intervention with ADC strategies is not included (see ADA, n.d.).



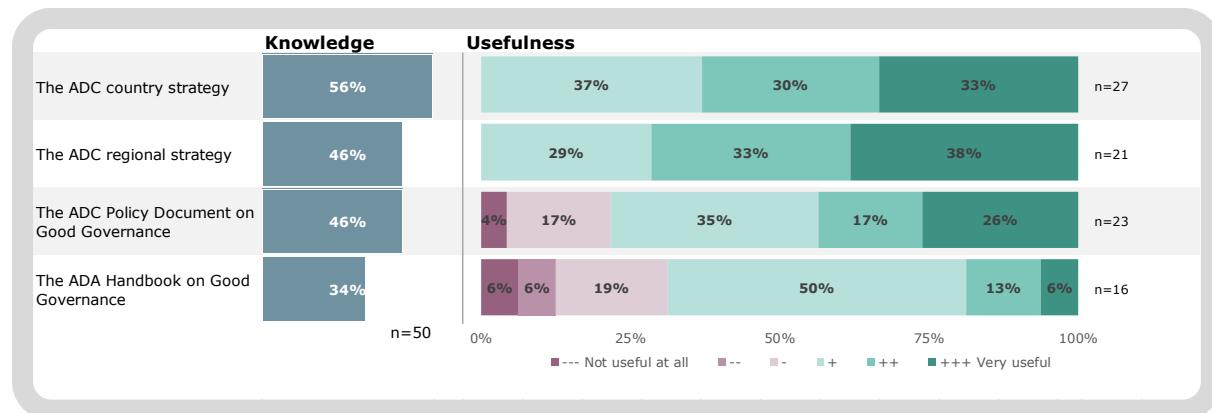
#### Good Practice: Training on the SSA

In the case of Uganda and Albania, implementing organizations received training on the SSA when it was first introduced. The coordination office and implementing partners appreciated this intensified exchange on the SSA and deemed the exchange useful for capacity development.

**Finding 6: The country and regional strategies provide key reference frameworks for steering that contribute to ensuring relevance of operational engagement. The Policy Document and Handbook provide little orientation for intervention planning and implementation.**

The country and regional strategies are highlighted as key steering instruments by both ADC stakeholders and project implementers (see also Finding 2). Due to the generic character of the Policy Document, the Policy Document is deemed less relevant and useful by both ADC staff and project implementers. The Handbook is least well known among project implementers and is assessed as least useful (see Figure 12). ADC staff members criticize the excessive length of the Handbook and the fact that it is only available in German. Some staff members nevertheless see it as a useful guidance for the operational engagement.

**Figure 12: Project implementers' perspectives on knowledge and usefulness of key strategic and policy documents**



Source: Syspons 2019, based on the results of the online survey



**Lessons learned: The use of countries and regional strategies**

Countries and regional strategies are the most well-known and used strategic documents within ADA's operational engagement, while the policy document is considerably less known by ADC staff. Therefore, country strategies bear potential for safeguarding the future uptake ADC GG policy approach into the strategic and operational level. If country and regional strategies that address GG systematically reflect the content of the policy document and adapt it to the distinct regional and country context, the relevance of the policy document for operational engagement could be further increased. To this end, the involvement of the relevant thematic advisors in strategy formulation could be beneficial.

### 5.1.3 Alignment of ADC's approach with regional and international development frameworks

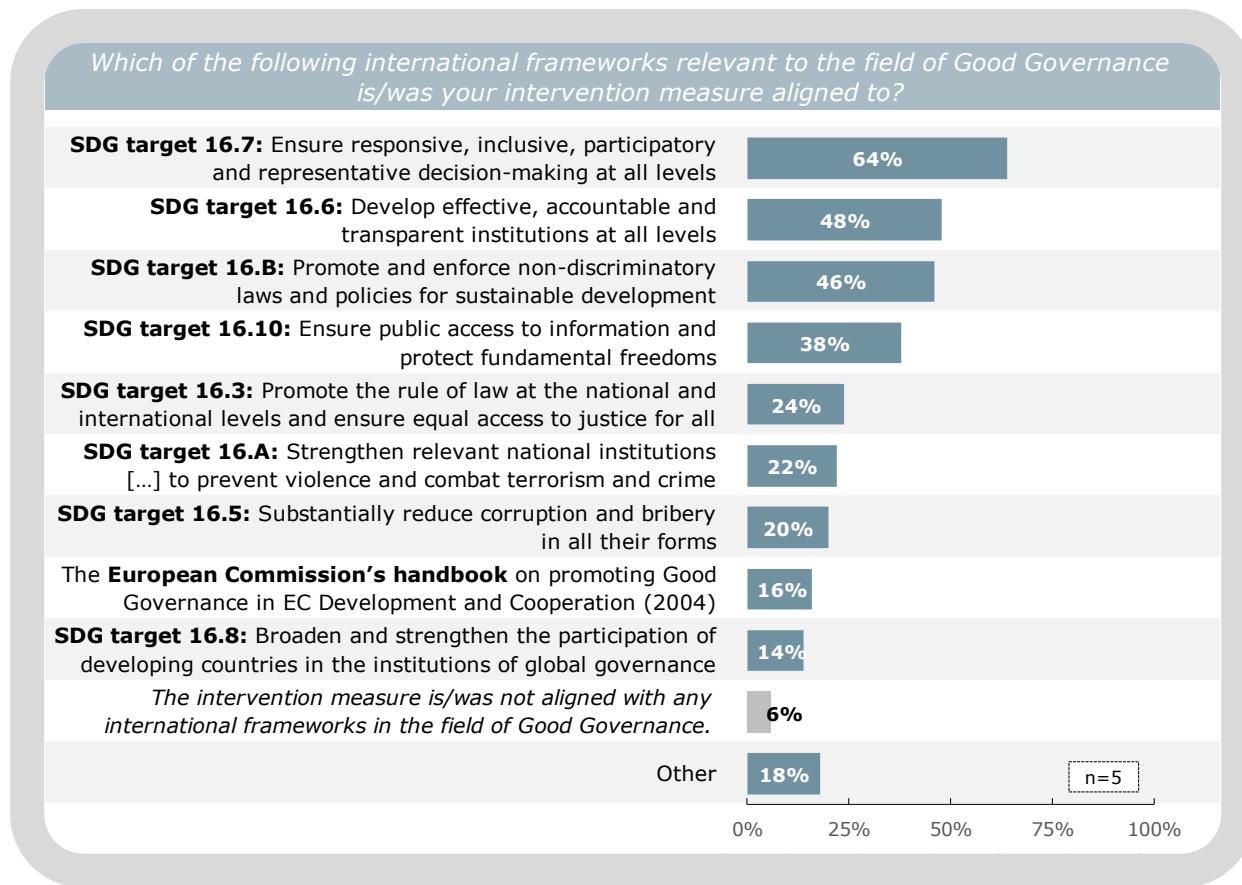
**EQ3:** How aligned was ADC's engagement on GG with the regional and international development framework, including the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development? How should it be adapted to be better aligned?

**Finding 7: ADC's GG operational engagement investigated in the evaluation is aligned with regional and international development frameworks such as the Agenda 2030 and the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness.**

Due to their heterogeneous nature, ADC GG interventions are oriented towards a diverse set of development frameworks which are relevant in a given context. For instance, interventions in Albania strongly align with the EU Pre-Accession Instrument. The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness is particularly used as a reference framework in interventions that are implemented through multi-donor-initiatives, sector budget support and

sector financing. With regard to the Agenda 2030, it should be noted that for most parts of the evaluation period the MDG presented the key international reference framework. Nevertheless, the majority of project implementers perceive their intervention as being aligned with at least one target of SDG 16 "Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions", which is particularly relevant for the GG context (see Figure 13).<sup>30</sup>

**Figure 13: Alignment of the operational engagement to international strategies**



Source: Syspons 2019, based on the results of the online survey

**Finding 8: To increase the overarching relevance of ADC's GG approach and its alignment with frameworks, the following aspects should be considered in the revision of the Policy Document and the Handbook, if ADA decides to revise the Handbook: increased clarity of the GG concept, prioritization of sectors of engagement, coherence with EGSIM as well as an update reflecting key international frameworks.**

With regards to clarity of the GG concept, sub-concepts of GG should be clearly defined, delineated from each other and their cause and effect relation should be specified. Furthermore, the Policy Document should expand on the distinction between GG as an intervention sector and GG as principles. To this end, it could clarify to what extent these two areas overlap with the concepts of core area GG and sector-specific GG. Through these changes, ADC could provide the basis for a strong joint understanding of ADC's GG approach.

With regards to a prioritization of sectors of engagement, numerous ADC stakeholders express that too many sectors are covered considering the limited funds available throughout ADC. This wide array of different interventions and the coinciding lack of clear focus in the portfolio becomes

<sup>30</sup> Notably, alignment with the Agenda 2030 ideally entails a reflection of the integrated character of the Agenda 2030, individual SDGs and specific targets in intervention planning and monitoring. Since the SDGs were only introduced in 2015, this benchmark was not used in this evaluation. Instead, it was assessed to what extent interventions addressed topics of relevance for one or more of the 17 SDGs.

apparent through the reconstructed ToC and the results of the online survey. Avenues for prioritization are a narrowing to specific dimensions of GG that reflect ADA's key strength and enable a more intensified engagement in the area given the relative size of ADC as a donor. In the prioritization, ADC should consider how it can still maintain flexibility to respond to partner demands as its partner orientation currently constitutes one of its key strengths.

Furthermore, the revision should provide coherence with existing practical tools such as EGSIM<sup>31</sup>, to strengthen their use as instruments for GG mainstreaming. Last but not least, the Policy Document should be updated to current international frameworks. It should be adapted to the Agenda 2030 and thereby, specify the connection and intended contributions of the ADC's GG approach to SDG 16. ADC should reflect on the terminology used for referring to GG (e.g. Good Governance, Inclusive Governance, Governance) based on its inherent understanding of the concept and the strategic orientation. The descriptions of causal relations between GG and other concepts such as development or human security could also be reflected based on current empirical evidence.

While the ADA Handbook on GG is technically a practical tool, the evaluation would also like to share suggestions for its revision in case ADA decides to revise the Handbook for future use. Interview partners recommend a revision of the Handbook on GG to increase its practical usefulness. It should be reduced in length, be provided in English and have the character of a practical checklist of things to consider when planning an intervention in GG sub-sectors defined as key areas of engagement for ADC.

Finally, ADC should consider how to operationalize its GG approach refined in the Policy Document and Handbook for monitoring and evaluation. For the purpose of this evaluation, the ToR defined the GG engagement with the use of CRS codes. While these CRS codes are automatically accorded the marker signifying GG as core objective (i.e. Participatory Development/Good Governance (PD/GG) 2), there are also additional interventions with the PD/GG 2 marker which would not be identified as GG interventions based on their CRS code. Thereby, not all potentially relevant interventions for ADC's GG engagement are currently captured in evaluations and other data analyses.

#### **5.1.4 Relevance of the engagement for the partner countries and target groups**

**EQ4:** How relevant was ADC's engagement to the priorities/policies of the partner country? How relevant was it in terms of helping fulfill the needs and rights of key stakeholders (partners/beneficiaries)?

**Finding 9: The ADC's Good Governance engagement in the priority countries is strongly aligned with partner strategies. This is ensured by a participatory approach through which ADC involves partners in the formulation of country strategies and interventions.**

As made apparent in interviews in the country case studies, alignment is assessed as particularly high in cases where interventions are implemented through sector-budget or sector financing, as in the case of Uganda. The relevance of ADC's operational engagement is also highlighted in the case of the online survey. The majority of implementing organizations indicates that their interventions are fully or partly in line with relevant national strategies. 88% of these implementing organizations (n=42) further named specific national strategies. With regards to regional strategies, 56% of implementing organizations (n=48) state that their interventions are aligned with relevant regional strategies. The strategies listed by implementing organizations are diverse and range from international strategies to strategies from the European Union.

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<sup>31</sup> Principles defined in EGSIM (2018) are: Ownership, Do no harm, Equity, Equality and Non-discrimination, Inclusive Participation and Equal representation of all stakeholders, Accountability and Transparency as well as Sustainability. From the perspective of the evaluation, there is an overlap with the principles Participation, Ownership and Empowerment as well as Transparency and Accountability from the GG Policy Document (2011). To ensure coherence, a revision of the GG Handbook should ensure that principles are presented consistently with and cross-referenced to EGSIM.

**Finding 10: ADC interventions build on and address needs and rights of key stakeholders.**

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) that received funding and for which ADA representatives acted in project implementation describe this support as highly relevant for the development of their organization. Ultimate target groups of CSOs financed by ADC that were consulted in the country case studies in Uganda and Albania, including persons with disabilities and women, consider the support they received to claim their rights as very empowering. Finally, duty-bearers that were sensitized on their responsibilities through ADC interventions expressed that this corresponded with their needs. The results from the online survey indicate that the majority of implementing organizations conducted a needs assessment with the ultimate target group and/or the immediate recipients of the interventions' outputs when the intervention was designed. In 57% of the interventions (n=46), the needs assessment considered needs of the ultimate target groups and in 75% (n=46) of the interventions, the needs assessment concerned needs of the immediate target group. In 4% (n=46) of the interventions in the online survey, no needs assessment was conducted.<sup>32</sup> In the period subject to evaluation, the SSA served as a tool to ensure that needs and rights of key stakeholders were addressed in the project formulation phase<sup>33</sup>.

### 5.1.5 Assessment of the relevance of ADC's GG engagement

**The evaluation assesses the relevance of ADC's GG engagement positively.** GG has remained an important subject within ADC throughout 2007 to 2017. On a legal, strategic and policy level, the ADC's GG instruments are to a large degree coherent in terms of their GG focus. With regard to the translation of strategy into practice, the operational engagement and strategic level are linked and inform each other. Country and regional strategies are the main reference framework for the operational engagement. Coordination offices have considerable flexibility to react to windows of opportunities or cater to priorities of partner institutions and implementing organizations among others. In shaping and steering the portfolio, the ADA field and HQ ensure that the interventions are congruent with the respective country and regional strategies. Within the context of steering the portfolio, the SSA has proved to be an effective practical tool to mainstream standards that to some extent reflect the GG principles as set out in the Policy Document. It is therefore a tool to increase relevance of operational engagement. ADC's operational engagement is highly relevant to the priorities and needs of the political partners and target groups. The operational engagement is further aligned with relevant international strategies and the Agenda 2030. Finally, interventions build on the needs and priorities of their target groups.

**The relevance of strategic documents and the Policy Document vis-à-vis the academic and international discourse as well as internal coherence could however be improved through some adaptations:** There is potential to increase the relevance of the Policy Document vis-à-vis the international policy and academic discourse. With regards to the consistency of its strategic GG approach, the distinction of GG concepts between sectors of engagement as defined in the Policy Document is not clear-cut. Based on the findings of the literature review, this can be a barrier to results-based monitoring and evaluation as it makes it difficult to make concepts measurable. In addition, relevance of key strategic documents could be strengthened by prioritizing areas of engagements and increasing coherence in terminology. Translating the policy approach into strategic documents, the differentiation between GG as a cross-cutting theme in contrast to a focal area is not coherently made in the different country strategies. Furthermore, the terminology used to describe GG is currently still heterogeneous. Considering the use of the Handbook for implementation, the Handbook could be revised with a view to its practical usefulness, if ADA decides to keep the Handbook for future use.

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<sup>32</sup> The question was designed as a multiple choice question. For information on the answer categories, please refer to chapter 8 of the annex.

<sup>33</sup> In Section I, the self-assessment for applicants, question two refers to the inclusion of information on target groups based on vulnerability, and questions 4, 5 and 6 address participation / inclusion.

## 5.2 Effectiveness and impact

This sub-chapter analyses effectiveness and impact of the ADC GG engagement along the respective evaluation questions<sup>34</sup>. The data gathered in the country case studies provide the main insights on effectiveness / impacts, by allowing for an in-depth analysis of circumstances under which ADC's engagement was successful or not successful. Nevertheless, the presentation of findings starts with insights from the online survey. While these present self-assessments of project implementers, they provide a bird's eye perspective on the portfolio. The country case studies in Albania and Uganda were each informed by document analyses on the development of the governance situation in the respective country, in-depth analysis of ADC country-level documents and documentation on selected GG projects (project documents, reports and evaluations) as well as two-week long on-site missions. During the on-site missions, interviews and focus groups were conducted with ADC representatives, sector experts, implementing partners, target groups, political partners and other development partners.

To contextualize the qualitative findings from the country case studies presented below, the following bullet points briefly present the ADC portfolio in Uganda and Albania. A detailed presentation of the respective country-specific portfolios and their effectiveness can be found in chapter 4 and 5 of the annex.

- **Uganda** is by far ADC's biggest portfolio in the evaluation period, both in terms of total budget (EUR 75m) and for sector-specific GG (EUR 33m). Engagement is characterized by **continuity and focus** in support to the Justice Law and Order Sector (JLOS) and the water sector. Sector budget support to JLOS and contributions to sector financing of the water sector represent the biggest share of ADC's budget in Uganda.
- **Albania** had a comparatively smaller total budget (EUR 11m) and GG core budget (EUR 4.3m). The portfolio is characterized by high **diversity** of areas supported.

### 5.2.1 Effectiveness and impact of ADC's GG core area engagement

**EQ 5:** How effective has ADC's engagement been on Good Governance? Which were the intended and unintended consequences of ADC's engagement?

**Finding 11:** While ADC made contributions in all three outcome areas of the TOC, the magnitude of these contributions varies widely between interventions and country portfolios.

The results from the online survey show that on average, project implementers rate their interventions related to government effectiveness, rule of law and democratic participation as successful. On a scale of 1 (not successful) to 6 (very successful), the mean rating for success in contributing to individual outcomes ranges from 4.2 to 5.1. Effectiveness across the outcome areas seems to be consistent (see Figure 14).

However, given the heterogeneity in the level of ambition of ADC interventions and the sometimes-limited budget, some of these contributions may be indirect and follow a longer chain of impact. For instance, the budget of interventions investigated in the country case studies range from budgets of EUR 250K (support to people with disabilities, a CSO intervention in Albania) to budgets of EUR 25.2m (sector budget support to the Justice Law and Order Sector in Uganda). While each intervention defines intended impacts and outcomes<sup>35</sup>, the scope of potential contributions on the outcome level is considerably smaller for interventions with a comparatively small budget and short

<sup>34</sup> The decision to present effectiveness and impact jointly was taken by the Evaluation Reference Group which prepared the Terms of Reference to provide a better understanding of the overarching objectives to which ADC's GG engagement contributes.

<sup>35</sup> Interventions define their intended contributions in the project document. The project document is the template for project proposals to be filled out by organizations seeking to obtain funding from ADC. This template is primarily used for funding where ADC is the main funding party. The template requires each intervention to define intended contributions at impact, outcome and output level. Use of the template is not mandatory for multi-donor initiatives and sector budget support, where templates of partner organizations are used.

duration. This makes it challenging to reach conclusions on the overall effectiveness of ADC's GG engagement across interventions.

**Figure 14: Self-assessment of project implementers on contribution to outcome areas<sup>36</sup>**



*Source: Syspons 2019, based on the results of the online survey*

A more differentiated picture regarding effectiveness in the **three outcome areas** emerges from the two country case studies:

<sup>36</sup> The n for the respective outcomes varies slightly in comparison to the n for the intention to contribute to selected outcomes presented in Figure 9, Section 4.3.2. This is because not all respondents rated success of the contribution to which they intended to contribute. On average, respondents selected 7 outcomes that they intended to contribute to, but rated success only for 6.3 outcomes.

## Effectiveness: Government effectiveness



**Finding 12:** The effectiveness of interventions within the outcome area of government effectiveness is mixed. In some cases, evolving political priorities of the partner government and a reshuffling of partner institutions adversely affected progress against intended results.

Beyond the positive self-assessment of participants in the online survey (see Figure 14), the country case study in Albania provided examples of interventions in this area that were not entirely successful. These two interventions are part of ADC's contributions in the area of administrative reform and improved functioning of public sector institutions (see Table 2). According to implementing partners and beneficiaries interviewed and documentation of the interventions, both the Regional Development Program (RDP Phase I) and the Project Preparation Facility (PPF) made valuable contributions to capacity development of Albanian authorities. However, the effectiveness of these interventions at outcome level was curtailed by evolving political priorities and a reshuffling of partner institutions.

**Table 2: Government effectiveness: relevant interventions from the country case studies**

Case study country	Title	Core or sector GG	Duration	ADC Budget
Albania	Regional Development Program (RDP) Phase I	Sector	20/05/2009 – 31/03/2015	EUR 4,256,832 (incl. 30% co-funding of SDC)
	Project Preparation Facility (EC funds)	Core	10/07/2009- 16/02/2016	EUR 2,955,000

In the case of the **RDP I** intervention, an underlying assumption of the intervention had been that Qarks (second-level administrative divisions) would play a central role when Albania's Territorial and Administrative Reform came into effect. The intervention therefore focused on strengthening two Qarks to constitute a model for regional development. However, the assumption regarding the role of the Qarks following Territorial and Administrative Reform did not hold. As a result, the capacity development provided to two Qarks did not have the expected leverage effect.

**PPF** was an EU-delegated cooperation intended to contribute to an improved functioning of public sector institutions in the context of the country's EU integration process. Specifically, the objective of this intervention was to strengthen the capacities of the Albanian authorities in submitting project applications to the EU and foster capacity for the implementation of these projects. Concerning the ambition level of the intervention, it is noteworthy that most objectives and indicators were formulated at the output level. Nonetheless, interview partners agreed that the capacity development provided contributed to increase Albania's absorption capacities for EU funding, which was critical for Albania subsequently reaching EU candidate status. At the same time, some of the capacities developed eroded because the main beneficiary, the Ministry of European Integration, was abolished after the intervention and merged with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



### Good Practice: Capacity development through funding mechanisms

Both interventions in Albania presented in this section (PPF and RDP I) used funding mechanisms as an incentive and a means to build capacities. In both cases, the respective ADC interventions accompanied target groups in the proposal writing, project management and reporting process. This capacity development mechanism was perceived as highly effective in both PPF and RDP I.



### **Lessons-learned: Monitor quality of cooperation to ensure added value of GG interventions even if political priorities evolve**

The country case studies have shown that the achievement of GG interventions can be adversely affected by evolving political priorities. How ADC might mitigate this risk was extensively discussed with various interview partners. While momentum for change can be lost due to evolving political priorities, momentum tends to be cyclical and a temporary loss of momentum should not automatically cast the contribution of development partners as being in vain. In addition, GG is as much about mindsets as it is about processes, yet the contribution to changes in attitudes and buy-in for change processes is not typically captured in the indicators for ADC GG interventions. From the perspective of the evaluation, it would be useful to integrate indicators on the participatory quality of cooperation to better account for the extent to which ADC contributes to evolving attitudes towards reform processes, even if reform is momentarily stalled due to the political macro-environment.



### **Effectiveness: Rule of Law**

**Finding 13: ADC's GG engagement in the area of rule of law is rather effective. In Uganda, long-term engagement and synergies between interventions and modalities contributed to improvements for the Justice Law and Order Sector. These however need to be seen against an environment of significant macro-challenges related to governance. Perspectives regarding the effectiveness of sector budget support in the Ugandan context differ and have evolved in the evaluation period.**

As in the other outcome areas, project implementers who participated in the online survey rate their own contributions to the four outcomes related to rule of law as successful (mean rating ranging from 4.2 to 4.6 on a scale of 6). The interventions which were the focus of the country case study in Uganda (see Table 3) largely achieved intended results as defined in the partner government's sector strategy and intervention documents. These results were related to improved functioning of sector institutions, improved access to justice, and duty-bearers fulfilling their duties. Interview partners highlight that the combination of support to the Ugandan Government and to CSOs working on human rights, women's empowerment and transitional justice creates synergies to achieve rights-holders claiming their rights and duty-bearers fulfilling their duties. In addition to financing training and advocacy activities of its partner CSOs, the ADA coordination office successfully lobbied for its partner CSOs to be invited to platforms of the Government of Uganda, such as the National Human Rights and Accountability Committee, thereby helping them to advocate for marginalized groups.

**Table 3: Rule of law: relevant interventions from the country case studies**

Case study country	Title	Core or sector GG	Duration	ADC Budget
Uganda	Sector Budget Support to the Justice Law and Order Sector (JLOS)	Core	01/07/2006 – 30/06/2020	EUR 25,200,000
	Promote awareness and understanding of human rights in Uganda (HRCUG)	Core	01/11/2014- 31/10/2017	EUR 252,000
	UWONET projects in Northern Uganda (UWONET)	Core	01/12/2009- 30/11/2017	EUR 934,986

According to interviews and JLOS annual and final reports, major improvements observed in the JLOS sector include a reduction in case backlog, a bigger role for alternate dispute resolution mechanisms, a reduction in the average length of stay on remand in prisons (prisoners awaiting trial) and improved geographical access to justice following deconcentrating (JLOS 2017). At the same time, the wider governance environment deteriorated in the period subject to evaluation. It is characterized by challenges related to corruption, a shrinking space for civil society and cases of torture and detention beyond 48 hours in the police system.

ADC has been characterized as playing an important role for the stability of the Justice Law and Order Sector, as it was the only development partner providing continued financial support in the period subject to evaluation. Other development partners ended their sector budget support following a corruption scandal in 2012 in which an equivalent of EUR 9.14m from general budget support were embezzled in the Office of the Prime Minister<sup>37</sup>. The adoption of the Anti-Homosexuality Act in 2014 also caused numerous development partners to end or significantly reduce their support to the Ugandan government. The embezzlement of funds from budget support – albeit not concerning JLOS or Austrian funds – raises the question whether the underlying rationale for sector budget support (i.e. contribution not only to sector goals but also to strengthened results-orientation and more efficient PFM) is plausible. In this regard, the 2015 Joint Evaluation of Budget Support to Uganda managed by several development partners comes to a positive appreciation of the effectiveness of budget support in general<sup>38</sup>: “it is extremely unlikely that alternative forms of aid to [general budget support] and [sector budget support] would have contributed to better results” (IEG et al., 2015U.a, p.38).

Several interview partners argued that in light of other development partners leaving the JLOS sector, ADC’s continued commitment had a stabilizing role and secured ongoing communication with the government. At the same time, some also highlighted that the widespread withdrawal from sector budget support undermined the collective weight needed to engage in effective policy dialog with the partner government. Notwithstanding this, interview partners concur that ADC engagement contributed to sector governance and the review of sector performance through policy dialog, e.g. by participating in Joint Annual Reviews of the sector (at ministerial level) and in the Joint Semi-Annual Reviews of the sector (at technical level) as well as through active engagement in sector working groups such as Gender and Justice and Democracy and Human Rights. ADC is further credited with moving forward results-orientation of the JLOS sector. This was achieved, amongst others, by ADC representatives acting as focal points on monitoring and evaluation (M&E) for many years, and by financing training on M&E for JLOS representatives which has been described by participants as a “game changer”.

At the time this evaluation was conducted, several development partners were considering re-entering sector budget support in JLOS. This shows that assessments have evolved as to the effectiveness of the instrument in the Ugandan context.



### **Effectiveness: Democratic participation**

**Finding 14:** **ADC’s GG engagement in the outcome area democratic participation and quality of democracy is effective for the most part. In addition to achieving intended results at the level of individual interventions, implementation through CSOs, especially through direct funding, contributed to strengthening partner CSOs in Uganda and Albania (unintended consequence).**

In accordance with the assessment in other outcome areas, project implementers perceive their interventions to be effective in making contributions to outcomes related to democratic participation (mean rating ranging from 4.4 to 5.1 on a scale of 6). The interventions which were the focus in the country case studies in Uganda and Albania relevant to this outcome area have made contributions to an improvement in democratic participation (see Table 4). Among others, ADC made contributions to the empowerment of women and girls through long-standing support to the CSO **UWONET**. In Albania, ADC contributed to improved processes in child protection.

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<sup>37</sup> ADC momentarily halted its sector budget support after the OPM scandal in solidarity with other development partners but resumed it, unlike other development partners. The scandal concerned funds from general budget support, which ADC did not fund in Uganda.

<sup>38</sup> This evaluation did not specifically look into sector budget support in JLOS

**Table 4: Democratic participation: relevant interventions from the country case studies**

Case study country	Title	Core or sector GG	Duration	ADC Budget
Uganda	Promote awareness and understanding of human rights in Uganda (HRCUG)	Core	01/11/2014-31/10/2017	EUR 252,000
	UWONET projects in Northern Uganda (UWONET)	Core	01/12/2009-30/11/2017	EUR 934,986
Albania	Developing a Child Protection Safety Net in Albania (Terre des Hommes)	Core	01/10/2009-31/12/2012	EUR 620,000

The intervention **Developing a Child Protection Net** (ADC contribution EUR 620K, total budget EUR 2.3m) established Child Protection Units in 12 municipalities and communes, a system that did not exist before the intervention. A key success factor of the intervention lay in its systems-approach which targeted stakeholders at multiple levels, scaled up effective approaches and enabled duty-bearers to replicate them. While interview partners and a capitalization report stress that the intervention contributed significantly to systems-wide changes, it is difficult to attribute observed changes at outcome and impact level solely to the intervention. Notably, at the time of implementation, numerous stakeholders and projects were working on the child protection system, and children's rights were high on the agenda of development partners.

Overall, according to interviewees, ADC interventions implemented by CSOs led to the strengthening of CSOs although this was not an explicit objective of the interventions. While direct funding to CSOs led to unintended positive consequences for organizational capacity development, basket funding to the CSO sector via the Democratic Governance Facility<sup>39</sup> in Uganda also brought unintended negative consequences. This funding modality curtailed the flexibility of CSOs to seize windows of opportunity for advocacy and thereby, negatively affected their advocacy power.



#### Lessons learned: Added value of ADC long-term support to CSOs

Several of the CSOs interviewed in the Uganda case study have received funding both through direct funding from ADC and through the basket fund Democratic Governance Facility (DGF). The comparison between the two modalities illustrates the added value of the former in terms of institutional capacity development.

In terms of positive consequences, CSOs highlight the contributions of direct support through ADC to their own institutional capacity development. CSOs positively note the continuous dialog with the coordination office, assistance provided in writing proposals, support in developing capacities for results-orientation, and in mainstreaming important cross-cutting principles. In addition, CSOs appreciate ADC's willingness to listen and to flexibly adapt intervention planning in the case of contextual changes. Partnerships with ADC are further considered positive because they are frequently long term and span multiple interventions. Beyond these partnership characteristics, the coordination office actively helped CSOs to gain access to duty-bearers.

By contrast, CSOs describe that DGF had negative unintended consequences for individual CSOs and the sector. Funding from the facility is perceived as more rigid with little leeway to adapt to contextual changes. It decreases opportunities to invest in non-project related activities such as staff development and thereby, contributes to a "projectification" of the sector.

<sup>39</sup> The Democratic Governance Facility was not focus of the Uganda case study. Due to the frequent mentioning of the intervention by interview partners, the evaluation team decided to include it in the main findings. Interview partners particularly commented on the effectiveness of this modality as opposed to direct financing to CSOs.

### 5.2.2 Findings related to effectiveness across all outcome areas

**Finding 15:** Across all outcome areas, capacity development of national or local authorities and non-state actors is a key output paving the way for effectiveness. The HRBA and the selection of adequate modalities is also relevant for effectiveness in all outcome areas.

Several findings from the evaluation apply to effectiveness across all outcome areas:

- To complement country case study findings, implementing organizations that participated in the online survey were asked to assess the plausibility of impact hypotheses of the ToC relevant to their intervention<sup>40</sup>. Responses of survey participants confirm the importance of capacity development of both local authorities and non-state actors to achieve GG outcomes<sup>41</sup>.
- Different modalities play a significant role in achieving outcomes. In particular, the modalities, sector budget support and sector financing, can in themselves constitute a means of contributing to GG objectives. Necessary conditions for these contributions are that these modalities are accompanied by a strong policy dialog and regular performance monitoring with high visibility towards development partners.

Implementing interventions through CSOs can contribute to strengthening advocacy capacities and assist in institutional capacity development (i.e. contribution to outcome, civil society organizations advocate more effectively). Necessary conditions are a partnership approach by ADC that includes regular dialog and long-term support.

- The HRBA is relevant for all outcome areas of the ToC. While the outcome, "duty-bearers fulfill their duties" is currently included in the area rule of law, it could equally be included in other outcome areas. For instance, some interventions that have a strong HRBA and address duty-bearers with their activities are not specifically active in the field of rule of law.

These observations provide relevant pointers for a revision of ADC's GG ToC. Further pointers for a revision of ADC's GG ToC can be derived from the results of the assessment of impact hypotheses by respondents of the online survey, which is included in section 3.4 of the annex.

### 5.2.3 Interplay of ADC's GG core area and sector-specific engagement

**EQ6:** Do the different approaches in implementing GG – core area or sector specific – show differences in explaining GG outcomes, and if so, how can these be explained?

**Finding 16:** Sector-specific GG interventions in the area of decentralization and interventions with a strong HRBA showcase similarities between the approach of core and sector-specific GG. Differences in GG outcomes can therefore only partly be explained by different approaches

**between core area and sector-specific engagement.**

The country case studies illustrated that some core area and sector-specific GG interventions follow very similar approaches:

- The Regional Development Program (RDP I) in Albania falls into the category sector-specific GG according to its CRS code: regional development<sup>42</sup>. Since it sought to strengthen Albania's Territorial and Administrative Reform, its objectives directly relate to outcomes of the core GG

<sup>40</sup> Via a filter function in the online survey, only impact hypotheses relevant to outcomes targeted by the respective intervention were displayed to respondents.

<sup>41</sup> The impact hypothesis that received the highest rating overall (5.14 on a scale of 1 to 6 respectively, n=21) was that strengthened competencies and capacities of local authorities contribute to the implementation of existing administrative frameworks. The impact hypothesis that received the second highest rating (5.03, n=33) was that strengthened competencies and capacities of non-state actors and other actors contribute to civil society organizations advocating more effectively. Overall, on a scale of 1 to 6, all but three impact hypotheses received a mean rating of at least 4. The impact hypotheses that received the lowest rating were related to the contribution of improved infrastructure and strengthened independent media to GG outcomes. For an overview of the assessment of impact hypotheses by project implementers, see chapter 3 of the annex.

<sup>42</sup> CRS code 43040

ToC<sup>43</sup>. Notably, the follow-up intervention (not subject to the evaluation period) also bears the title "Regional Development Program". It is implemented by the same local partner organization and seeks to support Albania's Territorial and Administrative Reform. Nevertheless, this phase is subsumed under the area "decentralization and subnational government"<sup>44</sup>. Thereby, it constitutes a core area GG intervention.

- The intervention support to people with disabilities (PWD) promoted respect for the rights of PWD and their access to education, health and cultural life in three Albanian municipalities. While it is a sector GG intervention, its objectives can be linked to outcomes of the GG core theory of change, notably civil society actors advocate more effectively in favor of underrepresented groups, and duty-bearers fulfill their duties.

Some sector-specific GG interventions are thus hard to distinguish from GG core interventions, since one could argue that they aim at promoting GG as a core area of their work (e.g. RDP) or they center on a strong HRBA (e.g. PWD). Differences in GG outcomes can therefore only partly be explained based on the distinction between core and sector-specific GG.

**Table 5: Sector-specific engagement: Interventions investigated in the country case studies**

Case study country	Title	Core or sector GG	Duration	ADC Budget
Albania	<b>Regional Development Program (RDP) Phase I</b> ➤ <i>Rural development</i>	Sector	20/05/2009-31/03/2015	EUR 5,169,832
	<b>Support to people with disabilities (Caritas Albania)</b> ➤ <i>Social protection</i>	Sector	01/09/2011-30/09/2017	EUR 250,000
Uganda	<b>Joint Water and Sanitation Sector Program Support (JWESSPS)</b> ➤ <i>Water sector policy and administrative management</i>	Sector	01/01/2008-30/06/2019	EUR 34,845,000

**Finding 17: For the interventions subject to the country case studies, differences in modalities, scope and budget were important parameters for explaining differences in GG outcomes.**

The country case study Albania encompassed a core GG CSO intervention (Developing a Child Protection Net) and a sector-specific GG intervention (support to people with disabilities). While project documents and interviews indicate that the contributions of the sector GG intervention were smaller in scope than the contribution of the core GG intervention, this difference cannot be explained by a fundamental difference between core and sector GG. Instead, from the perspective of the evaluation, it is linked to differences in budget and scope of the two interventions, as well as overall visibility of the situation of the respective target group in the partner country.

- The core GG intervention Developing a Child Protection Net had a total budget of budget EUR2.3m, to which ADC contribution EUR 620K. It contributed to changes at system level, which was made easier by the fact that numerous development partners were working on child protection at the time, and that the issue was high on the agenda of the Albanian government. (see EQ5).

<sup>43</sup> For this reason, findings on its effectiveness were presented in the previous section of the report.

<sup>44</sup> CRS code: 15112

- The intervention Support to people with disabilities received EUR 250K funding from ADC, which was supplemented by a EUR 255K contribution from Caritas Albania. While the intervention was instrumental in supporting their rights to education and participation in cultural life in the project region, these improvements were strongly contingent on service delivery by Caritas. The intervention actively engaged in advocacy with local government authorities. However, while authorities were open to dialog with people with disabilities and credited the intervention with increasing their awareness, they did not follow up on commitments made in this dialog.

The country case study in Uganda encompassed both an analysis of sector budget support to JLOS as core GG (see EQ5) and an analysis of sector financing to the Joint Water and Sanitation Sector Program Support (JWESSPS) as sector GG. The modalities, sector financing and sector budget support, have a similar rationale and underlying impact hypotheses, regardless of whether these modalities are implemented in core or sector GG. In both cases, the assumption is that sector governance can be strengthened through policy dialog and regular performance monitoring and accountability towards both development partners and the local population. In addition, sector specific objectives are strengthened. The difference is that sector objectives pursued in the water sector are not explicitly governance related. Nonetheless, ADC sector financing of the Ugandan water sector<sup>45</sup> (budget EUR 34.8m) was considered an effective contribution to sector governance in the water sector by the interview partners.

As with JLOS, the transfer of funds in the water sector to the partner government was accompanied by complementary measures. First, ADC had an active role in policy dialog, e.g. regularly acting as lead donor in the sector and chairing the sector group. It thereby provided inputs to sector policy, e.g. advocating for more investments in maintenance and operations (as opposed to only building new infrastructure). It also contributed to mainstreaming GG principles such as gender and participation. In addition, ADC financed long-term support of the Water Ministry by technical advisors. It thereby strengthened capacities of the sector, and indirectly contributed to sector governance in the sense of better management to achieve sector objectives. Several interview partners also pointed out that that ADC had demanded the elaboration of a roadmap following the discovery of the misuse of funds of development partners, thereby contributing to strengthening processes in the sector.

The comparison of core and sector-specific GG interventions in Albania and Uganda, while drawing on a limited sample, illustrate that differences in modalities, scope and budget are important parameters for explaining differences in GG outcomes. In the examples subject to the country case studies, these parameters were more important for differences in outcomes than the difference between a core and sector-specific GG approach. Given the limited sample of sector GG interventions analyzed, this conclusion can however not be applied to ADC's entire GG portfolio.

While it was beyond the scope of the evaluation to test this, the evaluation questions whether it can plausibly be assumed that all interventions classified under sector GG in this evaluation directly or indirectly pursued GG objectives<sup>46</sup>.

#### 5.2.4 Key enabling and hindering factors

**EQ 7:** What have been key enabling and hindering factors for ADC's engagement on GG?

Success and hindering factors presented in this section were identified in the country case studies and validated in the online survey. Most project implementers selected a large array of enabling factors

and hindering factors as relevant to the success of their intervention (n>40).

<sup>45</sup> Effectiveness with regards to general objectives of the water sector is not addressed here as the evaluation focuses on good governance.

<sup>46</sup> For context: In the period subject to evaluation, disbursements in sector-specific GG engagement representend EUR 259.53m. More than half of the disbursements (58.45%) of sector-specific GG correspond to one of the following three CRS codes: Rural development (43040); Water sector policy & administrative management (14010); and Social/welfare services (16010).

**Finding 18: Key enabling factors for ADC's GG engagement are creating ownership for GG principles and the quality and duration of cooperation between ADC and its partners. Coalition building with other development partners, as well as political will and the political climate in the partner country are also important.**

Project implementers assess "creating ownership of Good Governance principles such as accountability, transparency and participation within the target group" as most influential for the success of their intervention (mean rating of 5.4 on a scale of 1 to 6, n= 48). This is in line with the findings of the country case studies: Government partners and CSOs supported by ADC stress that mainstreaming of GG principles and the quality of process were key to achieving results. The existence of an "open dialog with other development partners that provides opportunities for coordination to assist the achievement of objectives" is deemed almost equally influential by project implementers (mean 5.3, n=48). In the country case studies in Albania and Uganda, coordination between development partners to achieve joint objectives is named as an added value of sector budget support, sector financing and multi-donor initiatives. At the same time, CSOs also voice that it can be helpful for their advocacy efforts if several other development partners are engaged in the same sector, as this helps coalition building. Coalition building also receives a high rating as a success factor in the online survey (mean 4.7, n=49).

Another group of enabling factors concerns the quality of the cooperation between ADC and its implementing partners. A central aspect in this regard is that ADC engages in long-term partnerships with implementing organizations by commissioning multiple subsequent interventions. In the online survey, this factor received the third highest mean rating (mean 4.8, n=45). Concurrently, several interview partners emphasized the importance of this factor for intervention success. By providing long-term support, ADC contributes to capacity development of partner organizations (see chapter on effectiveness). Long-term partnerships also contribute to the credibility of the implementing partners. This favors the effectiveness of interventions. In addition, ADC funding leverages existing policy and advocacy efforts of these partners by funding local partners who have been active in a given field for a long time. Thereby, ADC-funded interventions benefit from available expertise and networks of these local partners. Another element that implementing partners appreciate is that ADC rules and regulations leave flexibility to use windows of opportunity in the intervention area (mean of 4.7 in the online survey, n=47).

Attitudes towards international cooperation in the partner country also play an important role for the effectiveness of ADC's GG interventions. In partner countries where there is an Austrian Embassy, the Embassy can play an enabling role providing support through political dialog (mean 4.4, n=27). This was the case in Albania, where the Ambassador has repeatedly been involved in discussions with the Prime Minister to move the regional development process forward.

Overall, political will within the government counterpart to work towards intervention objectives is perceived as an important success factor (mean 4.4, n=44). In Uganda, some interview partners saw this evidenced by commitment of the highest levels of government including the President to conduct regular intensive dialog with development partners. Further enabling factors are that the intervention's target group is investing resources (e.g. staff or money) to contribute to meeting objectives (mean rating of 4.6 in the online survey). The country case study in Uganda showed that through sector budget support or sector financing, there is also the possibility for ADC to advocate for a change in priorities of how resources of the partner government are allocated in a given sector.

**Figure 15: Enabling factors ranked**



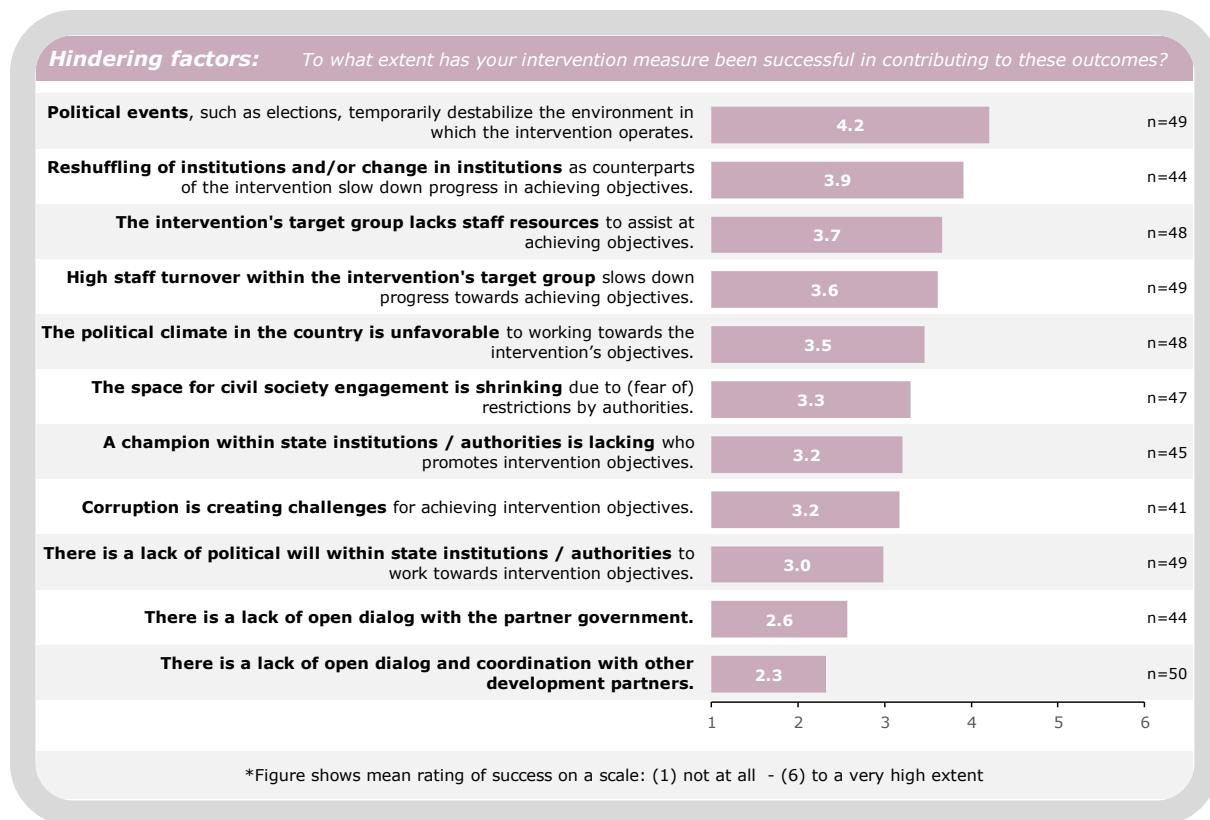
Source: Syspons 2019, based on the online survey

**Finding 19: Key hindering factors for ADC's GG engagement are political events which temporarily destabilize the environment in which an intervention operates, reshuffling of partner institutions, as well as lack of staff resources at the level of counterparts.**

With regard to hindering factors, the lack of an enabling factor oftentimes constitutes a hindering factor. Figure 16 presents a ranking of hindering factors, as assessed by project implementers. According to project implementers, the most influential hindering factors (mean value of 4.2, n=49) are political events, such as elections, that temporarily destabilize the environment in which the intervention operates. This echoes findings from the country case study in Uganda, where several interview partners state that the infringement of certain rights was cyclical and tended to surge in the electoral period. For CSOs, political events can coincide with a shrinking space for civil society. This is the case for Ugandan CSOs which are progressively marginalized due to power ambitions by the incumbent president.

The second most influential hindering factor (mean value of 3.9, n=44) in the online survey is the reshuffling of institutions and / or a change in institutions as counterparts of the intervention, slowing down progress in achieving objectives. This and the lack of a political champion affected several interventions subject to the country case study in Albania. Also related to the commitment and capacities of the partner, project implementers consider a lack of staff resources and high staff turnover at the level of the target group considerable hindering factors in the online survey (mean of 3.7, n=48 and mean 3.6, n=49, respectively).

**Figure 16: Hindering factors ranked**



Source: Syspons 2019, based on the online survey

### 5.2.5 Assessment of effectiveness and impact

**The evaluation team comes to a largely positive assessment of the effectiveness of ADC's GG engagement but highlights that findings at the level of the overall GG portfolio are subject to respondent bias.** The evaluation showed that on average, project implementers rated their interventions as successful in contributing to the outcomes of the theory of change. In this self-assessment, interventions are equally effective in contributing to changes related to government effectiveness, rule of law and democratic participation and quality of democracy. However, since the budgets and level of ambition of different interventions financed by ADC vary substantially, contributions especially in interventions with smaller budgets are likely to be rather indirect. The magnitude of contributions to GG varies not only between interventions, but also between country portfolios. There is room for improving the quality of results-orientation in intervention documents to better account for this.

**The cases studies showed that the extent to which synergies are actively pursued between ADC interventions at country level plays an important role for effectiveness.** Uganda is a good practice example where the intentional selection of different modalities and interventions around the flagship intervention, sector budget support to the Justice Law and Order Sector, has contributed to substantial progress against sector objectives<sup>47</sup>. In Albania, the country portfolio is a "potpourri" of different interventions targeting objectives in diverse areas. This makes it challenging to provide an assessment of effectiveness at country level. While individual interventions were effective for the most part against their intended objectives, these objectives were diverse and contributions to GG were thus scattered.

The scope of the evaluation only allowed for a limited analysis of sector-specific GG compared to core GG in the case study countries. The country case study examples in Albania showed that **interventions may blur the lines between sector-specific and core GG**. They further showed

<sup>47</sup> Notably, the active pursuit of synergies between modalities and interventions in the Uganda portfolio has not yet been captured in the country strategy.

that the **sustainability of results can be adversely affected by evolving political priorities** and a reshuffling of the partner institutions in both core and sector-specific GG. Given that GG interventions often entail reform processes that need to factor into evolving political priorities, quality of process is an important factor to get buy-in for change management. This has not yet been prominently addressed in the theory of change.

In Uganda, the country case study showed that in both core and sector-specific GG, modalities (sector budget support in core GG and sector financing in sector-specific GG) can in themselves be a means of contributing to GG – an aspect not yet represented in the theory of change. In both cases, the assumption is that **sector governance can be strengthened through policy dialog and regular performance monitoring**. While ADC is credited with contributing to sector governance in both the Ugandan justice law and order sector and the water sector, the prevalence of corruption has raised concerns on the adequacy of sector budget support and sector financing in the Ugandan context.

**Regarding ADC's contribution to the observed changes, it is plausible that ADC made contributions together with its partners and other development partners.** As a small development partner, ADC intentionally engages in multi-donor initiatives to leverage its funding. To adequately assess the significance of ADC's engagement, there is however room for improvement in documenting how much ADC's financial contribution represents in the overall budget of a given intervention. Partners appreciate ADC not only for its financial contributions, but also for its contributions to policy dialog and capacity development through constructive dialog between the ADA coordination offices and ADC partners. In particular, an unintended positive effect of ADC support in both Albania and Uganda was a contribution to strengthening the CSO sector through long-term partnerships with local CSOs. In turn, the commitment to long-standing partnerships is also beneficial for achieving intervention objectives, as ADC profits from networks, expertise and credibility of its partners in a given area.

**Key success and hindering factors contributing to GG are related to creating ownership for GG principles, the quality of cooperation with implementing partners, and coalition building with other development partners.** The partner government's political will, the presence of a champion for change processes, as well as attitudes towards international cooperation in the partner country also play an important role for the effectiveness of ADC's GG engagement.

## 5.3 Efficiency

The criterion efficiency assesses to what extent resources of ADC are converted to results economically. In this evaluation, the focus of the analysis lies on implementation efficiency. To this end, the evaluation undertook an analysis of the extent to which efficiency considerations are factored into the steering and implementation of intervention. In addition, the evaluation analyzed the appropriateness of human resources within ADC in light of the broad scope of engagement and the size of the country-level portfolio in the case study countries. Findings presented in this chapter are based on interviews conducted as part of the country case studies in Uganda and Albania with ADC stakeholders, implementing partners and other development partners. ADC strategy documents and interviews conducted with ADA and BMEIA staff as well as the validation meeting with ADA Heads of coordination offices constitute further sources.

### 5.3.1 Efficiency within ADC's GG engagement

**EQ 9:** How efficiently is the GG portfolio being implemented at country level?

**Finding 20: The adequate selection of modalities positively affects the efficiency of ADC's GG engagement.**

As a development partner with a comparatively small budget, ADC implements many interventions through pooled funding (e.g. DGF in Uganda<sup>48</sup>) and multi-donor initiatives (e.g. RDP I<sup>49</sup>). In Uganda, ADC has also invested substantial funds into sector budget support (in the Justice Law and Order Sector) and sector financing (in the water sector). Pooled funding, sector financing and sector budget support and other multi-donor initiatives are chosen by ADC out of strategic and economic considerations. Strategic and economic considerations both contribute to efficiency. When several development partners invest resources into the same intervention, this signals commitment of the development community to shared objectives and provides a forum for discussion on how to best reach intended objectives. According to interviewees, joint backing of the donor community of an intervention, a reform agenda, or a program-based approach of the partner government can thereby increase the potential for impact.

In addition, pooled funding, budget support and sector financing are believed to entail reduced overheads compared to implementation of separate interventions by each development partner. Thereby, development partners can ensure an economic use of funds. Regarding sector budget support and sector financing, the openness to use partner systems and commitment to untied aid also reduces transaction costs at the level of partner governments. Alignment to the priorities of the partners contributes to efficiency because it ensures that funds are spent on interventions that address the needs of the partners. In Uganda, partners appreciate the flexibility provided by ADC to finance measures complementary to sector budget support and sector financing. This includes the opportunity to draft Terms of Reference and select technical advisors financed by ADC.

Sector budget support and sector financing are particularly efficient modalities provided that funds are not misappropriated. This raises the question to what extent it is possible for ADC to ensure the disbursements made through these modalities are used appropriately. In accordance with the principle of alignment, development partners in Uganda rely on information provided by the reports of the Ugandan Auditor General. At the same time, the country case study shows that corruption is widespread in Uganda. Between 2007 and 2017, Uganda's rank in Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index had dropped back from rank 111 to rank 151, placing it at the lower end of the 180 countries and territories ranked. No cases of corruption related to sector budget support have been brought to the attention of the evaluation. Nevertheless, the corruption scandal related to general budget support (not financed by ADC) in the Office of the Prime Minister shows that budget support is subject to corruption risks. Moreover, ADC disbursements to sector financing

<sup>48</sup> Further examples from the case study countries not covered in this main report include ADISA and IPS Albania. For more details see chapter 4 of the annex.

<sup>49</sup> A further example from the case study countries not covered in this main report is the Justice without Delays intervention implemented by OSCE which received co-financing from both ADC and USAID. For more details see chapter 4 of the annex.

have partly been misappropriated. The evaluation received access to ADC internal assessments showing that an internal dialog on the adequacy of continuing sector budget support was conducted. ADC is committed to investigate corruption and fraud and ensure redress. However, feedback from the ADA Heads of coordination offices suggests that decisions about whether to continue engagement is made on a case by case basis. The Policy Document and Handbook provide no orientation on how to deal with cases of bad governance in good governance interventions. Such orientation would be welcomed by coordination offices.

**Finding 21: ADC's commitment to invest in long-term partnerships with local partners contributes to efficiency of implementation. The existing expertise, networks and credibility of local partners benefits the achievement of objectives of ADC interventions.**

The country case studies show that ADC engages in long-term partnerships with different types of implementing organizations, ranging from local CSOs, local consultancies (for the implementation of RDP I) and national sector institutions, to international organizations with an established presence in the partner country (e.g. OSCE in Albania<sup>50</sup>) (see chapter on effectiveness). These long-term partnerships are deliberate. ADC believes that the quality of cooperation depends strongly on developing a joint understanding of GG principles and objectives and the local context with its partners. This is also highly valued by the partners. Typically, the engagement of partners in areas for which they receive ADC funding goes beyond the ADC-financed intervention. Thereby, ADC interventions draw on existing expertise, networks and credibility of local partners, which benefits the achievement of intervention objectives: At the same time, these interventions contribute to organizational capacity development of CSOs (see chapter on effectiveness). This is particularly relevant since ADA, in most cases, does not implement interventions and assumes a coordinating and quality assurance role.

**Finding 22: ADC is understaffed for the steering and implementation of the GG portfolio and engagement at policy level. Despite limited human resources, the staff is perceived as highly competent and devoted by implementing partners and other development partners.**

ADC has highly limited human resources to steer its overarching GG portfolio. The number of interventions administered per ADA staff at HQ and in the coordination office is considerable given the size of the agency's core budget (OECD-DAC, 2015). In the period subject to evaluation, reduction in staff at ADA HQ have curtailed capacities to provide in-house expertise on GG. Staff capacities at ADA HQ for GG were reduced from two full-time advisors to one part-time advisor. One of the former full-time advisor positions was responsible for public administration, including budget support, PFM, anti-corruption and auditing authorities. Since this position does not exist anymore, capacities to provide in-house expertise on these subjects is currently scarce. Due to reductions in staff, ADC's framework contract with the BIM is increasingly used to outsource core staff tasks and competencies such as project assessments. It was initially signed to commission research on the human rights situation in the partner countries. In addition, limited personnel resources and high workload limit the capacities for ADA to engage in thematic debates on GG beyond the day-to-day work, including in relevant international fora such as the OECD-DAC GovNet.

ADA representatives in the case study countries feel chronically understaffed and perceive the lean personnel structures as a potential risk for quality of the GG engagement. Among the ADA coordination offices with a GG focus, Bhutan and the Albanian coordination office both have thematic advisors under local contract that cover GG next to other thematic areas. Uganda is the only office with a full-time advisor on GG.<sup>51</sup> Previous full-time GG advisors in Uganda were hired under an international contract. This position has been turned into a local position recently, but incidentally, it is currently filled by an Austrian national. Some interview partners express that parts of the role of the GG advisor is easier fulfilled by international staff, because some important information within ADC is only shared in German, and because international staff may be perceived as more independent

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<sup>50</sup> For reasons of brevity, the OSCE interventions are not presented in detail in this main report. Please refer to chapter 4 of the annex for details.

<sup>51</sup> In addition, the coordination office has a full-time advisor for the water sector.

from the partner government regarding GG. From the perspective of the evaluation, the credibility of a GG advisor depends on his / her qualifications. To what extent qualified candidates can be attracted and retained is influenced by the conditions of the contract, rather than the nationality of the incumbent. In the case study countries, both the Heads of coordination offices and the governance advisors were involved in policy dialog and followed up on individual interventions financed by ADC. While in Albania, the Austrian Ambassador is also involved in policy dialog, there is no Embassy in Uganda, and the Head of the coordination office in Kampala therefore has a more representative role.

ADA staff in the coordination offices has substantial autonomy in deciding how they fulfill their roles. As a result, the extent to which GG is mainstreamed depends strongly on the motivation of the Head of coordination office issue to work on GG. It also means staff has substantial leeway to allocate time between follow-up of individual interventions and policy dialog. Their limited resources often lead to dilemmas on whether to allocate time to intervention steering or policy dialog. The financial resources allocated to the GG portfolio and the workload associated with steering the GG engagement vary widely between interventions in a given country and between countries. Looking at the two case study countries in the period subject to evaluation, the average annual budget for core area GG interventions in Albania amounted to EUR 400K<sup>52</sup>. For sector-specific GG, the average annual budget rose to EUR 600K. In Uganda, core area GG accounted for an average annual budget of EUR 3m. Sector-specific GG received an average annual budget of EUR 3.8m. The largest share of the budget in both areas is disbursed to sector budget support and sector financing. While staff has considerable leeway in deciding how to allocate time between the follow-up of individual interventions and policy dialog, a certain amount of administrative follow-up on interventions is mandatory.

Despite limited human resources, ADA staff is perceived as highly competent and devoted by implementing partners and other development partners. ADA staff is perceived as pulling above its weight in policy dialog considering its limited personnel. While development partners greatly appreciate ADC's efforts in policy dialog, they would appreciate if ADC assumed a more prominent role. In Uganda, for instance, ADA was unable to chair the JLOS sector working group despite being one of the strategic partners.

The extent to which thematic expertise from HQ on GG is solicited depends strongly on the initiative of the respective coordination offices and the country desks. Coordination offices that actively solicit feedback perceive the thematic advisor as an important counterpart for quality assurance of their GG portfolio. In this regard, an upside to the lean personnel structures within ADC is that they allow for a personalized and direct exchange. A downside is that limited resources do not allow for adequate knowledge management from HQ and the dissemination of good practice on GG between countries. Structured knowledge management is perceived as difficult to implement because monitoring is weak and the level of ambition of the different GG interventions is heterogeneous.

Regarding the BMEIA's role in steering the GG portfolio, section VII of the Ministry is responsible for the field of GG. The Ministry's rotation principle in the Ministry creates barriers for efficient steering. BMEIA staff is perceived as capable and quick at learning new thematic topics. Yet, an initial lack of expertise after the assignment to a new post can undermine their capacity to effectively steer the portfolio.

**Finding 23: Increasing reliance on third-party funding (especially EU-delegated cooperation) represents both a challenge and an opportunity in light of ADC's limited human and financial resources.**

Third-party funding can be a means of leveraging support in areas in which ADC is already active. However, drafting proposals for major third-party funding represents a considerable workload which can be challenging given already strained personnel resources. Once funding is approved, third-party funding however enables ADA to hire staff for project implementation. Increasingly, ADA allows non-core staff for delegated cooperation interventions to represent ADC in policy dialog, which can relieve

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<sup>52</sup> EU delegated cooperation is not factored into this average annual budget.

the workload from the coordination offices. However, managing non-core staff also represents work for the coordination offices. ADA intends to acquire third-party funding in areas of expertise of ADA staff. In practice, ADA's acquisition of third-party funding is opportunity driven. For instance, ADA implemented an EU delegated cooperation on PFM in Albania, which is not a core competency of ADA.

### 5.3.2 Assessment of efficiency

**The evaluation reaches a mixed assessment of the efficiency of ADC's GG engagement.** ADC's willingness to channel a substantial amount of its funding through multi-donor initiatives is assessed positively as this contributes to leveraging the financial investments it can make with a limited budget. Moreover, ADC's commitment to long-standing partnerships with implementing organizations is assessed positively. It contributes to capacity development of partners and leverages their existing expertise, networks and credibility. Thereby, it positively influences the effectiveness of respective interventions. Finally, with regard to human resources, the evaluation perceives ADC to be understaffed. While ADC staff working on GG receives positive feedback from development partners and implementing partners, the current staffing situation represents a risk for the quality in the long run. Current staffing levels make it challenging to engage in thematic dialog on GG and create barriers for knowledge management with regards to data on interventions as well as the collection and disseminations of lessons learned and good practices.

## 5.4 Coordination, Coherence and Complementarity (CCC)

This section analyzes how coherence, complementarity and coordination of ADC's GG engagement have affected efficiency and effectiveness / impact. It examines ADA's role in achieving synergies between ADC-financed interventions in the case study countries and looks at the role coordination plays with other development partners for the whole portfolio.

### 5.4.1 Coordination, coherence & complementarity within ADC's GG engagement

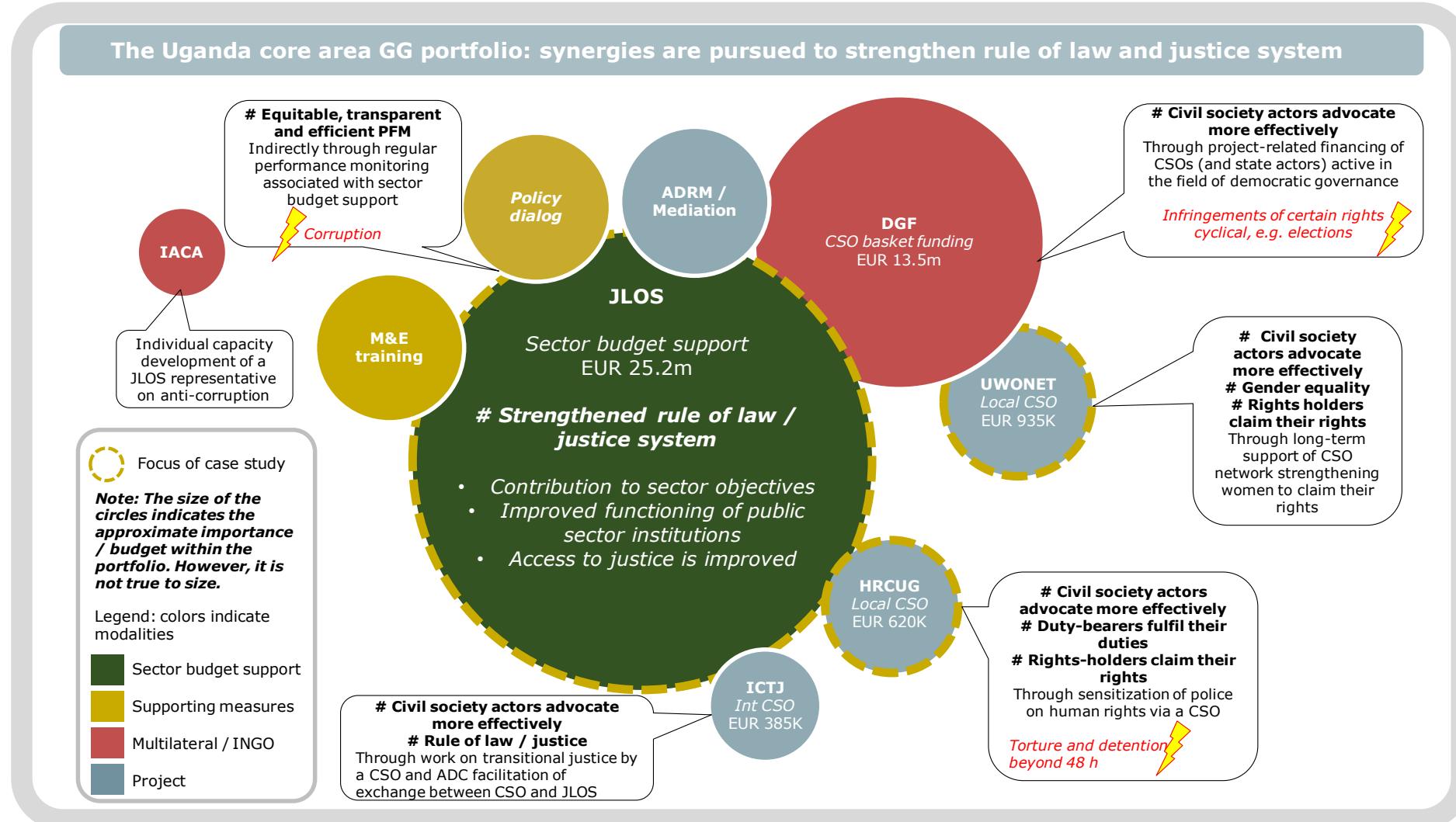
**EQ 10:** How have coherence, complementarity and coordination of ADC's engagement on GG – including within the framework of the Whole of Government Approach (WGA) – affected efficiency and effectiveness / impact of implementation at country and local level?

**Finding 24: The extent to which synergies between ADC GG interventions are pursued and contribute to efficiency and effectiveness varies between countries. Uganda constitutes a good practice example for coherence and complementarity within an ADC country portfolio.**

The main lever for achieving synergies in the implementation of interventions lies in the planning for synergies when designing a country portfolio. The extent to which this was done by ADC varies between countries. The Uganda portfolio is set up to foster synergies between modalities and different types of implementing organizations (see Figure 17). As illustrated in sections 5.2 and 5.3, these synergies positively affect ADC's contributions to a strengthened rule of law and justice system. Most core area interventions have been planned around the flagship intervention sector budget support to JLOS. CSO interventions pursuing a HRBA were implemented to bolster the support to government institutions of the JLOS sector. Thereby, synergies could be reached in relation to the sector objectives. The active contributions of the ADA coordination office to policy dialog and its engagement to strengthen results-orientation of the sector further acted as complementary measures. The ADA coordination office engages in JLOS sector working groups and is represented in coordination with development partners for steering the DGF basket fund. Together with the active liaising with CSOs, it thereby promoted the information flow between different stakeholder groups. This benefitted the achievement of sector objectives.

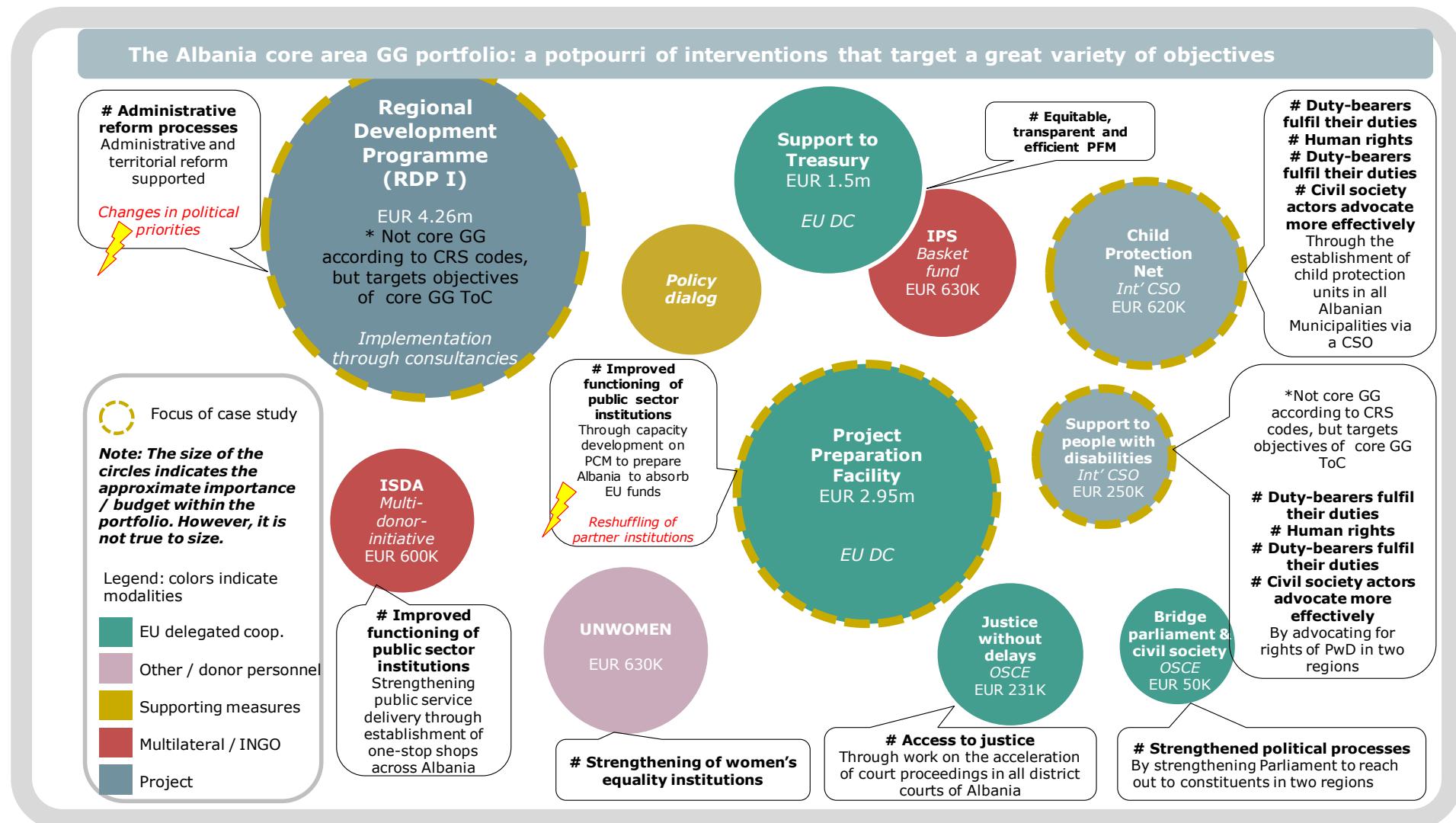
Conversely, the pursuit of synergies in the Albanian country portfolio is much more limited (see Figure 18). The Albanian country portfolio is less shaped by strategic considerations. Rather it includes a diverse set of independent interventions. Nevertheless, the ADA coordination office in Tirana still encourages the flow of information between ADC-financed interventions. For example, staff members of larger ADC-financed interventions such as RDP I and PPF were invited to a regular "jour fixe" in the coordination office. In addition, the coordination office sometimes fosters exchange between different ADC-funded CSOs through joint meetings. This initiative is much appreciated by CSOs, as it helps them to share experiences and liaise on advocacy strategies.

Figure 17: Intentional pursuit of synergies in ADC's Uganda portfolio



Source: Syspons 2019 based on analysis of country portfolio

Figure 18: Visualization of the ADC GG portfolio in Albania



Source: Syspons 2019, based on an analysis of ADC's GG portfolio in Albania

As a pre-condition for the intentional pursuit of synergies, implementing organizations need to know of other ADC-financed interventions related to GG. In the online survey, 70.8% of project implementers indicate an awareness of other ADC interventions running at the same time (n=34). 8.3% of project implementers state that they are aware of all other GG-related ADC interventions running at the same time (n= 4). Project implementers further indicate that their intervention achieved synergies with other ADC interventions. 48% of project implementers (fully) agree that other ADC interventions with GG as core area facilitated the achievement of outcomes in their interventions (overall mean rating 4.8, n=25).

**Finding 25: Coordination with other development partners is a strength of ADC across the GG portfolio and positively affects efficiency and effectiveness.**

Beyond synergies within the ADC engagement, ADA and ADC interventions actively coordinate with other development partners. This coordination contributes to achieving synergies. First, ADA actively coordinates with other development partners through participation in multi-donor initiatives (see efficiency chapter). Furthermore, ADA participates in development partner coordination fora related to its GG engagement, albeit staff resources are limited that it can engage with and promote thematic debates (see also section 5.3.1). Overall, the quality of coordination between development partners varies from country to country. It is affected by partner governments' ownership of the coordination process. For instance, in Uganda, coordination of development partners within JLOS is considered of high quality. Notably, the quality slightly decreased when several development partners withdrew from sector budget support. In contrast, interview partners in Albania see room for improving the quality of coordination efforts, specifically regarding the steering function of the Albanian government. Notwithstanding this, interview partners concur in describing ADC as highly engaged in coordination. In Uganda and Albania, ADC's commitment to engage in donor coordination is credited with promoting shared objectives of the development partners and the partner government.

Project implementers also perceive coordination with other development partners as one strength of ADC across the entire GG portfolio. Among survey respondents, 54% (fully) agree that coordination with other development partners contributed to synergies in the implementation of activities in their intervention (n=24). 68% of project implementers (fully) agree that coordination contributed to synergies at outcome level (n=30).

**Finding 26: The Whole of Government Approach (WGA) does not play a significant role for efficiency or effectiveness of GG engagement at country or local level.**

Several factors create barriers for a concerted WGA approach in and beyond ADC.<sup>53</sup> One of the most prominent hindering factors is BMEIA's lack of formal authority to issue guidelines for other ministries and Austrian stakeholders. While BMEIA is formally responsible for coordinating all Austrian activities in the field of development cooperation, it only holds formal authority over ADA. BMEIA can therefore only engage in soft coordination. This makes it challenging to resolve issues of policy incoherence and manage trade-offs-between competing priorities (OECD-DAC 2015). Nonetheless, inter-ministerial consultations and coordination in the elaboration of key strategy documents such as the 3YP and country strategies of ADC have gained in importance in recent years. At country level, ADA coordination offices should theoretically act as a coordination body and information hub for all other Austrian actors. However, the lack of a formal mandate to represent other stakeholders and their scarce human resources limit the ability of coordination offices to fulfill this function. Concurrently, the evaluation only identified a few examples of whole of government efforts in the case study countries. In Albania, ADC engaged in information exchange with the Austrian Development Bank regarding the administration of soft loans. The Austrian Development bank was also consulted by ADA and BMEIA to discuss ADC's position on (sector) budget support in general and in Uganda in particular. However, interview partners could not identify concrete examples of how these cases contributed to efficiency or effectiveness of ADC GG engagement.

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<sup>53</sup> The coordination among all Austrian stakeholders beyond ADC (i.e. BMEIA together with ADA) is sometimes referred to as ADC+.

#### **5.4.2 Assessment of coordination, coherence and complementarity**

The evaluation comes to a rather positive assessment of coordination, coherence and complementarity related to ADC's GG engagement with room for improvement. Two central levers for coordination, coherence and complementarity are closely tied. In cases where synergies are considered in designing a country portfolio, this significantly increases the potential for achieving synergies in implementation. In this regard, the Uganda case study constitutes a good practice example. The Albania case study shows that the pursuit of synergies is not inherent to all GG portfolios. A third lever to achieve synergies and thereby contribute to efficiency and effectiveness is well anchored across the ADC GG portfolio: ADC's engagement in multi-donor initiatives as well as policy dialog with partner governments and other development partners constitutes one of its strengths. Finally, the WGA approach holds little importance within ADC's GG portfolio. Notably, the WGA is largely beyond the sphere of influence of the BMEIA and ADA, as it is tied to a lack of formal authorities of these two entities over other Austrian government stakeholders engaged in activities related to development cooperation.

## 5.5 ADC's added value and comparative advantage

**EQ 8:** What has been the added value and comparative advantage of ADC's engagement on GG?

**Finding 27: The main added value and comparative advantage of ADC's engagement on GG lies in its partnership approach. It is characterized by a willingness to engage in long-term partnerships with a diversity of project implementers. The dedication of ADC staff and flexibility to take advantage of emerging windows of opportunity constitutes another strength.**

Local partners describe ADC as willing to listen and eager to gain a good understanding of reality in the field through field visits. They further describe ADC as a development partner with a strong participatory approach. ADA is perceived as willing to actively support partner organizations in their growth by providing feedback to proposals and reports and actively contributing to policy dialog. Partners also appreciate ADC's support in finding solutions if problems arise in the implementation of interventions.

This quality of support is made possible by highly dedicated staff. Interview partners in the case study countries further perceive ADA staff as very competent and knowledgeable of the local context. ADA staff is seen as accessible and showing interest in the activities of their partners. The quality of ADC's partnership approach is further characterized by its investment in long-term partnerships and its dedication to work through partner systems.

The diversity in project implementers constitutes an added value from the perspective of the evaluation. ADC's HRBA is inherent in the GG theory of change, which entails strengthening both duty-bearers and rights-holders. Cooperation with partner governments and CSOs thereby provides potential for synergies for promoting a HRBA. The diversity of project implementers enables ADC to target capacity development approaches to the distinct needs of stakeholders.

Another element that distinguishes ADC from other development partners is its flexibility in taking advantage of windows of opportunity. ADC has been described as open to react to emerging priorities of partners. It is further appreciated by partners for pursuing capacity development approaches adapted to the needs of targeted stakeholders, e.g. letting them select technical advisors themselves. It has also been described as comparatively unbureaucratic and accommodating when partners express the desire to shift funding between budget lines. Overall, a lot of discretion is given to the coordination offices. Depending on how prescriptive the country strategy is, this also means that there is a lot of flexibility regarding what can be funded in terms of Good Governance. While the scattered nature of the Albanian country strategies does not allow for strategic synergies in portfolio design, it provides flexibility to speedily react to emerging needs of partners.

Finally, ADC engagement provides an added value in contexts where comparatively few development partners are present. While multilateral development partners are present in Albania, only a limited number of bilateral partners are physically present. In this context, bilateral partners constitute an added value to move political processes forward, because they are less technocratic in nature. In Albania in particular, ADC positions carry weight in dialog with the partner government. This is due to the historic relationship between Albania and Austria, the ability of the Embassy to facilitate political dialog, and the fact that few bilateral partners are active in the country.

## 6 Conclusions

ADC's GG engagement between 2007 and 2017 spans a multitude of activities on the strategic and policy as well as operational level. ADC's GG approach is laid down in the Policy Document on Good Governance that was written in 2007 and reprinted in 2011. On a strategic and policy level, ADC engages to some extent in policy dialog on the international level through participating in the OECD-DAC Network on Governance amongst other things. On the country level, ADA coordination offices contribute to policy dialog with partner governments and other development partners and promote donor coordination.

On an operational level, the sectors of engagement are broad. In addition to interventions that have GG as their core objective, ADC also subsumes mainstreaming of GG principles, the pursuit of GG objectives in sector-specific interventions under its GG engagement. These interventions are heterogeneous in terms of budget, focus areas, implementing modalities, implementing organizations and the ambition level of intended results. Beyond interventions, there is also a marked heterogeneity between ADC country portfolios in terms of budget allocated to GG engagement, focus, strategic pursuit of synergies and national governance context.

The following conclusions are drawn on ADC's GG approach and its diverse GG engagement from 2007 to 2017:

**Conclusion 1: ADC's operational engagement reflects ADC strategies even though the Policy Document and Handbook are seldom used in practice.** The relevance of ADC's operational GG engagement for ADC strategies mainly stems from the active consideration of the country and regional strategies (*finding 2, finding 6*). While the engagement is in line with the content of the Policy Document, the Policy Document and the Handbook have low relevance as guideposts for designing and implementing operational engagement. The content of the Policy Document is too abstract. The Handbook is too long and not widely used as a reference book by stakeholders (*finding 6*). Most ADC stakeholders, apart from the thematic advisors (*finding 5*), do not consult the Policy Document on GG or Handbook in their day-to-day work (*finding 6*). The usefulness for practitioners could be increased both in terms of contents (e.g. by providing information on how to deal with bad governance) and format (*finding 8, finding 20*).

**Conclusion 2: The ADC GG policy approach and its engagement is currently broad in scope, rendering a specialization of ADC difficult.** While the ADC policy approach on GG provides coordination offices with flexibility in reacting to partner priorities and windows of opportunity (*finding 2*), the current collection of topics is deemed too broad considering available resources (*finding 8*). Limited financial resources within ADC are currently spread across a broad area of topics, leading to a lack of specialization (*finding 8*) and the limitations of staff resources render the provision of in-house expertise difficult for the wide array of topics (*finding 22*). At the same time, one of the key assets of ADC lies in its strong partner orientation, an aspect which should be maintained in the future (*finding 27*).

**Conclusion 3: The ADC GG policy approach is no longer fully up to date with international discourses and lacks internal consistency, limiting its relevance within and outside ADC.** Since ADC'S GG approach at policy and strategic level has not evolved significantly since 2007 (*finding 1*), its approach does not fully reflect current academic and international discourse (*finding 3*). Gaps include conceptual clarity, update of terminology and reference to the Agenda 2030. ADC policy and strategic documents do not yet provide precise definitions for areas of engagement. They also do not yet make sufficiently explicit how engagement in these different areas seeks to contribute to GG, nor do they address how different areas of engagement are interrelated. ADC has also not yet picked up on the trends to move away from the term "Good Governance" to less normative terminology and to stress political economy analysis (*finding 3*). The relevance of the GG approach in terms of its internal consistency is mixed. For instance, the principles of the Social Standards Assessment Form (and the principles now incorporated in EGSIM) are not fully aligned in the Policy Document and no cross-referencing between the documents exists (*finding 8*). Yet, the SSA has proved an effective tool for mainstreaming GG principles (*finding 5*). While there is consistency between ADC's policy and strategic documents regarding the areas of engagement, documents are not consistent in terms of terminology on GG. The distinction between GG as intervention sector in its own right and as cross-cutting principle

is not always clear in country and regional strategies. This is mirrored in different understandings amongst some ADC stakeholders regarding the division between sectors and principles. In addition, there is no consensus amongst ADC stakeholders as to whether gender is part of GG or should only be treated as a separate topic (*finding 4*).

**Conclusion 4: ADC's operational GG engagement in Uganda and Albania is mostly effective.** ADC made contributions to all three outcome areas of the theory of change developed for this evaluation (*finding 11*). Strengthening CSOs and authorities at local level is one of the main ways for ADC to achieve GG objectives in different fields. The HRBA and the selection of adequate modalities also contribute to effectiveness across all outcome areas (*finding 15*). Within the area "government effectiveness", effectiveness of interventions was mixed (*finding 12*). Evolving political priorities and a reshuffling of partner institutions – hindering factors relevant across the GG portfolio - put limits on the effectiveness in this area (*finding 12, finding 19*). The effectiveness in the area "rule of law" was mostly given (*finding 13*). For instance, while many goals defined for the sector by the Ugandan partner government have been achieved, the overall governance situation in Uganda has deteriorated on other levels. In interventions within the outcome area "democratic participation", interventions widely achieved their intended results. As an unintended positive consequence, ADC further contributed to strengthening partner CSOs in Uganda and Albania through working with them as implementing agencies of interventions (*finding 14*).

**Conclusion 5: The difference between sector-specific and core area GG operational approaches in Uganda and Albania is not the sole determinant for the extent of GG outcomes.** The analysis of the effectiveness of sector-specific vs core area GG engagement in Uganda and Albania has shown that differences in GG outcomes cannot systematically be explained by differences in approaches (*finding 16*). Differences in modalities, scope and budget were also important parameters for the interventions subject to country case studies (*finding 17*).

**Conclusion 6: Scarce staff capacities limit ADC's abilities to engage in strategic and policy discourse and to follow up on operational engagement through staff at ADA Headquarters and coordination offices. On one hand,** low staff resources decrease capacities at Headquarters and the coordination offices to provide in-house expertise, ensure the mainstreaming of GG principles and to engage in knowledge management on best practices and lessons learned. They also lead to differing levels of involvement of the thematic advisors in steering the portfolio (*finding 22, finding 5*). On the other hand, they also curtail the ability to actively participate and shape strategic debates surrounding GG on the international level and policy dialog on the country level. In particular, the staff are challenged in ADA coordination offices to find sufficient time resources for both policy dialog and the follow-up on interventions, focusing on one at the expense of the other (*finding 22*). Increasing reliance on third-party funding (especially EU-delegated cooperation) also represents a challenge to ADC's limited human resources, while it could present an opportunity to increase ADC's GG engagement despite scarce financial resources (*finding 23*). Despite shortages in human resources, the staff is perceived as highly competent by implementing partners and other development partners (*finding 22*).

**Conclusion 7: ADA rather actively engages in policy dialog and development partner coordination efforts. Coordination, coherence and complementarity of the ADC portfolio at country level works well for the most part.** Coordination with other development partners is a strength of ADC across the GG portfolio and positively affects efficiency and effectiveness. ADA actively coordinates with other development partners through multi-donor initiatives and actively participates in development partner coordination fora (*finding 25*). Coordination with development partners has been found to aid coalition building which constitutes a key enabling factor for effectiveness of GG activities at country level (*finding 18*).

**Conclusion 8: The current quality of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of data and systems on the country and intervention level creates a barrier for results-based steering and management and evaluation of the portfolio.** At the level of country strategies and individual interventions, M&E data was of heterogeneous quality. On the country level, not all country strategies employ log frames. Where these are used, they sometimes do not adequately reflect the country level intervention logic. Within log frames on country level and of interventions, indicators are not consistently SMART, and the methodological quality of project evaluations and data collection in project reports is

not always adequate. Moreover, information on the financial contributions of other development partners to ADC-financed interventions is not always available (see chapter 2).

**Conclusion 9: The main added value and comparative advantage of ADC's engagement on GG lies in its partnership approach.** It is characterized by a willingness to engage in long-term partnerships with a diversity of project implementers. The dedication of ADC staff and flexibility to take advantage of emerging windows of opportunity constitutes another strength (*finding 2, finding 27*). The strong partner orientation makes the ADC GG engagement highly relevant for partner strategies and the needs and rights of partners and target groups (*finding 10*). Furthermore, the partnership approach provides gains in efficiency and effectiveness. With regards to efficiency, ADC's commitment to invest in long-term partnerships with local partners contributes to efficiency of implementation. The existing expertise, networks and credibility of local partners benefit the achievement of objectives of ADC interventions (*finding 21*). With regard to effectiveness, the quality and duration of the cooperation between ADC and its partners is a key enabling factor for intervention. Creating ownership for GG principles which is particularly fruitful in contexts of close partnerships is a further key enabling factor (*finding 18*).

**Conclusion 10: The intentional and strategic use of modalities in GG interventions can increase the implementation efficiency as well as effectiveness at country level.** With regards to efficiency, ADC works through modalities of implementation that leverage its resources as a small development partner. For instance, ADC resorts to pooled funding, sector budget support and other multi-donor initiatives out of strategic and economic considerations. While sector budget support and sector financing are particularly efficient modalities if funds are not misappropriated, the country case study Uganda showed a need for ADC to assess risks in this regard (*finding 20*). With regard to effectiveness, the selection of adequate modalities contributes to effectiveness in all GG interventions (*finding 15*). In addition, on a country level, the intentional choice of interventions with different modalities but related objectives serves to harness synergies on the outcome level. Uganda constitutes a good practice example in this regard. Here, most interventions have been planned around the flagship intervention sector budget support to JLOS. Synergies with CSO interventions and ADC engagement in policy dialog positively affect ADC's contribution to a strengthened rule of law system (*finding 24*).

## 7 Recommendations

The following recommendations have been finalized in a participatory workshop with key stakeholders from BMEIA and ADA<sup>54</sup>. The order in which recommendations are presented below does not constitute a prioritization, nor does it prescribe a sequence in which recommendations should be implemented. While these aspects were discussed during the workshop with ADC key stakeholders, it was decided that a timeframe for implementation of the recommendations will be addressed in the management response. Nonetheless, there is a logic in the order in which recommendations are presented below, as some recommendations are linked. Recommendations that are linked in terms of process (e.g. recommendation 1 – 4) are presented one after the other<sup>55</sup>.

**Recommendation 1: BMEIA section VII (lead) and ADA should jointly review ADC's GG approach to sharpen it and prioritize areas of engagement based on a participatory discussion of the ToC involving coordination offices. Next to alignment with academic and international discourse as well as strategic considerations, expertise of ADA staff at Headquarters and in priority countries as well as GG expertise of long-standing implementing partners should be factored into the prioritization. The prioritization should maintain a certain space for flexibility.**

Based on conclusions 2, 3, 4 and 9, the evaluation recommends that BMEIA and ADA jointly assess whether after review of the approach, ADC's GG understanding shall continue to encompass both core and sector-specific GG. If so, the definition of sector-specific GG should be specified more clearly. Further, it should be reflected whether sector-specific GG should be differentiated from a mainstreaming of GG principles, and whether gender is considered part of GG. The evaluation further recommends that BMEIA and ADA jointly prioritize areas of engagement in core GG. This should be done based on a participatory discussion of the ToC involving field offices. In doing so, BMEIA and ADA should consider how a prioritization can at the same time safeguard ADC's strengths: flexibility in designing the portfolio and a strong partner-oriented approach. Possible criteria for prioritization are strategic considerations, expertise of core GG staff in Vienna and in ADA priority countries, as well as GG expertise of long-standing implementing partners in priority countries. If current GG expertise of staff does not match the prioritization of future areas of engagement, this should be taken into account in a needs assessment of ADC personnel (see also recommendation 6). Finally, after having revised its approach, ADC should define markers through which GG activities across ADC can be identified for monitoring and evaluation purposes.

**Recommendation 2: BMEIA section VII (lead) and ADA should revise the Good Governance Policy Document to reflect an updated GG approach and catch up on academic and international discourse. Specifically, a revised Policy Document should address political economy analysis, refer to the Agenda 2030 and be consistent with the Environmental, Gender and Social Impact Management Manual. The revision should be done in consultation with relevant partners.**

Based on conclusion 3, the evaluation recommends a revision of the Policy Document that reflects the current international discourse (SDGs), the current academic discourse (reflect specific context of GG engagement) and entails a prioritization of areas of engagement (based on joint review by BMEIA and ADA, see recommendation one). Lastly, the revision of the Policy Document should identify overlaps between ADC GG principles and principles in ADA's Environmental, Gender and Social Impact Management Manual, align the definitions and approach for mainstreaming and explicitly cross-reference overlaps to ensure consistency.

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<sup>54</sup> The workshop took place on February 18th, 2020, in Vienna. The recommendations were discussed following a presentation of findings and conclusions.

<sup>55</sup> Participants of the workshop suggested to merge recommendations that are linked. However, the evaluation decided to keep recommendations separate to make it easier to understand how recommendations were derived from conclusions, and to allow for a more differentiated management response.

**Recommendation 3: ADA should decide whether a Good Governance Handbook is needed in the future, in which case the current version should be revised. If ADA opts for a revision, it should ensure that the Handbook becomes more relevant for practitioners. The revision should include shortening it and making it available in English. In addition, it could provide pointers for tried and tested as well as innovative GG measures and include guidance on monitoring and how to deal with instances of bad governance.**

Based on conclusion 1, the evaluation recommends either phasing out the Handbook given its limited practical usefulness, or an overhaul to increase its relevance. If ADA opts for the latter, the revised Handbook could have a check-list character that helps ADC staff and implementing organizations plan and monitor GG interventions. It could for example provide pointers for political economy analysis, cross-reference principles defined in EGSIM and include orientation on monitoring of process quality in GG interventions. Additionally, it could provide orientation on how to address cases of bad governance in GG interventions. It could further list tried and tested and innovative components for selected GG sub-sectors of ADC engagement (e.g. differentiation of access to justice into geographical access, access to information, etc.). Given the heterogeneity in budgets and levels of ambition of ADC GG interventions, contents should not be viewed as mandatory guidelines for all interventions, but rather as a resource for planning and steering. If ADA decides to abandon the Good Governance Handbook, alternative tools and channels for mainstreaming GG approaches should be identified.

**Recommendation 4: BMEIA section VII (lead) and ADA should jointly devise a strategy for introducing and mainstreaming the revised GG approach within ADC.**

Conclusion 1 suggests that for adaptions in the GG approach to trickle down to operational engagement, a communication strategy will be necessary. The evaluation recommends a two-tiered approach targeting both ADA staff and implementing partners once the Policy Document (and possibly the Handbook) have been revised. First, the revised documents should be introduced internally, ideally on an occasion that allows for in-person presentation and discussion between ADA headquarters and the coordination offices (e.g. the annual meeting of Heads of coordination offices in Vienna). Second, GG staff and desk officers in Vienna and their counterpart coordination offices should jointly identify key implementing partners with whom to engage on the revised approach. On this basis, a workshop with key GG implementing partners in the coordination offices should be held to present the revised Policy Document and discuss it in light of the local GG context and ADC engagement. To further feed into coordination and coherence, other development partners active in GG could also be invited to this workshop.

**Recommendation 5: BMEIA section VII (lead) and ADA should strengthen synergies within country-level GG portfolios by prioritizing this aspect in the formulation of future country strategies. ADA should follow up on this at intervention level by identifying relevant linkages to other ADC-financed interventions at proposal stage.**

Based on conclusion 9 and 10, the evaluation recommends paying more attention to synergies between ADC GG interventions in all partner countries where GG represents a sizeable share of the portfolio. Since achieving synergies in implementation is strongly tied to planning for synergies when designing the portfolio, the planning stage of a country strategy and of individual interventions is particularly important. In their dialog within the formulation of country strategies, ADA and BMEIA should therefore explicitly discuss how synergies between modalities, types of implementing organizations and areas of GG engagement can contribute to effectiveness. ADA should follow up on this when accompanying implementing organizations in the elaboration of GG project proposals by identifying relevant linkages to other ADC-financed interventions. Finally, ADA coordination offices should continue to facilitate exchange between interventions that are pursuing related objectives.

**Recommendation 6: BMEIA section VII and ADA should undertake a capacity needs assessment for GG staff at Headquarters and selected coordination offices.**

Based on conclusion 2 and 6, BMEIA and ADA should identify capacity gaps regarding the number and type (generalist vs specialist, full-time vs part-time) of staff to cover GG in Vienna and abroad. This

analysis should be informed by an analysis of the feasibility of the workload of the current staff and observed trade-offs between policy dialog and follow-up on operational engagement. This assessment should be embedded in broader discussions about the adequacy of the number of staff within ADC and it should consider the size of specific country portfolios. The capacity needs assessment should clearly spell out potential implications of not increasing staff for ADC's capabilities to engage in policy dialog. It should further map a specific process to identify the type of expertise profiles required based on future priority areas of ADC's GG engagement to ensure complementarity with the expertise of current GG advisors. For example, if ADC decides it wants to pursue engagement in public financial management, then this should be considered in the qualification profile defined for the hiring process. A process for decision-making based on the results of the capacity needs assessment should be defined.

**Recommendation 7: BMEIA and ADA should strengthen results-management for GG engagement at country and intervention level. Increased quality assurance of country strategy log frames and indicators in project proposals through ADA should constitute a starting point.**

Based on conclusion 8, the evaluation recommends that BMEIA and ADA make it a priority to strengthen results-management in order to facilitate steering and increase evaluability. First measures could include increased quality assurance of county strategy log frames through BMEIA and ADA and increased quality assurance of indicators in project proposals.

**a) ADA should monitor the quality of cooperation with implementing and political partners to ensure added value of GG interventions even if political priorities evolve.**

Based on conclusion 4, ADA should integrate indicators on the participatory quality of cooperation to better account for the extent to which ADC contributes to evolving attitudes towards reform processes, even if reform is momentarily stalled due to the political macro-environment.

**b) ADA and BMEIA section VII should revise the theory of change developed for this evaluation in accordance with their updated GG approach and use it as an overarching framework for planning future GG engagement. In doing so, a realistic level of ambition for each intervention should be defined.**

As shown by conclusion 8, a lack of results-orientated planning and the heterogeneity of interventions constitute a challenge for evaluability. To remedy this, ADA and BMEIA should revise the ToC developed for this evaluation based on their updated GG approach and use it as their overarching framework for planning future engagement at country and intervention level. The online survey instrument could be used on an intermittent basis to map how the ToC is actually being implemented. In addition, future evaluations of individual GG interventions could benefit by seeking key stakeholders' views on impact hypotheses developed for the ToC. Given the diversity in budgets, scope and level of ambition of ADC GG interventions, it will be important to define a realistic level of ambition for each intervention.

**Recommendation 8: BMEIA section VII and ADA should make potential synergies between modalities and types of project implementers working towards GG more explicit in ADC strategic documents and at operational level.**

To ensure the potential for synergies is harnessed more systematically (see conclusion 9 and 10), the pursuit of synergies between modalities and different types of project implementers should feature as a more prominent objective in ADC strategic documents. It should be formulated as an explicit objective in the GG Policy document (see also recommendation 2) and in ADC country strategies, and country strategies should provide concrete examples of how this objective is pursued in the given portfolio. This should constitute the basis for a follow-up on the pursuit of synergies at the operational level.

**Recommendation 9: ADA should continue to engage in long-term partnerships in GG to harness the added value of ADC's GG engagement.**

Based on conclusion 9, the evaluation recommends that ADA continue to engage in long-term partnerships in GG to capitalize upon this strength in the future.

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## 9 Annex (Vol II)

The annex is available as a separate document. It contains the following contents:

- 1      Overview of international governance indices**
- 2      Development partners' approaches to GG**
- 3      Theory of change**
- 4      Country case study Albania**
- 5      Country case study Uganda**
- 6      Scope of data collection**
- 7      Presentation of evidence along assessment grid**
- 8      Instruments for data collection**
- 9      Terms of Reference for this evaluation**

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