

Evaluation of Swedish Support to One UN in Albania for gender equality work 2012-2017

In June 2017, Swedish International Development Agency (Sida) commissioned an independent evaluation of the effectiveness of the One UN Coherence Fund as a means to invest in the advancement of gender equality in Albania. Overall, the evaluation found that **“the Swedish support through the One UN Coherence fund has been largely relevant to Albanian priorities and obligations and the main beneficiary institution’s needs”**. Subsequently, Sida has indicated a positive willingness to pursue a new, focused contribution. The evaluation, available publicly here [Sida web page](#), also makes a series of recommendations as to how the UN can do a better job of convening discussions around policy priorities, and involving development partners in strategic guidance of activities.

The evaluation reviews USD 6 million of financial support provided from 2012-2017, in pursuit of the gender outputs of the Programme of Cooperation 2012-2016. The funding received from Sida was implemented jointly by relevant Albanian government institutions, especially Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Water Administration, municipalities; UN agencies including UNDP, UNWomen, UNFPA, UNICEF, IOM, UNESCO, UNODC, ILO and civil society organizations in the country.

In particular, it identified contributions to significant results in four thematic areas: the strengthening of public oversight bodies; promoting gender mainstreaming, addressing gender-based and domestic violence, and promoting women’s economic empowerment. Impact and sustainability is most clearly visible in the contribution to formal, systemic change through policies and laws. Results include:

- ✚ The Parliament, Central Elections Commission, the Ombudsman, and the Commissioner for the Protection against Discrimination become more active in promoting women’s political empowerment, addressing discrimination and monitoring international obligations.
- ✚ Further development of key national policies, action plans and laws on gender equality and women’s rights, alignment with international treaties, and the development of capacities and tools for gender mainstreaming. It includes the development of a new national Strategy on Gender Equality (2016-2020) and National Action Plan¹; mainstreaming of gender into the government’s Mid-Term Budget Programming, the national Pre-University Education Strategy, a package of legislative amendments to sustain and mainstream Gender Equality in the Justice System reform; a proposal with amendments of the Law on the Measures against Violence in Family Relations prepared to bring it in conformity with the international and regional standards, among others.
- ✚ Multidisciplinary services to domestic violence victims have significantly expanded with services now available in nearly half of Albania's municipalities². Information campaigns are likely to have contributed to public awareness-raising on gender-based violence.

¹ Approved by Council of Minister’s Order No.733, date 20.10.2016

² Check Community Coordinated Response mapping below

- ✚ The National Action Plan for Women Entrepreneurs 2014-2020, a National Advocacy Strategy to promote women's role in agriculture, and piloting of Women's cluster models in two communes are highlighted results in the area of women's empowerment.
- ✚ The PoC implementation structure and Coherence Fund modality have positively influenced the achievement of results, including by ensuring UN responsiveness, coordination and cooperation.

The evaluation also made some recommendations for how the UN's management of support could be improved. The evaluation called for increased use of the UN's convening power to involve development partners and other stakeholders in discussions with Government counterparts on questions of policy and implementation. This year, as the first year of the new Programme of Cooperation for Sustainable Development 2017-2021, for example, the UN with Government has instituted Outcome Groups at the Ministerial/Head of Agency level, to which development partners are invited, to discuss Two-year Outcome level Joint Work Plans.

The UN in Albania is looking forward to work with Sida in the design of a new, multi-year support package. Activities will be thematically focused and results-oriented, and will be anchored on the commitments that Albania has already made through the Committee for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

