

Annual Report 2008

Foundation for Local Autonomy and
Governance

Albania



Preface

Albania's move towards a decentralised democratic form of governance has been a long and tortuous process. Nevertheless, milestones have been reached and marked improvements have been seen and felt by its people. The staff of the Foundation for Local Autonomy and Governance (FLAG) and its pool of experts in local government issues have assisted in some of the aspects in this difficult process, most notably with supporting the development of the Association of Albanian Municipalities (AAM), Association of Albanian Communes (AAC) and Training Agency for Local Government of Albania (TALGA), and also through advising the Task Force for the Ministry of Local Government and Decentralisation, preparing in the process a number of draft laws on local government issues. FLAG has also provided assistance to many of Albania's municipalities and communes, across the country. Furthermore the Foundation has brought to bear the expertise of its extensive pool of local government and economic development trainers in producing a range of documents and manuals for elected or appointed local officials.

The number of Local Government Units (LGUs) in Albania was revised in 2007, and now stands at 308 communes and 65 municipalities. A second tier of local government includes the country's twelve regions (qarks or counties), interwoven with the central government's role via the twelve prefectures. Of these LGUs, FLAG has directly assisted twenty municipalities (31% of the total), and thirteen communes (4%). In addition the Foundation has provided assistance to Albania's local government associations (LGAs), namely the Albanian Association of Communes (AAC) and Albanian Association of Municipalities (AAM), and thus indirectly to all of the country's LGUs.

As Albania has progressed along the road towards European integration, the capacity development of its institutions, including its environmental agency, has been of prime importance, enabling structures to be set in place for the country to be able to meet its responsibilities, both to its people and to Europe in a more general sense. FLAG has provided its expertise in this capacity and institutional development and is currently taking on more projects that sustain the Foundation and feed into the development of a more decentralised and democratic society in Albania.

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Highlights

The year 2008 was another important year for FLAG. The Foundation continued to strengthen its roots and further broadened its expertise base, expanding both the number and coverage of projects in which it is involved. Of the projects implemented in 2008, six were designed to strengthen the functioning of democracy at the local level, five to create conditions for stimulation of local economic development and one to strengthen Albania's Agency of Environment and Forests (formerly the Institute of Environment).

Last year, FLAG implemented from beginning to end three projects and also finalised four projects whose implementation began in previous years: one in 2005 and three in 2007. Meanwhile, the Foundation began to implement four projects, two of which will be finalised this year, with a combined budget equivalent to more than that of € 57,000, and two of which will be completed in 2011 with a combined budget of € 153,000.

The total budget of the projects completed in 2008 came to the equivalent of about € 1.6 m, from which FLAG managed local expertise and implementation. Five of the projects (with a budget of € 40,282) were managed totally by the Foundation.

The two projects both begun and completed in 2008 both concerned local economic development, with a total budget of € 16,821, including also provision of advice in an additional project implemented by Cango in Rrëshen municipality and Kaçinar commune.

Developing a SWOT analysis for Shkodra Qark was a project funded by Shkodra's regional economic development agency Teuleda. This project involved gathering disparate information data on Shkodra qark, and undertaking a SWOT analysis, which was presented to the Regional council and local stakeholders, including members of local government, the university and businesses, at the end of 2008.

It was a great pleasure for FLAG to host a visiting team of local economic development stakeholders from Moldova for the *Moldova Study Tour*, undertaken in Albania in the summer of 2008. The group visited LED departments in the five DELTA cities in Albania, saw how LED was being implemented in those cities and exchanged information. Through this inter-country cooperation was increased. The focus of the workshops held on the study tour was local budgeting, citizens participation and strategic planning. The stakeholders returned to Moldova better prepared to undertake the DELTA methodology in their home region of Gagauzia. The tour was funded by LGI and East-West OSI.

Of the four projects begun in previous years, one was aimed at strengthening local governance, one to strengthen Albania's Institute of Environment and two were to do with local economic development.

Developing the Albanian Association of Communes (DAAC) is a project begun by FLAG with financial support of the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), and partnered by VNG-I and the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR). The project is focused on strengthening the Albanian Association of Communes (AAC) so that it play a leading role in the on-going reform of the country's public administration, particularly in strengthening its communes and the AAC's services to improve the communes' environment and conditions. The project was completed at the end of 2008, though a further phase is continuing with consultancy support from FLAG.

Providing Support to the Institute of the Environment was a project funded by the Royal Netherlands Embassy Tirana. It was aimed at developing methodologies and systems used in the Institute so that it can reach satisfactory (ISO) standards. Meanwhile, a new agency was created from this institute, the Institute of the Environment, and a merger with the Institute of Forests. The project continued once this institutional restructuring had taken place, and focused on two areas: 1) capacity building for the management of the agency, including formulating and new organisational structure and job descriptions, and developing a website and logo, and 2) improvement of the management and systems in place in the laboratories for them to reach ISO standards. The accreditation process has begun, with a favourable first report from the national body responsible.

The project *Integrated Informatics System for Management of the Activities of the LED Department, Korça Municipality* installed electronic equipment in the municipal office to strengthen its capacity to monitor and evaluate its LED strategy, establish a system to monitor and measure progress towards achieving the strategic plan's goals and provide a reference system for LED measurements. The project was funded by the Canada Fund, and implemented over the course of a year until October 2008.

The project *Develop Strategic Plans for three communes in Dibër Qark* was funded by Dibër Qark (County), and over the course of six months, FLAG provided its expertise to assist the development of a strategic plan for three local communes (Arras, Zall Dardha and Fushë Çidhën). The plans have been published and are available on the Internet (www.flag-al.org/strategic%20plans.htm).

Mission

to encourage achievement of the most advanced standards in decentralized and democratic governance

To fulfil its mission the Foundation for Local Autonomy and Governance, FLAG, supports the activities of Albania's local authorities and community-based organisations, contributing thus to the development of Albanian society. Through its work, the Foundation disseminates the idea of civil self-governance, widely perceived as the fundamental form of democracy. In its endeavours, FLAG complies with the principles of being non-political, independent, non-commercial, transparent, professional and responsive to needs.

FLAG aims at achieving sustainable results, excellence in performance and full customer satisfaction.

Using up-to-date methodology and approaches, FLAG offers to local government units (LGUs) services from its wide ranging expertise.

The Foundation

FLAG is a non-profit organisation set up in January 2003, when it was registered with the Courts of Tirana as an Albanian Non-Profit Organisation. The initiative to set up the Foundation emerged from a core group of Albanian managers and experts who had worked together for the previous seven years (since 1996) in implementing SLGCP and COMPASS.

Internal organisation

FLAG's highest decision-making body is the Board while the highest executive body is the Director supported by the Senate of Senior Councillors.

The Foundation employs four full-time staff, including the director and vice-director. Three staff members are Albanian, with excellent command of English and Italian, while the fourth member is English. The Foundation's strength, however, rests in the large pool of experts developed over the past thirteen years, formed since before FLAG was established.

Network of experts

FLAG's organisational and technical expertise is supported and complemented by short-term inputs from top local and international experts in specialised disciplines. A group of 44 experts comprised the core of the COMPASS programme's local network, and this group has been extended for FLAG. These experts underwent training for trainers courses and are well proven in implementation of specific projects or delivery of training courses. They comprise people with hands on experience who are capable of disseminating knowledge, managing processes and projects and encouraging sustainable change.

In 2008, FLAG's core group was complemented by a broader structure that included 20 professionals who were employed in the projects implemented by FLAG. These experts have a background in

various policy areas, with most having undertaken training of trainers courses, either generic or topic-oriented, or both, and are regarded as among the country's best in their areas of expertise.

FLAG's approach and methodology

Three major concepts describe the methodology FLAG applies in implementing activities to fulfil its mission:

- process management
- multidisciplinary and integrated approach
- sustainable change.

Process management

FLAG addresses management processes such as strategy formulation and performance improvement, and supports primary processes within Albanian organisations and LGUs. Its experts are very familiar with an approach to process management that involves as much as possible the ultimate beneficiaries from the process, at all stages. Through this approach the final achievements and results are accepted and embedded in the beneficiary organisation and environment much better than in its absence.

Multidisciplinary and integrated approach

FLAG, through its established network of experts, offers possibilities to create effective links between management and primary and support processes. The Foundation is supported by management specialists from a wide range of disciplines such as institutional development and strategic planning, while for primary processes it offers expertise in technical and non-technical issues such as social services, waste management, personnel management, tax collection, etc.

Sustainable change

FLAG believes strongly in creating sustainable change. It therefore emphasises the importance of maximising the use of local capacities in the development trajectory. The Foundation tries to make best use of the resources available and of best examples from outside Albania while at the same time it tries to encourage the exchange of best experiences among Albanian institutions and foreign counterparts. Provision of training supports the process for the beneficiaries to consolidate and sustain results, while at the same time it encourages dissemination of experiences of LGUs and organisations.

FLAG's expertise

FLAG's expertise extends from strengthening institutional capacities and collaboration, improving capabilities and performance of organisations, management and staff, to enhancing levels of coordination with beneficiaries and their primary target groups, mainly citizens. Naturally, there is much overlap across areas of expertise (e.g. providing coaching for capacity building in continuously managed projects), but the general areas fall into the following categories: citizen participation and information policy, decentralisation, environment, institutional and capacity building, local economic development, municipal management and services, project cycle management, and training development and delivery.

Citizen participation and information policy

Of crucial importance in the development of democracy and decentralisation and in the improvement of local government management and services is the concept of citizen participation. It is after all only with extensive and active participation of individuals in the governance of their community can such a system be regarded as fully democratic. Many of the projects undertaken by FLAG involve the citizens as much as possible, and at every level.

This issue was a main focus of two Dutch-financed programmes Strengthening Local Government and Citizens' Participation in Albania (SLGCP) and Community and Public Administration Support Strategy (COMPASS), and FLAG has brought this experience to bear in participatory local economic development (LED) strategic planning (*Developing Economies Locally through Techniques and Alliances; DELTA*) and in a cross border project *Promoting active citizenship at the local level in Albania and FYROM*.

Decentralisation

FLAG experts assisted in the compilation of Albania's decentralisation strategy and in its implementation at the local level.

At the national level, assistance was provided under COMPASS to the *Task Force on Decentralisation*. A FLAG expert was assigned as a permanent advisor to the Task Force and provided feedback on the policies that were drafted. Experts were also involved in organising round-tables to obtain feedback from local authorities on the draft Albanian Strategy on Decentralisation in early 1999. During the implementation of the strategy and compilation of several laws, FLAG experts were involved in association building, developing organisational documents, making international contributions, LED, LGA development, and holding conferences, seminars, workshops, round-tables and assemblies with local authorities on the proposed draft laws ('Functioning and Organisation of Local Government in Albania'; 'The Prefect'; 'Package on Taxes and Fees'; 'Urban Planning'). The round-tables were organised in close cooperation with the Association of Albanian Municipalities (AAM) and recommendations submitted to central government on behalf of the AAM were drafted by FLAG's team of experts.

At the local level, strategic plans, local economic development plans, a municipal and business profile, a tourism management plan and urban plans were elaborated by FLAG experts assisted by a municipal working group that provided the basic local information and other input serving implementation of decentralisation.

More recently, FLAG experts have been involved in undertaking *Accompanied self-assessment of Decentralisation and Local Development Programme (DLDP) partner LGUs* and participating in the *Local Government Leadership Programme* and *Partnership with Administration for an Effective Governance, Rubik Municipality*. Through these projects FLAG has assisted nine first-level LGUs identify needs for improvement of their performance in exercising their functions. In addition, FLAG experts have assisted the second level of local government (the region, 'qark' in Albanian) through the project *Finalising the project proposal 'Support programme for strengthening local governance in Dibër Qark, Albania'*.

Environment

FLAG believes strongly in improving the environment, both at a local, national scale and globally. In accordance with its views on the importance of creating and maintaining a healthy environment for Albania's citizens, FLAG has formed a group of environment experts.

Two environmental projects that have been implemented over the past four years by FLAG staff include *Feasibility Study: Management of Solid Waste in South-east Albania* and *Providing support to the Institute of Environment*, which involved participation of four of FLAG's experts. Meanwhile, a waste management regulation template has been developed and has been adapted up to now in at least ten LGUs. The Foundation is currently providing its expertise to *Strengthening Albanian Civil Society Organisation for an improved Environment*, in a project funded by Millieukontakt that aims to Prepare for Waste Working Group a Position paper that will be communicated in media, to government and international institutions.

Institutional and capacity building

Just as important as involving citizens in decision making is providing them with institutions that can perform their functions, represent them at various levels and monitor their social and biological environment. Since it was set up in 2003, FLAG has devoted much of its time to strengthening institutions in Albania, through *Providing support to the Institute of Environment*, providing *Support to the Albanian Association of Communes to broaden their membership base through institutional strengthening*, *Providing Support to the Albanian Association of Communes to broaden their membership base (Inception Period)*, *Developing the Albanian Association of Communes (DAAC)*, *Providing support to the Albanian Association of Municipalities (COMPASS extension)*, developing a *National Training Strategy for Local Government in Albania* and contributing towards building a democratic Kosova through the project *Good Governance / Institutional Building – Support Municipal Administration in Kosova (inception period)*.

Meanwhile, FLAG experts have been involved in the preparations for setting up a Solid Waste Management Association in the Korça Region.

Local economic development

At the core of improving the living standards of the inhabitants of a village, town or city lies the direction taken by economic development. A stagnant or regressive economy means a stagnating or regressing quality of life. FLAG has been very active in seeking ways to stimulate economic development at the local level in Albania through assisting and facilitating community-wide strategic plans for LED.

The *DELTA* project (Developing Economies Locally through Techniques and Alliances), completed in 2006, resulted in the elaboration of separate strategic plans for the local economic development of five municipalities in Albania (Berat, Durrës, Korça, Lezha and Shkodra). A business profile was also developed with and for one of these cities (Korça). The plans are published as books in Albanian and in English, while the business profile is a bilingual brochure, all of which are downloadable from the worldwide web (www.flag-al.org and lgi.osi.hu/documents.php?m_id=58). In addition, a documentary film on DELTA was made, copies of which are available from FLAG (www.flag-al.org) or LGI, Hungary (lgi.osi.hu). An additional project undertaken by FLAG was the development of a website to document

and promote the methodology and techniques used during the implementation of the DELTA project in Albania.

The experience gained from DELTA was extended into assisting LED in other parts of Albania with the projects *Combined Economic Development & Strategic Planning for Communes*, and *Partnership with Administration for Effective Governance, Rubik Municipality, Integrated Informatics System for Management of the Activities of the LED Department, Korça Municipality* and *Develop Strategic Plans for three communes in Dibër Qark*. Currently, FLAG is beginning the *DELTA follow-up* project, which will facilitate the development of a strategic plan for one Albanian municipality (Kavaja), and review and assess the implementation of the plans in the cities involved in the first DELTA project. During 2008, the Foundation also undertook a SWOT analysis for Shkodra Qark, and its staff hosted a *study tour* to Albania undertaken by a group of LED stakeholders from Moldova.

Municipal management and services

Over the last few years, FLAG staff have been responsible for publishing many manuals and guides concerning municipal management and services. In addition, FLAG experts were involved directly in improving such services through implementation of the project *Modernisation of Municipal Services in Selected Partner Towns*, in the towns and cities Berat, Elbasan, Kavaja, Korça, Kuçova, Lushnja, Maminas, Pogradec and Shkodra.

The manuals and guides that FLAG staff have published include the following:

- Guide to Establishing a Local Government Association
- Management of Local Taxes and Fees
- Model Internal Regulation for Municipalities
- Model of a Municipal Statute
- Modern Human Resource Management
- Guide on Issuing Building Permits
- Municipal Regulation on Waste Management (template)
- Municipal Urban Planning
- Organisation and Structure of Local Government in Albania (includes Municipal Council rules of procedure)
- Public Information and Communications Office
- Study Cases – Juridical Disputes

Currently, the Foundation is assisting the commune of Dajç in northern Albania establish a citizens information centre and one-stop-shop.

Project cycle management

The total budget of COMPASS was € 2.6 million, of which the FLAG executive directly managed € 646,000, along with two additional components: Municipal Management Training Programmes (with an additional budget) and the financial arrangements between the Municipalities of Obdam, Netherlands, and Rrëshen in their efforts to develop a twinning relationship.

The executive staff of FLAG were responsible for project management and monitoring, preparation of annual plans, compilation of project progress and financial reports (for the budget directly managed by the local office) and drafting contracts for local experts as well as allocating the time. Budgeting was activity based and 44 local short-term experts were under contract to implement various activities in the programme.

FLAG has subsequently implemented, or is currently implementing, a further *28 projects or programmes*. The budget of the projects implemented by FLAG has grown considerably (e.g., the budget that it managed for the DAAC project was € 440,000, for DELTA it was € 151,750, and for the DELTA follow-up project it will be € 153,000) and the experience and knowledge of the executive has grown accordingly. During 2008, 20 short-term experts were employed by FLAG.

Training development, coaching and delivery

FLAG experts have been involved in delivering training or coaching countrywide to most Albanian municipalities and communes. During the *COMPASS* programme, FLAG's core executive staff arranged delivery of 119 end-user courses throughout Albania, training 2,581 local government officials and some civil society representatives, making best use of the network of experts.

Since then, FLAG has coached eight municipalities and seven communes in local economic development (*DELTA, Combined Economic Development & Strategic Planning for Communes, Partnership with Administration for Effective Governance, Rubik Municipality*) and five municipalities and three communes in improving their standards of governance using Common Assessment Framework (CAF) methodology (*Accompanied self-assessment of Decentralisation and Local Development Programme (DLDP) partner LGUs*). In addition, its experts are currently coaching Albanian Association of Communes (AAC) staff and fora in institutional capacity building.

FLAG experts have prepared and delivered training and coaching on the following curricula:

- Citizen's information centres
- Citizens' commissions, partnerships with city council
- City council internal relations
- City council role and responsibilities
- City council vision and mission
- Financial management
- Human resource management
- Institutional capacity building
- Land use and urban planning
- Leadership styles, characteristics
- Local economic development
- Local government budgeting
- Local taxation
- Service delivery standards
- Standards of governance
- Strategic planning

Services

FLAG offers a range of services based upon its wide ranging and in-depth expertise. It provides services to individual LGUs, LGU networks and LGAs (Local Government Associations), including advice on policy and best practices.

Individual LGUs

For individual LGUs, FLAG assists in the implementation of their own functions as part of the national decentralisation strategy, particularly in relation to infrastructure and public services, local economic development and public administration.

Infrastructure and public services

FLAG was part of a team that undertook a *Feasibility Study: Management of Solid Waste in South-east Albania*, and has reviewed the waste management needs of 33 LGUs in Albania, serving 18 per cent of the municipalities, seven per cent of the communes and ten per cent of the Albanian population. It has developed a regulation on urban waste management, as well as a manual on setting up a compost facility, both of which will shortly be available from the on-line library.

Local economic development

Prior to 2007, FLAG had assisted development of LED plans in 14 LGUs, covering twelve per cent of Albania's municipalities, two per cent of its communes and 20 per cent of the entire population. Within the *DELTA* project alone it accessed 15 per cent of the population, while it has also implemented the PAQE (peace) project with Rubik Municipality. Since then, the number of LGUs has increased to include another two municipalities, and seven more communes, in addition to those assisted during the activities of the DAAC project. The Foundation also specialises in developing community and business profiles, as well as training curricula concerning economic development. The Foundation has published a large amount of material, which is available from its on-line library.

Public administration

FLAG has advised the administration of five LGUs on local tax management, covering two per cent of municipalities in Albania and seven per cent of the population, and created a manual on management of local taxes and fees available from its on-line library. It has also helped set up a civil registry for one LGU.

LGU networks

Inter-municipal cooperation

FLAG has been involved in stimulating inter-municipal cooperation at two levels. At the local level it implemented with IU-IGIP the project *Feasibility Study: Management of Solid Waste in South-East Albania*. A component of this project involved bringing municipalities together to set up for the first time in Albania an Inter-municipal cooperation entity. This body was streamlined in terms of objectives, scope of work and legal basis. At the international level, FLAG was responsible for the financial arrangements between the Municipalities of Obdam, Netherlands, and Rrëshen in their efforts to develop a twinning relationship. Very recently, FLAG has been acting as consultant for LGI to develop a prescriptive policy paper and advocacy plan for Inter-Municipal Cooperation

DELTA forum

During the *DELTA* project, a forum of Mayors was set up to facilitate sharing of experiences during local economic development strategic planning among five cities in Albania. The forum will become very active in 2009 during the implementation of the *DELTA* follow-up project.

Local Government Associations

FLAG has assisted two Albanian LGAs—Albanian Association of Communes (AAC) and Albanian Association of Municipalities (AAM)—and the Training Agency for Local Government in Albania (TALGA) on a number of issues. For the AAC, FLAG helped and continues to help set up procedures

for endorsement of democratic values, while at the same time helping with its organisational, institutional and capacity building. For the AAM, FLAG has provided training on local tax management. FLAG has advised on policy issues to TALGA, and served on the Best Practice Commission of the AAM. Over the past two years, FLAG has provided its expertise in developing a training programme for LGAs, and is currently providing input into development of a prescriptive policy paper and advocacy plan for Inter-Municipal Cooperation.

Partners

FLAG is affiliated with VNG-International (VNG-I) and its strategic partners are:

- Albanian Association of Municipalities (AAM)
- Albanian Association of Communes (AAC)
- VNG-I Group members
- Albanian LGUs
- Albanian central government agencies

Customers

FLAG has acted as local implementer of projects for Netherlands government, VNG-I, Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW), World Bank Institute, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Open Society Institute and Council of Europe.

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Summary of projects

Project	Aims Results	Donor and volume	Partners	Period mm-yy/mm-yy
Currently being implemented				
Strengthening Albanian Civil Society Organisation for an improved Environment	Prepare for Waste Working Group a Position paper that will be communicated in media, to government and international institutions	Millieukontakt € 350	Millieukontakt	09-08 / 08-11
DELTA follow-up	Encourage and promote economic growth, while extending capacities in city governments and communities to develop, implement, assess and review SPLED and assess LED, while enabling evidence-based policy making for economic growth and development	LGI 182,747 USD	Municipalities of Berat, Durrës, Kavaja, Korça, Lezha, Shkodra	09-08 / 08-10
Develop prescriptive policy paper and advocacy plan for Inter-Municipal Cooperation	Participate in training on Inter-Municipal Cooperation and develop prescriptive policy paper and advocacy plan	OSI 7,008 USD	CoE, LGI, UNDP Bratislava Regional Center	10-08 / 10-09
Establishment of citizens information centre and one-stop-shop in Dajç commune	Improve supply of information and communication between commune and citizens, improving transparency, efficiency and effectiveness; introduce new management and ensure quality service delivery	Swiss Intercooperation € 52,241	Dajç Commune, Shkodra Qark	04-08 / 02-09
Completed in 2008				
Providing Support to the Institute of the Environment	Develop methodologies and systems used in Institute of Environment for it to reach satisfactory (ISO) standards	Royal Netherlands Embassy, Tirana € 369,834*	Albanian Institute of Environment, Oranjewoud, Netherlands	09-07 / 12-08†
Developing the Albanian Association of Communes (DAAC)	Enable AAC to play a role in reform of Albania's public administration, especially in strengthening its communes	Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) € 1,250,000*	SALAR (Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions), VNG-I, AAC	09-05 / 12-08
Developing a SWOT analysis for Shkodra Qark	Gather latest background data and undertake SWOT analysis of Shkodra Qark	Teuleda € 1,155	Shkodra Qark	11-08
Integrated Informatics System for Management of the Activities of the LED Department, Korça Municipality	Develop capacities for Korça LED department to monitor and evaluate strategy, establish system to monitor and measure progress to achieving goals, provide reference system for LED measurements	Canada Fund 12,205 CD	Korça Municipality	09-07 / 10-08
Moldova Study Tour	Moldavian stakeholders visit LED departments in the five DELTA cities in Albania, exchange information and increase inter-country cooperation, focusing on budgeting, citizens participation and strategic planning	LGI, OSI 18,992 USD	Moldovan municipality stakeholders	06-08
Develop Strategic Plans for three communes in Dibër Qark	Provide expertise and training for Strategic Plan development for Communes Arras, Zall Dardha and Fushë Çidhën; publish plans	Dibër Qark 1,999,198 leke	Dibër Qark communes of Arras, Fushë Çidhën, Zall Dardha	09-07 / 02-08

Project	Aims Results	Donor and volume	Partners	Period
Completed in 2007				
Decentralisation and Regional Development in Albania	Advise on financing of LGUs as part of decentralisation, specifically LG rights to tax population	SIDA € 1,980	Ministry of Interior, SIPU	10-07
Cooperation towards a modern LGA	Provide expertise in Towards a modern local government association conference	CoE, UNDP € 1,572	Network of Associations of Local Authorities (NALAS) in CEE, Austrian Association of Cities and Towns	07-07
Donor Research in Albania	Review ongoing and completed operational programmes and regional development strategies in Albania	Lara Interreg € 1,000	MEPCO	04-07 / 07-07
Provision of expertise in training on Role of Local Government Associations	Provision of expertise and development of training programme based upon Transforming a Local Government Association toolkit	UNDP 2,884 USD	UNDP, Bratislava Regional Center	04-07 / 05-07
Completed in 2006				
Finalising project proposal 'Support programme for strengthening local governance in Dibër Qark, Albania'	Finalise programme design and proposal with the objective of strengthening local governance in the Qark of Dibër, east Albania	Royal Netherlands Embassy, Tirana € 11,678	Dibër Qark (Region), SNV	07-06 / 12-06
Partnership with Administration for an Effective Governance, Rubik Municipality	Increase effectiveness, capacities and standards of local government in Rubik, while creating conditions for improved quality of life for citizens	OSI 23,650 USD*	OSI, Rubik Municipality	05-05 / 12-06
Accompanied self-assessment of Decentralisation and Local Development Programme (DLDP) partner LGUs	Assist LGUs in N. Albania assess and improve standards of governance	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) 1,217,180 Leke (€ 9,896)	Intercooperation (IC) Albania, KPM University of Bern	09-06 / 11-06
Local Government Leadership Programme	Self-assessment mechanism introduced into 15 pilot municipalities; conclusions will lead to development of distinct Leadership Improvement Plans; manual published	Council of Europe (CoE), LGI, Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) € 16,900*	AAM, CoE, OSCE	06-06 / 09-06
Providing Support to the Institute of the Environment	Develop methodologies and systems used in Institute of Environment for it to reach satisfactory (ISO) standards	Royal Netherlands Embassy, Tirana € 369,834*	Albanian Institute of Environment, Oranjewoud, Netherlands	05-05 / 05-07†
Developing Enterprise Locally through Techniques and Alliances (DELTA)	Development of strategies and action plans for policy reform and private sector development at municipal level; building capacities in local government and business community to foster institutionalisation of public-private partnerships; development of locally owned projects and programmes that promote sound private sector development	OSF, LGI, WB Group 199,382 USD	Municipalities of Shkodra, Lezha, Durrës, Berat, Korça, MGS	10-03 / 04-06
Development of DELTA webpage	Development of website to document and promote methodology and techniques used during and products resulting from implementation of DELTA project in Kosova, Albania and Mongolia	OSF, LGI, WB Group 19,800 USD	LGI	07-04 / 04-05 extended into 2006
Completed in 2003-5				
Modernisation of Municipal Services In Selected Partner Towns	Improving municipal service responsibilities in town planning, including permits and supervision, assets, technical services, including solid waste management, related	GTZ € 1,200	Municipalities of Korça, Pogradec, Elbasan, Lushnja, Berat, Kuçova, Shkodra and Kavaja, Maminas Commune,	03-02 / 02-05

Project	Aims Results	Donor and volume	Partners	Period
	budget and financing policies, and participation of citizens and businesses in local policy making		Institut für Projektplanung (IP-GITEC)	
Feasibility Study: Management of Solid Waste in South-East Albania	Improvement of environmental conditions and minimising health risks, contributing thus towards the sustainable social and economic development of the region	KfW, EU € 667,000*	Municipalities of Korça, Pogradec, Erseka, Maliq, Bilisht, IU, IGIP	05-03 / 12-04
Support to the Albanian Association of Communes to broaden their membership base (Inception Period)	Identify, probe and analyse problems facing Albania's communes; produce detailed DAAC proposal (see above)	SIDA € 21,925*	SALAR, VNG-I, AAC	05-04 / 10-04
Support to the Albanian Association of Communes to broaden their membership base through institutional strengthening	Broaden membership base and support for AAC with enhanced legitimacy of AAC steering committee	VNG-I € 23,814	VNG-I, AAC	04-04 / 06-04
Community and Public Administration Support Strategy (COMPASS, one year extension)	Publishing and promoting through the AAM the experiences of the previous three years of programme implementation	Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, VNG-I € 35,145	AAM, MLGD, Municipalities of Peshkopi, Rrëshen, Kruje, Fier, Korça	05-03 / 05-04
National Training Strategy for Local Government in Albania	Development of a National Training Strategy for local government	CoE, EC € 5,500	NTS Working Group AAM, AAR, AAC, MLGD	05-03 / 03-04
Good Governance / Institution Building – Support for Municipal Administration in Kosovo (inception period)	Building a democratic Kosova with strong effective institutions with a respect for human rights and rule of law	European Agency for Reconstruction € 3,052	VNG-I	05-03 / 07-03
Promoting Active Citizenship at the Local Level in Albania and the FYR. of Macedonia	Contribute towards transparent, accountable and responsive governance at the local level through increasing civic participation in policy-making processes	World Bank \$ 1,800	Cittadinanzattiva's Active Citizenship Network, Italy	01-03 / 05-03

*, total budget from which FLAG manages local expertise and implementation, otherwise the figure is the total managed by FLAG; †, suspended due to institutional restructuring

Projects

Strengthening Albanian Civil Society Organisation for an improved Environment

September 2008–September 2011

Client: Millieukontakt

Financing agency: Millieukontakt

Implementing consortium: FLAG, Millieukontakt

Budget: € 350

FLAG's main task in this project is to participate in the Waste Working Group to prepare a Position paper that will be communicated in media, to government and international institutions. Specific attention will be paid to the EU and other relevant international legislation and policies.

Expected results:

- implementation and enforcement of national policy on waste, water and air quality will be improved
- community involvement in resolving issues concerning waste, water and air quality will be strengthened
- the capacities of NGOs working in this area will be strengthened

Developing Enterprise Locally through Techniques and Alliances (DELTA), follow-up

September 2008–September 2010

Client: Municipalities of Berat, Durrës, Kavaja, Korça, Lezha, Shkodra

Financing agency: OSF, LGI

Implementing consortium: FLAG

Budget: \$ 182,747

The DELTA follow-up project has two main goals: 1) encourage and promote economic growth in target cities, while building further capacities in city governments and communities for LED plan development, implementation and review and local economy assessment, and 2) enable evidence based policy making for economic growth and development.

The project has many objectives broken down into four components: a) establish the process and institutional setting for LED Plan development in one Albanian city, b) establish the process and institutional setting for LED Plan assessment and review, c) municipal economic development monitoring and assessment, and d) good practice sharing and performance measuring in carrying out the LED function.

Expected results:

- further trust built in city government that ideas of public and business community are considered
- awareness further raised at local, regional and national levels on benefits of developing LED plan
- city government develops policies to allocate own funds for implementation of plan projects
- solid methodological, institutional and network basis created for plan implementation, monitoring, review
- city government plays much more proactive role in leading development in city
- municipal staff able to assess LED plan implementation
- DELTA cities have knowledge on development of evidence-based policies for LED and plan implementation
- information from SPLED implementation allows public to improve planning, coordination and allocation
- public have institutional platform to provide input for evaluation of SPLED progress
- public regularly informed about and have participation in SPLED assessment and progress
- municipal staff able to independently review their LED Plan
- LGUs have processes and procedures to develop evidence-based policies for LED implementation
- coordination of planning and resource allocation enables effective, efficient implementation of SPLED
- local people have institutional platform to provide input for SPLED review
- other LGUs know how to conduct SPLED monitoring
- information and data sharing facilitate better development performance
- civil society and businesses provide data and information to help monitor SPLED progress
- DELTA cities in position to periodically monitor their local economies
- staff of other municipalities have reference for drawing up key indicators to assess LED

- LGUs develop require and refer to city economy assessments for policy development and priority setting
- experiences in LED and SPLED assessment will serve DELTA cities prepare for other benchmark exercises
- experience on benchmarking will encourage other Albanian LGUs to be involved in LED benchmarking
- DELTA cities improve their performance based on the benchmark for LED planning, monitoring and review
- information, data gathering systems, methodology for SPLED analysis, monitoring and review, methods for design of appropriate LED indicators available to other LGUs in Albania or abroad
- AAM and AAC involved in LED experience exchange and their lobbying capacities strengthened
- recommendations made in support of resolving LGU difficulties in design and implementation of LED plans
- central government and donor community influenced by outputs and lessons learned from project



Provide training on role of LGAs, improve their capacities and develop prescriptive policy paper and advocacy plan for Inter-Municipal Cooperation

April 2007–October 2009

Client: Bratislava Regional Center, UNDP, and Network of Associations of Local Authorities (NALAS) in CEE, Austrian Association of Cities and Towns

Financing agency: UNDP, OSF, CoE

Implementing consortium: FLAG

Budget: \$ 11,878

This is a compilation of three different tasks whose aims are to:

- 1) develop a training programme through provision of expertise and based upon *Transforming a Local Government Association* toolkit
- 2) provide expertise at a conference entitled *Towards a modern local government association*
- 3) develop a prescriptive policy paper and advocacy plan and provide expertise in training on Inter-Municipal Cooperation

Establishment of citizens information centre and one-stop-shop in Dajç commune

April 2008–February 2009

Client: Dajç Commune, Shkodra Qark

Financing agency: Swiss Intercooperation

Implementing consortium: FLAG

Budget: € 52,241

The main aim of this project is to support the commune of Dajç in the establishment of a citizens' information centre with a one-stop-shop. This shop will improve the information and communication of the commune with its citizens, thus improving transparency, efficiency and effectiveness of the commune administration. Through the one-stop-shop system the local government can introduce new management approaches and ensure quality service delivery.

Results:

- establishment of single place where citizens can get within the shortest possible time all administrative information and documents and permits
- administrative staff are citizen-oriented and well informed
- mechanisms in place to provide for citizens' requests, feedback and consultation
- intranet system introduced to link all administrative departments
- internal organisation of commune administration adapted to new conditions
- capacity of administration improved
- improved information and communications tools
- monitoring system installed
- development of maintenance plan for sustainability of one-stop-shop



Providing Support to the Institute of the Environment (Agency of Environment and Forests)

May 2005–December 2008

Client: Albanian Institute of Environment
Financing agency: Royal Netherlands Embassy Tirana
Implementing consortium: Oranjewoud, FLAG
Budget: € 369,834*

The long-term objective of this project was to develop the methodologies and systems used in the Institute of Environment, Albania, so that it can reach satisfactory (ISO) standards.

To achieve this objective the short-term objective was to make a significant improvement in the institute's competence and effectiveness so that it can achieve the following goals: provide a reliable analytical service; make a significant contribution to the National Environmental Monitoring System; provide technical support to the Ministry of Environment; improve project preparation skills.

Expected results:

- Reliable analytical service provided to the National Environmental Inspectorate, using methods that will stand up in a court of law
- Significant contribution made to the National Environmental Monitoring System, through effective sampling and analysis
- Technical support provided to the Ministry of Environment through effective implementation of research and technical projects
- Project preparation skills improved to the point where the institute can compete successfully in international tenders for environmental projects



Developing the Albanian Association of Communes (DAAC)

September 2005–December 2008

Client: AAC

Financing agency: Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA)

Implementing consortium: Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR), VNG-I, FLAG

Budget: € 1,250,000*

The DAAC project has been designed to enable the AAC to play a role in the reform of Albania's public administration, especially in strengthening its communes. The overall objective of the project is for the AAC to contribute towards improving conditions for communes, while enhancing its services.

The project has so far involved recruiting executive staff, providing staff training, holding a workshop in Stockholm to develop and launch the operational components of DAAC and perform initial training for AAC staff, holding an annual steering committee meeting and 12 regional meetings, developing internal procedures for decision making, developing a strategic plan, equipping the AAC office, developing and implementing a revenue-raising plan for the AAC, assisting in improving negotiating and operating techniques, undertaking needs assessment and service delivery and assisting the association in communicating with its membership. It is planned for a General Assembly to be held in 2007. The above functions are now part of the routine work of the AAC, and during its first year the association became a point of reference and communication for Albanian governmental agencies and other national and international organizations operating in the field of local government.

Expected results are that the AAC:

- represents its members
- has a qualified executive staff
- has a system in place for ensuring financial self-support
- has a system in place for advocating the interests of communes towards central government
- provides services for the benefit of its members
- has a system in place for AAC to disseminate information and communicate with its member base



Developing a SWOT analysis for Shkodra Qark

November 2008

Client: Shkodra Qark

Financing agency: Teuleda

Implementing consortium: FLAG

Budget: € 1,155

Using some of the methodology applied in the DELTA project in five of Albania's municipalities, FLAG gathered all relevant data, both published and unpublished, to undertake as comprehensively as possible an analysis of the current socio-economic situation in Shkodra Qark (County). Sources of information included Shkodra Prefecture, the Shkodra-Lezha regional development plan, Instat offices, both nationally and at the district level, and Instat's publications, some of which are available on-line. Based upon these data and information a SWOT analysis of the County was undertaken.

The information and SWOT analysis were presented to Shkodra Regional Council at a workshop, through which the analysis was fine tuned. Both the information review and SWOT analysis were left with the council for up-coming reference concerning regional development.

Results:

- comprehensive gathering of data at the qark level undertaken
- data and information subject to SWOT analysis
- regional council provided feedback on the analysis
- analysis available to help Regional Council assist the region's development



Integrated Informatics System for Management of the Activities of the LED Department, Korça Municipality

September 2007–October 2008

Client: Korça Municipality

Financing agency: Canada Fund

Implementing consortium: FLAG

Budget: CAD 12,205

This project followed on from the priorities identified in the 10-year strategic plan approved by Korça municipal council in 2006 and developed within the framework of the DELTA project implemented by FLAG. One of the identified priority projects was computerisation of data management and work procedures within the local government. As a result of the project, the LED department is now in a very strong position to monitor implementation and progress with both its LED strategic plan and its economic development. The municipality has been equipped through this project with two computers and associated office equipment. Procedures have now been put in place that will facilitate review of the municipality's strategic plan and economic development. A network of data gatherers has been created, along with a discussion forum. The network can provide data rapidly to the LED department as a result of the agreements reached a result of the present project.

Thus, the municipality of Korça is in a better position to undertake better and quicker decision making with respect to local governance, and is able to integrate such decision taking with its other activities.

Results:

- capacities developed for Korça LED department to monitor and evaluate strategy
- system established to monitor and measure progress to achieving goals
- reference system provided for LED measurements



Moldova Study Tour

June 2008

Client: Moldovan municipality stakeholders
Financing agency: LGI, OSI
Implementing consortium: FLAG
Budget: \$ 18,992

The agenda of the study tour included a visit to four municipalities in Albania to see how the LGI/OSI/WB sponsored programme DELTA (Developing Economies Locally Through Activities and Actions) was implemented. The municipalities that were visited included Durrës, Shkodra, Berat and Korça, while two seminars were held in Durrës, one with presentations made by the Albanian Ministry of Economy, AlInvest and FLAG, while the second seminar was presented by the Mayor of Lezha, the fifth municipality involved in the DELTA programme.

The activities that comprised in the study tour were included to increase the level of regional and inter-country cooperation, and exchange of knowledge. The Moldovan participants were involved in sessions addressing issues related to economic development, budgeting, local finances, citizens participation in drafting strategies, and developing a mission, vision, objectives, programmes and projects.

FLAG staff scheduled the programme for the study tour, facilitated the visit and also made a presentation on LED indicators.

The tour included visits to a private business–public partnership (road development) in Durrës, an aluminium press private industry in Shkodra, an agribusiness and a wine producer in Berat, and a brewery in Korça, all of which had state of the art equipment and infrastructure installed.



Develop Strategic Plans for three communes in Dibër Qark

September 2007–February 2008

Client: Dibër Qark communes of Arras, Fushë Çidhën, Zall Dardha

Financing agency: Dibër Qark

Implementing consortium: FLAG

Budget: ALL 1,999,198

The aim of this project was to provide expertise and training for strategic plan development for the three communes Arras, Zall Dardha and Fushë Çidhën in Dibër Qark (County), and for the resulting plans to be published. Members of the Regional Council were to be involved in the training to be able thus to provide their experience to other communes in the county and to help develop strategic plans at other levels, such as for the Qark.

Results:

- on-site training courses provided in local economic development for three communes in Dibër Qark
- on-site training courses provided in local economic development for Dibër Regional Council
- training package was deposited with the regional council for future reference and implementation
- project list compiled for these three communes to be financed by the Dibër Qark trust fund developed with FLAG assistance
- strategic plans of the three communes published (also available from the FLAG website)



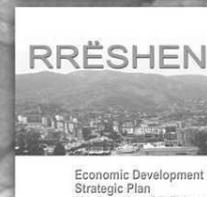
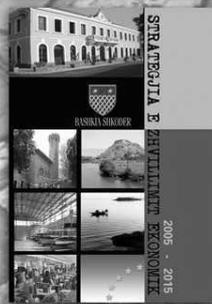
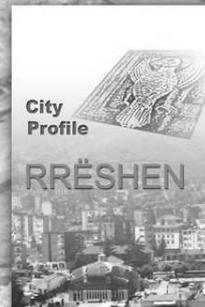
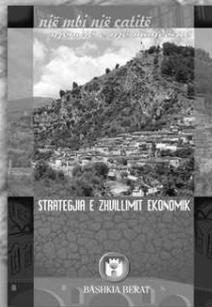
Annex: Sample publications compiled by FLAG experts

TRAINING CURRICULA FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

PROGRAME TRAJNIMI PER QEVERINE VENDORE

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