

**PROJECT DOCUMENT****[Albania]**Empowered lives  
Resilient nations.**Project Title:** Support to Higher Education in Albania**Project Number:****Implementing Partner:** Ministry of Education and Sport**Start Date:** 01/09/2016      **End Date:** 31/12/2017      **PAC Meeting date:** XX/XX/2016**Brief Description**

A new law on higher education was passed in parliament in the summer of 2015 paving the way for the implementation of an overhauling reform of the sector. The reform aims to improve standards in teaching and research, ties financing to performance and most importantly aims to link the higher education with the labour market. The creation of autonomous higher education institutions is envisaged – a new model of public and independent university, as well as a completely new research governance structure. Most importantly the reform aims to forge a unified system with coherent and cohesive standards through quality assurance, licensing, accreditation and financing. The law envisages the creation of several new agencies that will be in charge of specific aspects of the higher education's management system. At the end of this intervention the following results will be achieved:

1. **A complete legal / policy framework in place**
2. **Technical assistance at the university level for the reform roll out through feedback mechanisms and user perspective**

Contributing Outcome (UNDAF/CPD, RPD or GPD):

Economic growth priorities, policies and programmes of the Government of Albania are inclusive, sustainable and gender-responsive, with greater focus on competitiveness, decent jobs and rural development (2017 - 2021)

Indicative Output(s):

An optimized skills development system contributes to an adequately skilled labour force that meets private sector needs

<b>Total resources required:</b>	270,000 USD	
<b>Total resources allocated:</b>	<b>UNDP TRAC:</b>	
	<b>Italy:</b>	220,000 USD <sup>1</sup>
	<b>Government:</b>	50,000 USD
	<b>In-Kind:</b>	
<b>Unfunded:</b>		

Agreed by

Government	UNDP
Lindita Nikolla, Minister of Education and Sport	Brian Williams Resident Representative
<b>Date:</b>	<b>Date:</b>

<sup>1</sup> ! Euro = 1.1 USD, UN operational rate of exchange July

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## I. DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGE

The World Bank considers that equipping individuals with the knowledge, know-how, and behaviors required landing and keeping jobs in today's labor market as paramount for building job-relevant skills<sup>2</sup>. In Albania as in many other transition countries youth that aspire to further their education for a smooth transition to desirable jobs are equipped with diplomas and qualifications that fail to equip them with the necessary skills that the market demands.

Indeed, the EU considers the development of the country's human resources, in terms of skills, competences, and qualifications in line with the labour market needs as a crucial challenge. Albania needs to approximate education policies more closely with the EU and the implementation of the Bologna reforms is a key measure of comparability with standards and quality of higher education qualifications<sup>3</sup>.

Albania's higher education has been through dynamic changes especially after 2007 when the sector was liberalized. The main objective until 2013 was to increase access and as a result the number of enrolled students went up by 60% from 90,205 in 2007 to 145,028 for the academic year 2013-14<sup>4</sup>. Indeed, higher education enrollment rates rose from 33% of the university-aged population in 2009 to 63% in 2013<sup>5</sup>. This was however not accompanied by an adequate increase in teaching personnel (up only 32% to 3,651 for the academic year 2013/14 from 2,785 in 2007). During academic year 2012-2013, 15.7% of enrolled students came from vocational schools and in 2014 – 2015 this figure went up to 16.3%. Attempts have been made to create a certain framework of standards but they were not quite responsive to this evolution and the system still remains fragmented. Curricula are very out-dated and do not adequately respond to the labour market. Students are not equipped with proper practical skills and as a result a skills gap is created for newly graduates. In addition, curricula are not harmonized and currently there are over 1600 academic programs offered in Albania. 70 per-cent of these programs need to be unified across all universities – public and private.

Furthermore, scientific research in Albania is considered insufficient. Albanian institutions' participation in international research projects is very limited due to weak institutional capacities and resources. The current share of research in Albania's GDP is only 0.4% while the European standard as outlines in Chapter 25 of *acquis communautaire* is between 1 – 2 %.

With the advent of private universities, financing has become a real challenge. The lack of a strategic and visionary approach led to a considerable drop of higher education quality. Despite increase in enrollment rates and proliferation of private universities spending for higher education was still around 0.5% of GDP, far below the OECD average of 1.6% while neighboring countries are spending around 4-5 times more per student than Albania<sup>6</sup>.

While the discussion of access and quality are ongoing issues around the world, quality assurance has been particularly problematic in Albania. There needs to be a credible and

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<sup>2</sup> Workforce development in emerging economies: <http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSPContentServer/WDSP/IB/2016/06/17/090224b0843d5e47/10/Rendered/PDF/Workforce0deve0praxis00and0policies.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> EU Albania Instrument for Pre-accession assistance  
[http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key\\_documents/2014/20140919-csp-albania.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2014/20140919-csp-albania.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Draft NSDI, p. 129

<sup>5</sup> <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.TER.ENRR>

<sup>6</sup> The building blocks of higher education reform:  
<http://albania.growthlab.cid.harvard.edu/blog/building-blocks-higher-education-reform>

independent monitoring / evaluation of employability of graduates. This consists of a database of students and a tracing system. Monitoring at best has been considered a formality and findings and recommendations were never followed through.

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## II. STRATEGY

Higher education reform is a top priority for the Albanian government. NSDI outlines the main challenges of higher education that consist in 1) increasing quality of education through improvements in teaching standards and conditions; 2) increasing the quantity and quality of personnel; 3) improvements in infrastructure; 4) updating of curricula and quality control as per European standards; 5) coherence of strategies, curricula and education programmes with the private sector to better respond to the labour market needs; 6) expansion of post-secondary education according to specific needs and regional developments; 7) strengthening institutional capacities and increasing the autonomy and self-governance of higher education institutions.

An independent commission set up by the prime minister worked during two years for the reform document. Public discussions and a policy paper paved the way for the drafting of a new law on higher education that passed in parliament in the summer of 2015.

The basis of this reform was the concept that higher education is a public good. The reform aimed at improvements of standards in both teaching and research, tying financing to performance and most importantly linking the higher education with the labour market. The creation of autonomous higher education institutions is envisaged – a new model of public and independent university as well as a completely new research governance structure. Most importantly the reform aimed to forge a unified system with coherent and cohesive standards with an independent quality assurance system with all functions in line with ENQA's guidelines – licensing done by the Ministry of Education and Sport, accreditation, by a fully independent agency and ranking by a national or international agency.

The reform in Albania as outlined by the higher education law is going to be implemented through a series of institutions. The **Education Service Centre** will facilitate the application process of university admissions, students' matriculation and digital IDs as well as state exams for all regulated professions. The Educational Service Center will provide a series of government services for pupils, students, but also for the institutions and bodies of regulated institutions. The **National Agency for Scientific Research and Innovation** evolves from the recently closed National Agency for Technology and Innovation that will ensure that universities pay proper attention to research and will also have the necessary financial resources to do so. The **National Agency of Higher Education Financing** will be responsible for the allocation of public funds for teaching, development and innovation through a set of criteria and ensure their efficient use. Its work will be organised based on the principles of free competition, equal opportunities, excellence and national priorities for development. The **Higher Education Quality Assurance Agency** is also new institution that will assess the teaching and curricula quality as well as the quality of diplomas. It will draft and publish reports on higher education institutions and will also draft the national higher education code.

This is a project of the Ministry of Education and Sports. While, the law on higher education was approved in 2015, it needs to be supported through the drafting, approval and implementation of a series of secondary legislation. These acts will not only enable the implementation of the law but will ensure its cohesive spirit by addressing practical aspects related to unified and standardized processes in higher education. These issues capture the transition from pre-university to higher education, the definition of the higher education qualifications framework,

the recruitment of lecturers, teaching standards and quality assurance, the monitoring of institutional performance and the evaluation of research, as well as students' databases and tracer tools. Apart from the legal and policy framework, the implementation of the reform will be supported with assistance rolling out to universities in terms of statutes, regulation, performance measurement as well as research assessment. In these aspects, Italian academic experts - who are also well aware of the European convergence process - will be invited to collaborate with Albanian colleagues, in order to share with them the useful experiences made in implementing the Italian reforms.

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### **III. RESULTS AND PARTNERSHIPS**

#### ***(i) Expected Results***

The reform aims to establish a unified higher education system in Albania with set qualitative standards and aiming to become competitive in the region. The entire project is conceived as technical assistance support to the Ministry of Education and Sports. It per the rationale above, it will have two main intervention components:

#### **1. The legal and policy framework is completed with the necessary by-laws and acts**

Recognising the need for secondary legislation, institutional strengthening as well as policy and strategic support, this component will be implemented with the guidance of the Department of Higher Education at the MoES. It will be of a technical assistance nature with consultations and professional expertise as agreed with the lead partner. Outputs will consist in formulation, revision and adoption of legal and policy documents. While the law has paved the way for the reform roll out, the current institutional set up is in limbo due to the missing secondary legislation in its support. This legislation, will be mainly focusing in the establishment and functionality of the agencies and institutions as described above. The nature of this component will be primarily judicial as legal expertise will be required and hired. This expertise will support the working groups as established by the Ministry and will also assist in the drafting of decisions of the council of ministers as well as ministerial orders as appropriate. The list of bylaws to be prepared is provided below:

#### ***Decisions of the Council of Ministers:***

- "On determining the categories of individuals that will benefit financing for studying in one of the first level programmes, in an integrated study programme or in a professional study programme";
- On specifications of the functioning of non-secular higher education"
- "Model of financing the higher education and scientific research budget";
- "The maximum tuition fee for first level programmes in public institutions of higher education";
- "On determining the fees for the services provided by the Educational Centre";
- "On the organisation and functioning of the National Agency for Higher Education Financing"
- "Determination of the methodology of the assessment process carried out by the National Agency for Scientific Research and Innovation";
- "On the composition, organisation and functioning of the National Agency for Scientific Research and Innovation, Board of Administration, and remuneration of board members";

- "On the organisation and functioning of the National Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education";
- "On the organisation and functioning of the Accreditation Board, and the amount of compensation of its chairman and members";
- "On the manner of organisation and functioning of the higher professional college"
- "On approval of university health structures"
- "On criteria and organisation of university health centres"
- "On criteria and procedures for opening up branches of domestic and foreign higher education institutions";
- "On standards, criteria and procedures for the establishment, reorganisation, division, merger or closing up of higher education institutions";
- "On the status and special treatment of academic personnel";
- "On determining the state standards for obtaining the titles "Professor" and "Associate professor";
- "On defining the elements of the study programmes offered by higher education institutions";
- "On determining the average grade as a criteria for admission to the first level of studies";
- "On determining the fields of integrated study programmes for the second level";
- "On the criteria to be met by the candidate in order to obtain the degree "Doctor of sciences";
- "Specification for codification of study programmes"
- "On approval of the structure, organisation, fields of research and object of institutions and inter institutional activity of research and development";
- "On categories of services provided to students by state institutions";
- "Definition of the fee for the books kept by higher education institutions";
- "Quality Code of Higher Education";
- "Determination of fees for the external assessment of quality and accreditation of higher education institutions";
- "Model of financing the higher education budget";
- "Definition of fields that constitute a national priority, for which scholarships shall be awarded";
- "Determination of criteria for classification as vulnerable student"
- "Student crediting scheme"
- "Conditions to be met by public institutions of higher education in order to apply for a loan"
- "Definition of the procedure and documentation for the establishment of I.P.H.E.I.".

### ***Instructions of the Minister of Education and Sport***

- "On organisation and functioning of the Educational Centre";
- "On procedures for student registration";
- "On determining the matriculation number";
- "On determining the criteria and formula for distribution of public funds";
- "On the special status of Institutions of higher education";
- "On determining the procedures to for the establishment, closing up, reorganisation and start of activity of higher education institutions";
- "Reporting and terms for reporting by institutions of higher education";
- "On determining the criteria and documentation to be included in the request for opening up new study programmes and the respective procedures";
- "Determination of the full teaching load for the academic personnel in institutions of higher education";
- "On determining the form of organisation of studies, admission of students and financing in institutions of higher education with a special status";

- "Attendance of classes, according to teaching activity in the auditorium and the study level";
- "On determining the constituent elements, form of diploma and procedures for registration";
- "Content and form of the diploma supplement";
- "Procedures and criteria for recognition and unification of diplomas, certificates and degrees obtained on conclusion of studies abroad";
- "Elements and form of the service contract signed by the students";
- "On insuring of students by the higher education system in one of the insurance companies";
- "On the implementation of the financing scheme for public institutions of higher education";
- "On approval of priorities, distribution terms, form of application for grants, and approval of the policy grant for the development of public institutions of higher education";
- "Procedures for codification and reorganisation of study programmes";

Experts will present comparative materials on the experience and legal acts and secondary legislation of other countries of the region and the European Union, in the field of higher education and scientific research. They will closely cooperate with the working groups established by the Ministry of Education and Sport for the preparation of bylaws pursuant to the Law No. 80/2015 "On higher education and scientific research in institutions of higher education in the Republic of Albania. They are expected to take part in the meetings of the working groups and deliver the relevant materials in each meeting. They will also prepare the final concepts of the bylaws as proposed and approved within the working groups, accompanied by the respective explanatory notes.

## **2. Technical assistance at the university level for the reform roll out through feedback mechanisms and user perspective**

In addition to addressing policy and legal needs, the project will pay specific attention to the implementation of the reform at the university level. Engagement with beneficiaries – students and academic personnel is foreseen for the drafting, consensus building and approval of certain elements that will ensure the smooth management of academic institutions in view of the new law. Campus based needs analysis through surveys, youth platforms, consultations and user-feedback mechanisms through innovative techniques will be employed to get an accurate sense of the expected impact of work. Service oriented statutes, rules and regulations and user friendly solutions vetted through feedback mechanisms with student groups and academic bodies will be supported.

Scientific research will be the new frontier of the reform ambition. Necessitated by the need for the country to be integrated and supported in the European Union research and development agenda, the scientific research institutions are getting closer to the higher education institutions. While scientific research is already integrated to teaching, a qualitative leap is needed in terms of research and development agenda. Indeed, research has not been connected to the accreditation process of universities. In advanced countries academic preference is also seen from the research and academic potential of a university. Institutions' research quality is not measured and moreover accountability has not been tied to scientific research work.

This reform will enact a 360-degree overhaul of the higher education system. As such the implementation component of this project will envisage academic expertise support to universities facilitated through a continuous dialogue between the Ministry of Education and Sports and beneficiaries. In addition, conferences, workshops, and discussion forums will be supported. IN terms of academia, support will be provided to the framework of academic titles, performance measurement, curricula standardisation and didactic aspects. Whereas in terms of

scientific research this project will undertake the preliminary work in view of the strategy and the respective law on scientific research.

**(ii)      *Resources Required to Achieve the Expected Results***

Initial resources for this project are limited. The nature of work is very output based with the outputs of the projects directly linked to the success of the higher education reform - either at the legal dimension or the academic implementation. The project is expected to be complete within 12 months following the completion of the preparatory assistance phase. The project will be hosted under the growth and skills development portfolio. The Ministry of Education and Sports will also contribute to the project by not only playing a leading role through a dedicated national project director. It will provide an office space to the project staff expected to be engaged and is also committing 50,000 USD of its own resources to complement the funding from the Italian Cooperation Office in Albania.

**(iii)     *Partnerships***

The Ministry of Education and Sports is the main government institution in charge of this project. Yet the reform encompasses several institutions under its responsibility and reaches out to many public and private universities in the country. In addition, research and scientific institutions will also play a vital part in the implementation of this project. As far as development partners, the reform is outlined based on the UK system of higher education. As such an extensive work has been undertaken by British institutions via the UK Embassy in Albania as well as the office of the British Council. British Quality Assurance Agency has already been engaged in supporting the Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education that will be turning it into an agency of quality assurance and higher education. The agency will not only be responsible for accreditation, but will also play a role in the evaluation of performance indicators which in turn will define the level of funding of any public higher education institution.

In view of Italian support to this project, it has to be noted that the Academic Network of Albania (ANA) has been established with funding from government of Italy. ANA with offering concentrated ICT services for the entire policy making and implementing agencies in the field of higher education and research. All these efforts have been enabled by support from the Italian Ministry of Education, University and Research and facilities and software provided by CINECA – a non profit consortium, made up of 70 Italian universities, 5 Italian Research Institutions and the Italian Ministry of Education. CINECA's expertise that designs information systems specifically to the requirements of Universities and Research Bodies has been provided to Albania.

As ANA is continuing to complete its activities as foreseen until the end of their project - this new project will focus only on legislative and technical support to the implementation of the higher education law. ICT aspects related to the previous and on-going work on ANA will not be in the scope of this new project. Yet synergies will be required as ICT solutions will inevitably be in the look of secondary legislation as well as reform roll out in the universities.

**(iv)      *Risks and Assumptions***

The main risk of this project is the upcoming elections that are scheduled to take place in June 2017. Regular or early elections - as experience has shown in Albania have a slowing down effect on any governmental matter. However, the eventuality of government change may not

materialise until September 2017. This would mean that this risk is not substantial to this project that will be completed operationally and financially until the end of 2017. In addition, most of the scope of work under this project relies outside the remit of the ministry - as the reform will roll out in public and private institutions.

Coordination, weak capacities and dysfunctional new institutions are some of the risks outlined in the risk log at the end of this document. Yet the government ownership and hands on approach role in the implementation of this project are strong mitigation elements that this project will bank on for its successful implementation.

#### **(v) Stakeholder Engagement**

Stakeholders of this project are grouped in four categories:

- *Institutions in charge of enabling environment (Ministry of Education and Sport, agencies under the ministry)*

The project will engage in a direct way with these institutions and establish channels of communication with key managers and boards. They are the main beneficiaries of legal expertise - the first component of this project and their engagement will be frequent.

- *Beneficiary institutions - public and private universities,*

On the other hand, the beneficiaries of the second component are the public and private universities operating in Albania. With this reform, they will have new statutes, new regulations and eventually a system of comparability that accommodates their views and performance. In coordination with the Ministry of Education and Sports, the project will facilitate the creation of academic or university forums or networks that will serve as platforms for information sharing, capacity development and provide a two way communication channel with the policy makers. Although not structured, they will take place in loco as coordinated with the Ministry of Education and Sports.

- *Individuals - academics and students*

People centre policies call for individuals to be placed as the focus of policy impact. Therefore, as the overall objective of this project is to increase the quality of teaching and performance of universities - in other words the quality of graduates and improved employability perspectives, the views of academics and students are paramount for the success of this project. Consultative forums will serve to nurture a discussion among partner institutions and ultimate beneficiaries to ensure an informed process of reform implementation. For this purpose, as the funding of the project is limited, innovative engagement ways will be utilised (through social media or online surveys).

- *Integrated Policy Management Group*

The fourth group of partners includes the international organisations and development partners that are engaged in the education sector. The new donor coordination of the government of Albania will be fully utilized in terms of information sharing and coordination of efforts and ensuring synergies. Apart from Italy and the UK this group includes bilateral



partners such as Austria, France, the Netherlands as well as international organisations such as EU, CoE, UNICEF and UNDP.

***(vi) Knowledge***

The main outputs of this project are legal acts as well as technical expertise reports and documents. As such knowledge will be generated mostly in terms of processes, experiences and lessons learned. UNDP will pay attention to documenting practises and stories that will showcase the Albanian experience in this radical restructuring of the higher education system. They will be shared in the Albanian media as well as international forums making use of the large potential of social media and UNDP regional and global networks.

***(vii) Sustainability and Scaling Up***

National ownership in this project is ensured by the direct implementation role of the Ministry of Education and Sports. Yet, this is the initial stage of the reform implementation. There are limits to what can be achieved through a small intervention. The communication between project partners will identify issues that require long-term engagement and support. Such efforts will be mainstreamed into the national education policies and will also be presented for further qualitative support from project partners. Albania is a candidate country with the EU and opening of negotiations will eventually reach Chapter 26 of Education and Culture. Therefore, the project will pay attention to the EU integration processes so the higher education reform is further consolidated and supported.

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## **IV. PROJECT MANAGEMENT**

This is a project with limited resources and short duration. As such, efforts are being coordinated among partners to ensure the outmost efficiency of resource management and delivery of results in an effective way.

Therefore, UNDP will be performing the management function of the project supported by an Italian UNDESA fellow (application submitted on June 24th). Project administration and finance support will also be performed by current UNDP projects under the portfolio of skills development. In the eventuality of a failed attempt to hire an Italian UNDESA fellow, UNDP and Ministry of Education and Sports will decide for the next most efficient way for coordination and back up support for the project duration.

The Ministry of Education and Sports will provide the necessary space for the project. Should this result problematic due to lack of available spaces or delayed completion of renovation works of the Ministry of Education and Sports, UNDP will host the relevant project staff in shared project office facilities. Logistic and driving costs will also be undertaken making use of current UN and UNDP support arrangements.

## V. RESULTS FRAMEWORK

<b>Intended Outcome as stated in the UNDAF/Country [or Global/Regional] Programme Results and Resource Framework:</b>											
Outcome 3: Economic growth priorities, policies and programmes of the Government of Albania are inclusive, sustainable and gender-responsive, with greater focus on competitiveness, decent jobs and rural development											
<b>Outcome indicators as stated in the Country Programme [or Global/Regional] Results and Resources Framework, including baseline and targets:</b>											
<u>Indicator 3.2</u> Unemployment rate (men and women (15+) who are: without work; available for work; seeking work)											
<u>Baseline (2014):</u> 17.6% <u>Target:</u> 15%(by 2020)											
<b>Applicable Output(s) from the UNDP Strategic Plan: 2.1.1</b> Effective public education and consultation undertaken											
<b>Project title and Atlas Project Number: Support to Higher Education Reform in Albania:</b>											
EXPECTED OUTPUTS	OUTPUT INDICATORS	DATA SOURCE	BASELINE		TARGETS (by frequency of data collection)						DATA COLLECTION METHODS & RISKS
			Value	Year	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year ...	FIN AL	
<b>Output 1</b> <i>Legal framework for the implementation of the higher education reform drafted and approved</i>	<b>1.1</b> Number of bylaws and instructions	<i>Ministry of Education and Sport</i>	0 - Higher education law approved in 2015	2015	33 Decisions of CoM and 19 instructions of MoES approved	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	33	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MoES website <a href="http://www.arsimi.gov.al">www.arsimi.gov.al</a></li> <li>Reports of the ministry</li> </ul>
<b>Output 2</b> <i>Higher education reform implemented</i>	<b>2.1</b> Number of established and functional agencies	<i>Ministry of Education and Sport</i>	2 existing	2015	5 agencies (3 newly established and 2 re-organised)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MoES website <a href="http://www.arsimi.gov.al">www.arsimi.gov.al</a></li> <li>Reports of the ministry</li> </ul>
	<b>2.2</b> Number of universities that complete their statutes	<i>Ministry of Education and Sport</i>	0	2016	35 universities					35	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MoES website <a href="http://www.arsimi.gov.al">www.arsimi.gov.al</a></li> <li>Reports of the ministry</li> </ul>

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## **VI. MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

In accordance with UNDP's programming policies and procedures, the project will be monitored through the following monitoring and evaluation plans:

### **Monitoring Plan**

#### Within the annual cycle

- On a quarterly basis, a quality assessment shall record progress towards the completion of key results, based on quality criteria and methods captured in the Quality Management.
- An Issue Log shall be activated in Atlas and updated by the Project Coordinator to facilitate tracking and resolution of potential problems or requests for change.
- Based on the initial risk analysis, a risk log shall be activated in Atlas and regularly updated by reviewing the external environment that may affect the project implementation.
- Based on the above information recorded in Atlas, a Project Progress Reports (PPR) shall be submitted by the Project Coordinator to the Project Steering Committee through Project Assurance, using the standard report format.
- A project Lesson-learned log shall be activated and regularly updated to ensure on-going learning and adaptation within the organization, and to facilitate the preparation of the Lessons-learned Report at the end of the project
- A Monitoring Schedule Plan shall be activated in Atlas and updated to track key management actions/events
- In addition to the above standard monitoring framework, a close communication will be established between UNDP and Minister of Local Issues with respect to the day-to-day implementation of activities and information on the project's progress will regularly be shared and when needed with the project's stakeholders and partners

#### Annually

- Annual Review Report. An Annual Review Report shall be prepared by the Project Coordinator and shared with the Project Steering Committee. As a minimum requirement, the Annual Review Report shall consist of the Atlas standard format covering the whole year with updated information for each above element as well as a summary of results achieved against pre-defined annual targets at the output level.
- In accordance with standard UNDP procedures, a recognized auditing firm will carry out the final auditing of the project. The purpose of the audit is to certify that disbursements were made in accordance with the activities specified in the project document; disbursements are supported by adequate documentation; financial reports are fairly and accurately presented; appropriate management structure, internal controls, and record keeping is maintained. At the end of the project, an evaluation may be conducted to assess the impact of the project.



## VII. MULTI-YEAR WORK PLAN

EXPECTED OUTPUTS	PLANNED ACTIVITIES	Planned budget by year		RESPONSIBLE PARTY	PLANNED BUDGET		
		Y1	Y2		Funding Source	Budget Description	Amount
<b>Output 1</b>  Legal framework for the implementation of the higher education reform drafted and approved	1.1 Technical assistance for the drafting of Decisions of the Council of Ministers and instructions of the Minister of Education and Sport	X		MoES, UNDP	Italian Cooperation, MoES	Legal experts,	\$ 50,000
						Legal studios,	\$ 80,000
						Workshops and conferences	\$ 5,000
						Operational costs	\$ 5,000
<b>Output 2</b>  Higher education reform fully implemented	2.1 Capacity support for the implementation of higher education reform (new agencies)	X		MoES, UNDP	Italian Cooperation, MoES	National experts	\$ 10,000
						Int'l experts,	\$ 10,000
						Operational costs	\$ 5,000
						Travel costs	\$ 5,000
						Operational costs	\$ 5,000
	2.2 Support to universities for their new statutes, rules and regulations as well as the new framework of academic titles and performance management	X		MoES, UNDP, Universities	Italian Cooperation, MoES	Nat. consultants	\$ 20,000
						Travel costs	\$ 5,000
						Operational costs	\$ 5,000
	2.3 Communication and feedback mechanisms through user perspective	X		MoES, UNDP, Universities	Italian Cooperation, MoES	Focus groups, online survey	\$ 10,000
	2.4 Preparatory work for the new framework of scientific research	X		MoES, UNDP,	Italian Cooperation,	National experts	\$ 10,000

	(strategy and law)				MoES	International consultants,	\$ 10,000
						Workshops and conferences	\$ 5,000
						Operational costs	\$ 5,000
<b>Evaluation</b>	EVALUATION			MoES, UNDP,	Italian Cooperation, MoES	National consultant	\$ 5,000
<b>General Management Support</b>				UNDP	Italian Cooperation, MoES	Facilities administration and	\$ 20,000
<b>TOTAL</b>							\$ 270.000

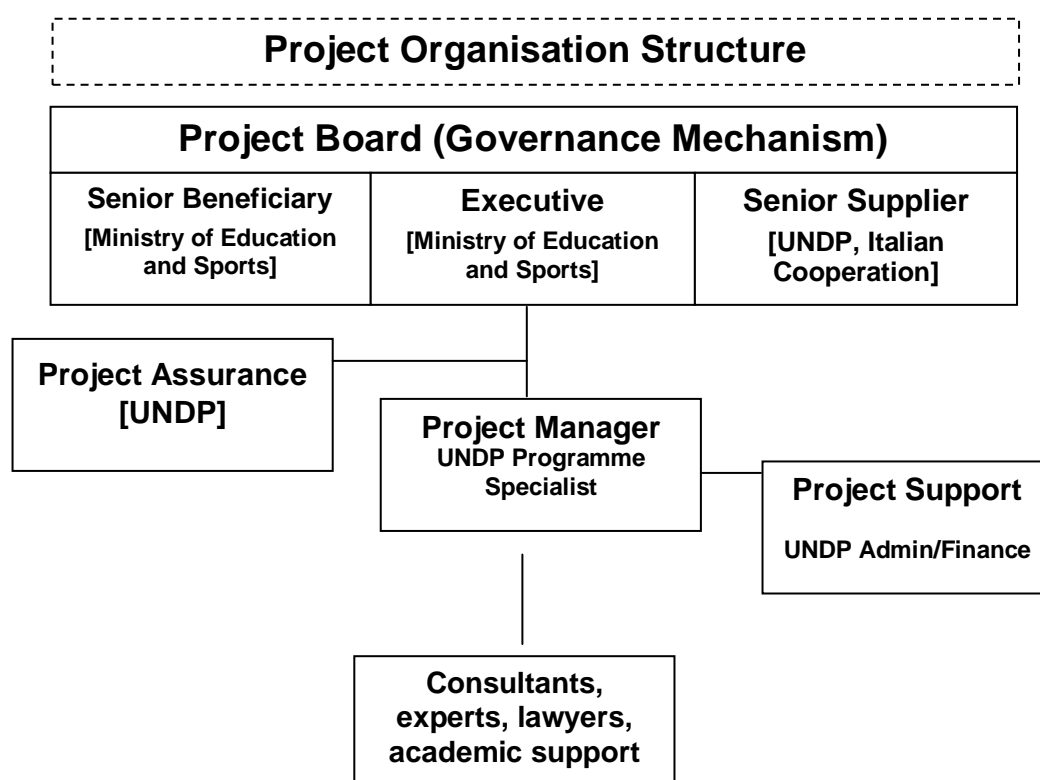
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## VIII. GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

The project will be implemented in accordance with UNDP's National Implementation Modality (NIM)

[http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/corporate/Programme%20and%20Operations%20Policies%20and%20Procedures/NIM\\_for\\_Government\\_english.pdf](http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/corporate/Programme%20and%20Operations%20Policies%20and%20Procedures/NIM_for_Government_english.pdf) whereby the Ministry of Education and Sports is the designated National Implementing Partner, on behalf of the Government of Albania.

UNDP will be responsible for the provision of project inputs upon formal request from the Ministry of Education and Sport/Project Director (see below). Services are will be provided according to UNDP rules and procedures based on a standard letter of agreement with the Ministry of Education and Sports for the provision on support services.



### Detailed description of various roles within the management of the project:

#### Project Board:

- Provide overall guidance and direction to the project, ensuring it remains within any specified constraints;
- Address project issues as raised by the project manager;
- Provide guidance on new project risks and agree on possible countermeasures and management actions to address specific risks;
- Review the project progress and provide direction and recommendations to ensure that the agreed deliverables are produced satisfactorily according to plans;
- Review combined delivery reports prior to certification by the implementing partner;

- Appraise the project annual review report, make recommendations for the next annual work plan, and inform the outcome group about the results of the review;
- Provide ad-hoc direction and advice for exception situations when project manager's tolerances are exceeded;
- Assess and decide to proceed on project changes through appropriate revisions;

Project Director/Implementing partner:

- The Deputy Minister of Ministry of Education and Sports is the Project Director designated by Government and is given the authority to request advances, payments, contracts, etc.
- The National Project Director (NPD) is responsible for the achievement of project objectives.
- The Project Director is the official liaison between the Ministry of Education and Sports and UNDP to ensure proper project execution and sits in the project board on behalf of the Ministry of Education and Sports.
- Approves work plans for planned expenditures;
- Approves and sign the Combined Delivery Report (CDR) at the end of the year;
- Sign the Financial Report or the Funding Authorization and Certificate of Expenditures (FACE).

Senior Beneficiary:

- Group of individuals representing the interests of those who ultimately benefit from the project. The Senior Beneficiary's primary function within the Project Board is to ensure the realization of project results from the perspective of Ministry of Education and Sport.

Development Partners (also called Supplier):

- Individuals or groups representing the interests of the parties concerned which provide funding and/or technical expertise to the project. Senior Suppliers in this specific case are considered all international partners contributing to the project budget represented in the Board. The Office of Italian Cooperation as the main contributor in the project will be present in this capacity in the project board. Additional partners may also be included in the future.

Project Manager:

- Reports to the National Project Director
- Plan the activities of the project and monitor progress against the approved work-plan;
- Mobilize personnel, goods and services, training and micro-capital grants to initiative activities, including drafting terms of reference and work specifications and overseeing all contractors' work;
- Monitor events as determined in the project monitoring schedule plan, and update the plan as required;
- Manage requests for the provision of financial resources by UNDP, through advance of funds, direct payments, or reimbursement using the FACE (Fund Authorization and Certificate of Expenditures);
- Monitor financial resources and accounting to ensure accuracy and reliability of financial reports;



- Be responsible for preparing and submitting financial reports to UNDP on a quarterly basis;
- Manage and monitor the project risks initially identified and submit new risks to the project board for consideration and decision on possible actions if required; update the status of these risks by maintaining the project risks log;
- Capture lessons learned during project implementation – a lessons learned log can be used in this regard (MS Word template)
- Perform regular progress reporting to the project board as agreed to by the board;
- Prepare the annual review report, and submit the report to the project board and the outcome group;
- Prepare the annual work plan for the following year, as well as quarterly plans if required;
- Update the Atlas Project Management module if external access is made available.

#### UNDP project assurance:

- Ensure that funds are made available to the project;
- Ensure the project is making progress towards intended outputs;
- Perform regular monitoring activities, such as periodic monitoring visits and “spot checks”;
- Ensure that resources entrusted to UNDP are utilized appropriately;
- Ensure that critical project information is monitored and updated in Atlas;
- Ensure that financial reports are submitted to UNDP on time and that combined delivery reports are prepared and submitted to the project board;
- Ensure that risks are properly managed, and that the risk log in Atlas is regularly updated

#### UNDP Project Support:

- Set up and maintain project files;
- Collect project related information data;
- Assist the project manager in updating project plans;
- Administer project board meetings;
- Establish document control procedures;
- Compile, copy and distribute all project reports;
- Assist in the financial management tasks under the responsibility of the project manager;
- Provide support in the use of Atlas for monitoring and reporting

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## **IX. LEGAL CONTEXT AND RISK MANAGEMENT**

### **LEGAL CONTEXT**

This document together with the UN Program of Cooperation which is incorporated herein by reference, constitute together a Project Document as referred to in the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement (SBAA); as such all provisions of the SBAA apply.

Consistent with the Article III of the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement (SBAA), the responsibility for the safety and security of the Implementing Partner and its personnel and

property, and of UNDP's property in the Implementing Partner's custody, rests with the Implementing Partner. To this end, the Implementing Partner shall:

- a) put in place an appropriate security plan and maintain the security plan, taking into account the security situation in the country where the project is being carried;
- b) assume all risks and liabilities related to the implementing partner's security, and the full implementation of the security plan.

UNDP reserves the right to verify whether such a plan is in place, and to suggest modifications to the plan when necessary. Failure to maintain and implement an appropriate security plan as required hereunder shall be deemed a breach of the Implementing Partner's obligations under this Project Document.

The Implementing Partner agrees to undertake all reasonable efforts to ensure that none of the UNDP funds received pursuant to the Project Document are used to provide support to individuals or entities associated with terrorism and that the recipients of any amounts provided by UNDP hereunder do not appear on the list maintained by the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999). The list can be accessed via [http://www.un.org/sc/committees/1267/aq\\_sanctions\\_list.shtml](http://www.un.org/sc/committees/1267/aq_sanctions_list.shtml). This provision must be included in all sub-contracts or sub-agreements entered into under/further to this Project Document".

## **RISK MANAGEMENT**

1. Consistent with the Article III of the SBAA *[or the Supplemental Provisions]*, the responsibility for the safety and security of the Implementing Partner and its personnel and property, and of UNDP's property in the Implementing Partner's custody, rests with the Implementing Partner. To this end, the Implementing Partner shall:
  - a) put in place an appropriate security plan and maintain the security plan, taking into account the security situation in the country where the project is being carried;
  - b) assume all risks and liabilities related to the Implementing Partner's security, and the full implementation of the security plan.
2. UNDP reserves the right to verify whether such a plan is in place, and to suggest modifications to the plan when necessary. Failure to maintain and implement an appropriate security plan as required hereunder shall be deemed a breach of the Implementing Partner's obligations under this Project Document [and the Project Cooperation Agreement between UNDP and the Implementing Partner]<sup>7</sup>.
3. The Implementing Partner agrees to undertake all reasonable efforts to ensure that no UNDP funds received pursuant to the Project Document are used to provide support to individuals or entities associated with terrorism and that the recipients of any amounts provided by UNDP hereunder do not appear on the list maintained by the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999). The list can be accessed via [http://www.un.org/sc/committees/1267/aq\\_sanctions\\_list.shtml](http://www.un.org/sc/committees/1267/aq_sanctions_list.shtml). This provision must be included in all sub-contracts or sub-agreements entered into under/further to this Project Document.
4. Consistent with UNDP's Programme and Operations Policies and Procedures, social and environmental sustainability will be enhanced through application of the UNDP Social and

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<sup>7</sup> Use bracketed text only when IP is an NGO/IGO

Environmental Standards (<http://www.undp.org/ses>) and related Accountability Mechanism (<http://www.undp.org/secu-srm>).

5. The Implementing Partner shall: (a) conduct project and programme-related activities in a manner consistent with the UNDP Social and Environmental Standards, (b) implement any management or mitigation plan prepared for the project or programme to comply with such standards, and (c) engage in a constructive and timely manner to address any concerns and complaints raised through the Accountability Mechanism. UNDP will seek to ensure that communities and other project stakeholders are informed of and have access to the Accountability Mechanism.
6. All signatories to the Project Document shall cooperate in good faith with any exercise to evaluate any programme or project-related commitments or compliance with the UNDP Social and Environmental Standards. This includes providing access to project sites, relevant personnel, information, and documentation.

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## **X. ANNEXES**

## Annex 1 - Risk Log

#	Description	When Identified	Type	Impact & Probability (1 low - to 5 high)	Counter measures / Management response	Owner
1	Risk due to elections	Project design stage	Strategic	Elections cause distraction in public administration  Probability = 4 Impact = 3	- By the time elections take place; most of the results of the project would have been completed or well under way. The cycle of the project is very much related to the academic year	MoES UNDP
1	Risk due to the untimely completion of drafting and approval of by-laws and ministerial acts.	Project design stage	Operational Organizational Strategic	Delays associated to completion and approval of by-laws will affect the reform roll out by the beginning of the new academic year 2016 - 2017  Probability = 4 Impact = 3	- Increased attention will be paid to those acts that are necessary to be ready and approved by October 2016 - Appropriate coordination ensured by Ministry of Education and Sports - Responsiveness by UNDP to any issues that require urgent attention	MoES UNDP
2	Weak institutional capacity and inadequate coordination among responsible parties	Project design stage	Financial Operational Strategic	New institutions and agencies will be established for the management of higher education. Therefore delays may be experienced related to their capacities and full functionality.  Probability: 3 Impact: 4	- Additional efforts will be required by MoES to oversee the establishment and functionality of institutions.	MSLI
3	Coordination among international actors working in this	Project design stage	Strategic	The higher education reform is a top priority for the government. While not many actors are active, support is provided by several international	- The new donor coordination infrastructure (IPMG) will serve for open communications and information sharing among	MoES PM Office

#	Description	When Identified	Type	Impact & Probability (1 low – to 5 high)	Counter measures / Management response	Owner
	sector			agencies. The coordination and alignment of their interventions with this project will ensure synergies and avoid any issues that may arise.  Probability: 2 Impact: 2	involved actors.	
5	Difficulties may be encountered in mobilizing the right technical expertise - national and international that will assist MoES in the reform roll out		Operational	For specific issues, recruitment may be difficult to lead to suitable and available candidates  Probability: 1 Impact: 2	- Intensive discussions among project partners will fend off any likely situation to rise from this risk	MSLI UNDP



