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**Strengthening of Enhanced Capacities
for Border Control and Criminal Justice
Response towards illicit Trafficking and
Organized Crime in Albania**

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ABBREVIATIONS

DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
EU	European Union
IBM	Integrated Border Management
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IOM	International Organisation on Migration
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Project was initiated against a background of widespread criminality that included high incidence of human trafficking and drugs cultivation and smuggling. Albania, then and now, was a source country for men, women, and children subjected to human trafficking, specifically forced prostitution and forced labour, including forced begging children. Then, as also now, Albania was a transit and destination country for cannabis, heroin and cocaine: and a source country for cannabis going to EU member countries.

According to the Project Document the Border Police were largely untrained and ill-equipped. The Customs Directorate faced similar challenges in terms of equipment and training. In addition the lack of effective cooperation and coordination between the services engaged in combating illicit trafficking activities presented a further problem for the Government of Albania.

In consultation with the Albanian authorities UNODC established this Project in April 2005 with the aim of providing a balanced priority assistance package to the Government of Albania to counter illicit trafficking and disrupt organised crime activities.

The Project's Objective was to *achieve measurable progress in the strengthening of capacities for enhanced border control and criminal justice response towards illicit trafficking and organised crime in Albania.*

The Project's intended Outcomes were:

- (a) Facilitation of the implementation of the IBM strategy
- (b) Scaling-up of the operations of joint task forces
- (c) Enhanced use of criminal intelligence as a tool to interdicting illicit trafficking
- (d) Strengthening the capacities of prosecution and police in investigating AHT activities
- (e) Supporting special operation works and undercover methods
- (f) Strengthening institutional capacity of policy making bodies

The main activities undertaken by the Project were:

- (a) Organising and delivery of training, including Train The Trainer courses
- (b) Organising study visits to other countries
- (c) Provision of expert advice on policy, practice and legislation
- (d) Procurement of equipment

The Project, which was originally scheduled to run for two years, in fact operated for seven years and nine months. There were five Project Revisions: although these resulted in minor modifications in emphasis they did not signify any substantial alteration to the Project's overall approach. Three of the Revisions provided for additional funding and timeline extensions; thus enabling the Project to run for five years and nine months longer than originally planned.

As with any project evaluation the two overarching questions that needed to be addressed in this Final Evaluation were: is UNODC doing the right things and is UNODC doing things right?

For this evaluation an approach based on Rapid Appraisal principles was utilised: this being an appropriate means for securing answers to the significant questions associated with the Project's progress.

Given the limited time allocated for the field mission (three full working days); it did not prove logistically practical to visit any border posts. It was also not possible to meet with officials who had participated in the Project's various training events and study visits; the Project having already terminated and the participants dispersed across the country's twelve operational areas.

Data for this evaluation was secured through the conduct of interviews with fourteen stakeholders, who had been identified by UNODC as key informants, and the review of Project documentation and relevant reports published by UNODC and other international institutions.

In respect of documentation, there was a content analysis of the sixteen papers relating to the Project that were provided by UNODC and reviews of articles and reports relating to the subject area.

The available evidence points to the conclusion that, in terms of technical soundness, the Project's design and management were missing several significant elements, particularly in respect of the identification of baseline data and the absence of a monitoring and evaluation framework to provide a structured mechanism for measuring the progress and impact of its activities. There is a disconnect with the statement, repeated in each of the Project Revisions to the effect that: monitoring and evaluation, an integral component of the project, *will be strengthened*. As a consequence of the above shortcomings, there are weaknesses in the supporting evidence for the achievements claimed for the Project.

The Project's Objective was clearly expressed and consistent with the issues and challenges as perceived by UNODC and the Albanian authorities: and the means by which UNODC planned to achieve the Objective were in keeping with the generality of capacity building interventions in rule of law settings and consistent with the Project's analysis and aspirations.

All the key informants who were interviewed in the course of this evaluation confirmed that the Project's Objective and interventions were relevant to the border management, human trafficking and counter narcotics challenges in Albania. This was confirmed in the documentation reviewed in the course of this evaluation, as was the Project's consistency with UNODC's policies and strategies.

While not achieving all the components of its Objective the available quantitative and qualitative data point to the Project making substantial contributions in respect of:

- (a) The procurement of much needed equipment, especially in the Project's earlier period
- (b) Making a much heralded contribution to the successful promotion of an ethos of inter-departmental teamwork
- (c) Making a significant contribution to the professional development of police and customs officials through training and study visits
- (d) Supporting innovations such as the establishment of a helpline for trafficked persons
- (e) Promoting intelligence led investigation approaches

With several technical assistance initiatives with similar mandates operating in parallel; it is difficult to disaggregate the Project's specific impact from that of other programmes. In

attempting this, heavy reliance needs to be placed on the testimony of key informants. These informants pointed to the Project having had an enduring impact within the areas of inter-departmental teamwork, intelligence led investigation and the enhancement of front-line officials' professional knowledge and skills.

As an indicator of impact: according to commentary provided by the Anti-Drugs Section, from a baseline of zero before the Project commenced there has been a steady increase in seizures and arrests. There were 185 narcotics related cases detected in 2005 and 916 in 2012: in 2005 there were 12 intelligence-led narcotics investigations, in 2012 there were 48.

The response to human trafficking activities has been significantly less successful: of the 27 investigations in 2011, five resulted in convictions; a reduction on 2010 when there were 29 investigations and 11 convictions.

Throughout the Project's duration Border Police and Customs demonstrated a high degree of commitment to supporting its training activities. They part-funded the delivery of courses and facilitated the attendance of officials. Both organisations were also committed to the "train the trainer" programmes and senior officials reported that participants in these were delivering in-service courses for colleagues.

Albanian and donor informants were unanimous in the view that there was a close and productive partnership between the Project and counterparts in Police, Customs and Ministry of Interior. Senior officials confirmed that there was frequent communication between them and UNODC and that the Project was responsive to requests for assistance. One respondent characterised the Project as being a strong partner who was "there for you: responsive to needs, flexible in approach and effective".

There was a consensus among informants that there was a continuing requirement for technical assistance in respect of: legal advice, standard operating procedures, management, organisational development and training.

While there is no likelihood of this Project being revived, informants believed there was a probability that other donor programmes will provide support in these areas.

However, it is recommended that the following be taken into account should that eventuality arise.

In the light of the current pressures on domestic economies, major donor agencies, particularly DFID, World Bank and USAid, now place much greater emphasis on sound project management, including evidence based results and demonstrated value for money than might have been the case when the Project was initiated.

It is recommended that any future initiative of this nature adhere closely to the principles, processes and protocols of best practice project management.

Informants emphasised that there remained much to be done in respect of Anti-Drugs and Anti-Trafficking: for example, there is seen to be a pressing need to improve security at the Green Borders as an example of work yet to be completed and, as the statistics clearly indicate, with human trafficking being such a major social and law enforcement challenge there has been very limited success in bringing traffickers to justice.

It is recommended that any future initiative pay particular attention to green border issues and the need to increase the number of prosecutions of traffickers.

SUMMARY MATRIX OF FINDINGS, EVIDENCE AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Findings¹: problems and issues identified	Evidence (sources that substantiate findings)	Recommendations²
<p>The Project concept of itself was well grounded and the Objective consistent with the perceptions and aspirations of the Government of Albania. There were shortcomings in the process by which this Project was designed and these have resulted negatively on aspects of project management. In particular the absence of measurable baselines and a monitoring and evaluation framework meant that there were no accessible on-going indicators of the Project's progress and impact, rooted in systematically secured evidence.</p>	<p>Supportive statements by senior officials endorsing the Project's Objective and activities.</p> <p>Documentation and discussion with UNODC official indicate that Project design was lacking specified baseline, M&E framework, indicators of success, milestones, theory of change, risk assessment</p>	<p>It is recommended that any future initiative adhere to the principles and practices of good project design: this being the responsibility of the designated project manager and those in UNODC HQ with oversight responsibilities.</p>
<p>The Project's Objective and activities were highly relevant to the presenting challenges and the priorities of the Albanian authorities. This was the case at the outset of the Project and remained so throughout.</p> <p>There were no significant problems or issues with regard to this aspect of the Project's operation.</p>	<p>Reports on human trafficking and narcotics by international organisations, Albanian reports and the testimony of senior officials and donors</p>	<p>It is recommended that any future initiative in this area continue with the proactive and continuous reference to the challenges and priorities of the Albanian authorities, which might change in content and emphasis through time. The harmonisation of project objective and activities with these, and with UNODC policies should be confirmed in the project's periodic reporting.</p>
<p>The Project was effective in relation to:</p>	<p>Annual reports, key informant interviews and statistical data</p>	<p>It is recommended that any future initiative in this area provide more systematic and</p>

¹ A finding uses evidence from data collection to allow for a factual statement.

² Recommendations are proposals aimed at enhancing the effectiveness, quality, or efficiency of a project/programme; at redesigning the objectives; and/or at the reallocation of resources. For accuracy and credibility, recommendations should be the logical implications of the findings and conclusions.

<p>(a) The procurement of much needed equipment, especially in the Project's earlier period</p> <p>(b) Making a much heralded contribution to the successful promotion of an ethos of inter-departmental teamwork</p> <p>(c) Making a significant contribution to the professional development of police and customs officials through training and study visits</p> <p>(d) Supporting innovations such as the establishment of a helpline for trafficked persons</p> <p>(e) Promoting intelligence lead investigation approaches</p> <p>Apart from the lack of a more structured and systematic monitoring framework that would have provided firmer evidence for the project's effectiveness, there were no significant problems or issues with regard to this aspect of the Project's operation.</p>		<p>tested monitoring of the effectiveness of project's activities.</p>
<p>The Project had an enduring impact on the development of an ethos of inter-departmental collaboration and intelligence lead investigation.</p> <p>There were no significant problems or issues with regard to this aspect of the Project's operation.</p>	<p>Key informant interviews, annual reports</p>	<p>Although the project is now over, consideration should be given to "showcasing" its achievements in this area, possibly by the production of a case study and/or the use of Albania as a study tour destination and/or engaging Albanian officials as mentors to those attempting similar transformations elsewhere.</p>
<p>The training element of the Project's activities will be sustained by the Albanian authorities.</p> <p>There were no significant problems or issues with regard to this aspect of the Project's operation.</p>	<p>Key informant interviews</p>	<p>It would be helpful if UNODC could maintain some continuing contact with Albanian counterparts, involving them in training activities, particularly train the trainer events that might be held regionally or in Vienna.</p>
<p>The Project worked in close partnership with Albanian counterparts at policy, strategy</p>	<p>Key informant interviews</p>	<p>Given the well developed network of collaborative partnership that has been</p>

<p>and operational levels, across the spectrum of institutional stakeholders. While it partnered with IOM on some activities, there was little collaboration with other technical assistance providers.</p>		<p>established by the project, it would be useful if UNODC could maintain an ongoing association with Albanian counterparts; by involving them in regional initiatives or by, for example, supporting periodic workshops, roundtables etc.</p>
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I. INTRODUCTION

Background and Context

In the context of its own national security, international commitments and its Stabilisation and Association Agreement with the EU, Albania is committed to strengthening border control and pursuing a strategy of integrated border management to support this. As a result there have been concerted efforts at improving cooperation between those agencies within the country that deal with different aspects of border control: in particular the Border Police and Customs, and cooperation with neighbouring EU member states and other countries; as Albania is committed to under the terms of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime.

Two of the major issues confronting the Albanian authorities are the trafficking of people and drugs.

Albania is a source country for men, women, and children subjected to human trafficking, specifically forced prostitution and forced labour, including forced begging by children. Albanian victims are subjected to conditions of forced labour and sex trafficking within Albania and Greece, Italy, Macedonia, Kosovo, and Western Europe. While in the past there was a significant transit element, more recently the phenomenon has been domestically generated.

The US State Department considers Albania to be a Tier 2 country for human trafficking. That is, *Albania does not fully comply with the TVPA's minimum standards, but is making significant efforts to bring itself into compliance with those standards AND: A) The absolute number of victims of severe forms of trafficking is very significant or is significantly increasing; b) There is a failure to provide evidence of increasing efforts to combat severe forms of human trafficking from the previous year.*³ Albania is a signatory to no fewer than nine international conventions, agreements and protocols on human trafficking.⁴

With regard to narcotics, according to the INCSR Albania is a transit and destination country for cannabis, heroin and cocaine; and a source country for cannabis going to EU member countries. The Report concludes that Albanian authorities effected significant increases in drug seizures and arrests in 2012, a rise in enforcement activity attributable to better police training and techniques, including enhanced risk analysis and better use of donated equipment.⁵

The mission statement of the National Strategy Against Drugs 2012–16 is to: *protect public safety and the life and health of individuals and communities through minimizing the risks and of other damages deriving from drugs via a national coordinated action.* The main National Anti-

³ Source: US Department of State, 2012 Trafficking in Persons Report – Albania, June 2012

⁴ Source: Ciacci J, “Trafficking Dilemmas in Albania”, Lund University, 2011. Some of International conventions and protocols ratified and signed by the Albanian government are: UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress & Punish human Trafficking ILO Convention 182, Elimination of Worst Forms of Child Labor Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child in Armed Conflict ILO Convention 29, Forced Labour ILO Convention 105, Abolition of Forced Labour.

⁵ Source: US Department of State, “International Narcotics Control Strategy Report, 2013

Drug Principles derive from the Constitution of the Republic of Albania, the UN Conventions, international and national legislation in this domain and from the objectives Albanian society has to meet in its membership process to EU.⁶

The situation in 2005, when this Project was planned, was one where the Government of Albania was committed to, and already making progress toward combating organized crime and improving border security. While there were noted advances in the areas of legislation and policy there were also numerous challenges; including a lack of professional capacity, poor inter-agency cooperation and a dearth of appropriate equipment.

According to the Project Document the *Border Police are largely untrained and ill-equipped. The Customs Directorate faces similar challenges in terms of equipment and training. In addition the lack of effective cooperation and coordination between the services engaged in combating illicit trafficking activities presents a further problem for Albania*⁷.

Against this background the Objective of the Project was to: *achieve measurable progress in the strengthening of capacities for enhanced border control and criminal justice response towards illicit trafficking and organised crime in Albania.*

The Project's intended Outcomes were:

- (a) Facilitation of the implementation of the IBM strategy
- (b) Scaling-up of the operations of joint task forces
- (c) Enhanced use of criminal intelligence as a tool to interdicting illicit trafficking
- (d) Strengthening the capacities of prosecution and police in investigating AHT activities
- (e) Supporting special operation works and undercover methods
- (f) Strengthening institutional capacity of policy making bodies

The main activities undertaken by the Project were:

- (g) Organising and delivery of training, including Train The Trainer courses
- (h) Organising study visits to other countries
- (i) Provision of expert advice on policy, practice and legislation
- (j) Procurement of equipment
- (k) Supporting innovative initiatives, such as the creation of a Help Line

According to the Project Document⁸: *the principal performance indicator is an increase in the number of successful country-level and cross-border investigations leading to large-scale seizures, arrest and prosecution of major perpetrators and disruption of organised criminal groups and organisations, both in the beneficiary country and in the EU Member States.*

⁶ Official Gazette No 85, 24 July 2012, p. 4299

⁷ UNODC Project Document, April 2005

⁸ UNODC ALBG70 Project Document, April 2005

The direct intended beneficiaries are the rule of law institutions of Albania and indirectly it is intended that the Project will support the implementation of economic and political reforms. In respect of overall strategy, the Project Document summarises this as providing a carefully balanced mix of expert advice, training and equipment required for the achievement of its objectives in counter illicit trafficking and disrupt organised criminal activities.

Although it was initially scheduled to run for twenty four months with a budget of US\$995,000, the Project's eventual duration was seven years and nine months; from April 2005 until October 2012, with a final budget of US\$2,245,024. There were five Project Revisions: although these resulted in minor modifications in emphasis they did not signify any substantial alteration to the Project's overall approach. Three of the Revisions provided for additional funding and timeline extensions; thus enabling the Project to run for five years and nine months longer than originally planned.

The overall purpose of this evaluation is to determine what the Project has achieved and if it has attained its objectives successfully and efficiently, taking into account the prevailing conditions (political, financial, technical, levels of cooperation etc.) during its implementation. In this regard, the extent to which the needs of the beneficiaries are being met as well as what has been achieved in terms of impact and sustainability are also assessed.

This evaluation seeks to draw lessons and good practices from the Project implementation which will be used to improve future project planning, design and management. Furthermore, insofar as the evidence allows, the evaluation identifies the Project's achievements, outcomes and impacts, both positive and negative.

The evaluation was undertaken by Mr. Paul Donnelly, independent consultant.

Evaluation Methodology

As with any project evaluation the two overarching questions that needed to be addressed were: *is UNODC doing the right things and is UNODC doing things right?*

Given the time limitations, an approach based on Rapid Appraisal principles was utilised: this being an appropriate means for securing answers to the significant questions associated with the Project's progress.

Rapid Appraisal methods fall on a continuum between very informal methods, such as casual conversations or short site visits, and highly formal methods, such as censuses, surveys, or experiments.

Rapid Appraisal is an effective compromise with more elaborate methods of enquiry and has proven benefit in enabling decision making at policy and programme levels. As well as facilitating institutional review it offers context and interpretation of the available data and can provide accessible understanding of complex environments, illustrating people's experiences, attitudes and aspirations.

In-built into the Rapid Appraisal approach is the flexibility to explore emerging issues and trends. It can assist in the identification of effective ways forward for improving the impact of the programme's activities. The flexibility of the approach allowed for reviewing the evaluation on a continuous basis, making adjustments as necessary in the light of emerging trends, discoveries and challenges.

In collecting key informant evidence for this evaluation it has been important to secure triangulated data across all key stakeholder interests:

- (a) The Ministry of Interior of Albania through the Albanian State Police Directorate, Department of Fight against Organized and Serious Crime and Department of Border Police and Migration.
- (b) Office of the National Coordinator on AHT Issues.
- (c) The General Customs Directorate of Albania.
- (d) Serious Crime Prosecution Office.
- (e) The Project Donor, the Government of Italy

At the outset of the field mission UNODC provided a list of fourteen key informants: donor representatives and senior officials, drawn from across the institutions listed above, who were in a position to provide information and opinion on the Project's activities, achievements and shortcomings as well as supplying contextual background material, documentary and statistical data.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with each of these senior personnel who provided responses, from their various perspectives, to the following areas of enquiry:

- (a) *The circumstances pertaining before the inception of the Project*
- (b) *The contribution that the Project had made*
- (c) *The Project's achievement and their impact*
- (d) *The sustainability of the Project's results*
- (e) *Views in respect of what could have been done better*
- (f) *Learning and recommendations for any similar activities in the future*
- (g) *Any other information that respondents considered to be of relevance*

Contemporaneous notes were made for each interview and the relevant data utilised to inform the evaluative process.

The field mission timetable (three full days) was set by UNODC in advance. Although it would have been a useful contribution to the evaluation process, it did not prove logistically practical to visit any border posts. It was also not possible to meet with a group of officials who had participated in the Project's various training events and study visits; the Project having already terminated and the participants dispersed across the country's twelve operational areas.

In respect of documentation, there was a content analysis of the sixteen papers relating to the Project that were provided by UNODC and reviews of articles and reports relating to the subject area. A list of the documents consulted is annexed to this report.

Throughout the evaluation all strands of data were considered within the context of the Project's progress toward achieving *measurable progress in the strengthening of capacities for enhanced border control and criminal justice response towards illicit trafficking and organised crime in Albania*. Qualitative data from key informants were comparatively reviewed and considered alongside the available documentation; and within the constraints of the generally limited material the presented conclusions are based on two or more evidential sources.

Limitations to the Evaluation

There were several issues that served as challenging or limiting factors in the conduct of this evaluation.

There was no Monitoring and Evaluation framework established at the outset of the Project. In each of the annual reports made available for this evaluation the section headed "Monitoring" contained the *words none to be reported*.

While the annual reports supplied by UNODC provided accounts of Project achievements these were lacking in detail and precision. To take two examples: in one report there is a statement to the effect that number of operations and arrests increased; but this does not give evidence on from which beginning level to which improvement level: in another report it is stated that participants' feedback on a training course indicated a score of 96% satisfaction; but this does not give the full number or provide evidence of the training's effectiveness in improving performance.

No "End of Project Report" had been prepared upon the completion of the Project in 2012. This would have provided a useful overview from the provider's perspective of the Project's history, progress, achievements and challenges. It would also have provided a breakdown of budgetary expenditure that would have facilitated a Value for Money critique.

Any project evaluation endeavours to provide an evidence based account of progress from a measurable beginning point toward a specified, measurable outcome. As mentioned above, the absence of any systematic baseline study at the Project's inception meant that reliance had to be placed on the recall of key informants, which understandably lacked measurable precision. The Project's logical framework was consequently lacking in baseline indicators: precise and measurable indicators for success, progress milestones or end point output measures were also substantially absent: its lack of content therefore rendered it of limited assistance to the evaluation.

While the Project Steering Committee did meet on several occasions, there are no minutes of their deliberations. Annual reports describe presentations being made on the Project's activities, but no account is given of any discussion, debate or decisions made by the Committee.

The Project was one of several donor funded initiatives, addressing similar areas of intervention. Some of these were considerably more extensively funded. It was therefore a challenge to disentangle the results of this Project from those that were operating in parallel.

The above factors inevitably impacted on the conduct of the evaluation, leading to inescapable gaps in the quantity and quality of the evidence that could be secured. However, within these constraints it has nonetheless been possible to secure a foundation of reliable evidence on which to base a credible evaluation of the Project's progress over the seven years and nine months of its operation.

II. EVALUATION FINDINGS

Design

Fundamental elements of effective project design include clarity concerning the nature and extent of the problems to be addressed, an articulated sense of the end-point objective and the output elements that contribute to this, the input means by which these will be achieved, indicators by which progress will be evidenced and specific milestones against which the pace of progress will be judged. Two other key characteristics are the preparation and continuous application of a risk assessment schedule and a framework for monitoring and evaluating progress. Finally, if a project has not been designed collaboratively with counterpart stakeholders, they at least need to share its analysis and aspirations and be committed to engaging with its implementation.

In respect of clarity concerning the nature and extent of the problems to be addressed the Project Document describes the beginning point for the Project in terms of: *combat against organised crime remains one of the priorities for Albania. Albania is a country of origin for illegally cultivated Cannabis Sativa and is also a country of origin and transit for women and sex workers trafficked or smuggled to Western European destinations. Organised criminal groups use Albania as a transit point for drugs trafficking and human beings smuggling largely due to its geographically strategic location, weakened law enforcement and judicial systems as well as porous land borders.*

The Terms of Reference for this evaluation present an image of Albania in 2005 where: *Albanian border crossing points had no sophisticated inspection equipment, no effective drug scenting dogs, no access to intelligence databases and limited communication with their headquarters. At some border crossing points, there is often no electricity or a lack of basic infrastructure. Border Police had limited vehicles and equipment for mobile patrols across an often-rugged terrain. Under such circumstances, terrorists and traffickers found conditions in Albania conducive to their illegal activities and take great advantage of the situation.*

While UNODC conducted a brief scoping mission⁹ that endorsed the above perceptions there was no preparatory political economy or baseline study undertaken as part of the Project's design phase: these would have provided credible and measurable beginning points against which to measure the Project's progress. Without undertaking free-standing research, confirming (or challenging) political economy analysis and quantitative data could possibly have been secured from Albania Government sources, international bodies and donors such as EU Delegation, US State Department, OSCE, USAid, IOM etc.

As mentioned earlier, the Project Document identifies the overarching Objective as being to *achieve measurable progress in the strengthening of capacities for enhanced border control and criminal justice response towards illicit trafficking and organised crime in Albania.* While the Project Document does not articulate a specific theory of change, the Outputs and activities identified by it do provide a sense of congruity with the overall aim of the initiative.

⁹ UNODC Mission Report conducted by Mr Mark Stanley, Coordinator for SE Europe, May 2004

The Project Revisions were triggered by the availability of additional funds and each in turn produced subtle shifts in the Project's direction as a result of donor or Albanian authorities' priorities; but there is no evidence of any substantial review of the overall design of the Project as a consequence of these. With regard to the preparation of a risk assessment schedule and the design of a monitoring and evaluation framework, neither has been a feature of the Project design. In each of the annual reports made available for this evaluation the section headed "Monitoring" contained the words *none to be reported*.

It is clear from the documentary evidence and the testimony of key informants that endorsement for establishing the initiative was forthcoming from the relevant Albanian authorities and other stakeholders. Regardless of the paucity of precise baseline data, the unanimous opinion expressed by key informants was that the Project concept was well considered and rooted in the realities of the circumstances at the time. Key informants also confirmed that Project design, including Outputs and planned activities mirrored the priorities as identified by the Albanian authorities

The preponderance of the available evidence points to the conclusion that, in terms of technical soundness, the Project's design was missing several significant elements as outlined above. As a consequence many of the claims made for the Project's achievements are weakened by the paucity of verifiable hard evidence, systematically secured through a programme of continuous monitoring.

The Project's overall Objective was clearly expressed and consistent with the issues and challenges as perceived by UNODC and the Albanian authorities: and the means by which UNODC planned to achieve the Objective were in keeping with the generality of capacity building interventions in rule of law settings and consistent with the Project's analysis and aspirations.

Relevance

The Project's expressed strategy is summarised in the Project Document as being; *a carefully balanced mix of expert advice, training and equipment required for the achievement of its objectives in counter illicit trafficking and disrupt organised criminal activities*. This was followed through in practice with programmes of equipment procurement, training, study visits, the provision of expert advice on specific policy and operational issues and funding for innovative initiatives. The senior official informants were of the unanimous view that these approaches were appropriate to the context and relevant to their departments' capacity development needs.

All the key informants who were interviewed in the course of this evaluation confirmed that the Project's Objective and interventions were relevant to the border management, human trafficking and counter narcotics challenges in Albania. This was also confirmed in the external documentation reviewed in the course of this evaluation.¹⁰ Senior officials endorsed the Project's approach as being consistent with the Government's policies, priorities and action plans: such as the National Strategy Against Drugs 2012–16 and the standard operating procedures on victim identification.

¹⁰ For example, US Department of State, 2012 Trafficking in Persons Report – Albania, June 2012
Ciacci J, "Trafficking Dilemmas in Albania", Lund University, 2011, US Department of State,
International Narcotics Control Strategy Report, 2013

The key informant and documentary evidence point to the Project's activities being in support of the international conventions and protocols to which Albania is a signatory.

UNODC's current strategic objective is to promote effective responses to transnational organized crime, illicit trafficking and illicit drug trafficking by facilitating the implementation at the normative and operational levels of the relevant United Nations Conventions and Protocols. This it pursues through research and awareness raising, promotion of the Protocols and capacity-building and the strengthening of partnership coordination. *In order to ensure the effective implementation of the Protocols in practice, UNODC provides technical assistance and capacity-building to Member States. This technical assistance covers a number of issues, including legislative assistance, the development of national policies and strategies, capacity building in terms of criminal justice responses in investigating and prosecuting crimes of human trafficking and migrant smuggling, victim support, the protection of the rights of migrants and international cooperation*¹¹.

Although the Project's establishment pre-dates the current strategy, all its activities were clearly in keeping with UNODC's current strategic direction.

Efficiency

The timeframe that was originally planned for the Project was twenty four months. As is evident from the available contextual documentation on human trafficking and narcotics, as well as the early annual reports, meeting the Objective in such a timescale was a wholly unrealistic aspiration.

While the four tranches of funding that permitted the Project to continue for an additional five years and nine months brought meeting the Objective closer, it is generally considered that "drip feeding" of resources and the uncertainties that such arrangements generate, predisposes a less efficient delivery of a project's outputs than circumstances in which funding is committed for the full duration at a project's outset.

There is insufficient data available on which to base a value for money evaluation of the Project, but it is reasonable to assume that greater certainty over funding would have allowed for more effective planning and generally been a more efficient way of proceeding. However, in its favour it has to be acknowledged that the revisions that were prompted by the funding tranches permitted a flexibility of response to counterparts' requirements than might otherwise have been the case had there been a longer-term planning and funding in place.

In considering the question of possible less costly interventions it is important to recognise that the UNODC Project played a niche role in supporting the Albanian authorities in meeting the challenges posed by human trafficking and narcotics and did so on what was relatively modest resources.

Senior officials remarked favourably on the Project's ability to respond in a timely manner to requests for assistance and commented on how valuable this was. While major donors were and are active in providing support, the Project was credited by all the officials interviewed with providing assistance in advance of most other technical assistance initiatives and making contributions that, although modest in scale, were pivotal to increasing institutional and professional capacity.

¹¹ Strategy for the period 2012–2015 for the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

Partnerships and cooperation

Albanian and donor informants were unanimous in the view that there was a close and productive partnership between the Project and counterparts in Police, Customs and Ministry of Interior. Senior officials confirmed that there was frequent communication between them and UNODC and that the Project was responsive to requests for assistance. One respondent characterised the Project as being a strong partner who was “there for you: responsive to needs, flexible in approach and effective”.

In the course of this evaluation key informants consistently identified the Project’s successful operation as being due in large measure to the efforts of UNODC’s national office. They described how UNODC Albania developed and maintained effective working partnerships with stakeholders and ensured the Project’s support for activities and acquisitions that were Albanian authorities’ priorities; and managed to do so within timelines that were much shorter than other providers could have managed.

The Project’s engagement with donors, particularly Italy and Germany was positive throughout. However, as is inevitably the case, the donor officials who were most closely engaged with the Project moved on to other postings; and their successors had considerably less involvement in the final months. Interviews with recently appointed Italian and German representatives that were conducted a part of this evaluation rendered little more than a general sense of satisfaction with the Project’s results that was based on their review of earlier documents rather than direct engagement.

While jointly with the International Organisation on Migration the Project supported public awareness campaigns and the establishment of a telephone help line for trafficked women, there were no such collaborative activities with any other programmes. However, it is clear that the UNODC office did have a comprehensive understanding of the other activities in the area and did maintain a good level of communication with other programme providers in the UN family and beyond.

Effectiveness

In considering how effective the project has been in achieving *measurable progress in the strengthening of capacities for enhanced border control and criminal justice response towards illicit trafficking and organised crime in Albania* it is useful to begin with the Project Document’s statement to the effect that: *the principal performance indicator is an increase in the number of successful country-level and cross-border investigations leading to large-scale seizures, arrest and prosecution of major perpetrators and disruption of organised criminal groups and organisations, both in the beneficiary country and in the EU Member States.*

Support to Albania’s Anti-Drug efforts has been a key component of the Project since its inception. According to commentary provided by the Anti-Drugs Section, from a baseline of zero before the Project commenced there has been a steady increase in seizures and arrests; to the extent that they are now described as a daily occurrence. Statistics provided by the Anti-Drugs Section show that there was a 495% increase in detected cases in 2012 as compared with 2005¹².

Supporting the response to human trafficking was also a major focus for the Project’s activities has been significantly less successful than in counter narcotics. Of the 27 investigations in 2011,

¹² Source: Anti-Drugs Sector Feb.2013

five resulted in convictions; a reduction on 2010 when there were 29 investigations and 11 convictions¹³.

It is worth noting that no men have been identified as victims of trafficking, although there is evidence that Albanian men are subject to forced labour in Greece and other neighbouring countries.¹⁴

The lacklustre performance in respect of human trafficking has prompted comment from the Council of Europe to the effect *that the Albanian government's official recognition of the need to increase the response to internal trafficking has yet to lead to tangible actions*.¹⁵

Although it is not realistically possible to disentangle the effectiveness of the Project's support to Albania's efforts to combat human trafficking and narcotics from those of several other donor funded initiatives, senior officials involved in these area were fulsome in their praise of its effectiveness.

According to the senior officials interviewed in the course of this evaluation, of particular assistance was the purchase of Memex software and licenses; supported by expert advice and training on operating the software to optimum effect. The introduction of Memax along with the associated inter-departmental professional development, that emphasised teamwork and an intelligence-led ethos, has been seen as making a significant contribution to the effectiveness of Anti-Drug initiatives.

In respect of operational performance, key informants underlined UNODC's emphasis on inter-departmental cooperation as an important element in the promotion of a teamwork approach to Anti-Trafficking and Anti-Drugs.

They also highlighted the significant contribution that the Project made to the development of an intelligence-led approach to Anti-Trafficking investigations which they stated contributed to a steady increase in the number of pro-active human trafficking investigations, as opposed to those instigated as a result of discoveries of trafficked people. While in the Anti-Drugs area the use of intelligence-led investigation has been demonstrated to be increasingly effective; as can be seen from the statistics, this has not been manifested in increased numbers of trafficking convictions.

Training was one of the main strands of the Project's activities and the consistent emphasis on the importance of inter-departmental teamwork was reinforced by training events and study visits that included participants from both Border Police and Customs.

While there was no documented strategy for training inputs or their planned impact prepared as part of the Project's inception, the provision of training was closely linked to preparing officials to implement new technologies or operate new equipment, as is exemplified in the case of the introduction of Memax.

The Project also responded to training requests from senior officials in the relevant departments. Examples of this are to be found in such course as the training in skills relating to the interviewing of victims specifically for those officials involved in Anti-Trafficking, and which was considered by Ministry of Interior informants to be of particular value. Senior officials also highlighted the significant contribution that the Project's training courses made to the

¹³ Source: Ministry of Interior 2013

¹⁴ US Department of State, 2012 Trafficking in Persons Report – Albania, June 2012

¹⁵ Council of Europe, Report Concerning the Implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Action Against Trafficking in Human Beings by Albania, December 2011

development of an intelligence-led investigation approach to Anti-Trafficking and the interception of narcotics.

The project's annual reports describe how in their feedback course participants were positive about the relevance of the training inputs and course materials for their professional roles. Course materials were available in Albanian and associated with this was the translation of the UNODC Criminal Intelligence Training Module into Albanian and its promotion as a contributing element in the development of a national level training curriculum in this area.

Beyond the relevance of training course content and participants' satisfaction or otherwise with this the key question concerns the degree to which learning from training is transferred into day to day working practices.

It would appear that the Project's training evaluations are based on Kirkpatrick's four-level model and specifically two levels of that model, namely reaction and learning: did participants enjoy and value the training content and did they consider that they learned from it? Establishing the impact of training would entail engagement with the third and fourth levels, namely observed behaviour and confirmed results over time.¹⁶

While there is no evidence of the Project engaging in such a systematic follow-up to training courses, all the key informants interviewed expressed a high degree of satisfaction, from their different perspectives, with the content, delivery and effectiveness of the training provided. An indicator of the Albanian authorities' commitment to the training provided by the Project was their commitment to proving premises, refreshments, travel and subsistence payments for course participants.

The Project's procurement of equipment ranged from the purchase of vehicles, dog transporters, search kits and rummage equipment to the provision of IT hardware and software. While in the early stages of the Project procurement of equipment was a major element of its activities; as it progressed there was a greater emphasis on professional development by means of training programmes and overseas study visits as well as on the provision of expert advice on policy and legislative matters.

At a policy level, the Project provided the Albanian authorities with expert advice on international commitments, legislation, strategy and operational procedures. According to key informants this was valued and made a useful contribution to policy and practice.

Impact

Given the relative paucity of hard, measurable evidence for the Project's performance any assessment of its impact has, of necessity, to lend considerable weight to the testimony of key informants.

However, when the lack of hard data was discussed with one informant they replied that "not everything is tangible"; meaning that some of the benefits from the Project were not susceptible to quantifiable measurement.

¹⁶ Kirkpatrick D.L. & Kirkpatrick J.D. (2006). *Evaluating Training Programs* (3rd ed.) San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler

Each of the senior officials in the Police and Customs who were interviewed in the course of this evaluation considered that the Project had made significant contributions to: the enhancement of relationships across the departments, the promotion of an integrated approach to border management and an increase in technical, institutional and professional capacity.

An aspect that informants singled out as being particularly relevant was the emphasis placed throughout the Project's activities on the principle of inter-departmental teamwork. In respect of the inter-departmental working arrangements, one respondent commented to the effect that the Customs Service has never been as close to the Border Police as they are now and this was directly attributable to the influence of the Project. Informants cited examples of police and customs working together on vehicle searches and joint use of equipment at border crossings as one example of this.

Informants were particularly impressed with the quality of the professional development achieved as a result of inter-departmental training and the transfer of training skills through "train the trainer" courses. There was unanimity of opinion on the part of the Albanian informants to the effect that closer inter-departmental cooperation and an intelligence-led approach to tackling organised crime, both of which have their origins in the Project's intervention; are now fully embedded in Albania's approach to border management and organised crime.

A common response on the part of senior officials was the underlining of the importance of promoting officials' confidence in their professional capacities. While the Project was credited with contributing to this, one respondent emphasised that this was "still a work in progress". This sentiment was echoed by another official who was of the view that, while professional development had certainly been furthered by the Project, there was still a sense that there remained some hesitation on the part of officials to exercising this to the fullest extent.

With regard to the long-term impact of the Project's activities, the comment of one informant to the effect that it "left a very good taste"; meaning that, without being specific, the repercussions of its intervention were still being felt, encapsulated the overall opinion of all those interviewed in the course of this evaluation.

Sustainability

Informants in the Policing, Customs and the Ministry of Interior reported that, while initially there was considerable reliance on the Project for procuring equipment and vehicles, due to increased departmental budgets this tapered off to the extent that in later years the capacity building requirements were almost entirely in the area of professional development and policy advice. The Project's mandate in respect of procurement being fulfilled there is no sense of there being any continuing need for externally supported intervention in this area.

Throughout the Project's duration Border Police and Customs demonstrated a high degree of commitment to supporting its training activities. They part-funded the delivery of courses and facilitated the attendance of officials. Both organisations were also committed to the "train the trainer" programmes and senior officials reported that participants in these were delivering in-service courses for colleagues.

With regard to those challenges that remain, among these is the continuation of the "work in progress" relating to developing the confidence of officials who have professionally benefited from the Project's interventions. Senior officials confirmed that they are committed to working on this aspect of capacity building.

There was a consensus among informants that there was a continuing requirement for technical assistance in respect of: legal advice, standard operating procedures, management, organisational development and training.

While there is no likelihood of this Project being revived there is a good probability that other donor programmes will provide support in these areas.

III. CONCLUSIONS

The preponderance of the available evidence points to the following conclusions.

There were shortcomings in the process by which this Project was designed and these have resulted negatively on aspects of project management. In particular the absence of measurable baselines and a monitoring and evaluation framework meant that there were no accessible on-going indicators of the Project's progress and impact, rooted in systematically secured evidence.

From the available externally published documentation and the qualitative data obtained from the key informants, it is evident that the Project's Objective was aligned with the current policy priorities and action plans of Albania and UNODC mandates. The Project did demonstrate a high degree of relevance in respect of border management, human trafficking and counter narcotics: and its Objective and activities reflected this. Although not extensively involved in collaborative efforts with others the Project management did have a good grasp of the areas of activity supported by other donors.

While not achieving all the components of its Objective the available quantitative and qualitative data point to the Project making substantial progress toward meeting it.

The procurement of much needed equipment, especially in the Project's earlier years made a major contribution to border management and crime detection: importantly, this was matched by comprehensive training in Albania and overseas in the effective use of this equipment.

The Project made a much heralded contribution to the successful promotion of an ethos of inter-departmental teamwork. This was frequently commented on by senior officials as being of pivotal importance to the increased efficiency, effectiveness and morale of law enforcement personnel.

While evidently making a significant contribution to the professional development of police and customs officials through training and study visits, the train the trainer programme predisposed the continuation of these activities after the Project ended.

Although modest in scale, the Project's support to innovations such as the establishment of a helpline for trafficked persons and of public awareness campaigns made a welcome, if not easily measurable, contribution to anti-drugs and anti-trafficking efforts by the Albanian authorities.

The Project's promotion of intelligence lead investigation approaches was credited by officials as supporting a sea change in the way in which criminal investigation is conducted. While the successes in the area of anti-drugs are evident of the impact of the approach, the evidence for anti-trafficking is considerably less compelling.

As has been mentioned already, with several technical assistance initiatives, with similar mandates, operating in parallel; it is difficult to disaggregate the Project's impact from that of other programmes. In attempting this, heavy reliance needed to be placed on the testimony of key informants. These informants pointed to the Project having had an enduring impact within the areas of inter-departmental teamwork, intelligence lead investigation and the enhancement of front-line officials' professional knowledge and skills.

Senior officials confirmed that they remained committed to continuing with the training regime that was instigated by the Project and the current and planned activities in this area stand as testament to this.

The Project forged a close and positive partnership with counterparts in the Police, Customs and Ministry of Interior: every person interviewed spoke highly of the Project's responsiveness, flexibility and level of cooperation with the Albanian authorities.

There were deficiencies in some aspects of project management, particularly in respect of monitoring and evaluation, which had an overall detrimental effect on the Project's ability to measure its progress accurately and underpin some of its successes in firm evidence.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

Although the Project has closed and there are no immediate plans to replace it, it is recommended that the following be taken into account should that eventuality arise.

Particularly in the light of the current pressures on domestic economies, major donor agencies, including DFID, World Bank, EU and USAid, now place greater emphasis on sound project management, including evidence based results and demonstrated value for money than might have been the case when the Project was initiated.

It is recommended that any future initiative of this nature adhere closely to the principles, processes and protocols of best practice project management.

In particular the preparatory stages of the Project would need to develop and put into operation a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework. This would ensure that the Project's achievements were based on systematically secured firm evidence, gathered throughout the Project's duration and offering demonstrable confirmation of any successes that might be claimed.

Informants emphasised that there remained much to be done in respect of Anti-Drugs and Anti-Trafficking: for example, there is seen to be a pressing need to improve security at the Green Borders as an example of work yet to be completed and, as the statistics clearly indicate, with human trafficking being such a major social and law enforcement challenge there has been very limited success in bringing traffickers to justice.

It is recommended that any future initiative pay particular attention to green border issues and the need to increase the number of prosecutions of traffickers.

With the evident improvements in other aspects of border control, green border issues stand out as being a remaining area requiring substantial technical support. While the Albanian authorities are acknowledged as making considerable efforts and there is a commitment to intelligence-led law enforcement resulting in pro-active criminal investigation, the low level of prosecutions relating to trafficking in persons is a source of major concern is a prompt to evaluating the effectiveness of current practices and providing further expert advice and capacity building.

Several informants also expressed unease at UNODC activities in Albania being subsumed into Regional programmes. They were concerned that Albania's particular circumstances and needs would not be given the appropriate attention.

It is recommended that in the planning and conduct of Regional programmes UNODC pay particular attention to the specific needs and aspirations of Albanian stakeholders.

This would represent a continuation of the effective partnership already existing between UNODC and the Albanian authorities and provide targeted support in those areas where Albanian priorities might not exactly parallel those of other jurisdictions in the Region.

V. LESSONS LEARNED

There were two important areas where lessons can be drawn from the experience in delivering this Project.

Firstly, the establishment of an Integrated Border Management framework in 2005 and the technical assistance support provided continuously throughout the Project's duration has seen the increasing sophistication, effectiveness and impact of the management measures that have been put in place. The keynote to their success has been the high quality of the technical assistance input, the Project's responsiveness to the Albanian policies and priorities, effective stakeholder partnerships and, importantly the fact that the Project lasted for over seven years. Another valuable lesson to be drawn from this is that substantial and sustainable change takes time; often a longer period of time than is generally allowed for by donors and governments in planning initiatives such as this Project.

Secondly, the activities and outputs of the Project have underlined the important positive results to be gained through the development and operation of an integrated approach to the development and delivery of border management. Time and again key informants paid tribute to the inter-agency teamwork engendered by the Project's approach to training and operational practice. In facilitating a dynamic move from "stove pipe" approaches on the part of the agencies involved, through to cooperation and toward collaboration in multi-disciplinary teamwork the Project has underlined the lesson that agencies achieve most when they operate together toward shared objectives: their combined efforts produce greater results, more effectively and more efficiently; and, as testified by key informants, the morale of officials is consequently enhanced.

ANNEX I. TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE EVALUATION

1. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The project aimed to provide a balanced priority assistance package to the Government of Albania to counter illicit trafficking and disrupt organized criminal activities. It provided direct assistance to strengthen capacities to detect illicit drugs and other trafficking activities, especially at the eastern border crossing points and green border, through the provision of technical equipment and training. The project introduced modern concepts of an ‘intelligence-led’ approach to Police and Customs enforcement services and promoted national and regional information exchange and cross border cooperation. It additionally focused on sensitive operational areas and strengthened regional operational cooperation. The project generally raised the institutional capacity in the fight against drugs contributing to the national drugs’ strategy and action plan for its implementation and aimed at strengthening the criminal justice system to counter organized crime and trafficking in human beings. Both the beneficiary agencies and other technical assistance organizations comprising the International Consortium had been fully consulted in the development of the project and its activities and concurred with the urgency and relevance of its intervention.

Project number:	Project ALBG70
Project title:	Strengthening of Enhanced Capacities for Border Control and Criminal Justice Response towards Illicit Trafficking and Organized Crime in Albania
Duration:	7 years and 9 months
Location:	Tirana
Linkages to Country Programme	
Linkages to Regional Programme	Regional Programme on Promoting Rule of Law and Human Security in SEE
Linkages to Thematic Programme	Organized Crime and Border control (first sub programme component)
Executing Agency:	UNODC
Partner Organizations:	Albanian Ministry of Interior, General Customs Directorate, Serious Crime Prosecution Office
Total Approved Budget:	
Donors:	Italy, Germany
Project Manager/Coordinator:	Ela Banaj

Type of evaluation (mid-term or final):	Final
Time period covered by the evaluation:	April 2005 – December 2012
Geographical coverage of the evaluation:	Albania, Tirana
Core Learning Partners (entities)	Ministry of Interior, Customs Directorate, Prosecution Office, ICITAP, IOM, UN agencies

At the time when the project was drafted organized criminal gangs had converted certain areas of Albania into havens of criminal activity and exercise strict control over trafficking of drugs, women, children and illegal immigration to Western Europe and principally in the first instance to Italy. Domestic gangs cooperate with well-organized international groups focusing mainly on smuggling, including weapons, drugs, stolen goods and people. The eastern Borders, particularly with Kosovo and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, offered great challenges to effective border management and the detection of illicit goods. The Border Police were largely untrained and ill-equipped. The Customs Directorate faced similar challenges in terms of equipment and training. In addition, the lack of effective cooperation and coordination between the services engaged in combating illicit trafficking activities presented a further problem for Albania.

Albanian border crossing points had no sophisticated inspection equipment, no effective drug scenting dogs, no access to intelligence databases and limited communication with their headquarters. At some border crossing points, there is often no electricity or a lack of basic infrastructure. Border Police had limited vehicles and equipment for mobile patrols across an often-rugged terrain. Under such circumstances, terrorists and traffickers found conditions in Albania conducive to their illegal activities and take great advantage of the situation.

There was a general consensus both in the region and beyond that, given the scale of ongoing drug trafficking and the level of its organization, and in view of the existence of numerous landing points and border crossing points, disruption of these criminal operations is feasible only by means of dismantling of criminal organizations. The latter could be best achieved through intelligence-led operations.

Strengthened intelligence analysis capacity in South Eastern Europe, amongst other factors, would improve the efficiency of criminal investigations and thus directly contribute to the objective of stopping the expansion and proliferation of the organized crime in general and drug related activities in particular.

2. DISBURSEMENT HISTORY

Overall Budget (time period)	Total Approved Budget (time period)	Expenditure (time period)	Expenditure in % (time period)
2,245,024 \$ 7 years 10 months	2,245,024 \$ 7 years 10 months	2,187,041 \$ 7 years 7 months	97% 7 years 7 months

3. PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

The final independent evaluation is commissioned by the Project office in Tirana. The overall purpose of this evaluation is to determine what the project has achieved and if it has attained its objectives successfully and efficiently, taking into account the prevailing conditions (political, financial, technical, levels of cooperation etc.) during its implementation. In this regard, the extent to which the needs of the beneficiaries are being met as well as what has been achieved in terms of impact and sustainability should also be assessed.

The evaluation will seek to draw lessons and good practices from the project implementation which will be used to improve future project planning, design and management. Furthermore, the evaluation must seek to measure the project's achievements, outcomes and impacts, both positive and negative.

The main stakeholders of this project are:

1. The Ministry of Interior of Albania through the Albanian State Police Directorate, Department of Fight against Organized and Serious Crime and Department of Border Police and Migration.
2. Office of the National Coordinator on AHT Issues.
3. The General Customs Directorate of Albania.
4. Another stakeholder less central to the project includes Serious Crime Prosecution Office.
5. The Project Donor, the Government of Italy
6. UNODC Office

Austria

Regional Section for Europe, Latin America and Caribbean

Albania

National Project Office

4. SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

The evaluation shall focus mainly on the project's concept, design, implementation, results, outputs and outcomes. The evaluation will cover the entire period of project implementation i.e 7 years and 10 months. It will cover Tirana as well as Qafe Thana Border Crossing Point and Vlora Blue Border.

The project has not been evaluated before at any of its stages. Project Steering Committee meetings have been organized to review the progress made and identify deficiencies which have been well considered and incorporated in the project revisions and extensions. The project has gone through various extensions due to receipt of additional earmarked funding.

The evaluation should appraise:

(a) Project concept and design:

The evaluation should analyse whether and how the project contributed to priority areas, thematic and result areas of the UNODC. It should review the problems identified by the project and the corresponding strategy chosen in order to address these. The evaluation should also encompass an assessment of the relevance and attainability of the objectives and of planned outputs, activities and inputs, as compared to other cost-effective alternatives. An analysis of the clarity, logic and coherence of the project as a whole should also be conducted.

(b) Objectives, outputs, impact and sustainability:

The evaluation should seek to determine to what extent results have been achieved, and if not fully, whether there has been some progress made towards their achievement. Taking into account these factors, the overall impact of the project should be assessed. A fundamental aspect in this respect is beneficiary capacity building (and whether the beneficiaries have gained the necessary tools and skills). This should also encompass the likely sustainability of results and benefits as well as the project's contribution to law

enforcement agency capacity building and its capability to investigate organized crime cases. In addition, the beneficiaries' perception towards the achievements should be taken into consideration.

The evaluation should assess how effectively / efficiently project planning and implementation have been carried out. This includes assessing the extent to which organizational structure, managerial support and coordination mechanisms used by the UNODC effectively supported the project. Efficiency should be analyzed namely as the project's capacity to achieve the desired effects at an acceptable cost when compared to any alternative approaches which may have enabled reaching the same effects. The role played by the field office and regional field office in the development and implementation of the project or program should also be assessed. The evaluation should analyze problems and constraints encountered during implementation as well as the quality and timeliness of inputs and the efficiency and effectiveness of the activities carried out.

(d) Lessons learned and good practices from the concept, design and implementation of the project, as well as:

Recommendations may be made on issues relating to the implementation and management of the project as well as follow up projects dealing with the same issues. The evaluation shall assess in what ways the project design and / or delivery can be improved to enhance its effectiveness. The evaluation should also identify the key elements, assumptions and risks for the development of similar initiatives in this and other regions.

5. EVALUATION CRITERIA AND KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS

(a) Project concept and design:

- Was the design of the project technically sound?
- Were the project objectives clear, realistic and coherent in terms of collectively contributing to the further enhancement of the operational capacities to investigate and disrupt illicit activities at the Albanian green and blue border and the strengthening of law enforcement cooperation?

(b) Relevance

- Were the objectives of the project aligned with the current policy priorities and action plans of Albania and UNODC mandates?
- Was the implementation strategy appropriate for meeting the stated objectives, with a focus on assessing project elements directly related to capacity building and coordination mechanisms between the law enforcement agencies of Albania?
- How well did the project objectives reflect the specific nature of the problem and needs of the countries' law enforcement agencies and criminal justice development in general in the project beneficiary country?
- To what extent were complementarities and synergies of the project with other projects implemented by UNODC and other organisations and donor bodies in Albania created?
- Is there an appropriate mechanism in place to monitor and assess the overall progress of the project?
- Was a formal or informal situation analysis of the technical equipment needs produced?

(c) Effectiveness

- To what extent has the project achieved its objectives?
- Overall what are the reasons for the achievement and non-achievement of specific objectives?
- Was a formal or informal situation analysis of baseline situation produced? Were recommendations made to design programmes to enhance the prevailing situation with regard to the human trafficking investigation capacities of the specialized units of the police and the border police, and the law enforcement regional cooperation?
- Was training element key in the project? Is the training material produced under this project technically appropriate? Is the training material produced under this project available in local

language? Is the training material available for further future use by the law enforcement personnel in training?

- Did the staff trained during courses given by the project subsequently have the opportunity to utilise their skills learned in their future work environments?
- Were a training strategy and / or training programmes developed? Were the training programmes delivered in accordance with needs of their recipients?
- In an overall context, was the training provided effective?
- Was the project able to purchase and supply the technical equipment needed?
- Were law enforcement officials adequately trained in the use of such equipment?
- Was the equipment used for the intended purpose of facilitating law enforcement operations in the area of anti-trafficking?
- Were missions conducted to beneficiary country? Who conducted the visits? Who were the counterparts met?
- Did the visits entail mentoring / support to the criminal intelligence analysis units of the police?
- Were mission reports produced? Did the reports include recommendations and follow up actions?

(d) Efficiency

- In particular, was the timeframe allowed for in the project design feasible to enable its objectives to be achieved?
- Did alternative less costly interventions/methods exist which could have been utilised in designing this project in achieving the same outcome/impact at the beneficiary level?
- How did internal UNODC factors affect the effectiveness of project implementation including availability of human resources, logistical support, the level, predictability and regularity of resources and flexibility of the budget (UNODC constraints)?

(e) Impact

- Did the staff trained during the courses given by the project subsequently have the opportunity to utilise their skills learned in their future work environments?
- What are the positive and negative, intended and unintended, effects / outcome of the project interventions / activities in general including those affecting the beneficiary country's law enforcement agencies and other donor organisations?
- What are the perceptions of the different stakeholders, especially the Ministry of Interior of the country involved in the project, other UN agencies, the project donor (Italy) and other bilateral and multilateral donors about the overall impact of UNODC's project activities?
- To what extent did the project contribute to the achievement of any formal or informal development strategies with regard to the enhancement of investigations of organized crime cases and strengthening of border control?
- What is the anticipated positive and negative, intended and unintended, effects of interventions on the law enforcement agencies of the country involved in the project and other donor organizations in this country following implementation of this project? impact

(f) Sustainability

- To what extent are the project interventions/activities sustainable?
- What concrete actions or measures have been taken or are required to ensure the sustainability of the practices and structures established/strengthened by the project (e.g. working practise, working structures and behaviour change)?
- Does the country have the financial resources to ensure follow-up activities?
- How have project achievements and lessons learned been disseminated to the stakeholders?
- What are the outstanding needs of Albania's law enforcement agencies with regard to the enhancement of organized crime investigation capacities and law enforcement cooperation (locally and regionally)?

(g) Partnership and coordination

- To what extent have partnership / partnerships been sought with other relevant actors (including UN-agencies) and synergies been created in the delivery of assistance?
- Overall was there effective coordination among government, UNODC and other partners?
- Has adequate and appropriate backstopping support been provided by field and HQ staff (administrative / managerial support and coordination)?
- How did factors like constraints and administrative processes regarding communications with project focal points, limits to access of personnel at their working locations (particularly trainees of project delivered courses), human resource constraints of the recipients etc. impact on effectiveness of project implementation (e.g. prevailing security situations)?
- Have informal partner institutions been fully supportive in the execution of joint activities?

(h) Lessons learned and good practices from the concept, design and implementation of the project, as well as:

- Do the project interventions have a potential for increasing in scale, complexity or replication?
- What are the good practices which have been identified through the implementation of the project?
- What are the lessons learned which have been identified through the implementation of the project?

6 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The evaluation consultant should present an inception report that includes a detailed statement of evaluation methods and the approach to be used to identify information sources and collect information during the evaluation, and to analyse the data obtained. The evaluation methods will include:

- (a) Document review: this will include all major documents, such as (a complete list is provided in Annex):
- The project document
 - Project work plan
 - Project coordinator's evaluation report
 - Monthly, quarterly, semi-annual and annual project progress reports held in the UNODC project management system
 - Quarterly, semi-annual and annual project progress reports to the donor organisation
 - Project Meeting Reports
 - Project Mission Reports
- (b) Assessment (appropriateness, quality and use) of manuals developed by the project:
- Training Manual Vehicle Search
 - Presentations for Criminal Intelligence Assessment Report with regard to tactical and strategic analysis of drug related data
- (c) Structured / semi-structured interviews to be undertaken by phone and/or questionnaires by email with representatives from the beneficiary countries (including the Operational Focal Points), and the project donor. Specific contact persons are noted below:

Ministry of Interior of Albania

Ms. Irena Taga – Acting National coordinator on AHT Issues. E-mail

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Mr. Agron Kulicaj – Deputy General Director of the Albanian State Police/ Director of OC and Operational – Investigation Department.

E-mail Agron.Kulical@asp.gov.al Mobile 068 20 52 743

Mr. Pellumb Nako – Deputy General Director of the Albanian State Police/Director of Border Police and Migration Department.

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Mr. Edmond Riza, Head of Anti Narcotics Directorate.

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 Mr. Kosta Beluri, Serious Crime Prosecution Office. E-mail: kbeluri@pp.gov.al. Mobile: 069 20 95 598

The Project Donor, Government of Italy

Office of the Italian Cooperation in Tirana – Mr. Andrea Senatori, Head. E-mail: andreaseuatori@esteri.it. Tel: 22 40 881

(d) Structured / semi-structured interview of relevant UNODC staff

Albania – Project Office

Ela Banaj, National Project Officer (tel.: +355-69 20 40 209, email ela.banaj@unodc.org)

Before the field mission, the evaluator is to prepare an evaluation matrix and submit to the UNODC field office and to IEU for review and feedback. Following the completion of the field mission, the evaluator is expected to present the initial findings and possible recommendations to the UNODC Project Office in Tirana, Albania as well as to the Independent Evaluation Unit for validation of findings and appropriateness of recommendations.

7. TIMEFRAME AND DELIVERABLES

Time Frame & Tentative programme for the Evaluators:

The evaluator will be recruited for 15 days.

Programme & Activity	Days Required	Tentative dates
Preparation of methodology/questionnaires + Desk-review	5	20 November.
Review of inception report by IEU	<u>2</u>	27 November
Desk-review of documentation at UNODC project office in Tirana	1	30 November.
Meeting all project counterparts during the final project meeting	2	3– 4 December
Additional interviews/questionnaires by telephone and/or email	2	5 - 6 December
Preparation of the draft report	5	10-15 December
Review of the draft report for feedback by IEU	<u>10</u>	
Incorporating the UNODC comments in the report and preparing the final draft	2	26 - 27 December
Review of the draft report for final clearance by IEU	<u>10</u>	
Total Working & Travel Days	17	

Note: Detailed itinerary and programme will be prepared upon arrival and in consultation with the Evaluator.

Deliverables of the evaluation:

- 1) Evaluation plan and detailed terms of reference with methodology
- 2) Evaluation draft report with findings
- 3) Final evaluation report (including evaluation questionnaire).

8. EVALUATION TEAM COMPOSITION

The ALBG70 project is to be evaluated by a National or International Expert (Evaluator) who has the relevant skills for the task. The evaluator should have respectively excellent knowledge in the theory and workings of the combat of organised crime and extensive knowledge in the field of human trafficking and smuggling of migrants.

The evaluator should hold an advanced degree in law, criminology, crime analysis, social sciences or relevant field and have proven experience on the key issues highlighted above, preferably in the specific context of the Western Balkans in general and Albania in particular. Familiarity with structured training programmes in the field of law enforcement would also be an asset. In addition, the evaluators should also meet the following criteria:

- 1) Be familiar with project implementation in international organisations.
- 2) Have experience in conducting independent evaluations and or assessments.
- 3) Have at least 10 years relevant professional experience in issues relating to organised crime gained either in working directly in law enforcement or in an academic context.
- 4) Have obtained a post-graduate degree in a relevant area.
- 5) Possess excellent analytical, drafting and communication/writing skills in English. Knowledge of any local languages of the region would be an asset.

The evaluator is selected by the UNODC Vienna. Coordination is to be sought also with the Regional Section for Europe, Latin America and Caribbean, IPB/Division for Operations and clearance should be given by UNODC Vienna, using the agreed criteria and drawing expertise from the roster of experts.

The consultants are contracted by UNODC. UNODC is committed to achieving workforce diversity in terms of gender, nationality and culture. The qualifications and responsibilities for each team member are specified in the respective job descriptions attached to these Terms of Reference (Annex 1).

9. MANAGEMENT OF EVALUATION PROCESS

This evaluation will be a joint effort between the evaluation team and UNODC. As for substance, it is critical that the evaluation should be carried out independently by the Evaluator and that they conduct a thorough evaluation covering all aspects of the project objectives, achievements, implementation and management.

The independent evaluation will be carried out following UNODC's evaluation policy and UNEG Norms and Standards. The evaluation team will work closely with UNODC's Independent Evaluation Unit.

The Evaluator will have access to all relevant documents and the UNODC Project Office for Albania will provide the required support for the Evaluator whilst the evaluation process is carried out. The UNODC officials responsible for the briefing of the Evaluators are:

UNODC HQ RSEULAC (Austria):
- Programme Officer

UNODC Project Office for Albania:
- National Project Officer

UNODC HQ (Austria):
- Independent Evaluation Unit

Management is responsible for the provision of desk review materials to the evaluation team, reviewing the evaluation methodology, liaising with the Core Learning Partners, as well as reviewing the draft report and developing an implementation plan for the evaluation recommendations.

Management will be in charge of providing logistic support to the evaluation team including arranging the field missions of the evaluation team. For the field missions, the evaluation team liaise with UNODC Regional/Field Office and mentors as appropriate.

The Independent Evaluation Unit (IEU) guides the process of this evaluation; endorses the TORs, approves the selection of the proposed evaluation team and liaise closely with the evaluators throughout the entire evaluation process. IEU comments on and approves the selection of the evaluation consultants and the evaluation methodology and provides methodological support throughout the evaluation; IEU will comment on the draft report, endorse the quality of the final report, supports the process of issuing a management response if needed and participates in disseminating the final report to stakeholders within and outside UNODC. IEU ensures a participatory evaluation process by involving Core Learning Partners during key stages of evaluation.

Members of Core Learning Partnership (CLP) are selected by the project managers in consultation with IEU. Members of the CLP are selected from the key stakeholders groups, including UNODC managements, mentors, beneficiaries, partner organizations and donor Member States. The CLPs are asked to comment on the key steps of the evaluation and act as facilitators with respect to the dissemination and application of the results and other follow up action.

Roles and responsibilities of the Evaluator:

- carry out the desk review;
- develop the inception report including sample size and sampling technique;
- draft the inception report and finalize evaluation methodology incorporating relevant comments;
- lead and coordinate the evaluation process;
- implement quantitative tools and analyze data
- triangulate data and test rival explanations;
- ensure that all aspects of the terms and of reference are fulfilled;
- present preliminary findings;
- draft an evaluation report in line with UNODC evaluation policy;
- finalize the evaluation report on the basis of comments received.

10. PAYMENT MODALITIES

The Evaluators will be issued a UNDP Tirana consultancy contract and paid as per the common UN rules and procedures. The final payment will be made only after the acceptance of the final draft of the evaluation report and clearance by UNODC HQs.

ANNEX II. LIST OF PERSONS CONTACTED DURING THE EVALUATION

Ms Ela Banaj, UNODC National Programme Officer
Mr Sokol Selfollari, Head of Anti-Drugs Sector
Mr Ardian Cipa, Head of Anti-Trafficking Sector
Mr Agron Kulicaj, Deputy General Director of State Police, Head of Organised Crime Dept.
Mr Armando Mandro, Advisor to Deputy General Director and Member of UNODC Regional Programme Steering Committee
Mr Pellumb Nako, Deputy General Director of State Police & Head of Border Security
Mr Walter Conrad, ICITAP OC Adviser
Mr Qazim Merlika, Deputy General Director of Customs Administration
Mr Aleksander Mucko, Head of Anti-Trafficking, Customs Administration
Ms Irena Taga, Coordinator of the AHT Unit, Office of Deputy Minister of Interior
Mr Giacomo Antonio Pides and colleague, Italian Cooperation Office
Mr Martin Wehrmeister, Liaison Officer, German Embassy
Mr Kosta Beluri, Deputy Chief of Serious Crime Prosecution Office

ANNEX III. EVALUATION TOOLS: QUESTIONNAIRES AND INTERVIEW GUIDES

Semi-Structured Interview Schedule	
1	Introduction to the evaluation and its purpose. Provide assurance on confidentiality and respond to any questions arising.
2	The original project documents did not contain much detailed information on the circumstances prevailing in 2005, before the project began. Can you give me some idea of what the situation was like then? What were the problems, constraints and challenges at that time?
3	How relevant was the Project's overall approach to Albania's priorities in human trafficking/counter narcotics? Were there any priorities that you believe they should have addressed and didn't?
4	How effective were the Project's activities in respect of (a) procurement (b) training and study visits (c) providing expert advice? Where were they most effective? Where were they less effective?
5	What lasting impact did the Project have in respect of (a) policy (b) operational effectiveness?
6	Which of the Project's activities is your department continuing with now that it has closed?
7	Please describe the nature and extent of your department's working relationship with the Project management.
8	The Project's Objective was to achieve measurable progress in the strengthening of capacities for enhanced border control and criminal justice response towards illicit trafficking and organised crime in Albania. To what extent do you think it has succeeded in this? What could or should the project have done better?
9	In terms of capacity building what are the current priorities? How do you think these will be met?
10	If there was to be a new project what do you think it should prioritize?
11	Please tell me what other comments you would like to make about any aspect of the Project.

ANNEX IV. DESK REVIEW LIST

Summary Mission Report by Mr Mark Stanley, May 2004
Project Revision Reports X 5
Project Annual Reports X 5
Project Logical Framework, Jan. 2010
Diagnostic of the Training Capacities of the Albanian Customs Administration 2010
ALBG70 Project Document April 2005
ALBG70 Evaluation Report June 2009
US Department of State, 2012 Trafficking in Persons Report – Albania, June 2012
Ciacci J, “Trafficking Dilemmas in Albania”, Lund University, 2011
US Department of State, “International Narcotics Control Strategy Report, 2013
Government of Albania Official Gazette No 85, 24 July 2012, p. 4299
Council of Europe, Report Concerning the Implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on
Action Against Trafficking in Human Beings by Albania, December 2011
Kirkpatrick D.L. & Kirkpatrick J.D. (2006). Evaluating Training Programs (3rd ed.) San Francisco, CA:
Berrett-Koehler
International Narcotics Control Strategy Report 2013
European Monitoring Centre for Drug and Drug Addiction Report, March 2013
Ervin Muco,P TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS: PARADIGMS OF A SUCCESSFUL
REINTEGRATION INTO SOCIETY (ALBANIAN CASE), European Scientific Journal February 2013
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