

**IPA National Programme 2011 for Albania**  
**Project Fiche no 6**

**Supporting Social Inclusion of Roma and Egyptian communities.**

**1. Basic information**

**1.1 CRIS Number:** IPA/2011/ 023-035/6

**1.2 Title:** Supporting Social Inclusion of Roma and Egyptian communities.

**1.3 ELARG Statistical code:** 02.19 – Economic criteria/Social policy and employment

**1.4 Location:** Albania, Tirana, Vlora, Berat, Korca regions

**Implementing arrangements:**

**1.5 Contracting Authority:** The European Union represented by the European Commission on behalf of the Government of Albania.

**1.6 Implementing Agency:** Delegation of the European Union to Albania in joint management with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

**1.7 Beneficiaries:**

**Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (MoLSAEO)**

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Local Government units and local communities in Vlore, Berat and Korca regions; civil society organisations.

**Financing:**

**1.8 Overall cost (VAT excluded): 1 695 000 Euros**

**1.9 EU contribution: 1 500 000 Euros**

**1.10 Final date for contracting:** Two years following the date of the conclusion of the Financing Agreement.

**1.11 Final date for execution of contracts:** Two years following the end date of contracting. These dates apply also to national co financing.

**1.12 Final date for disbursements:** One year following the end date for the execution of contracts.

## **2. Overall objective and project purpose**

### **2.1 Overall Objective**

Social, economic, political, civic and cultural empowerment of most vulnerable people in Albania.

### **2.2 Project purpose**

Improvement of social inclusion of most vulnerable communities (Roma and Egyptians) in Albania.

### **2.3 Link with AP/NPAA / EP/ SAA**

The project responds to the imperative, as expressed in Article 2 of the **EU-Albania Stabilisation and Association Agreement**<sup>1</sup>, concluded in 2005, that “respect for democratic principles and human rights” as proclaimed in a number of key instruments, including instruments relating to minority rights, “shall form the basis of the domestic and external policies of the Parties”. As such, the project will contribute to fulfilling Albania’s commitment under section 1.2.2 of the National Plan for the Approximation of the Legislation and SAA Implementation to fulfil Article 2 of the SAA through improvement of the legislative framework on minorities in compliance with the standards included in the international documents on protection of minorities and through implementation of the strategy on Roma minority, including improvement of living conditions.

The project addresses key priorities established in the **European Partnership Document** with Albania<sup>2</sup> in the following way:

- The project contributes to the short-term priority of combating social exclusion in the context of European standards social policies.
- The project also contributes to the medium-term priority of encouraging active participation of NGOs and other civil society organisations in the government decision-making through activities aimed at strengthening the capacity of Roma and Egyptian NGOs.
- Training, capacity strengthening and awareness raising activities targeting members of the Roma community and government will address the medium-term priority of ensuring appropriate institutional support for victims of discrimination. It is envisaged that some awareness raising activities related to anti-discrimination might be carried out through support to the Office of the Anti-Discrimination Commissioner.
- Activities supporting the implementation of the Roma Strategy will contribute to the short-term priority of implementing that strategy.

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<sup>1</sup> The EU-Albania Stabilisation and Association Agreement, signed at the General Affairs and External Relations Council in Luxembourg in June 2006 and entering into force on 1 April 2009.

<sup>2</sup> The European Partnership Document for Albania adopted by Council Decision of 18 February 2008 on the principles, priorities and conditions contained in the European Partnership with Albania and repealing Decision 2006/54/EC.

The project addresses recommendations of the Analytical report of the **Commission's Opinion on Albania's application for membership of the EU** of November 2010 related to human rights and minorities by:

- reinforcing government's sensitivity to human rights and contributing to the implementation of the Law on protection against discrimination (cf. pp. 24-25, 36-37, 96);
- improving living conditions of Roma / Balkan Egyptians , promoting implementation of the National Strategy on Roma, promoting the participation of Roma / Balkan Egyptians in public life and decreasing discriminatory attitudes (cf. pp. 32-33, 37, 97);
- strengthening the capacity of civil society, including their civic engagement, and of the networks of organisations dealing with Roma, including their involvement in decision making and democratic scrutiny (cf. pp. 27, 96).

## **2.4 Link with MIPD**

The Multi-Annual Indicative Planning Document (MIPD) 2011-2013 foresees "Employment and Social Inclusion" as one of the six priority sectors, where EU financial assistance should be concentrated over the next three years.

According to the MIPD, the aim is to prevent social exclusion and to develop social inclusion policies/measures for the most vulnerable, notably the Roma population, inter alia, and other minorities such as Balkan Egyptians. Finally, equality between men and women as well as the fight against discrimination shall be strengthened.

## **2.5 Link with National Development Plan**

The project directly responds to the overarching vision of the 2007-2013 National Strategy for Development and Integration (NSDI), i.e. *"A country with high living standards, which is integrated in the European and Euro-Atlantic structures, is democratic and guarantees the fundamental human rights and liberties"*(p. 14).

The project directly responds to strategic priorities of European Union membership, development and consolidation of the democratic state, social and human development, and the inclusion of the poor (pp. 15, 18).

Sector-specific strategic priorities and policies addressed include -under democratisation and rule of law (pp. 27-43)- implementation and fulfilment of the European Convention on Human Rights and the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (pp. 26-27) and -under economic and social development- youth representation and participation (p. 64) and social inclusion, including of the Roma minority (pp. 68-70).

The priority of social inclusion of the Roma minority covers involving Roma in improving their status, reducing poverty, overcoming discrimination and achieving integration, in line with the National Strategy on Roma (pp. 69-70).

## **2.6 Link with national/ sectoral investment plans**

The national policy framework is also composed of the National Strategy for Improving the Roma Living Conditions 2003-2015, the National Action Plan on the Roma Decade (approved in 2009) and the Social Inclusion Crosscutting Strategy 2007-2013. The project directly targets

the effective implementation of the Roma Strategy and Action Plan by supporting monitoring activities and providing training to government bodies. The aims of the project directly contribute to the aims of the Strategy for Social Inclusion, notably by improving access to services for vulnerable groups and overcoming participation barriers for the Roma/Egyptian community by targeting discrimination.

The national policy framework relevant to strengthening civil society has been complemented by an important document, the Civil Society Charter which still remains to be endorsed by all political parties); efforts will be made to ensure that the project remains responsive to the Charter, once it is approved.

### **3. Description of project**

#### **3.1 Background and justification**

Roma in Albania are recognised as a ‘linguistic’ minority,<sup>3</sup> a second-tier status compared to ‘national’ minorities (Greeks, Montenegrins and Macedonians).<sup>4</sup> Unlike Roma, Egyptians have not been attributed a minority status under the rationale that they have not preserved their identity (i.e. language) and tend to identify themselves as Albanians. Regardless of their recognition as a minority, Roma and Egyptians are both marginalised and socially excluded communities. Both communities in Albania live at the margin of poverty due to a long-standing and two-fold social exclusion. The majority of the population views them as second-class citizens due to their low levels of education and their poverty, and due to prejudice against non-white people. The causes of poverty and social exclusion for Roma and Egyptians in Albania are poor income and living conditions, lack of access to public goods and services such as healthcare and public education, the labour market, etc. Services provided by the government have not adequately responded to the diverse needs of these communities. As a result, the level of poverty in these communities is estimated to be four times higher than that of other parts of the population<sup>5</sup>.

The findings of the national vulnerability study on “Social Vulnerability of Roma in Albania of 2006” show that Roma face additional vulnerabilities besides prejudice and direct discrimination, such as a low chance of acquiring higher education due to poorer knowledge of majority language, fewer opportunities on the labour market due in part to poorer educational achievements, etc. As a result of the multiple dimensions of their poverty and social exclusion, Roma and Egyptians do not have sustainable formal income and employment security; they lack access to public and social support services, resulting in them

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<sup>3</sup> In its First Report on Framework Convention on National Minorities 2001, the Albanian Government stipulates that it has given the status of national minority to those communities which share common characteristics such as language, culture, religion etc with their mother land. Under such rationale, only Greeks, Macedonians and Montenegrins have been recognised as National Minority while Roma and Aromanians are recognised and respected as linguistic minority.

<sup>4</sup> The Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination recommends that the Albanian authorities review the criteria on which they distinguish between national and linguistic minorities, in consultation with involved groups (CERD/C/63/CO/1/Rev.1 22 August 2003). The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance urges Albanian authorities to ratify the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages which would allow linguistic minorities to have more rights with regard to the use of their language. ECRI recommends Albanian authorities: ensure that the principle of discrimination is fully respected with regard to Egyptians in Albania; ensure participation of Egyptians without discrimination in state institutions which deal with minority issues; and to draft measures which consider the special needs and issues of indirect discrimination towards Egyptians (Recommendations 123, 124, 125, ECRI third report on Albania 2004).

<sup>5</sup> Based on UNDP “At Risk: The Social Vulnerability of Roma in Albania”. Tirana, 2006

living in deplorable conditions. A 2005 World Bank study on “*Roma and Egyptians in Albania: From Social Exclusion to Social Inclusion*” reveals that of total household expenditures, food constitutes 71% for Balkan Egyptians and 64% for Roma. As Roma and Balkan Egyptians have few opportunities to engage in formal employment, they rely on casual work and informal sources of income such as second-hand clothes trade, can collection and begging.

Roma and Balkan Egyptian civil society has been growing during the past year taking over a more active role in representing the voice of Roma and Egyptian communities. There are no exact data, but various sources mention that there are over 15 Roma NGOs and more than 10 Egyptian NGOs operating in Albania. Though most of the Roma NGOs are based in Tirana, some of them have branches or affiliates in the regions. Generally, Roma NGOs seem to be more involved in discussions and activities with public authorities at both central and local level, and there is a Roma Strategy and Action Plan on the Roma Decade for them.

In contrast, few Egyptian NGOs or representatives are engaged in civil society activities. Recently a network of 8 Egyptian NGOs circulated a call to Government and donors to refer to them as “Egyptians of Albania”. The call also insists that they be recognised as an ethno-cultural minority and not linked with the Roma. The Government’s policy via the National Action Plan on the Roma Decade targets only Roma and not Egyptians, though on a few occasions some government decisions have been addressed to Egyptians as well. Several international institutions, inter alia the Council of Europe, the European Union, Roma Education Fund, etc., when referring to Roma communities, usually also include Ashkalia, Sinti and Egyptians.

There are no official statistics on the number of Roma and Egyptians in Albania while various sources provide different data. The Roma communities are considered in the range of 90 000-120 000 whereas the Egyptians declare that their number is over 200 000.

There is a recognised need for further strengthening of Roma and Egyptian civil society, to raise their capacities in preparing and implementing projects benefitting their communities, to enhance their partnership with other civil society organisations and to give them a more powerful voice in the national and local development processes.

Roma/Egyptian people, as economically marginalised persons, have limited entrepreneurship experience and opportunities. Although some of them have vocational skills, they often lack non-vocational skills, as well as business and management skills, making it difficult for them to successfully establish their own businesses. Many Roma/Egyptians lack sufficient capital to cover the initial cost of business start-up and lack the collateral necessary to secure loans. Roma/Egyptian entrepreneurs tend to operate from home or in the street, relying on inadequate tools and equipment.

The Albanian Government has since 2003 adopted a National Strategy for Roma and in 2008 joined the Decade of Roma Inclusion Declaration. In 2009, a National Action Plan for Roma was approved aligning the Strategy with the commitments under the Declaration. The Action Plan sets six priority areas including education, employment, health, housing, cultural heritage and equal opportunities, to be implemented and achieved by 2015. Despite the political commitment expressed, the state budget has provided very limited financial resources for implementation of the National Action Plan and there needs to be a better monitoring and reporting mechanism at central and local level government.

The Technical Secretariat for Roma<sup>6</sup> is responsible for coordinating implementation and monitoring of the Strategy and Action Plan for Roma and is currently establishing a monitoring and reporting system in collaboration with Focal Points for Roma in line ministries and Regional Councils, with UN support. However, the Technical Secretariat is still lacking capacity in terms of coordination, data collection and analysis, planning, reporting, monitoring and documenting actions. There is also a recognised need for capacity development support for operationalising the Roma Decade National Action Plan at the local (municipality/commune), regional and national levels. This project will assist the Roma Technical Secretariat and implement concrete actions in support of the Roma Decade and Action Plan directly benefitting Roma/Egyptian communities and civil society.

The Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, through the Directorate of Cross-Cutting Strategies, in which the Roma Technical Secretariat is located, will be directly involved in the overall management of the Project.

The project fiche has been formulated through a participatory approach with inputs from various partners. A formal consultation meeting on the priority areas of intervention was held on 27 December 2010 with the participation of Roma and Egyptian civil society representatives as well as representatives of Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education and Ministry of European Integration.

The project includes four basic components:

- A) **Participatory local planning**
- B) **Strengthening civil society capacity to combat discrimination**
- C) **Promote entrepreneurship for Roma/Egyptian communities**
- D) **Support for the implementation of Roma Strategy and Decade Action Plan**

**NB:** With regard to Roma registration, there is a notable progress in the area. Most of the unregistered people have become formally part of civil registry. There are still some complicated cases that cannot simply be solved through court procedures but need interactive cooperation of various central, local government institutions as well as police authorities and court system. The UN project is supporting the registration component and it was considered that no further actions will be needed by mid 2012 when the current IPA project will start.

### **3.2 Assessment of project impact, catalytic effect, sustainability and cross border impact**

By taking a multi-sectoral response to the multidimensionality of poverty and social exclusion of Roma and Balkan Egyptian communities in Albania, the project activities help to ensure that Roma/Egyptian communities will be able to lead dignified lives in Albania, contributing to their social inclusion while valuing their diversity.

Local development planning and economic empowerment will give communities the experience of finding out what they need to know and being listened to by government officials, as well as seeing the tangible and intangible short, medium and long-term results of the activities. The project will contribute to the Government's fulfilment of international human rights commitments through implementation of the anti-discrimination Law while also

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<sup>6</sup> Roma Technical Secretariat is the former Roma Monitoring Unit which until July 2008 has been operating under the State Social Service, a subordinate institution to the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. Recently the Unit has become part of the Directory of the Crosscutting Strategies at the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities and is officially renamed as Roma Technical Secretariat.

ensuring that other relevant laws are implemented (notably Gender Equality Law). Project results will serve to promote policies and institutional strengthening for minority inclusion at local and national levels.

To foster sustainability, the project has been formulated following a three-pronged approach. First, the project is in line with the Government of Albania national policy priorities, priorities established in the European Partnership Document and recent recommendations of the European Commission's Opinion on Albania's application for membership. Second, the activities will be integrated into local and central government policy and programme development, thereby ensuring the long-lasting impact of the resources invested. Finally, sustainability will be enhanced by linking the project to other initiatives being implemented by various organisations related to promotion of human rights based approach and social inclusion policies, local development, Roma empowerment and non-discrimination.

Sustainability of project activities will also be ensured through the involvement of local and regional authorities in activity implementation and monitoring. Civil society will also be encouraged to continue their work to the benefit of vulnerable communities, support local and regional authorities in this regard, but also make them accountable for their undertakings. Mechanisms established by the project are expected to last beyond the project's duration.

The project will work closely with Roma and Egyptians NGOs and will provide capacity building support for them to enhance their skills in organisational management and project cycle management.

The project will support linking and networking of Roma/Egyptian craftspeople to national, sectoral or local networks and association of artisans to ensure their access to value chains and their participation in the business associations that can benefit the growth, promotion and sustainability of their businesses.

### 3.3 Results and measurable indicators

Activity 1	Results	Indicators
<b>A) Participatory local planning</b>	The development projects that were identified and prioritised by local Roma and Egyptian communities are implemented, ensuring equal representation of women and men in participatory planning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- At least 9 development projects identified by the local communities.</li> <li>- 6 quality development projects implemented in a sustainable manner.</li> </ul>
<b>B) Strengthening civil society capacity to combat discrimination</b>	The capacity of civil society organisations to combat discrimination is increased.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Increased knowledge of civil society organisations' members in Roma and Egyptian communities on human rights, relevant policies and mechanisms to promote these rights (based on training needs assessment of civil society organisations)</li> <li>- Increased number of Roma and Egyptian civil society organisations advocacy actions to promote rights of the Roma and Egyptian population (baseline – very limited number of actions at the community level)</li> </ul>
<b>C) Promote entrepreneurship for Roma/Egyptian communities</b>	New and pre-existing businesses run by Roma/Egyptians generate increased income.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Number of new businesses started since the beginning of the projects (at least 20)</li> <li>- Number of new businesses registered, (both female and male owned) (at least 15)</li> <li>- Sustainability of existing businesses ensured</li> </ul>
<b>D) Support for the implementation of Roma Strategy and Decade Action Plan</b>	The capacity of Roma Technical Secretariat to monitor implementation of the Roma Strategy and the Roma Decade Action Plan strengthened.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Number and quality of annual progress reports prepared with inputs and feedback from line ministries and civil society.</li> </ul>



### **3.4 Activities**

#### **Activity 1**

##### **Contract 1.1 Contribution agreement (covered by IPA funds)**

The project will be implemented in joint management through a contribution agreement with UNDP according to Article 53 of the Financing Regulation and the corresponding provisions of the Implementing Rules.

UNDP is already providing longstanding significant assistance and institutional strengthening related to the rights of Roma and Egyptian communities in Albania and therefore the organisation's expertise in the field is considered of added value to this project.

Through the contribution agreement technical assistance will be provided for the following components:

##### **A. Participatory local planning**

- Conduct a rapid assessment to identify the project intervention areas in three regions (Vlore, Berat and Korce).
- Design and implement training programmes on community mobilisation, self-help and advocacy, partnerships with local government and development planning. Facilitate discussions in which focus groups prioritise, plan and prepare a three-year community development plan. Technical documentation for approximately nine community upgrading projects will also be prepared.
- Agree on final community development plans with local government and implement six of the highest priority community upgrading projects identified for an indicative maximum value of 50 000 Euro each. The benefitting local government units will be required through a Memorandum of Understanding to take over once the projects are completed and provide related contribution to be defined and agreed with local government units before signing of the Contribution Agreement.

##### **B. Strengthening civil society capacity to combat discrimination.**

###### *B.1 Strengthening capacity of Roma/Egyptian civil society organisations.*

- Develop and implement training programmes in response to a capacity and needs assessment of Roma/Egyptian civil society organisations (expected to cover issues like needs assessment and project proposal writing, fundraising and sound project cycle management), including on the job training provided by specialist technical assistants working directly with Roma/Egyptian NGOs.
- Facilitate the preparation and joint submission of proposals for small community projects by Roma NGOs in line with local community development priorities (c.f. sub-activity A), review proposals according to criteria developed in consultation with stakeholders and allocate grants to the proposals that best met the criteria.
- Train local government officials on participatory local planning and facilitate strengthening dialogue with civil society organisations through concrete activities (such as participatory planning exercises and selecting the projects to be supported at the local level).
- Conduct capacity building programmes for young and promising Roma/Egyptians (encouraging an active participation of both women and men) on human rights and

non-discrimination, the use of complaint and redress mechanisms, and how to access legal aid.<sup>7</sup>

**B.2** *Raising awareness of how to combat discrimination against Roma and Egyptian communities.*

- Conduct campaigns and other actions directly and/or by supporting the Office of the Anti-Discrimination Commissioner, to promote the democratic values of non-discrimination, tolerance, understanding and support among Roma/Egyptian communities and Albanian civil society more broadly.
- Conduct public information/media campaigns on the new anti-discrimination Law and the protection it provides for Roma/Egyptian communities.

**C. Promote entrepreneurship for Roma/Egyptian communities**

**C.1** *Supporting young Roma/Egyptians to set up and run profitable businesses.*

- About 20 participants will be selected on the basis of their entrepreneurial potential; screening will be carried out during business development training offered to about 40 individuals. The training will be focused on career counseling/guidance and entrepreneurship skills.
- Support for the appropriate advisory services, including mentoring, and support with logistics, administrative procedures and management, will be provided to participants selected during the training, from the approval of their business plans until they are able to operate independently, with a focus on ensuring profitability and therefore sustainability of the business.
- Non-refundable grants (4 000-5 000 Euro) from the project budget will be allocated on the basis of selection criteria.<sup>8</sup>

**C.2** *Supporting expansion and/or strengthening of pre-existing handicraft businesses as well as other viable businesses (eg. recycling) run by Roma/Egyptians (having in mind the need for equitable share of women and men).*

- Ongoing support will be provided to help small businesses renew technical tools and skills and to help them develop their business management skills.
- Non-refundable grants (2 000 – 4 000 Euro) from the project budget will be allocated on the basis of selection criteria. At least 10 beneficiaries from each region will benefit from this scheme.
- Support the marketing of Roma/Egyptian handicraft products and participation of Roma/Egyptian craftspeople in networks and in national and international sector organisations will be promoted and supported.

Monitoring of the performance of self-employed women and men and micro-enterprises will take place throughout the process and the evaluation will be carried out against pre-established targets. Special attention will be paid on how to ensure the sustainability of the business projects after EU subsidies.

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<sup>7</sup> An active participation of young women will be encouraged, if and when needed, through specific arrangements (such as ensuring child-care during the meetings, setting the time and the venue of the meetings having in mind their ability to attend).

<sup>8</sup> Transparent criteria will be developed in order to minimise the potential for misunderstanding at the community level and to foster healthy competitive approach and clarity that the best proposals will be rewarded. A set of criteria will be published with the public call for proposals, in order to allow for all interested to prepare better quality proposals based on the understanding of the assessment process.

## **D. Support for the implementation of Roma Strategy and Decade Action Plan**

### *D.1 Strengthening the capacity of the government to monitor implementation of the Roma Strategy and Roma Decade National Action Plan.*

- Assist and train the Technical Secretariat to prepare evidence-based annual progress reports of the Roma Strategy and National Action Plan on the Roma Decade with feedback and inputs from line ministries, regional/municipal coordination committees and civil society organisations.
- Support the establishment of a data collection system at the local level with disaggregated data on Roma and Egyptians to assist local level monitoring and reporting. (Currently UNDP is supporting Roma technical secretariat to set up a data collection and monitoring system at central level. The IPA project will strengthen the local level work in the three regions).

### *D.2 Improved monitoring of Roma and Egyptian development issues at the local level.*

- Facilitate the establishment and sustaining of three regional/municipal coordination committees including representatives of local Roma and Egyptian communities, to monitor implementation of the project and, on completion of the project, implementation of local development plans and of the Roma Strategy and National Action Plan on the Roma Decade.
- Prepare and implement four training sessions (one for each project region and one for central government officials in Tirana) on anti-discrimination, minority rights and intercultural education for local and central government representatives.

## **Co-financing**

Co-financing of the Contribution agreement will be provided by UNDP and the Ministry. National co-financing will be transferred to UNDP and will be used by UNDP for realising sub-activities under Activity 1.

## **3.5 Conditionality and sequencing**

- The implementation modalities for the rehabilitation works have to be specified, before signing of the Contribution Agreement taking in consideration the need to secure timely disbursement procedures from all funds sources, to avoid delays in works implementations.
- A political commitment from the Government is needed to provide funding to various actions of the Roma Decade Action Plan adopted in 2009 and to strengthen coordination work among relevant line Ministries.
- It is essential that the Roma Technical Secretariat as part of the Directorate of Crosscutting Strategies is strengthened and that experienced staff be retained. In this context, it is important that sufficient financial resources are allocated to this project under the national budget.
- It is very important that a close cooperation is established among the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities and the local governments of the areas where the project will be implemented for the successful implementation of the project activities.

- The Roma Technical Secretariat needs to maintain very good and professionally impartial relations with all Roma/Egyptian NGOs that might be eligible for small grants under the project.
- A key factor which can contribute to reaching the communities and successfully implementing the project activities is the involvement of qualified Roma and Egyptian individuals in the project teams.
- The rules and regulations of the small grants for Roma NGOs will be elaborated in sufficient details to allow Roma/Egyptian civil society organisations to submit good proposals. A consolidated capacity building exercise will precede the call for proposals.

### **3.6 Linked activities**

Albanian State support to civil society organisations includes funding, mainly by contracting for service delivery and dispensing project grants, through line ministries, notably the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities and the Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports. A national budget line (1 million Euro yearly) for the support of civil society was included in the 2008 and 2009 budgets, but became operational only in the last quarter of 2010, when the Agency for Supporting Civil Society issued the first call for proposals and grants were allocated to 52 NGOs operating all over Albania in a total amount of approx. 850 000 Euro. Only one Roma NGO (Rromano Kham) was successful in the first round receiving approx 11 000 Euro for their proposal in support to education of Roma children and youth. In addition, local governments are beginning to increase support to civil society organisations which provide services in the community, although this is limited in scope and size.

The European Union is currently the most important international donor to civil society. Since 2001 the European Union has provided approximately 900 000 EUR to projects addressing the needs of the Roma/Egyptian communities under both the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights for Albania "Country Based Support Scheme" and under the CARDS and IPA instruments. Currently four projects in support of Roma / Egyptian are under implementation totalling EU contribution of about 700 000 EUR.

The IPA 2010 Regional Initiative for Roma Integration worth 3 million EUR aims at improving the quality of life and access to rights of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in the Western Balkans, also intends to work with Albania in order to: 1) develop a regional capacity-building programme targeting a selected number of Roma groups/settlements and relevant local and regional authorities. It also aims at: 2) setting up a regional service aiming at improving the provision of free legal aid to Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities and facilitate access to documents. In addition, it intends to: 3) conduct regional actions aiming at improving living and housing conditions of these communities as well as: 4) raise awareness among the general public on Roma issues and promote participation and visibility of these communities in public life. Finally, this multibeneficiary project also aims at: 5) fostering regional coordination and active participation of relevant public authorities in the field of Roma inclusion, as well as visibility and promotion at European level of actions carried out in the Western Balkans. As the implementation of this project shall start during the first semester 2011, special attention and coordination should be paid, notably with regards to activity 1, 2 and 3 in order to allow the best possible complementarity.

The IPA 2008 regional project "Technical Assistance for Civil Society Organisations" (TACSO) worth 6,7 million EUR, which is covering the Western Balkans and Turkey (August 2009 - August 2011), aims to increase the capacity of civil society organisations and to strengthen their role within a participative democracy, including strengthening the overall public image and accountability of civil society organisations.

The IPA funded "*People2People* programme" worth 4 millions EUR supports since January 2009 visits of representatives of civil society organisations from the Western Balkans countries and Turkey to EU institutions and bodies, as well as organising events in the beneficiary countries in order to reach more grass-roots civil society organisations and focus on national situations and challenges. The programme fosters dialogue between governments, civil society organisations and EU institutions in the context of the pre-enlargement strategy, targeting, among others, NGOs dealing with *acquis* related subjects such as non-discrimination, human rights groups, including minorities defence groups, human rights activists and legal aid offices.

The United Nations and Swiss Development Cooperation are currently the most active international donors supporting Roma and Egyptian communities in Albania.

In terms of activities, the current IPA project is closely linked and coordinated to the July 2010-July 2013 United Nations (UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA) project on empowering vulnerable communities of Albania, worth around 2 million EUR which supports participatory planning, access to rights (service provision), and institutional strengthening in Tirana, Durrës, Elbasan and Fier, as well as institutional strengthening of central government. The current IPA project would carry out some similar activities in three other regions Vlore, Berat and Korce, as well as continuing and complementing the work of the UN project with the central government.

Between 2008 and 2010, the United Nations Development Programme in Albania and United Nations Volunteers provided direct assistance to vulnerable ethnic minorities worth around 630 000 EUR to partner with relevant organisations and government institutions at the regional level to assist partnership building to address development priorities, mobilising a broad range of NGO partners. Between 2006 and 2008, the United Nations Development Programme in Albania supported minority rights capacity building and advocacy, raising awareness and building knowledge on Roma and Egyptian rights among the majority (worth around 20 000 EUR). In 2007, the United Nations Development Programme in Albania supported the preparation of a Progress Report (worth around 48 100 EUR) on the implementation of the Roma Strategy, which identified key problems and produced a manual with concrete guidelines to address these problems.

In addition, in 2010 the Institute for Democracy and Mediation, with the support of UNDP Albania, conducted a CIVICUS Civil Society Index for Albania, which charts civil society development and assesses the capacity of the sector to meet Albania's development challenges and societal expectations from this sector. This will provide a good general baseline for the project in the activities targeting civil society strengthening. Euclid Network's FCO-funded project on civil society development run in collaboration with the Albanian Human Development Promotion Centre also produced a research paper in 2008 which may provide some useful background information.

The United Nations Development Programme in Albania is working with the Albanian Commissioner on anti-discrimination to provide trainings on anti-discrimination for central

and local government officials. Swiss Cooperation is active in the area of Roma education, supporting a regional education fund used to strengthen national strategies for Roma with an emphasis on the education system (2004-2011), as well as an Albanian project targeting education, vocational training, Roma community empowerment and organisational strengthening for the Albanian NGO Help for Children Foundation (2009-2012). In addition, World Vision's "*Children in Crisis*" programme includes Roma and Egyptian communities.

Finally, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in Albania and the German *Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit* (GTZ) are supporting strengthened state-civil society cooperation in decision making. GTZ has been supporting the development of the Civil Society Charter, which aims to establish a partnership between government and the non-governmental sector; which remains to be adopted by the parliament.

### **3.7 Lessons learned**

- Government policies for Roma must apply also to Egyptians, because such policies are based on the vulnerability of the two communities and are not conditional on their minority status;
- There is a low understanding of Roma issues and social inclusion policies at the local level, therefore the support provided by international organisations should continue to promote dialogue with the vulnerable groups considering their needs in the local decision making;
- Any kind of community mobilisation assistance toward Roma/Egyptian populations should be accompanied with investments in public and social infrastructure to the direct benefit of these communities;
- All support offered to Roma/Egyptians as citizens of Albania must be based on a human rights approach -rights holders v. duty bearers- and not as charity to the poor.

#### **4. Indicative Budget (amounts in EUR)**

				SOURCES OF FUNDING								
			TOTAL EXP.RE	IPA EU CONTRIBUTION		NATIONAL CONTRIBUTION					UNDP Contribution	
ACTIVITIES	IB (1)	IN V (1)	EUR (a)=(b)+(c)+(d)	EUR (b)	% (2)	Total EUR (c)=(x)+(y)+(z)	% (2)	Central EUR (x)	Regional/ Local EUR (y)	IFIs EUR (z)	EUR (d)	% (2)
Activity 1												
Contract 1.1 Contribution agreement	X	–		1 500 000	88.5	45 000	2.7	45 000			150 000	8.8
TOTAL IB			1 695 000									
TOTAL INV												
TOTAL PROJECT			1 695 000	1 500 000	88.5	45 000	2.7	45 000			150 000	8.8

**NOTE: DO NOT MIX IB AND INV IN THE SAME ACTIVITY ROW. USE SEPARATE ROW**

Amounts net of VAT

- (1) In the Activity row use "X" to identify whether IB or INV
- (2) Expressed in % of the **Total** Expenditure (column (a))

## **5. Indicative Implementation Schedule (periods broken down per quarter)**

[Only refer to EU funded contracts in consistency with Annex II]

Contracts	Start of Tendering	Signature of contract	Project Completion
Contract 1.1 Contribution Agreement with UNDP	N/A	1Q 2012	1Q2014

All projects should in principle be ready for tendering in the 1<sup>ST</sup> Quarter following the signature of the Financing Agreement.

## **6. Cross cutting issues**

### **6.1 Equal Opportunity**

The project will have a direct impact on girls and women as they will be encouraged to participate equally in all project activities; field staff will pay particular attention to try to ensure this. Roma women are often said to suffer from double discrimination, as they are on the one hand targeted by majority hostility and, on the other hand, oppressed by their own patriarchal community.<sup>9</sup> With this in mind, the project will pay particular attention to empowering women.

The project will cooperate with other projects working on gender and domestic violence issues and will benefit from their resources and expertise to integrate gender in all the components of project implementation. In this regard, specific gender trainings will be organised for project staff and project counterparts. Gender issues will also be introduced throughout the process of community mobilisation. Specific training programmes will be drafted for community groups (in line with their specific profiles) to raise awareness on gender issues and to enable them to address some gender concerns in their community mobilisation efforts.

### **6.2 Environment**

All the activities foreseen to be undertaken within this project will be performed with due respect for the environment. Environment friendly practices will be introduced in the community mobilisations awareness and all capacity building activities of the project.

### **6.3 Minorities**

The full project is focused on reducing discrimination against most vulnerable people.

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<sup>9</sup> See text adopted by the European Parliament, 1 June 2006, on Roma women in the EU: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P6-TA-2006-0244+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN>



## **ANNEXES**

## ANNEX I: Logical framework matrix

LOGFRAME PLANNING MATRIX FOR Project Fiche		Programme name:	
		Contracting period expires: Two years following the date of the conclusion of the Financing Agreement	
CRIS Number:		Total budget :  1695 000	IPA budget:  1 500 000
<b>Overall objective</b>	<b>Objectively verifiable indicators</b>	<b>Sources of Verification</b>	
Social, economic, political, civic and cultural empowerment of minorities in Albania	Positive assessment of progress made by the Government of Albania in the realisation of the rights of minorities.	Commission Opinion on Albania's application to the EU/ EU-Albania Stabilisation and Association Agreement Subcommittee meeting on Human Rights and minorities, inter alia  Roma Strategy Progress Report	
<b>Project Purpose</b>	<b>Objectively verifiable indicators</b>	<b>Sources of Verification</b>	<b>Assumptions</b>
Improvement of social inclusion of vulnerable communities (Roma and Egyptians) in Albania	Increased number of Roma and Egyptian women and men benefitting from public services.  Positive assessment of progress made by the Government of Albania in the realisation of the rights of Roma and Balkan Egyptians.	Project beneficiaries' assessment (baseline survey and impact evaluation studies through at beginning and end of project.  Monitoring and Evaluation Reports  Annual Implementation report  EU Progress reports/Commission	Sufficient incentives for Roma and Egyptian communities in longer term to mobilise and advocate actively for their rights.

		Opinion on Albania's application to the EU	
<b>Results</b>	<b>Objectively verifiable indicators</b>	<b>Sources of Verification</b>	<b>Assumptions</b>
A. Development projects identified and prioritised by local Roma and Egyptian communities are implemented at local level, ensuring equal representation of women and men in participatory planning in a sustainable manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- At least 9 development projects identified by the local communities.</li> <li>- 6 quality development projects implemented in a sustainable manner</li> </ul>	<p>Roma Strategy progress Report</p> <p>Local Government units reports</p> <p>Project reporting</p>	<p>Willingness of local government to sustain initiatives.</p> <p>Local Governments and Communities able to work in partnership.</p> <p>Communities are willing to discuss their concerns with local government</p>
B. Capacity of civil society organisations to combat discrimination increased.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increased knowledge of civil society organisations' members in Roma and Egyptian communities on human rights, relevant policies and mechanisms to promote these rights (based on training needs assessment of civil society organizations)</li> <li>- Number of Roma and Egyptian civil society organisations advocacy actions to promote rights of the Roma and Egyptian population (baseline – very limited number of actions at the community level)</li> </ul>	<p>Interviews with civil society organisation members regarding joint activities in their respective communities.</p> <p>Relevant research (Albania and regional level)</p> <p>Project records; people signed in for the awareness raising activities with community member's participation.</p> <p>Project records; training activity reports</p>	<p>Roma and Egyptian civil society organisations understand the need for improving their capacities and participating in the project activities.</p> <p>Roma/Egyptian communities members are interested in being informed on civic/minority rights and social integration.</p>

		<p>together with participants lists and training evaluation sheets</p> <p>Minutes of working group meetings; project records; government public documentation; government official websites.</p>	Heterogeneity of Roma and Egyptian communities is being accounted for.
C. Increased income generated by new and pre-existing businesses run by Roma/Egyptians.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Number of new businesses started since the beginning of the projects (at least 20)</li> <li>- Number of new businesses registered, (both female and male owned) (at least 15)</li> <li>- Sustainability of existing businesses ensured</li> </ul>	<p>Project records.</p> <p>Interviews with people that run their own business.</p> <p>Local Government Unit records</p>	<p>Formalisation of Roma/Egyptian small businesses would lead to sufficient benefits for the entrepreneur compared to the costs.</p> <p>Business development support is appropriate to entrepreneurial circumstances.</p>
D. Capacity of Roma Technical Secretariat to monitor implementation of the Roma Strategy and the Roma Decade Action Plan strengthened.	Number and quality of annual progress reports prepared with inputs and feedback from line ministries and civil society.(two yearly reports)	<p>Feedback reports from line ministries.</p> <p>National Strategy for Development and Integration Progress Reports.</p> <p>Minutes of working group meetings; project records; government public documentation; government official websites.</p>	<p>The Roma National Strategy remains in place.</p> <p>Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities effectively engages in a dialogue with local government structures on the implementation of Roma Strategy.</p>
<b>Activities</b>	<b>Means</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Assumptions</b>
<p>A. Participatory local planning.</p> <p>B.1 Strengthening capacity of Roma/Egyptian civil society organisations.</p>	Contribution agreement and co-funding from Central Government and UNDP	EUR 1 695 000	Continued commitment from central and local governments for the social inclusion and integration of Roma and Egyptian

<p>B.2 Raising awareness of how to combat discrimination against Roma and Egyptian communities.</p> <p>C.1 Supporting young Roma/Egyptians to set up and run profitable businesses.</p> <p>C.2 Supporting expansion and/or strengthening of pre-existing handicraft businesses run by Roma/Egyptians.</p> <p>D.1 Strengthening the capacity of government to monitor implementation of the Roma Strategy and Roma Decade National Action Plan.</p> <p>D.2 Improved monitoring of Roma and Egyptian development issues at the local level.</p>			<p>communities.</p> <p>Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities is committed to implement the project in cooperation with line Ministries, local government units and civil society</p>
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ANNEX II: Amounts (in million EUR) Contracted and disbursed by quarter for the project

[List only EU funded contracts in line with point 5 above]

<b>Contracted</b>	1Q 2012	2Q 2012	3Q 2012	4Q 2012	1Q 2013	2Q 2013	3Q 2013	4Q 2013	1Q 2014	2Q 2014	3Q 2014
Contract 1.1 - Contribution Agreement with UNDP	1,5										
<b>Disbursed</b>											
Contract 1.1.1 - Contribution Agreement with UNDP	0,8				0,55					0,15	

### **ANNEX III: Description of Institutional Framework**

In the development and implementation of policies for the minorities in general, Albania relies on the obligations deriving from the Framework Convention of the Protection of National Minorities of the Council of Europe. The bodies involved in the protection of the minorities and the implementation of the National Strategy for Improving Living Conditions of the Roma.

*State Committee for Minorities* (created with Decision of Council of Ministers no. 127, dated 11.03.2004) is composed of representatives of national (Greek, Macedonia, Montenegrin) and ethno-linguistic minorities (Roma and Arumun) in Albania. The committee functions as an advisory body to the office of the Prime-Minister and it collaborates with local and central institutions and organisations operating in the area of improving the monitoring the human rights situation of minorities in Albania. It may propose concrete measures for the economic, social and educational development of minorities in the country.

*Technical Secretariat for Roma* (created with Directive no 213/2, dated 22.06.2004 initially under the State Social Service) is functioning under the Directorate of Crosscutting Strategies at Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. This body is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Roma Strategy and its Decade Action Plan, through raising awareness of local and central authorities on programmes targeting Roma, receiving regular reports by involved institutions as well as cooperating with Non Governmental s and donor organisations.

*Inter-ministerial committee* composed of deputy-ministers of line ministries, including Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Ministry of Education< Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Telecommunications, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports and Ministry of Integration. is responsible for overseeing implementation of the Roma Strategy and its Decade Action Plan. The Committee has assigned a *Focal Point for Roma in each line ministry* who reports on a regular basis to the Technical Secretariat for Roma at Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities on the progress towards implementation of Roma Strategy and its National Action Plan on the Roma Decade.

*The Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports* has recently established a new unit dealing with minority cultural heritage.

*The institutions of Ombudsperson* (created in Mars 2000) protect the rights, freedoms and legitimate interests of individuals from illegal actions or failures to act on the part of public administration bodies and on the part of third parties acting on their behalf. Its mission is to prevent potential conflict between the public administration and individuals. The Ombudsperson acts on the basis of complaints or requests directed to him or her. He or she may also act *proprio motu* in special cases that have been made public, but must always obtain the consent of the interested or damaged party.

*The Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination* (created in February 2010), assures the effective protection from discrimination and from every other form of conduct that incites discrimination. The Commissioner is supported by the Office of the Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination. This office is responsible for addressing complaints for discrimination caused by actions taken by private entities as opposed to actions of the public administration.

*Regional Committees on Social Services* have been established in each region, led by the respective Regional Councils and with the participation of heads of sectorial institutions as well as civil society organisations. Regional Committees on Social Services meet on a quarterly basis for coordinating the implementation of measures targeting vulnerable groups including Roma, women, children and disabled persons.

The *Agency for Supporting Civil Society*, which manages the Civil Society Fund small grant scheme, was established in 2009 and issued the first call for proposals in 2010.

#### **ANNEX IV: Reference to laws, regulations and strategic documents**

The Constitution of the Republic of Albania (ratified by the Albanian Parliament by Law no 8417, on 21.10.1998, amended by Law no 9675, on 13.01.2007 and Law no 9904, on 21.04.2008), guarantees equality before the law and protection from unjust discrimination on several grounds including race, ethnicity and language. It also allows for positive actions in benefit of vulnerable groups. Further, persons belonging to national minorities exercise in full equality before the law human rights and freedoms and have the right to freely express, without prohibition or compulsion, their ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic belonging. They have the right to preserve and develop it, to study and to be taught in their mother tongue, as well as unite in organizations and societies for the protection of their interests and identity. The Constitution also guarantees the right to organise collectively for any lawful purpose, with the registration of such organisations according to the procedure provided for by law, as well as the freedom to choose or accept any lawful work. The Constitution of the Republic of Albania calls directly on and has embedded the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, ratified by Law no 8137, on 31.07.1996, by the Parliament of the Republic of Albania.

The Republic of Albania has drafted and is implementing several important legal reforms related to the protection and implementation of the freedoms and rights guaranteed by the Constitution, as well as important international Conventions in the field of security and the guarantee of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The treatment of minorities in Albania acquired a new dimension after Albania's membership of international organisations such as the OSCE, the Council of Europe, etc., its ratification or signing of almost all international human rights conventions and especially after the ratification with no reservations of the 1995 Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.

*Albania has ratified all the major UN conventions on the protection of human rights including;*

- Universal Declaration on Human Rights 1948 (signed in 1955);
- International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination, 1969 (signed in 1994);
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966 (signed in 1991);
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 1976 (signed in 1991);



- International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women, 1980 (signed in 1996);
- Convention on the Rights of Child, 1989 (signed in 1992);
- Convention Against Discrimination in Education, 1960 (signed in 1963).

*Albania has also signed all the documents of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe such as;*

- The Final Act of the Helsinki Conference, 1975;
- The Copenhagen Declaration, 1990;
- The Charter of Paris for a New Europe, 1990;
- The Document of the Moscow Meeting, 1991;

*Similarly, a considerable number of important documents adopted by the Council of Europe have been signed and ratified, including;*

- Convention on the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, 1951 (ratified by Law no.8137, dated 31.07.1996) and Protocols 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 11 of this Convention;
- Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, 1995 (ratified by Law no. 8496, dated 03.06.1999);
- The Enlarged Partial Agreement for the establishment of the European Centre of Modern Languages in Graz, Austria (ratified by Law no. 8706, dated 01.12.2000).

*Laws and By-Laws relevant to Minorities in Albania;*

- National Action Plan for the Decade of Roma Inclusion, adopted by decision of Council of Ministers, no 1087, dated 28.10.2009;
- Accession in the Declaration on the Decade of Roma Inclusion, adopted by Decision of Council of Ministers, no 437, dated 08.04.2008;
- National Strategy “ On improving the living conditions of Roma Minority”, adopted by decision of Council of Ministers, no 633, dated 18.09.2003;
- Law no 10221, dated 04.02.2010 “On Protection from Discrimination” provides for equality before the law and equal protection by law in the area of employment, education and provision of services. It establishes the institution of Commissioner for protection from discrimination endowing it with necessary executive powers.

*Laws and By-Laws relevant to Civil Society in Albania:*

- Chapter II of the Civil Code of the Republic of Albania, on Judicial Persons, regulating not-for-profit organisations;

- Law no 8580, dated 17.2.2000 “On Political Parties”;
- Law no 8788, dated 7.5.2001 “On Non for Profit Organisations”;
- Law no 8789, dated 7.5.2001 “On the registration of Non for Profit Organisations”;
- Law no 10093, dated 9.03.2009 “On the organisation and the functioning of the Agency for the Support of Civil Society” regulates the management of the Albanian Civil Society Fund;
- Order of the Prime Minister no 168, dated 27.07.2006 “On creating the Inter-ministerial Working Group for drafting the Crosscutting Strategy on Social Inclusion”.

*Law and By-Laws relevant to micro-enterprises in Albania:*

- Law no 9536, dated 15.5.2006 “Amendments to the Law No 7667 of 28.1.1993 “On Company Registration and Formalities to be Observed by Companies”;
- Law No 7667 of 28.1.1993 “On Company Registration and Formalities to be Observed by Companies”.

**ANNEX V: Details per EU funded contract (\*) where applicable:**

The project will be implemented in joint management through a contribution agreement with UNDP according to Article 53 of the Financing Regulation and the corresponding provisions of the Implementing Rules.