

# Mid-Term Evaluation of Austrian Development Cooperation's Albania Country Strategy (2015-2020)

## *Terms of Reference*

13 March 2019

### 1. Background

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The Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC) has been active in Albania for over 25 years, with Albania being an ADC focus country since 1992 and in-country presence with an Austrian Development Cooperation Office<sup>1</sup> in Tirana since 1995. Austrian Development Policy's current strategic Three Years Program (3YP) for the period 2019 to 2021 confirms Albania as a focus country and South East Europe as a focus region.<sup>2</sup> For the region and its focus countries, the 3YP outlines an overall prioritization of sustainable economic development and the strategic orientation of ADC's engagement in the context of the European Union enlargement process and the EU strategy for the Western Balkans.<sup>3</sup>

Austria's Official Development Assistance (ODA) to Albania between 1995 and 2017 amounted to 134,42 million Euro (EUR) of which 42,85 million Euro were projects/programs funded by the Austrian Development Cooperation.<sup>4</sup> Since 1995 ADA has funded close to 90 projects and

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<sup>1</sup>Nowadays referred to as Austrian Development Agency (ADA) Coordination Office (CO), Field Office or Local Office. See <http://start.entwicklung.local/>.

<sup>2</sup> Bundesministerium Europa, Integration und Äußeres (BMEIA), *Gemeinsam. Für unsere Welt. Dreijahresprogramm der österreichischen Entwicklungspolitik 2019 - 2021*, pp. 18-20.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid. In February 2018, the European Commission adopted a new Western Balkans Strategy, including six flagship activities and an Action Plan. For relevant EU documents see European Union's *Strategy for 'A credible enlargement perspective for and enhanced EU engagement with the Western Balkans'* and related *Action Plan* at [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/publications/enhancing-eu-engagement-western-balkans\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/publications/enhancing-eu-engagement-western-balkans_en) and [https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/annex\\_en.pdf](https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/annex_en.pdf); the European Commission's Indicative Strategy Paper for Albania 2014-2020 (IPA) at [https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/key\\_documents/2014/20140919-csp-albania.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/key_documents/2014/20140919-csp-albania.pdf) and the Regional Cooperation Council's (RCC) South East Europe (SEE) 2020 Strategy at <https://www.rcc.int/files/user/docs/reports/SEE2020-Strategy.pdf>, accessed on 03 January 2019.

<sup>4</sup> Ada Statistics Unit. For more details see also BMEIA/ADA, *Länderinformation Albanien, Juni 2018*. See [http://www.entwicklung.at/fileadmin/user\\_upload/Dokumente/Laenderinformationen/LI\\_Albanien\\_Juni2018.pdf](http://www.entwicklung.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Dokumente/Laenderinformationen/LI_Albanien_Juni2018.pdf) Other Austrian ODA actors funding programs/projects in Albania include the Austria Development Bank (OeEB), the Federal Ministry of Sustainability and Tourism (now BMNT), the Federal Ministry of Interior, the Federal Ministry of Justice (now BMVRDJ), the Federal Ministry of Finance, the Ministry for Family and Women Affairs (now BMFSFJ), the Ministry for Education, Science and Research (BMWFW) the Austrian Federal Chancellery and various Austrian States

programs in Albania.<sup>5</sup> Third party funding/delegated cooperation has gained significance for ADA's portfolio in Albania over the last decade and was one of the factors for the decision taken to keep an ADA coordination office (thereinafter CO) operative in Albania at a time when four other Austrian co-ordination offices in the Western Balkans were closed.

Albania applied for European Union (EU) membership in April 2009 and received candidate status in June 2014. Progress in the EU accession – in particular the opening of accession negotiations – will depend on improvements in several key policy areas related to the rule of law, human rights and democratization.<sup>6</sup> For the period between 2007 and 2020, the European Union has allocated approximately 1.2 billion Euro (EUR) of development aid to Albania under its Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA).<sup>7</sup>

Albania currently ranks 68th out of 189 countries in the latest Human Development Index (HDI).<sup>8</sup> In the 2017 Corruption Perceptions Index Albania scores 38 on a scale of 100 indicating the perceived level of public sector corruption on a scale of 0 (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean) and ranks 99<sup>th</sup> out of 180 countries included in the index.<sup>9</sup>

In 2005, an evaluation of Austria's cooperation with Albania from 1991/1992 to 2004 was conducted - resulting in an evaluation report and an Action Plan for the Implementation of Evaluation Results.<sup>10</sup> In addition, in late 2014 an informal, strategic review process of the Country Strategy Albania 2010-2014 took place during a two-day strategic planning workshop with ADC partners and key stakeholders in Albania's capital Tirana. The workshop resulted in proposals for the strategic direction of the 2015-2020 Country Strategy, with objectives and expected results.<sup>11</sup>

### **ADC's strategic orientation for Albania**

The current Country Strategy for Albania (thereinafter Country Strategy/CS) was developed in late 2014 and spans over six years (2015-2020).<sup>12</sup> Importantly, it includes also a matrix that outlines objectives, results, indicators and actors as formulated at the time of strategy development.

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and Municipalities. For details on Austrian ODA payments to Albania in 2017 see Österreichische ODA-Leistungen an Albanien 2017 nach Modalität, Sektor, Mittelherkunft und Projektträger, [http://www.entwicklung.at/fileadmin/user\\_upload/Dokumente/Projektliste/Laender\\_Projektliste/Albanien\\_Projektliste2017.pdf](http://www.entwicklung.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Dokumente/Projektliste/Laender_Projektliste/Albanien_Projektliste2017.pdf), accessed on 21 February 2019.

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.entwicklung.at/en/projects/>, accessed on 15 January 2019.

<sup>6</sup> [https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/albania/6953/albania-and-eu\\_en](https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/albania/6953/albania-and-eu_en).

<sup>7</sup> This sum does not include the *multi-country* funds allocated under IPA I (2007-2013) and IPA II (2014-2020). [https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/instruments/overview\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/instruments/overview_en).

<sup>8</sup> <http://hdr.undp.org/en/2018-update>.

<sup>9</sup> For more details see Transparency International, available at <https://www.transparency.org/cpi2018> and <https://www.transparency.org/country/ALB>, accessed on 04.01.2019

<sup>10</sup> Both documents are with ADA's Evaluation Unit.

<sup>11</sup> No review document as such was produced. The preparatory and workshop documentation, including the proposal document, is with the ADA Evaluation Unit.

<sup>12</sup> For the Country Strategy (available in English and German) go to [http://www.entwicklung.at/fileadmin/user\\_upload/Dokumente/Publikationen/Landesstrategien/CS\\_Albania\\_2015-2020.pdf](http://www.entwicklung.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Dokumente/Publikationen/Landesstrategien/CS_Albania_2015-2020.pdf).

The CS stipulates that Austria's development cooperation with Albania will increasingly focus on capacity development, know-how transfer and public administration reform.<sup>13</sup> The CS identifies

the following overall strategic focus: "1. Support of Albania's EU integration; 2. Promotion of regional cooperation with the Western Balkan countries and Albania's neighbouring EU countries [..]; 3. Support of the reform process in Albania through the development of institutional and human capacities and the promotion of sustainable development and social inclusion, and strengthening the rule of law/ accountability and implementation of human rights principles; 4. Promotion of good governance in the framework of the ongoing decentralisation process to strengthen the planning and implementation capacities of the public administration<sup>14</sup>".

The country strategy also defines the thematic priority areas for ADC's operational engagement in Albania: 1. Governance and Rule of Law, 2. Integrated Water Management and 3. Labour market-oriented Vocational Education/Employability. In addition, social inclusion, gender equality and environment/climate change are identified as cross-cutting issues.<sup>15</sup> Last, but not least, the Country Strategy explicitly mentions the human rights-based approach (HRBA) as comprehensive basis for Austrian Development Cooperation. It also refers to several national, regional and international development commitments as part of the Strategy's reference framework.<sup>16</sup> These include, the ADC regional strategy for the Danube Area/Western Balkans Region<sup>17</sup> and Austrian Development Policy's strategic Three Years Programs (3YP)<sup>18</sup> as well EU strategic documents relevant to Albania and the region<sup>19</sup> and, as international commitments, the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)<sup>20</sup>.

The Strategy also notes that its alignment with the Austrian Federal Ministry of Finance's International Financial Institutions (IFI) Strategy, the Strategy of the Austrian Development Bank (Oesterreichische Entwicklungsbank, OeEB,) on the Western Balkans and the development and sector strategies and priorities of the Albanian government.<sup>21</sup> Albeit these national, regional and

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<sup>13</sup> Country Strategy, Executive Summary, p. 1.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, Strategic development goals, p. 5.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> The current Strategy was adopted in 2016. See at [http://www.entwicklung.at/fileadmin/user\\_upload/Dokumente/Publikationen/Strategien/Englisch/EN\\_Strategy\\_Danube\\_area\\_Western\\_Balkans.pdf](http://www.entwicklung.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Dokumente/Publikationen/Strategien/Englisch/EN_Strategy_Danube_area_Western_Balkans.pdf), accessed on 03.01.2019.

<sup>18</sup>The Austrian Development Policy's Three Year Programs (3YP) falling within the time frame of evaluation are the 2013-2015, 2016-2018 (plus 2017 and 2018 updates) and the 2019-2021 3YP. The 3YPs 2013-2015, 2016-2018 (plus 2017 update) are available in English at <http://www.entwicklung.at/en/media-centre/publications/programmes/>. The 2018 update of the 2016-2018 3YP and the 2019-2021 3YP are available in German only at <http://www.entwicklung.at/mediathek/publikationen/strategische-dokumente/>. All documents accessed on 04.01.2019.

<sup>19</sup> It mentions, amongst others, the EU's Development Policy 2014-2020 for Albania, the EU Indicative Strategy Paper for Albania (IPA II) and the 2020 SEE Strategy of the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC). IPA III is envisaged to be part of a set of EU external action instruments under its 2021 to 2027 multiannual financial framework (MFF). The EU's current MFF runs from 2014-2020.

<sup>20</sup> See <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>.

<sup>21</sup> Expressly mentioned in this context are the Albanian national draft development strategy and the 2014-2020 sector strategies, e.g. Cross-sectoral Strategy for Public Administration Reform, National Strategy for Employment and Skills, Public Finances Management Strategy, the National Anti-Corruption Strategy, Social Inclusion Policy Paper.

international strategies and commitments themselves are not the object of this evaluation, they are referred to in the Country Strategy as guidance and relevant to the evaluation, especially regarding relevance, added value, policy coherence and coordination.<sup>22</sup> The Country Strategy also expressly foresees a ‘Whole of Government Approach’ (WGA) and a stronger results-orientation to achieve greater Policy Coherence for Development (PCD). To this end, the establishment of an inter-ministerial platform with the participation of parliament and civil society in Austria was launched as well as the conduct of local development performance monitoring in cooperation with Albanian partners and in coordination with international development actors.<sup>23</sup> The strategy also confirmed Austria’s interest, especially as a small donor, in ensuring effective harmonization, coordination and efficient division of labor with all international stakeholders in Albania, including Austrian institutions that apply for EU funds.<sup>24</sup>

### **ADC’s Portfolio in Albania since 2015**

As noted above, the Country Strategy’s thematic priority areas for ADC’s operational engagement in Albania are: Governance and Rule of Law, Integrated Water Management and Labour market-oriented Vocational Education/Employability while social inclusion, gender equality and environment/climate change are defined as cross-cutting issues.

ADC/ADA net disbursements in Albania from 2015 to 2018 amount to 6,84 million Euro<sup>25</sup> (excluding third party funds). Third party funds delegated to ADA and disbursed by ADA in Albania within the same timeframe amount to 2,67 million Euro.<sup>26</sup>

Since the beginning of the current Albania Country Strategy in January 2015, a total of 36 ADA projects have been running in Albania of which 23 started after the adoption of the CS.<sup>27</sup> Out of these 36 projects 17 fall within the priority theme Governance and Rule of Law, nine within Labour market-oriented Vocational Education/Employability and five within Integrated Water management. Five projects are so called Small Project Funds, annually put at the disposal of ADA Co-ordination Offices for the funding of small local projects.<sup>28</sup> In terms of contract value of projects running since the start of the Country Strategy the thematic priority areas are represented as follows: 45% Integrated Water Management, 41 % Governance and Rule of Law, 12% Labour market-oriented Vocational Education/Employability and 2% Small Project Fund. In terms of

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<sup>22</sup> The Austrian Development Policy’s Three Year Programs (3YP) falling within the time frame of evaluation are the 2013-2015, 2016-2018 (plus 2017 and 2018 updates) and the 2019-2021 3YP. The 3YPs 2013-2015, 2016-2018 (plus 2017 update) are available in English at <http://www.entwicklung.at/en/media-centre/publications/programmes/>. The 2018 update of the 2016-2018 3YP and the 2019-2021 3YP are available in German only at <http://www.entwicklung.at/mediathek/publikationen/strategische-dokumente/>. All documents accessed on 04.01.2019.

<sup>23</sup> See Country Strategy, Executive Summary, p. 1.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> This does not include third party funds. Total ODA to Albania between 2015 and 2017 amounted to 25,11 million Euro. ADA Statistics Unit, February 2019.

<sup>26</sup> Figures based on data from ADA Statistics and ADA Advisor Albania (for 2018), February 2019.

<sup>27</sup> These figures are based on ADA Funding Management System (FMS) data and include figures until the second quarter of 2019. They do not include regional projects. They include projects managed by ADA’s Countries and Units (L&R), Economy and Development (W&E) and Civil Society International (ZGI).

<sup>28</sup> Since the beginning of the Country Strategy five small project funds have been put at the disposal of the ADA Co-ordination Office. For 2019, as of 10 March 2019, the small projects to be funded have not yet been selected. In total 28 small projects (all contract value below 20.000 Euro each, generally contract value below 10.000 Euro) have so far been funded: 9 in 2015, 5 in 2016, 6 in 2017 and 8 in 2018. The annual Small Project Fund is limited to max. 100.000 Euro per ADA Co-ordination Office.

contract value, fifteen projects have a volume between 110.000 Euro and 500.000 Euro, seven up to 50.000 Euro, six a contract value between 60.000-100.000, three between 510.000 and 1 Mio Euro, three between 1, 1 Mio Euro - 2 Mio Euro and one above 2 Mio Euro.<sup>29</sup>

As of March 2019, ADA is funding/implementing six<sup>30</sup> projects in Albania, falling within in the following areas: water and sanitation (49%), government and civil society (27%), social infrastructure and services (9%) and education sector (13%).<sup>31</sup> In terms of the Country Strategy framework this means 49% for integrated water management, 36% for Governance and Rule of Law and 13% Labour market-oriented Vocational Education/Employability.

A look at ADA's regional/global portfolio relevant to Albania shows a total of 33 projects running since the start of the Country Strategy, with the vast majority falling within the framework of Governance and Rule of Law (25 projects), followed by Labour Market oriented Vocational Education/Employability (7 projects) and integrated Water Management (1 project).

From the perspective of the funding source measured by contract value between 2015 and March 2019 nearly 17, 08 Mio Euro came from ADA and 9,27 Mio Euro from third parties (delegated cooperation), including funds from the European Union and the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC). Three of the ADA co-funded third party projects running since 2015 fall within the thematic priorities Governance and Rule of Law and two within Integrated Water Management.

Finally, four Albania projects currently have the status of 'proposed' or 'planned', with the start foreseen between the second quarter of 2019 and the first quarter of 2020.

### **This evaluation**

ADA's Evaluation Unit<sup>32</sup> (EVAL) is commissioning a strategic mid-term evaluation of ADC's 2015-2020 Country Strategy for Albania (thereinafter "evaluation"), more specifically, from the second half of 2014, when ADC's preparations to develop a new Albania strategy started, until April 2019. The evaluation is to be conducted by a team of external consultants between April/May 2019 and December 2019/January 2020. These Terms of Reference (ToR) are the main planning document that describes the purpose, scope and main evaluation questions. They are based on existing ADC/ADA guidance on country and regional strategy evaluations and have been drafted through a consultative process with inputs from key stakeholders in Austria and Albania.

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<sup>29</sup> Based on FMS data. Each small project fund (SPF) has been counted as one here and allocated to the category up to 50.000 Euro due to the fact that each of the projects funded through the SBF is below that volume. As noted above, 28 projects have been funded through the SPF in Albania since the start of the CS. within the relevant timeframe of this evaluation.

<sup>30</sup> For the ADA Funding Management Systems (FMS) technically these are seven projects. The 'EU Support to Integrated Water Management', is broken down into two projects, one for the third party funding (European Commission) and a second one for the ADC co-financing. See <https://www.entwicklung.at/en/projects/current-projects/map/country/ALEUSIWM/EU>, accessed on 12 March 2019.

<sup>31</sup> This categorization reflects the assigned OECD DAC CRS Purpose Codes and not the scope of priority sectors as included in the Country Strategy. For the purpose of the Country Strategy as well as ADA programming (Themes and Quality Unit/T&Q), the thematic areas of government and civil society as well as social infrastructure and services fall within one and the same sector and theme, namely Good Governance and the Rule of Law. For more details on ADA's ongoing and past projects in Albania see <http://www.entwicklung.at/en/projects/all-projects> accessed on 18.01.2019.

<sup>32</sup> A subgroup of ADA's Executive Unit of Evaluation and Statistics.

## 2. Evaluation purpose

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The main purposes of this evaluation are learning and steering for better strategic decision making, programming and implementation.<sup>33</sup> The evaluation will be forward looking, formative and improvement-oriented.

The evaluation will provide evidence for institutional learning at the strategic level and help define the future ADC engagement in Albania, with particular attention to Albania's accession process to the European Union and related implications for ADC, including a possible phasing over and options for ADC cooperation at a different level. The timing of this evaluation, two thirds into the strategy's implementation, will allow that its findings, lessons learned and recommendations contribute to developing a possible new Albania Country Strategy for 2021 and beyond. As the current CS is still being implemented until the end of 2020, the evaluation will also help taking stock, reflecting and making adjustments, where needed and adequate, for the remaining implementation period.

The primary users of the evaluation results is ADC's management, more specifically, strategic decision makers, senior management and program (country desk and thematic) staff across relevant departments at BMEIA and ADA (HQ und field). It is expected that the evaluation will also be useful for Austrian ODA actors and ADC partners active in Albania, which meet on a regular basis institutionalized through the Interministerial Session (IMS).

## 3. Objectives

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The main objectives of the evaluation are:

1. To assess the relevance, coherence, complementariness of ADC's strategic framework for Albania and synergies in its implementation;
2. To assess the effectiveness, overall impact and prospects for sustainability of ADC's strategic orientation and its implementation in Albania and identify hindering and facilitating factors;
3. To assess the efficiency and effectiveness of funding instruments, implementation modalities and partnerships used by ADC for its engagement in Albania and identify related good practice and challenges;
4. To identify and help sharpen the comparative advantage and added value of ADC's engagement in Albania.

This strategic evaluation is based on the OECD-DAC framework and standards<sup>34</sup> and the ADC guidelines for Country and Strategy Evaluations<sup>35</sup>.

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<sup>33</sup> As background to ADC country strategy evaluations see ADC/ADA, Guidelines for Country and Regional Strategy Evaluations & Reviews of the Austrian Development Cooperation, See at [www.entwicklung.at/en/ada/evaluation/](http://www.entwicklung.at/en/ada/evaluation/).

<sup>34</sup> See OECD, DAC Norms and Standards for Evaluating Development cooperation, available at <http://www.oecd.org/development/evaluation/dcdndep/41612905.pdf>. OECD (2010): Quality Standards for Development Evaluation. DAC Guidelines and Reference Series (currently being revised), available at <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>. OECD, DAC Quality Standards for Development Evaluation, available at: <http://www.oecd.org/development/evaluation/dcdndep/44798177.pdf>. For the purpose of this evaluation, 'impact' will be assessed without its broad scale element.

<sup>35</sup> See ADA Guidelines for Country and Regional Strategy Evaluation (2016), [https://www.entwicklung.at/fileadmin/user\\_upload/Dokumente/Evaluierung/Evaluierungsberichte/Guidelines\\_for\\_Country\\_and\\_Regional\\_Strategy\\_Evaluations\\_\\_\\_Reviews\\_of\\_the\\_Austrian\\_Development\\_Cooperation.pdf](https://www.entwicklung.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Dokumente/Evaluierung/Evaluierungsberichte/Guidelines_for_Country_and_Regional_Strategy_Evaluations___Reviews_of_the_Austrian_Development_Cooperation.pdf)

## 4. Focus and Scope

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The period covered by the evaluation spans from the second half of 2014, when the Albania Country Strategy was developed to April 2019.

The evaluation will help assess whether ADC's strategic positioning in Albania has been and continues to be relevant and coherent and how effective, efficient and impactful this strategy has been implemented and what the prospect for sustainability are. In doing so it will assess design, implementation and monitoring mechanisms, aid modalities, sector impact, added value, national and local/regional, partnerships and donor coordination.

The evaluation will reconstruct the Theory of Change (ToC) for all three priority sectors and the cross-cutting issues. In terms of assessing effectiveness, impact and sustainability, two of the three priority sectors will be selected for in depth analysis during the inception phase. The evaluation will also look at how the crosscutting issues and the human rights based approach have been applied within each and across sectors. Even though ADC's Regional Strategy for the Danube Area / Western Balkans Region is not the focus of this evaluation, the evaluation will take its role in consideration in terms of issues of coherence, complementariness and synergies.

Available evaluative evidence and findings related to ADC's and other donors' engagement in Albania should inform this evaluation. This includes previous strategic evaluations and reviews undertaken by ADC, program/project evaluations and reviews commissioned or conducted by ADA or its implementing partners<sup>36</sup> as well as relevant evaluations of other stakeholders.

## 5. Evaluation Questions

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The key evaluation questions to be covered by the evaluation are:

### Relevance

1. To what extent does the strategy and its intended results<sup>37</sup> take into account and respond to the specific context in the partner country, particularly Albania's accession process to the European Union, and the demands of the target population, including the most vulnerable/marginalized?
2. To what extent is the strategy coherent with other ADC strategic documents<sup>38</sup> relevant to Albania, how is coherence being monitored and how are discrepancies being addressed?
3. How relevant are the projects implemented to the Strategy in terms of objectives and results? And what potential options for improvement exist?

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<sup>36</sup> Around ten ADA project/program evaluations have so far been completed, are ongoing or are planned for the first quarter of 2019.

<sup>37</sup> In particular with a view to its strategic development goals, thematic priority areas, cross-cutting issues, implementation and coordination arrangements, its matrix as well as policy coherence for development (PCD), especially ADC's Whole-of-Government Approach (WGA).

<sup>38</sup> Such as the 3YP, thematic policies etc.

**Effectiveness**

4. What have been the results achieved within the three priority sectors over the evaluated period? How did the Strategy enable these results? Did any unintended effects occur as a result of the Strategy and its implementation, positive or negative? Any missed opportunities?
5. Which role have different funding instruments used in Albania played in the achievement of results and overall performance? Which associated advantages and disadvantages can be identified for future decision making in this regard?
6. To which extent was ADC's approach effective in relation to the cross-cutting issues (social inclusion, gender equality and environment/climate change) as well as the human rights-based approach (HRBA)?

**Efficiency:**

7. How efficiently has the Country Strategy been implemented? Which enabling and hindering factors can be identified in the context? How can related challenges best be addressed in future?

**Impact:**

8. What has demonstrably changed for the target population and groups as a result of the strategy (positive/negative, intended/unintended) – both with a view to the thematic priorities and cross-cutting issues?
9. What have been the key enabling and hindering factors for these changes? How have related challenges been managed and how can they be mitigated in future?

**Sustainability:**

10. To what extent has the Country Strategy and its implementation built-in strategies and measures for sustaining positive effects and change, especially regarding changes of context?
11. To what extent have results brought about lasting change and/or can be expected to continue beyond the duration of the Strategy? What have been the main enabling and hindering factors for sustainability of results and how can they be built on/addressed?

**Complementariness and Synergies**

12. How is Austria's Whole of Government Approach (WGA) reflected in the development, implementation and coordination of the Strategy? What have been enabling and hindering factors for WGA operationalization?
13. What has been and still is ADC's added value and comparative advantage vis a vis other development actors engaged in the country, if any?

Questions can be refined and restructured in agreement with ADA's Evaluation Unit during the inception phase. Any changes need to be explained and adequately reflect the overall purpose and scope of the evaluation.

## 6. Approach and Methods

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The evaluation will use a theory-based approach (TBA)<sup>39</sup> to assess and determine ADC's work in Albania. The starting point for this is the reconstruction of a Theory of Change (ToC,) incl. assumptions for the Country Strategy as such and possibly for the priority sectors. The reconstruction of the CS's (implicit) ToC, starting from the Country Strategy and its matrix itself, and the testing of underlying hypothesis and assumptions will provide evidence to inform ADC's future engagement in Albania. It will also help draw conclusions on the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and prospects for impact, sustainability and added value of specific approaches and interventions of ADC's engagement in Albania.

The evaluation will employ a Mixed-Methods approach<sup>40</sup> to data collection and data analysis, including both quantitative and qualitative methods. A Mixed-Methods design will be used to draw from the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative methods and to improve the internal validity of results through data and method triangulation<sup>41</sup>. As such, the evaluation will draw on a range of data sources and data collection methods to ensure the reliability of results, promote impartiality, reduce bias, and ensure that the findings are based on the most comprehensive and relevant information possible. The methods are likely to include the following:

- **Portfolio review** (based on preparatory work and supported by the ADA Evaluation Unit): The portfolio analysis will include the analysis of quantitative and qualitative data and will help understand ADC's engagement in Albania in detail during the timeframe of the evaluation and beyond, as needed;
- **Context analysis:** The context analysis will include a review of relevant literature on Albania. It will also include taking stock of available evaluative evidence related to Albania.
- **Document review:** The document review will include a review of key international/regional/national strategy documents (ADC, regional and country level), program/project related documentation across the three priority sectors.
- **Key informant interviews:** Key informants will include the Austrian Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs (BMEIA), ADA senior and programme managers and thematic experts at Headquarters and at the Coordination Office (CO) in Tirana, as relevant; Whole of Government (WGA) actors, Albanian government and partner institutions, civil society and other implementing partner organizations as well as bi- and multilateral development partners and key international organizations active in Albania, such as the OSCE, UNDP, UN Women. Key informants should be selected in such a way that they adequately cover different stakeholder groups.

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<sup>39</sup> Weiss, C. H. (1997). Theory-based evaluation: Past, present and future. *New Directions for Evaluation*, 76, 41-55. Funnel, Sue C., Rogers, Patricia J. (2011), *Purposeful Program Theory: Effective Use of Theories of Change and Logic Models*. See also Mayne, John (2015), *Useful Theory of Change Models*, in: *Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation* 30(2), 119-142 and Aspen Institute (ed.) *The Community Builder's Approach to Theory of Change: A Practical Guide to Theory Development*, The Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change available at [http://www.entwicklung.at/fileadmin/user\\_upload/Dokumente/Evaluierung/Theory\\_of\\_Change/Aspen\\_Institute\\_Theory\\_of\\_Change\\_Guide.pdf](http://www.entwicklung.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Dokumente/Evaluierung/Theory_of_Change/Aspen_Institute_Theory_of_Change_Guide.pdf).

<sup>40</sup> Bamberger, Michael/Rao, Vijayendra, Woolcock, Michael (2010), *Using Mixed Methods in Monitoring and Evaluation*, Policy Research Working Paper, The World Bank Development Research Group, Poverty and Inequality Team.

<sup>41</sup> See, for example, Flick, U. (2004): *Triangulation. Eine Einführung*: Springer.

- **Survey:** Based on a standardized online questionnaire, the survey can be an important component in assessing effectiveness, impact and prospects for sustainability in the eyes of the project implementers. Thus, the survey is expected to mainly reach out to ADC implementing partners and possibly government partners.
- **Case studies:** Case studies can contribute to assessing the relevance, effectiveness, impact, sustainability as well as complementariness and synergies. The internal validity of the case studies is of fundamental importance. In the context of this evaluation, (at least) one case study on one of the priority sectors is envisaged.
- **Methods to assess development outcomes:** ADA envisages to apply rigorous methods to assess effectiveness of its interventions. These can include theory based impact evaluation approaches (such as contribution analysis, process tracing or most significant change<sup>42</sup>) as well as (quasi-)experimental designs<sup>43</sup>.

Methodological rigor will be weighted significantly in the assessment of proposals. Bidders are therefore invited to question the methodology presented in this TOR and improve on it, or propose an approach that is deemed more appropriate.

## 7. Evaluation Process

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The evaluation will be divided into three phases which each have specific deliverables. Their timely delivery is within the responsibility of the evaluation team.

The evaluation will include visits to Vienna and Albania. A total of three to four visits to Vienna (Kick-Off, Inception Report Presentation and Interviews, Preliminary findings Presentation, Final Draft Report) and one, if needed and as agreed with the ADA Evaluation Unit, two, field trips to Albania are foreseen during the evaluation.

### **7.1. Kick-off and Inception Phase (May – end June 2019)**

During the inception phase one visit to Vienna is planned, for the kick-off meeting.

The first phase comprises of the following actions/deliverables by the evaluation team:

- a. Desk research and a study/desk review of documents and data provided by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA)
- b. Draft inception report (10 pages) that must contain at least the following points
  - Presentation of hypothesis/assumptions on the main evaluation questions;
  - Detailed presentation of the methods to be applied during data collection;
  - Proposed field visits;
  - Theory of Change (ToC);
  - Evaluation Matrix, (showing how each question will be answered through the use of indicators, data collection tools etc.)
- c. Incorporation of the written comments into the draft inception report and submission of the final inception report and completed feedback matrix.

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<sup>42</sup> See for example, Davies, R. and Dart, J. (2005), *The 'Most Significant Change' Technique – A Guide to its Use*.

<sup>43</sup> See for example, Howard White and Shagun Sabarwal (2014), *Quasi-Experimental Design and Methods*, UNICEF.

## **7.2 Data Collection and Interview Phase (June –August)**

At the outset of the data collection and interview phase one visit to Vienna is planned: for the presentation of the inception report and key informant interviews.

The second phase starts upon written approval by the ADA Evaluation Unit (EVAL) of the inception report. The main components of the second phase are:

- a. Data collection through interviews and visits of programme sites in Albania. The interviews and site visits will be conducted in line with the plans agreed in the inception report. To guarantee their independence, it is important that the evaluation team conducts and is seen to conduct the field visits in an independent manner.
- b. Survey data, if applicable
- c. Case study briefs, if applicable

## **7.3. Data Analysis and Submission of Report (September - December 2019/January 2020)**

- a. Data analysis und preparation of triangulation matrix.
- b. Submission of the draft report to the ADA Evaluation Unit
- c. Incorporation of the feedback (or else non-incorporation of feedback based on a sound justification) by the evaluation team and submission of the final draft report to the ADA Evaluation Unit,
- d. Incorporation of Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) feedback as relevant by the evaluation team and submission of a final draft report to the ADA Evaluation Unit (two weeks after having received the feedback).
- e. Presentation (power point) by the evaluation team leader in Vienna of the final draft report to the Evaluation Reference Group (and possibly additional key actors) in Vienna.
- f. Incorporation of the written comments by the evaluation team and submission of the final version of the report to the ADA Evaluation Unit for coherence screening.

The evaluation team will build up its work on the relevant standards for evaluations of the OECD DAC<sup>44</sup> and those of the Austrian Development Cooperation, where applicable<sup>45</sup>. All work needs to be documented by using transparent criteria.

## **8. Timetable and Deliverables**

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The Evaluation should start in early May 2019. The inception report is to be finalized by mid-June 2019. The draft report is to be submitted to ADA in September/early October 2019 and the final report the latest in December 2019/January 2020.

The evaluation team is expected to provide the following deliverables:

- Draft and final inception report, including evaluation matrix, interview guidelines, survey questionnaire and draft Theory of Change (ToC);

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<sup>44</sup> Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development/OECD (1992), Development assistance manual: DAC Principles for effective aid, Paris.

<sup>45</sup> <http://www.entwicklung.at/activities/evaluation/en/>.

- Kick-Off Meeting, Interviews/Focus Group Discussions in Vienna, Preliminary Findings and Final Draft Report Presentations in Vienna;
- Analytical Framework
- Triangulation Matrix
- Codified data from interviews
- Survey data, case study briefs, as applicable
- Feedback matrices
- Draft evaluation report
- Final evaluation report, with Executive Summary in English, German and Albanian

#	Phase	Deliverable	Timeline	Time Estimate (evaluation team)
1	Kick-Off and Inception Phase	Draft Inception Report	Early June '19	20 working days
		Final Inception Report	Mid-June 19	
2	Data Collection and Interview Phase	Field visit to Albania	End-June – Mid-July 19	28 working days
3	Data Analysis and Submission of Report	Triangulation matrix, interview protocols and survey data	Mid-August 19	39 working days
		Presentation of Initial Findings (Power Point)	Early September 19	
		Draft Report	Mid-September 19	
		Presentation of Draft Final Report	End October '19	
		Final Report (Executive Summary in English, Albanian and German)	End December '19/January 2020	

All evaluation products, including the reports need to be written and delivered in English. The Executive Summary of the Evaluation Report needs to be translated and also submitted in German and Albanian.

The inception report must contain an evaluation matrix, analytical framework, draft Theory of Change (ToC) and a draft list of interview partners.

The final report must contain an executive summary and a list of recommendations made by the evaluation. The final report should not comprise more than 40 pages (excluding annexes). The executive summary should summarize key findings and recommendations (three to five pages) and needs to be submitted as part of the final draft report.

The quality of the reports will be assessed according to the following criteria:

- Does the report contain a comprehensive and clear executive summary?
- Were the Terms of Reference fulfilled and is this reflected in the report?
- Are all evaluation questions answered?
- Are the methods and processes of the evaluation sufficiently documented in the evaluation report?
- Does the report present/analyze a theory of change and its underlying assumptions?
- Are the conclusions and recommendations based on findings and are they clearly stated in the report?
- Does the report clearly differentiate between conclusions, lessons learnt and recommendations?
- Are the recommendations SMART?
- Were the most significant stakeholders involved consulted?
- Does the report present the information contained in a presentable and clearly arranged form?
- Is the report free from spelling mistakes and unclear linguistic formulations?
- Can the report be distributed in the delivered form?

## **9. Management of the Evaluation and Responsibilities**

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The evaluation will be managed by the ADA Evaluation Unit EVAL, which will also approve the evaluation products, including the inception report and final report.

An Evaluation Reference Group, co-facilitated by ADA and BMEIA Evaluation Units and composed of one or more representative/s from the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (BMEIA), the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) and the Government of Albania, will be established to act as a sounding board, to facilitate and review the work of the evaluation and enhance participation, ownership and learning. They will also serve as an independent validation of facts and findings. The Reference Group will provide inputs and feedback at all stages of the drafting, i.e. Terms of Reference (ToRs), inception report and the draft report.

In the inception phase, all relevant organizational units within BMEIA and ADA will provide – through the Evaluation Reference Group and coordinated through ADA’s Evaluation Unit - basic documentation and information to the evaluation team.

The strategic evaluation of ADC’s country strategy Albania is accompanied by two peer reviewers reviewing the quality of the evaluation throughout the evaluation process. More specifically, the

peer reviewers will comment in writing on the evaluation's ToR, the inception report, the survey questionnaire, interview guidelines and the draft evaluation report.

ADA's Evaluation Unit and the evaluation team will be responsible to ensure independence throughout the evaluation process. Where needed and adequate ADA EVAL will provide support regarding the coordination of meetings.

## **10. Payment modalities**

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The payment will be done in three installments. The first installment amounts to thirty percent (30%) of the total contract value and will be settled by ADA after acceptance of the inception report. The second installment, also consisting of thirty percent (30%) of the total contract value will be transferred after the acceptance of the draft evaluation report and the third payment of the remaining 40% of the contract value will be transferred after the submission of all remaining deliverables and the acceptance of the final evaluation report and the related invoice and its acknowledgement by ADA.

## **11. Logistical arrangements**

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The evaluation team is responsible for its own logistical arrangements and shall arrange the necessary meetings independently. If a specific need for this is identified during the evaluation process, ADA's evaluation team will work to facilitate travel and other logistical arrangements when needed and as much as possible.

## **12. Evaluation team**

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The strategic evaluation should be conducted by a team of evaluators, including at least one national evaluator. The evaluation team should not exceed three persons. The evaluation team must include different gender. The team composition should be detailed in the technical offer, together with a clear division of tasks among all team members.

The team leader should have the following qualifications:

- Track record in leading strategic evaluations during the last 5 years (at least three strategic evaluations conducted), including at least two of which country strategy evaluations, proven by at least one publication to be annexed to the offer.
- Proven experience with theory-based evaluations (at least two evaluations conducted within the last seven years);
- Proven experience with quantitative, multivariate analysis and survey development, proven by at least one writing sample (published or unpublished, to be annexed to the offer);
- Proven work experience in development cooperation and with EU accession countries., including the European Union's Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (If other team member has experience with IPA, this can be waived).
- Proven familiarity with or work experience in Albania and the region.
- Expertise or/and evaluation experience in at least one of the other ADC sector priorities relevant in Albania

- Expertise or/and evaluation experience with the cross-cutting issues relevant to this evaluation.
- Excellent knowledge of English language. Knowledge of Albanian and German language is an asset.

The other team member(s) should have the following qualifications:

- Track record in conducting strategic evaluations, including at least two of which country strategy evaluations in the context of development cooperation.
- Proven experience with theory-based evaluations (at least two evaluations conducted within the last seven years);
- Expertise or/and evaluation experience in at least one of the ADC sector priorities relevant in Albania (different from the sector of expertise of the team leader).
- Proven experience with quantitative, multivariate analysis and survey development, proven by at least one writing sample
- Proven work experience in development cooperation and with EU accession countries, including the European Union's Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance/IPA (If other team member has experience with IPA, this can be waived).
- Expertise or/and evaluation experience with the cross-cutting issues relevant to this evaluation.
- Proven familiarity with or work experience in Albania and the region.
- Excellent knowledge of English language. German language is an asset.

### **13. Contracting and selection process**

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For the hiring of the evaluation team, ADA will pursue a direct contracting process. Several experts/companies will be invited to submit a proposal. Furthermore, a call for expression of interest (including the Terms of Reference) will be published in a variety of platforms and networks. Interested candidates/firms should provide a technical offer (maximum 10 pages) and a financial offer (in word and excel format).

Financial offers exceeding 71.000,- EUR net will be excluded from the application and selection process.

The **technical offer** should include the following:

- Brief description of the understanding of the assignment;
- Presentation of a proposed approach and methodology, particularly regarding methods used, possible challenges and how to address them;
- Presentation of a detailed work plan including time schedule and division of tasks;
- Detailed CVs and references of similar assignments of the team leader, the other team member(s) as annex
- Information on and references of similar assignments of the consulting firm (if applicable) as annex

The **financial offer** should follow the following breakdown (in EUR):

- Personnel costs: name of evaluators and support staff, if applicable, estimated number of working days per evaluation phase, fee rate per working day, total amount;

- Travel (Albania, Vienna): travel, accommodation, other costs, if applicable;
- Other costs (for communications, etc.);
- VAT (if applicable). Please note that ADA does not hold a value-added tax identification number (UID).

Criteria that will be used to assess the proposals include:

- Expertise, relevant experience and suitability of evaluation team
- Relevant experience and capacity of consulting firm (if applicable)
- Quality and coherence of the proposal, including methodology, timeline and work plan
- Methodological rigor and adequacy of approach that matches this evaluation's information needs
- Coherence of financial and technical proposal; efficient use of resources.

Please note that personal data included in the proposals (like CVs) will be stored and used by ADA internally during the review of the Proposals.

***The consultants must not have been involved in the design, implementation or monitoring of ADC's 2015-2020 Country Strategy in Albania or ADA funded/implemented projects/programmes in Albania during the timeframe that is being evaluated.***

Proposals must be submitted by email with "Evaluation - Albania Country Strategy" as subject header **by 9 April 2019, 12 a.m. (noon), CET**, to the Evaluation Unit at the Austrian Development Agency: [evaluierung@ada.gv.at](mailto:evaluierung@ada.gv.at)