



Albania Mid-term Self-Assessment

MIAP
10/13/2015

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Since the *Open Government Partnership* was launched in September 2011, Albania has shown its commitment to the initiative's founding principles and values. By the end of 2011, an Inter-Ministerial Working Group (IWG) was established by the government of Albania to develop the OGP Action Plan, in compliance with the National Strategy of Development and Integration and the Anti-Corruption Strategy. The IWG is led by the former Minister of Innovation and ICT and all its participatory members are high level officials from other central government ministries and institutions.

The Albanian government's commitments addressed primary three out of five OGP Grand Challenges: Increasing Public Integrity, Improving Public Services, and More Effectively Managing Public Resources.

The work for the preparation of the Second National Action Plan started in January 2014 with the creation of an Inter-Ministerial Working group composed by the vice ministers of each Ministry and by the Directors of the most important public institutions and agencies in Albania, led by the State Minister for Innovation and Public Administration. A technical working group, with representatives from each ministry and Agency was also constituted in order to follow periodically the drafting and monitoring phases of the action plan.

In collaboration with civil society a first Conference was organized in March during which the draft commitments of each ministry were distributed to working groups composed by representatives of civil society and representatives of the State that were directly involved with the proposed commitments.

The Albanian OGP CSO Coalition is launched on December 5th 2013. The Coalition of Civil Society for The Open Government presented 25 recommendations in regard to the improvement of the second Albanian Action Plan.

The timeline of the activities, the draft action plan, the 25 recommendations and each commitment were published for public consultation on the MIPA website.

After the public consultation phase, the Minister of State for Innovation and Public Administration organized a second meeting with civil society where the comments and suggestions arrived from civil society during the consultation phase were consulted, discussed and integrated in the draft action plan.

The Action Plan was further officially approved by each Ministry involved in the process and published on the OGP web site.

The 13 commitments of the second Action Plan address four grand challenges identified by the OGP:

- Increasing Public Integrity
- Managing Public Resources More Effectively
- Improving Public Services
- Creating Safer Communities

INITIATIVE	OGP GRAND CHALLENGES			
	Increasing Public Integrity	Effectively Managing Public Resources More	Improving Public Services	Creating Safer Communities
Standardization of processes on complaints related to corruption	x			
Electronic Registry of authorizations, permits and agreements issued by the Ministry of Energy and Industry	x			
Promoting OGP values among local authorities	x			
Implementation of public expenses module in "open data" format	x			
Establishing the database of government data for economic assistance		x		
Electronic Portal on water resources management		x		
Single Window		x		
Electronic Access to Protected Areas			x	
E-Albania			x	
National Geoportal			x	
E-document			x	
Law on whistleblowers protection				x
The Police Service Offices				x

This Self- Assessment Report reviews the Albanian Government progress to date in implementing the first year of the National Action Plan 2014-2016. While not all the

commitments of the Second Action Plan are fully implemented, work continues to advance for each commitment.

Based on OGP guidelines the Self-Assessment Reports are a key element of the Open Government Partnership accountability mechanism. During the two-year National Action Plan (NAP) cycle, each government will produce a yearly Self-Assessment Reports. The two Self-Assessment Reports will have similar content to one another, differing primarily in the time period covered.

The Midterm Self-Assessment should focus on the development of the NAP, consultation process, relevance and ambitiousness of the commitments, and progress to date. The End of Term Self-Assessment should focus on the final results of the reforms completed in the NAP, consultation during implementation, and lessons learned.

In order to have coherence and uniformity in the manner of reporting the Albanian National Coordinator for Albania, distributed to each institution the same reporting form as suggested by the OGP support unit:

Name of the commitment				
Lead implementing agency				
Completion Level	Not started	Limited	Substantial	Completed
Problematic				
Description of the results Include specific activities within the reporting period (evidence of members of the public using the commitment or whether it has had an effect.				
End date				
Additional information (any risks or challenges)				

ALBANIAN ACTION PLAN COMMITMENTS

Open Government to increase Public Integrity

Stop Corruption Portal



1.1 Standardization of processes on complaints related to corruption- Minister of State for Local Issues

COMMITMENT: The Minister of State for Local Issues, in the role of the National Coordinator for Anti-Corruption, will undertake the standardization of the process related to complaints addressing corruption. Currently, although many ministries have been given green lines or forms to denounce corruption, there is no standardized procedure, which ensures transparency in the review of the complaint and concrete deadlines to ensure a good service

STATUS: IMPLEMENTED

ACTIVITIES:

- Prime Minister Order “Unified procedures for handling corruption complaints” No. 30, dated 05.03.2015 adopted;
- Order accessible on the official website of PM and MSoLI;
- Responsible officials’ network established and operational;
- Complaints handled within the set timeframe;
- National campaign for public awareness on the new procedures for reporting corruption already drafted;
- Compilation of weekly statistical reports;
- Monthly reports on the progress of cases;
- Publication of the weekly statistical reports;

COMPLIANCE WITH THE MILESTONE SET: ACHIEVED

- Drafting relevant guidelines by the NCAC
- Integrating transparency rules on plans of each ministry
- Respecting deadlines and relevant rules
- Publish standards on the website

On February 2nd, 2015, the Government started a nationwide campaign to address the issue of corruption in public administration. One of the components of the campaign was the launching

of the unique portal to denounce corruption cases, a novelty that brings all the portals to denounce corruption in the institutions of the executive to one: www.stopkorrupsionit.al

The novelty with the unique portal is that cases are diligently followed by the responsible officials in the institutions within the set timeframe and feedback is provided to the citizens on the status of the case. Citizens can remain anonymous while declaring cases of corruption. Furthermore, the whole process is monitored by an operation room which guarantees that all cases are followed and investigated within the set timeframe and with professionalism. On monthly basis, statistics of the cases denounced, closed, investigated and resolved through the unique portal are published. The unified procedures for handling corruption complaints, which have been drafted and approved with the council of ministers decision No. 30, 05 March 2015, aim at further building public trust, increasing transparency and ensuring accountability. The launching of the unique portal will be accompanied by an awareness campaign with the slogan “Show the real face of corruption – Denounce the invisible so visible”!



1.2 Electronic Registry of authorizations, permits and agreements issued by the Ministry of Energy and Industry

COMMITMENT: The Ministry of Energy and Industry, in the framework of increasing transparency and accountability, has undertaken the Electronic Registry initiative, aiming to establish and publish in its web page an Electronic Registry of authorizations, permits and agreements given in the relevant fields and their updated status.

Currently there is a lack of information not only on the procedures for obtaining an authorization or permit, but also citizens, interested groups, civil society have no information on the number of permits and authorization given in the energy and industry sector.

STATUS: PARTLY IMPELEMENTED

ACTIVITIES:

- The project is approved by the Council of Minister Decision no. 607, dated on 17th of September 2014;
- Entry into force on 27th of November 2014;
- The deadline of the project is on 30th of December 2015;

Until now the recognition phase it is completed and approved as “Inception Report”. Currently we are working on the establishment of the concession Monitoring and Information System (MIS), following the first phase known as “Capacities Establishment”. After the approval of the European Bank Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), second phase will start.

The electronic register project for the concessions/permits/authorization is leaded by the Department of Concessions and is still in the process of implementation.

Information about the legislative aspect for the concession application procedures and about the concessioner permits on electric energy area are available at <http://www.energija.gov.al/al/bazaligjore/koncesione/vkm1426776682> .

1.3 Implementation of public expenses module in "open data" format – NAIS

COMMITMENT: The National Agency for Information Society in the context of the global initiative "Partnership for Open Governance", will undertake as commitment the implementation of a module that will allow in an open data format, online access to information on budgetary data of the Ministries. This module will be accessed from the government portal e-Albania and the official websites of the respective institutions.

STATUS : IMPLEMENTED

ACTIVITIES:.

The National Agency for Information Society in the context of the global initiative "Partnership for Open Governance", has undertaken as commitment the implementation of a module that allows in an open data format, online access to information on budgetary data of the Ministries.

This module is now accessible and administered from the Prime Minister Office official website.

In the e-Albania government portal, NAIS has implemented 3 services in the open data format, one of which is Publication of daily payments done from the Treasury branches, which can be downloaded in XML or CSV format.

This module is not implemented fully as it was described in the engagement, since it was not financed till now. It was part of the project “Implementation of the system for Open Government, Public Notification and Consultation”. NAIS has applied in the Regional Development Fund to get the financing of this project.

The “Publication of daily payments” service, accessible form the e-Albania Government portal has had 257 uses during September 2015.

1.4 Promoting OGP values among local authorities- MSIPA, Minister of Local Affaires and the OGPCCSO

COMMITMENT: The Minister of State for Innovation and Public Administration in cooperation with the Minister for Local Affairs and the open government partnership coalition of civil society organization will undertake together the commitment to promote and engage local authorities in the OGP values. This commitment was proposed by civil society organizations with the aim to introduce and promote the core value of OGP also in the governance of local authorities.

STATUS : Not implemented

This engagement was taken by the Minister of State for Innovation and Public Administration in cooperation with the Minister for Local Affairs and the open government partnership coalition of civil society organization. Unfortunately due to lack of funds this engagement has not yet started to be implemented.

Several attempts have been done by CSO part of the OGFPCCSO to fund this engagement through different call for proposal and grants.

During September 2015 in collaboration with the OGP CSO Coalition, the Minister for Innovation and Public Administration organized a two day event on: OGP Open Dialogue for the region of the Western Balkans.

Furthermore, the activity aimed to foster inclusive, accountable and transparent governance and policymaking through enhanced civil society expertise and strengthened dialogue between civil society and governments within the framework of the OGP.

In this event, a special session was dedicated to local government, how CSO and local government can work together. Transparency is the foundation of local accountability; it gives people the tools and information they need to enable them to play a bigger role in society. Sessions encouraged governments and CSOs to work together and extend the OGP at local government level as well.

2.1 Establishing the database of government data for economic assistance - Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth

COMMITMENT: The Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth, in close collaboration with the State Social Service, in the framework of the reform for poverty alleviation, increase of transparency, service quality and effective use of budgetary funds and exclusion of abusive cases in the economic assistance scheme, has undertaken the initiative to establish the National Electronic Registry of beneficiaries of Economic Assistance.

STATUS: IMPLEMENTED

ACTIVITIES:

The system is fully implemented in three pilot regions and for the moment the problems are only daily maintenance and manageable.

- The precise identification of the families/individual that need economic assistance;
- Improving of capacities for planning, managing, and providing economic assistance;
- Exchanging information in the real time to verify the data of applicants for economic assistance;
- Improving the capacities for monitoring the Economic Assistance and Administration;
- The exclusion of the abusive cases from the economic assistance scheme;
- The coordination of quality and the processes through case management;

Supporting the automated interoperability for the data on the Regional and Local Service Social offices and Agencies / other state institutions;

It is fully implemented for three pilot regions (Tirana, Durrës, Elbasan). At the end of 2016, there will be an expansion on the national level.

2.2 Electronic Portal on water resources administration and management - Ministry of Environment.

COMMITMENT: The Ministry of Environment, through the Directorate of Policies for Water Resources, will undertake the creation of an integrated water management system that will improve the cooperation of public and private actors through the use of new technologies for license applications and control. The creation of an online register of water resources users will positively affect transparency and

STATUS: Not implemented

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2.3 Single Window- General Directorate of Customs

COMMITMENT: In order to facilitate and accelerate the procedures for trade in the custom system, the General Directorate of Customs will centralize the administration of requests and procedures through a single window. The utilization of a single window will reduce the time of administrative practices, will reduce the cost and inevitably increase the transparency level.

STATUS : In process

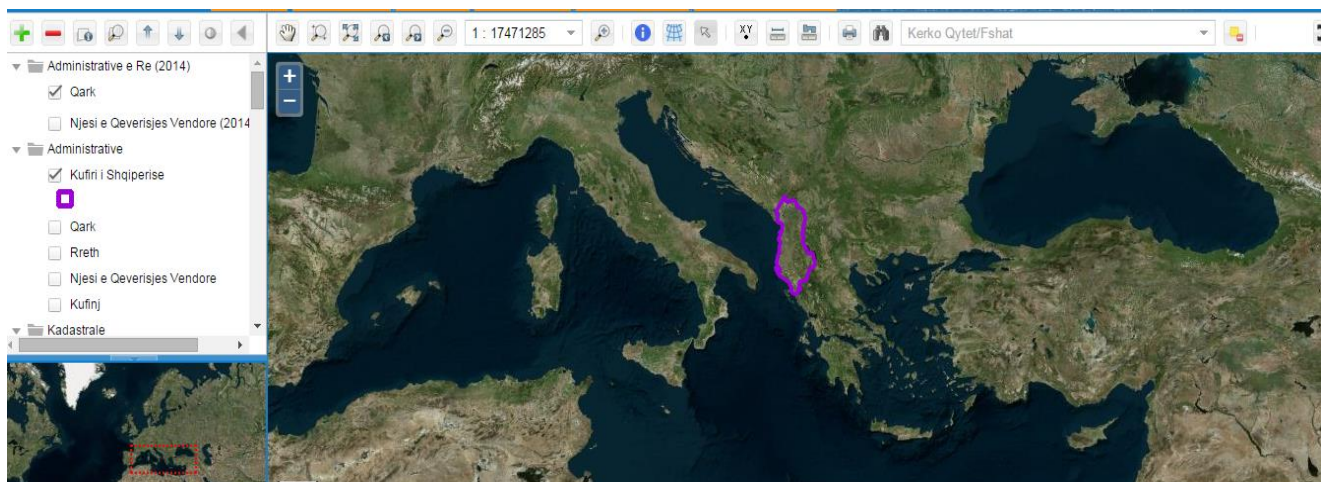
ACTIVITIES: Based on an order of the General Director of Customs is established a working group for the project in the Directorate General of Customs under the direction of Deputy / Director General of Customs at the same time head of the technical department. DTI is part of this project group

Open Government to Improve Public Services

E-Albania



National Geoportal



3.1 Electronic Access to Protected Areas- Ministry of Environment.

COMMITMENT: Electronic access to a registry of protected areas increases the participation and the inclusiveness of the public opinion and interested stakeholders for activities related to protected areas, hunting areas and national legislative initiatives in the field of nature conservation and biodiversity. The creation of this portal will strongly contribute in the increase of transparency and public participation.

STATUS : Partially implemented

ACTIVITIES:

We have designed the template database for electronic access to protected areas in collaboration with the GEF-UNDP project. The identification and collation of the main information have been gathered in order to achieve a complete database. The template is formatted and designed in such a way as to ensure the review and update of data on Protected Areas.

Database will be an integral part of the portal of information exchange mechanism (CHM - Clearing House Mechanism) for biodiversity and will be part of Bion portal dedicated to biodiversity in Albania.

3.2 National Geoportal- MSIPA and ASIG: <http://geoportal.asig.gov.al/>

COMMITMENT: The Ministry for Innovation and Public Administration, in collaboration of the Albanian Authority for geospatial information will undertake the creation of a National Electronic Geoportal, which, for the first time, will provide citizens and institutions, transparent and accurate geospatial information. Through the National Geoportal mapping citizens and interested parties can access to topographic maps, orthophotos, boundary maps, indicative maps of immobile property, and maps of the property value.

STATUS: IMPLEMENTED

ACTIVITIES:

The National Geo Portal version Beta has had this year its consolidation phase. Asig has published in the National Geoportal, national spatial data that Asig has officially received from various public institutions, on topics such as:

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| - Administrative divisions | - Cadaster |
| - Orthophoto | - Topographic Map |

- | | |
|---|-------------------|
| - Census 2011 | - Geology |
| - Directory | - Use of Land |
| - Information on roads | - Protected Areas |
| - Information on educational structures | - H. Land Value |

Up to this point in the National Geo Portal, the public can access free of charge to 40 online services on geospatial data in the Republic of Albania.

In October 2015 the Terms of Reference will be completed in order to further development the National Geoportal in full conformity to the Law Nr. 72/2012 and to the European Directive on European Spatial Data Infrastructure INSPIRE.

During 2015 the below online services were added to the National Geo Portal:

- | | |
|---|-------------------|
| - Census 2011 | - Geology |
| - Directory | - Use of Land |
| - Information on roads | - Protected Areas |
| - Information on educational structures | - H. Land Value |

All the mentioned services are open and can be used by all users. The major impact of the National Geo Portal was in the improvement of access to this information from public institutions such as ALUIZNI, AKKP, AKTP ect.

All this information and data were before inaccessible due to:

- No information and data existed
- No right to access it
- Very long and complicated procedures to access the information.

In the current version of the National Geo portal we do not dispose of a statistical module but from an audit procedure that has been done to the Geo Portal by using statistical software the results are that only for the Month of June 2015 the online services are used by 1000 unique users.

3.3 E-Albania- NAIS

COMMITMENT: E-Albania portal serves as a single contact point for government services, helping to improve the overall accessibility of information to the public. Interoperability Platform on which this portal is based can be extended for other essential governmental services. The aim of this commitment is to pass from first level services (informative services) to level 3 and 4, which means public services that are offered entirely online. It is expected that during 2015, 10 new services will be offered entirely online and other 10 will be added in 2016

STATUS: Implemented

ACTIVITIES:

For the purpose of improving the e-Albania government portal, during the 2014, the following projects (already concluded) have been undertaken:

□ The improvements of e-Albania government portal, which consist on re-engineering of the portal in a new upgrade version. The new version will be published on 2nd March 2015. As a result, the following activities are performed:

- The update of e – Albania.al government portal;
- Facilitate the usability of the portal;
- Visual improvement of government portal;
- The implementation of public key government infrastructure on the e-Albania.al portal;
- The establishment of the e-Albania portal on mobile version;
- The establishment of mobile apps for Android and IOS;
- The implementation of electronic payment module;

□ Links of the systems in the government interoperability platform and adding new services in e-Albania portal. As a result the following activities are performed:

- Increasing e – Albania. al portal by adding new electronic services;
- The upgrade of the existing electronic services;
- The publishing of the electronic services on e – Albania. al portal;

□ A new re-designed and newly programmed e-Albania online portal is up and running; the new version having upgrades in the easiness of usability, as well as integration of Public Key Infrastructure (authentication and signature). The new website can be accessed through different

platforms, both PCs and mobile ones such as Android and IOS; as well as having integrated in itself an online payment module.

Regards the increasing of new electronic services on the portal, the progress to date and the provision are as follow:

- 200 existing electronic services on e – Albania online portal;
- 65 electronic services which will be online until the end of this year;
- 209 electronic services will be online during the period 2016-2018;
- 65 services on which National Agency on Information Society is working for their digitization

It is expected that by the end of year 2015, 75 new e-services level 3-4, will be offered online and more than 209 e-services will be added in 2016-2018.

3.4 E-document- *General Directorate of Customs*

COMMITMENT : Forms and documents to be completed for different procedures in the customs system are not only complicated but also numerous. In the aim to facilitate the access to the customs system we shall introduce the e-document. Not only will we facilitate the use of different forms and documents, but we will also contribute in the establishment of a paperless environment. The provision of public services in electronic way through e-documents and e-forms will facilitate the procedures for citizens and business, by reducing the costs and time employed for this services, it will also improve the degree of access to information for citizens thus making the procedures more transparent.

STATUS : In process

ACTIVITIES: There are two parallel developments

1.e-document for the Automated System for Customs Data (AYCUDA WORLD)

2.e-document for administrative purposes.

Point one is related to electronic certification and for this we have discussed with NAIS in order to improve the legislation to provide this service also for business Regarding point two NAIS has started the procedures to ensure us the application and it will be hosted on its premise

ALBANIAN ACTION PLAN COMMITMENTS

Open Government to Create Safer Communities

The Police Service Offices



4.1 Law on whistleblowers protection - Minister of State for Local Issues

COMMITMENT: Currently, the trust of the public towards the public administration is low, while the risk that an informant will have when denouncing cases of corruption is very high. In Albania, there is no clear framework which ensures cooperation with informants and protects whistleblowers. This law will not only enhance transparency and reporting of cases of corruption, but also the credibility of the administration.

STATUS: Partially implemented

ACTIVITIES :

In May 2014, NCAC and the Ministry of Justice, with the assistance of the Dutch government that is channeled through Utrecht University, began drafting the Whistleblowers Protection Act. This act will serve to increase transparency of public and private institutions by creating a better environment for employees to step up and denounce corruption cases. The first draft law was discussed on 9 June 2014, in a roundtable where representatives of the central and independent institutions as well as international actors attended. Feedback collected from several rounds of consultations with relevant stakeholders and written proposals received further improved and shaped the proposed initial draft. The improved version of the draft bill defines the scope of the law on corruption related offences, delineates the competences of the internal mechanisms, and pinpoints which body should serve as the external reporting mechanisms and how the protection of whistleblowers should be ensured. In addition, the draft legislation foresees that it will apply both in the public and private sector. Following to the roundtable with interested actors in end of February 2015, the draft law has been further improved and reflects not only suggestions coming from the best international examples and Albanian counterparts but will also is aligned with the Albanian legal and institutional framework. The draft law is expected to be adopted in Parliament within year of 2015.

- First draft of the law, May-June 2014. NCAC and the Ministry of Justice, with the assistance of the Dutch government that was channeled through Utrecht University, began drafting the WB protection law;
- First round of public consultations with the focal points in line ministries and donor community in June 2014;
- Consultation roundtable with civil society organizations in September 2014;

- Consultation roundtable with business community in November 2014;
- Second draft law improved based on the written proposals received from different stakeholders;
- Roundtable with relevant ministries, civil society and the private sector to discuss the second draft of the law in February 2015;
- Request for opinion/comments on the consolidated final draft law to all stakeholders, July 2015;
- The final improved draft law expected to be approved at the Council of Ministers within October 2015.

4.2 *The Police Service Offices*

COMMITMENT: The Albanian Government in the aim to ensure and facilitate the access to Police Service, will establish “one stop shop” point in each police district with the purpose to: create a unified reception desk for all services delivered, simplify the procedures and limit the number of documents to be submitted. The one stop shop will also improve and make more efficient the cooperation Police-Community thus helping in the creation of a safer community and raise public participation

STATUS: Implemented

ACTIVITIES:

1. The construction of the police service offices was completed in Police Directorate of Tirana for the police station nr. 1,2,3,4,5 and for the police Directorate for the Districts of Lezha, Berat Vlorë, Pogradec, Korçë, Fier, Kukës, Durrës, Elbasan, Shkodër dhe Dibër.

2. The recruitment procedures for the employees these offices have already been closed and employers have been selected . With order Nr. 91 date 10.03.2015, of the Minister of Interir Affairs the organic stracture for the service offices was approved in the Police Directorate of Tirana, police stations nr. 1,2,3,4,5 and in the Police Directorate of Districts of Lezhë, Berat, Vlorë, Pogradec, Korçë, Fier, Kukës, Durrës dhe Shkodër. An innovation in the adoption of this

structure is that employees who will provide administrative services in the offices, will not be from the ranks of the police, but civil employees and priority will be given to female candidates with a university degree for legal or social science, thus promoting gender equality and equal opportunities.

3. App implementation

- Piloting and implementation of this app is all service offices for citizens that are fully functional.
- All the technical problems found during the pilot phase have been corrected.
- The full functionality of the application is not yet realized due to lack of investments in assisting the increase of server capacities as well as improving the quality of the website.
- A draft order and a technical manual for the regulation and standardization of the work flow in the Police service offices are ready for approval.

4. Trainings

- In cooperation with the IT department a group of trainers have been trained and will undertake the training of the staff at all stations that will operate the service offices.
- In September was organized the first training with the participation of all employees appointed in the offices of service to citizens.
- The management of IT department is monitoring the current work in the offices of service to citizens.

COMMITMENT	STATUS	GRAND CHALLENGE
<i>Standardization of processes on complaints related to corruption</i>	IMPLEMENTED	Increase Public Integrity
<i>Electronic Registry of authorizations, permits and agreements issued by the Ministry of Energy and Industry</i>	PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED	Increase Public Integrity
<i>Implementation of public expenses module in "open data" format</i>	IMPLEMENTED	Increase Public Integrity
<i>Promoting OGP values among local authorities</i>	NOT IMPLEMENTED	Increase Public Integrity
<i>Establishing the database of government data for economic assistance</i>	IMPLEMENTED	Manage Public Resources More Effectively
<i>Electronic Portal on water resources management</i>	NOT IMPLEMENTED	Manage Public Resources More Effectively
<i>Single Window</i>	IN PROCESS	Manage Public Resources More Effectively
<i>Electronic Access to Protected Areas</i>	PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED	Improve Public Services
<i>National Geoportal</i>	IMPLEMENTED	Improve Public Services
<i>E-Albania</i>	IMPLEMENTED	Improve Public Services
<i>E-document</i>	IN PROCESS	Improve Public Services
<i>Law on whistleblowers protection</i>	PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED	Create Safer Communities
<i>The Police Service Offices</i>	IMPLEMENTED	Create Safer Communities

5. CONCLUSIONS

Through implementation of the Second National Action Plan of Albania, we have worked to strengthen and promote a more efficient, transparent and effective government. The Albanian government has fully implemented many of its open government commitments, and made strong progress on others.

We recognize that there is still much to be done in terms of collaboration with civil society and improvement in the mechanism of monitoring the implementation and status of the commitments.

While CSO were broadly consulted during the drafting process of the National Action Plan, their presence during the self-assessment period and monitoring of the implementation has not been in the same levels of involvement as during the drafting process of the National Action Plan. New mechanisms have to be used in order to ensure collaboration and effective monitoring mechanism for the implementation phase of the Action Plan.

During September 2015 in collaboration with IDM, one of the CSO members the OGP CSO coalition, we organized a two day event on *Open Dialogue for the region of the Western Balkans*. This was a great opportunity to promote the initiative in the Balkans and raise awareness on the OGP principles. This event also was an excellent example of the effectiveness and achievements that can be reached if public institutions and CSO closely collaborate to reach common goals.

With these lessons in mind, we are determined to implement successfully all our commitments and improve the participatory mechanism for the implementation phase of NAP.