



ALBANIA

Final Report Gender Thematic Trust Fund Project Report



BACKGROUND:

The national MDG report identifies Gender Mainstreaming as one of the four principles upon which the Government's approach to the MDGs in Albania is based: "(iv) *Gender mainstreaming*, emphasizing *gender equality* as a goal in itself, as well as a development factor influencing and influenced by the achievement of other MDGs". And one of the conclusions in the MDG report is the recognition of the government of the necessity to improve gender equality and gender mainstreaming of development policies.

The UNDP Albania Country Programme Document for 2006-2010 places Gender Equality issues high on the agenda. UNDP Albania has a Gender Mainstreaming Strategy since 2002 and is committed to continue its consolidation and operationalization through training of staff and development of project specific action plans. Also the CO Strategic Note for 2005 states that “strengthened cooperation and knowledge among cluster programmes and projects to ensure that all activities are Gender mainstreamed” will be prioritized.

The Consolidation and Institutionalization of Gender Mainstreaming Tools and Practices Project (Gender TTF) is part of UNDP Albania s broader program on gender equality and gender mainstreaming. It was during June-December 2005 and focused on Capacity Building for UNDP Staff and partners.

The main objective was to strengthen the capacity of UNDP programme and project staff to understand gender concepts and gender mainstreaming as a method and to operationalize the perspective in every day work in projects as well as in relation to government partners. This was achieved through an extensive capacity building programme designed to raise awareness and knowledge among staff, identification and implementation of specific action plans and development of new tools.

1. Training Component for UNDP Albania programme and project staff

Gender mainstreaming is strongly related to the integration of gender perspective into the policy-making process, implementation and evaluation of programs and policies. Gender mainstreaming “places the importance on individuals, their needs and interests,” “leads to a better governance,” “involves women and men and makes use of all human resources,” “increases the visibility of equality,” and “takes into account differences that exist between women and men.” A training component focusing at building capacity of policy makers and civil servants for gender mainstreaming of policies and programs at the local level is considered to be one of the most essential components of the project.

Objective: The Objective is to strengthen the capacity of UNDP programme and project staff to understand gender concepts and gender mainstreaming as a method and to operationalize the perspective in every day work in projects as well as in relation to government partners.

1. 1. Basic training for UNDP Albania programme and project staff

Four rounds of basic 2-day Gender Mainstreaming training were carried out as the first activity of the project for all UNDP staff. For the first time in UNDP Albania all CO and project staff were invited to a mandatory training programme for all staff.

Three sessions held in Albanian with participation of local staff from country office and projects. It is to be noted here that all staff from the regions participated in the sessions.

Sessions were led by two experienced local trainers, who were also among core group of trainers developed under UNDP project on Capacity Building for Gender Mainstreaming implemented during the period 2004-2005.

Organization of training in local language provided the possibility of project staff from the regions to participate and contribute in the training sessions without any language barrier.

Staff from programme and operations, CO and field offices as well as office managers went through the same training programme and had the chance of learning new concepts but also sharing their personal experiences.

Participants were exposed to main gender-related concepts besides academic lecturing through group work, proverbs, jokes, sayings and discussions on the topics. Academic concepts were given through theoretical considerations but also through deductions from examples or group work. Participants showed vivid interest and involvement into all the group work and during the presentations.

The adopted methodology included the following elements:

- Brief lecture
- Group work
- Presentations of group work

4 Training programmes of two day each
3 sessions held in Albanian
1 session held in English
75 participants of 9 nationalities
42 females and 33 males
20 staff from local project offices (Kukes, Shkodra, Vlora, Gjirokastra)

2 (one man +one woman) specialized trainers

Day 1

- Introduction and getting to know each other
- Gender concept
- Gender stereotypes and socialization process
- Gender roles. The triple roles of women.
- Gender tree concept
- Gender and development concepts
- Women in development and Gender Mainstreaming approaches

Day 2

- Practical needs and strategic interests
- Gender mainstreaming as definition, the conditions and challenges for gender mainstreaming in programmes and policies
- Data from gender analysis form the Ministry of Education
- Gender and budget as a concept
- Evaluation of the training

- Jokes
- Proverbs
- Discussions
- Debate
- Sharing experiences among participants
- Video and discussion about the video

Participants were bringing their personal experience from gender perspective point of view. Active attendance, interest, attention, commitment and high involvement were the main elements to describe the participants “performance” during the whole training sessions. Illustrative pictures and the video were vividly discussed and commented by all the participants. Staff from the regions brought in “fresh air” in the discussions and deepened the analysis the participants on gender issues in the Albanian society.

The four round of two day training were a sound foundation for more serious consideration of gender mainstreaming into their daily work.

Success factors:

- Management commitment to the process.
- Right momentum built from previous serious work of UNDP Albania on gender programmes and need for integrating gender in the new Country Programme.
- 4 rounds were organized giving timing options to all to participate
- Very experienced local trainers

1.2 Specific training for UNDP staff

This activity was planned as a follow-up of the basic training on gender offered to all UNDP staff. 4 one-day workshops were organized with programme, project and human resources/ administration staff on selected areas. The nexus between gender and Governance, HR, Human Security and Environment were discussed. The outcome fed into the implementation of the new country programme and preparation of gender mainstreaming action plans for all projects.

The specialized gender mainstreaming training were built on six steps:

Step 1. Refreshing Basic concepts from previous trainings:

Full and active participation was noticed in this session, accompanied by practical examples from everyday life aspects. The time between the two trainings had helped the participants to reflect on the concepts newly introduced and identify in their work areas where deeper knowledge and further expertise on gender is needed.

Step 2. UNDP gender commitment and gender policy framework.

This session was organized by UNDP gender officer and was considered as important to reiterate the place and the role of gender commitments into the overall contents and mission of UNDP in Albania and abroad. In a way it helped the staff to better define the scope of crosscutting issues and strategies in their overall commitment.

The session highlighted that UNDP is working on:

- a) Women's empowerment, strengthening women's capacity to equally access resources and opportunities and address discrimination;
- b) gender equality, recognizing the different impact of programmes on women and men so as to prevent discrimination against either sex and ensure equal access.

Step 3. Main elements of gender analysis.

This was the most theoretical part of the training, however participants demonstrated commitment to learn about all methods of gender analysis and intervened with questions and discussions related to the practicalities of implementation was a successful one.

Step 4. Harvard framework.

This was chosen by the group of trainers as the most simple methodology and the most easy to

4 training sessions of one day under the following thematic areas:

1. Gender and Governance
2. Gender and Human Security
3. Gender and Environment
4. Gender and Human Resources

62 participants
39 females and 23 males
3 trainers- one woman; two men

Step 1. Resuming the gender basic concepts explained in the previous two-day trainings.

Step 2. Discussing the UNDP gender commitment and gender policy framework, objectives, main strategic documents etc

Step 3. Discussing the main elements of gender analysis, concepts, mentioning the 7 frameworks used during gender analysis, how to make a gender analysis, what to do, what to ask etc.

Step 4. Discussing the Harvard framework of gender analysis, since it is a more project-driven methodology and a simpler one

Step 5. With a checklist in hand from Harvard methodology, participants should analyze two UNDP projects (or project proposals) from the gender perspective

Step 6. Presentation of analysis and discussion among participants

understand. Participants reacted with comments, notes, questions and even appreciated the idea of such method in the form of a checklist to be practically used during project analysis.

Step 5. Project gender analysis with Harvard checklist.

This session was implemented differently as per the specialties of each programme area under discussion in the training. At Gender and Environment session participants made a screening of all their projects from the gender perspective. At Gender and Governance participants brought two project proposals which were analyzed as a practical exercise.

These sessions were appreciated by the participants for the practical purpose and approach and .

Step 6. Presentation of analysis in group.

These sessions triggered discussions among participants and were broadly commented, reacted, questioned etc.

The specialised training sessions for UNDP staff arranged in four thematic areas were considered as the first initiative to show practically how gender can be mainstreamed not only in governance related projects, but also in environment and human security.

Challenge: A good start that needs to be followed up with similar exercises and joint work of gender experts and project managers in identifying targets and indicators for mainstreaming gender in the projects and programmes in a continuous way.

2. Training for UNDP partners

To fulfill its mission and to achieve its development goals UNDP in Albania is working with a wide range of partners such as central and local government organizations, academic institutions, civil society organizations and community groups. The 2004 Common Country Assessment of Albania identifies “a male dominated society” where women are seen as inferior to men and a weak state machinery as important causes for the prevailing gender inequality in Albania. Real development granting a better future for all and fully democratic institutions can only be achieved when a gender perspective is fully integrated into the planning and implementation processes of policies and programmes at all levels and becomes target of interventions of the work of civil society at large.

The implementation of this project created opportunities for consolidated capacity building efforts in the area of gender mainstreaming. Besides the component of capacity building on gender for its staff, UNDP Albania broadened the scope of this type of intervention by targeting some of its partners.

Under this component seven local NGOs working alongside UNDP in implementation of different projects went through gender training. Through this process we not only aimed at raising the capacities of members of local NGOs working on development and awareness raising area, but also laying the ground for implementing gender aware activities in the framework of their work with communities and civil society groups in the regions.

Taking into consideration that VMA (local NGO working in Mine Risk Awareness) was involved through UNDP and other donor organizations in the Region of Kukes in conducting different Mine Risk Education and anti-trafficking activities in 16 communes of Kukes, a specific gender training programme was organized with the aim of raising their understanding of gender issues while working with the community groups and public at large on gender and women's rights issues.

Kukes is the poorest region of Albania and approximately half of the population in the area lives in absolute poverty while another 20% live in extreme poverty. Women comprise 67% of the unemployed in Kukes. Women's political participation is extremely low, there are no women in the municipal council of Kukes (there are 7 % women in the national parliament). In rural areas the school attendance of girls is at risk due to bad infrastructure, risks and perceived risks, and the societal role of girls where priority is given to work that support the family rather than to education. Only 37% of the students at secondary school in Kukes are girls.

UNDP Support to Security Sector Reform project aims at reforming the security sector by introducing the concepts of community policing and establishing partnerships between security officials and community members for crime prevention. **Awareness Education** component of this project aims to increase awareness of schoolchildren to dangers related to weapons, human rights, child and women trafficking, domestic violence, road traffic, drugs and alcohol abuse etc. The component consists of close collaboration between the police, schools, local authorities and mass media in classroom sessions, art / poetry competitions, roles plays, performances, on-field visits etc. In order to make gender equality and women empowerment part of the awareness education implemented through this project, staff of 6 local NGOs working for the implementation of this project went through a two day gender training. In follow up of the training the local NGOs initiated a series of activities focusing on gender equality at primary and secondary schools in 5 regions of the country.

3. Tools and institutionalized approach to GM

Certain efforts during the project were devoted to development of tools that could be used at CO level for institutionalizing gender mainstreaming process. The specialised training sessions became in a way forums of discussions for the ways and methodologies that can be deployed for continuous work on gender mainstreaming. The two key questions discussed include: 1- How will addressing the concerns of women, and improving equality between women and men, contribute towards strengthened and more sustainable project results? 2- How can women's practical needs and strategic interests best be supported and advanced in the project environment envisaged?

The checklist prepared for this purposes is the first step that should be taken further through practical implementation exercises. Pilot Gender Mainstreaming Action Plans were developed for Gov-net and E-services and Kukes Infrastructure Rehabilitation project to demonstrate in practice that there is a recognised need for integrating gender in all types of projects.

Closely related to the objective of building UNDP staff capacities on gender mainstreaming process is the process of preparation of Gender Mainstreaming Resource Sheets for main programme areas which includes in one document all resources that can be used as reference materials and can guide UNDP programme and project staff in their efforts for mainstreaming gender in the programme they are implementing

Also our new CPD 2006-2010 is a success indicator for the achievements so far. The whole document has a strong gender approach and gender has been mainstreamed in all its components.

4. Strengthen gender capacities within pilot ministries: training and policy analysis at 2 ministries

As part of Capacity Building for Gender Mainstreaming project, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs went through a capacity building programme and policy review process from the gender perspective.

At the workshop arranged for sharing the interesting findings of the policy review process of the two above ministries, two other ministries expressed their deep interest to support a similar exercise with the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Finance.

4.1 Training

Two specific training programmes were built for civil servants of the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Health on gender issues. On request of the Ministry of Education specific gender training was tailored and implemented for representatives of educational departments of the region of Tirana and Durres. Gender trainers from the core group of trainers (who have received

specialized trainings by the Gender Mainstreaming Project) were involved in these sessions.

The training objectives were:

- Clarify and deepen the understanding of gender concepts and possible differences among them
- Rise awareness among the participants regarding gender issues and gender equality in the working environment
- Foster the personal engagement on gender equality
- Develop the participant's abilities for integrating gender in their daily life, family, community and especially in their working environment.

The training methodology focuses on: "sharing of experiences and active participation". The training combined theory with practical exercises. Discussion and work group have also been an integral part of the training. These discussions mainly concerned daily problems, including personal and professional life connected to possible ways of making a change. The evaluations showed that the most appreciated part of the trainings has been the sharing of personal experiences, since this was seen as the best way for getting a better understanding of the issue.

EVALUATION SUMMARY - GENDER TRAINING FOR MINISTRY OF HEALTH																		
Participation per gender	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15			
Male	1	1	1		1				1				1		1	7	47%	%
Female				1		1	1	1		1	1	1		1		8	54%	%
Participation per age																		
20/30	1			1	1		1		1			1		1	1	8	53%	%
31/40		1	1			1						1				4	27%	%
41/65								1		1	1					3	20%	%
Overall Evaluation																	4.92	
Overall Training Evaluation	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	4.93		
Overall Logistic Evaluation	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5.00		
Overall Content Evaluation	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	4	5	4	4.80		
Overall Trainers' Evaluation	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4.93		
Sessions Evaluation																	4.81	
MODULE:" Gender Training"																		
Sesioni1: Gender Concepts	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	4.93		
Sesioni 2: Gender stereotypes	5	4	5	4	3	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	3	5	4	4.47		
Sesioni 4 : Gender issues in Alb	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5.00		
Sesioni 5: Practical needs, strategic interest	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	4	5	5	4.87		
Sesioni 6:Policy Analysis (Health)	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	4.87		
Sesioni 7: Gender Mainstreaming	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	5	5	4	5	5	4.73		

Group exercises were a good opportunity for participants to show the main concerns they face in their work relating to gender issues, in different contexts and different geographical areas. Particularly interesting was the fact that for them gender was something they all could see in everyday life activities, but the training offered them a completely new point of view on the social relations between men and women in society. For them, awareness on gender differences that exist in our society and knowing some ways to work for changing and improving them was the most important outcome of the training. Based on this, the participants developed practical methods and strategies, building and designing specific tools, and finding ways to achieve objectives related to gender issues in their work.

“Since this training was on a specific topic it was different from the others. We learned about theory linked to interesting exercises, allowing us to be active participants. The information was useful and the presentation of it was nice”, said one of the participants.

According to the trainers, the debate was the most important part of the training since gender equality to a large part is a matter of attitudes and changing of attitudes. In their view, the debate was a sign of the participants’ consideration, ability to see things from different perspectives and active involvement. It highlighted prejudices and gave a signal on the level of awareness concerning gender issues. The participants showed in general a tolerant attitude towards new models and concepts

4.3. Strengthen gender capacities within pilot ministries

Besides strengthening gender capacities among staff in pilot Ministries through gender trainings, the project also carried out impact analysis and made recommendations for mainstreaming gender within policies or programs and budgets of the Ministries of Finance and Health. The trainings and support for policy analysis were identified as joint actions in the cooperation between the project and the Committee on Gender Equality. The gender analyses documents were sent for comments to different institutions and individuals engaged in the issues of gender analysis and in this way giving a high profile and transparency to these analyses.

This activity was focused on identifying a core team of government officials and experts that could facilitate a more focused approach to gender mainstreaming, which could provide lessons and a basis for replication in other ministries. The group of experts was composed of resource people from each Ministry, the Committee on Gender Equality, INSTAT representative and two gender experts.

While the product of the above process for the Ministry of Health was an analysis from the gender perspective of health-related-policies and sectorial

strategies, with due recommendations on how gender should be better integrated in the health sector policies, the document prepared in cooperation with the Ministry of Finance marks the first venture in introducing gender budgeting concepts and laying the ground for further specialized support on gender budgeting.

5. Support for INSTAT and NSSED department

Originally a workshop on sex-disaggregated data was planned for INSTAT and provision of a gender expert to support NSSED (Albanian version of PRSP) department were foreseen. After changes in the government following the parliamentary elections, in discussions with these two institutions we agreed with them that a more substantial and sustainable support to them would be to provide their core staff with Gender Mainstreaming training in a joint group where they will work together to identify joint challenges and opportunities in Gender Mainstreaming for these two institutions.

The objective was to disseminate the learned experience to more staff in order to have a larger impact on the institution itself. This training targeted the staff of two important institutions, the National Statistics Office (INSTAT) and NSSED Department (Ministry of Finance) who are responsible for producing and using national statistics, including gender statistics, in order to learn about the most important problems, to set objectives for their solution, and to monitor this process. Based on this, specific objectives of the training were:

- To introduce important concepts such as: gender practical needs and strategic interests, gender mainstreaming, necessary preconditions and important actors
- To make participants aware of the concept of gender statistics, their role and importance in the process of gender mainstreaming and achieving gender equality and equity.
- To make participants aware of the importance of producing and using gender statistics.

The training highlighted the importance of these sessions since many were not aware of the important role that gender statistics can play in presenting new and necessary data that can serve as important baseline data for taking different actions to make a change towards more gender equality.

6. Reflection

6.1 Success factors:

- Management commitment to the process. It was clearly stated since the beginning of the project that the success of the project fully depends

on the commitment of all staff to be part of the process and dedicate time and efforts to knowledge building on gender mainstreaming.

- Right momentum built from previous serious work of UNDP Albania on gender programmes and need for integrating gender in the new Country Programme, which was under formulation process.
- 4 rounds of training sessions were organized and the evaluation process after each round made possible to amend the methodologies adopted and expand the range of topics discussed during the sessions.
- As the whole staff was supposed to go through the training process, the organization of four training rounds provided opportunity to all to participate
- Very experienced local trainers were used for organizing the training session. The couple of trainers (one man and one woman) used for the generic gender training provided deep insights in the process and shared a wide range of experiences as gender trainers. A key factor to the successful trainings is that we have been able to use the very good trainers from our resource base of gender trainers. The fact that they are gender experts with broad experience from training and learning coupled with knowledge of UNDP and its programme gave them capacity to raise to the challenge
- Good knowledge of UNDP programme and UNDP policy documents on gender mainstreaming enabled the trainers to formulate interesting training curricula as per the interest and specific area of expertise of UNDP groups of trainees. .
- Also important for this success has been the decision to locate the training out of the city centre so that people could concentrate fully on the training.

6.2 Obstacles and challenges

- Different levels of knowledge on gender issues and gender awareness/sensitivity among CO and project staff.
- Relatively short time form implementing a whole range of activities.
- One challenge was that it was a little bit hard to motivate colleagues to come to the first two rounds of training. They felt stressed about being away from the office and didn't know if the training was relevant for them. They did come, but only after repeated reminders by the GFP. Later when they heard the very positive feed back from colleagues and when the management reiterated that the training is important and mandatory this challenge was solved.

- Different levels of knowledge on gender issues among participants. Programme staff were more aware on gender issues than administration staff, nevertheless going through the same training process made them widen up their knowledge on the issue and adopt new discussion approaches.

6.3 Lessons learned and recommendations

- It is very important that the management states clearly that Gender Mainstreaming training is important and mandatory. This led to participation in the training of all staff, national or international, long term and short terms contract, including the office managers.
- Involvement of the management in the planning and organization of TTF project activities led to better coordination of this single project with other project activities that work with a broad range of partners and different types of activities at grass root level. As a result of these recommendations by the management, gender awareness and education became a constituent part of the work of partner NGOs with children, youth groups and public at large aiming at behavioral change and in the long run at a democratic society with equal opportunities for girls and boys alike.
- It is necessary to coordinate all activities with national partners/institutions as well as other donors and projects in order to enforce the outcome of different initiatives.
- Discussions whether application of a Gender Mainstreaming approach in programme and project activities should be reflected in individual staff members RCA should continue. It is important that these successful first steps to make Gender Mainstreaming a jointly owned task are followed by more activities, where the new knowledge is concretized into clear outputs and indicators.
- Regular evaluation of the conducted exercises and collection of participants' feedback assisted the project managers and gender trainers in introducing improvements to the training programme.
- The process needs to be continuous and not on the basis of allocated funding for specific activities. A similar kind of project is needed to capitalize on the results and bring the gender mainstreaming issues to a higher stage.
- Gender training should continue to be delivered to newcomers in the system and also to partners in government offices and civil society working with UNDP projects
- E-learning course –could be organized for all staff in a mandatory way like ICDL course or “basic security in the field” training.