**Component III – Better Regulation**

Albania’s fourth OGP country action plan was developed after input was sought and obtained from government departments, communities, civil society, and citizens, through surveys, public participation, and consultative dialogue. This ensured that all stakeholders involved in the programme were active drivers of the process and owners of its end-product.

The commitments of the third component “Better Regulation” of the National OGP Plan 2018-2020 are fully aligned with the National Cross Cutting Strategy for the Public administration reform 2015-2020, and its revised action plan 2018-2020.

The policy objective for this activities are:

* The development of a public administration that provides high quality services to citizens and businesses in a transparent, effective and efficient manner, through the use of modern technologies and innovative services, and complies with European integration requirements through impartial, professional and accountable civil servants, part of the efficient structures.
* A transparent policy-making, inclusive, policy-making system that ensures alignment with the acquis

Policy and strategy development is based on the Integrated Planning System (SPI). IPS is the national decision-making key system for defining strategic directions and resource allocation (the World Bank refers to the Albanian SPI as one of the best practices in the region). The IPS's main goal is to draft a strategic, integrated, structural and accountable plan for Albania, including harmonizing the adaptation of existing planning and monitoring systems within the new system and reorganizing structures under the new system. IPS aims to avoid drafting ad hoc policies and strategies, avoid overlapping, and ensure compliance with financial planning processes.

The IPS institutional framework is further consolidated with the restructuring of the Prime Minister's Institution and the strengthening of the monitoring and strategic planning capacities in this institution through the establishment of the Development and Good Governance Policy Unit at the Department of Development and Good Governance and the Regulatory Acts Programming Unit at the Regulatory and Compliance Department.

Information systems are being set up for different components of SPI. Since 2007, the Medium Term Budgeting System (MTBP) is functioning for all line ministries, while the Government Financial Information System (AFMIS), the Foreign Assistance Management Information System (EAMIS) and the Information System for the Integrated Planning System (IPSIS). Regarding the legislative process and the quality of the legislation, there are efforts to improve the analysis, plan the measures and their fulfillment. In general, the process of drafting the legislation is accompanied by insufficient transparency and lack of stakeholder consultation. In 2014, the Law on Public Consultation of Political and Legislative Acts was adopted, as well as a new law on the right of information, for which the necessary measures for full and qualitative implementation should be taken. In few cases there have been genuine ex ante and ex post assessments of the consequences of legislation.

Challenges:

Consolidating the framework of the Integrated Planning System remains a challenge. Moreover, it is necessary to consolidate the capacity of the new structures related to the functioning as a whole of the entire system mechanisms. Increasing system efficiency needs to be addressed through its consolidation.

Establishing information systems for IPS components requires a clear implementation of business core processes related to policy, budget, and investment planning. On the other hand, the capacity building of the institutions involved is necessary

In terms of improving the regulatory system:

* Policies aim at strengthening the system of integrated planning, policy and legislation monitoring, reporting and evaluation, which transforms government priorities into concrete actions; increasing the transparency of government's strategic documents and monitoring them; enhancing the capacity of ministries to develop good policies and legislation in line with the acquis.

Policies in this sector will also aim at increasing efficiency in strategic planning and monitoring the performance of implemented policies; establishment of information systems for public policy and public finance planning systems; capacity building and improvement of horizontal coordination and cooperation between ministries, as well as within line ministries; as well as the establishment of mechanisms for controlling the effectiveness of legislation.

What is the current problem?

Drafting a methodology for the preparation of strategic documents (strategies, programs, action plans, policy documents, etc.).

There are many strategic and policy documents prepared in Albania under the framework of the National Strategy for Development and Integration 2015-2020 and the Integrated Planning System (IPS) which insures linkages between policy preparation, budgeting, implementation and monitoring. Consolidating the framework of the Integrated Planning System remains a challenge. It requires an increase of efficiency in strategic planning and monitoring the performance of implemented policies; establishment of information systems for public policy and public finance planning systems; capacity building and improvement of horizontal coordination and cooperation between ministries, as well as within line ministries; as well as the establishment of mechanisms for controlling the effectiveness of legislation (simplified and unified tools for proper planning, templates for monitoring of the strategic documents measurement of impact, information available for different users and easy to be read and understood from them)

How will the methodology be developed?

The methodology is in preparation process.

What are the new elements of the revised methodology that will help measure the impact of strategic documents?

The methodology aim to prepare result based oriented policy documents and action plans that will be able to monitored and evaluated towards the achievement of results and impact. Several new elements has been added to the previous format in this respect and the DDGG is leading a series of training with regard to understand and easily use of IPSIS tools and formats.

The IPS's main goal is to draft a strategic, integrated, structural and accountable plan for Albania, including harmonizing the adaptation of existing planning and monitoring systems within the new system and reorganizing structures under the new system. IPS aims to avoid drafting ad hoc policies and strategies, avoid overlapping, and ensure compliance with financial planning processes.

Who will help develop it (gov, CSOs?)? Also, why is having a methodology in place for developing these strategic documents important in the Albanian context?

We are developing IPSIS through the support of a donor trust fund managed by the World Bank. The donors are European Union, Swiss Development Agency, Austrian Development Agency, etc. An experienced international company has been hired to implement the system, called SINERGY. IPSIS is expected to go live in 2020.

What are these two “methodologies” (with IPSIS & AFMIS?

Information systems are being set up for different components of SPI. Since 2007, the Medium Term Budgeting System (MTBP) is functioning for all line ministries, while the Government Financial Information System (AFMIS), the Foreign Assistance Management Information System (EAMIS) and the Information System for the Integrated Planning System (IPSIS).

IPSIS is a management tool for policy preparation and monitoring of results, while AFMIS is a management tool for budget preparation (MTBP) and public investment management (PIM). Both those systems are linked together with External Assistance Information System (EAMIS) to insure the IPS goal: better linkage between policy preparation with budgetary process and monitoring and implementation of the policies at strategic level. Methodologies and formats are prepared as important tools, part of the systems.

Do they pertain to European integration?

All methodologies are based on the best practices and in line with EU/Sigma standards.

What will this toolkit look like, if completed?

The GMIP's Good Governance and Public Administration Mechanism is a horizontal, inter-ministerial mechanism that manages the monitoring of planning, co-ordination and implementation of good governance reforms in Albania in line with GoA priorities, Economic Reform Program (ERP), NSD and MTBP, as well as the process of EU integration and Albania's international obligations.

The toolkit will help to define roles and procedures of the Integrated Sector Wide approach Management Mechanism, facilitate the integration and functioning of the mechanism, participation, inclusiveness, openness and communication aspect, including better planning program (annual calendar), monitoring of activities, reporting.

How this commitment will contribute to a higher quality services to citizens and businesses in a transparent, effective and efficient manner?

Policies in this sector will also aim at increasing efficiency in strategic planning and monitoring the performance of implemented policies; establishment of information systems for public policy and public finance planning systems; capacity building and improvement of horizontal coordination and cooperation between ministries, as well as within line ministries; as well as the establishment of mechanisms for controlling the effectiveness of legislation.

Better planning, coordination and harmonisation processes is directly translated into increased improved performance, increased effectiveness and efficiency, as well as higher quality services to citizens and business. This component also includes measures that insure proper public consultation process and full transparency with regard to policy and regulatory framework preparation, implementation and monitoring.

Are the activities of commitment (3) associated with a realistic budget for the fulfilment of the latter?

As explained above the commitments of the third component “Better Regulation” of the National OGP Plan 2018-2020 are fully aligned with the National Cross Cutting Strategy for the Public administration reform 2015-2020, and its revised action plan 2018-2020. This strategic document is fully aligned with MTBP and budget.

Do you think the timeline for implementing these activities (commitment 3 activities) is a realistic time frame to meet the set targets?

In regards to activities 3.10, 3.11 and 3.12 the timeline is a realistic timeframe to meet the set targets.

One of the most challenging activities in order to improve implementation of impact assessment is 3.11.

If implemented, would the commitment impact performance and tackle the problem?

Yes, the implementation of impact assessment (3.10 & 3.11), would serve as a tool for increasing the quality of policies/legislation in Albania. For sure it will take the time needed to tackle the problem definitely