

**FINAL MDG-F JOINT PROGRAMME  
NARRATIVE REPORT**

<p align="center"><b>Participating UN Organization(s)</b></p> <p><b>UNESCO, lead agency</b> <b>UNDP</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>Sector(s)/Area(s)/Theme(s)</b></p> <p>Please indicate Thematic window and other relevant sub thematic areas</p> <p><b>Culture and Development</b></p>
<p align="center"><b>Joint Programme Title</b></p> <p><b>Culture and Heritage for Social and Economic Development</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>Joint Programme Number</b></p> <p><b>00067185</b></p>
<p align="center"><b>Joint Programme Cost</b> <b>[Sharing - if applicable]</b></p> <p><b>[Fund Contribution): USD 3,260,000</b></p> <p><b>Govt. Contribution:</b></p> <p><b>Agency Core Contribution:</b></p> <p><b>Other:</b></p> <p><b>TOTAL: USD 3,260,000</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>Joint Programme [Location]</b></p> <p><b>Region (s): Albania</b></p> <p><b>Governorate(s):</b></p> <p><b>District(s)</b></p>
<p align="center"><b>Final Joint Programme Evaluation</b></p> <p><b>Final Evaluation Done</b>    Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><b>Evaluation Report Attached</b>    <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes    <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><b>Date of delivery of final report : 1 August 2011</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>Joint Programme Timeline</b></p> <p><b>Original start date</b> 13/08/2008</p> <p><b>Final end date</b> 06/12/2011</p>

## Participating Implementing Line Ministries and/or other organisations (CSO, etc)

- Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Ministry of Education and Science
- National History Museum
- Institute of Monuments of Culture
- Institute of Education Development
- National Tourism Agency
- National Film Archive of Albania
- National Centre of Cultural Assets Inventory
- National Centre of Folk Events
- National Centre for Albanian Studies
- Municipality of Berat
- Municipality of Gjirokastra
- Administrative Offices of Archaeological Park of Apollonia
- Administrative Offices of Archaeological Park of Antigonea
- Tirana University
- World Federation of Tour Guide Associations
- Albanian Forum of Alliance of Civilizations (NGO)
- Albanian Media Institute (NGO)
- Institute of Dialogue and Communication (NGO)
- International Centre for Albanian Archaeology (ICAA)
- Albanian Artisan Association (NGO)
- Gjirokastra Conservation and Development Office (NGO)
- Interarts (NGO, Spain)
- Tourism Development International (Private company, Ireland)

## I. PURPOSE

### a. Provide a brief introduction on the socio economical context and the development problems addressed by the programme.

The Joint Programme on Culture and Heritage for Social and Economic Development aims at boosting the country's social and economic development through its rich culture and heritage. It demonstrates how culture can be used as a tool for sustainable development, and conversely, how such development can be used as a catalyst for culture. Harnessing the potential of Albania's cultural heritage offers opportunities for Albania to strengthen its national identity, create economic opportunities for poor and rural communities, enhance investment, and position itself positively in Europe and the rest of the world. Albania's rich, unique, and storied culture offers many opportunities to positively transform the country by weaving culture into the fabric of society – from economic development, to diplomacy, to education and everyday life of its citizens.

Albania's cultural richness though is in stark contrast with its economic and human development situation. The country has made significant progress towards its integration with the European Union; however poverty remains an important issue despite significant income growth and improvements in some development indicators. Some indicators suggest progress over time in key areas such as absolute poverty, child mortality, maternal health, and youth and young female literacy. However, there continues to be a broad disparity in MDG attainment between urban and rural areas (Albania MDG reports). Income distribution continues to worsen, particularly the difference between urban and rural areas.

The Joint Programme focuses in particular on such transformative activities as: the conversion of the National History Museum into a modern cultural institution; protection of and access to two of the country's most important archaeological parks, Apollonia and Antigonea; strengthening the capacities of state employees and other cultural professionals to manage, preserve and present Albania's cultural heritage; demonstrating the viability of new economic opportunities through cultural tourism in Gjirokastra and Berat; strengthening of national policies to safeguard Albania's cultural heritage; and developing new national capacities to promote a more accurate image of Albania's culture abroad.

**b. List joint programme outcomes and associated outputs as per the final approved version of the joint programme Document or last agreed revision.**

1. A transparent and accountable government, developing and implementing effective national policies on culture and cultural-related issues
  - 1.1. Culture is treated as an integral part of national Government strategy, rather than an isolated sector strategy
  - 1.2. Private owners of cultural monuments are given increased opportunities to conserve and protect their properties
  - 1.3. Government strategies and action plans on culture and related sectors benefiting from new data gathered and interpreted
2. An enabling environment is in place to ensure people's access to cultural heritage and participation in cultural heritage decision-making at the local, regional and national level
  - 2.1. National History Museum is transformed into a modern cultural institution at international standards of governance, management, documentation, presentation, conservation and security
  - 2.2. Albania's archaeological park system upgraded to better safeguard Albania's cultural heritage
  - 2.3. Albanian film archives are digitized and preserved for future generations
3. Increased capacities to manage, preserve and present cultural heritage and cultural industries in an efficient, transparent, accountable and equitable manner
  - 3.1. Staff employed at cultural sites are trained in cultural heritage management, conservation, and protection
  - 3.2. Formal training and credentials available to cultural professionals
4. An increased role of cultural heritage in social and economic opportunities and in engaging community participation in regional and local development strategies
  - 4.1. Quality of visitor experience improved at cultural heritage sites
  - 4.2. Albanian artists and artisans are accessing new markets
5. A contribution to the National Strategy of the Alliance of Civilization (AoC) and an increased awareness of Albania's cultural heritage internationally as a means to promote cultural understanding and religious tolerance
  - 5.1. Increased awareness of Albania's cultural heritage by foreigners

**c. Explain the overall contribution of the joint programme to National Plan and Priorities**

This Joint Programme was primarily designed to achieve outcomes derived from the national priorities of Albania that are consistent with the Millennium Development Goals and the One UN programme, approved by the Albanian Government in October 2007. Albania's priority of EU accession was also taken into close consideration when designing this program, as were specific sectoral priorities with regards to culture and development. Structuring the Joint Programme within the One UN framework for Albania, launched in October 2007, has allowed UN Agencies and their implementing partners to make concrete strides towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

The Joint Programme also aimed to support Albania's development potential with a special attention towards demonstrating how Albania's unique culture and its many manifestations can advance priority national goals, such as:

- Rural development
- EU accession (defining Albania's uniqueness and its contribution to the broader Union)
- Strengthening of national identity (through cultural validation)

Moreover, the Joint Programme has contributed to the reshaping of the policy linkages already identified by national counterparts between tourism and cultural heritage, through studies and recommendations on how to empower the two.

**d. Describe and assess how the programme development partners have jointly contributed to achieve development results**

The participatory approach applied during the inception of the joint programme has been further consolidated during the implementation stage through the Programme Management Committee that has consistently monitored progress and provided guidance to the Joint Programme team in terms of implementation towards the achievement of development results. Through this platform, national counterparts namely the Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the one hand, the representatives of the Spanish Embassy as the main donor on the other and the participating UN agencies have jointly contributed to the implementation of the JP in a way that best contributed to development results. While the above -mentioned stakeholders have fully involved in activity design during the formulation stage and any activity re-designs to better align to the evolving needs of the country, they have also participated in decision-making processes and directly monitored progress through regular site visits, updates on specific issues, and regular financial reporting on the JP activities. The overall assessment of the partners, as reflected in the JP proceedings, has been positive throughout the JP duration and its implementation.

## **II. ASSESSMENT OF JOINT PROGRAMME RESULTS**

**a. Report on the key outcomes achieved and explain any variance in achieved versus planned results. The narrative should be results oriented to present results and illustrate impacts of the pilot at policy level)**

As described above, there are five main outcomes of this Joint programme and here is a narrative on the achievement:

Outcome 1: A transparent and accountable government, developing and implementing effective national policies on culture and cultural-related issues

The JP was extensively engaged in legislative work on intangible heritage and its incorporation into the National Culture Strategy which has been completed. The National Culture Strategy has been fully revised and awaits governmental approval. There is broad agreement among national counterparts that a sector strategy for culture needs to be put in place but the timing for formal adoption remains unclear. The Joint Programme was successful in providing the Government with clear policy recommendations in terms of fiscal interventions in order to strengthen the cultural heritage and tourism sectors. MoTCYS was supported in its effort to implement the two UNESCO Conventions (2003 and 2005). Although the architecture competition did not have a good number of entries, the experience gathered by the Institute of Monuments of Culture and the Competition documentation produced is a good basis for future endeavors.

Outcome 2: An enabling environment is in place to ensure people's access to cultural heritage and participation in cultural heritage decision making at the local, regional and national levels

The transformation of the National History Museum (NHM) into a modern cultural institution with international standards is about to be achieved by the end of the extended programme period, but Government action is needed. It remains now with the Albanian authorities and the NHM management to promptly act on implementing the various recommendations provided by the NHM Advisory Board, temporarily established within the framework of the Joint Programme, composed of eminent personalities on international museum management. These recommendations relate to the governance and management structure of the NHM, its human capacities, and operational plans that would improve the visitor's experience within the museum. To help the government move forward a transitional governance and management structure was elaborated and endorsed by the MoTCYS. The reconstruction of the Ethnographic Pavilion of the NHM is aimed at providing a model for similar renovation in the rest of the NHM and/or other cultural institutions in Albania. This component has been moving at a slow pace, due to various implications and the complex nature of decision-making

within the Government. However the JP team is ensuring the quality of the intervention and the consensus around the new pavilion is such that the sustainability of this component is ensured. The NHM Conference room is being renovated and converted into multimedia-enabled conference and educational facilities. This will become an asset for the NHM to start implementing a number of recommendations of the NHM Advisory Board regarding the fiscal management financial management of the NHM with a view to making it self-sustainable. Albania's archaeological park system is being upgraded to better safeguard Albania's cultural heritage and ensure environmental sustainability, but further visible Government action is needed. The renovation of the archaeological museum in Apollonia was successfully completed in December 2011. A key strategic document provided has been the study on fiscal management and governance of the archaeological park system in Albania. The Albanian film archives have been effectively upgraded and national films preserved for future generations via digitalization and increased storage capacity at the responsible institution.

Outcome 3: Increased capacities to manage, preserve and present cultural heritage and cultural industries in an efficient, transparent, accountable and equitable manner

The objective of improving the skills level of staff employed in museums and archaeological parks in cultural heritage management, conservation and protection has been fully achieved. The various training activities, study tours and other events in this sub-component have resulted in an increased understanding and competence as concerns modern ways of cultural heritage management, presentation, conservation and protection, as well as the communication and education function. There appears to be a high degree of enthusiasm to put the newly gained knowledge into practice, but rapid adoption of change and the fiscal management process for the NHM and the archaeological parks is required. The objective of providing formal training and credentials available to cultural professionals is fully achieved. The fully accredited Masters course on Cultural Resource Management (CRM) is running smoothly in its second year, coordinated by a highly motivated team at Tirana University. The number of students/candidates applying to be admitted to the MA program in the academic year 2011-2012 clearly reveals the growing interest for this program. The tour guide Master's course that has benefitted from a newly developed, up-to-the standard academic curriculum is progressing.

Outcome 4: An increased role of cultural heritage in social and economic opportunities and in engaging community participation in regional and local development strategies

Improving the quality of visitor experience improved at cultural heritage sites has been successfully achieved. The upgrade of tourism facilities and information services has been fully completed. Tourist information materials (mapguides, audioguides produced in Albanian and foreign languages) for the archaeological parks of Apollonia and Antigonea, Gjirokastra (WHS) and Berati (WHS) represent models worth of being replicated for other cities and parks. Support for Albanian artists and artisans in accessing new markets have been fully addressed. The artisan incubator in Gjirokastra provides a model for innovative promotion of artisan education and artisan works. The incubator planned in Shkoder did not materialize due to unexpected events related with the venue recommended by the Government. However, the Gjirokastra model can be replicated elsewhere in the country. The training component has also been successfully achieved with more than 30 artisans who have received training on product development. More than 75% of the trained artisans are women.

Outcome 5: A contribution to the National Strategy of the Alliance of Civilization (AoC) and an increased awareness of Albania's cultural heritage internationally as a means to promote cultural understanding and religious tolerance

The objective of increased participation of Albania in global dialogue for cross-cultural and religious understanding has been achieved and has resulted in an increased awareness as concerns cross-cultural understanding and religious tolerance. Albania's implementation of the AoC strategy has been effectively supported and has influenced the quality of opinion expressed by the Albanian media. The rich AoC documentation published uploaded in the website of the National Commission for UNESCO at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) will ensure for free access of the interested public to them and for the sustainability of the MoFA efforts/input. The JP has successfully assisted the Government in the preparation of a very comprehensive cultural marketing strategy as a sound basis for increasing Albania's international recognition in respect of culture and cultural heritage. The cultural marketing strategy has a strong focus on immediate implementation with its first annual work plan for 2012 addressing direct support to the "2012 Visit Albania" promotion campaign. This component needs

further Government and donor support to be implemented. Similarly, the cultural diplomacy strategy is ready to be adopted and is also needed immediately for promoting Albania.

**b. In what way do you feel that the capacities developed during the implementation of the joint programme have contributed to the achievement of the outcomes?**

The aspect of capacity building is partly a specific, important component of the JP outcomes, such as JP Outcome 3 on Increased Capacities to Manage, Preserve and Present Cultural Heritage and Cultural Industries and partly is on-the-job capacity building that happens along with the implementation of the JP itself such as the support provided to artists and artisans and/or support given to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to fulfill cultural attaché functions.

It is our belief that with the capacity building activities the JP has enabled cultural heritage professionals to better execute their tasks in terms of management, preservation and protection of cultural heritage sites, but also through the approval of formal training credentials in the form of master courses on cultural heritage management and tour guide education, the JP has ensured that the performance of Albania's future class of cultural heritage professionals improves in the longer run. In this sense, it is difficult to measure the immediate impact versus the long-term result.

It remains clear that the JP work in terms of policy development has benefited a lot from the trained professionals that are now ready to embrace major policy changes, from the establishment of stronger institutions from a fiscal point of view to the provision of better services to Albania's visitor and tourists with the aim of improving the country's image abroad. In the same vein, the adoption of a cultural diplomacy strategy which is under way will be ready to be implemented by the already trained diplomatic staff that has had the opportunity to benefit from the very advanced Spanish model in the area.

The artists and artisans trained in the development of new, improved souvenir products will generate more sales and stronger economies at the local level, by also strengthening the role of women in society.

**c. Report on how outputs have contributed to the achievement of the outcomes based on performance indicators and explain any variance in actual versus planned contributions of these outputs. Highlight any institutional and/ or behavioural changes, including capacity development, amongst beneficiaries/right holders.**

1.1 Government mechanisms and/or instruments for protecting and preserving culture adhere to principles of good governance and offer improved services to citizens

*Indicator: # of government mechanisms and/or instruments on culture improved to follow international standard of good governance*

A fiscal mechanism study comprising recommendations on how the cultural heritage system can be improved has been prepared and submitted to the Government. The recommendations have contributed to up-coming amendments to the national heritage law which is under review and make a good ground for future legislative changes which are in line with the JP outcome. An amendment to the Law on Intangible Heritage has been drafted and shared with the MoTCYS. A set of brochures has been printed on the 2005 UNESCO Convention on "Protection and Promotion of Diversity of Cultural Expressions" in Albanian as a useful tool for the awareness raising activities carried out by MoTCYS. Three institutions in charge of the cultural heritage promotion, conservation and research have been supported in their activities and provided with technical equipment in accordance with the action plan of activities in support of the two Conventions (2003 and 2005) jointly agreed upon with the MoTCYS. A new section has been established within the department of National Heritage in MoTCYS for the implementation of the UNESCO conventions.

1.2 New ideas to conserve and protect cultural monuments are shared with local communities, civil society and the private sector

*Indicator: # of owners of cultural monuments better informed on the opportunities to restore their properties*

Two public seminars in Gjirokastra and Berat were organized in March 2011 in order to raise awareness at local levels and to guide local communities to better protect cultural monuments. A how-to manual in the form of a booklet on how to access funds and how to behave towards cultural monuments in need for intervention has been produced and widely distributed. The publication reflects on the views of private landlords, civil society organizations and also local authorities in the world heritage cities. In cooperation with the Institute of Cultural Monuments (IoCM) and MoTCYS, an architectural competition was announced to encourage new ideas on the best uses of cultural and historical objects to be shared with the private owners. The number of entries was not considerable. IMC will make a new call on its own, using the same competition set of documentation prepared with support of JP as well the experience gathered.

### 1.3 Government strategies and action plans on culture and related sectors benefit from new data gathered and interpreted

*Indicator: Quality and quantity of baseline indicators used in government strategies and action plans on culture are related sectors*

A draft national Culture Strategy had been prepared by the Albanian Government at the start-up of the JP and there was government consensus that the draft did not fulfill the standard quality criteria. In particular, JP expertise was initially mobilized to provide baselines and indicators for measurement however, during the process the government requested further assistance in the full revision of the existing draft Culture Strategy. The revised draft strategy is currently with the Council of Ministers. Political discussions within the Council are ongoing and the Strategy has still not been approved.

#### 2.1 National History Museum (NHM) is transformed into a modern cultural institution at international standards of governance, management, documentation, presentation, conservation and security

*Indicator: quality of visitor experience improved through targeted actions undertaken in conformity with the Museum's approved strategic guidelines*

After prolonged discussions, a broad consensus was reached around the future of the NHM, while the JP had been closely working with the NHM staff to ensure a smooth transition. An International Advisory Board for the NHM was established by the JP which endorsed four basic NHM-related documents: (1) Recommendations on the NHM Governance and Structure; (2) NHM Background study; (3) NHM Needs Assessment Report, and (4) NHM Overall Concept Note. New NHM governance and management structures have been recommended by the NHM Advisory Board and shared with the Government and NHM management. The NHM change management plan has been implemented with NHM staff to facilitate the change process. Drafting of operation plans has been completed. Concerning the physical output – renovation of part of the NHM - preliminary studies on the physical conditions of the NHM building were undertaken followed by the commissioning of the physical renovations. The NHM Conference room is being renovated and converted into a multi media conference hall. It will be an asset for the NHM to start implementing a number of recommendations of the NHM Advisory Board regarding the fiscal management financial management of the NHM with a view to making it self-sustainable. Following the MoTCYS decision and request, the renovation works have been directed towards the establishment of the ethnography pavilion in the NHM. The renovation is in its final stages as this report is being completed, with major improvements in infrastructure, display approach, artifact presentation and modern technology application. Through the ethnographic pavilion the JP is setting the standard for the remainder of the NHM. On the other hand, the JP is providing the NHM with a clear road map as to where the NHM should be going a few years from now with the aim of replicating the model deriving from the Ethnographic Pavilion. This component has proven to be the most intense one in terms of behavioral changes and on-the-job capacity building within the NHM. Through the day-to-day implementation of activities, the mentality of the NHM is gradually being reformed with the NHM management getting to understand the need for major future changes within the NHM premises with the rest of the pavilions. A more effective management and governance structure for the NHM will result in a smoother implementation of activities and better response time to the needs of the visitors. The renovated pavilions also represent a major milestone in the overall enhancement of visitor experience within the NHM.

#### 2.2 Albania's archaeological park system upgraded to better safeguard Albania's cultural heritage and

## ensure environmental sustainability

*Indicator: # of measures taken to better protect and preserve Albania's archaeological parks and their surrounding environments*

The JP experts revisited the activities relating to archaeological parks to best accommodate the priorities of the Government through close cooperation with the Government. For this purpose: (1) a background study on the Archaeological Park System in Albania has been produced; and (2) an assessment of the fiscal management and governance of the Archaeological Park system in Albania has been shared with the Government, and printed in English and Albanian. The international and national consultants also prepared reports on immediate interventions to mitigate risks in the Apollonia and Antigonea archaeological parks. The original planned actions of providing minor touristic infrastructure at the archaeological parks (park benches, directional and informational signage, clearing of trails/paths) was modified partway through the implementation of the JP to instead be allocated for the renovation of the museum at Apollonia Archaeological park. This was in response to a request from the MoTCYS, who noted that the need for renovation support was quite urgent. Reconstruction works have been fully completed and the museum is now accessible to visitors for the first time in nearly decades.

## 2.3 Albanian film archives are digitized and preserved for future generations

*Indicator: # of Albanian films digitized and stored in a publicly-accessible venue*

A 35 mm film projector and a new film storage server were installed in the National Film Archive (NFA). These contributions enable the NFA to fulfill their mission to make Albania's cinematic heritage more accessible to its citizenry. The entire artistic film fund has been catalogued as well as 99% of the Albanian documentary films, 100% of Albanian chronicles, 100% of foreign chronicles on Albania and 95% of animation films. The 35 mm film projector was not originally foreseen in the project. Revisiting the NFA priorities and with the aim of optimizing the state budget investment made for the renovation of the cinema hall, the JP provided the 35 mm film projector which has enabled free access to the cinematic heritage for the interested public. Films from the cinematic heritage fund are now screened in the newly-renovated cinema hall on a weekly basis according to a calendar of events.

## 3.1 Skill level of staff employed at cultural sites is improved in cultural heritage management, conservation and protection

*Indicator: # of staff employed at cultural sites trained in cultural heritage management, conservation and protection*

Comprehensive training for staff of the archaeological parks on cultural heritage management, conservation and protection was delivered. The CHSED JP experts also undertook a preliminary assessment to evaluate the specific skills/ training needs of the staff at the NHM to ensure that existing staff are fully prepared to take on potential new roles in the newly developed organigram. Twelve senior staff members from the NHM and other cultural entities in Albania were trained in Milan, Barcelona and Tirana on best museum management practices. Twenty NHM employees were trained in Tirana on best conservation and protection practices. Ten senior staff of the archaeological parks and related institutions in Albania attended a study tour organized by CHSED JP and MoTCYS in cooperation with the Ministry for Cultural Heritage and Activities of Italy. The trainees were able to observe and exchange information on best practices in archaeological and museum management, conservation, security, display, education and communication at relevant institutions in Rome and Pompeii.

## 3.2 Formal training and credentials available to cultural professionals

*Indicator: # of accredited MA-level courses in Arts and Cultural Resource Management are in place*

The first ever Cultural Resource Management (CRM) MA Program has been established in Albania; the program is fully accredited and mainstreamed in the public higher education system in cooperation with the faculty of History and Philology of the Tirana University. Launched in October 2010, the course is running smoothly and has raised considerable interest on the part of Bachelor students and the in-service employees working in culture area. Visiting professors and the scholarship programme for the non-resident Albanian students, along with the well refurbished and equipped Masters premises, have

contributed to the reputation and visibility of this activity/ intervention. A tourist guide training curriculum has formally been approved by line ministries and Tirana University. It is intended to start the tourist guide education scheme as a Masters-level course in October 2012. A library with resource books has also been created to serve the up-coming tour-guide course.

#### 4.1 Quality of visitor experience improved at cultural heritage sites

*Indicator: Improved accessibility of visitor information at cultural sites*

Cultural heritage directional signage and tourism information facilities have been upgraded in the two Albanian World Heritage cities of Berat and Gjirokastra with the establishment of Tourism Information Offices. A map guide series in Albanian and various foreign languages has been produced with the aim of improving the information available to tourist in the archaeological parks of Apollonia and Antigonea, the cities of Berat and Gjirokastra and the production of an audio-guide for Antigonea has been developed. Better information services are now being provided to national and foreign visitors in these designated areas.

#### 4.2 Albanian artists and artisans are accessing new markets

*Indicator: # of artists and artisans able to access international or foreign markets*

A national artisan conference was organized in 2009 in order to identify artisan training needs and also to get the artisans together so that their needs are better heard. Artisans from around the country participated and were briefed on state-of-the-art self-promotion techniques and design. An Artisan Incubator has been successfully established in the city of Gjirokastra with the aim of offering an attractive venue for artisan sales and also to ensure the transfer of artisan skills and techniques from one generation to the other. The establishment of the Incubator in Shkoder did not materialize because the agreed location within the Shkoder castle was finally not made available by the local authorities. Artisan training on product development has been completed with new best selling products already available. The interventions have resulted in the creation of new opportunities for artists and artisans to access new markets by providing new economic and social opportunities for them, mainly women.

#### 5.1 Increased participation of Albania in global dialogue for cross-cultural and religious understanding

*Indicator: # of Alliance of Civilizations projects and activities that Albania sponsors or participates in*

The main aim is to increase the awareness of Albania internationally, through policy interventions in the areas of cultural marketing, cultural diplomacy and Alliance of Civilizations National Strategy. Religious harmony being a precious cultural heritage for Albania, the JP supported the GoA in the implementation of the National Strategy for the Alliance of Civilization as well as the structures set by for the strategy enabling thus the Albanian representatives to participate and share about “the Albanian case” in all the regional AoC related conferences. The ‘Rapid Media Response mechanism’ established with the Albanian Forum for the Alliance of Civilizations (NGO) monitored and responded to public debates on intercultural issues, ensured that coverage of intercultural issues was balanced and correct as well as trained and built capacities of journalists and opinion makers through a series of training events and national conferences. The Institute of Curriculum and Training conducted a school curriculum AoC related research, published the observations as well as teachers’ manual on handling the findings and trained teachers, textbook authors, textbook editors on best and fair treatment of the AoC related issues in the textbooks, with students. With the Institute of Dialogue and Communication and Albanian Media Institute “the AoC documentation centre” was prepared with the publication in Albanian of seven books and 13 brochures, a documentary film “Island of Peace” was produced and aired by the national TV station. The winners of the essay competition “No Clashes, Alliance of Civilizations instead” organized with high-school students were issued the prizes by the deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs (in charge of the implementation of the AoC national strategy). The AoC debates organized with students in Tirana and over a number of TV talk shows aroused public interest.

A cultural marketing strategy has been launched at a national conference with the participation of the prime minister to share also the tools and action plan for its implementation. The Visit Albania Year event has also been developed and embraced by the Government as Albania celebrates the centenary of its independence in 2012 and the government aims to use the year to attract more visitors to the country and

raise awareness about Albania internationally. Further Government and donor attention is needed in order for the strategy and action plan to be implemented.

Through international expertise, the JP has assisted the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, an important partner in promoting the country internationally, in the development of Albania’s cultural diplomacy strategy and the relevant training with support from the Spanish MoFA. This component needs follow-up for the strategy to be implemented and the cultural attaché functions to be strengthened.

**d. Who are and how have the primary beneficiaries/right holders been engaged in the joint programme implementation? Please disaggregate by relevant category as appropriate for your specific joint programme (e.g. gender, age, etc)**

Here is a disaggregated table of the JP beneficiaries:

Indicate Beneficiary type	Expected number of Institutions	Number of Institutions to date	Expected Number of Women	Number of Women To date	Expected number of Men	Number of men to date	Expected number of individuals from Ethnic Groups	number of individuals from Ethnic Groups to date
National Institutions	11	11	30	30	40	40	n/a	n/a
Local Institutions	8	8	45	25	40	30	n/a	n/a
Urban	16	16	60	50	65	55	n/a	n/a
Rural	3	3	15	5	15	15	n/a	n/a
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>n/a</b>

They vary from central state institutions and their staff, to local municipalities, archaeological parks and civil society organizations, including individual artists and artisans, future culture heritage professionals and private owners of cultural heritage monuments. They have been engaged through participation in training activities, major conferences and workshops, study tours, but also by providing them with new ideas, products and ways on how to better present Albania’s cultural and tourism assets.

**e. Describe and assess how the joint programme and its development partners have addressed issues of social, cultural, political and economic inequalities during the implementation phase of the programme:**

- a. To what extent and in which capacities have socially excluded populations been involved throughout this programme?
- b. Has the programme contributed to increasing the decision making power of excluded groups vis-a-vis policies that affect their lives? Has there been an increase in dialogue and participation of these groups with local and national governments in relation to these policies?
- c. Has the programme and its development partners strengthened the organization of citizen and civil society groups so that they are better placed to advocate for their rights? If so how? Please give concrete examples.
- d. To what extent has the programme (whether through local or national level interventions) contributed to improving the lives of socially excluded groups?

This JP and its development partners did not specifically seek to address issues of inequalities during the design or implementation of the programme. All activities were open to individuals from any ethnicity, religion, race, political orientation and economic situation. However, inequalities may be better addressed in the future due to the realization of more transparent and democratic governing and

decision-making structures, such as for the NHM, archaeological parks, and artisan community.

**f. Describe the extent of the contribution of the joint programme to the following categories of results:**

**a. Paris Declaration Principles**

- **Leadership of national and local governmental institutions**
- **Involvement of CSO and citizens**
- **Alignment and harmonization**
- **Innovative elements in mutual accountability (justify why these elements are innovative)**

- The Government fully owns the JP and steers its implementation according to national priorities. This is also reflected in the alignment of the JP to both the UN/Government One UN Programme and National Sectoral strategies.
- Implementing partners and the JP are mutually accountable in implementing activities through a number of MOUs and agreements and regular meetings are held under the supervision of the PMC to ensure a smooth implementation.
- Constant communication with the central and local government counterparts in all activities at all the levels of their implementations has empowered the Government and ensured a smooth implementation.
- Civil society institutions have been instrumental in defining a number of activities related to AoC national strategy implementation, “how-to-Guides” for owners of cultural monuments, etc.

**b. Delivering as One**

- **Role of Resident Coordinator Office and synergies with other MDG-F joint programmes**
- **Innovative elements in harmonization of procedures and managerial practices (justify why these elements are innovative)**
- **Joint United Nations formulation, planning and management**

- The JP is part of the One UN Programme in Albania and is structured under the Governance Pillar. Therefore, activities are part of the standard planning and reporting cycle foreseen by the One UN Programme along with those of all other JPs active in the country. To reflect this structure, and with the permission of the MDG-F Secretariat, the MDG-F logo was modified for all JPs in the country to be shown side-by-side with the One UN Programme logo.
- The UN Resident Coordinator and her office has participated in all stages of the joint programme, from formulation stage to the inauguration and closing events.
- The Programme Management Committee, which meets on a quarterly basis and is co-chaired by the Director of UNESCO Venice Office as the lead agency and as delegated by the UNRC with the main Government partner (MoTCYS), provides oversight and guidance to the two UN agencies participating in the joint programme.
- The activities of the Joint Programme have been structured in order to complement each other and are closely interlinked to prevent the various components of the JP from running in parallel as separate sub-programmes. A Joint Programme office hosting all participating agencies was set up facilitating coordination and fostering a sense of belonging among staff and opportunities for cross learning and brainstorming. A Joint Programme “fast facts” sheet and website were also developed to jointly share all information from activities implemented by either or both agencies.
- At the invitation of the Resident Coordinator the Joint Programme CTA / coordinators have been meeting to share lessons learned and experiences to improve and strengthen the work of all the JPs in the country.

### **III. GOOD PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED**

**a. Report key lessons learned and good practices that would facilitate future joint programme design and implementation.**

Being the pioneer Joint Programme in Albania under the Spanish MDG Achievement Fund, a number

of lessons were drawn related to the various phases: design, inception, implementation and monitoring/evaluation.

- a. **Design:** Several meetings with numerous stakeholders from relevant institutions were held during the design phase of the project which resulted in a very long and varied “wish list” of top concerns and issues to be addressed in the field of culture and development. The “good practice” of this is that a wide variety of stakeholders were consulted in preparing the initial concept note for this JP. In an effort to accommodate all of the partners’ concerns, the project design team put together a diverse project document with around 30 highly diversified activities to be implemented. After the initial review by the MDG-F selection committee, the project was approved as is but the 2-year budget was cut from the USD 5 million to USD 3 million. As few national partners were willing to eliminate their activities so that funds could be consolidated into fewer activities, the number of activities remained the same with cuts only to their financial allocations. The final project document ended up with a budget of 3.260.000USD within 24 months, and with a dedicated Joint Program team of only 5 people plus consultants (International coordinator, 2 project managers, one of which financed with funds other than the JP funds, project assistant and the driver, who has been co-shared with other JPs). This made the JP the largest donor-funded project in culture in the country to-date. An additional factor to be taken into consideration was the heavy involvement of the donor’s representative during the design phase. Upon his suggestion, additional activities had been added to the project document despite not having been initially included by the Government’s partners. As a result, the design proved to be way too ambitious for the time and resources allocated, as multiple extensions had to be requested to ensure full completion of the activities. These were important lessons learned by the UN agencies and the national counterparts, which have already been reflected during the design of the GoA- UN Program of Cooperation 2012-2016 (Output on Culture).
- b. **Inception:** Once the project was approved, there were a number of delays in the recruitment of key personnel, with the International Coordinator starting a full four months after the funds were received and other project personnel hired only shortly before. Project premises were already located in an existing UNDP office which was to be shared between the participating agencies, and represented a good practice for future activities. Considering that by the time the team was on board over a year after the initial concept note was submitted, a number of changes of personnel in key positions in the national partner institutions (due to local elections earlier in the year) meant that further time was required to get the new individuals up to speed and “buy in” to the designed programme of activities. Some changes to the project document were also made at this point, such as the inclusion of the purchase of the 35mm film projector for the National Film Archive and the revision of the existing draft of National Strategy on Culture. The key lesson learned was that the same amount of start-up time is needed for 2-year or 3-year programmes, and therefore this programme should have been designed for three years instead so that more time can be allocated to the inception phase of the project to be able to buy in the project activities all/most of the counterparts and hire the necessary staff.
- c. **Implementation:** The key lesson learned during the implementation phase was to remain flexible in meeting the targeted results from the various outputs and outcomes. As additional stakeholders became aware of the JP, new requests for the allocation of resources were submitted to the UN which were evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the UN agencies, with final decisions being taken at the PMC level, in order to respond to the evolving needs of the country. While some of the activities may have been altered, the results achieved were the same. Another challenge during the implementation came from not appropriately identifying the right TOR for an International Coordinator – while the TOR had called for a senior expert in culture or a related area, the needs were really that of an experienced manager and coordinator; hence, the JP went through no fewer than two different International Coordinators throughout the three years of the JP, and a temporary Programme Management Specialist. The best practice that was illuminated during this challenge, however, was that having two highly competent national project managers, with the right support, could have managed the implementation of planned activities. This is a lesson that will certainly be taken into consideration for future UN activities.
- d. **Monitoring/evaluation:** Project Management Committee, meeting quarterly, and the National Steering Committee, meeting biannually, were the two structures that ensured the full alignment of the activities with the principles and quality/quantity objectives set forth. Co-

chaired by the representatives of the national counterparts, they assured for a complete national ownership of the decisions taken and the activities implemented and represent one of the best practices of this JP. The external evaluation of the project was also a very constructive exercise building in all the national counterparts. The Improvement Plan enabled that follow up activities and future priorities were set jointly through a series of discussions where all the key players took their respective responsibilities and commitments for future endeavours.

**b. Report on any innovative development approaches as a result of joint programme implementation.**

**Joint Programme Staffing:** Considering the limited number of staff foreseen to be part of the joint project team, UNESCO, the leading agency of the Joint Programme, took the initiative and arranged with UNESCO HQs for the opening of a full-time position in Tirana Project Office for the duration of the joint programme. The UNESCO National Professional Officer was charged with the implementation of the activities which UNESCO was responsible for; this proved to be a very good move at the outset of the project implementation.

**Joint Programme Office premises:** In line with the Guidelines provided by the MDG-F Secretariat, efforts were made to identify adequate premises for the Joint Programme team within the building of the Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports. Upon repeated negotiations, MoTCYS was not able to house all of the staff of the joint project. While keeping all the components of the Joint Programme together was crucial to UN agencies and bearing the MoTCYS constraints for physical space for their own staff, UNESCO Venice Office was able to provide some funds for the shared Joint Programme office. This proved to be a timely and effective decision to make under the circumstances because it assured for the cohesion in the implementation of the activities and coordination of efforts in line with the One UN spirit.

**Joint Programme activities:** Given the lapse of time from design to the implementation of the activities, the Joint Programme team deemed it necessary to revisit the activities in close consultation with the national counterparts. Certain activities had to be slightly or totally changed. This was the case with the National Film Archive which was provided with the 35mm film projector and the powerful computer for digitized film storage instead of the two digitizing machines; the rehabilitation of the Apollonia archaeological museum (reopened after 20 years) instead of the activities foreseen for the upgrade of the visitor's experience (infrastructure) in the Apollonia and Antigonea archaeological parks; the renovation/conversion of the National History Museum (main) Conference Hall into a multipurpose hall for the NHM needs instead of the establishing of a film screening room in one of the small library rooms in the NHM; re-focusing the physical interventions at the NHM on the ethnographic pavilion and the full revision of the National Strategy on Culture instead of only establishing targets and baseline indicators as originally foreseen in the project document. Equally important has been the decision to establish only two out of four artisan incubator as originally foreseen in the Programme Document, since the JP team and the PMC realized four different incubators were not feasible given the limited resources and time frame. The support provided to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was also revisited to answer the national need for the development of a strategy on cultural diplomacy prior to the establishment of any cultural centers abroad.

**c. Indicate key constraints including delays (if any) during programme implementation.**

**a. Internal to the joint programme**

**Joint Programme Staffing:** Although the official start date of the Joint Program is August 18, 2008, the Joint Programme team was fully staffed only in December 2008 due to the alignment with the recruitment procedures. Also the TOR of the International Coordinator position were poorly designed at the onset with regard to core competencies and reporting lines, which resulted in at least three different individuals taking over this function during the three-year implementation of the JP.

**Joint Programme coordination:** At the start of the JP implementation, how exactly the role of the JP coordinator would function was unclear, though this was eventually clarified by UN agencies at the expense of some further delays.

**b. External to the joint programme**

The fact the Joint Programme "lived" through 5 Ministers of Culture and 3 Ministers of

Foreign Affairs during its three-year implementation is self-explanatory. The frequent changes in the leadership of the two main national counterparts resulted in personnel changes and priorities within the institutions. Apart from delays in decision-making processes, these changes required extra effort, time and energy on the part of the JP team to update the newly-arrived partners and decision-makers.

On a number of occasions decision-making entailed the involvement of the highest levels in the culture hierarchy (i.e. the Institute of Monuments of Culture, MoTCYS and the Office of the Prime Minister) making agreement over important decisions for the implementation of the Joint Programme activities not always easy to reach.

A number of major JP activities required highly specialized skills and capacities which were not always available in the Albanian “market”. This is the case with the renovation of the two museums: National History Museum and Apollonia Archaeological Museum. Identifying the appropriate institutions and companies was extremely time-consuming, in part due to complex UN procurement procedures. Conversely, for the same reason, the implementation of these components was also an excellent learning opportunity for capacity building in the relevant partner institutions.

**c. Main mitigation actions implemented to overcome these constraints**

Intensive communication with national counterparts has been in the focus of the Joint Program throughout its entire process from design to implementation to closure. This enabled the avoidance of further delays as key players were always kept up to speed through both formal and informal channels.

Very often the Joint Programme team paired up with the specialists of the relevant institutions to transfer the know-how to ensure the smooth and timely implementation of activities. Communication at the technical level has been another asset for the Joint Programme which has been highlighted on a number of occasions by the national stakeholders.

Open and thorough discussion/communication at the Project Management Committee quarterly meetings have resulted quite healthy for the running of the activities. PMC meetings proved to be quite a useful forum/tool from both management and monitoring point of view, where issues were tackled from various viewpoints by the various members.

The two UN agencies have benefitted from each others’ expertise and specialization in carrying out their activities and to share/assist each other in the most effective and efficient ways.

**d. Describe and assess how the monitoring and evaluation function has contributed:**

The MDG-F Joint Programme on “Culture and Heritage for Social and Economic Development” followed all the instructions set forth in the project document and MDG-F Secretariat Guidelines with regard to monitoring and evaluation. It should be noted that being one of the first JPs launched in the thematic window, sometimes the guidelines came after the challenges had already needed to be addressed. The JP coordinator, along with the UN agencies managers, prepared the quarterly report as well as color-coded work plans for discussion and approval at the PMC meetings. Further, semi-annual reports were prepared and submitted to the MGD-F Secretariat as required. The Government of Albania has also been updated with reports on the implementation and financial status of the joint programme upon request. Although originally, reporting felt to be too frequent and time consuming, looking back at it, it should be stated that it helped to keep the implementing partners alerted on further progress and potential delays that could be mitigated.

Initially foreseen to be a two-year project, CHSED did not undergo a mid-term evaluation, but it did go through an external final evaluation.

**e. Improvement in programme management and the attainment of development results**

Management and coordination between the implementing UN agencies and with the national counterparts, improved in every reporting period. The reports clearly revealed the delays, bottlenecks, and advances in the implementation of the JP activities and enabled the implementers to better plan and distribute the human and financial resources accordingly. This monitoring tool enabled the PMC as well as the JP leadership to provide appropriate advice as to the most effective approaches to solve various problems of both a technical or administrative

nature.

**f. Improvement in transparency and mutual accountability**

The monitoring reports contributed to the improvement of the transparency and mutual accountability between (1) the two implementing UN agencies. The reports were prepared jointly by the implementing agencies and constituted a formalization of the sharing and caring process which went on in the JP office on a daily basis. (2) The reports were shared and thoroughly discussed during the PMC meetings with the JP national counterparts, the Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Being so well informed and part of the problem-solving process, the representatives of the national counterparts grew to be very strong advocates of the Joint Programme.

**g. Increasing national capacities and procedures in M&E and data**

At the start of the project implementation, the JP team revisited the M & E framework of the MDG-F JP. Representatives of the national counterparts were invited to contribute to update the statements and data stated there at the inception phase. This exercise was repeated at the completion of the first year of JP implementation. The national counterparts are adopting this procedure in other projects they are implementing with State or other donors' financial support. The Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports has recently established a department on culture- and tourism-related statistical database.

**h. To what extent was the mid-term evaluation process useful to the joint programme?**

As it was originally planned to be only a two-year project, the MDG-F JP 'Culture and Heritage for Social and Economic Development' did not go through a mid-term evaluation process.

**d. Describe and assess how the communication and advocacy functions have contributed to:**

To insure that Government, partners, beneficiaries and other stakeholders were adequately informed about the progress on Joint Programme activities, but also bearing in mind that a general awareness needed to be raised with regard to culture as an important factor for development, a communications strategy was developed in coordination with the UN Communications Team, aligned with the One UN Communications Plan, "Communicating as One". Since the JP Team didn't include a dedicated communication officer both agencies made available their communication teams to draft a communication strategy and to ensure the timely production and dissemination of JP communication materials.

This communications strategy focused on both internal and external communication for the joint programme. While the internal communications plan managed to build in increased support of different stakeholders at different moments of the program's implementation, such as line ministries, civil society, and community at large, the external communications plan helped with the public relations aspects for the joint programme.

**a. Improve the sustainability of the joint programme**

At the end of the MDG-F Joint Programme, it can be stated that the intensive institutional and public communication considerably changed the attitude of all the above-mentioned stakeholders towards culture and its important potential in the economic development of this country. Culture and Tourism are proclaimed to be a strategic priority for the Government of Albania. A benefit of the diversified nature of the Joint Programme meant that it could touch upon almost all the sectors of culture administration in the country and provide support, leaving behind some strong strategic guidance and enthusiasm amongst the specialists to further follow up on those guidelines. Unanticipated results of the JP include public debates in the print and electronic media amongst professionals on the best managerial methods for the cultural resources. All relevant structures and institutions, both governmental and non-governmental, are industriously working to increase their perceived value to the general public and contribute their opinions to the debate.

**b. Improve the opportunities for scaling up or replication of the joint programme or any**

### **of its components**

As a result of the strong internal and external communication of the JP, there is a broad consensus around the need for follow up in certain components of the Joint Programme like: (1) implementation of the fiscal recommendations in support of the strengthening of cultural heritage and tourism sectors, (2) National History Museum with regard to its fiscal and financial management, (3) Artisans' incubator replication in other cities, (4) implementation of the Cultural Marketing Strategy, (5) Implementation of the management plans in the WHSs, (6) MA-Program on Cultural Resource Management, (7) Archaeological Park of Apollonia.

The strong communication with the national partners in this JP, though both formal and informal channels has helped them better understand how culture, tourism, and development are clearly linked, as they have seen results achieved step by step. This form of participatory advocacy by the JP has resulted in a strong commitment by the Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports to continue prioritizing this approach, and to see it reflected in the upcoming MoTCYS budget and planned activities. Further, there is a strong commitment on the part of the two UN agencies to continue to coordinate their efforts and work on the above components in the framework of the UN-GoA Programme of Cooperation 2012-2016. Lastly, after witnessing the positive results of many of what could be called start-up activities within the JP, other donors have approached the UN agencies to offer their support to continue some of the aforementioned activities.

UNRC Office is in the process of putting together a brochure featuring all the success stories of all Joint Programmes implemented in Albania where MDG-F Joint Programme on Culture and Heritage for Social and Economic Development" will be well represented. It will be an effective tool for fundraising for culture and tourism in the framework of the One UN in Albania.

#### **c. Providing information to beneficiaries/right holders**

The highly diversified nature of the Joint Programme activities has resulted in a rich spectrum of beneficiaries starting from state institutions' officials, NGOs, universities, gateway communities and other stakeholders.

Through a number of communication tools produced like Fast Fact Sheets, Media Advisories, Press Releases, articles online, in written media and TV programs, map guides, publications of the recommendations, reports and studies, CHSED Programme managed to reach out its direct and indirect beneficiaries.

Besides the general communication tools, certain Joint Programme activities were designed to provide direct support to beneficiaries and stakeholders. This is the case with the Architecture Competition which was designed to encourage new ideas as to the new uses for the cultural and historical property entrusted to private owners and the production of the manual "My house" providing practical guidance to the owners which followed on-site meetings with private owners and other relevant stakeholders.

#### **e. Please report on scalability of the joint programme and/or any of its components**

##### **a. To what extent has the joint programme assessed and systematized development results with the intention to use as evidence for replication or scaling up the joint programme or any of its components?**

The design of the "Improvement Plan" formalised the process for reaching the agreement over the priority activities. It contains activities which directly or indirectly contribute to the achievement of the development results as stated by the Government for Albania. In general, the systemization and incorporation of JP results into Government's agenda has been a key factor when designing the activities, which is why so many are focused at the national level (support to fulfilment of obligations under the conventions, new sector strategy, etc).

##### **b. Describe an example, if any, of replication or scaling up that are being undertaken**

*MA Program on Culture Resource Management* – An increased interest has been noted for this program of studies. The number of student candidates applying to be admitted to the CRM MA

program in the academic year 2011-2012 is higher compared with the first year. Meanwhile, the Faculty of History and Philology and the Tirana University Rector's office are considering the option of starting off a new graduate program on Culture and Archaeology to feed into the MA Program on Cultural Resource Management.

*Artisans' incubator* – Successfully established in Gjirokastra, the artisans' incubator model will be replicated by UNDP in other cities like Shkoder, Berat and Korca – cities with a rich tradition in crafts, culture and cultural tourism. The artisans' associations from these cities were invited to participate in the National Artisans' Conference organized within the framework of the MDG-F JP.

*Apollonia Archaeological Museum/Park* – MDG-F JP supported the efforts of a number of Albanian institutions involved in the reopening of the Apollonia Archaeological Museum in the Apollonia Archaeological Park after 20 years. Inaugurated on the 6<sup>th</sup> of December 2011, it is a great value added to the Apollonia Archaeological Park, an important touristic destination in Albania. There is a common understanding on the need to upgrade the overall tourist experience in this park, as tourist numbers are expected to increase just for this reason. UNESCO is planning to work on the design of the overall management plan of the site which will provide a solid basis for upcoming interventions.

*National History Museum* – MDG-F Joint Programme provided sound recommendations as to the Fiscal management and governance structure of the National History Museum validated by the NHM Advisory Board set up by the JP. Further, MDG-F JP renovated the ethnography pavilion as well as renovated/converted the NHM Conference Hall into a multi-purpose Conference Hall up to the international standards. These will not only set a standard with regard to the quality of physical and substantive interventions in the future in the Museum, but also will help to put into practice most of the recommendations provided by NHM Advisory Board related to self-sustainability of the NHM. In 2012, NHM will apply many of the concepts discussed to another new/renovated pavilion.

*Cultural Marketing Strategy* – The cultural marketing strategy and its action plan along with the Visit Albania Year concept provides a clear platform for scaling up during the year 2012, which marks the centenary of the country's independence. The strategy provides clear provisions for the strengthening of the marketing package in Albania's various cultural heritage centers and sites, with a combination of short city-breaks concepts, an improved Internet presence and a revised institutional set-up that would strengthen the country's national tourism agency. The strategy is already being picked up by the government and future support will be given by UNDP.

*Management of WHS* – The central and local institutions in charge of the implementation and reporting on the management plans for the World Heritage Sites in Albania were provided technical assistance in updating the management plans, in coordinating the efforts among the key stakeholders and building up the necessary reporting skills related to the implementation of the management plans abiding by the guidelines. Institutional partnerships created during the training will be enhanced and maintained. The local NGO which was involved to transfer the know-how on these issues is planning to continue to provide that support to the local stakeholders.

**c. Describe the joint programme exit strategy and assess how it has improved the sustainability of the joint programme**

The exit strategy, which was developed by the Joint Programme in cooperation with the national stakeholders, made the closure of the Joint programme activities as a smooth process as possible and further ensured for the national ownership of the outputs and results produced during the lifetime of the Joint Programme. It identified a possible future for the systems, structures, and skills that were developed, enhanced and strengthened beyond the lifetime of the Joint Programme.

All of the physical products produced by the JP have been formally handed over to the cultural institutions, many of which have been already utilizing them. This is the case of the technical support/equipment provided to a number of institutions which have upgraded their performance and their effectiveness in accomplishing their tasks and mission: National Film Archive, National Center of Folk Events, National Center of Cultural Assets Inventorying, etc.

All the reports, studies and recommendations produced with the assistance of international and national technical expertise via the JP have been published electronic versions and posted on the JP, UN Albania, UNDP Albania and UNESCO Venice Office websites when possible. Any printed copies of the reports have been handed over to the relevant institutions.

The Joint Programme has enabled the acquisition, development and upgrade of the necessary skills and qualifications needed for an up to the standard management of the cultural and tourism assets through a number of trainings developed in Albania and in other peer institutions in the neighboring countries. The JP has ensured that this institutional cooperation be maintained after the lifetime of the Joint Programme. The visit of the representative of the Italian Ministry of Cultural Goods and Activities to Albania at the invitation of the Albanian group of archaeological park managers (who were formerly on a study tour in Rome-Pompeii archaeological parks in Italy) is an example of this. The same goes for the exchange of visits between the representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Albania to their counterparts in Barcelona.

Strategizing for the sustainability of the major JP inputs and activities, the PMC corporately decided to mainstream the major initiatives of the JP into the national systems. This is the case with the Cultural Resource Management Master – Program which is hosted by Tirana University, Faculty of History and Philology. The same goes for the Alliance of Civilizations website which has been entrusted and linked to that of the Albanian National Commission for UNESCO at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

UN implementing agencies are committed to continue to provide support to the national and local authorities in their efforts to further implement the jointly prioritized JP activities with the support of the One UN Coherence Fund. The fields of Cultural Heritage and Tourism Development are part of the Government of Albania - One UN Programme of Cooperation for the period 2012-2016. Highlighting the great potential of Culture and Tourism for economic growth and development and showcasing the best achievements of the Joint Programme, the two agencies are also advocating for and fundraising with the donor community in Albania and elsewhere to channel additional funds and contributions for the scaling up of the Joint Programme flagship activities.

#### **IV. FINANCIAL STATUS OF THE JOINT PROGRAMME**

- a. Provide a final financial status of the joint programme in the following categories:
  1. Total Approved Budget: USD 3,260,000
  2. Total Budget Transferred: USD 3,260,000
  3. Total Budget Committed: USD 3,260,000
  4. Total Budget Disbursed: USD – pending final payments to be issued ASAP

- b. Explain any outstanding balance or variances with the original budget

The remaining unspent funds are explained by commitments that have not been disbursed due to the ongoing civil works at the National History Museum's Ethnographic Pavilion and Conference Hall. It is retention money that is being kept for a six-month period as a warranty for the executed works. These amounts will also be disbursed within 6 June 2012, which is the deadline for the project's financial closure.

#### **V. OTHER COMMENTS AND/OR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

## VI. CERTIFICATION ON OPERATIONAL CLOSURE OF THE PROJECT

By signing, Participating United Nations Organizations (PUNO) certify that the project has been operationally completed.

PUNO	NAME	TITLE	SIGNATURE	DATE
UNDP	Norimasa Shimomura	Country Director		
UNESCO	Engelbert Ruoss	Director, Venice Office		

## **VII. ANNEXES**

1. List of all document/studies produced by the joint programme
2. List all communication products created by the joint programme
3. Minutes of the final review meeting of the a) Programme Management Committee and  
b) National Steering Committee
4. Final Evaluation Report
5. M&E framework with update final values of indicators