

**Joint SDG Fund**  
 Template for the Joint Programme  
 Evidence-based Final Narrative Report  
**SDG FINANCING PORTFOLIO – COMPONENT 1**

## Cover page

**Date of Report:** 24 / August / 2023

<i>Programme title and Country</i>
<b>Country:</b> Albania <b>Joint Programme (JP) title:</b> Strategic policy options for SDG financing <b>MPTF Office Project Reference Number<sup>1</sup>:</b> <a href="#">00122110</a>

<i>Programme Duration</i>
<b>Start date<sup>2</sup></b> (day/month/year): 1 July 2020 <b>Original End date<sup>3</sup></b> (day/month/year): 31 July 2022 <b>Actual End date<sup>4</sup></b> (day/month/year): 30 June 2023  <b>Have agencies operationally closed the Programme in its system:</b> <u>Yes/No</u> <b>Expected financial closure date<sup>5</sup>:</b> 31 December 2023

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<sup>1</sup> The MPTF Office Project Reference Number is the same number as the one on the Notification message. It is also referred to as "Project ID" on the project's factsheet page on the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#).

<sup>2</sup> The start date is the date inserted in the original ProDoc submitted and approved by the Joint SDG Fund.

<sup>3</sup> As per approval of the original project document by the relevant decision-making body/Steering Committee.

<sup>4</sup> If there has been an extension, then the revised, approved end date should be reflected here. If there has been no extension approved, then the current end date is the same as the original end date. The end date is the same as the operational closure date which is when all activities for which a Participating Organization is responsible under an approved MPTF / JP have been completed. As per the MOU, agencies are to notify the MPTF Office when a programme completes its operational activities. Please see [MPTF Office Closure Guidelines](#).

<sup>5</sup> Financial Closure requires the return of unspent balances and submission of the [Certified Final Financial Statement and Report](#).

**Programme Budget (US\$)**

**Total Budget** (as per Programme Document, without co-funding): **\$ 855,000**

**Agency/Other Contributions/Co-funding** (if applicable): **\$ 72,000**

**Joint SDG Fund Contribution<sup>6</sup> and co-funding breakdown, by recipient organization:**

<b>Agency/others</b>	<b>Joint SDG Fund contribution</b>	<b>Co-funding</b>	<b>Total</b>
UNDP	\$415,000	\$30,000	\$445,000
UNICEF	\$305,000	\$30,000	\$335,000
ILO	\$135,000	\$12,000	\$147,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$855,000</b>	<b>\$72,000</b>	<b>\$927,000</b>

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<sup>6</sup> Joint SDG Fund Contribution is the amount transferred to the Participating UN Organizations – see [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#).

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## Abbreviations

AFMIS	Albanian Financial Management Information System
AFSA	Albanian Financial Supervisory Authority
AIC	Albanian Investment Corporation
AIDA	Albanian Investment Development Agency
ALL	Albanian Lek (currency)
BoA	Bank of Albania
DaO	Delivering as One
DFA	Development Finance Assessment
EAMIS	External Assistance Management Information System
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
EC	European Commission
EIB	European Investment Bank
ERP	Economic Reform Program
EU	European Union
EU-SILC	EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GoA	Government of Albania
GRB	Gender-responsive budgeting
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INFF	Integrated National Financing Framework
INSTAT	Institute of Statistics
IOA	Investment Opportunity Area
IPS	Integrated Planning System
IPSIS	Integrated Planning System Management Information System
ISSH	Institute of Social Security Albania
JP	Joint Programme
KfW	Credit Institute for Reconstruction (Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau)
LGU	Local Government Unit
MARD	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
MIE	Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy
MFE	Ministry of Finance and Economy
MHSP	Ministry of Health and Social Protection
MTBP	Medium Term Budget Planning
MTRS	Mid-Term Revenue Strategy
NCE	No-cost extension
NE	Ndihma Ekonomike (Government's cash assistance instrument)
NSDI II	National Strategy for Development and Integration 2015-2020
NSDEI	National Strategy for Development and European Integration 2023-2030
PF4C	Public finance for children
PFM	Public Finance Management
PUNO	Participating UN Organization
SASPAC	State Agency for Strategic Planning and Aid Coordination
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNPCSD	United Nations Programme of Cooperation for Sustainable Development
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
WB	World Bank

## Executive summary *(max 1 page)*

The Joint Programme "Strategic policy options for SDG financing" in Albania (hereinafter, JP) was implemented by UNDP, UNICEF, ILO, with contributions by UN Women and UNFPA, and in coordination with RCO. It worked closely with national partners to expand institutional capacities for developing feasible solutions and identifying the fiscal space to progressively increase SDG-related spending in Albania and to integrate these in the national budgetary framework.

The JP was implemented during 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2023, including two successful no-cost extension requests. Its tenure was marked by significant challenges related to the effects of the consecutive crises – the November 2019 earthquake, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the war in Ukraine. In addition, the JP navigated two election cycles (general elections in April 2021 and local elections in May 2023). These events led to a fluctuating engagement of national partners and to an uneven momentum around the JP activities.

The JP intended to achieve its result of increasing SDG financing and expanding the social protection system in the country through the provision of evidence on the costs on non-investment on SDGs, the credible analysis and data on fiscal space, the promotion of analytical tools for decision making, and strengthening the capacities of the SDG financing institutions, thus enabling a continuous national dialogue on SDG financing in Albania. The above is reflected in the JP Outcome (1) and JP Outputs (4).

Specifically, the JP produced several assessments and generated knowledge for policy advocacy. These include analyses of budgetary spending by year and sector; the feasibility of introducing a social protection floor; the fiscal space for financing an expanded social protection system; reforming of the economic assistance programme; investments in early childhood education development and education; and financing of long-term care needs for the elderly; funding and delivery of social care services at the local level. Findings from these studies were shared with stakeholders in national policy dialogue events and have resulted in the JP contributing to the development of the National Social Protection Strategy 2023-2030 (currently in process), including the strategy's costing and budgeting, aiming to address shock responsive social protection and to foster a shift towards universal coverage.

Secondly, the JP has contributed to the capacity building of 189 civil servants at the national and local level. This comprises the training of 30 social security experts and Ministry staff on social security contribution collection and compliance of rural workers in Albania; and the training of 159 staff in 10 municipalities for increasing their skills on efficient and effective use of revenues and resources for delivering gender responsive social services.

Thirdly, the JP championed a data-centric approach for decision-making. This included supporting the Ministry of Finance and Economy in preparing metadata frameworks and datasets that can be used for designing a data visualization platform (through its own resources), and the preparation of an SDG Investor Map for the country. The latter, an initiative that emerged as a response to the lessons that the JP had gathered and to the changing context, has resulted in the identification of a long list of Investment Opportunity Areas (IOAs) which will generate market intelligence for the [SDG Investor Platform](#) and contribute to private finance mobilization.

Crucially, the JP initiated the process of drafting the Integrated Financing Framework for Albania (INFF). The fluctuating engagement of national partners, coupled with the inherent complexity of the process, and the institutional changes affecting the technical secretariat of the Inter-ministerial Committee (IC) for Sustainable Development (resolved only in March 2023) delayed the process. To date, the JP has completed the assessment and diagnostics through a development finance assessment (DFA). The publication of the DFA report and the next steps in the process will be further coordinated with the Inter-ministerial Committee and its technical secretariat.

Finally, a noteworthy achievement of the JP was the establishment of a collaboration with the Parliament of Albania through the Parliamentary Subcommittee on Sustainable Development. This resulted in the organization of working and planning meetings, of a retreat on the role of MPs in advancing the 2030 Agenda and SDG financing (attended by 14 MPs and Parliamentary staff), and of an online training on SDG-centered budget oversight (attended by 10 MPs of the Parliamentary Committee on Economy and Finance and Parliamentary Subcommittee on Sustainable Development).

While the JP did not manage to fully achieve its ambitious results, it has raised the awareness of national partners in the importance of financing national development priorities. UN in Albania is committed to maintain the momentum around the JP for the successful completion of the INFF process and the adoption of the National Social Protection Strategy 2023-2030.

## Context *(max 1 page)*

This Joint Programme (JP) was designed in Q1/2020, at a time marked by the aftermath of a devastating earthquake that hit Albania in November 2019 and the imminent onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The socio-economic context of Albania presented several challenges. Despite steady GDP growth between 2011-2019<sup>i</sup>, the country continued to face issues related to poverty, gender inequality, and limited social protection coverage. Over that same period, 33.8 per cent of the population was living on less than US\$5.5 per day<sup>ii</sup>. In 2020, the at-risk of poverty rate was 21.8 per cent<sup>iii</sup>, while unemployment rose to 13.07 per cent (from 11.47 per cent in 2019<sup>iv,v</sup>). Youth employment, which already lagged behind the rest of the adult population, stood at 41.2% (46.9% men and 35.3% women). The social protection system, including the provision of social care services, remained weak, leaving vulnerable groups, including women, girls, and children, at great risk of being left behind.

The consecutive crises of the November 2019 earthquake, the COVID-19 pandemic, and later the inflationary pressures that arose after the start of the war in Ukraine in February 2022, worsened existing vulnerabilities and tightened the country's fiscal space, highlighting the urgency of the 2030 Agenda.

During this time, the commitment of the Government of Albania (GoA) to the 2030 Agenda remained strong. GoA has integrated the SDGs into the national policy framework and has established strategic decision-making mechanisms (such as the Inter-ministerial Committee and Inter-institutional Working Group on Sustainable Development). Coordination of cross-governmental efforts to improve SDG achievement is carried out by the State Agency for Strategic Planning and Aid Coordination (SASPAC, established in December 2021). Progress in meeting the SDGs has been tracked through a [Baseline Report](#) (2017), a [Voluntary National Review](#) (2018), and a [Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support for Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals](#) report (MAPS, 2018), and is currently monitored on the [SDG dashboard of national statistical agency, INSTAT](#). Yet, despite these efforts, estimations of the cost of meeting national development targets and the identification of financing options have often been inadequate.

In this context, JP participating UN organizations (PUNOs) recognized the need:

- On the one hand, to increase the effectiveness and improve monitoring of public spending on SDGs, given that domestic public finance is the main driver behind investment in SDGs<sup>vi</sup>, and
- On the other, to identify holistic approaches to financing national sustainable development by mobilizing other sources, in ways that responds to heightened uncertainty, inter-connected shocks, and trade-offs between policy choices.

As such, this JP was designed to support national partners, particularly the Ministry of Finance and Economy (MFE) and the Ministry of Health and Social Protection (MHSP), to expand institutional capacities for developing feasible solutions and identifying fiscal space to progressively increase SDG-related spending in Albania and integrate these in the national budgetary framework.

The JP intended to bring about such change through solid evidence on the costs on non-investment on SDGs and credible data and analyses on fiscal space, by promoting tools for mobilizing and monitoring financing for SDGs, and through strengthening the capacities at the national and local level, in order to enable a continuous national dialogue on SDG financing in Albania. This approach is evident in the four output areas of the JP, which included:

- Investigating the fiscal space for social protection in the country and fostering policy dialogue on the opportunities for expanding support to the most vulnerable population groups,
- Increasing the capacities of local government staff for financing social protection and care services,
- Promoting the use of innovative analytical tools for policy and decision-making,
- Improving integrated planning and monitoring at the central level for mobilizing additional SDG financing and improving SDG budget tracking and SDG-focused budget scrutiny.

The JP was fully aligned with the government priorities relating to sustainable development objectives, poverty reduction, social cohesion, and improving gender equality. JP deliverables were evidence-based and gender sensitive. During its tenure, the JP also showed considerable adaptability, promptly responding to major domestic developments, e.g., relating to effects of the Covid-19 lockdowns on the planned activities, the institutional slowdown during the April 2021 general elections and May 2023 local elections.

The direct beneficiaries of the JP activities comprised policy makers in line ministries and municipal staff, Members of Parliament and Parliamentary staff, social partners.

## Joint Programme Results

### 1. Overview of Strategic Final Results

#### 1.1. Overall assessment (max 100 words)

- Above expectations (fully achieved expected JP results and made additional progress)  
 In line with expectations (achieved expected JP results)  
 Satisfactory (majority of expected JP results achieved, but with some limitations/adjustments)  
 Not-satisfactory (majority of expected JP results not achieved due to unforeseen risks/challenges)

Overall, the JP managed to achieve its main intended results of fostering dialogue among policymakers and key national actors on financing for sustainable development. JP knowledge products directly contributed to policy processes (as in the case of the National Social Protection Strategy 2023-2030), to discussions on the need to track SDG-related spending in public budgets, and discussions about financing of national development. MPs' commitment towards advancing the 2030 Agenda and SDG-focused budget scrutiny was revitalized. Capacities of staff in 10 municipalities on resource planning for social care services were raised. INFF was partially completed, but efforts will continue in 2023.

#### 1.2 Key results achieved (max 500 words)

The three key results of this JP include:

- Encouraging national partners to reflect on the need to shift from costing & budgeting of national development priorities towards a financing mindset** – Championed through the JP's work on preparing the first Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF) in Albania, this result is best exemplified by the feedback received from participants to INFF consultations who found the assessment of the information on financial flows available to the country against the needs and on-going development processes very elucidating and useful in the context of policy development. In fact, the INFF assessment and diagnostics provided valuable insights on the trends of financial flows available to country, the opportunities for resource alignment and mobilization, and on the coordination needs between different governmental actors – especially regarding cross-sectoral strategic priority areas that have a significant impact on the country's sustainable development and require substantial investment. These insights were shared during key reflection moments with the working group that was responsible for drafting the National Strategy for Development and EU Integration 2023-2030 (NSDEI).
- Knowledge generation for policy advocacy** – The JP embraced a strong knowledge-centric, analytical approach. It produced several studies and analyses that informed its own activities and contributed to exchanges with national partners in policy dialogue events. This was especially the case for the need to build comprehensive social protection floors. Most notably, the JP supported MHSP in drafting of the annual progress report on the implementation of the National Social Protection Strategy 2019-2022 and the National Social Protection Strategy 2023-2030, including the strategy's costing and budgeting, aiming to address shock responsive social protection and to foster a shift towards universal coverage. The JP also employed a strong focus on the use of data for decision-making. While the challenging context (outlined later in the report) impeded the implementation of a microsimulation exercise, the JP supported MFE in preparing metadata frameworks and datasets that the ministry can use for designing a data visualization platform (through its own resources). Similarly, it embraced the SDG Investor Map methodology for gathering the market intelligence necessary to engage with the private sector more systematically and mobilize private finance.
- The transformative aspects of the above-mentioned interventions would not be possible without **capacity building at the central and local level**. To that end, the JP offered tailored capacity building to different audiences. Particularly, the strategic partnership with the Parliamentary Subcommittee on Sustainable Development and the Parliamentary Committee on Economy and Finance was paramount in enabling exchanges with MPs on their role in advancing the 2030 Agenda and SDG-related budget scrutiny. The Parliamentary Subcommittee on Sustainable Development is embedding some of the lessons from capacity

building events in the periodic reporting it will request to line ministries. Other capacity building offers included training of the Institute of Social Security (ISSH) and MHSP staff on social security contribution collection and compliance of rural workers in Albania, and training of staff in 10 municipalities on efficient and effective use of revenues and resources to plan and deliver gender responsive social services.

1.3. Results achieved on Integrated National Financing Framework/SDG financing building blocks (max 2 pages)

Implementation stages	Planned (0%)	Emerging (1-49% progress)	Advancing (50-99% progress)	Complete (100% progress)	Previously completed	Not applicable
1. Inception phase	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Assessment & diagnostics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Financing strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Monitoring & review	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Governance & coordination	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Delivering on the Integrated National Financing Framework** was one of the JP priorities. The drafting process was structured as depicted in Figure 1 – the Inception phase was combined with the assessment and diagnostics, which was completed through the Development Finance Assessment (DFA) methodology. A team of national and international experts was recruited to support the drafting process.

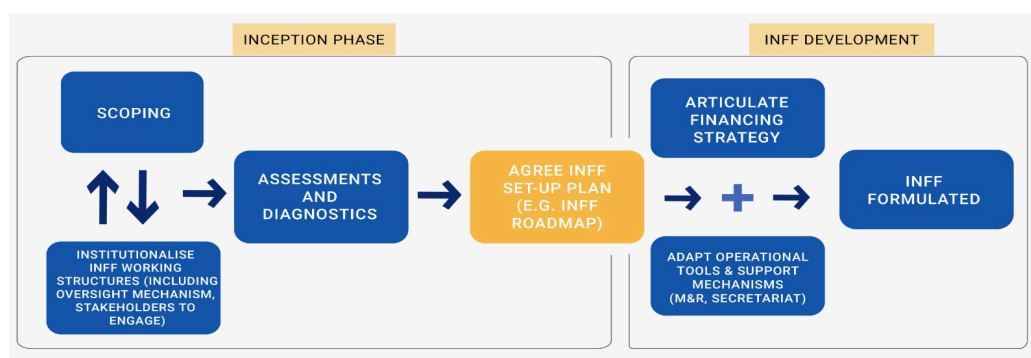


Figure 1. INFF process in Albania

After an initial scoping, the team proceeded with detailed data collection and in-depth analyses, engaging in an exhaustive process of stakeholder consultations including institutions such as Prime Minister’s Office, State Agency for Strategic Planning and Aid Coordination (SASPAC), Bank of Albania, Institute of Statistics (INSTAT), MFE, Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy (MIE), Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD), Albanian Financial Supervisory Authority (AFSA), Albanian Investment Development Agency (AIDA).

The DFA report provides an overview of the financial flows available to Albania, shedding light on their volume and historical trends, thus allowing to identify emerging areas of opportunity. Key takeaways from the report state that:

- Albania has experienced significant growth in the past decades. However, the growth has been dependent on public investments, remittances, and revenues from hydroelectric power generation in the years of high rainfall.
- Even though the country has shown a good ability to recover from shocks, it continues to remain vulnerable.



- While improving efficiencies in public finance and fiscal consolidation are necessary, they will not be sufficient to finance the entire range of development priorities. It is crucial to mobilize domestic private finance. Financial institutions should infuse credit to the economy, particularly in strategic sectors, utilizing innovative financial instruments.

To the end of the latter, UNDP has also initiated the preparation of an [SDG Investor Map for Albania](#) – a market intelligence tool, which aims to explore sectors that have the potential to attract investment, while at the same time positively impacting the progress on SDGs. The results of these efforts will be presented later in 2023.

The DFA preparation process also provided relevant insights pertaining to data gaps to be filled in the future; coordination needs between different governmental actors, which, in turn, will serve to define INFF governance and coordination; and opportunities for leveraging and mobilizing additional financing for development.

Further progress in the INFF process was hindered by institutional changes that took place in December 2021, when SASPAC was created. These changes temporarily halted the mechanism for convening the Inter-ministerial Committee on Sustainable Development – a collegial body chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister and comprising key government institutions, as well as other stakeholders from the business community, civil society, academia, and international organizations. The Inter-ministerial Committee is a key entity for the INFF process, as it anchors its governance, ensures local ownership, and provides the forum where the focus of the INFF financing strategy can be discussed.

It was only in March 2023, when the technical coordination of the Inter-ministerial Committee was assigned to SASPAC, that the convening mechanism was restored. The first Committee meeting since was held on June 6, 2023, and the INFF process was presented to government partners in attendance. This marked an important step in including INFF in the Government’s agenda. However, the Inter-ministerial Committee members required more time to make a decision on the milestones for the next stages in this process.

Publication of the DFA report was placed on hold until the presentation to the Inter-ministerial Committee was possible. The publication date will be further coordinated with SASPAC and is likely to be scheduled in Q4/2023.

UN is committed to continue the efforts in finalizing the INFF process. Exchanges with Inter-ministerial Committee and SASPAC will continue later in 2023 in order to develop an INFF Roadmap and move forward into the drafting of the Financing Strategy.

#### 1.4. Contribution to SDG acceleration

<b>SDGs indicators</b>	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>Expected target</b>	<b>Actual results achieved/to be achieved in the near future</b>	<b>Reasons for deviation from targets, if any</b>
1.3.1 Proportion of population covered by social protection floors/systems, by sex, distinguishing children, unemployed persons, older persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, newborns, work-injury victims and the poor and the vulnerable	N/a	National strategy with feasible options for financing a social protection floor in place	Studies around financing of social protection completed and shared with MHSP. Support to drafting National Social Protection Strategy 2023-2030 is underway.	Strategy currently being drafted, Consultations with key stakeholders are ongoing, Adoption of the new strategy is expected by the end of 2023
5.c.1 Proportion of countries with systems to track and	N/a	SDG-budget tagging in place	The JP delivered a series of SDG-related budgetary spending	The analyses were well received by MFE and Members of the

make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment			assessments (listed in Annex 2), including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the SDG-related analysis of budgetary spending for the 2015-2019 period (<i>focused on expenditure</i>)</li> <li>an SDG-related analysis of the 2023 draft public budget (<i>focused on planning</i>).</li> </ul>	Parliamentary Committee on Economy and Finance. Further technical support is needed to prepare the Albanian Financial Management Information System (AFMIS) for enabling automatic SDG-budget tagging and tracking.
10.4.2 Redistributive impact of fiscal policy	N/a	Including indicator 10.4.2 in the national SDG tracker managed by INSTAT	Exchanges with INSTAT aimed to identify whether INSTAT or other producers of official statistics in the country do / can collect the necessary data for calculating this indicator	Further exploration was halted due to the postponement of the upcoming Population Census (an essential data source for the indicator; postponed twice and now scheduled to start in September 2023)

### 1.5. Contribution to SDG financing flows (max 500 words)

As outlined in the response to Question 1.3, drafting of the INFF Financing Strategy has not been completed. However, the JP has undertaken a number of actions that contribute to the broader goal of aligning and mobilizing financial flows towards the SDGs. Specifically, these include:

- Advocating for improved alignment of public budgets with SDGs: the JP produced assessments of SDG-related budgetary spending (by year and sector) in order to influence budget planning towards a more equitable allocation of resources for children and women, as well as to encourage the inclusion of an SDG tagging and tracking feature in AFMIS in the future.  
For instance, sectoral budget briefs on health, education and social protection were disseminated publicly and used to engage with line ministries on the topic of costing and budgeting key policies for children. Crucially, the budget briefs highlighted the lack of budget transparency and of clear links between the Mid-term Budget Plan (MTBP, a result-based planning document) and annual budget allocations, which follow the economic classification. They also confirmed the need to build capacities on public finance for children (PF4C) literacy at the central and local level. Findings and recommendations from the budget briefs were used in the [annual parliamentary hearings on the draft 2022 budget law](#) to advocate for increasing social spending for children.
- Contributing to the drafting of the National Social Protection Strategy 2023-2030, including the strategy's costing and budgeting, by providing empirical evidence on:
  - the fiscal space for financing social protection (including financing a social protection floor for vulnerable women, girls and children), and investing in universal childcare,
  - the positive impact of gender-sensitive public investment, supporting SDG Target 5.c and 5.c.1 (Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership),
  - the assessment of perceptions and attitudes of cash assistance beneficiaries, addressing gender equity issues and contributing to SDG Target 5.5 (Ensure women's full and effective

- participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making),
- Mainstreaming gender in macroeconomic policies and integrated gender equality and women's empowerment principles into investment strategies, supporting SDG Target 5.a (Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources),
  - Increasing institutional capacities at the local level (through the training of staff in 10 municipalities) to plan efficient and effective use of revenues and resources to plan and deliver gender responsive social services, contributing to SDG Target 5.4 (Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work),
  - Fostering the mobilization of private sector flows by initiating the SDG Investor Map preparation and presenting long-list of Investment Opportunity Areas (IOAs) to a wide range of stakeholders including the Albanian Investment Development Agency (AIDA), the [Investment Council](#), the [Albanian Investment Corporation](#) (AIC), MFE, MARD, networks of angel investors, and various business associations.

#### [1.6. Results achieved on contributing to UN Development System reform at the country level \(max 500 words\)](#)

The JP was jointly implemented by UNDP, UNICEF and ILO, in close coordination with RCO. In addition, the JP benefitted from contributions by UN Women and UNFPA.

PUNOs collaborated through the Delivering as One mechanism, bringing forward a cohesive and coordinated UN approach to avoid overlapping and maximize synergies and results. Under this set up, PUNOs coordinated periodically on the delivery of planned activities, as well as co-designed and co-implemented them. This allowed to capitalize on the respective strengths and expertise, while maximizing the efficiency in the use of resource. Some examples of coordination and co-creation include ILO taking the lead in activities pertaining to fiscal space and some aspects of social protection, such as targeting of the cash assistance programme and long-term care, with the latter being further complemented by the work done by UNFPA on old people and loneliness; UNICEF and UN Women working jointly on aspects of social protection that concern children and women; UNICEF, UN Women and UNDP conducting a joint study on the perceptions and attitudes of social protection beneficiaries; UNDP and UNICEF producing complementary analyses on SDG-related budgetary spending; UNDP leading the work on INFF, with UNICEF and UN Women contributing to the process; UNDP and UNICEF coordinating on activities with the Parliament of Albania.

Activities of the JP have been included in the Joint Work Plan of UN in Albania reflecting the alignment with the wider cooperation framework.

In [UNPCSD 2017-2021](#) the JP contributed to **Output 2.3**: Social Protection and **Outcome 3**: Economic Growth, Labour and Agriculture. Whereas in [UNSDCF 2022-2026](#), it contributes to **Output 1.1**. Social protection: Social protection systems and mechanisms are strengthened to increase the coverage, quality, and monitoring of cash benefits and social care services and affordable housing for vulnerable groups, **Output 2.2**. Sustainable and resilient economic growth and green and blue economy transition: Economic policy measures and programmes are designed, piloted, and tracked to promote sustainable, climate resilient, green and blue economic growth and women's economic empowerment with focus on 'building back better' of, **Output 2.6**. Sustainable cities: Capacities of urban municipalities increased to implement sustainable development policies and programmes, and **Output 4.3**. Gender Responsive Planning and Budgeting: Government institutions at central and local levels have increased capacities to plan, budget, monitor, track expenditures, and leverage resources for GEWE in targeted sectors.

The UN Albania Progress Report 2022 captures the contribution of the JP in the above-mentioned Outputs, including achievements such as the contribution to the progress report of the National Social Protection Strategy 2019-2022 and the drafting of the National Social Protection Strategy 2023-2030; the work on INFF for linking national strategies with sustainable financing policies and reforms; the screening of legislation that regulates funding of mandates at the local level; increasing capacities on gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) and its integration into the domestic financial systems.

Finally, the JP shared updates and welcomed feedback from the wider UNCT members on activities of wider interest, such as the INFF process and the SDG Investor Map preparation.

### 1.7. Results achieved on cross-cutting issues (max 200 words)

The JP was grounded on the assumption that accelerating SDGs in Albania requires investing in social cohesion. The effects of the poly-crisis reinforced the importance of building strong social protection systems and sustainable development strategies that address the rising inequalities and socioeconomic challenges, in order to leave no one behind.

The JP was guided by the need for holistic approaches to financing that respond to heightened uncertainty, inter-connected shocks, and trade-offs between policy choices in different areas. An essential aspect of this strategy was the integration of gender equality, which was prioritized across the programming.

Through its work on fiscal space analysis, the JP explored the critical area of care infrastructure, aiming to address discrimination and vulnerabilities that disproportionately affect women. It examined the implications of cash assistance benefits on gender equity, leading to actionable insights that are contributing to policy development.

Similarly, options for financing social protection were explored under a gender-based lens, with PUNOs leveraging their expertise in gender-responsive budgeting within domestic finance systems. Moving forward, this knowledge will contribute to engendering the upcoming INFF financing strategy. This will entail incorporating gender considerations into all instruments that the strategy will put forward, for both public and private finance.

### 1.8. Results achieved on COVID-19 recovery (max 200 words)

While COVID-19 recovery was not an explicit goal of the JP, its holistic approach to financing meant that pandemic response was inevitably part of JP discussions. In fact, the COVID-19 pandemic reaffirmed the strong rationale underpinning the JP, highlighting the importance of shock-responsive and resilient social protection systems.

The JP's contribution to knowledge building on care infrastructure and the intersectionality of discrimination, to policy dialogue on social protection systems and fiscal space, and the exploration of vulnerabilities through the INFF lens aimed to shift policy discussions away from an 'emergency response' focus towards a 'resiliency outlook' under which policies are integrated with financing mechanisms and can promptly respond to unforeseen / adverse circumstances.

From a programmatic perspective, the JP was agile and flexible to adapt its interventions to the new realities of COVID-19. It minimized the adverse impact of physical distancing and other restrictions by using alternative modalities of implementation for planned activities (online and hybrid) when possible. In other cases, where the modality of delivery would negatively impact the results of the intervention, the JP decided to postpone the activity. It also adjusted communication around JP accordingly.

### 1.9. Strategic Partnerships (max 500 words)

JP implementation leveraged partnerships with government actors, at both national and local level. In particular, strong partnerships were established with the Ministry of Finance and Economy, Ministry of Health and Social Protection, and select municipalities, as related to the respective intervention areas.

A crucial achievement of the JP was the establishment of a partnership with the Parliament of Albania, specifically through the newly revitalized Parliamentary Subcommittee on Sustainable Development and the Parliamentary Committee on Economy and Finance. This partnership allowed a greater degree of coordination and exchange that made the delivery of capacity building for MPs possible.

Coordination around the INFF process was maintained with MFE and the State Agency for Strategic Planning and Aid Coordination (SASPAC) – the latter coordinates governmental efforts on the 2030 Agenda. As of March 2023, it also serves as the technical secretariat of the Inter-ministerial Committee on Sustainable Development, a key body in the INFF process. Importantly, during the JP tenure, SASPAC coordinated the preparation and approval of the National Strategy for Development and EU Integration 2023-2030 (NSDEI). The JP made sure

to exchange and align with NSDEI team during the DFA preparation, in order to adequately reflect national priorities throughout the INFF process.

DFA preparation was helped by the collaboration with MFE, INSTAT, and the Bank of Albania, which allowed access to the data necessary for analyzing financial flows available to the country.

In the same vein, the JP built on UN’s existing collaborations with other international partners, such as WB, EBRD, IMF, EIB, Delegation of the EU to Albania, Sida and SDC to engage them in constructive dialogue, ensure coherence of approaches, and build strong alliances to advocate with Government for progressive investment in the SDGs. These international partners were invited to INFF consultations and will be contacted in the next stages of the process as well.

Finally, through the work on the SDG Investor Map, the JP also expanded its network of partnerships to the private sector, including business associations such as the Albanian Manufacturers Union, the Albanian Investment Corporation, as well as public bodies covering investment-related functions, such as AIDA and the Investment Council. The goal of these partnerships is to mobilize domestic private finance towards SDGs.

1.10. Additional financing mobilized (max 300 words)

Source of funding	Yes	No	Type of co-funding/co-financing	Name of organization	Amount (USD)	Comments
Government	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Co-funding	Albania SDG Acceleration Fund	100,000.00	Though the amount was expected as GoA co-funding to the JP, it was not received within the JP implementation period, this affecting JP planning.
Donors/IFIs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
Private sector	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
PUNOs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Co-financing	UNICEF-UNDP Global Finance Flagship Initiative	60,000	In July 2022, UNICEF and UNDP were awarded \$60,000 under the UNICEF-UNDP Global Finance Flagship Initiative. The funding was used complementarily to that of the JP to further the goal of aligning public finance with SDGs. These funds contributed to SDG-related budgetary analyses and activities with Parliament. The latter will continue for the remainder of 2023.
				ILO	12,000	ILO contributed this co-funding to the JP in the form of project management and technical assistance (as measured by worktime).
Other partners	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				

## 2. Results by JP Outcome and Output

### 2.1. Results achieved by Fund's global results (max 500 words)

At the time of reporting, the JP has not produced quantifiable results on *Outcome 2: Additional financing leveraged to accelerate SDG achievement*. However, the quantitative nature of the indicators for this Outcome does not capture the qualitative changes that the JP managed to achieve. Despite the challenging context, that caused a fluctuating engagement of national partners who were overburdened by emergency response of the poly-crisis, the JP raised their awareness on the importance of financing sustainable development and readiness to incorporate financing measures in future policy development. Particularly MFE and SASPAC are more attuned to the necessity of moving beyond simply costing policy and strategy documents, into introducing measures for their financing.

Similarly, progress across indicators relating to *Output 4: Integrated financing strategies for accelerating SDG progress implemented* can be assessed through the instruments outlined in the INFF financing strategy. At the time of reporting, this strategy has not been finalized yet.

The INFF process proved more challenging than anticipated due to the circumstances the JP faced. In addition to the complexity of the analytical work that the process requires and the fluctuating engagement of overburdened national counterparts, changes in the institutional ecosystem temporarily halted the mechanism for convening the Inter-ministerial Committee on Sustainable Development, the body that will serve as INFF oversight. This mechanism was clarified only in March 2023, thus delaying the presentation of the DFA and the decision making on the sector/domain of focus of the financing until June 2023, when the Inter-ministerial Committee meeting was held and INFF effectively included in the Government's agenda. Following, the Inter-ministerial Committee members required more time to make a decision on the milestones for the next stages in this process. Coordination with the Inter-ministerial Committee and SASPAC (in its function as technical secretariat of the Inter-ministerial Committee) will continue during the second half of 2023 in order to finalize the process.

### 2.2. Results achieved by Joint Programme Outcome (max 500 words)

The JP's progress at the Outcome level is measured through two indicators:

- i) **Proportion of population covered by social protection floors/systems, by sex, gender, distinguishing children, unemployed persons, Roma and Egyptians, persons with disabilities, migrants, refugees, pregnant women, newborns, work-injury victims and the poor and the vulnerable.** No baseline level was readily available at the start of the JP. A potential source for its estimation was the number of people or population groups covered by some social protection scheme. An assessment published by the JP in 2023<sup>vii</sup> reports that, in 2021, 68,246 families were receiving social assistance benefits. The estimated number of beneficiaries was 250,000 which accounts for 9.0 per cent of the total Albanian population.  
The JP tackled progress under this indicator through the national policy forums and policy advocacy based on the results of the studies it produced, particularly those related to the feasibility of introducing a social protection floor, the expansion of fiscal space for social protection, the reform of the economic assistance programme. The JP exceeded the intended target for this indicator by contributing to the on-going drafting of the National Social Protection Strategy 2023-2030, including the strategy's costing and budgeting, aiming to address shock responsive social protection and to foster a shift towards universal coverage. The strategy is expected to be adopted in late 2023.
- ii) **Proportion of total government spending on essential services (education, health and social protection).** At the baseline (2019), the proportion of government spending on education, health, social protection, and culture equaled to approx. 50%. The JP reviewed budget documents for the period 2019-2023. The accompanying table to the [budget document](#) that summarizes the allocations across government functions indicates that the proportion of spending on education, health, social protection, and culture has decreased from 49% in 2019 to 46% in 2023. However, the nominal value of the amounts spent across these services has increased during the period, as has the total budget. A more detailed budgetary analysis will be necessary to understand the shifts in public spending.

### 2.3. Results achieved by Joint Programme Output (max 500 words / 654 words)

The JP operated across four Outputs:

- i) **A national strategy for financing comprehensive social protection floors is developed, discussed nationally and ready to be integrated in the MTBG through national dialogue** – Results in this Output concerned the generation of knowledge for policy advocacy through national policy forums/events. The JP produced several studies (detailed in Annex 2) including the investigation of budgetary spending on health, education, and social protection; the feasibility of introducing a social protection floor; the fiscal space for financing an expanded social protection system; reforming of the economic assistance programme; investments early childhood education development and education; and financing of long-term care needs for the elderly, including a pilot study for establishing a database of long-term care needs as a first step in building an effective system of integrated health and social care services for the elderly. Results were validated and discussed with policymakers in dedicated policy forums and are now contributing to the drafting of the National Social Protection Strategy 2023-2030, including the strategy’s costing and budgeting, aiming to address shock responsive social protection and to foster a shift towards universal coverage.  
In addition, the JP also increased the capacities of 30 ISSH experts and MHSP staff who are in charge of social security administration in rural areas.
- ii) **Feasible options are identified and agreed with Government Authorities to catalyse financing of unfunded mandates at local government units** – Results under this Output focused on building capacities at the local level for financing sustainable development. The content of capacity building activities was informed by the knowledge generated by the JP, including a legislative review of mandate funding, an assessment of challenges in social care provision at the local level, and a study on the perceptions of cash assistance beneficiaries. These have also fed in policy dialogue under Output 1.  
Capacity building trainings were delivered to social care municipal staff in 10 municipalities. A total of 159 staff (113 women) were trained on efficient and effective use of revenues and resources to plan and deliver gender responsive social services. They covered topics such as legal frameworks in place, planning and financing of social services, gender equality, gender mainstreaming and GRB, gender responsive social services.
- iii) **Innovative approaches, tools, and other mechanisms are developed to pilot and evaluate the impact of fiscal policies** – This Output was revised in response to the changing context and lack of interest of national partners in a microsimulation exercise. Updated activities preserved the data-centric ethos of the Output. The JP supported MFE in preparing metadata frameworks and datasets that can be used for designing a data visualization platform (through its own resources). Furthermore, the JP initiated the preparation of an SDG Investor Map for the country. At the time of reporting, results include the identification and presentation of the long list of Investment Opportunity Areas (IOAs) to a broad range of stakeholders, including policy makers and key private sector actors. They are currently being shortlisted and complemented with the data necessary for publication in the [SDG Investor Platform](#). UNDP is committed to support its completion and dissemination.
- iv) **Public institutions’ capacities are enhanced to articulate, implement and review budgets that reflect increasing SDG related spending** – Results in this Output include the progress made on INFF and capacity building in Parliament. As described earlier in the report, the DFA was completed, while progress on the financing strategy experienced delays. Collaboration with the Parliament resulted in a retreat on the role of MPs in advancing the 2030 Agenda and SDG financing attended by 14 MPs and Parliamentary staff, as well as an online training on SDG-centered budget oversight attended by 10 MPs of the Parliamentary Committee on Economy and Finance and Parliamentary Subcommittee on Sustainable Development. These have been accompanied with coordination meetings about the planning of future activities, such as thematic sessions and tailored capacity building. These will be delivered later in 2023 through the UNICEF-UNDP Global Finance Flagship support.

### 3. Challenges and Changes

#### 3.1. Challenges faced by JP (max 300 words / 315 words)

The JP began implementation on July 1, 2020, facing a particularly challenging and unpredictable context. Initially, the engagement of national counterparts with the JP was lower than anticipated because of the increased burden of the COVID-19 response, which caused high budgetary pressures and disrupted planning. JP's own planning was affected by the fact that it did not receive the government's share of co-funding (\$100,000). Moreover, movement restrictions hindered the delivery of certain activities, prompting PUNOs to adapt by employing online or hybrid modalities and delaying some activities for greater impact.

Adding to these challenges, the JP navigated two election cycles. The general elections in April 2021 resulted in an 'institutional slowdown' until a new Government Cabinet was appointed in September 2021. Subsequently, local elections in May 2023 affected planned events involving MPs and local governments, necessitating their postponement (to a yet-to-be defined date).

The start of the war in Ukraine caused another deceleration in JP momentum. Although the war's impact in Albania is indirect – manifesting through inflationary pressures and price increases – national authorities diverted their focus to emergency response.

In times of low engagement, the JP focused on the technical support and completing research in fulfillment of Output 1.1 and 1.2, engaging relevant stakeholders when / as much as possible; advancing capacity building under Output 1.2; deepening collaboration with Parliament, and working on the DFA in line with Output 1.4. A notable adjustment pertained to Output 1.3: National partners showed a lack of interest in the originally planned microsimulation exercise given the high effort required from Ministry staff amid urgent priorities and long delivery times. As such, in lieu of the microsimulation exercise and in response to DFA findings, the JP initiated the preparation of an SDG Investor Map for the country. This market intelligence tool aligns with Output 1.3's data-centric ethos and complements the array of instruments for bolstering SDG Financing in the country.

#### 3.2. Changes made to JP (if applicable) (max 200 words)

In order to respond to the challenges outlined above and to ensure the successful delivery of its results, the JP requested two no-cost extensions (NCE). The first of these was submitted in January 2022, extending the end date from July to 31 December 2022. The second NCE request was submitted in November 2022, further extending the end date to 30 June 2023. Both were successfully granted.

These no-cost extensions allowed the JP to make up for some of the delays experienced due to circumstances outside of its control. While they did not entail major changes to the JP's intended deliverables, responding to the changing context did require updates to the Work Plan. These included a revised approach to the national policy dialogue events, which were delayed due to COVID-19 restrictions; an update in the work under Output 1.2 due to the findings of the analysis on funding of mandates at the local level; and an adjustment in Output 1.3 as outlined in Question 3.1.

Finally, the work on INFF proved to be more demanding and costly than anticipated at the start of the JP, requiring some adjustments in budget allocations across outputs, in order to accommodate the actual costs incurred.

### 4. Sustainability and Country Ownership

#### 4.1. Sustainability and country ownership (max 500 words)

Because of the policy-oriented nature of this JP, ensuring national ownership of the results is a key factor in determining sustainability. To that end, throughout the JP implementation, PUNOs applied as much as possible principles of co-design. This included continuous dialogue with national counterparts and other stakeholders to



identify both gaps and solutions that could be implemented without duplicating existing platforms and functions.

PUNOs found that the main obstacle to fostering national ownership was not the lack of commitment from government partners and local stakeholders, but rather the insufficient time and attention they could devote to the JP because of the demands of the on-going poly-crisis.

Nevertheless, there are some achievements that deserve note.

At the SDG financing / macro level, the JP was able to generate buy-in from national partners through the INFF process. Even though the JP was only able to complete the first building block in the process, it has made important progress in including financing in the agenda of key government bodies. The successful presentation of the INFF to the Inter-ministerial Committee was followed by a commitment of attending government partners to continue discussions on the next stages in the process. At the same time, UN in Albania is committed to continue supporting the completion of the INFF process, with an outlook to the future implementation of the resulting financing strategy.

A related development concerns the recently initiated efforts of GoA to produce a national roadmap for the achievement of SDGs within 2030. This process will be coordinated by SASPAC and supported by the UN in Albania, which is proposing the inclusion of a costing and financing chapter to the roadmap as a first step in embedding a financing approach (as opposed to a costing-only one) in strategic planning in the country.

At the sectoral level, it is premature to definitively assess the sustainability of a potential social protection reform that incorporates the insights and recommendations put forth by the JP. The sustainability of such a reform would not be solely contingent upon successfully integrating JP's findings and proposed financing measures into the upcoming National Social Protection Strategy 2023-2030. It would be equally dependent on the concrete impact these measures eventually deliver. While the JP's findings have been well-received by ministry staff, the strategy drafting process is still in its early stages. Importantly however, the JP actively engaged in fostering consensus through its national policy dialogue events. Still, there is a risk that the progress achieved thus far could regress if momentum is not maintained. As such, PUNOs supporting the strategy drafting process are committed to continue their efforts in ensuring continuity.

## 5. Communications

### *5.1 Communication products (max 300 words)*

JP communication was guided by a Communication Plan that was implemented by PUNOs and coordinated with the RCO communication officer. The JP maintained an online presence through its dedicated page on the UN Albania website. The page can be found [here](#) and it provides links to some of the JP highlights, such as the [project brief](#) and knowledge products.

In addition, PUNOs and RCO promoted the JP activities and results on the respective social media accounts, cross-posting for a wider outreach. Given the technical and complex nature of JP's work, the content of web-articles and other social media posts was coordinated with the respective communication officers to ensure readability for a diverse audience.

In line with the commitment of Delivering as One (DaO), when communicating with third parties, PUNOs framed their messages in a JP-oriented language. This was the case in Steering Committee meeting and other public events. The visibility products that the JP used in such events reflected a DaO approach, making reference to the Joint SDG Fund and UN in Albania.

The types of public events organized by the JP include:

- Steering committee meetings,
- Studies / Assessments validation and presentation workshops,
- National policy dialogue forums,
- INFF launch event,
- INFF consultations and validation workshops,

- Working meetings with the Parliamentary Subcommittee on Sustainable Development,
- Capacity building trainings,
- JP closing event.

## 5.2 Events

Type of event	Yes	No	Number of events	Brief description and any highlights
JP launch event (mandatory)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	The JP launch event was held online, due to COVID-19 restrictions. A brief summary of the event can be found <a href="#">here</a> .
Annual donors' event* (mandatory)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	Donor and partner events were combined with INFF-related events and the JP closing event. Specifically, donors were invited to the <a href="#">INFF launch event</a> in March 2022 and the <a href="#">JP closing event</a> in June 2023. Partners were also invited to two other INFF <a href="#">DFA validation workshops</a> held in October 2022. In addition to these, the JP organized bilateral meetings with partners throughout its duration.
Partners' event ** (optional)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	

\*the Fund donor countries are Denmark, European Union, Germany, Ireland, Luxembourg, Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland. Please note that this event can be held together with a launch event or partners' event.

\*\* Key advocacy outreach events with high level JP partners.

## 6. Lessons and Best Practices

### 6.1. Key lessons learned, best practices, and recommendations on SDG financing (max 300 words)

The implementation of this JP served as a valuable learning experience for PUNOs. It marked the first collaboration between UN in Albania and MFE on addressing SDG financing. Given the novelty of the financing topic for the country and the technical intricacies involved the JP team encountered a learning curve in developing the adequate working language to effectively engage with MFE. One key takeaway from this experience is the imperative to further technical capacities within the UN team. Strengthening these capacities is essential to better coordinate and assist national counterparts in matters pertaining to financing.

Regarding the INFF drafting process, the JP was overly ambitious on the timeline for its completion. It underestimated the time needed for its finalization. Delays were not only due to the poly-crisis context that affected the JP tenure, but also to the intrinsic complexities of the process itself. For instance, the DFA preparation proved more demanding than anticipated due to the emergence of data gaps and the need for additional data processing to align with the methodology.

On the coordination with national counterparts, the JP learned that establishing a clear link between the INFF process and the national development priorities was crucial. Initially, the JP's narrative centered around SDG financing, inadvertently isolating the INFF process from national development efforts. However, a pivotal shift occurred when the JP reframed the process as a strategy to identify financing gaps and mobilize resources in support of national development priorities, including SDGs. This reframing led to heightened interest and engagement from national counterparts. This holds particular significance in Albania's context, where EU accession drives the development agenda. Hence, anchoring the INFF within the broader national framework, as a tool to bolster existing processes, and to identify and mobilize adequate financing, emerged as the most strategic and effective approach.

### 6.2. Key lessons learned and best practices, and recommendations on Joint Programming (max 300 words)

The JP serves as a compelling example of the positive outcomes from PUNOs' collaborative synergy. Yet, it is also important to acknowledge that, often, coordination required considerable effort. In fact, despite the periodic coordination and co-design of joint initiatives, there was room for further enhancing alignment and

coherence both between PUNOs and across the broader UN work. This included fostering greater coherence with other C1 joint programmes implemented in the country.

The JP outcomes and outputs had an over-ambitious scope. Considering the long-term nature of social protection policy development, due regard should be given to the time necessary for fostering national consensus and for building the partners' absorptive capacity. This holds true for the INFF drafting as well.

The obstacles faced by the JP offer valuable insights that can inform future joint programming. First, programme support efficacy could be optimized through adequate allocation of technical and administrative resources at the PUNO's country office, rather than at the regional level. Secondly, the difficult context the JP navigated underscored the importance of embedding flexibility, adaptability, and resilience within program design and execution. Acknowledging the impact of external risks and devising contingency plans capable of mitigating potential disruptions and delays are critical elements for ensuring JP's success. Thirdly, sustained collaboration with government counterparts and continuous awareness raising on JP's goals and results are vital. However, considering the importance of national ownership in ensuring JP sustainability, future programming could benefit by the greater involvement of national counterparts in JP formulation and implementation.

SDG financing and social protection will continue to remain greatly relevant in Albania's SDG agenda. Building on the JP's achievements and momentum, PUNOs are committed to continue engaging with national partners in the successful completion and future implementation of both the National Social Protection Strategy 2023-2030 and an INFF Financing Strategy.

## Annex 1: Consolidated results framework

### 1. JP contribution to global programmatic results (full programme duration)

Joint SDG Fund Global Outcome 2: Additional financing leveraged to accelerate SDG achievement (Complete table below)

Indicators	Baseline 2019	Target (end of JP)	Result (end of JP)	Notes
2.1: US\$ & Ratio of financing for integrated multi-sectoral solutions leveraged disaggregated in terms of public and private sector funds	0	3	0	While no quantifiable results can be reported at this time, the JP made important progress in advancing the national partners' awareness and readiness to shift to a paradigm of financing sustainable development (as opposed to simply costing policy and strategy documents).

Joint SDG Fund Global Output 4: Integrated financing strategies for accelerating SDG progress implemented (Complete table below and provide details as requested)

Indicators	Baseline 2019	Targets (end of JP)	Results (end of JP)	Notes
4.1: #of integrated financing strategies/instruments that were tested	0	2	0	Progress / results across these indicators can be assessed through the instruments outlined in the INFF financing strategy. At the time of reporting, this strategy has not been finalized yet. In addition to its own complexities, the INFF process in Albania faced delays caused by the lower-than-anticipated engagement of national counterparts due to the high burden of the poly-crisis emergency response (COVID-19 and war in Ukraine). Moreover, lack of institutional clarity on the mechanism for convening the Inter-ministerial Committee on Sustainable Development, i.e., the body that will serve as INFF oversight, delayed decision making on the sector/domain of focus and anchoring of the financing strategy. The mechanism was restored only in March 2023, and the first Inter-ministerial Committee since was held in June 2023, putting INFF in the GoA Agenda. Coordination on the next steps of the process is pending.
4.2: #of integrated financing strategies that have been implemented with partners in lead	0	2	0	
4.3: # of functioning partnership frameworks for integrated financing strategies to accelerate SDG progress	0	4	0	

### 2. Selected global operational effectiveness indicators (full programme duration)

2.1. Did your Joint Programme contribute to the improvement of the overall UNCT coherence?

Yes, considerably contributed

Yes, contributed

No

Explain briefly:

2.2. Did your Joint Programme contribute to avoiding duplication of efforts for the participating UN agencies in interaction with national/regional and local authorities and/or public entities?

 Yes,

 No

 N/A (if there are no other joint programmes in the country)

Explain briefly:

### 3. Results as per JP Results Framework

Result / Indicators	Baseline	Original Target (as per ProDoc)	Revised Target (if applicable)	Result (end of JP)	Reasons for variance from original target (if any)
<b>Outcome 1: Institutional capacities at national and local level are supported to develop feasible solutions and identify fiscal space to progressively increase SDG-relating spending for women, men, boys and children in Albania.</b>					
Outcome 1 indicator: Proportion of population covered by social protection floors/systems, by sex, gender, distinguishing children, unemployed persons, Roma and Egyptians, persons with disabilities, migrants, refugees, pregnant women, newborns, work-injury victims, and the poor and the vulnerable.	No available data for this indicator. Baseline for 2019 at the national level to be calculated as number of various groups benefitting from different social protection schemes	Feasibility study of innovative financing mechanisms and instruments that catalyse public and private investment in social protection	National policy dialogue events encouraging broader discussion on social protection in Albania	In 2021: 68,246 families were receiving social assistance benefits; Individual beneficiaries are estimated at 250,000, or approx. 9% of the total Albanian population (ILO, 2023, <a href="#">Reform of the economic assistance programme in Albania</a> ). Multiple studies completed and presented to relevant stakeholders in policy events; In addition, the JP is contributing to the drafting of the National Social	The JP exceeded intended targets under this indicator

				Protection Strategy 2023-2030	
Outcome 1 indicator: Proportion of total government spending on essential services (education, health and social protection)	50% (including culture)	52%	52%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2022: 47% (including culture)</li> <li>• 2023: 46% (including culture)</li> </ul> Though the percentage value has decreased, the nominal value of spending across these services has increased during 2019-2023.	The source of verification for this indicator was Table 6 of the <a href="#">Budget document for 2019-2023</a> , that provides an overview of the public budget by government function. Further analysis is needed to understand the trends.
<i>Output 1.1. A national strategy for financing comprehensive social protection floors is developed, discussed nationally and ready to be integrated in the MTBG through national dialogue.</i>					
Output 1.1 indicator: Proportion of population covered by social protection floors/systems, by sex, distinguishing children, unemployed persons, older persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, newborns, work-injury victims, and the poor and the vulnerable	No available data for this indicator. Baseline for 2019 at the national level to be calculated as number of various groups benefitting from different social protection schemes	Assessment of the impact of the poverty targeted cash assistance	National policy dialogue events encouraging broader discussion on social protection in Albania	Multiple studies completed and presented to relevant stakeholders in policy events; In addition, the JP is also contributing to the drafting of the National Social Protection Strategy 2023-2030	
Output 1.1 indicator: By 2030, reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions.	14.30%	-0.35%	-0.35%	The <a href="#">EU-SILC</a> calculates the <b>at-risk-of-poverty rate</b> , i.e., the percentage of persons living in households where equivalent disposable income is below the at-risk-of-poverty threshold (in 2021, equal to ALL 191,791). Rate in 2019: 23% Rate in 2020: 21.8%	The value of the baseline indicator was taken from the <a href="#">Living Standards Measurement Survey (2012)</a> . It measured the proportion of population whose real per capita monthly consumption is below ALL 4,891. LSMS was discontinued and eventually replaced by the EU-SILC. The most

				Rate in 2021: 22%	recent available data is that of 2021.
<i>Output 1.2. Feasible options are identified and agreed with Government Authorities to catalyse financing of unfunded mandates at local government units</i>					
Output 1.2 Indicator: Mapping of gaps from unfunded mandates and costs	N/a	Legislation is screened and Capacities at selected municipalities to enable financing of delegated functions are strengthened	Legislation is screened and Capacities at selected municipalities to enable financing of delegated functions are strengthened	Legislative review completed and published; 159 municipal staff (113 F) in 10 municipalities (Prrenjas, Lushnje, Tirana, Elbasan, Lezha, Puka, Pogradec, Kukes, Gjirokaster and Gramsh) trained to increase their skills on efficient and effective use of revenues and resources for delivering gender responsive social services; 30 social security experts and Ministry staff trained on social security contribution collection and compliance of rural workers in Albania	
Output 1.2 Indicator: Social impact of intergovernmental transfers	N/a	Case study on the impact of local resources and conditional transfers from the state budget on the amounts and stability of funding the social care services is developed	Study on the perceptions of social assistance beneficiaries complete	Study finalized and shared with MHSP. Its findings are contributing to the drafting of the National Social Protection Strategy 2023-2030	Based on the findings of the legislative review of funding of local mandates and lessons drawn from other activities carried out by the JP, this activity was reformulated as a joint UNICEF, UN Women and UNDP study that investigated the

					perceptions of social assistance beneficiaries on the process by which they receive the financial support, as well as its effect on roles and decision-making within the family unit.
<i>Output 1.3. Innovative approaches and tools (micro-simulation, behavioural insights) and other mechanisms are developed to pilot and evaluate the impact of fiscal policies</i>					
Output 1.3 Indicator: Proportion of government recurrent and capital spending to sectors that disproportionately benefit women, the poor and vulnerable groups	N/a	Behavioural experimentation to induce innovative thinking both in public service and the private sector			National partners displayed little-to-no interest in behavioural experiments and microsimulation exercises due to the high effort required from Ministry staff and long delivery times. Lack of engagement from stakeholder makes such exercises very theoretical and not useful.
Output 1.3 Indicator: Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality	N/a	Policy microsimulation model designed to test different scenarios of distributional effects of tax benefit policies on household incomes	Development of an SDG Investor Map for Albania	SDG Investor Map drafting process initiated. Long-list of Investment Opportunity Areas (IOAs) presented to a broad range of stakeholders including policy makers and key private sector actors. IOAs are currently being shortlisted and complemented with the data necessary for publication in the <a href="#">SDG Investor Platform</a> .	In this context and based on the findings of the DFA, the JP explored the possibility of preparing an SDG Investor Map for the country. This exercise embodies the innovative and data-centric ethos of Output 1.3 and complements the array of instruments necessary for boosting SDG Financing in Albania.
<i>Output 1.4. Public institutions' capacities are enhanced to articulate, implement and review budgets that reflect increasing SDG related spending</i>					



<p>Output 1.4 Indicator: Formulation of policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, that progressively achieve greater equality.</p>	<p>No SDG financing mechanism in place</p>	<p>Preparation of SDG financing strategy About 15 staff of the Ministry of Finance and Economy trained on SDG financing based on best practices</p>	<p>Preparation of SDG financing strategy About 15 staff of the Ministry of Finance and Economy trained on SDG financing based on best practices</p>	<p>DFA completed. Preparation of the INFF Financing Strategy is on-going.</p>	<p>Work on INFF building blocks 2-4 experienced delays due to developments in the national context and the compounding effects of poly-crisis that diverted the attention of government partners. Institutional changes within the Prime Minister’s Office in December 2021 were resolved only in March 2023, finally clarifying the mechanism for convening the Inter-ministerial Committee (IC) on Sustainable Development – a key entity that anchors the INFF governance, ensures local ownership, and serves as the forum where the Financing Strategy can be discussed and approved. The only IC meeting since was held in June 2023: INFF was introduced in GoA’s agenda, but more time was requested for coordinating on the next stages in the process.</p>
<p>Output 1.4: Indicator: Capacities in high-level decision making improved on SDG budgeting</p>	<p>N/a</p>	<p>Members of the parliament supported on SDG budgeting</p>	<p>Members of Parliamentary Committee on Economy and Finance supported</p>	<p>20 MPs and Parliamentary staff trained on SDG-focused budget scrutiny</p>	<p>Planning of further capacity building with Parliament under the UNICEF-UNDP Global</p>

			in mainstreaming SDGs in the national policy		Finance Flagship is on- going.
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## Annex 2: List of strategic documents

### 1. Strategic documents that were produced by the JP

Title of the document	Date (month; year) when finalized	Document type (policy/strategy, assessment, guidance, training material, methodology etc.)	Brief description of the document and the role of the JP in finalizing it
<a href="#">Budget Analysis of SDG Related Spending in Albania: 2015 - 2019</a>	March 2021	Budgetary analysis	Produced by JP (UN), this budget analysis focuses on public spending in the Republic of Albania between 2015 and 2019 towards the achievement of SDGs. It documents Albania's efforts towards pursuing SDGs in economic and social development policies, through tracking of its public expenditure. Data on public spending between 2015 to 2019 has been complemented with other secondary data sources such as Albania's SDGs performance vis-à-vis other countries based on international databases.
<a href="#">Education Budget Brief</a>	July 2021	Budgetary analysis	Produced by JP (UNICEF), this policy brief analyses the budget allocation and spending on the education sector over the period 2018- 2020 and MTBP 2015-2020. It provides some highlights on the way how mid-term budgets are constructed and some challenges on the investment in education for the most vulnerable children.
<a href="#">Health Sector Budget Brief</a>	July 2021	Budgetary analysis	Produced by JP (UNICEF), this policy brief analyses the mid-term budget of the health sector for the period 2015-2020, investigating critical issues and challenges in budgeting for the health sector, particularly in view of the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. The report notes that health expenditure per child is difficult to be defined and monitored, the only exception being the indicator of vaccination.
<a href="#">Budget for Children</a>	July 2021	Budgetary analysis	Produced by JP (UNICEF), this policy brief analyses three sectors (social protection, health, and education) in regard to budgeting for children. It highlights trends, challenges and gaps in the process of budgeting for children alongside budget performance indicators.

<a href="#">Social Protection Budget Brief</a>	July 2021	Budgetary analysis	<p>Produced by JP (UNICEF), this policy brief provides an overview of the composition and progress of the social protection budget over the period 2015-2020. The social protection expenditure in Albania accounts for approx. 9% of GDP (as opposed to 19.6% in the EU in 2018). The analysis is based on children-related indicators.</p> <p>The analysis focuses on poverty, as the most critical concern factor, as well as bringing a local government perspective.</p>
<p>Long-term care for the elderly in Albania: Challenges and key policy issues            ENG: <a href="#">Policy note</a> and <a href="#">Report</a>            ALB: <a href="#">Policy note</a> and <a href="#">Report</a></p>	May 2022	Policy / budget analysis	<p>Produced by JP (ILO), this report presents the key challenges and issues in the long-term care policy in Albania. With a rapidly aging population Albania is facing an imminent challenge to ensure the access to affordable and quality long-term care services for all the elderly in need.</p>
<p>Social Care at the Local Level – Institutional ecosystem, capacities, challenges            ALB: <a href="#">Report</a></p>	June 2022	Policy assessment	<p>Produced by JP (UNICEF), this report analyses capacities, achievements, and institutional challenges to local level social protection services. The report analyses the social services workforce development at the local level and provides recommendations on the way forward to further consolidate the decentralization model of social services in regard to structures, financing, and coordination of service providers.</p>
<p>Social Fund – A Reality Amidst Local Challenges            ALB: <a href="#">Report</a></p>	June 2022	Policy assessment	<p>Produced by JP (UNICEF), the report reviews the financing mechanism of Social Fund in financing local social services. It notes the progress in implementation of the Social Fund over the last three years, identifies achievements and challenges for ensuring transparency and adequacy of service provision. The report provides recommendations for local and central government in Albania in further advancing the financing of social care services and ensuring financial sustainability.</p>
<p>Legislative Review of Funding of Local Mandates in Albania            ALB: <a href="#">Report in the Knowledge Products section</a></p>	June 2022	Legislative Review	<p>Produced by JP (UNDP), this report reviews the legal framework that regulates funding of mandates at the local level, focusing on the provision of social welfare support, social protection, social care services.</p> <p>It found that, while there are no regulatory gaps per se, LGUs are still unable to mobilize sufficient own resources and remain highly</p>

			dependent on the central government for offering social services. Some temporary mechanisms which were put in place with the 2015 territorial and administrative reform still persist. Capacities for making use of the entire range of financing mechanisms for service delivery need to be strengthened.
<p>Developing a case for investing in free universal childcare in Albania  ENG: <a href="#">Report</a> and <a href="#">brief</a>  ALB: <a href="#">Report</a> and <a href="#">brief</a></p>	2022	Policy assessment	Produced by JP (UNICEF and UN Women), this study provides concrete evidence on how gender sensitive public investment has important ramifications in terms of who benefits from childcare and job creation. Beyond “who” benefits, the report also presents a comparative analysis of “how much and what kind of” benefits can be expected from each additional dollar gender-sensitive public spending versus gender-blind spending in universal childcare.
<p>Financing a Social Protection Floor for Vulnerable Women, Girls and Children in Albania  ENG: <a href="#">Policy brief</a></p>	2022	Policy assessment	Produced by JP (UNICEF and UN Women), this analysis explores the fiscal space that is available for the Government of Albania to finance a social protection floor that offers provisions for health care and meets the needs of women, children, parents of working age, and women and children working in the informal economy.
<p>Expenditures and fiscal space analysis for gender- and child-sensitive budgeting  ENG: <a href="#">Report</a> and <a href="#">op-ed</a>  ALB: <a href="#">Report</a></p>	2023	Policy assessment	Produced by JP (UNICEF and UN Women), this analysis aims to shed light on the scope of gender responsive fiscal policies to address gender and child sensitive socio-economic vulnerabilities. This report analyses the selected gender-sensitive fiscal policy and the mechanisms through which the policies affect social protection systems including women labour force participation, wage gaps, GDP growth, public fiscal balances, income distribution, and poverty. This provides essential information for policymakers that intends to adopt gender sensitive fiscal policy measures to empower women economically and, at the same time, tackle other economic and social priorities.
<p>Fiscal space for social protection in Albania - 2022 update  ENG: <a href="#">Policy note</a>  ALB: <a href="#">Policy note</a></p>	February 2023	Policy note	Produced by JP (ILO), this policy note updates the fiscal space analysis conducted in the framework of the UN JP “Catalysing Municipal Social Protection” ( <a href="#">Fiscal space for financing social protection in Albania</a> ). It takes into account the earthquakes in November 2019 and

			the COVID-19 pandemic during 2020-2022, which had significant implications on the economy, labour market and public finance.
Reform of the economic assistance programme in Albania ENG: <a href="#">Report</a> and <a href="#">Policy Note</a> ALB: <a href="#">Report</a> and <a href="#">Policy Note</a>	May 2023	Policy assessment	Produced by JP (ILO), this analysis assesses the effectiveness of the economic assistance programme with respect to its coverage, adequacy and comprehensiveness from the perspectives of the international social security standards, in particular ILO Social Protection Floors Recommendation, No. 202, and the development objectives of the international community as expressed in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It builds upon ILO's <a href="#">Review of social protection system in Albania</a> (listed in Annex 2.2), which provides an overview of the national social protection systems, both contributory and non-contributory, and assesses their recent trends and performance.
SDG Analysis of Albania's 2023 Draft Public Budget ENG: <a href="#">Report</a>	June 2023	Budgetary analysis	Produced by JP (UNDP), this analysis looked at SDG-related allocations in the 2023 draft public budget. Differently from previous assessment, which looked at budget execution, the current one focuses on budget planning.
Household perspectives and Challenges for 'Ndhima Ekonomike' Benefit	June 2023 – <u>completed but unpublished</u>	Policy assessment	Produced by JP (UNICEF, UN Women, UNDP), this study investigates the perceptions of social assistance beneficiaries on the process by which they receive the financial support, as well as its effect on roles and decision-making within the family unit. The study has been completed and presented to MHSP. Publication is pending coordination with and confirmation by the Ministry; however, lessons are contributing to the National Social Protection Strategy 2023-2030 drafting.
Development Finance Assessment for Albania	<u>To be published in Q4/2023</u>	Policy assessment	Produced by JP (UNDP) in fulfilment of the INFF first building block on assessment and diagnostics. Publication delayed until presentation to the Inter-ministerial Committee on Sustainable Development was possible. Date of publication will be decided in coordination with the Inter-ministerial Committee on Sustainable Development / SASPAC.

2. Strategic documents to which the JP directly contributed to

Title of the document	Date (month; year) when finalized	Document type (policy/strategy, assessment, guidance, training material, methodology etc.)	Brief description of the document and the role of the JP in finalizing it
Translation to Albanian of the “Fiscal Space for Social Protection. A Handbook for Assessing Financing Options” ALB: <a href="#">Handbook</a>	October 2020	Handbook	The JP contribution (ILO) was the translation of this handbook to Albanian. It outlines 8 financing options for expanding the fiscal space for social protection.
Assessment of the Social Security Responses to COVID-19 – Lessons from the Western Balkans and Eastern Europe during the first stage of the pandemic ENG: <a href="#">Report</a> ALB: <a href="#">Report</a>	March 2021	Policy assessment	JP contribution (ILO). The report reviews the COVID-19 situation and economic data, the social security and related measures implemented to address the economic and social consequences of the COVID-19 pandemics of the countries in Western Balkans and Eastern Europe during the first lockdown period in 2020.
Review of social protection system in Albania ENG: <a href="#">Report</a> ALB: <a href="#">Report</a>	June 2021	Policy assessment	Contribution to other C1 JP implemented in Albania. The report provides an overview of the current national social protection systems, both contributory and non-contributory, and assesses their recent trends and performance with respect to the structure and level of social expenditure, beneficiary coverage and adequacy, contributor coverage, and financial sustainability.
World Social Protection Report 2020–22: Regional Companion Report for Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia ENG: <a href="#">Report</a> ALB: <a href="#">Report</a>	December 2021	Policy assessment	JP contribution (ILO). This report complements the ILO’s World Social Protection Report 2020–22. It highlights key social protection developments, challenges and priorities for the region covering Albania from a life-cycle perspective.
Loneliness and Social Exclusion among older people in the Eastern Europe and Central Asia zone ENG: <a href="#">Report</a> ALB: <a href="#">Report</a>	March 2022	Policy assessment	JP contribution (UNFPA) on the Albania chapter of the study. The report is based on a survey conducted during the pandemic and thus captures the effects COVID-19 has had on loneliness and social isolation. It addresses policymakers and the general public to improve the well-being and

			respect for the rights of older people as countries emerge from the pandemic and aim to build back better.
Training Material for the Financing of Social Security and Pensions (in ALB: Material Trajnimi për Financimin e Sigurimeve Shoqërore dhe Pensionet)	April 2022	Training Material	This is a consolidated training material (total 513 pages in Albanian language) on social security financing and pension system based on International Training Center (ILO-ITC). ISSA guidelines as well as good practices of EU countries have been translated into Albanian language (The file is too large to send via attachment. Can be made available upon request).
Coherent and effective child investments: Generating evidence on child-related investments and proposing a methodology to tag child budget allocations in national financial systems and frameworks	Analysis completed in June 2023; planned for publication in Q4/2023	Policy assessment	<p>JP contribution (UNICEF). This assessment of public spending for children was prepared within the scope of the UNICEF-UNDP Global Finance Flagship Initiative support.</p> <p>It complements and builds on other SDG-related budgetary analyses prepared by the JP.</p> <p>The purpose of this exercise was to contribute to strengthening the effectiveness and efficiency of public budget allocations and expenditure on children and fostering links between policy/program planning and budget planning, particularly in the context of more equitable outcomes for children. The review provides evidence about the extent to which budget allocations and expenditures at national and subnational level are aligned to child-focused policy commitments. In addition, it proposes a methodology for a standardized system which would identify (possibly tag) and monitor child-related investments across the different PFM systems in Albania. Finally, it puts forward some preliminary conclusions on the strengths and weaknesses of budget tagging as a mean to support investment in children.</p> <p>The analysis was developed in close cooperation with the Ministry of Finance and Economy and will be published later in 2023.</p>





## Annex 3. Communications materials

### 1. *Human interest story*

#### ***Budgeting for Children***

UNICEF in Albania prepared several budget briefs on the expenditure for children, generating evidence and improving understanding around trends in planning and executing the budget in the select sectors. The key findings were disseminated publicly and were used to engage with line Ministries on costing and budgeting key policies for children. The budget briefs highlighted a lack of budget transparency and a lack of clear links between the MTBF (a result-based planning document) and the annual budget allocations/expenditure which follow the economic classification; they confirmed the need to build capacities and PF4C literacy at central and local level.

Findings and recommendations from the budget briefs were used in the annual parliamentary hearings on the draft 2022 budget law, a session in which UNICEF made a plea to increase social spending for children and to use the budgets wisely.

The budget briefs will be repeated biannually and will be the basis for evidence-based advocacy to influence the budget planning in the sectors towards a more equitable allocation of resources for the benefit of children and women. They will serve as an important tool for engaging in budget advocacy for allocation of funds for the benefit of children.

<https://www.facebook.com/unicefalbania/posts/3030102327243363>

<https://www.unicef.org/albania/stories/influencing-national-budgets-best-interest-children>

#### ***Long-term Care for the Elderly***

On 24 May 2022, the ILO in cooperation with the Ministry of Health and Social Protection and UNFPA organized a national forum on the long-term care for the elderly. The event served to present the main findings and recommendations of the policy study "[Long-term care for the elderly in Albania: Challenges and key policy issues](#)" and accompanying brief "[Challenges in long-term care for the elderly in Albania](#)", as well as "[Regional Survey on Older Persons and Loneliness - Loneliness and Social Isolation Among Older People in the Eastern Europe and Central Asia Region](#)".

The meeting provided a forum to discuss current and future challenges concerning long-term care among main stakeholders, as well as the full implementation of the National Action Plan on Ageing adopted by the government. The recommendation on the private-sector provision of care services also presents one case of innovative financing mechanism that catalyzes public and private investment in social protection.

Discussions sparked further interest of national stakeholders. In fact, as a follow up to this event, and at the request of the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, in October-December 2022, the ILO with support from UNFPA commissioned a pilot study for establishing a database of long-term care needs of the elderly. The Sukthi administrative unit of Durrresi Municipality was chosen as the pilot area.

The pilot long-term care database was a first step to build an effective system of integrated health and social care services for old age people. The shared contribution of both organizations is in line with the obligations that derive from the National Plan of Action on Ageing 2020-2025

This is a clear example of how JP research fostered action. More details at: [https://www.ilo.org/budapest/whats-new/WCMS\\_847680/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/budapest/whats-new/WCMS_847680/lang--en/index.htm)

## 2. Communication products

Title of the document	Date when finalized (MM/YY)	Brief description and hyperlink (if it exists)
JP Launch Event: United Nations supports Albania in strengthening capacities to increase financing for Sustainable Development Goals	Feb-21	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/unicefalbania/posts/2822985764621688;">Website Post</a> <a href="https://www.facebook.com/unicefalbania/posts/2822985764621688;">https://www.facebook.com/unicefalbania/posts/2822985764621688;</a>
Social security and COVID-19: Which measures were effective in protecting workers?	Mar-21	<a href="#">Web Article</a>
Project brief	Aug-21	<a href="#">Project brief</a>
ILO presented the work done on assessing the fiscal space for social protection in Albania in a recent global webinar co-hosted by UNICEF and ILO on Financing Social Sectors for Vulnerable Groups	Sep-21	Can be found in <a href="#">Digital Library</a>
UNDP presented lessons learned at the Joint SDG Fund Webinar 'Europe & Central Asia Knowledge Sharing Webinar Component 1 – SDG Financing Portfolio'	Nov-21	Can be found in <a href="#">Digital Library</a>
Advocating with the Parliamentary Committee on Health and Social Issues about budgeting for children and youth	Nov-21	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/unicefalbania/posts/3030102327243363">https://www.facebook.com/unicefalbania/posts/3030102327243363</a>
Awareness raising on social protection as a fundamental right	Jan-22	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/unicefalbania/posts/3068402843413311;">https://www.facebook.com/unicefalbania/posts/3068402843413311;</a> <a href="https://www.facebook.com/unicefalbania/posts/3067623970157865;">https://www.facebook.com/unicefalbania/posts/3067623970157865;</a> <a href="https://www.facebook.com/unicefalbania/posts/3071184536468475;">https://www.facebook.com/unicefalbania/posts/3071184536468475;</a> <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/CYWDk7hqzMy/">https://www.instagram.com/p/CYWDk7hqzMy/;</a> <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/CYWDhjkIH4k/">https://www.instagram.com/p/CYWDhjkIH4k/;</a> <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/CYi4zwBIsgI/">https://www.instagram.com/p/CYi4zwBIsgI/</a>
Awareness raising on social protection and social care decentralization, highlighting the case of the Municipality of Puka	Jan-22	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W8-dCzhRGow&amp;t=6s;">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W8-dCzhRGow&amp;t=6s;</a> <a href="https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=464202392154841;">https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=464202392154841;</a> <a href="https://www.instagram.com/tv/CY82ZYHI4pj/">https://www.instagram.com/tv/CY82ZYHI4pj/</a>
Awareness raising on social protection and social care decentralization, highlighting the case of the Municipality of Tirana	Jan-22	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B9yXe9qybzE;">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B9yXe9qybzE;</a> <a href="https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1889723154532856;">https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1889723154532856;</a> <a href="https://www.instagram.com/tv/CZG-fOV0TK8/">https://www.instagram.com/tv/CZG-fOV0TK8/</a>
Presentation of Results of Regional Survey Loneliness and Social Isolation Among Older People in the Eastern Europe and Central Asia Region	Jan-22	<a href="#">Web Article</a>

Consultations for improving financing of social care services at the local level	Mar-22	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/unicefalbania/posts/3125348971052031">https://www.facebook.com/unicefalbania/posts/3125348971052031</a>
INFF kick off meeting	Mar-22	<a href="#">Press Release</a>
		<a href="https://twitter.com/UN_Albania/status/1509473030338191364?s=20&amp;t=oZmWPF-Fpif8EEqfGfGas9g">https://twitter.com/UN_Albania/status/1509473030338191364?s=20&amp;t=oZmWPF-Fpif8EEqfGfGas9g</a>
		1/4: <a href="https://twitter.com/UNDPAlbania/status/1509472697574739980">https://twitter.com/UNDPAlbania/status/1509472697574739980</a>
		2/4: <a href="https://twitter.com/UNDPAlbania/status/1509474437455876106">https://twitter.com/UNDPAlbania/status/1509474437455876106</a>
		3/4: <a href="https://twitter.com/UNDPAlbania/status/1509475330205102084">https://twitter.com/UNDPAlbania/status/1509475330205102084</a>
4/4: <a href="https://twitter.com/UNDPAlbania/status/1509477150197436417">https://twitter.com/UNDPAlbania/status/1509477150197436417</a>		
MPs retreat on 2030 Agenda and SDG-related budgeting and budget scrutiny	May-22	<p><a href="#">UNDP post</a>;</p> <p>MPs posts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Post 1</a>; <a href="#">Post 2</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Post 3</a>; <a href="#">Post 4</a></li> </ul>
Albania faces a growing need of long-term care for its elderly population	Jun-22	<a href="#">Web Article</a>
Discussion of the Social Care Plan of the Municipality of Tirana	Jul-22	<p><a href="https://www.linkedin.com/posts/unicef-albania_unicefalbania-jointsdgfund-socialprotection-activity-6949675056750866432-eAje/?utm_source=share&amp;utm_medium=member_desktop">https://www.linkedin.com/posts/unicef-albania_unicefalbania-jointsdgfund-socialprotection-activity-6949675056750866432-eAje/?utm_source=share&amp;utm_medium=member_desktop</a>;</p> <p><a href="https://www.facebook.com/unicefalbania/posts/3197788660474728">https://www.facebook.com/unicefalbania/posts/3197788660474728</a></p>
INFF DFA validation workshops	Oct-22	<a href="#">Post 1/2</a> and <a href="#">Post 2/2</a>
Republic of Albania and ILO sign new cooperation agreement to pave the way for delivering decent work	Jan-23	<p><a href="#">Web Article</a></p> <p>The Decent Work Country Programme is indirectly linked, yet still relevant to the JP as it underpins the entire labour and social protection efforts in the country.</p>
The reform of the social assistance programme in Albania - improvements and future challenges	May-23	<a href="#">Web Article</a>
Presentation of recommendations on Early Childhood Development (ECD) financing	May-23	<p><a href="https://www.facebook.com/unicefalbania/posts/3435546076698984">https://www.facebook.com/unicefalbania/posts/3435546076698984</a>;</p> <p><a href="#">LinkedIn post</a></p>
JP closing event: From Funding to Financing SDGs: UN's 'Support to SDG Financing' Programme' Makes Strides Towards Sustainable Development in Albania	Jun-23	Article: <a href="https://www.undp.org/albania/press-releases/funding-financing-sdgs-uns-support-sdg-financing-programme-makes-strides-towards-sustainable-development-albania">https://www.undp.org/albania/press-releases/funding-financing-sdgs-uns-support-sdg-financing-programme-makes-strides-towards-sustainable-development-albania</a>
		LinkedIn: <a href="https://www.linkedin.com/posts/undp-albania-6436b2170_albania-undp-unicef-activity-7079011252693254144-k4Gm?utm_source=share&amp;utm_medium=member_desktop">https://www.linkedin.com/posts/undp-albania-6436b2170_albania-undp-unicef-activity-7079011252693254144-k4Gm?utm_source=share&amp;utm_medium=member_desktop</a> ;
		<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/posts/undp-albania-6436b2170_albania-undp-unicef-activity-7079377319491977216-NHDs?utm_source=share&amp;utm_medium=member_desktop">https://www.linkedin.com/posts/undp-albania-6436b2170_albania-undp-unicef-activity-7079377319491977216-NHDs?utm_source=share&amp;utm_medium=member_desktop</a> ;
		<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7080161222909698048/">https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7080161222909698048/</a> ;
Twitter: <a href="https://twitter.com/UN_Albania/status/1673254858311254016">https://twitter.com/UN_Albania/status/1673254858311254016</a> ;		
<a href="https://twitter.com/FionaMcCluney/status/1673624485012881409">https://twitter.com/FionaMcCluney/status/1673624485012881409</a>		
<b>Coverage in Local Media Outlets</b>		
Regarding Long-term care for the elderly	May-22	<a href="#">Shqipëria po plaket me shpejtësi (panorama.com.al)</a>
	Jun-22	<a href="#">ILO jep "alarmin": 91 mijë të moshuar kanë nevojë për kujdes afatgjatë, vetëm 1,6% e tyre përfitojnë (monitor.al)</a>
	Jul-22	<a href="#">Raporti: Të moshuarit lihen në harresë, vetëm 1.6% marrin shërbime sociale - Citizens Channel (citizens-channel.com)</a>

	Jul-22	<a href="#">Raporti ndërkombëtar ngre alarmin: 91 mijë të moshuar në Shqipëri kanë nevojë për kujdes afatgjatë (abcnews.al)</a>
	Jul-22	<a href="#">Shtëpitë e kujdesit në Shqipëri mund të strehojnë 0.78 për qind e të moshuarve (gazetasi.al)</a>
	2022	<a href="#">91 mijë të moshuar në Shqipëri kanë nevojë për kujdes afatgjatë, vetëm 1.6 për qind e tyre përfitojnë (telegrafi.com)</a>
	Oct-22	<a href="#">Thellohet deficit i skemës së pensioneve, 90 mijë të moshuar në emergjencë për kujdes - Ekonomi (pamfleti.net)</a>
Regarding Fiscal Space Expansion	Apr-23	<a href="#">OKB propozon 8 masa fiskale për Shqipërinë për të ardhura më të larta ndaj pensionistëve dhe të varfërve (Shqiptarja.com)</a>
Regarding the Economic Assistance Programme	Jun-23	<a href="#">Instrumenti i ndihmës ekonomike jo efektiv në zbutjen e varfërisë, 5 problematikat (monitor.al)</a>
		<a href="#">Ndihma ekonomike nuk shmang varfërinë, OKB-ja vlerëson se lë shumë familje në harresë (joq-albania.com)</a>

<sup>i</sup> [The World Bank Group. \(2021, September\). Strengthening the Sustainability of Albania's Growth Model. WBG Diagnostics](#)

<sup>ii</sup> Ibid.

<sup>iii</sup> EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions survey, 2021

<sup>iv</sup> For more details: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/444445/unemployment-rate-in-albania/>

<sup>v</sup> [The World Bank Group. \(2021, September\). Strengthening the Sustainability of Albania's Growth Model. WBG Diagnostics](#)

<sup>vi</sup> [Budget Analysis of SDG Related Spending in Albania: 2015-2019](#)

<sup>vii</sup> ILO. (2023). [Reform of the economic assistance programme in Albania](#). Listed in Annex 2.