

**UNDP**  
**ART GOLD Albania 2 Programme**

**Report on the conducted activities and achievements 2009 - 2010**

**Introduction**

ART GOLD Albania is part of UNDP's ART Initiative (ARTiculation of territorial and thematic networks of human development cooperation), intended to promote cooperation framework programmes for governance and local development among decentralized government authorities.

The Framework Programme UNDP ART GOLD Albania 2 (hereinafter referred to as AGA 2) is the successor of a previous UNDP ART GOLD Albania Phase 1 programme, active from September 2006 to March 2008, which in turn was implemented as the continuity of the IFAD/UNOPS PASARP programme, operating from July 1999 to June 2006 in three Albanian regions, Vlora, Durres and Shkodra.

ART GOLD Albania 1 was operational and encouraged local development in three Albanian regions: Vlora, Durres and Shkodra, by providing a framework through which bilateral donors, European regional and city governments, associations, universities, private sector organizations and firms, citizens groups and others were enabled to contribute and support Albanian local governments through decentralised cooperation. ART GOLD Albania 1 contributed to the following main results:

- Enhanced capacities of regional and local governments and other stakeholders of selected Albanian regions in local planning, implementation and monitoring processes.
- Further consolidation of Local Economic Development Agencies in Shkodra (Teuleda), and Vlore (Auleda).
- Linkages and facilitation of partnerships among Albanian and Italian's regional and local authorities and communities for initiating development projects oriented towards implementing local good practices, fostering cultural dialogue and European integration of Albania.
- Address a strategy vacuum by putting in place "mechanisms for a multi-level strategy that simultaneously implements actions at the local, national and international levels in support of the process of localizing the MDGs".
- Enhanced capacities of key regional actors in selected regions by defining an effective and agreed upon *modus operandi* for decentralised cooperation linking Italian regions with the Albanian target ones.

AGA 2, in line with its predecessor programmes, intends to support the Albanian Government in implementing its national policies and strategies to achieve the Millennium Development Goals through promoting a territorial development approach at the level of regional (qark) and municipal administrations, in accordance with the Strategy for Decentralization and Local Governance of the Ministry of Interior and Regional Development Cross-Cutting Strategy of the Ministry of Economy and Trade.

At the regional level, the programme supports the elaboration of County Strategic Plans, promoting the active role of public and private social actors in development processes as well as of the donors, including European Regions and Local Communities.

In addition, AGA 2 actively promotes, at central and local level, other sectoral national development policies and strategies, in particular those related to Health, Education and Environment. To achieve these goals, **AGA 2 makes use and encourages the participation of different local, national and international actors, creating and supporting innovative partnerships within a global system of cooperation.**

AGA 2 is funded through a contribution of the Italian Government made available at the end of 2007 as part of assistance for ART GOLD Balkans Initiative, which included support for Serbia and Albania for a total financing of 5 million Euros. Subsequently, a portion of funding has been diverted by Italy to the ART GOLD Lebanon programme and the remaining amount was focused on ART GOLD Albania. As a result, AGA 2 succeeded in getting a total financing of US\$ 2,540,000 in 2008.

The programme is implemented jointly by two UN agencies, UNDP and UNOPS. Out of a total of US\$ 2.54 million the programable amount is US\$ 2,291,522, out of which US\$ 1,263,832 is being administered by UNDP and US\$ 997,690 by UNOPS, while US\$ 30,000 is planned for monitoring, internal evaluation and reporting activities and managed directly by UNDP HUB Geneva as the Trust Manager.

As AGA 2 is intended to build upon past results and ensure continuity, the following presents, in a consolidated format, past achievements and current planned activities through a smooth transition.

Programme Objectives	AGA 1 Main Achievements / Results	AGA 2 Progress & Work Plan
Support to policies for decentralization and democratic governance in Albania, encouraging the participation of social actors in the development processes.	An Inter Ministerial Working Group led by the Ministry of Economy, comprising the Ministry of Interior and other ministries, such as the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Environment was established and became operational for the duration of this phase of the project.	Initial coordination meetings are being held in order to revitalise the Inter Ministerial Working Group established on the course of the previous phase. By Autumn 2010 this group has been established and is operational.
	Continuous coordination work were conducted on technical assistance to the Government on the complex activities related to the political and administrative decentralization that takes place in dialogue with EU structures.	A substantial number of coordination activities is continuously taking place throughout the whole project on providing technical assistance to the Government on the complex activities related to the political and administrative decentralization that continues to takes place in dialogue with EU.
	The project, through meetings and workshops as well as through the local economic development agencies (LEDAs), provided direct input in the process of designing the Albanian decentralization structures, in particular in the two regions where the LEDAs are fully functional.	Constant input is being provided and technical support offered on designing the Albanian decentralization structures, in particular in Shkodra and Vlora where LEDAs are operational. By the end of 2010, the mandate and the scope of works for the LEDAs would have been expanded to cover the Regional Development priorities. This process of expansion to Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) reflects the priorities of the government strategies. It is currently being discussed and advanced in consultation also with the central and regional authorities, which too date have shown willingness and commitment to collaborate.
	Local working groups are currently being established in the regions of Shkodra and Vlora, chaired by the local authority consisting of numerous representatives of public, social and private actors that deal with the development planning of their territory.	The local economic development agencies (LEDAs) in the regions of Shkodra and Vlora have organised and coordinated a large number of consultation activities with private, government and other non-government entities within the framework of facilitating the development of regional/country strategic development plans. By summer 2010, the LEDAs (AULEDA and TEULEDA) have publicly launched the process of strategic development plans both regionally and nationally.
		By the end 2010, the consultation process regarding the formulation of strategic plans has been completed in each of the regions, Shkodra and Vlora, and the first drafts are ready. The process is being already used for coordination of initiatives and mobilization of international funds (Europe, Decentralized, Donors).
	Programming processes were enabled and supported as part of AGA 1 resources in order to complete the existing resources for local development actions according to the agreement.	The local government authorities and other stakeholders (private business and social actors as well as NGOs) in Vlora and Shkodra are committed to collaborate in developing the strategic development plans under the leadership of AGA 2 project-supported LEDAs.

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	<p>A number of territorial marketing documents, used for establishing decentralized cooperation partnerships with Italian and other countries' actors were drafted through participatory action.</p>	<p>By autumn 2010, two project initiatives in each of the regions (Vlora and Shkodra) have been identified and started to be implemented in the course of and within the jointly identified priorities of strategic planning.</p> <p>A number of documents are being drafted and designed within the strategic planning process, such as stakeholder maps and project ideas and project concept notes. These have been particularly useful in marketing the potential of the territories with decentralized cooperation partnerships especially with representatives of Italian regions and investors.</p> <p>By the end of 2010, the territorial potential of each of the areas (Shkoder and Vlora) is fully mapped and selected priority chains of production and services provision is marketed nationally and internationally through promotion materials and events.</p>
<p>Support for the achievement of development agreements between Local Albanian Communities, in particular those of Shkodra and Vlora, Regions, Local Authorities and Italian and European social actors.</p>	<p>Development agreements were drafted with 42 actors of decentralized cooperation, including two territorial pacts comprising over 30 municipal authorities:</p> <p><u>Local and regional authorities:</u> Marche, Molise, Puglia, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Tuscany and Umbria regions. Province of Lecce and Cosenza. Municipality of Cerzeto and the Union and the 27 Arberesh municipalities, the Union of Municipalities of Grecia Salentina.</p> <p><u>Other regional actors:</u> Integrated Development Agency of Barletta, "Città del fare" Agency in Naples, Park of the Strait of Tuscany (Arpat), University of Ancona, University of Perugia, University of Chieti, University of Padova, University of Salento Music Project Association of Monfalcone, LegaCoop Puglia, Health Enterprise of Bari, Mediterranean Agronomic Institute (IAM) of Bari.</p> <p>Moreover, collaborations were established with international partners such as UN agencies and programmes and international cooperation agencies (UNDP, GEF, UNDP MedWetCoast, WHO Albania, FAO, IOM, World Bank,</p>	<p>Several representatives of regional and local authorities from Italian regions have already started to show interest and seek the collaboration of AGA 2 and its partner agencies, AULEDA and TEULEDA in Vlora and Shkodra.</p> <p>Such entities include particularly the regions of Marche, Molise, Puglia, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Sardinia and Emilia-Romagna with which the LEDAs have started to sign the first agreements of collaboration and partnership and draft the first joint projects in varying areas of application.</p> <p>Other initiatives such as with the University of Perugia, the University of Ancona and the University of Trieste, etc. are also being processed and will be finalised by the end of 2010.</p> <p>The LEDAs are additionally being supported and encouraged to maintain the successful collaboration established during the initial phase of the project.</p> <p>During the start-up phase of AGA 2 and ongoing, collaboration is being re-established and reinforced also with wider international partners such as varying UN agencies and programmes including UNDP, UNICEF, WHO, ILO, etc. as well as international cooperation agencies such as GTZ, SIDA, SNV, Italian cooperation, Swiss Cooperation.</p> <p>In addition, the project has been in contact and has established excellent collaboration relations with numerous international and local entities and initiatives which operate in the country, particularly in Vlora and Shkodra. Through the strategic planning exercise it is providing and providing a framework of collaboration to all these</p>

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	EDEM/USAID, GTZ, SIDA, SNV).	agencies and bodies. The number of agencies subscribing to this initiative is expected to grow rapidly by the end of 2010.
		<p>An agreement is being signed with the University of Perugia consisting on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- short intensive course for the improvement of Albanian frames of developments organized in the Marche region with the involvement of the regional university which will include guided visits in order to be acquainted with the achievements in this area in the field of democratic governance of development (Marche region funding).</li> <li>- national intensive course in Tirana about the "Democratic governance, decentralization and territorial development programme" for the frames of all the Albanian districts, including the Albanian universities.</li> <li>- intensive course in Umbria about "Programming and management of territorial development in rural areas" for the concerned Albanian actors in collaboration with the University of Perugia and co-funding of Umbria region.</li> <li>- three interactive workshops of high qualification for researchers and lecturers of Albanian universities in the preparation of the two year postgraduate course to specialize in the development frames, related to the process of the establishment of the International School for Human Development.</li> </ul>
	The partnership between Albanian and Italian actors was promoted in the presentation of the EU INTERREG projects, some of which were financed.	The partnership between Albanian and Italian actors is continuously being promoted especially within a series of meetings and events taking place in Albanian organised by the Italian embassy in Tirana and the Italian Cooperation and where AGA2 is participating.
	An event was planned in Albania on "Human Development and Decentralized Cooperation: Albania's experience".	By October 2010, AGA2 is participating in an international event organised in collaboration with the Italian Embassy in Tirana, where the achievements and the potential of the project is presented and promoted to Balkans and Italian partners.
	A scheduled visit by a delegation from Albania to Italy and Europe was planned, with the aim of promoting the establishment of additional agreements for development. It is foreseen that the visit to Italy will end with an event at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.	Albanian and other specialists of local development and other areas took part, supported by AGA 2, in a number of conferences and workshops in Italy and Spain, focusing on the health and higher education sectors, as well as on the strategic development of local agencies. This is paving the way for the implementation of larger scale activities in the country and the undertaking of several agreements within 2010.
Promote the dissemination of innovations that	The new innovative technique "Mother Kangaroo" for underweight newborn babies, previously established and distributed in Albania within the framework of the IDEASS	The 'Mother Kangaroo' Care project innovation in Albania, especially its implementation in Tirana and Shkodra was promoted in collaboration with the ART GOLD project of Sri Lanka and the

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<p>improve the policies and the quality of development pursuant to the objectives of the UN Millennium Platform.</p>	<p>Programme, by a UNOPS initiative under the coordination of the Department of Paediatrics in Tirana Hospital, was replicated in the hospital of Shkodra with the support of Meyer Hospital in Florence and the region of Tuscany.</p>	<p>Ministry of Health of Sri Lanka. For this purpose, a study mission on the exchange on 'Mother Kangaroo' methodologies was organised for three representatives of the the Sri Lankan health authorities took place in Albania, hosted by AGA2.</p>
	<p>The use of innovative practices in the field of mental health started with activities of humanization in the Psychiatric Hospital of Vlora, the realization of four family homes for former patients and hospitalized patients, inclusion of patients in social activities, including local activities in Shkodra and support was given to the Ministry of Health for its reform policies in the field of mental health.</p> <p>A permanent Coordination Committee on Mental Health was established, comprised of the Director of Mental Health Department of the Ministry of Health, the President of the Balkan Stability Pact for Mental Health and the Head of Health Services in Tirana, the Director of Psychiatric Hospital of Vlora, the manager of the Mental Health Services of Vlora, and the representative of WHO Albania for mental health.</p> <p>All activities were carried out with support from the Region of Puglia and Friuli Venezia Giulia.</p>	<p>The innovative practices in the field of mental health, especially those undertaken in collaboration with the Psychiatric Hospital of Vlora consisting of the family homes for former and hospitalized patients and their inclusion in social activities have continued to be promoted and find recognition and acceptance at both local and central levels.</p> <p>Currently AGA2 is coordinating the expansion of such initiatives and as well as its enrichment with other social rehabilitation components such as greenhouses heated by solar panels for the patients, through involvement of the Italian regions of Sardinia, Molise and Reggio Emilia. By the end of 2010 it is expected that these initiative are up and running.</p>
	<p>Activities of phyto-purification of water were carried out: pilot purifying tanks were built in a school in Narta (Vlore), environmental education activities were conducted, the Ministry of Environment was supported in the national coverage of this ecological purification methodology. Activities were conducted in support of the Tuscany Region and the Environmental Protection Agency of Tuscany (ARPAT). Technical assistance was provided to the Ministry of Environment on strategies for the eco-treatment of water, which resulted in consideration of Phytodepuration as a strategic priority from the Albanian Council of Ministers, for the treatment of wastewater from small and medium-sized local communities throughout the country.</p>	
<p>Awareness raising activities, planning and pilot actions for the promotion of sustainable tourism were carried out in Shkodër and Vlorë, in collaboration with the Marche Region, Federparchi and Parks Company Consortium. A work group was established, comprised of: The Ministry of Tourism, the Ministry of Transportation, the Ministry of Environment, UNDP Albania, UNDP GEF and UNDP ART GOLD Programmes, World Bank, Local Economical Development Agency of</p>	<p>Continuous awareness raising activities for the promotion of sustainable tourism are being carried out in Shkodra and Vlora, in collaboration with a number of Italian regions and other local and national actors within the framework of the strategic planning. The LEDAs of Vlora and Shkodra through support and empowerment actions by AGA 2 are playing a substantial role in coordinating these activities.</p>	

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	<p>Shkodra (TEULEDA) and other representatives from international cooperations. A project document for tourism development and the creation of a touristic park in northern Albania was defined and drafted in accordance with the guidelines of the Ministry of Environment and the European Union regulations.</p> <p>The preliminary phase of the "Vlora River" (Vlora Ecological Valley) project was implemented with the involvement of the 8 municipalities of the Valley and numerous social actors; brochures and promotional activities were published for sustainable tourism in the area.</p>	
	<p>Concerts and cultural events were organized in order to increase the value of historical areas of Shkodra and Vlora, by supporting the Strategic Plans in the two Albanian regions, pursuant the agreement with LEDAs in other areas of the country also, supported by "Project Music" Organisation of Friuli Venice Giulia. Many young people were involved and various cultural associations were established. The cultural musical initiatives were realised through the agreements made with Friuli Venice Julia Region (The Department of Culture, Tourism and International Relations), Gorica, Pordenone, Udine, Trieste Regions, Municipality of Medea, Central Europe Initiative CEI, Adriatic-Ionian Initiative, National Italian Committee for the Music CIDIM (Member of CIM-Conseil International de la Musique of Unesco), Gorica's "Cassa di risparmio" Foundation, University of Udine, Jacopo Tomandini Music Conservatory of Udine and "Antonio Vivaldi" Music Institute of Monfalcone.</p>	
	<p>The innovative methodology of Plant Protection Institute from the Albanian Ministry of Agriculture was recognized for the appropriate pesticide control in olive production (109,000 olive trees treated by means of innovative system during 2009). A multilingual brochure was prepared, delivered through the web page of IDEASS Programme and the activities on delivering it were held outside national territory (Morocco, Plant Protection Institute, University of Agadir).</p>	<p>The IDEASS Programme is being supported through identifying Albanian innovations that have to be delivered on international level and by promoting international catalogue's innovations of IDEASS in Albania. These events are made possible due to the involvement and cooperation of Albanian institutions (Universities, Ministries, Research Centres and Institutes, Professional and Cultural Associations).</p> <p>Various informational contributions on innovation promotion events are being presented, published and delivered through the website of IDEASS Programme.</p>

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Assistance in purchase of operational tools for planning and realising the processes of territory's social-economic development that respect environment, based on emphasizing the values of natural, historical and human heritage of territory, being able to favour the involvement of un guaranteed subjects.	Shkodra's LEDA (TEULEDA) was given assistance for the project of Cooperation between Molise Region and Shkodra Region that had the following results: Installation of a laboratory on food safety, fully equipped for milk, oil and wine analysis, according to European standards and establishment of a touristic information and promotion centre for Shkodra lake. Preparation of a touristic guide of the area, by emphasizing the values of echo-touristic itineraries and those of local sources. Within the framework of the project, a course on territory planning was held with the participation of 21 local representatives coming from 6 Balkan countries, apart from representatives of Vlora's LEDA. Its aim was to define cooperation projects in Euro-Atlantic zone.	The Local Economic Development Agencies of Shkodra (TEULEDA) and Vlora (AULEDA) are constantly being supported and empowered to provide technical assistance activities on reaching project funding and financing possibilities for a number of local stakeholders with interest and potential in social-economic development.
		The process of Internationalisation of Local Economic Development was strengthened through experience exchange projects and operational agreements between Albanian Development Agencies of Shkodra (Teuleda) and Vlora (Auleda) and two Italian Agencies.
	Albanian agencies received international technical assistance in order to prepare for participation in international competitions.	International support for Albanian LEDAs was initiated through EURADA (European LEDA Federation) and ILS LEDA (United Nations Programme supporting LEDAs). In accordance with the Albanian Government strategies and the Guidelines of European Union, the two agencies of Vlora and Shkodra are receiving this international technical assistance through ILS/LEDA in order that, by the end of 2010, they have become Regional Agencies of Integrated Development.
	Local Development Agencies of Shkodra and Vlora, in cooperation with the International Programme of ILS/LEDA received support and assistance for participation in 11 projects on border cooperation in Adriatic area, funded by Interreg IIIA Italy-Albania. The aforementioned agencies received support from different international bodies in order to promote Albanian initiatives and agencies as well.	LEDAs of Shkodra and Vlora are continuously receiving from AGA 2 technical assistance in designing and implementing two Regional Strategic Plans on the course of which also on the development and elaboration of preliminary studies related to identification of priority development projects.
	Local Development Agencies of Shkodra and Vlora received technical assistance for conducting a research on the chains of local production in both areas mentioned above.	
Assistance for social, public and private actors in Albania in order to improve the	The following were held in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Albanian Universities and other Albanian factors, and international support as well: - A short, intensive course for improving Albanian development view, organized in the region of Marche with the	- Contacts were established with the Albanian Ministry of Education, in order to set up the Albanian branch of the International School for Human Development and preliminary agreements were defined with the Deputy Minister. - Tree representatives from the Albanian Ministry of Education

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<p>capacities of recognizing, programming and implementing the development processes.</p>	<p>participation of the regional University, during which there will be organized trips around this region in order to become acquainted with the achievements in the field of democratic development (funded by the region of Marche).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- An intensive national course in Tirana on "Democratic Development, and Territorial Development Programming", on the view of all Albanian regions, with the involvement of Albanian universities.</li> <li>- An intensive course in Umbria on "Programming and Administration of Territorial Development in Rural Areas" for those Albanian actors interested in it, in cooperation with the University of Perugia and co-funded by the province of Umbria.</li> <li>- Interaction seminars for higher training of researchers and teachers of Albanian Universities during the preparation period of post graduation Course that lasts two years. They get specialized in development views that are connected with the process of establishing the International School of Human Development.</li> </ul>	<p>participated to the workshop held at the University of Camerino in November 2009, aimed at defining the modality and curricula of the International School for Human Development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A draft agreement with the Perugia University, concerning the Albanian Branch of the International School for Human Development was finalized. The signature of the agreement is scheduled by June 2010.</li> </ul>

