

September 2022

# Social Enterprises as Potential Partners in Development Cooperation Advocacy

## Albania Country Report





This publication was made possible through the financial support of the European Commission (EC), Austrian Development Agency (ADA), Irish Aid, and IBON International through the CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness (CPDE). The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of Partners Albania for Change and Development and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Commission (EC), Austrian Development Agency (ADA), Irish Aid, and IBON International.

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Tirana, Albania 2022

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# Acronyms

ADA	-	Austrian Development Agency
AIDA	-	Albanian Investment Development Agency
AICS	-	Agenzia Italiana per la Cooperazione allo Sviluppo (Italian Agency for Development Cooperation)
CAUSE	-	“Confiscated Assets Used for Social Experimentations” project
CPDE	-	CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness
CSO	-	Civil Society Organization
DCM	-	Decision of the Council of Ministers
DSA	-	Down Syndrome Albania
EC	-	European Commission
EU	-	European Union
EMBRACE	-	“Entrepreneurship Models Building Relations and Creative Economy” project
LLC	-	Limited Liability Company
MoU	-	Memorandum of Understanding
MHSP	-	Ministry of Health and Social Protection in Albania
PA	-	Partners Albania for Change and Development
RISE -ALB	-	“Strengthening of Social Entrepreneurship in Albania” project
RISE Incubator	-	Regional Incubator for Social Enterprises
RYCO	-	Regional Youth Cooperation Office
SE	-	Social Enterprise
TWIST	-	“Towards a new social entrepreneurship model in confiscated assets in Albania” project
UMT	-	Metropolitan Tirana University
UNDP	-	United Nations Development Programme
UN Women	-	The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
WEE	-	Women’s Economic Empowerment
YAPS	-	Youth Albania Professional Services
YSB Balkans	-	Yunus Social Business Balkans

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Context and Objectives

Partners Albania for Change and Development (PA) is an independent Albanian NGO established in 2001, working to support civil society and facilitate inter-sector cooperation in order to strengthen democratic institutions and advance economic development. PA focus is based on four main pillars, namely: Enabling Environment and Sustainable Development of Civil Society; Entrepreneurship and Social Innovation; Philanthropic Activity and Supporting Infrastructure; and Transparent and Accountable Participatory Governance. In regards to the Social Entrepreneurship and Innovation pillar, PA provides its contribution in research and advocacy, in particular related to the legal framework of social enterprises, and it has pioneered the research of social entrepreneurship in Albania, covering issues of sector mapping, understanding its challenges and opportunities in local markets, existing funding and institutional support, the potential for growth and the role of state and non-state actors in social entrepreneurship development. Partners Albania has been part of several research initiatives on social enterprises and social entrepreneurship in the Western Balkans and European level. Its research findings make the basis of advocacy, backed up by participation in diverse networks such as EMES, EUCLID, Balkan Social Enterprise Research Network, Diesis, etc.

The development of the Social Economy and Social Enterprises (SE) sector in Albania is still in its nascent phases, despite efforts put by different stakeholders into working on a common ground to further advance in this regards. In 2016, the Law No. 65/2016 “On Social Enterprises in the Republic of Albania” came into force, followed by several bylaws issued over a three-year period. The legal package is not effectively implemented due to unclear and cumbersome regulations, and the approved public fund in support of social enterprises by the Ministry of Health and Social Protection has not been allocated, marking a missed opportunity for the SEs development in Albania.

The main objective of the country level action research is to contribute to the formulation of a development cooperation advocacy agenda promoting social enterprises (SEs) as key actors in equitable and sustainable development.

The Specific Objectives of the Research are to:

- Identify the key actors in the SE sector who are or could be potentially engaged in development cooperation advocacy;
- Determine the challenges and opportunities for SEs given the context and conditions in their area and specifically related to their country of operation (Albania); and
- Explore strategies and recommendations on how Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and key SE actors could work together to further support and develop the SE sector as a key player in equitable and sustainable development.

## 1.2. Methodology

The applied methodology for the development of the country level action research followed two main phases: desk research and qualitative approach.

During the Desk Research phase, identification of relevant stakeholders that have an impact or are impacted by the social entrepreneurship sector in Albania, categorized in 9 categories based on the instructions provided for the development of the action research, took place. A database of stakeholders was created with specific roles appointed.

Specific evaluation and selection criteria were applied, in order to generate a short-listed pool of key informants.

**These criteria include the following:**

- *Considering the scope and focus on the action research, SEs that have a clear focus on empowerment through provision of employment opportunities, with a special focus on women self-employment or actions directed towards gender-based issues; or stakeholders whose work is focused on promoting Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE);*
- *Stakeholders that directly support SEs through their programs, actions or supporting mechanisms;*
- *Stakeholders that provide financial support through grants, or technical support through mentoring, capacity building and training sessions, for entrepreneurs and start-ups, where SEs are considered as beneficiaries, despite the lack of specific focus or categorization of these mechanisms for SEs.*

During the Qualitative Approach phase, interview was selected as the most relevant instrument to collect information. Stakeholders were group in three categories, namely: Significant SE Leader Representatives and Key Staff; Key Resource Institution Representatives; Network of SEs representatives.

For the first category, Significant SE leaders, 12 stakeholders were identified and contacted to be part of the interview. Out of these, 5 have received the "Social Enterprise" status issued by the Ministry of Health and Social Protection (MHSP), while the rest are social enterprises that operate in the SE sector, identified by other initiatives, mainly implemented by Partners Albania, such as EMBRACE, CAUSE, RISE-ALB, Green Business Competition, etc.

From the second category, Key Resource Institutions, representatives from the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, Minister of State for the Protection of Entrepreneurship, Municipality of Tirana; Experts from the Academia at Metropolitan Tirana University and Polis University; representatives from Financial Institutions (Tirana Bank and Credins Bank), representatives from Capacity development institutions, such as: BC Business Consulting; and representatives of Multilateral development agencies supporting SEs, such as: UN Women and UNDP, were contacted to become part of the research. From this category, a total number of 19 representatives were contacted.

From the third category, Network of SEs representatives, Yunus Social Business Balkans as the implementing organization of the RISE Incubator activities in Albania was contacted to become part of the research.

Interviews were conducted in the premises of the representatives of selected institutions/entities, and online, using the Zoom platform. Their duration was about 45 minutes to 1 hour (with the SE leaders). Recorded materials were transcript and data was processed for further analysis. Three of the interviewed SEs were selected as caselets and are included in this country report.

## 1.3. Key stakeholders Engaged in the Action Research

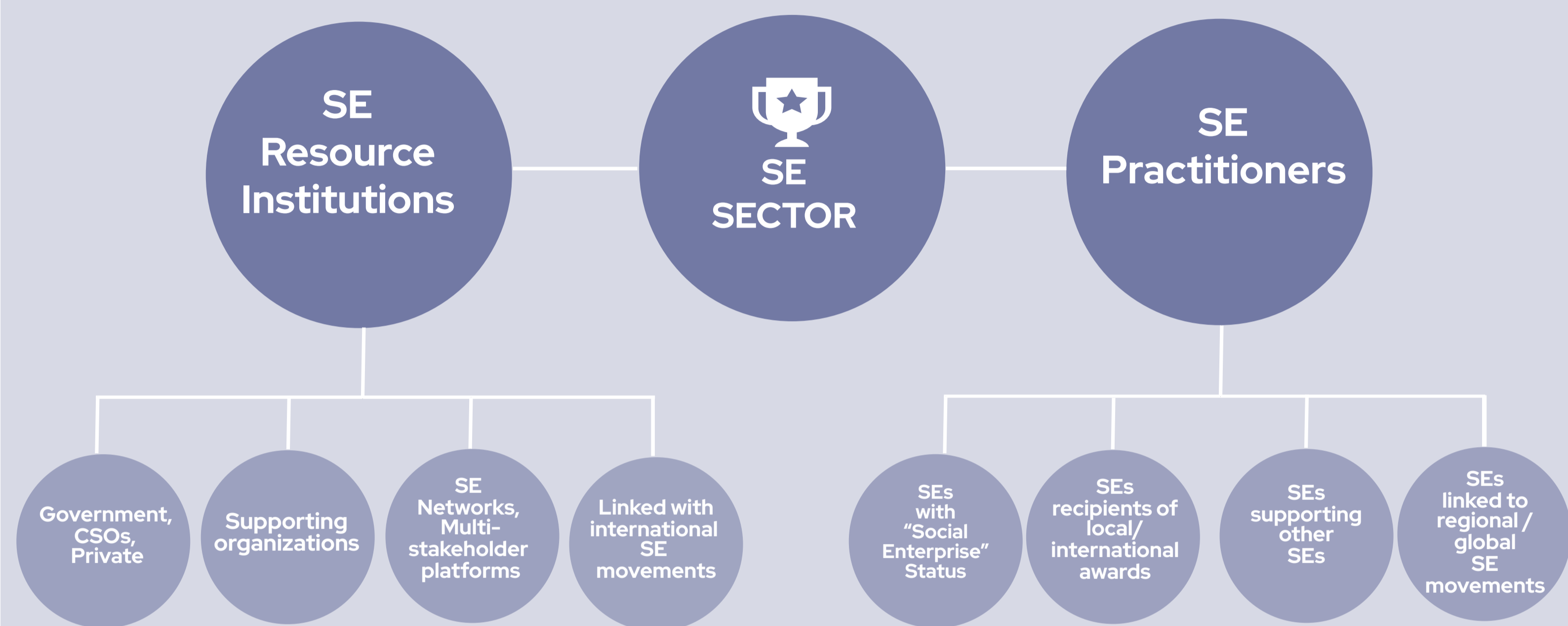


Figure 1: Key Stakeholder Groups of the SE Sector

Type and name of the stakeholders engaged in the action research, based on their category, are presented below:

### Significant SE leaders:

- Klubi Kombëtar i Prindërve të Fëmijëve me Çrregullime të Spektrit Autik (National Club of Parents of Children with Autism Specter Disorders);
- Shoqata shqiptare për edukim, përkujdesje dhe trajnim (Albanian Center for Education Care and Training, ACT-Center)
- Shoqata "Fuqizimi i Grave të Liqenit të Shkodrës" F.G.L.SH (Association "Empowering Women from Shkodra Lake")
- Shoqata Kombëtare për Integrim, Zhvillim dhe Ndihmë për Shtresat në Nevojë (SHKIZH) (National Association for Integration, Development and Assistance of People in Need)
- Linja e Këshillimit për Gra dhe Vajza (LKGV) (Counseling Line for Women and Girls)
- Romix Community Comics
- Mami Care Center – Fondacioni Spitalor i Nënës dhe Fëmijës (Mother and Child Hospital Foundation)
- Te Xhoni Café - Jonathan Center
- Drita Cleaning - Voice of Roma
- App Tour - Vjosa Explorer
- Made in Prison - Orkidea Organization Tirana
- Qendra Rinore Arka - Code Partners Shkodër (Arka Youth Center)
- Drita Cleaning - Voice of Roma
- App Tour - Vjosa Explorer
- Made in Prison - Orkidea Organization Tirana
- Qendra Rinore Arka - Code Partners Shkodër (Arka Youth Center)



#### Government SE resource institutions:

- Ministry of Health and Social Protection
- Municipality of Tirana: Directorate of Employment
- Municipality of Tirana: Directorate of Strategic Investment and Economic Development
- Municipality of Tirana: Women Empowerment Project, Youth Empowerment Project
- Minister of State for Protection of Entrepreneurship

#### Experts from the academia:

- Metropolitan Tirana University
- Polis University

#### SE finance institutions/organizations:

- Tirana Bank
- Credins Bank

#### SE research, capacity development, or technology providers:

- BC Business Consultancy

#### Multilateral development agencies supporting SEs:

- UN Women
- UNDP

#### Network of SEs or multistakeholder network/platform promoting social entrepreneurship:

- Yunus Social Business Balkans

#### Regional or global SEs or SE resource institutions based in the covered countries:

- RISE - Regional Incubator for Social Entrepreneurs, at the regional level.

## 1.4. Key Research Questions per Stakeholder

For each stakeholder, specific questions were asked during the interview, based on the category that the stakeholder represented. There are three types of questionnaires developed, namely: Questionnaire for the 'Significant SE Leader Representatives and Key Staff', questionnaire for the 'Key Resource Institution Representatives', and questionnaire for the 'Network of SEs Representatives'. Each questionnaire is presented in Annex 1.

Questions were grouped based on their scope, as follows: (i) questions addressing the background of the stakeholder; (ii) questions addressing the key stakeholders engaged in the SE sector; (iii) questions addressing the challenges and opportunities faced by SEs; and (iv) questions addressing opportunities for collaboration among different stakeholders of the SE sector and offering of strategies and recommendations.

## 1.5. Research Participants

Despite the engagement of a variety of stakeholders that are active in the SE sector and the support provided to the Social Enterprises that were invited to participate in the study, consent to become part of the survey and research was received by almost 60% of stakeholders.

From the first category “**Significant SE Practitioners/Leaders**”, the participation rate is 50%. Six SE leaders, out of 12 invited participated in the research. The participants from this category are:

(i)

Two SEs that have been granted the “Social Enterprise” status from the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, namely:

- *Klubi Kombëtar i Prindërve të Fëmijëve me Çrregullime të Spektrit Autik (National Club of Parents of Children with Autism Specter Disorders);*
- *Shoqata "Fuqizimi i Grave të Liqenit të Shkodrës" F.G.L.SH (Association "Empowering Women from Shkodra Lake")*

## SIGNIFICANT SE LEADERS

### SEs with SE Status:

- *Klubi Kombëtar i Prindërve të Femijëve me ÇSA (National Club of Parents and Children with Autism Specter);*
- *Shoqata "Fuqizimi i Grave të Liqenit të Shkodrës" F.G.L.SH (Empowering Women from Shkodra Lake);*

## (ii)

Four SEs that have been awarded, supported or received grants from different supporting mechanisms operating in Albania, namely:

- *Romix Community Toys – SE that has received support from the Municipality of Tirana, from the “Start Up City” event organized by Metropolitan Tirana University, and from “Green Business Competition” 2021, grant supporting mechanism implemented by Partners Albania.*
- *Mami Care Center – Fondacioni Spitalor i Nënës dhe Fëmijës (Mother and Child Hospital Foundation) – SE that has received support through the EMBRACE project, implemented by Partners Albania.*
- *Te Xhoni Café - Jonathan Center - SE that has received support through the EMBRACE project, implemented by Partners Albania.*
- *Drita Cleaning - Voice of Roma – SE that has received support through the EMBRACE project, implemented by Partners Albania, and RISE-ALB: Strengthening of Social Entrepreneurship in Albania” implemented by ENGIM Albania*

## SIGNIFICANT SE LEADERS

### SEs recipients of national / international awards

- Rommix Community Comics;
- Mami Care Center – Fondacioni Spitalor i Nënës dhe Fëmijës (Mother and Child Hospital Foundation);
- Te Xhoni Cafè – Jonathan Center;
- Voice of Roma in Albania.

From the category “**Government agencies, CSOs and private entities**”, the participation rate is 50%. Three institutional representatives participated in the research, out of six invited. The participants from this category are:

(i)

The Minister of State for Protection of Entrepreneurship – being the institution responsible for the development of entrepreneurship.

(ii)

The Directorate of Employment and the Directorate of Strategic Investment and Economic Development at the Municipality of Tirana.

## SE RESOURCE INSTITUTIONS

### Government SE Resource Institutions:

- Minister of State for Protection of Entrepreneurship;
- Municipality of Tirana.

From the category “**Supporting Organizations**”, which includes organizations that undertake support mechanisms or that enable the SEs to effectively fulfill their mission through the provision of financial, research, capacity building, advocacy support, etc., the participation rate is 50%. Four organizations’ representatives participated in the research, out of eight invited (engaged). The participants from this category are:

(i)

Metropolitan Tirana University (UMT) – in collaboration with its Metro Research center, and as part of the activities dedicated to the MetSInc Social Incubator, has designed the “Social Entrepreneurship Courses”, and is implementing it for the second year in a row. It involves online lessons, training sessions, videos, practical activities, workshops and boot-camps for all interested parties. At the same time, “Start Up City” event is organized every year and a prize for “Best Social Entrepreneur” was awarded in this year’s edition.

(ii)

Tirana Bank – financial banking institution, which has put an emphasis on the Corporate Social Responsibility and this year has also provided financial support to the winners of the “Green Business Competition” 2022 in Albania.

(iii)

Credins Bank - financial banking institution, which has turned into a reliable partner and sponsor of the “Green Business Competition” in Albania over the years, financially supporting social enterprises participating in the competition.

(iv)

BC Business Consultancy – a business consultancy & digital marketing agency, providing capacity building, technical support and mentoring for enterprises and startups during their phases of operation. The agency has established collaboration opportunities with UMT and other institutions, in order to support SEs.

## SE RESOURCE INSTITUTIONS

### Supporting Organizations:

- Metropolitan Tirana University;
- Tirana Bank;
- Credins Bank;
- BC Business Consultancy

From the category “**SE Networks or Multi-stakeholder platforms**” the participation rate is 100%, meaning that both institutions that were invited to participate (engaged) in the survey, participated. The participants from this category are:

(i)

Yunus Social Business Incubator - YSB Balkans aims to equip social and young entrepreneurs with the knowledge, skills and tools to design, test, build and grow entrepreneurship initiatives that have the potential to create positive social impact for the society in WB6 countries

(ii)

RISE Regional Incubator for Social Entrepreneurs – is a regional program supported by RYCO in Albania, which has established local structures in the Western Balkan to enhance youth social entrepreneurship. RISE has created a regional network of “Risers”, young social entrepreneurs, and supports them in making their ideas a reality.

## SE RESOURCE INSTITUTIONS

### SE Networks, Multi-stakeholder platforms:

- Yunus Social Business Balkans
- RISE – Regional Incubator for Social Entrepreneurs

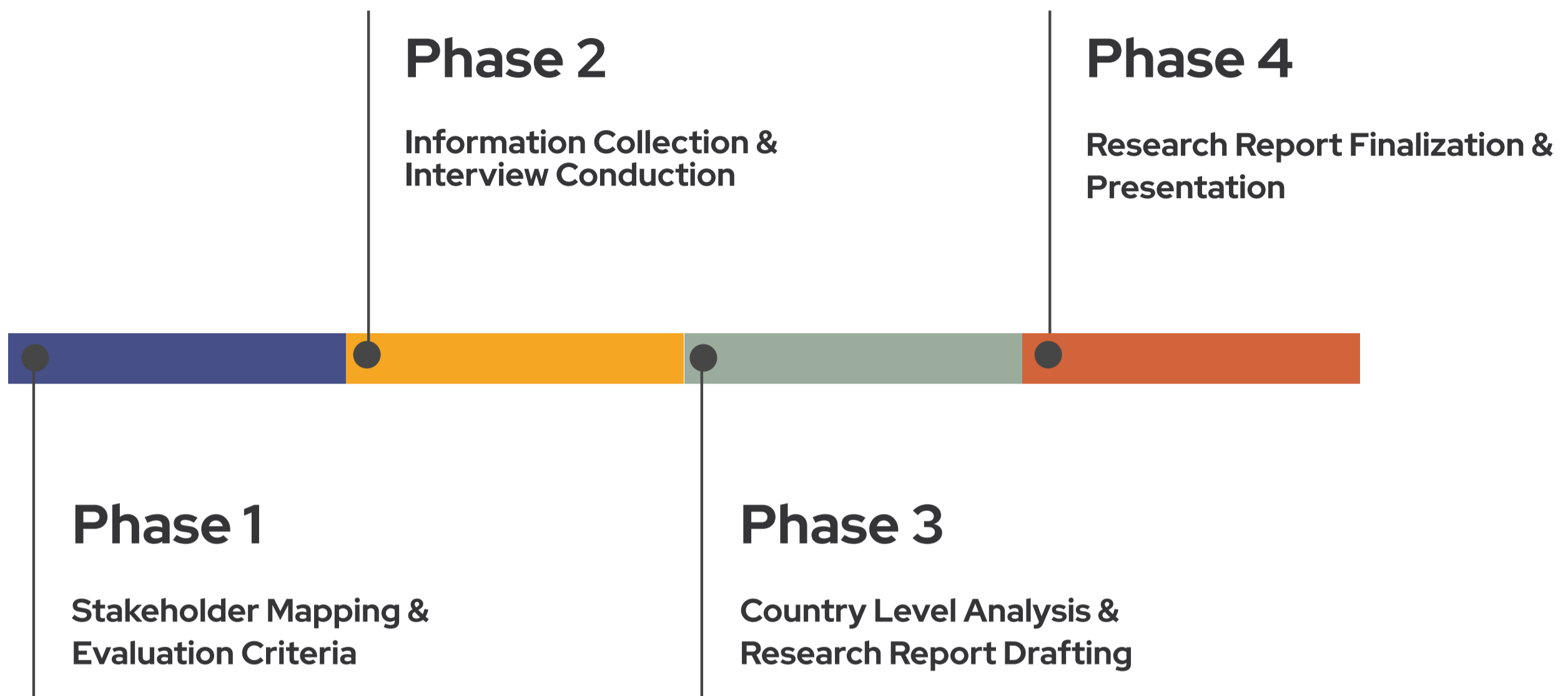
## 1.6. Limitations of the Research

One of the limitations of the research can be attributed to the reluctance of the engaged stakeholders to participate in the data collection process. Despite extending the invitation to participate and contribute to the research to 30 stakeholders, whose functional responsibility is related to the SE sector, have either an active role in the SE sector or are influenced by SEs, only 15 stakeholders responded positively and eventually participated in the study.

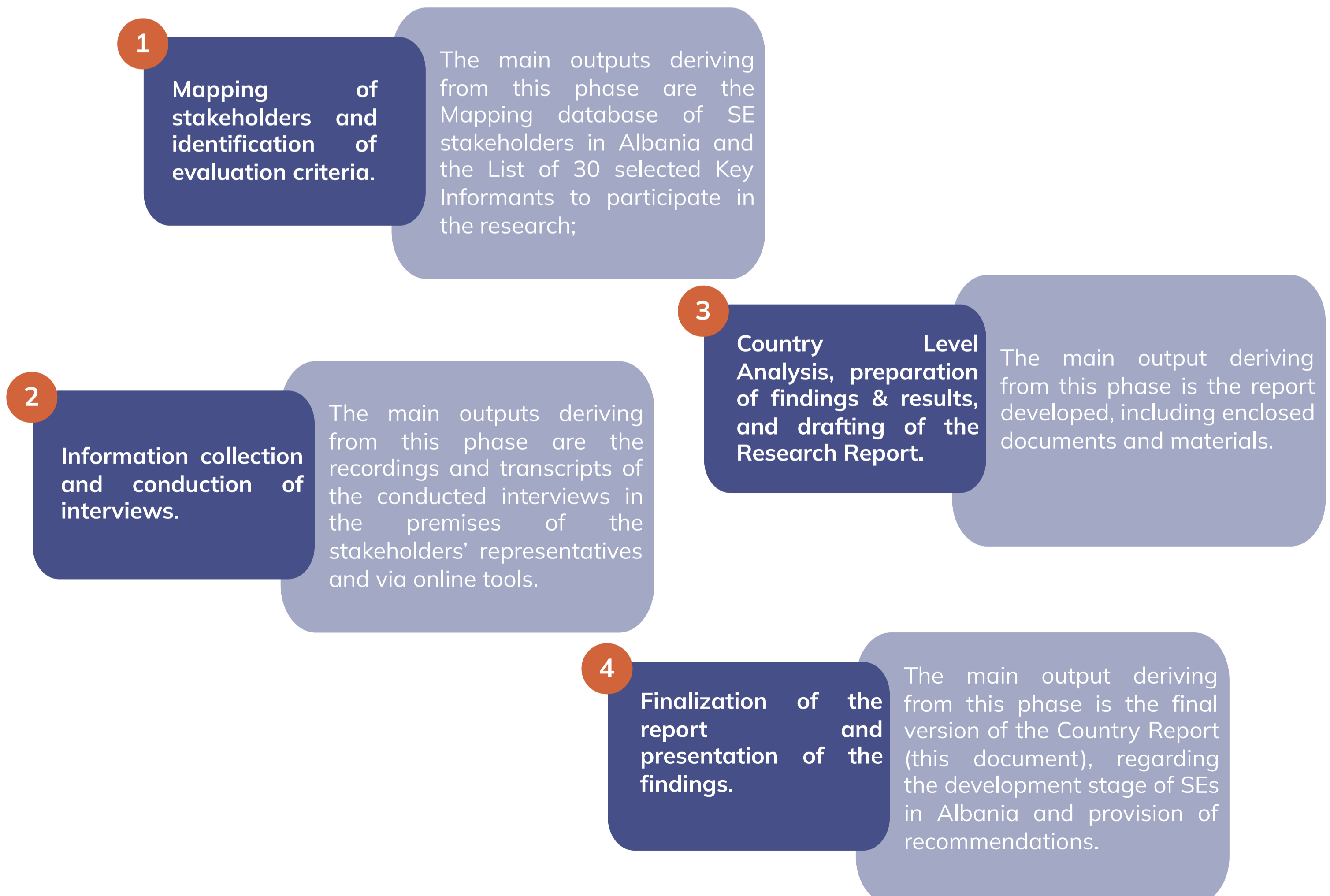
In the frame of this research, the assumption has been made that questions related to the groups to which SEs offer their products or services, including the poor, have a wider extension to other vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, like: women, marginalized groups, the categories in need, people with disabilities, and the Roma and Egyptian community.



## 1.7. Timeframe and Output



Contributing to the overall objective of the research in the formulation of a cooperation advocacy agenda promoting SEs as key actors in equitable and sustainable development, four main phases were identified for the conduction of the research:



# 2. Findings and Analysis

## 2.1. History and Context of SEs in Albania

The Social Entrepreneurship sector in Albania is still in its initial phase, while there are still many un-clarities related to the functioning of the social enterprises. The first form of the Social Enterprise in Albania can be considered the Cooperative type. Cooperatives were formed during the communist period, where land was expropriated from groups of farmers who were forced into cooperative working to continue their agricultural production and husbandry. In this form of organization, farmers had no choice on production and cooperative members had no ownership rights to capital, production equipment, machinery or their products. The state owned all land and properties that had been privately owned before the communist regime. Workers only 'owned' their manual labour, which was poorly paid (Partners Albania for Change and Development, 2019). The negative perception regarding cooperatives are still present in Albania, despite the change of their functioning since then and the political transition to democracy in 1992. Furthermore, the cooperatives' activity is linked entirely to the agricultural production by the general public.

But since then, different types of social enterprises have emerged in Albania. The first initiatives were established from the non-profit sector, triggered and supported by foreign investment (Partners Albania 2013). Despite the fact that most social enterprises have started their activity by registering as non-for-profit organizations, the eco-system comprises also other legal forms such as, for-profit entities. Most of social enterprises recently established have chosen for-profit legal form to register their entity, considering that this form is considered as the most convenient form of registration to operate as social enterprise due to the flexibility in terms of the type of economic activities conducted and less operational barriers compared to the other legal forms. NPOs, which still constitute the vast majority of Albanian social enterprises, focus on social service delivery and inclusion that combat rising social exclusion and compensate for gaps in public agency service delivery. Social enterprises provide services to disadvantaged groups including people with physical disadvantages and disabilities, people with mental health disorders, children with special needs, woman and girls who are victims of trafficking, etc.

In 2016, the Law No. 65 "on Social Enterprises" was approved by the Albanian Parliament, which would enable the support and development of the social enterprises sector in Albania. Many aspects are still not covered by the law and there has been a public discussion about the extension and coverage of this law, considering that according to it, only Non-profit organizations (NPOs) are recognized as a legal form entitled to benefit the Social Enterprise status, excluding all the other forms of organizations, such as limited liability companies (LLCs) and agricultural cooperatives. The law was followed by the approval of the DCM "For the Establishment of the Fund for Support of Social Enterprises and Support Forms by Subsidiaries for Social Enterprises", according to which a fund of 249,760,000 ALL was set for the period of 2019-2021, but was not awarded to any of the SEs.

One of the first organizations that meet the EU operational definition of a Social Enterprise is Youth Albania Professional Services (YAPS)[1]. YAPS was established in 2000 by a group of donors and businesses, which are also board members of the SE. YAPS fulfills its mission by integrating marginalized groups into the labour market, as it employs people from the Roma community, orphans, unemployed women and youths, ex-prisoners and people with physical disabilities. The foundation offers mail delivery and cleaning services mainly to its board members and to other corporations, hospitals and embassies. YAPS started by providing 600 services per month and today has reached nearly 100,000 per month. It operates in Tirana and its suburban areas (Partners Albania for Change and Development, 2019).

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[1] YAPS official web site: [www.yaps.al](http://www.yaps.al)

## "Te Xhoni" Café

"Te Xhoni" Café is a social enterprise established by Jonathan Center, an NGO established in 2011 with a mission to enable children with Down Syndrome for an independent life and to integrate them into the Albanian society with full rights through specialized therapies.[2]

Te Xhoni Café was launched on the global day of Down Syndrome (DS), on 21 March 2017. It is place where youngsters with Down Syndrome could attend life-skill courses, and an environment where parents of the children could spend time with one another while their children attend therapy sessions. It also serves as a place that contributes towards raising awareness on the potential of youngsters with Down Syndrome to be independent and be employed, and to generate revenue that would support the main activity of the organization in support of the DSA community. The initial invested capital in "Te Xhoni" Café was in the amount of 10,000 Euro, and it was further supported by the grant awarded by EMBRACE project[3] implemented by Partners Albania, in the amount of 21,134 Euro[4].

### Description of SE

The SE was established in the premises of the organization. It is established as a place for people to organize different kind of activities. It is positioned in an accessible area, with a cozy outdoor and indoor structure. The main target group of the SE are parents of the DSA community, that benefit from the trainings offered in the center. It serves as a networking and interaction place for all the parents while they bring their children to the center, being considered also as a good spot for support group. The services offered are promoted intensively, resulting in two permanent customers and also in reservations in cases of special occasions and activities, such as birthday parties and karaoke activities. Te Xhoni Café offers employment opportunities to people with the Down Syndrome. Currently, the SE has three employees, working on a part-time and full-time basis, one of which is a young woman with DS.

### Engagement and Support of SE to Poverty Sectors

The main target group of the SE are families of the DSA community, other supporters of the cause, different organizations, mainly NGOs that use the services for the implementation of their own activities and the wider community. The SE has managed to offer employment opportunities to 14 youngsters with DS only in the last year at the café shop serving. The focus was for these youngsters to perform on activities related to the café shop, despite that vacancies for these types of services are sometimes missing. By far, 6 youngsters are engaged in the discipline of kitchen and the café shop.

### Strengths and Limitations of Engagement and Support of SE to Poverty Sectors

The main strength of the SE is the focus on empowerment, not only for youngsters with DS, but also their parents and the community that supports them. Parents are empowered to advocate for their children in the context they are part of. Sometimes there is a daily challenge for every parent and they need to understand that the main challenges are not always solved through the organization.

### Gains and Benefits derived by Poverty Sectors

Despite the direct services offered to the children with DS, such as individual and group therapies and opportunities for inclusion and empowerment through employment opportunities, the parents of the children with DS are also beneficiaries. A considerable effort is being put to raise their awareness about the issues that children with DS are dealing with daily and they also benefit from advocacy initiatives taken by the organization with their involvement to increase inclusion of their children in daily activities at school and other environment.

[2] <https://resourcecentre.al/directory-dir-cso/listing/jonathan-center/>

[3] Fact Sheet of "Te Xhoni Cafe" Social Enterprise, supported through the EMBRACE project:

<file:///C:/ALIS/WORK/Partners%20Albania/CPDE/Empowering%20Jonathan%20Center%20with%20financial%20sustainability%20through%20its%20social%20business%20TE%20XHONI%20CAFE.pdf>

[4] Enterprises supported through the EMBRACE project: <https://partnersalbania.org/embrace-entrepreneurship-models-building-relations-and-creative-economy/>

### **Needed mechanisms to sustain support to poverty sectors**

Institutions, especially public and governmental ones, need to fulfill their functional responsibility. The organization(s) that have a specific objective in this matter, need to become more active and “aggressive” when dealing with the “battle” of making public institutions become more social supportive towards this category (children/youngsters with DS in Albania). Apart from the legal obligation of employing one person with special needs for every 25 employees, this obligation should be applied at every public institution.

A special focus should be also placed on awareness raising and empowerment of families and parents, to become advocates for the special needs and for the community to become more social responsive towards this group.

### **Current engagement with Government, CSOs and other organizations**

The main form of engagement with other stakeholders, especially organizations and public or private institutions, so far has been through promotion and information about the services performed at Te Xhoni Café and the opportunity to explore and make use of these services for the organisation of different activities in the SE’s premises. Focus has been put also on engaging the municipality.

Another form of engagement has been through partnership and collaboration with the National Agency of Employment and Skills, in order to take specific actions needed for the employment of youngsters with DS in Albania. This is an ongoing partnership that has resulted successful during the years.

There is also a collaboration and a signed MoU with two universities, whose scope is for the students in the graduation phase coming from these universities, to conduct their internship in the premises of the organization and the SE.

## 2.2. Key Actors in the SE Sector

The slow speed of the development of the SE sector and the current stage of SE has contributed to an SE ecosystem with a low number of stakeholders and key actors involved, that can actually have an impact on the sector itself. One of the main challenges related to the SE sector identified through this research is the lack of awareness of the key stakeholders, part of the ecosystem. The interviewees were aware of their closest collaborators, but they lacked the information regarding the ecosystem as a whole. Especially related to the identification of Social Enterprises that are successful in the generation of income, or that are successfully operating towards the fulfillment of their mission and stated objectives, the stakeholder representatives engaged in the research, were reluctant to answer due to lack of information. Some of the SEs mentioned during interviews with stakeholders are: “Ejona Café”, “New York Bagels”, “Romix Community Comics”, “NdiHmoni Jeten”, “Frut Alpine”, “Shtëpia e Zotërinjve”, “KeBuono”, “Drita Cleaning”, etc.

### Drita Cleaning

Drita Cleaning started as an initiative of its administrator. After gaining experience working in organizations of the civil society and in a service provider company in Greece, he decided to apply the same practice in Albania, by working with civil society organizations that are supporting the Roma and Egyptian community and offering the cleaning services simultaneously. The SE started through a grant awarded by EMBRACE project, that was used for the machineries and equipment needed for the economic activity of the SE. The first invested capital was 3,500 EUR from personal funds, and the awarded grant in the amount of 6,323 EUR<sup>[5]</sup>. The invested capital now has reached the amount of 20,000 – 22,000 EUR in assets., part of that coming from the economic activity of the SE.

#### Description of SE

Drita Cleaning started operating as a sub-activity of the “Voice of Roma in Albania” association, an NGO active in the services sector, whose main focus is the promotion of social and economic development of the Roma community and their integration in the Albanian society, through the empowerment of young people, increased employment, access to education and health services, housing, etc. Drita Cleaning is a SE operating in the housing services sector, providing general cleaning and carpets’ cleaning services to the community. The clients are mainly public and private institutions, but also the wider community. The SE has started its activity and has its premises in the city of Fier, but it offers its services in the whole country. Services are delivered by full time employees, but there are cases when part-time employers are called on board based on contract services when there is higher demand. The main channels for the promotion of the SE is social media, like Instagram and Facebook.

#### Engagement and Support of SE to Poverty Sectors

The main support provided to the community are the employment services, with the focus on the Roma community members. So far, the SE has employed three young people, two men and a woman, two of them from Roma community, and one with hearing and vision impairment. They were reached through the collaboration with the Labour Office as the three of them came from the unemployed people registered at this office. In case of higher demand from customers, part-time employees are subcontracted, whom undergo

[5] <https://partnersalbania.org/embrace-entrepreneurship-models-building-relations-and-creative-economy/>

training programs before the implementation of the services, such as: customer service, work ethics and conduct, customer satisfaction, etc. There is potential for the employment of up to 10 subcontracted employees, based on the customer demand and season.

Despite the focus being on people coming from the Roma community, Drita Cleaning aims to create synergy and hire people from all communities. The majority of employees are women, especially during the summer season which is also considered as the “cleaning season”, due to the involvement of hotels and accommodation units in the offer.

### **Strengths and Limitations of Engagement and Support of SE to Poverty Sectors**

One of the main strengths of the SE has always been considered the engagement and involvement of the Roma community. This has had a positive effect in the families, especially those in need. At first, the focus of the organization has been on projects related to the education of children from Roma community. With lack of employment being considered as one of the main issues, engaging parents and providing them with employment opportunities, has contributed to increasing the wellbeing of the family, therefore the wellbeing of the children.

### **Gains and Benefits derived by Poverty Sectors**

The main benefit for the Roma community is the provision of stability and decrease in the need to be in continuous move. This community is well-known as a “moving” (nomad) one, always trying to seek asylum in other countries. Having established employment for the community members, has contributed to increasing their stability and lack of willingness to search for asylum abroad.

Another benefit has been the increased capacities and skills of the engaged people through the provision of training and capacity building sessions, prior to implementing the cleaning services. The gained skills can always be applied in different environments.

### **Needed mechanisms to sustain support to poverty sectors**

The main challenge faced by the SE is the lack of profit, and of stable financial opportunities. The small amount generated by the business activity is reused for the operation of the SE. The only sources of financial support by far have been the awarded grants by the EMBRACE project and the RISE-ALB project, used mainly for equipment and machinery.

With the new plans for the expansion of business activity to offering cleaning services for clothes (textiles) and blankets, and the lack of machinery and equipment to support the provision of these services, there is always need for financial supporting mechanisms that are stable and that come from government institutions. In the same time, the collaboration with the Labour Office and other employment agencies is fundamental for the provision of employment opportunities and establishing networks between these agencies and the SE.

### **Current engagement with Government, CSOs and other organizations**

So far, collaboration have been established with CSOs, like Partners Albania and ENGIM, through the grant awarded and provision of support, and with the labour offices for the connection of the labour market with the SE. So far, there have been many attempts to establish communication with local government, which have resulted in no feedback. There is a lack of collaboration with local government despite efforts put in this regards.

The research is supported with additional key stakeholders operating in the social entrepreneurship field in Albania, derived by the work and studies undertaken by Partners Albania. Some, as explained accordingly do not operate specifically in the SE field, but rather target entrepreneurship and its development through the provision of supporting mechanisms. These stakeholders are categorized based on their field of operation and functional responsibility into: Academic and research institutions; Supporting organizations; Government institutions; and Financial institutions.

At the Faculty of Social Sciences in the University of Tirana, there is a specific subject named “Social Business”, where students of the bachelor’s degree of Administration and Social Policy are equipped with principles and the basics of the operation of a social business.

Epoka University has built a program on social business and sustainable systems (ECOSSS) following the Yunus model, and has conducted several scientific conferences in this regard. The program is no longer active, but was dedicated to education, learning, applied research and the development of social businesses.

For the second year in a row, Metropolitan University and Metro Research, as part of the activities dedicated to the MetSInc Social Incubator[6], have designed the “Social Entrepreneurship Courses II”, built on online lessons, training sessions, videos, practical activities, workshops and boot camps for all interested in this regard.

### MetSInc

Metropolitan Social Incubator is the first Social Incubator in Albania and Central and Eastern Europe, included by the Metropolitan University of Tirana and funded by AUF. MetSInc aims to identify and encourage the most talented entrepreneurs and assist them in successful social enterprise and innovative and productive environments.

Faculty of Economy of the University of Tirana, and Tirana Business University, both have dedicated subjects related to entrepreneurship and innovation, but there is not a tailored study programme for social entrepreneurship. Both institutions organize competitions to identify potential start-ups and promising business ideas, some of which contribute to reaching social impact in the community or the targeted groups.

Partners Albania has pioneered research on social economy and social entrepreneurship as part of its Entrepreneurship and Social Innovation programmatic area.

Regional Incubator for Social Entrepreneurs (RISE)[7] is a regional program supported by RYCO, which has established local structures in the Western Balkan to enhance youth social entrepreneurship. It has published a regional study on Social Entrepreneurship for each specific country.

### RISE Incubator

Launched on 1 October 2019, RISE aims to support social entrepreneurship in WB. RISE supports young change-makers in developing their impactful ideas into sustainable social businesses. The local implementation of RISE is ensured by the social incubators located in the region: ARNO (North Macedonia), Nesto Vise, (Bosnia-Herzegovina), Yunus Social Business Balkans (Albania), Smart Kolektiv (Serbia), IEC Technopolis (Montenegro) and Balkan Green Foundation (Kosovo).

[6] Metropolitan Social Incubator web page: <https://umt.edu.al/metsinc->

[7] Regional Incubator for Social Entrepreneurs (RISE) web page: <https://www.risewb.org/>

[8] Dua Partner Invest web page: <https://www.duapartnerinvest.com/homepage>

## Supporting organizations:

They provide either incubator and accelerator infrastructures, or related programs, and some operate as innovation hubs:

Partners Albania for Change and Development, through the implementation of the projects “EMBRACE – Entrepreneurship Models Building Relations and Creative Economy”, “C.A.U.S.E – Confiscated Assets Used for Social Experimentations”, “Green Business Competition”, “TWIST – ToWards a new social entrepreneurShip model in confiscaTed assets in Albania” and the Dua Partner Invest[8] platform, dedicated to the entrepreneurship and social innovation ecosystem, bringing together the three main categories: entrepreneurs, consultants and investors.

### Dua Partner Invest

Is the latest initiative of Partners Albania in the Entrepreneurship and Social Innovation area. It comprises a unique opportunity that enables investors around the world to invest in regional startups generating a social or environmental impact, and innovative startups in the WB region to access expertise from a large community of experts and funding opportunities.

Yunus Social Business Balkans[9], functioning as an NGO that supports entrepreneurs and the development of the inclusive and social entrepreneurship sector in the region.

Growpreneur[10], as an Incubation and Acceleration programme, empowering entrepreneurs to design, test and build viable solutions that solve real customer needs and generate positive impact for the society.

IDEA, with the support provided to innovation business ideas, entrepreneurship initiatives, employment, etc.

Grand Thorton Albania, a company that provides legal and business pro-bono, for newly established green enterprises, collaborating with Partners Albania for the national Green Ideas Competition.

One Telecommunications, company operating in the technology and communication sector, that has financially supported through the years the green start-ups, through the collaboration with Partners Albania in the national Green Ideas competition.

Organisms such as AICS (Agenzia Italiana per la Cooperazione allo Sviluppo), through the implementation of the “RISE-ALB: Strengthening of Social Entrepreneurship in Albania” project.

### YSB Balkans

It first started as a social business development project in Albania in June 2012, and then was formally registered in February 2013 as an NGO.

YSB Balkans supports entrepreneurs and development of the inclusive and social entrepreneurship sector in the region.

Its vision is that entrepreneurs in the WB6 countries are empowered to take bold actions towards bringing significant positive change to the society.

[8]Dua Partner Invest web page: <https://www.duapartnerinvest.com/homepage>

[9] Yunus Social Business Balkans web page: <https://www.balkanimpact.com/about-us>

[10] Growpreneur official website: <https://growpreneur.al/>

[11] UPSHIFT official website: <https://upshift.al/>



There are also other supporting organizations, considered as Facilitators, that support the entrepreneurship ecosystem, including young innovators, entrepreneurs, start-ups, and individuals with business ideas, operating in different fields rather than focusing specifically on social entrepreneurship. Under this category are included: ICTS Lab through the Uplift Albania accelerator program and UPSHIFT[11], Tirana Inc., Student Business Incubator by TBU, Destil Creative Hub, Argjiro Innovation Hub, Barleti Hub, Innohub, Coolab, Oficina, Swisscontact Albania, Talent Garden, Center for Competitiveness Promotion, Protik Innovation Center Albania, Women Founders Albania, Innovation Factory at Polis University, and Triple City.

## UPSHIFT

UPSHIFT is a program that helps teenagers and young adults become innovators and social entrepreneurs by providing experiential learning to understand community challenges. Young people will learn to design and build solutions in the form of products or services and will engage in leading the ventures that enable these projects.

### Government institutions:

The Albanian Investment Development Agency (AIDA) provides grant funding for startups targeting women, youngsters, artisans, etc.

The Ministry for Health and Social Protection, responsible for granting the status of SE, is responsible for the management of the register of SEs that have received the status, and the management of the state fund for these SEs, provisioned by DCM “For the Establishment of the Fund for Support of Social Enterprises and Support Forms by Subsidiaries for Social Enterprises”.

The Minister of State for the Protection of Entrepreneurship, based on the new approved law “For the support and development of Start-ups”, has issued the grant scheme of 10 Million Euro, in support of Start-ups and Facilitators of the entrepreneurship ecosystem, even though as mentioned above, this fund does not target SEs specifically.

At local level, the Municipality of Tirana has launched various calls and implemented different projects that do not target directly SEs, but aim at empowering vulnerable groups and enhancing the provision of employment opportunities, such as “Women Empowerment and Driving Entrepreneurship”[12] project and “Youth Empowerment”[13] project, also in collaboration with different actors.

### Financial institutions:

The European Investment Fund (EIF) and the microfinance institution BESA have created an instrument for the employment and social innovation of small enterprises. During the last years, Credins Bank has supported with seed funding green startups in collaboration with Partners Albania. Tirana Bank recently joined the initiative, supporting the national Green Business Ideas Competition of 2022.

[11] UPSHIFT official website: <https://upshift.al/>

[12] <https://tirana.al/artikull/fuqizimi-i-grave-dhe-nxitja-e-sipermarrjes>

[13] <https://tirana.al/artikull/projekti-i-bashkise-tirane-per-fondin-e-fuqizimit-te-te-rinjve-dhe-te-rejave>

## 2.3. Challenges and opportunities for SEs given the context and conditions in their area/country of operation

### Challenges:

The SE sector is still in its early phases in Albania, with the majority of them established in the last decade. Social Enterprises and the SE stakeholders are facing many challenges, and there is a long way towards reaching sustainability. The main challenges are related to:

**Lack of entrepreneurial management capacities of the Social Entrepreneurs.** So far, the majority of Social Enterprises are established by CSOs, therefore lacking the entrepreneurial mindset to operate in the market. In the majority of the cases these SEs address a specific social issue or create a social impact for their target-group or the community, focusing on the achievement of their social mission, but they miss the coordination between the social mission and the business management approach present in the traditional enterprises.

**Lack of information and collaboration among stakeholders.** As mentioned, the number of stakeholders involved in the ecosystem is still low, and the majority of support comes from the non-profit organizations that have a clear focus on the SE sector development or that support the SEs through various supporting mechanisms. There is a considerable lack of initiatives among stakeholders to collaborate with one another, despite that efforts have been put on creating a public discussion and establishing advocating (ad-hoc) structures, like the one for the law on social enterprises.

**Not enabling legal framework on SEs.** In the Law no. 65/2016 for Social Enterprises, there is a limitation on the definition of the Social Enterprise in Albania. Regardless of operating as Social Enterprises, business entities with a clear focus on the social aspect, can still not take advantage of and given the "Social Enterprise" status under this law. In addition, there is lack of clarity regarding the benefits of gaining the "Social Enterprise" status, approved by MHSP. This un-clarity is followed by lack of supporting mechanisms for the SEs. Entities that are in the process of gaining the "Social Enterprise" status, or the ones that have been awarded this status are still unclear about the benefits offered, or the processes of how to access these benefits.

**Lack of awareness and support from the main target groups of SEs and the wider community of stakeholders.** One of the main challenges faced by SEs is the lack of awareness about the products and services that they offer, and about the target group they are trying to support with the incomes generated from the economic activity of the SE. Sometimes the lack of support comes even from the main target group of the SE, being disadvantaged groups and their families. Bringing them on board to support to activity of the SE is also difficult.

**Challenges with the financial sustainability.** So far, grants awarded from different programs or projects, and donations have served as the main financial support for SEs. Other supporting mechanisms, already existing in other countries, like business angels or venture capitals are missing, while the allocation of financial support from the state (the fund for social enterprises) has proven to be not effective. On this regard, the support should not be limited only to grants, but a clear-cut mid-term plan should be prepared covering the scaling-up of SEs and their operation.

**Lack of a dedicated study programme on Social Entrepreneurship.** Despite initiatives implemented by specific stakeholders, in conduction of research or offering capacity building programs related to the Social Enterprises sector, in Albania there is a lack of an approved tailored study programme at the University level on Social Entrepreneurship. As mentioned, there are several Universities that have included in their curricula some courses on social economy, entrepreneurship and innovation, but not a dedicated program on Social Entrepreneurship.

## Mami Care

***“The aim is to support every mother during and after pregnancy”***

“Mami Care” started operating in 2012, as a fitness, educational and community center for new parents. It was established as a supporting alternative and source of financing to the Mother and Child Hospital Foundation, helping it to continue the work and achievement of its mission towards supporting every mother during and after pregnancy.

Mother and Child Hospital Foundation is an NGO established in Tirana, dedicated to supporting maternity hospitals in Albania to secure the well-being of newborns and women in need by optimizing healthcare, safety and comfort of patients. The foundation’s work has a special focus on the most vulnerable women and their babies.[14] Under the EMBRACE project implemented by Partners Albania, Mami Care was awarded a grant in the amount of 7,000 EUR[15].

### **Description of SE**

“Mami Care” operates as a community center where new and expectant parents meet, participate in prenatal and post-partum classes led by experts, and exchange practices. It offers employment opportunities to five women. Some are also engaged on a voluntary basis, or part-time, dividing the work within the activities of the Foundation or the activities of the SE.

The target groups and the clients at the same time are new mothers and fathers and those expecting to become. The main services offered include: pre-natal classes (courses) and support provided at home after birth called “Mami at home” which is related to helping mothers in their first days after birth; the service and support related to the breast-feeding issue; online training on the related issues. Coping with the Covid-19 pandemic was hard and the Mami Care center had to undergo a makeover process, in order to affront challenges.

### **Engagement and Support of SE to Poverty Sectors**

The income generated from the services offered by Mami Care, are used in support of poor mothers, and those from other disadvantaged groups in the state hospitals, who cannot afford to pay for these necessary services.

[14] <https://fsnf.org/index.html>

[15] <https://partnersalbania.org/embrace-entrepreneurship-models-building-relations-and-creative-economy/>

### **Strengths and Limitations of Engagement and Support of SE to Poverty Sectors**

Mami Care aims to educate mothers and to empower them, offering also a better care for them and their babies. One of the main pillars is the implementation of the online awareness raising activities, considering the lack of a dedicated physical space to offer the classes/courses, thus serving as the main limitation. Another limitation is attributed to the low number of engaged staff and to the lack of additional marketing and promotional activities.

### **Gains and Benefits derived by Poverty Sectors**

The main benefit from the activity is related to mothers having a better understanding of their bodies and health and to the ones of their babies. In addition, they feel appreciated by the way the service is delivered and how they are being taken care of, especially related to different problematics in this stage, such as post-partum stress, and breast-feeding issues.

In the future, MamiCare aims to offer direct targeted services to women coming from poverty sectors as well.

### **Current engagement with Government, CSOs and other organizations**

Collaboration opportunities have been established with businesses that provide goods and products for babies and mothers, in exchange of marketing and promotional activities. Some cases include stakeholders such as BioSafe, Chicco and FiBank.

There have been efforts to establish collaboration with state institutions to enable the extension of the services in active care centers all over the country, taking also into consideration that the services provided by Mami Care, should be provided by state institutions.

## Opportunities

Despite the challenges faced by Social Enterprises and the SE stakeholders, there are some opportunities, mentioned also by interviewees, that to a certain degree facilitate the operation of these SEs, as follows:

**Being considered as a new sector and operating on an unexplored territory**, it is seen as an opportunity for the new established and emerging SEs to be successful in their areas of operation, and to use creative ways and innovative solutions to the problems faced by their target groups.

**Existence of financial supporting mechanisms in different sectors of the economy**, applicable also to SEs. Different financial supporting mechanisms from state and non-state institutions available, do not present any restrictions, nor prohibit SEs to apply and benefit from them. The programmes that are currently in place and being implemented allow existing social enterprises to participate and compete following the same rules as other forms of enterprises.

**Existence of programs and organizations that provide technical support and capacity building**, mainly through the programmes of acceleration, incubation and start-up development. Almost all the participants in the survey mentioned the existence of programmes, initiatives or projects that aim to support entrepreneurship and the ecosystem, which could serve also as an opportunity for social enterprises, considering that there is no differentiation or award criteria in these programmes, in terms of the application of non-exclusion criteria for social enterprises specifically.

**The existence of a public discourse to increase awareness on the potential of SEs**, recognized mainly by CSOs that are oriented toward development of social entrepreneurship activity. Opportunities are seen in the work of the stakeholders of the ecosystem that are contributing to the development of this sector, such as Partners Albania, Yunus Social Business Balkans, or RISE Incubator.

**Opportunities to collaborate and exchange experiences with economies with an advanced stage of the SE sector**, through the implementation of common programs and projects with regional stakeholders. Participants specifically mentioned the Italian ecosystem and activities that could be implemented as part of the cross-border or regional projects and initiatives.

## 2.4. Potentials for CSOs and SE Collaboration for Development Cooperation Advocacy

Considering the state of SEs development in Albania, there is potential for collaboration among SE stakeholders, as a way to further advance in this stage. The majority of SEs have been established as initiatives coming from CSOs, aiming to fulfill their social mission, and as such, this represent an opportunity to engage both sectors (CSOs and SEs), to create a common development cooperation agenda. Some of the steps that need to be considered to fully make use of this potential are:

- Continuous awareness raising, information and knowledge sharing regarding the concepts of social entrepreneurship, the terminology used and the areas of focus. In this way, it would be easier the collaboration among CSOs that are or plan to be engaged in social entrepreneurship activity, as well as between CSOs supporting SEs and other actors from the public and private sector leading to the creation of a strategy to support SEs, including establishment of new supporting mechanisms.
- Identification of the phases of SE development in other countries at European level, best practices and establishment of collaboration opportunities, as a way to replicate those practices in Albania, taking into consideration the areas of economic development in Albania and the development focus in the long-term. Small cases should be incentivized and further supported to reach the desired development stage, through common regional programs, projects and establishment of networking opportunities.
- Meaningful engagement of relevant government institutions in round tables and consultation meetings with SEs and CSOs, especially representatives of the social enterprises, to discuss about the development of the SE sector, legal framework regulating the sector, and on the financial and other supporting mechanisms.
- Establishment and strengthening of existing collaboration between SEs and CSOs with state structures responsible for employment, at local and national level, such as the Regional Employment Offices, and the National Employment Service, and the private sector in order to identify and create empowerment and employment opportunities for marginalized groups.

# 3. Conclusion & Recommendations

## 3.1. Conclusion

Social Economy and Social Enterprises are still new concepts in Albania, which need coordinated efforts and support for all stakeholders involved, and targeted strategies that involve awareness raising, capacity building, educational programs, financial and other supporting mechanisms, to go from their early stages of development to a more advanced sustainable level that produce a greater social impact, the main objective of social enterprises. Establishing of an enabling legal and regulatory framework, developed through a participatory process with the involvement of key players, should be also considered a strategic priority in this regards.

## 3.2. Recommendations

The main strategies and actions that would serve the purpose of addressing the challenges and support the development of the SE sector in Albania are:

**Establishment of an enabling of a the legal and regulatory framework on SEs.** A working group composed of representatives from main stakeholders of the ecosystem such as CSOs, SEs, the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, the Ministry of Finance, and other relevant state agencies, representatives from the private sector, universities, and other relevant stakeholders identified should be established to this regards. The aim should be to discuss deficiencies and propose amendments to the existing legal and regulatory mechanisms to support the operation of all forms of social enterprises, recognizing their diversity, that meet the three main dimensions: social, economic, and participatory governance.

**Creation of a consolidated ecosystem in support of SEs in the country,** through increased collaboration and networking among all stakeholders involved in SE development through, coordinated efforts and clear action plans and strategies. Having public discussions, organized round tables and engaged stakeholders would also serve the purpose of addressing the main challenges and providing solutions to the identified issues.

**Creation of an enabling environment for different state and non-state financial and other supporting mechanisms for CSOs to increase financial sustainability of SEs.** The international experience shows that SEs are highly dependent on public funding, social contracting and other state support, therefore the Albanian government should expand funding opportunities for SEs. Concrete actions should be taken to either mentioning SEs specifically as a beneficiary of the existing supporting mechanisms, like the grant allocated for the development of Startups, or the funds allocated by the Albanian Investment Development Agency, etc., procurement of social services by public institutions at local and central level through SEs, as foreseen in the law on procurement, etc. The design and allocation of the fund for social enterprises should be also revised to be accessible and respond to the needs of SEs. Co-design of services between SEs and government should be also introduced and encouraged. Other non-state financial mechanisms, like business angels, social impact investment, etc. should be promoted and incentivized.

**Design and introducing of an education curriculum on social economy and social entrepreneurship at the university level.** This is a strategic recommendation to motivate and engage youth in innovation and entrepreneurship, through the formal and informal methods of education provided at the universities, targeting potential social entrepreneurs and social innovators. The program could be extended to existing social entrepreneurs to increase their capacities in the management of social enterprises specially on topics related to market research, financial management, risk management, legal framework, integration of technology in services, etc.

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# Annexes

## Annex 1 – Key Stakeholders Engaged in the Action Research

**Matrix 1: Key Stakeholders Engaged in the Action Research**

No./ ID	Category	Type	Key Informant
1	1. Significant SE leaders	SE Status received	Klubi Kombëtar i Prindërve të Femijëve me ÇSA (National Club of Parents and Children with Autism Specter);
2	1. Significant SE leaders	SE Status received	Shoqata shqiptare për edukim, përkujdesje dhe trajnim (ACT-Center) (Albanian Center for Education Care and Training: ACT-Center)
3	1. Significant SE leaders	SE Status received	Shoqata "Fuqizimi i Grave të Liqenit të Shkodrës" F.G.L.SH (Empowering Women from Shkodra Lake)
4	1. Significant SE leaders	SE Status received	Shoqata Kombëtare për Integrim, Zhvillim dhe Ndihmë për Shtresat në Nevojë (SHKIZH) (National for Integration, Development and Assistance of People in Need)
5	1. Significant SE leaders	SE Status received	Linja e Këshillimit për Gra dhe Vajza (LKGV) (Counseling Line for Women and Girls)
6	1. Significant SE leaders	Award received (Green Ideas & Start-up City)	Romix Community Comics
7	1. Significant SE leaders	Award received (EMBRACE)	Mami Care Center – Fondacioni Spitalor i Nënës dhe Fëmijës (Mother and Child Hospital Foundation)
8	1. Significant SE leaders	Award received (EMBRACE)	Te Xhoni Café - Jonathan Center
9	1. Significant SE leaders	Award received (DIVAC)	Voice of Roma
10	1. Significant SE leaders	Award received (EMBRACE & Green Ideas)	App Tour - Vjosa Explorer
11	1. Significant SE leaders	Award received (EMBRACE)	Made in Prison - Orkidea Organization Tirana
12	1. Significant SE leaders	Award received (EMBRACE)	Qendra Rinore Arka - Code Partners Shkodra (Arka Youth Center)

13	2. Government SE resource institution/s	Government, CSOs, Private	Ministry of Health and Social Protection
14	2. Government SE resource institution/s	Government, CSOs, Private	Municipality of Tirana: Directorate of Employment
15	2. Government SE resource institution/s	Government, CSOs, Private	Municipality of Tirana: Directorate of Strategic Investment and Economic Development
16	2. Government SE resource institution/s	Government, CSOs, Private	Municipality of Tirana: Women Empowerment Project, Youth Empowerment Project
17	2. Government SE resource institution/s	Government, CSOs, Private	<i>Minister of State for Protection of Entrepreneurship</i>

18	3. Expert from the academia	Supporting Organizations	Metropolitan Tirana University
19	3. Expert from the academia	Supporting Organizations	Metropolitan Tirana University
20	3. Expert from the academia	Supporting Organizations	Epoka University
21	4. SE finance institution/organization	Supporting Organizations	Tirana Bank
22	4. SE finance institution/organization	Supporting Organizations	Credins Bank
23	5. SE research, capacity development, or technology provider	Supporting Organizations	BC Business Consultancy
25	7. Multilateral development agencies supporting SEs	Supporting Organizations	UN Women
26	7. Multilateral development agencies supporting SEs	Supporting Organizations	UNDP

24	6. Network of SEs or multistakeholder network/platform promoting social entrepreneurship	SE Networks, Multi-stakeholder platforms	Yunus Social Business Balkans
28	9. Regional or global SEs or SE resource institutions based in the covered countries	SE Networks, Multi-stakeholder platforms	RISE - Regional Incubator for Social Entrepreneurs

# Annex 2 – Matrices: Key Research Questions for Key Informants from the SE Sector

**Matrix 2: Key Research Questions for SE Resource Institution**

Research Objectives	Key Questions
<p>Background on the Government Agency/ Resource Institution</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What is the mandate of your office/organization? What specific programs and services are you implementing for SEs?</li> <li>2. What are the strengths and limitations of these programs and services?</li> <li>3. What do you think have been the gains and benefits of SEs from these programs and services?</li> <li>4. What could still be done by your office/organization to further support SEs and the SE sector in your country? What are your plans towards this direction?</li> </ol> <p><u>For Expert from the Academia</u> - What researches/studies can you recommend for a better understanding of the SE sector in the country?</p> <p><u>For Multilateral Development Agencies Supporting SEs</u> - Why is your agency supporting SEs? - What are the challenges in supporting SEs?</p> <p><u>For Organizations Linked with Global SE Movements</u> - How has your strong link with a global SE movement supported SEs and the SE sector in your country?</p>
<p>Identify the key actors in the SE sector who are or could be potentially engaged in development cooperation advocacy</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Can you identify SEs in your country that you think have been successful in attaining revenues to realize/support its social mission? Which among these SEs:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1. Engages the poor as suppliers, the poor as workers, or the poor as clients?</li> <li>1.2. Is entrepreneurial non-profit organization, social cooperative, or social business?</li> <li>1.3. Is consciously pursuing women's economic empowerment (WEE)?</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Do you think these SEs are open and willing to work with other SEs, CSOs, and other support organizations to advocate for better support for the SE sector and poverty groups they serve?</li> <li>3. Can you identify other government, non-government, or private organizations in your country that provide financial and/or technical support to SEs? What is/are their specific support/services?</li> <li>4. Do you know of a network or collaborative platform of SEs in your country? What are they primarily doing for the SE sector?</li> </ol>

<p>Determine the challenges and opportunities for SEs given the context and conditions in their area/country of operation</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What are issues and challenges that SEs face in your country? What factors/circumstances hinder their growth? What is being done to address these issues and challenges?</li> <li>2. On the other hand, what are the opportunities for SEs in your country? What are the factors/circumstances that facilitate their growth? How are these opportunities being taken advantage of by SEs?</li> </ol>
<p>Explore strategies and recommendations on how CSOs and key SE actors could work together to further support and develop the SE sector as a key player in equitable and sustainable development</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Do you know of a network or collaborative platform of BOTH SEs and CSOs in your country? What are their primary objectives and what have they gained from their efforts?</li> <li>2. Can you think of ways that CSOs can work with SEs to address the challenges that SEs face in your country?</li> <li>3. How do you think can SEs be better supported by your office/organization? By government? By resource institutions (donor agencies, academe, CSOs, etc.)?</li> <li>4. How can SEs and CSOs work together to enhance/develop the role of SEs as actors in equitable and sustainable development?</li> <li>5. How can SEs and CSOs work together to influence the development cooperation discussions (bilateral and multi-lateral official development assistance, remittances, domestic resource mobilization, etc.) in strengthening the role of SEs as actors and social entrepreneurship as pathway to sustainable development?</li> </ol>

### Matrix 3: Key Research Questions for SE Network

Research Objectives	Key Questions
Background on the SE Network	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In what year was the network established? What were the circumstances that led to its formation? Please describe in detail how the network started.</li> <li>2. What are your network's advocacy agenda? To what extent has your agenda been pushed/realized?</li> <li>3. What are the current programs and activities of the network to support these agenda? What specific services do you provide for network members?</li> <li>4. What are the strengths and limitations of these programs and activities?</li> <li>5. What do you think have been the gains and benefits of members and the SE sector from these programs and activities?</li> </ol>
Identify the key actors in the SE sector who are or could be potentially engaged in development cooperation advocacy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Can you identify SEs in your country that you think have been successful in attaining revenues to realize/support its social mission?</li> <li>2. Do you think these SEs are open and willing to work with your network, other SEs, CSOs, and other support organizations to advocate for better support for the SE sector and poverty groups they serve?</li> <li>3. Can you identify other government, non-government, or private organizations in your country that provide financial and/or technical support to SEs? What is/are their specific support/services?</li> </ol>
Determine the challenges and opportunities for SEs given the context and conditions in their area/country of operation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What are issues and challenges that SEs face in your country? What factors/circumstances hinder their growth? What is being done to address these issues and challenges?</li> <li>2. On the other hand, what are the opportunities for SEs in your country? What are the factors/circumstances that facilitate their growth? How are these opportunities being taken advantage of by SEs?</li> </ol>
Explore strategies and recommendations on how CSOs and key SE actors could work together to further support and develop the SE sector as a key player in equitable and sustainable development	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Do you know of a network or collaborative platform of BOTH SEs and CSOs in your country? What are their primary objectives and what have they gained from their efforts?</li> <li>2. Can you think of ways that CSOs can work with SEs to address the challenges that SEs face in your country?</li> <li>3. How do you think can SEs be better supported by your network? By government? By resource institutions (donor agencies, academe, CSOs)?</li> <li>4. How can SEs and CSOs work together to enhance/develop the role of SEs as actors in equitable and sustainable development?</li> <li>5. How can SEs and CSOs work together to influence the development cooperation discussions (bilateral and multi-lateral official development assistance, remittances, domestic resource mobilization, etc.) in strengthening the role of SEs as actors and social entrepreneurship as pathway to sustainable development?</li> </ol>

## Matrix 4: Key Research Questions for SE Heads / Key Staff

Research Objectives	Key Questions
Background on the SE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In what year did your SE begin operating? What were the circumstances that led to its inception? Please describe in detail how the SE started.</li> <li>2. How much was the capital infused to start your SE? What is the value of your SE in terms of assets now?</li> <li>3. How many paid employees does your social enterprise have? How many are female?</li> <li>4. In what legal form is your social enterprise registered? (e.g. cooperative, single proprietorship, corporation, etc.)</li> <li>5. What are the products/services you provide? Who buys your product/s and/or service/s?</li> <li>6. Where do you sell/offer your products/services? How do you sell them?</li> <li>7. What poverty sectors does your social enterprise serve? How do you engage/support them? Any particular support/program for women? How many individuals from these poverty sectors does your social enterprise engage? About how many of them are female?</li> <li>8. How would you assess your engagement with poverty? What are the strengths and limitations of your engagement/support? What are the benefits they have gained from your engagement with them? How have their lives changed?</li> <li>9. How well is your SE doing in terms of profits (break-even? profitable?)?</li> <li>10. How else can your SE sustain and strengthen your support to the poverty groups, especially given the ongoing pandemic?</li> <li>11. Does your SE engage your government, CSOs, and other organizations? How do you engage them? Any gains and benefits from engaging these entities?</li> </ol>
Identify the key actors in the SE sector who are or could be potentially engaged in development cooperation advocacy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Can you identify other SEs in your country that you think have been successful in attaining revenues to realize/support its social mission?</li> <li>2. Do you think these SEs are open and willing to work with other SEs, CSOs, and other support organizations to advocate for better support for the SE sector and poverty groups they serve?</li> <li>3. Can you identify government, non-government, or private organizations in your country that provide financial and/or technical support to SEs? What is/are their specific support/services?</li> </ol>

<p>Determine the challenges and opportunities for SEs given the context and conditions in their area/country of operation</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What are issues and challenges that SEs face in your country? What factors/circumstances hinder their growth? What is being done to address these issues and challenges?</li> <li>2. On the other hand, what are the opportunities for SEs in your country? What are the factors/circumstances that facilitate their growth? How are these opportunities being taken advantage of by SEs?</li> </ol>
<p>Explore strategies and recommendations on how CSOs and key SE actors could work together to further support and develop the SE sector as a key player in equitable and sustainable development</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Do you know of a network or collaborative platform of BOTH SEs and CSOs in your country? What are their primary objectives and what have they gained from their efforts?</li> <li>2. Can you think of ways that CSOs can work with SEs to address the challenges that SEs face in your country?</li> <li>3. How do you think can SEs be better supported by government? By resource institutions (donor agencies, academe, CSOs)?</li> <li>4. How can SEs and CSOs work together to enhance/develop the role of SEs as actors in equitable and sustainable development?</li> <li>5. How can SEs and CSOs work together to influence the development cooperation discussions (bilateral and multi-lateral official development assistance, remittances, domestic resource mobilization, etc.) in strengthening the role of SEs as actors and social entrepreneurship as pathway to sustainable development?</li> </ol>



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