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# ACSF Three-Year Strategic Plan

September 2005

## I. INTRODUCTION

The **Albanian Civil Society Foundation (ACSF)** was established in January 1995 as an Albanian nonprofit organization to assist in the development of the nonprofit sector in Albania. It initiated its activity with a clear view of promoting the consolidation of the third (nonprofit) sector.

Over the past nine years the Foundation has been focused on the following main activities and practices:

- Assistance to associations applying for grants at the grass root level.
- Capacity building through planned and regular training courses for Albanian NPO-s.
- Collection and dissemination of Information on activities of NGP-s all over Albania and the creation of a database on the sector.
- Citizen Service Center, which offered all Tirana NPO-s support to pursue their activities.
- Studies and publishing :
  - Legislation regulating the activities of the Albanian NGOs.
  - Outcome of an opinion poll implemented in co-operation with the National Institute of Statistics.
  - Four other study-brochures about civil society, the rights of ethnic minorities, European Conventions, interethnic relations and cultures as joining bridges of friendship complete the past publishing of ACSF.
  - Manual on Project Cycle Management and the Logical frame Approach is the latest contribution of ACSF in this field.
- Continuous co-operation with all Albanian and foreign foundations in and outside the country. In many cases ACSF has co-financed NPO activities with the Soros Foundation, the Regional Environment Centre, the Albanian Human Rights Documentation Center, etc.
- Sponsoring of activities to boost civil society development and improve social relations in our country.
  - February 1996: International Conference on the Freedom of Religion in Albania and Religion of Minorities.
- Interethnic Relations through projects:
  - "Interethnic understanding and the rights of minorities" in the southern region of the country. Implemented in cooperation with Soros Foundation and the financial support of King Baudouin Foundation.

During these years ACSF has supported 178 NGOs through 236 grants and 400.000 \$ funds given to implement projects all over the country.

The quality of work and the past best practices have contributed to ACSF to be supported from significant number of international and domestic donors besides the basic funds of DANIDA which stopped in

2002. The funds raised for the 2003 activities were around 100.000 \$ and almost the same for 2004 which demonstrates the fundraising skills and the good quality of Proposals of the ACSF.

The local partners (local NPO-s), which are of big importance for operating in other towns of Albania, have been a very important aspect of ACSF work during these years. Strengthening their capacities as well as their independence or " transferring ownership" has produced a fruitful cooperation.

Following up carefully the development process of the Albanian CS we realize that there are still many problems and concerns which might be shortly described as follows:

Although the Republic of Albania has a comprehensive non-governmental sector (consisting of about 600 or more different civil society organisations), it is dispersed, incoherent and uncooperative in comparison with that of the EU Member States.

They lack co-ordination, facilities, networking, information channels, and particularly some expertise and knowledge on how to apply for a project, how to manage and disseminate the results, how to use lobbying power and how to built a dialogue with the Government. In short, most of the NPO-s are not developed enough to become an important partner with the Government, and at a later stage, after the accession, with the EU institutions. NPO-s remain weak in the field of professionalism, transparency of their activity and staffing policy.

NPO-s suffer from a lack of extensive membership, poor networking, and a lack of real corporate social responsibility. NPO-s also remain weak in terms of strategic planning, management structures, and use of modern technology.

Board members tend to be ill prepared for their role and NPO funding remains donor-driven and donor-dependent, i.e. insufficient for the sustainable development of this sector.

Only some civil society organisations already co-operate with the corresponding EU organisations and successfully participate in public tenders abroad, but most of them have too poorly developed structures and too insufficient skills to be able to influence either governmental policy or EU policy-making by entering European platforms.

Albania is undergoing a process of decentralization which must still be consolidated. While local authorities need to be strengthened, the citizens' role in the local democratic process often needs to be better explained still and fostered. Especially at local level the individual's impact and opportunity to influence the course of politics can be much more tangible than at the national or state level. If citizens are made to feel their impact at local level, democracy at all levels will be strengthened.

Many individuals believe that currently there is no genuine Civil Society in existence in Albania, nor is there any political option which would support the efforts of a civil society.

With the goal to provide continuous future development to the existing community of NPO-s, and the push given by NOSA to continue the process after the first phase, ACSF started up the process of Strategic Planning for a three year period of time .

ACSF-s staff and two Board members, have put a strong effort on this plan development. The process started in early June 2004 as the NOSA strategy was made public to the NPO-s. Actually, the whole process was based on the Analysis of the current situation of the Civil Society in Albania described shortly above, ACSF SWOT analysis and identification of the key issues that served as a frame for elaboration of the strategic plan. ACSF-s efforts for Institutional Development and Organizational Strengthening as well as Civil Society development in general were the key part of the planning exercise.

During this time period the below mentioned steps were performed:

- Key persons (of board and executive) were involved in the drafting process.
- Analysis of current situation of civil society development in Albania.
- Definition of problems with regards to civil society development in Albania, and prioritization to come to the core problem.
- The top priority (core) problem was analyzed with the help of a problem tree analysis.
- The objective tree and the alternative of Objectives were the next step performed.
- Definition and clarification of the planning parameters.
- Definition of the strategic framework :
  - A clearly stated **vision**;
  - Clearly articulated **values**;
  - A **mission**, articulated in a mission statement;
  - The **overall goal** of the organization;
  - The **immediate objectives** of the organization;
  - The **key result areas** on which the organization intends to focus;
- ACSF final SWOT;
- Determination of possible strategies and strategic directions;
- Determination of final vision and completing of strategic plan;
- Determination of detailed plan for implementation, through logical frames definition;

Wilbert Schouten and Rene Bastiaanssen, of SNV – Albania, have facilitated this process which was led by Pandeli Theodhori, ACSF Executive Director.

Interviews were conducted with 4 NPO-s that ACSF co-operates with, 3 donors, representatives of local government, as well as representatives from target groups, in order to obtain information on what's the environment attitude towards ACSF-s work.

As a result of the strategic planning process the following priorities have been defined for ACSF to work on in the next 3 years:

- 1. Empowerment of CS in Peripheral Areas (PA) of Albania.**
- 2. CS Development for Improved Partnership with the Government in the Urban Areas ( UA) .**
- 3. USE of ICT for CS Development and stronger Involvement in Monitoring of NSSD Progress.**

## II. GENERAL ISSUES

### VISION

**We live in a world in which each of us is in partnership with the rest of the human race; where the quality of life of each individual, is strongly connected with the wellbeing of local and regional communities; and where development is based on the harmonious relationship among the Central and Local Government, the Business Community and the Non – Profit Sector.**

We pursue this vision through creative activities, thoughtful communication and other activities that enhance community in its many forms for an open and developed civil society.

### KEY VALUES:

**1. ACSF commits itself to Horizontal relation which is more productive than Vertical.**

- There is always good planning and preparation of activities.
- ACSF commits itself to complete its duties on time;
- The staff members show care and respect to each other;
- ACSF always embraces its successes,

**2. ACSF internal processes are based on cooperation, coordination and the team spirit.**

- We dedicate time and efforts to produce the services and products as planned qualitatively and quantitatively on the basis of the professional values of accurateness, commitment, concern etc.

**3. Our external activities strongly promote coalitions and networks.**

- ACSF believes that it is better to work as a team or a network than individually.
- The coalitions make it easier for the local GVT to comply with laws requiring inputs from CSO-s in their decision making.
- There is strong team spirit in the works accomplished in cooperation with others;

**4. We share information with similar other organizations as necessary and consider learning as a continuous process.**

- There is a high stimulation in work and everyone contributes;
- ACSF accepts its mistakes as experience that could be learned from and headway to success;

**5. We are always grateful to donors.**

- ACSF always embraces its successes and respect donors,

## **MISSION**

**ACSF is an Albanian non-profit Organization which aims to promote and develop the Civil Society in Albania, prioritizing the urban areas away from the capital and focusing on the peripheral areas in particular. ACSF will intensify its efforts for the communities of these areas, in close cooperation with them, local CS Organizations and Local GVT, for the Civic Education and Participation of the community, in order to create an open, righteous, equal and sustainable Developed Democratic Society in the Republic of Albania.**

The Foundation seeks to strengthen, in people and their organizations, what we call "the capacity for accomplishment."

## **LONG-TERM GOALS**

- ◆ Empowered Civil Society in Albania to Ensure Democracy
  - An active, diverse civil society plays a valuable role in helping advance democracy and discipline the state to ensure that citizens' interests are taken seriously.
- ◆ Central and Local Government play a valuable role in developing a healthy civil society.
  - Established, clear and workable regulatory frameworks for the nongovernmental sector.
- ◆ Albanian Civil Society an efficient tool to guaranty people-centered approach in decision making.

## **III. OVERALL GOAL**

**Albanian CS empowered as a tool for citizens to effectively contribute to Democracy and Development**

### **Immediate Objectives:**

- Empowered CS in Peripheral Areas (PA) of Albania.
- Enabled CS for a stronger Partnership with the GVT in the Urban Areas.
- ICT efficiently used for CS Development, Public Image and improved Involvement in Monitoring of NSSD Progress.

## IV. STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

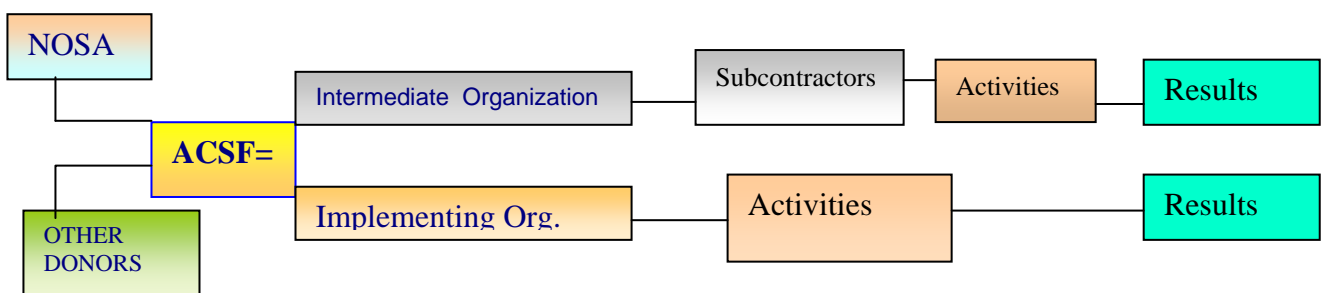
The following strategic directions emphasize ACSF-s future actions towards what needs to be done, in order to achieve the strategic immediate objectives, as well as the ways of their achievement. The detailed activities with timeline table, responsible persons, needed budget with financial resources and indicators for implementation will be developed and presented at a later date because they go beyond the limits of this presentation of the strategy. Some supportive documents will be presented as annexes at the end of the main document.

### KEY DIRECTIONS

- \* Development and implementation of initiatives that demonstrate the importance of development and role of the nonprofit sector in Albania.
- \* Promotion and enhancement of Civic sector in peripheral areas.
- \* Set up of community civic education centers (CCEC) for a sustainable development and cooperation with local GVT in peripheral areas.
- \* Promotion of the activities of the Civic sector in peripheral areas through capacity building and fundraising campaigns.
- \* Empowerment of the CS organizational skills in the urban areas towards a better cooperation with Government.
- \* Development of knowledge management and Information sharing tools for NPO-s.
- \* Use of ICT for CS development, public image and participation, in both urban and peripheral areas.

### WORK APPROACH

- \* In its work, ACSF has equal focus and access to men and women;
- \* Production of impact at local level contributes to strengthen democracy and development at all levels
- \* ACSF invests in education of young people, for securing the future.
- \* Through dissemination of its own experience and knowledge, ACSF creates pre-conditions for successful work of other NPO-s throughout RoA;

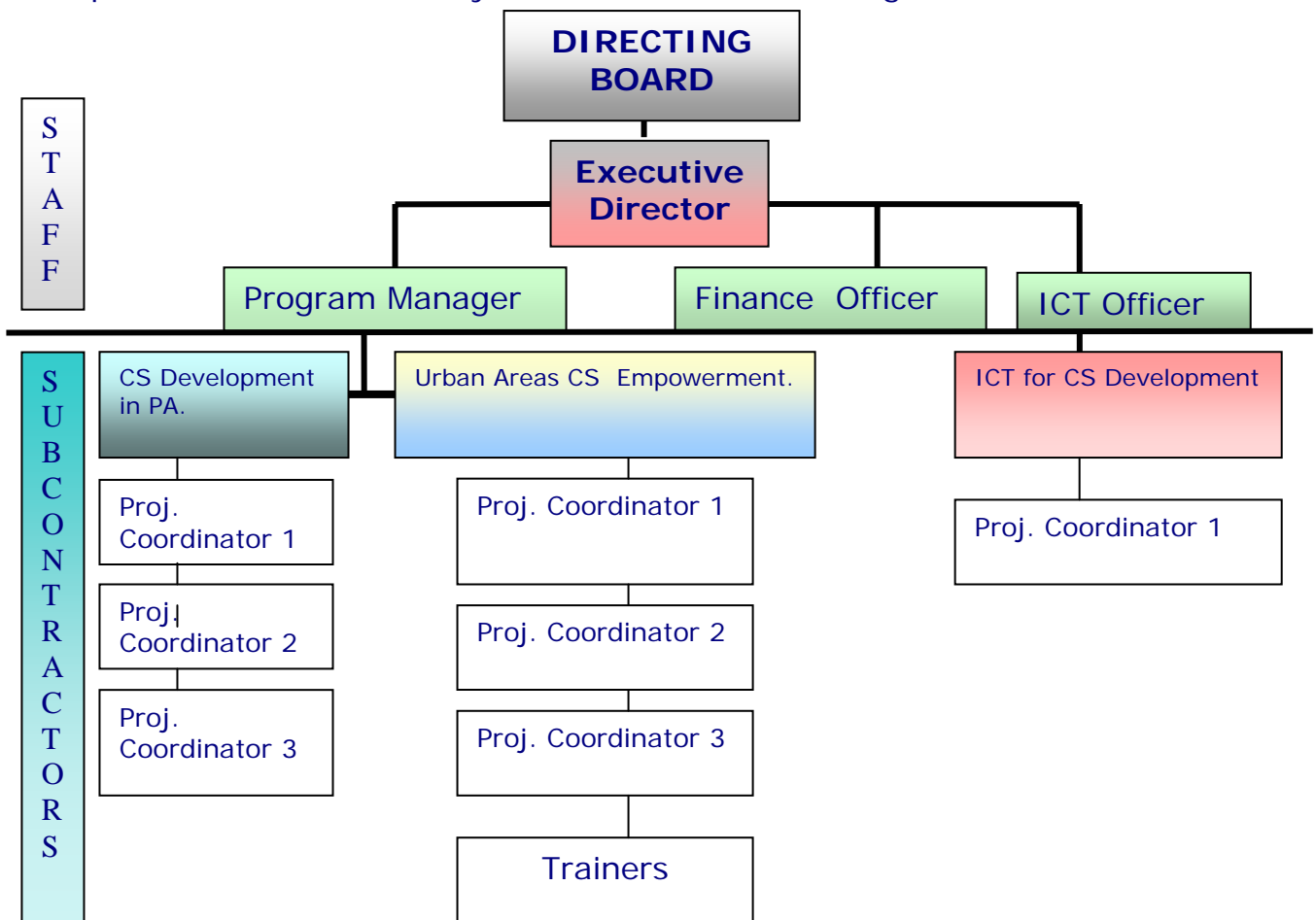


### TARGET GROUPS

- \* Wide Communities in the peripheral areas ( PA),
- \* NPO-s in the urban areas.
- \* CBG-s and other organizations in the remote districts.
- \* Ethnic groups, minorities and other vulnerable groups.
- \* State and local authorities and institutions;
- \* Media;

## STRUCTURE

Expected ACSF structure by 2006 will be the following:



In this Organigram the Project Coordinators will be subcontracted from selected local NPO-s through a process of call for Proposals on the topics included in the action plan for the accomplishment of the immediate objectives.

## NETWORKS

ACSF has had fruitful cooperation with the local NPO-s in the past. We used to keep operational the NPO houses in Peshkopi, Burrel, Bulqize and Permet. A new environment for further cooperation was created in Kelcyre with the establishment of QEK Kelcyre. Other collaborative contacts we have in 16 districts of Albania based on previous cooperation and funding that we have provided. ( see the former questionnaire to NOSA). Benefiting from this positive environment, our best practice in the area and the future actions through NOSA , it will be very easy to make operational networks of NPO-s in both urban and peripheral areas and the moderation to be performed by ACSF. We will involve successful organizations with significant results behind them from the urban areas to cooperate with NPO-s in peripheral areas and create three networks which will co-operate with ACSF in terms of assistance and consultations. The networks as independent bodies will continue to work based on their respective statutes and ownership.

## RESOURCES

### Offices

ACSF rents its offices at a rate of 400 usd/month. The largest room serves as a training unit and has all the facilities for that purpose.

### Equipment

ACSF possesses 9 PC-s, photocopying machine, scanner , three printers , TV , VCR, overhead projector and all the office furniture necessary for normal performance of activities. Transportation is assured through ACSF owned car.

### Human Resources

ACSF will continue to count on the experience of the actual staff, (4 people) and the delegation (subcontracting) of responsibilities and activities to skilful and professional NPO-s or teams created on purpose. In each of the teams, there will be several people trained and experienced.

### Financial Resources.

Starting December 2002, after the pullout of DANIDA, ACSF proved itself to sustain its activities by assuring the development of accurate and professional Proposals. This quality assured a budget of 100.000 \$ for 2003 (see the 2003 Annual Report) and almost the same amount for the 2004. ACSF is applying to international Donors including EU Funding program CARDS even through the Network to Network program as a member of the Balkan Civil Society Development Network. Cooperation is established with PYTHAGORAS Center- Greece and actually a joint Project Proposal is applied to the Greek Government for possible funding. ACSF has not yet managed to benefit from the national public funds.

Possible Donors to support the ACSF Proposals might be:

German Marshal Fund; Balkan Trust; DFID, EU Commission; Palme Center; Embassies in Tirana ,etc.

## COOPERATION

ACSF is an institution with good reputation, with network of contributors, organizations and institutions from Albania, Balkans, Europe and the world.

ACSF is an associate member of CONCORD and a member of the Balkan Civil Society Development Network. This cooperation plays an important role in ACSF's development, through active participation, provision of technical assistance and training.

The Community Education and Communication Centers in Peshkopi and Kelcyre, NPO Forums in Permet, Burrel, Kruja, etc and the CSDC-s will consist a good source for cooperation to implement projects through other structures.

## V. ELABORATION OF GENERAL ISSUES

### IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVES IN DETAILS

#### **Objective 1. Empowered CS in Peripheral Areas (PA) of Albania.**

**Current Situation:** The peripheral areas are described by the map attached to this document. There is almost no CS activities in those areas ( Bilisht, Leskovik, Delvine, Corovode, Kurbin,Koplik,Fushe Arrez,Memaliaj etc) and no NPO-s are created in the same areas. Very little activity may be noticed in other peripheral areas such as Bulqize, Burrel, Permet, Kelcyre,Tepelene,etc. As result there is no involvement of CS and no impact at all. The third pillar representing the nonprofit sector is very weak for a stable and developed society.

#### **Why take actions in PA.?**

- ◆ NPO-s are recognised as a significant component of civil society and as providing valuable support for a democratic system of government”.
- ◆ Civil Society needs strengthening because it is not currently able to fulfill its positive potential roles.
- ◆ Especially at local level the individual’s impact and opportunity to influence the course of politics can be much more tangible than at the national or state level.

#### **KEY ACTIONS:**

- 1.1 Dissemination of Information and Knowledge about the CS to the CBG-s in PA.
- 1.2 Increase of Public understanding of the role and contributions of the nonprofit sector in PA.
- 1.3 Creation and empowerment of a NPO-s community, at the grass root level, in PA.
- 1.4 Set up of CCEC-s ( Community Civic Education Centers) in some pilot districts in PA.

#### **Objective 2: Enabled CS for a stronger Partnership with the GVT in the Urban Areas ( UA) .**

#### **Current Situation:**

NPO-s also remain weak in terms of strategic planning, management structures, cooperation and networking and use of modern technology. Albania is undergoing a process of decentralization which must still be consolidated. While local authorities need to be strengthened, the citizens’ role in the local democratic process often needs to be better explained still and fostered.

### **Why enable Civic Sector?**

- ◆ Civil society organizations need to be helped to see that their ability to be mission driven is directly related to their financial freedom.
- ◆ Even more important, the ability of the nonprofit sector to demand fair and equitable public policy properly funded by taxes.
- ◆ To insure that social justice is the overall mission driving the whole sector,

### **KEY ACTIONS:**

- 2.1 Development of Sufficient Organizational skills for the NPO-s in urban areas.
- 2.2 Improvement of professionalism and transparency of the NPO-s in urban areas.
- 2.3 Improvement of legal framework and tax regulations for the nonprofits.
- 2.4 Cooperation CS- GVT for Local Development planning (strategies) and social services.
- 2.5 Development of knowledge management and Information sharing tools for NPO-s.
- 2.6 Set up and moderation of national networks for better cooperation within the sector.
- 2.7 Promotion and set up of international networks and resource mobilization activities.

### **Objective 3: ICT efficiently used for CS Development, Public Image and improved Involvement in Monitoring of NSSD Progress.**

**Current Situation:** NPO-s remain weak in the field of professionalism, transparency of their activity and staffing policy. They suffer from a lack of extensive membership, poor networking, and a lack of real corporate social responsibility. From the international point of view, the nonprofit sector in Albania results isolated, has lost credibility and has a Low Public Image.

### **Why take actions?**

- ◆ Rapid and easy Exchange of information, access to capacity building and resource mobilization information will boost the development options of the Albanian CS.
- ◆ Transparency of the CS activities through the ICT will improve the Public Image and the credibility of the nonprofit sector.
- ◆ ICT will increase the quantity and quality of involvement of CS in policy decision making and Monitoring of the NSSD at both national and local level.

### **KEY ACTIONS:**

- 3.1 Capacity building online: Study Circle on different topics.
- 3.2 Active involvement of NPO-s and communities in Monitoring and Evaluation of development process. ( MDG-s and NSSD)
- 3.3 Use of ICT for CS transparency and Public Image.( Portal online for CS Organizations)

**ANNEX 1: STRATEGIC PLAN MATRIX – OVERALL GOAL AND IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVES**

Description of the OVERALL GOAL	Indicators	Means of Verification	Assumptions
<p><b><u>GENERAL OBJECTIVES:</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sufficient Impact on Democratization.               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Social Equality for ethnic/minorities groups.</li> <li>b. Rural-Urban differences Reduced</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Sufficient Impact on Development               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Participatory decision making increased and improved.</li> <li>b. Appropriate development planning at different levels.</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Improved use of ICT for CS Development and participation.</li> </ol>			
<p><b><u>OVERALL GOAL:</u></b></p> <p align="center"><b>Albanian CS empowered as a tool for citizens to effectively contribute to Democracy and Development</b></p>	Sufficient impact of CS to Democracy and Development at the end of 3 yrs time period.	Reports and other documents on Democratic/ Development progress in Albania	Political and Economic stability assured. Communities and NPO-s participate
<p><b><u>Immediate Objectives:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Empowered CS in Peripheral Areas (PA) of Albania.</li> <li>◆ Developed CS for a stronger Partnership with the GVT in the Urban Areas ( UA).</li> <li>◆ ICT efficiently used for CS Development, Public Image and improved Involvement in Monitoring of NSSD Progress.</li> </ul>	Number of new NPO-s and impact on democratic progress in PA. Number of sustainable NPO-s and activities in urban areas. Study Circle for CS Development 3 CS Annual Forums for monitoring of NSSD Progress regionally.	<p>Statistics about the nonprofit sector in PA and urban areas.</p> <p>Proceedings of each regional workshop</p>	<p>Communities and NPO-s willing to participate. Funds available. Training capacities available.</p> <p>Participation and cooperation with GVT assured.</p>
<p><b><u>KEY ACTIONS:</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1 Dissemination of Information and Knowledge about the CS to the CBG-s in PA.</li> <li>1.2 Increase of Public understanding of the role and contributions of the nonprofit sector in PA.</li> <li>1.3 Creation and empowerment of a NPO-s community, at the grass root level, in PA.</li> <li>1.4 Set up of CCEC-s ( Community Civic Education Centers) in some pilot districts in PA.</li> <li>2.1 Development of Sufficient Organizational skills for the NPO-s in urban areas.</li> <li>2.2 Improvement of professionalism and transparency of the NPO-s in urban areas.</li> <li>2.3 Improvement of legal framework and tax regulations for the nonprofits.</li> <li>2.4 Cooperation CS- GVT for Local Development planning (strategies) and social services.</li> <li>2.5 Set up and moderation of national networks for better cooperation within the sector.</li> <li>2.6 Development of knowledge management and Information sharing tools for NPO-s.</li> <li>2.7 Promotion and set up of international networks and resource mobilization activities.</li> <li>3.1 Capacity building online: Study Circle on different topics.</li> <li>3.2 Active involvement of NPO-s and communities in Monitoring and Evaluation of development process. ( MDG-s and NSSD)</li> <li>3.3 Use of ICT for CS transparency and Public Image.( Portal online for CS Organizations)</li> </ol>	<p>25 Local communities informed and trained on CS Issues.</p> <p>No. of awareness campaigns in the PA.</p> <p>No. of new NPO-s created and put to action.</p> <p>No. of CCEC set up in PA.</p> <p>No. of training and topics taught.</p> <p>No. of NPO-s trained and financial reports provided.</p> <p>No. of articles improved and passed by the lawmakers.</p> <p>No. of involvements and impacts to the development programs in the area.</p> <p>No. of local strategies developed.</p> <p>Capacity of Database and portal serving community of NPO-s.</p> <p>3 Operational networks set up.</p> <p>No. of topics on study Circle.</p> <p>Monitoring of Progress on NSSD online. (<a href="http://www.regions.org">www.regions.org</a>)</p> <p>Transparency portal online</p>	<p>Reports and other documents.</p> <p>Court decisions and other records.</p> <p>Reports on Workshops and technology used. Reports and other documents. Official Gazette.</p> <p>Written Documents</p> <p>Active web pages representing the sector.</p> <p>Reports and other documents.</p>	<p>Available information and knowledge. Willingness to receive. Sufficient infrastructure.</p> <p>Available funds and capacities exist. Good will and cooperation are possible.</p> <p>Willingness to cooperate.</p> <p>Cooperation and understanding is assured.</p> <p>Sufficient infrastructure Available funds and capacities exist.</p>

**ANNEX 2: STRATEGIC PLAN MATRIX –DETAILS OF TABLE 1: Immediate Objective 1**

Description of the PROGRAM	Indicators	Means of Verification	Assumptions
<p><b>GENERAL OBJECTIVES:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Rural-urban differences Reduced.</li> <li>2. Appropriate local development planning.</li> <li>3. Improved living conditions in PA.</li> </ol>			
<p><b>GOAL 1:</b>  <b>Empowered CS in Peripheral Areas (PA) of Albania.</b></p>	<p>Number of new NPO-s, activities and impact on democratic progress.</p>	<p>Statistics about the nonprofit sector in PA.</p>	<p>Communities and NPO-s willing to participate.            Funds available.            Training capacities available.</p>
<p><b>KEY ACTIONS:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dissemination of Information and Knowledge about the CS to the CBG-s in PA.</li> <li>2. Increase of Public understanding of the role and contributions of the nonprofit sector in PA.</li> <li>3. Creation and empowerment of a NPO-s community, at the grass root level, in PA.</li> <li>4. Set up of CCEC-s ( Community Civic Education Centers) in some pilot districts in PA</li> </ol>	<p>25 Local communities informed and trained on CS Issues.            No. of awareness campaigns in the PA.</p> <p>30 new NPO-s created and put to action.            No. of CCEC set up in PA.  <b>( 3 pilot centers)</b></p>	<p>Reports and other documents.</p> <p>Court decisions and other records.</p>	<p>Communities and NPO-s willing to participate.            Funds available.            Training capacities available.</p>
<p><b>RESULTS:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Informative sessions held in each district of PA.</li> <li>◆ Training Seminars on CS Issues in all the PA.</li> <li>◆ CBG-s in PA, organized and empowered to perform CS activities.</li> </ul> </li> <li>2.           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ System set up to provide information about nonprofits and the sector to Local Opinion Leaders.</li> <li>◆ Education campaigns to develop greater understanding of the sectors role in society.</li> <li>◆ Improved messages by the nonprofits communicated to the public.( Improved PR)</li> </ul> </li> <li>3.           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Legal assistance provided to all the CBG-s and communities to get involved in CS Issues.</li> <li>◆ Local NPO-s created in all the districts of PA.</li> <li>◆ Basic training provided to the new NPO-s.</li> <li>◆ Basic Knowledge Workshops performed with the new NPO-s in the PA.</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. Pilot Community Civic Education Centers (CCEC) set up in some districts of PA.***</li> </ol>	<p>50 one day sessions held.            50 two day seminars.            30 workshops to empower CBG-s.</p> <p>Agreements, publications and other means of written or electronic information and communication.            No. of awareness activities to increase understanding.            No. of messages , information and best practices communicated to the public.            No. of assisted groups and cases.</p> <p>No. of new NPO-s created in the PA.            50 one- day Seminars            50 two- day Workshops</p> <p>No. of CCEC in the peripheral areas( PA)</p>	<p>Reports, photos and records of the activities.</p> <p>Reports, photos and records of the activities.</p> <p>Articles and shows supplied by the local media.</p> <p>Reports, photos and records of the activities.</p> <p>Court decisions.</p> <p>Reports, photos and records of the activities.</p>	<p>Communities are ready to participate.            Capacity and methodology exists.</p> <p>Local media willing to cooperate.</p> <p>Capacities and cooperation is available.            Local GVT cooperates and provides assistance</p> <p>Capacities and cooperation is available.            Willingness to receive training.</p>

**ANNEX 3: STRATEGIC PLAN MATRIX – DETAILS OF TABLE 1: Immediate Objective 2**

Description of the PROGRAM	Indicators	Means of Verification	Assumptions
<p><b><u>GENERAL OBJECTIVES:</u></b> Sufficient Impact on Development and Participation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Participatory decision making increased and improved.</li> <li>▪ Appropriate development planning at different levels.</li> <li>▪ Public Image of the nonprofits improved.</li> </ul>			
<p><b><u>Immediate Objective 2:</u></b> <b>Enabled CS for a stronger Partnership with the GVT in the Urban Areas ( UA).</b></p>	Qualitative Institutional and Organizational skills for the CS in the urban areas.	Quality of performance and results. Reports from donors and international organizations.	Communities and NPO-s willing to participate. Funds and training are available.
<p><b><u>KEY ACTIONS:</u></b></p> <p>2.1 Development of Sufficient Organizational skills for the NPO-s in urban areas. 2.2 Improvement of professionalism and transparency of the NPO-s in urban areas. 2.3 Improvement of legal framework and tax regulations for the nonprofits. 2.4 Cooperation CS- GVT for Local Development planning (strategies) and social services. 2.5 Set up and moderation of national networks for better cooperation within the sector. 2.6 Development of knowledge management and Information sharing tools for NPO-s. 2.7 Promotion and set up of international networks and resource mobilization activities.</p>	<p>No. of well managed and planned NPO-s. No. of financially transparent NPO-s in urban areas. No. and institutions of partnership created. Articles and regulations passed. No. of Local Strategies set up Networks and resources .</p> <p>No. of activities, structures and publishing for this purpose</p> <p>3 operational networks</p>	<p>Reports on Capacity building activities. Qualitative projects to applied to INTL donors. Financial reports open to the public. Official Gazette.</p> <p>Reports, photos and records of the activities.</p>	<p>Communities and NPO-s willing to participate. Funds available. Training capacities available. Lawmakers cooperate. International organizations collaborate.</p>
<p><b><u>RESULTS:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Capacity Building activities performed in urban areas (strategic issues , PCM ).</li> <li>▪ Development of strategies for NPO-s in urban areas.</li> <li>▪ Improvement of management skills .</li> <li>▪ Code of ethics and relations between NPO-s.</li> <li>▪ Financial Reports and provision of them online.</li> <li>▪ Regular informative meetings CS- Local GVT on local development.</li> <li>▪ Institutions and mechanisms set up to assure participation in decision making.</li> <li>▪ Contribution of CS to development planning locally. Local development strategies set up.</li> <li>▪ Tax regulations set up locally and nationally.</li> <li>▪ Financial support from local business to CS Organizations.</li> <li>▪ Regional networks set up for social services and other cooperation.</li> <li>▪ Resource mobilization activities in the region.</li> </ul>	<p>50 workshops performed with the NPO-s. No. of Strategic Plans developed. 30 workshops</p> <p>No of Financial reports on the Portal set up online. No. of meetings NPO-s participating. No. of structures that assure community participation. No. of local development strategies set up in the districts/ municipalities/ communes</p> <p>No. of new articles of tax regulations set up locally and nationally. Funds from business to NPO-s. No. of Networks.</p> <p>No. of activities</p>	<p>Reports of implementing organizations.</p> <p>Quality of info and the availability online.</p> <p>Reports and written documents on this subject.</p> <p>Meetings and documents published in the official Gazette.</p> <p>Memorandum of agreements.</p>	<p>Skills and cooperation with the NPO-s are available. NPO-s willing to develop strategies. NPO-s cooperate to get involved for the touched issues. Training capacities available. Lawmakers cooperate. International organizations collaborate.</p> <p>Business community exists and willing to cooperate</p>

**ANNEX 4: STRATEGIC PLAN MATRIX – DETAILS OF TABLE 1: Immediate Objective 3**

Description of the PROGRAM	Indicators	Means of Verification	Assumptions
<p><b><u>GENERAL OBJECTIVES:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Use of ICT for CS Development and participation is improved.</li> <li>▪ ICT is accessible by greater no. of NPO-s.</li> <li>▪ Sufficient public participation assured.</li> </ul>			
<p><b><u>Immediate Objective 3:</u></b>  <b>ICT efficiently used for CS Development, Public Image and improved Involvement in Monitoring of NSSD Progress.</b></p>			<p>Communities and NPO-s willing to participate. Funds available. Training capacities available. Infrastructure improved.</p>
<p><b><u>KEY ACTIONS:</u></b></p> <p>3.1 Capacity building online: Study Circle on different topics.</p> <p>3.2 Active involvement of NPO-s and communities in Monitoring and Evaluation of development process. ( MDG-s and NSSD)</p> <p>3.3 Use of ICT for CS transparency and Public Image.( Portal online for CS Organizations)</p>	<p>No. of modules available online.</p> <p>3 networks in Albania to monitor NSSD. Portal created for this purpose.</p> <p>NO.of NPO-s providing Financial reports online.</p>	<p>Reports and other documents.</p>	<p>Communities and NPO-s willing to participate. Funds available. Training capacities available. Infrastructure available.</p>
<p><b><u>RESULTS:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Basic training Modules online for NPO-s in PA.</li> <li>◆ Advanced modules online for NPO-s in urban areas.</li> <li>◆ NPO-s Forum online for exchange of Information and experience.</li> <li>◆ Increased access of NPO-s to ICT .</li> <li>◆ Networks in regions of Albania to Monitor and Evaluate NSSD Progress.</li> <li>◆ Raised skills of NPO-s to monitor and evaluated MDG-s and NSSD.</li> <li>◆ Better cooperation established between NPO-s and local GVT for this purpose.</li> <li>◆ Development and monitoring of Social Services Networks</li> <li>◆ Prepared web page on transparency of NPO-s including financial transparency.</li> <li>◆ Management and update of the page on transparency.</li> </ul>	<p>5 basic modules prepared and elaborated for this purpose. 5 advanced modules</p> <p>No. of participating Organizations in the forums. No. of NPO-s with access to ICT. 3 Networks</p> <p>Quality of skills to monitor and evaluate.</p> <p>No. and quality of information received by the local authorities. 1 web page set up and made operational No. of updates on transparency.</p>	<p>Reports of implementing organizations.</p> <p>Quality of info and the availability online.</p> <p>Reports and written documents on this subject.</p> <p>Meetings and documents published in the official Gazette.</p>	<p>Training possibilities exist.</p> <p>Providers of service exist.</p> <p>NPO-s cooperate and have access to ICT.</p> <p>Willing to cooperate NPO-s.</p> <p>GVT accepts the role of NPO-s .</p> <p>Skills and infrastructure are available.</p>

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## ANNEX 5 – INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL ANALYSIS FOR ACSF-TIRANA, ALBANIA (SWOT)

### INTERNAL ANALYSIS

#### STRENGTHS

1. ACSF is a civil society development organization with great maturity and experience;
2. ACSF has accomplished a significant number of activities/projects for civil society development at grass root level throughout the country.
3. Good co-ordination exists between staff members, director and the Board members;
4. ACSF co-operates with a considerable number of donors, both public and private
5. ACSF co-operates/co-ordinates with big number of NGOs in Albania;
6. ACSF has sufficient resources (human, material, technical, financial): great facilities and equipment (copy machine, scanner, printer, computers);
7. In general, ACSF has accomplished its annual plans;
8. ACSF employees show great knowledge about the organisation itself and excellent connection and commitment to ACSF's work;
9. ACSF has a strong/ powerful database on the Non-profit sector
10. ACSF has good practices on community participation and education
11. ACSF has good distribution of duties when realising activities;
12. There is a great discipline at ACSF ;
13. The Executive Director has very good managing capabilities;
14. We work to the interest of the target groups;
15. ACSF-s focus is always directed to project's content, not towards money;
16. ACSF has a rather comprehensive archive;
17. ACSF staff members learn by mistakes;
18. ACSF cooperates successfully with international Organizations in Albania( UNDP, OSCE,SNV)
19. ACSF has a good experience and expertise on policy and development monitoring.( MDG-s and NSSD)
20. ACSF has a valuable experience on the use of ICT for advocacy and capacity building of CS
21. Subcontracting of activities is a NORMAL practice of ACSF
22. ACSF has its own means of transportation.
23. Training modules and the trainers are at a high quality and well experienced.
24. ACSF is for quite a long time member of international Network( Balkans Network since 2001)
25. Within the non profit sector ACSF is flexible to assume different responsibilities.( change can be applied very easily)
26. When necessary we dedicate extra time for the organization
27. ACSF staff members have been successfully involved in monitoring and evaluation by International organizations.( SNV, World bank)
28. ACSF has always auditing reports for its activities.
29. ACSF is qualitatively involved in Capacity building of Local and Central Government officials( MoE, Mini Municipalities in Tirana, Municipality of Durrës etc)
30. ACSF Believes that working Horizontally is more productive then Vertically
31. We strongly base our work in cooperation and networks.
32. We share information with similar other organizations as necessary.

## **WEAKNESSES**

1. ACSF does not have cooperation with similar organizations working in the same field.
2. ACSF does not have good co-operation with electronic media and newspapers on national/international level;
3. ACSF has not yet established co-operation with the Ministry of Education and Science; Ministry of Local GVT, etc.
4. ACSF does not have a high level of co-operation with schools;
5. ACSF staff members do not have legal knowledge.
6. Although we have a database for the sector we lack good records for the organisation-s history.
7. ACSF does not have strategy for working with volunteers;
8. ACSF does not work with emphasis on motivation of the personnel.
9. Target groups are not always included in the phases of planning, realisation and evaluation of ACSF activities;
10. ACSF has reduced its regular contacts with its network of coordinators in districts.
11. ACSF does have its managing board but they are very busy to contribute efficiently for the Organization;
12. ACSF-s web page is not constantly maintained and upgraded/ updated
13. Internal management/office skills need to be improved for appropriate performance
14. ACSF Totally Donor dependant, ( No income generating activities)
15. ACSF does not develops regular PR activities to make known its accomplishments
16. Skills of staff members are reduced and not likely to change very fast.
17. The organisational development is not followed by same level institutional progress.

## **EXTERNAL ANALYSIS**

### **OPPORTUNITIES**

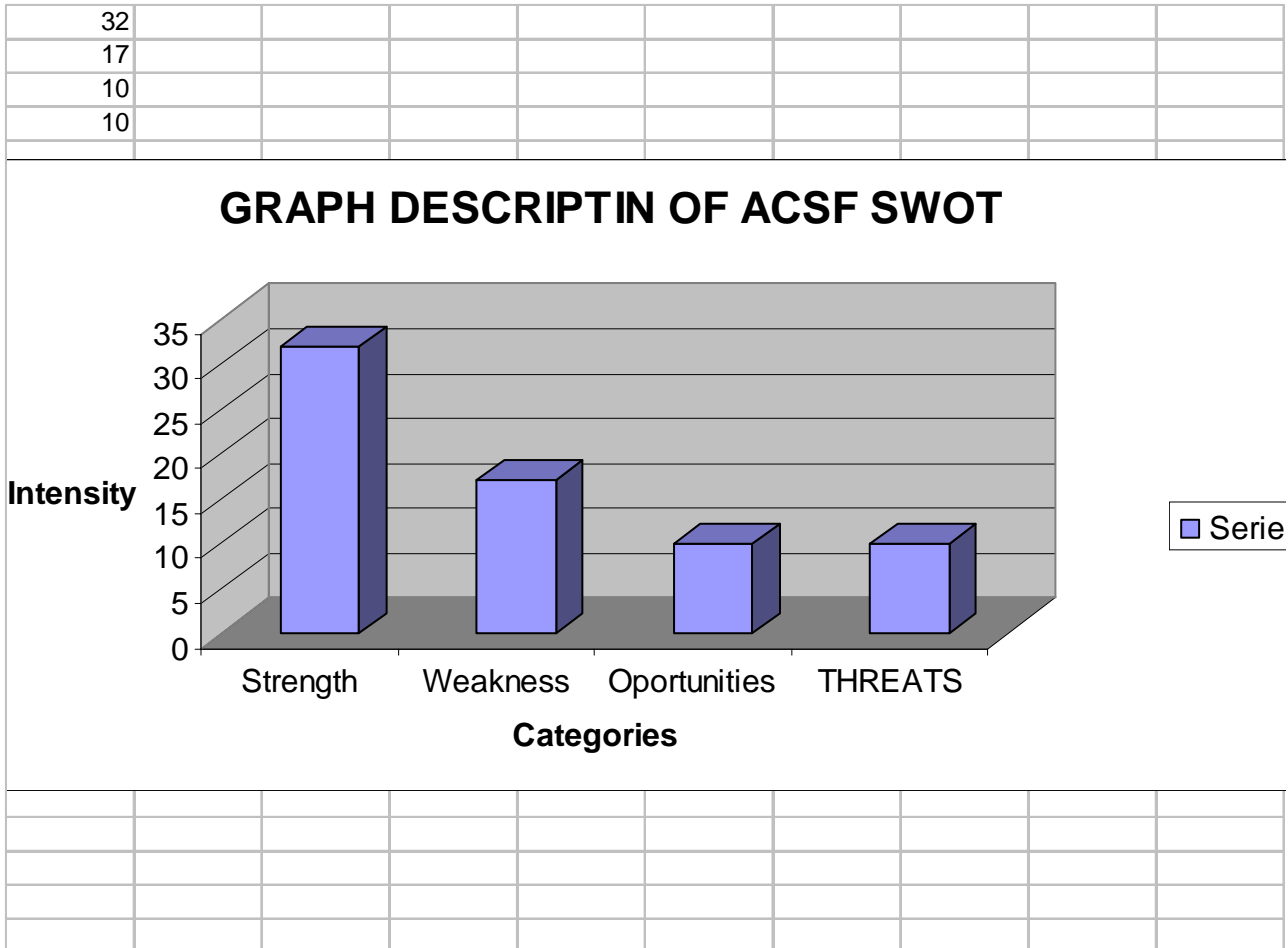
1. Great need for the Development of CS in the peripheral areas of Albania
2. Capacity building needs for both CSOs and Local GVT authorities
3. EU Funding is oriented towards the remote areas.
4. Central GVT accepts the fact of CS Involvement in Monitoring and evaluation process of the NSSD.
5. MDG-s and NSSD will last for ten more consecutive years and it provides a good area for involvement.
6. UNDP Albania has already introduced ACSF into the list of successful partners.
7. The central GVT encourages initiatives for local development to reduce the migration in Albania
8. Cross border Programs are encouraged and consist a good point for cooperation in the Balkans.
9. The GVT ICT Strategy creates a comfortable environment fro the use of ICT for Capacity building activities.
10. Possibility for co-operation and networking with other regional NGOs.

### **THREATS**

1. Local and Central GVT is not likely to take a real supporting position towards the CS.
2. A severe competition in the market of the non profit.
3. Very few chances of fundraising from the business sector.
4. A poor infrastructure in the peripheral areas is not favourable to activities
5. ICT and access to it is very difficult especially in the same areas.
6. The political parties have bad influence to the NGOs
7. Number of potential donors is reduced in Albania
8. Migration of the intellectuals from the peripheral areas
9. Big dependence of donors

10. Some INTL organizations which overlap activities

### ACSF SWOT ANALYSIS GRAPH DESCRIPTION



## **ANNEX 6: PROBLEMS of the non-profit sector in Albania**

### **Organizational:**

- disproportionately high number of focused and “mission specific” NGOs, relative to the number of broad based community organizations.
- The process of constituency-building is not well understood
- Missions/priorities tend to be tailored to attract funds from donors rather than to gain a constituency<sup>1</sup>
- Volunteer training, recruiting and managing is poorly understood
- Most NGOs have one dominant leader, and delegation of authority is rare outside of Tirana<sup>2</sup>
- Few NGOs have constituents or a Board to hold Directors and staff partly accountable
- These NGOs with Boards do not often use their Board members productively
  - CSO remain weak in the field of:
    - professionalism,
    - transparency of their activity
    - staffing policy.
  - lack of extensive membership,
  - poor networking,
  - lack of real corporate social responsibility.
  - CSO also remain weak in terms of:
    - strategic planning,
    - management structures,
    - and use of modern technology.
  - Board members tend to be ill prepared for their role.
  - Mentalities inherited from the previous regime are not conducive to volunteerism, collective action, responsible citizenship, and charity.
  - Volunteer training, recruiting and managing is poorly understood

### **Regional Distribution:**

- Approximately half of the NGO-s are Tirana based with the majority of others in urban areas.
- It is still rare to find civil society organizations outside the large towns.
- There is no impact of civil society in peripheral areas.
- Very few resource-centers for CSO exist outside the capital cities or large towns.
- are too small and too weak to have any impact.

### **Funding and Financial:**

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> USAID, 2002.

- Foreign funding for Civil Society in Albania has fallen dramatically.
- international donors decrease or stop their funding.
- Albanian non-profit sector is critically donor dependant.
- CSO funding is insufficient for the sustainable development of this sector.
- Relations between foreign donors and Albanian CSO-s is typically structured around short-term projects.
- CSO-s are very reliant on donors for funds
- Financial sustainability is rare in Albanian Civil Society, for a number of reasons.
  - Competition between CSO-s is very high.
  - Diversification of funding sources is low.
  - Resources available domestically from Government, corporate, and individual donors are low.
  - Albania has no middle class to adequately fund CSO activities.
  - Domestic sources of funding have not been sufficiently researched and explored.
  - Many NGOs are highly or completely dependent on foreign donors to provide grants and sub-contract projects.
  - Donors who provide grants do not often closely monitor their use by CSO recipients,
- CSO funding remains donor-driven and donor-dependent.
- It is difficult for CSO-s to access local funding.
- Few NPO-s can afford to own their own office, hire permanent staff, and purchase equipment.

#### **Legal and Fiscal Framework:**

- there is insufficient legal advice available outside of Tirana.
- The tax framework is confusing with limited tax benefits for NGO-s.
- Tax laws are so unclear that they do not provide appropriate support for the sector.

#### **Relationships:**

- Genuine cooperation and partnership with the various levels of government is often difficult because of the low esteem in which the possible contribution of civil society organizations to the policy-making process is held.
- Generally, there is little cooperation between CSO-s and the media.
- Civil Society lacks experience dealing with the media.
  - CS consists an important source of ideas and facts. This is not yet an established practice in Albania.
  - advocacy skills are often concentrated in the leader of the NGO and rely on his or her personal relations with Government representatives.
  - CSO-s require training in order to improve and strengthen their media relations.
  - The state has not always recognized the importance of civil society and therefore has not always systematically supported or empowered civil society organizations in order to make them more

sustainable. CSO-s require training in order to improve and strengthen their media relations.

- The relative weakness of the civil society sector is reflected in the way local democracy is seen and indeed exercised.

**Public Image and Credibility:**

- Only about 35 NGOs have written financial procedures<sup>3</sup>
- Almost no NGOs have bylaws.
- Financial mismanagement is seen in some CSO-s, as well as corruption.
- Organizational and financial procedures are often unclear.
- high reliance of Albanian NGOs on foreign donors hinders their independence of expression and action, and hinders their credibility with the public.
- NGOs are sometimes seen as an arm of Albania's adversarial politics, as elitist and sexist, as detached from the grass-roots, and as driven by donor priorities.
- lobbying and drafting stages of policy development has shown some encouraging steps in recent years but it remains fragile and sporadic

Religious Organizations are important traditional actors in Albanian Civil Society. One of their main objectives is the spiritual growth of Albanians in order to promote peace and justice.

Albanian trade unions have been marginalized in the Government's process of reform and privatization; they are not considered full social partners in negotiations.

Academic Organizations recognize the key weaknesses of the educational system:

- pre-school education,
- poor salaries , incentives and prestige,
- shortage of qualified teachers in rural areas,
- the dropout rate especially among girls and in rural areas, certain children such as difficult children and Roma marginalized within the classroom,
- large high-school classrooms in urban areas,
- poor access to education in peri-urban areas,
- rushed and incomplete curricula reforms,
- outdated and non-interactive teaching methods,
- teacher training system that is only beginning to be constructed,
- and little collaboration between schools and universities.
- A new education strategy is needed that is broad and inclusive of multiple stakeholders.

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<sup>3</sup> Freedom House, 2001.

CBO-s such as these are still uncommon and in an early stage of establishment in Albania.

#### LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CS----- Civil Society  
NPO----- Non Profit organizations  
PA -----Peripheral Areas  
UA ----- Urban Areas  
GVT ----- Government  
CBG ----- Civil Based Group  
CBO-----Civil Based Organization  
CSO ----- Civil Society Organizations