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National Conference of Civil Society 2020

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A c k n o w l e d g e m e n t

The National Resource Centre for Civil Society in Albania and Partners Albania for Change and Development express their gratitude for the presence and contribution of all participants in the conference: the representatives from civil society organizations, the donor community and the international institutions in the country, as well as civil society activists.

A special thank you goes to the speakers of the panel, to H.E. Mr. Luigi Soreca, for his presence and words, to all CSOs organizations and networks who put forward and led the thematic workshops in the "OPEN SPACE", as well as to the conference's working group, for its contribution in the identification and information of the key problems, challenges and future development prospects of the sector.

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Key Figures



Summary

The National Conference of the Civil Society in Albania, held on December 4, 2020, brought together, in a virtual meeting, about 135 representatives from civil society organizations, networks and activists, as well as representatives from the donor community and international organizations in the country, to discuss sector developments in the last two years and beyond, concerning the political, social and economic developments in the country, the political dialogue and the current state of art with regard to the progress made and the challenges on the road to the country's integration into the EU.

The conference was organized in two main sessions: the first session - "Democracy and Civil Society - A critical overview of the state of play, developments and challenges", included three speeches from the panellists-representatives from the sector, followed by discussions from participants in three key pillars, to further explore the key problems, challenges and perspectives of the CSOs. During the second session of the Conference - "OPEN SPACE", participants held discussions in 8 thematic Workshops, on issues proposed by the organizations themselves along the conference. The workshops were led by the proposing organizations themselves, with the aim of generating discussion within the sector and exploring together ways of collaborating to advance issues and dialogue with other institutions and actors.

Conceived as a major sector's discussion meeting, the conference aimed at identifying the key issues, ways and means to strengthen cross-sectoral and inter-institutional dialogue, as well as to increase cooperation between CSOs and other actors on issues addressed in the Discussion Panels and Workshops.

This document is a summary of the speeches and discussions held in the panels, as well as the discussions and recommendations issued in the thematic groups and workshops of the conference. It is widely shared with all stakeholders involved in the conference and other actors at the centre of the discussions, as well as with the public at large.

In the following months, the document will be discussed with other actors and institutions, in view of following up on issues raised by the CSOs and on their respective recommendations.

Opening remarks

Ms. Ariola Agolli,
Manager of the National Resource
Centre for Civil Society Albania

In her opening speech, Ms. Ariola Agolli emphasized the key role and contribution the sector plays in strengthening democracy, rule of law, economic development, social inclusion and service delivery, by describing the role that the CSOs played in coping with two extremely difficult situations such as, the Covid-19 pandemic and, the post-earthquake situation of the last year, faced by thousands of citizens.

Further on, she introduced some achievements of the Centre in its two years of operation and stressed the importance of this strategic investment in support of the non-profit sector in the country, its further strengthening and increasing its role in policy-making and the country's EU integration process.

In addition to listing some of the key issues facing CSOs and the lack of progress in the recent years regarding the enabling environment for civil society development, Ms. Agolli also focused on the internal challenges of the sector such as, sustainability, raising standards, transparency and accountability, etc. "The Initiative of the Code of Standards and its implementation is a mechanism that we are working on; this expresses the sector's willingness and commitment to strengthening communication and public transparency, as important tools in strengthening the public trust".

H.E. Mr. Luigi Soreca,
Head of Delegation of the European
Union to Albania

In his speech H.E. Mr. Luigi Soreca thanked for the organization the National Resource Centre and Partners Albania for organising this Conference of Civil Society and mentioned that was pleased to see more than 100 participants online to discuss the challenges they are facing.

He stressed crucial role played by Civil Society Organisations in the democratic development of Albania and its accession to the European Union. "The EU will continue its support for the civil society organisations in Albania. Their involvement in policy-making is therefore essential but currently unsatisfactory in Albania. Public authorities should ensure the participation of civil society in reform processes. In its recent Progress Report, the European Commission was obliged to highlight that "no substantial progress has been made on the implementation of the roadmap on an enabling environment for civil society."

This state of play is not acceptable and must improve. Important efforts are still needed to have effective consultation processes with civil society before legislation is adopted. Consultation that are not done consistently and coherently, particularly on the most critical and sensitive subjects, may compromise the quality of new laws and future steps in the accession process. we strongly urge institutions, from the executive to the legislative branch, from the local to the central level, to show political will and considerably step up their concrete commitment to systematically engage with civil society – as any modern democracy does - said EU Ambassador Luigi Soreca.



Democracy and Civil Society

A critical overview of the state of play, developments and challenges

Topic 1 : The shrinking space for civil society, enabling environment and the role of sector in the path toward EU Accession

Introductory speech: Mr. Gjergji Vurmo, Director of Program, Institute for Democracy and Mediation (IDM)

"We tried to prepare ourselves towards the European integration process, but the only developments marked during these 7 years are obtaining the "status of candidate country" in 2014 and the decision dated in March 2020 to open negotiations, which has not yet materialized. On the other hand, the government has adopted the modality of civil society engagement in the negotiations process. This was carried out in consultation with the CSOs, however our feedback has not been reflected" said Mr. Vurmo in his speech. As regards the enabling environment for the sector, Mr. Vurmo highlighted that there are some very important achievements in the period 2013-2016, whereas over the last 4-5 years, a drastic decline in optimism is noticed. The law "On the right to information" and the law "On public consultation" still entail problems. National Council for Civil Society has not met its expectations, whereas, in particular, the Roadmap for an enabling environment has marked poor progress. An increase in attacks by the government has been noticed, with suspicious legal initiatives which affect not only our performance but also our independence and our role in the development and democratization processes of the country. Further, he focused on the role of donors in the country, considering their role as crucial in supporting the sector. "However, we need to further enhance our work and our relationship. It is about time to have a more constructive, formal and sustainable dialogue between CSOs and the donor community. In the frame of this dialogue, let us sit together and discuss on essential issues that affect the quality of our work, our credibility and yours as well."

Conclusions from the discussion with CSOs

Concerns/Challenges

- The space left to organizations to operate as well as the opportunities to engage in these processes has been increasingly narrowed, especially during the pandemic times of the last year. Many of the institutions' consultation processes are considered fictitious, without reflecting the opinion on the draft laws or policies being consulted, especially at local level.
- The fiscal treatment of the sector (including VAT refunds for grants) still constitutes a concern and is negatively affecting by shrinking the CSOs activities.
- Following the negative experience deriving from the implementation of Roadmap 1, there is a big question mark on the applicability of Roadmap II and great scepticism on the process, as long as there is no information on the implementation and monitoring mechanisms by CSOs.
- Drafting of laws with a direct impact on the activity of CSOs (i.e. For the registration of NPOs, for the national register of bank accounts etc) as well as the prolonged time of their completion with legal acts (i.e. Law on Voluntarism, Youth, Social Enterprises), causes ambiguity, affects negatively and hinders the activity of CSOs.
- Low capacity of local and grass roots CSOs to access and manage funds.
- The National Council for Civil Society does not function, it is just fictitious. The structure is not operational; it significantly lacks communication with CSOs throughout the country and does not play the proper advisory role for an enabling environment for the sector in relations with institutions.
- National Council for European Integration, as an advisory mechanism and structure, has operational problems and poor quality of consultation.

Recommendations

- Implementation of the Roadmap and engagement of CSOs in monitoring its implementation.
- Real involvement of CSOs in consultations, working groups and roundtables in the framework of negotiations and EU integration.
- Implementation of the law on consultation and re-shaping of the whole consultation concept and process and the role of civil society in decision-making at central and local level.
- There is need for re-evaluation of National Council for European Integration and National Council for Civil Society structures.
- Strengthening of the role of civil society at National Council for European Integration - not only aiming at strengthening the role of this council but also in the framework of the European integration process itself.
- National Council for Civil Society must perform the functions for which it was established; it must put forward the civil society concerns and discuss with government representatives to translate them into policies that provide an enabling environment for the sector.
- The donors need to design long-term programs of support and funding for CSOs, in line with country priorities, and drafted through an extensive consultation process with representatives of CSOs and other stakeholders.
- CSOs' capacity building programs with particular focus on diversification of funding sources, financial sustainability and organizational development.

Topic 2 : Rule of Law, democracy and participation in policy making and legislative processes

Introductory speech: Ms. Erida Skendaj, Director, Albanian Helsinki Committee

Ms. Erida Skëndaj, in her speech, stressed that despite the role and substantial contribution that the CSOs have provided in terms of monitoring or providing services to advance the implementation of priorities related to the country's integration into the European family, the state appreciation for the contribution of the sector is not at the adequate level and it is often despised, in some cases using the support that the state received from the international community in the country as a counter-argument. "Public consultation with civil society organizations presents a number of challenges and has a strong formal element, although the Parliament has adopted a special law that charges the responsible state institutions with a range of competencies that often remain unimplemented in practice. There have been cases when the language used in the parliamentary plenary sessions against the representatives of the CSOs has been offensive and inhibitory, follow to the sector opposing highly controversial legal packages which do not observe the International Conventions ratified by the Albanian state (CoE's, UN's, etc.). Many civil society organizations supported justice reform from the very first steps of its conception and adoption. Yet, when the organizations became involved in monitoring its implementation, support was limited, often with the argument that the reform has the support of the international community".

Conclusions from the discussion with CSOs

Concerns/Challenges

- The Parliamentary Resolution on Human Rights Defenders is of a declarative nature and the commitments reflected therein remain, to a large extent, formal.
- Although some organizations have been authorized by the Ministry of Justice to provide free state-guaranteed legal aid, they have not yet received adequate funding to provide for legal services.
- The non-functioning of the National Council for Civil Society, the lack of communication with the sector and representation with institutions.
- The implementation of the Law on Social Enterprises has proved impossible in practice.
- The legal reform concerning the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is not being effectively implemented, whereas there is a need for the harmonization of the domestic legislation with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
- The Law on Social Services 121/2016 turned organizations to eligible parties receiving funds by the state. Yet, the fund has not been established.
- Taxes at the local level burden the finances of the organizations providing services to people with disabilities (e.g., tax on property).
- The inadequate implementation of the law on the Right to Information and the law on Public Notice and Consultation, poses obstacles in terms of fulfilling the mission and for the CSOs in carrying out their activities.
- The organizations at the local level, have little information and very limited access to important policy and legislation consultation processes, while the selection of the CSOs has a discriminatory element from the public institutions conducting public consultations.

Recommendations

- Proposing and adopting a special law guaranteeing effective protection for the human rights defenders.
- The organizations authorized by the Ministry of Justice to providing primary legal aid service, shall be financially supported without any further delays.
- Strengthening the representative voice of the civil society in mechanisms such as National Council for Civil Society or National Council European Integration, as well as of the sector itself, to creating more effective self-regulatory mechanisms addressing and referring its concerns.
- Revision of the Law on Social Enterprises, with extensive consultation with the sector, in view of creating an enabling and developing environment.
- Full harmonization of domestic legislation, in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
- The role of the coordinators appointed by the public authorities for the implementation of these two laws shall be strengthened and the legal remedies mechanism shall be reviewed whenever these two laws are not implemented due to their lack of effectiveness.

Topic 3 : Fundamental rights, freedom of expression and media

Introductory speech: Ms. Kristina Voko, Director, Balkan Investigative Reporting Network (BIRN)

In her speech, Ms. Voko focused on the issues faced by civil society representatives on three fundamental rights and freedoms in the country. First, as regards the right to information, during the last two years, the situation of all NGOs directly involved in the proactive transparency of public institutions and in the requests for the right to information has deteriorated, which became even worse during the state of emergency. Secondly, the right to rally, with a large number of NGOs, activist groups and public institutions which have reacted by constantly calling for transparency and clearer rules on rally. Furthermore, as regards freedom of expression and media, Ms. Voko emphasised that the situation has worsened, which can be easily noticed in all progress reports and other international reports, mainly influenced by the number of physical and denigrating attacks on journalists, prosecution of journalists and media administrators, as well as proposed legal amendments as part of the "Anti-defamation package".

Conclusions from the discussion with CSOs

Concerns/Challenges

- Lack of transparency by public institutions at central and local level and problems encountered in access to information, which is more evident during the pandemic period.
- Centralization of information provided during the period of civil emergencies.
- Less effective public consultation process on important acts, which has increasingly affected vulnerable groups and rural communities.
- Lack of information by journalists on the rights of vulnerable groups, leading to lack of attention to social problems in the country, the needs of vulnerable groups and increasing hate speech in online and social media.
- Lack of stakeholders' engagement in the drafting and consultation of the "Anti-Defamation" package.
- Increased use of pre-roll videos by political entities and public institutions, which jeopardize the right to impartial information and media freedom.

Recommendations

- Increase of transparency by public institutions to enable supervision by civil society, as well as re-strengthening of the role of the Commissioner for the Right to Information in taking administrative actions in this regard.
- Strengthening of public consultation mechanisms and strict enforcement of the law.
- Prohibition of propaganda and political attacks to journalists and other civil society stakeholders.
- Review of the legal framework on rallies, including the recommendations identified by the Ombudsman and civil society organizations.
- Strengthen of the advocacy capacities of civil society and communities in raising issues important to them and increase of cooperation between organizations and the media.
- Increase of media and journalists' capacities on fair reporting on important social issues and vulnerable groups.
- Active engagement of stakeholders in drafting and consultation procedures in legal initiatives restricting freedom of expression and media freedom.

“Open Space Discussion”

Thematic Workshops

Workshop 1 – Engagement of CSOs and citizens in advancing the local agenda?

✓ Proposing organisation: Gender Alliance Centre for Development

Concerns/Challenges

- Despite the existence of several strategic documents and social plans adopted by the Local Self-Government Bodies, they are not practically implemented.
- Low engagement of CSOs in the consultation process.
- Lack of implementation of mechanisms at the local level that guarantee civic engagement and real and consistent participation in local governance
- Poor interaction between CSOs and other civil society groups to demand accountability at the local level.
- Low capacities of organizations at the local level intended for institutional monitoring, advocacy and networking.

Recommendations

- Strengthening the advocacy and monitoring capacities of CSOs at the local level.
- Strengthening networks and coalitions between CSOs at local and national level for joint actions.
- Establishment of a better dialogue between CSOs and institutions at the local level to implement existing or establish new mechanisms where they are lacking.
- Promotion of good practices of participation, consultation and monitoring.

Workshop 2 – Engagement of young people and youth organizations in policy making - Challenges in participation and cooperation with institutions

✓ Proposing organisations: Euro Partners Development; Partners Albania for Change and Development, New Vision, Vlora Youth Centre, Youth Development Through Integration Policies

Concerns/Challenges

- Low engagement of youth organizations in decision-making processes at local and central level.
- Lack of capacity of youth organizations to build and conduct advocacy campaigns, monitor and contribute to policymaking and implementation of holistic processes.
- Lack of financial sustainability of youth organizations.
- Lack of capacity of youth organizations to absorb European Union funds and implement them effectively.
- Lack of cooperation among youth organizations, and between the latter and other CSOs that work with young people.

Recommendations

- Increase of CSOs and young people engagement in consultation and decision-making processes at local and central level.
- Increase of capacities of youth organizations to participate and contribute to decision-making processes.
- Support to advocacy campaigns/initiatives of CSOs and youth groups.
- Development of capacity building programs for youth organizations for access to European Union funds; organizational and project management.
- Increase of cooperation and networking between youth organizations, and between them and other CSOs to build joint youth-focused advocacy campaigns

Workshop 3 – Dynamics of the civil society sector over the years - Dilemmas for the future

✓ Proposing organisations: “Antigonea” Cultural Media Center, Regional Development Agency, Vlorë, Useful to Albania Women

Concerns/Challenges

- The decline of voluntarism and activism in the sector compared to previous years has negatively affected the image of CSOs, recognition of their work and contribution, as well as the decline of confidence and support of citizens with respect to CSOs.
- There is not a CSOs-friendly environment by decision-makers and as a result the expertise acquired over the years is not properly and sufficiently exploited in relevant decision-making and policy-making processes.
- Fiscal addressing of the sector
- Insufficient public funds to support the activity of CSOs. Lack of governmental financial and non-financial support, especially for small and local CSOs which lack capacities to apply and compete for foreign donors' grants.
- Focus of foreign donors and their respective programs mainly on strategic development issues of the country, such as democracy, good governance, leaving out of focus the provision of services and their support.

Recommendations

- Increase of the working standards, transparency and accountability in the sector aiming to improve the public image and increase public confidence. Promotion of good initiatives, no matter how small, which have an impact on the community.
- Capacity building of small organizations and development of their expertise.
- In order to address enabling environmental issues, including the fiscal framework, requires the holistic engagement of CSOs from across the country and sectors. Undertaking initiatives and joint efforts by CSOs in this regard.
- Establishment of mechanisms for effective participation of CSOs in decision-making processes.
- More donor support for the service sector and the CSOs that provide such services and obtain the necessary relevant expertise.
- Increase of public funds. Financial and non-financial support from state institutions, especially for local organizations and those who provide services to vulnerable groups.

Workshop 4 – Integrated services for children in vulnerable situations - Challenges of CSOs and the need to increase inter-institutional cooperation

✓ Proposing organisation: Initiative for Social Change (ARSIS)

Concerns/Challenges

- Lack of financial support from public funds in providing services for categories in need and complementing human resources pursuant to the provisions of Law no. 121/2016. Support is limited to CSOs only.
- Provision of services in line with the priorities and capacities of public organizations and institutions, and not corresponding to the identified needs.
- Limited collaboration and not meritocracy-based between NGOs and Public Institutions; CSOs are considered as a tool and not as partners in providing suggestions and alternatives for intervention, and in providing services to categories in need.
- Allocation of funds on services related to the Covid-19 emergency had and will continue to have a negative impact on the financing and provision of social services

Recommendations

- Facilitating financial policies for CSOs and enhancement of structures and human resources for service providers.
- Operational and sustainable partnership in place between state institutions and CSOs.
- Addressing identified needs and more effective use of existing resources; Transparency of information and establishment of a relevant standard in this regard.
- Cross-sectoral intervention and acknowledgement of different perspectives in service provision aiming at higher effectiveness.
- Categorization of integrated services according to target groups, as well as combination of such services.
- Prioritization of the needs of children and families in vulnerable situations, and the increased needs during the pandemic times.

Workshop 5 – Strengthening of the role of CSOs in designing and implementing environment friendly policies

- ✓ Proposing organisations: “An eye for the environment” Network, “Celim”, The Institute for Environmental Policy, Protection and Preservation of Natural Environment Organisation Vlora

Concerns/Challenges

- Legal framework on environmental protection is incomplete and not transposed by EU Directives.
- The environment and its protection are not a priority for decision makers nor the community itself.
- Albania is directly affected by climate change. This is due to the fragile economy and all the gaps in the actions to be undertaken to cope with the consequences of climate change.
- Economic development has often affected areas of natural value with investments of negative impact, especially along the coastline and protected areas.
- Very poor engagement of CSOs in central and local environmental consultation and decision-making process.
- Political involvement of local and central institutions makes it difficult for CSOs to obtain information on environmental interventions and their impact.
- Role overlapping and confusion as regards institutional responsibilities at central level for natural resource management and the environment.
- Less funds intended for environmental protection; Existing funds are allocated to large organizations, often non-environmental and unbalanced for environmental actions and capacity building.

Recommendations

- Improving and increasing the participation and consultation processes with the involvement of environmental CSOs.
- Amendment of the law on the right to information on environmental issues regarding the obligation to share information on investments with high impact on the environment. Legal facilitation provided to environmental CSOs to appeal and file violation cases to court.
- Review of the decision-making within institutions in charge for implementing and monitoring the environment, where expert representatives from CSOs become part of the Board.
- Better cooperation between CSOs and local institutions to increase community awareness on environmental protection.
- Increase of monitoring of environment pollution and exploitation (especially focused on industrial emissions) as well as state and CSOs monitoring capacities.
- More active and supporting CSOs involved in climate change initiatives to promote and unite all society stakeholders in transport and energy low-carbon processes, and the use of renewable energy.
- Increased coordination and networking between CSOs on climate change, circulating economy and reducing energy poverty issues.

Workshop 6 – Difficulties encountered by organizations and other service providers for people with disabilities and their families

- ✓ Proposing organisations: Albanian Disability Rights Foundation, “Help the Life” Association, “Ray of Hope” Organisation

Concerns/Challenges

- Limited financial resources for the sustainability and expansion of the activity of organizations or service providers in the disability sector. Foreign donor funding programs do not consider disability as a priority, and therefore is addressed as a cross-cutting issue, therefore deepening the social exclusion of PWDs and their families*. Support provided through short-term sub-grant schemes also entail difficulties in the implementation of organizations' strategic plans, undermining the sustainability and standards set so far by CSOs.
- Services provided to PWDs are not a priority issue for local institutions to allocate funding. Lack of fiscal facilities and payment of local taxes increases the financial burden for CSOs and service providers for PWDs.
- The social fund supports the implementation of social plans, which have superficially addressed disability without including the entire network of services necessary for independent living and improving the life quality of persons with disabilities and their families. The criteria to benefit from the Fund are unclear. The process of selecting partner CSOs is not transparent and is organised without CSOs consultation. Often, services consolidated over the years thanks to donor support are not selected and risk to close.
- Lack of CSOs engagement in providing services to persons with disabilities in the consultation process, as a result of barriers that still impede access to information, communication and accessible facilities.
- Removal of obstacles/barriers in access to information, communication, transport and facilities, already provided for in the specific legal framework for disability, is not reflected in the general legal framework, such as the legal provisions on information and public consultation.

Recommendations

- Issues faced by the PWD community (15-20% of the population with an increasing trend) to occupy a prominent space in relevant programs and funding provided by state and international bodies, in accordance with the obligations arising from the national and international political and legal document, therefore providing support to that part of the civil society sector in charge to advance the disability agenda;
- Review of social plans to ensure proper financial support for service providers in the field of disability; Review of the criteria and increase of transparency on the selection of partner organizations for local government funding;
- Provision of fiscal facilities for CSOs and service providers for citizens with disabilities;
- Review of the legal framework on public information and consultation, to emphasize the removal of obstacles to the real engagement of persons with disabilities and CSOs that represent and protect their interests in public consultation processes.

*reference to Article 31 of the ICCPR on international cooperation and the responsibilities of supporting agencies to support its implementation

Workshop 7 - Social Enterprises (SE) impact in the development of local economy and communities - The Role of Civil Society Organizations

✓ Proposing organisations: Association "For gender Integration", Young Entrepreneurs Club"

Concerns/Challenges

- Lack of incentive schemes to support young people and vulnerable categories in employment and self-employment.
- Existing support schemes are difficult for CSOs to access locally.
- Low management capacities of social enterprises which affects their development and sustainability.
- Lack of platforms in place to support start-ups and social enterprises.
- The legal framework is unclear, not enabling, and even hinders the development of social enterprises.
- The existing fiscal framework is unclear and leaves room for interpretations by employees of institutions and CSOs at local level. Fiscal incentives are missing.
- SEs in Albania generally have little chance of growing and expanding.
- SEs do not have diversified funding sources and are not depending on grants.
- Lack of know-how for social enterprises.

Recommendations

- Review of the legal and regulatory framework enabling the establishment of social enterprises, provision of fiscal incentives for their development.
- Drafting of clear guidelines for the implementation of the legal and regulatory framework to increase understanding and avoid interpretations by the administration, CSOs and enterprises.
- Drafting of capacity building programs for young people and vulnerable groups for the establishment and management of start-ups.
- Set up of platforms that help expose and support start-ups and create opportunities for capacity building and attracting investor attention.
- Raising awareness of various stakeholders in the ecosystem for alternative financing and supporting mechanisms: business angels, entrepreneurial equity, establishment of incubators and accelerators that address social enterprises.
- Strengthening a good understanding on social entrepreneurship, risk undertaking, entrepreneurial mindset to solve social issues in universities and high schools where young people receive early education on these concepts.

Workshop 8 - How to increase cooperation between CSOs and the media?

✓ Proposing organisation: Human Dimension

Concerns/Challenges

- Lack of understanding and awareness of the civil society sector on the mission and role of the media.
- CSOs have not made sufficient investments in building cooperation bridges with the media through awareness raising, information and capacity building of journalists in recognizing, addressing and covering with integrity any issues addressed by the CSO sector. Failure to comply with human rights principles and lack of know-how on relevant legislation addressing media coverage for issues in focus has often led to misinformation rather than addressing the cases in an ethical way.
- Failure to recognize the issues faced by the media and CSOs has led to prejudice and mutual misunderstanding of their work.
- Lack of space in public media (Albanian Public Radio and Television) to cover issues addressed by CSOs. Poor investment by CSOs in search of these rights on the public media.

Recommendations

- The focus of work of CSOs is mostly oriented on programs dedicated to increasing the capacity of journalists (mostly journalists covering social issues and on-site journalists) for acquiring thorough know-how on basic human rights legislation and on social topics/issues. Simultaneously, more efforts are needed in increasing the capacity of CSOs for media advocacy and not just focused on information.
- Establishment of cooperation mechanisms with the media aiming to identify common interests and proper public information beyond simply asking for a media space by CSOs. Promoting and educating media advocacy stakeholders.
- Media-CSOs solidarity practices and support should be further developed, based on a cooperation and acceptance spirit, with no prejudice between the two sectors.
- Increased advocacy with the Albanian Public Radio and Television for the expansion of media coverage of the work of CSOs.

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