



Pathway towards an
efficient
use of local natural resource



Funded by
the European Union

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Project: Pathway towards an efficient use of
local natural resources

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Implemented by



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Introduction

This Communication Strategy has been developed in the framework of the project “Pathway towards an efficient use of local natural resources”.

This Project is financed by the European Union under the “IPA II Cross Border Cooperation Programme Albania-Kosovo 2014-2020”. The Contracting Authority is the European Union Delegation to Albania.

The consortium that is implementing this action - Academy of Political Studies (APS) from Albania and Pristina Institute for Political Studies (PIPS) from Kosovo, two CSOs members of the Council of Europe’s Network of Schools of Political Studies - have been providing political education to leading decision-makers in their respective societies for more than a decade. These organizations bring with them years of experience of engaging in policy dialogue and capacity building activities. Their experience is being put into service of two other partners, Municipality of Kurbin and Municipality of Suhareka, in order to build capacities of local administration and local community towards a sustainable use of energy resources.

The project aims to promote the sustainable use of natural resources (energy) through the implementation of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy measures and policies and development of local Action Plans.

Specific objectives of the project are:

- To build capacities of local administration and local community on planning and implementing Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy measures towards a sustainable use of energy resources.
- Create comprehensive and detailed local Action Plans for the implementation of the Energy Efficiency measures with a view to reduce fossil fuel consumption and pollution.
- To pilot investments on Efficiency and Renewable Energy Sources (RES) in order to be a learning ground on the technologies.
- Awareness raising and exchange of knowledge in between actors.

Section 1: Communication Purposes of the Project

As members of the Energy Community and future member of Energy Charter and EU, both Albania and Kosovo periodically prepared National Action Plans, monitoring and reporting on the fulfilment of European Union targets on renewable energy, energy efficiency and greenhouse-gas emissions reductions. While both countries are making good progress towards transposing the Acquis into their national legislation and policy, there is slower progress in actual implementation of policies adopted.

The lack of implementation of public policies is one of the key weaknesses on the path to prosperity. In addition, there is lack of awareness on Energy issues, followed by lack of motivation and willingness to put it into action. Suhareka Municipality in Kosovo has an existing Local Energy Efficiency Action Plan (2019 – 2021) and does not have the expertise to draft a new one, while Kurbin Municipality does not have a Local Action Plan in place, therefore expertise and know-how will be provided through the project. Similar investments are an innovative approach for these two areas, because being small municipalities, they are not usually targeted or do not have the capacities to benefit from such support. In preparing this project proposal, a preliminary assessment has been carried out to understand the local plans and strategies that are in place and relate to sustainable and efficient use of resources. This exercise identified a distinct lack of strategic vision towards resource efficiency. Even though Suhareka municipality had adopted an Energy Efficiency Plan 2019 – 2021 with the support of an IPA funded project, its implementation has been limited. In this context, there is room for support in many of the areas within the overarching sustainability aspect. According to EU Progress Report for Albania¹, the implementation of the action plan to increase energy efficiency is delayed and Albania's economy remains three times more energy-intensive than the EU average.

In order to exploit the existing energy saving potential, any supporting legislation and programs must take advantage of existing EE market drivers. One such driver that has become increasingly important in recent years is energy security. The introduction of EE measures can enhance energy security by (a) cutting down on the consumption of fire wood and thereby preventing deforestation; and (b) minimizing the volume of electricity imports, thereby reducing the need for government subsidies.

Through the proposed project it is aimed to foster capacity building of the local authorities on sustainable use of energy at local level to enable a proper environment for the successful implementation of relevant regional policies on Energy and Resource Efficiency and Climate Change. **The specific objective of the project is to enhance networking, raise awareness and understanding on Energy Efficiency and Climate Change issues by promoting best practices on both countries and initiatives for action at local level with the involvement of all relevant stakeholders with final aim to protect environment and to make possible better use of its resources.**

The envisaged activities fit into the following elements:

“promoting sustainable use of environmental resources” - The activities promote reducing energy consumption and changing the type of energy used (from fossil fuels to renewable electricity). The activities reduce the amount of greenhouse gas emission as well as improve air quality locally.

¹¹ https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/system/files/2020-10/albania_report_2020.pdf

“fostering renewable energy” – Part of the pilot projects will be to introduce solar panels in order to supply the efficient appliances that will be installed. This will make for partially self-sustainable infrastructure.

“supporting joint actions related to strategies, action plans” – Part of the actions are sharing knowledge through exchanges towards energy efficient action planning as well as an assessment of the current action plan in Suhareka will be prepared and two local action plans for both municipalities 2022-2026. Sharing know-how and lessons learnt while preparing the local action plans will highly contribute to the cross border effect during preparation and implementation phase of the action plans.

“preparation of strategies and action plans on prevention and mitigation of manmade hazards and natural disasters” – Energy Efficiency, especially in buildings is both a mitigation and adaptation measure to the incoming effects of Climate Change. It increases resilience of dwellings to more extreme weather events and ensures a lower dependency on fuel resources.

“awareness raising actions targeting the population on the importance to protect environmental resources” – The activities list a series of workshops and campaigns to increase knowledge towards energy efficiency and its benefits on a local and regional context, ranging from employment to better air quality. Promotional items will be produced and disseminated, a video and a website will be produced and made available as well as one promotion on the radio of the two pilot investments.

“support small scale environmental infrastructure interventions and procurement of equipment and promotion of environmental awareness and education” – The activities of pilot project fall into this description of the guidelines. The goal of the pilot projects is to introduce and raise capacities in green procurement and its specificities and actually implement the small-scale demonstrative projects in order to learn and educate the stakeholders through.

In addition, the following results will be addressed in the framework of the project, *Result 1.1 Environment resources and biodiversity better managed and promoted through promotion of environmental awareness and education on the importance to protect environmental resources (as a complementary activity to others), support to small-scale environmental infrastructure interventions and procurement of related equipment, small-scale interventions to foster renewable energy.*

The project will consist in increasing the capacities and networking of 2 municipalities (Kurbin in Albania and Suhareka in Kosovo) and other local stakeholders on energy efficiency and climate change issues through the following outputs: producing an Assessment report of the current local action plan of Suhareka Municipality which draws recommendations and lessons learnt for the new plan, two local actions plans 2022-2026 in place for Kurbin, AL and Suhareka, KS, one comprehensive and implementable Action Plan on Energy Efficiency in each municipality, including monitoring and reporting, a local internal strategic framework complying with national requirements and EU standards, a Manual on Procuring Energy Efficiently at local level, platforms for Knowledge Exchange among local stakeholders and across borders, 4 trainings.

The project will facilitate and foster the cooperation between the two countries through actions at local level – with municipalities, and at civil society level including the communities to result in local ownership and sustainability of the project outputs and outcomes. The cooperation among

local government units (Albanian and Kosovo municipalities) at both sides of the border shall boost the exchange of experiences and conveying of best examples to face such challenges jointly.

In turn all these interventions are expected to contribute to the Energy Efficiency and Climate Change, environmental protection and sustainable use of natural resources in both municipalities, through a more efficient and nature friendly intervention.

The project activities will be addressed towards public authorities (local authorities responsible for energy, planning, procuring, environment, employment, economy, social issues, construction, education), businesses (trade unions, industry, identified large consumers of energy, providers of services of energy like efficiency or renewable installers, Energy Service Companies), CSOs (NGOs representatives acting in the fields of consumers protection, environmental protection, energy, youth), local communities (academia representatives and individual experts interested in the raised issues) and media.

In order for the project to reach its objectives, internal and external communication as well as public relations, are essential areas of work.

Section 2: Visibility Approach/Key Audiences and Target Groups

2.1. Visibility Approach

The project will work in two directions:

- Visibility of the project as regards its being funded by the European Union that will be used in all the visibility items and mentioned in all events and the basis for the development of all these will be the Communication and Visibility Manual for EU External Actions
- Visibility of actions to reach a wider target.

2.2. Appropriate Visibility

In order to maximize the impact of communication efforts, the following will be the guidelines during the project implementation:

- timely activities;
- accurate information used;
- activities shall be coordinated closely with the Contracting Authority;
- the right audience(s) shall be targeted;
- messages transmitted in the interest of the target audience(s);
- appropriate activities in terms of resources spent, timing and expected impact.

2.3. Key Audiences:

The following stakeholders would be key for contact network building:

- NGOs representatives acting in the fields of consumers protection, environmental protection, energy, youth: Although there are many NGOs in both Albania and Kosovo,

their impact on daily life is limited. Both the overall number of NGOs and the number of NGOs outside Tirana have increased over the past five years, but, especially the NGOs outside Tirana, where they have been working for many years now, lack the institutional capacity to develop, fundraise, monitor, and lobby adequately for their work. That is why the project will take on the regions outside the capital, that is, Kurbin, Lezha region in Albania and Suhareka in Kosovo, in order to increase their capacities and skills;

- Public authorities: local authorities responsible for energy, planning, procuring, environment, employment, economy, social issues, construction, education;
- Businesses: trade unions, industry, identified large consumers of energy, providers of services of energy like efficiency or renewable installers, Energy Service Companies;
- local communities such as academia representatives and individual experts interested in the raised issues and
- Media which is lacking information on energy efficiency while being one of the main tools to raise awareness on its benefits to a broader public.

2.4. Target Audiences

The Project target audiences are:

- local authorities and their employees,
- CSOs,
- local communities in Kurbin and suhareka,
- students,
- businesses
- researchers/academia,
- media

Final beneficiaries will be all strata of the society, communities and public at large (through the media).

Based on the project budget, visibility actions are estimated at 25,300 euros.

Section 3: Media Relations and Enhancement

Effective implementation of public policies requires, among others, a good absorption capacity on the side of the public. The project, Through the implementation of its activities, the project provides real world data-based information on the concrete benefits of energy efficiency and renewable energy measures on public and residential buildings. It will, therefore, contribute directly to increased awareness of all local stakeholders on energy efficiency and climate change issues and its implementation. Green investments by local institutions will be promoted. Business and private sector will be encouraged taking into account sustainable use of energy resources.

Media is one of the prime means by which we will promote our project to target audiences and other interested stakeholders. It is the best source of disseminating widely information and initiating active dialogue involving civil society and community. As the project will be implemented in the cross border area between Albania and Kosovo, covering 2 regions from 2 countries, the emphasis

will be on locally based media, radio stations and new media like social networks such as Facebook, Instagram, blogs and websites, etc. Media visibility will be ensured at all stages of the project. Electronic and print media communication products of the project are and will continue to be in line and synchronized with all the project promotion, information, and partnership building activities with an outcome of enhancing joint project communication goals.

In addition, media at national level and participation of the project team in various meetings with national stakeholders at central level in both countries, promoting cross border cooperation, will also be an added value to the project visibility and will ensure cross-cutting issues, coordination of efforts with other actors working in the field of energy Efficiency and provide a value added component to the project.

The major project's communication lines will be:

- Media
 - Interviews and activities to involve the local media;
 - Possible participation in TV/Radio discussions;
 - Project events; trainings; workshops;

- Events
 - Meeting in the municipalities with companies that implement measures of EE and Renewable Energy
 - Open days on energy efficiency Awareness raising Campaign:
 - Preparing a Regional Fair to exhibit products and best practices of EE utilization and its benefits across borders.
 - Closing Conference on Best Practices Exchange

- Means of communication
 - Websites of all project partners (success and feature stories);
 - Social media channels;

Sets of promotional materials to be developed and used for further promotion of the Project and Projects' goals:

- Reports;
- Assessments;
- Promotional materials (bags, pens, t-shirt, files, etc);
- Banners;

Each activity shall be branded with the Project title and donors logo. All materials that are presented to the media or used at project events shall use the project's logo/letterhead, etc.

Section 4: Communication with External Actors

In order for the project to reach its objectives, internal and external communication as well as public relations, are essential areas of work. To this extend, APS will assign one representative of the staff

for media relations. The Project Director of APS has previous extended experience in media environment.

In addition, all staff members will engage in external communication and will support the Media Contact whenever needed with dissemination of materials.

4.1. List of Media Contacts

The Project will establish a Media Contact list and will update it regularly. This will ensure the clear visibility of the project and its activities.

4.2. Press Releases

When inviting the press to an event the project partners will produce press releases that will be disseminated prior to the event (2 days) in forms of information sheets to the media lists and also during the event. In addition, media will also be contacted to invite them to participate and explain the details of the project and get their commitment in presenting the event. The press releases shall be sent also on the day the event is occurring. All press clippings, articles and videos shall be kept by the Lead Partner when prepared by other partners so as to keep them as records.

Section 5: Visual Kits

The Project shall be in line with the Communication and Visibility Manual for European Union External Actions. All publications/banners/files shall have the cover (as in the above Document) with the logo of the project, EU Logo and Logos of all partners:

This Projects funded by the European Union

And

The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of <name of the author/contractor/implementing partner> and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union.

The project will have a banner and roll-up presented below with the above words.

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Banner, Roll-up & Notebook printscreen

Chapter 7: Communication Work Plans

The communication work plan is as follows:



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Communication Action Plan

Objective No	Activity - Communication Activity	Details	Period/ Venue	Responsible
1.	Prepare the Communication Strategy and Action Plan	<p>Prepare the Communication strategy with work plans and also the Communication and Visibility Package, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Banner; -Media list; -branded materials <p>The project will make use of the media list and list of all stakeholders to make the project visibility items as public as possible as in the case of the website</p>	(Aug – Sep 2022)	All project partners
2.	Meeting in the municipalities with companies that implement measures of EE and Renewable Energy	Informative sessions which will prepare the basis of the next steps to be taken by all involved actors	(Jun – Jul 2024) Kurbin & Suhareka	All project partners
3.	Build a website and social media dedicated accounts for the project directly linked to the	The website and social media will serve not only for the targeted communities to have access to the information and project outputs, but it will be directly linked to the municipalities'	(Aug 2022 – Sep 2024)	

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	websites of the municipalities.	websites to offer access for other services. This will raise awareness locally and nationally in both Albania and Kosovo.		
4.	Open days on energy efficiency Awareness raising Campaign:	Development of website, information materials (leaflets, posters, guides, videos, jingles). The hard copy promotional materials are usually neglected when distributed during events, but for these small municipalities are very important as can be used to directly influence and inform the participants while the news can be spread easily people to people. Internet is not always the available and preferred option in this area, therefore in person activities are crucial to raise awareness on this initiative.	(Apr – Jun 2024) Kurbin & Suhareka	All project partners
5.	Preparing a Regional Fair to exhibit products and best practices of EE utilization and its benefits across borders.	These kinds of events have a higher impact in small communities such as Kurbin and Suhareka as they raise awareness not only on the interventions happening locally but also increase the attention towards smaller municipalities which are often neglected by visitors, donors and businesses. Media will be informed on the outcomes of the visit. As regards the visibility items, there will be used the banner, presented website, distributed leaflet	Jul 2024 Kurbin	All project partners and experts
6.	A video and radio news	They will promote the two pilot investments in Kurbin and Suhareka and raise awareness on their benefits.	May- Jun 2024	All project partners
7.	Closing Conference on Best Practices Exchange	The main results of the project will be presented. Suhareka will share the experience on development and implementation of its Action Plan and pilot investment in public lighting while Kurbin will share the experience on the pilot investment in the kindergarten and state of play of the new local actions plans in place.	Sep 2024 Suhareka	All project partners

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