

## Data Sheet

<b>USAID Mission:</b>	Albania
<b>Program Title:</b>	Civil Society
<b>Pillar:</b>	Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance
<b>Strategic Objective:</b>	182-0210
<b>Proposed FY 2004 Obligation:</b>	\$4,077,000 AEEB
<b>Prior Year Unobligated:</b>	\$0
<b>Proposed FY 2005 Obligation:</b>	\$4,077,000 AEEB
<b>Year of Initial Obligation:</b>	FY 1992
<b>Year of Final Obligation:</b>	2006

**Summary:** The USAID Civil Society program currently promotes civil society participation through: technical assistance to political operatives across political organizations; training of national, district, and local election commissions; training and technical assistance to NGOs working in conflict management; assistance in the implementation of NGO law reform; training of citizens' groups to interface with government; technical assistance and training to create a professional and sustainable independent media; technical assistance to municipalities in finance, governance and corruption prevention; and technical assistance to municipalities and the GoA on decentralization issues.

### Inputs, Outputs, Activities:

#### FY 2004 Program:

Empower civil society (\$1,020,000 AEEB). This element will strengthen a civil society that commits to transparency and accountability. Through training and technical assistance, it will support the education of the Albanian citizenry in civil rights and responsibilities, mobilize and strengthen concerned NGOs and lead to increased citizen advocacy. Specific activities will: sustain and continue to train domestic election monitoring groups (NGOs) during off-election periods; support viable polling and data collection on a regular basis; place citizen representatives on the boards and committees of local governance, health, and education units; support citizen monitoring (NGOs and others) programs of Local Government Unit efforts; and, in synergy with efforts under the Rule of Law activities, support citizen efforts in the fight against corruption. Competition to be carried out-no contractors currently identified.

Strengthen democracy and governance (\$3,027,000 AEEB). This element will support the decentralization program of the central government that devolves important decisions on the physical, cultural and social environment to Local Government Units (LGUs). Training, technical assistance and small grants will be utilized to: support civic forums and citizen participation in local government units, particularly in regard to the budgetary process; in collaboration with other donors, improve the civil and voter registries; support local government associations to formulate policies and positions proactively; support local government units with a strong emphasis on practice-oriented training; strengthen the capacity of functions to be transferred from the central government to the local governments; harmonize the national legislation affecting the decentralization process; support better hierarchical control and appropriate discretion for decision makers; develop and enforce LGU performance standards in regard to municipal services; and assist LGUs to gain access to credit. Competition to be carried out-no contractors currently identified.

Support Peace Corps (\$30,000 AEEB). The Peace Corps Small Project Assistance program will provide technical assistance and training to local communities and local governments primarily in local economic development.

#### FY 2005 Program:

As nationwide Parliamentary elections are due in late-June, 2005 a crosscutting theme for this year will be the preparation for the elections: improving election administration, particularly the voters' lists; get-

out-the-vote civic campaigns; media fairness in campaign coverage; and issue based, rather than personality based, political campaigns.

Empower civil society (\$1,020,000 AEEB). The activities above will continue to receive support. Training for domestic election observers will be made more extensive. Citizens will be organized to interface with and question political candidates. Polling and data collection will be used to frame and inform the debate. Using information provided by USAID's anti-corruption efforts under the Rule of Law program, informed citizens and NGOs will question candidates and parties on their funding and stance on corruption.

Strengthen democracy and governance (\$3,027,000 AEEB). The activities above will continue to receive support. Local Government associations will be encouraged to take apolitical stands on political campaign issues that most affect LGUs and their citizenry.

Support Peace Corps (\$30,000 AEEB). Assistance will continue to the Peace Corps to assist the volunteers in their community-based small-scale development activities.

**Performance and Results:** USAID's civil society activities began to pay dividends in FY 2003 as a result of continued improvement in the political environment of Albania. A major area of advance was decentralization. The USAID-supported transparent formula for the transfer of funds from the central government to local governments was improved, based upon the experience from the previous two budget cycles. Election administration continued to move toward international standards when the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe's Office of Democratic Initiatives and Human Rights declared the local government elections of early October 2003 as the best to date in Albania; the number of Albanian observers (2,200) from the previous election in 2001 doubled, supported by a synergistic ad hoc coalition of five USAID contractors serving as domestic election observers. Notwithstanding its weakness and donor dependence, the NGO sector saw advances in sustainable advocacy campaigns of certain organizations, which have become more aggressive in setting national and local government priorities, along with gains in membership and expansion of their operations to new areas. A notable example of this improvement was the work of the USAID-supported Albanian Coalition Against Corruption (ACAC), which has increased its membership to well over 200 individuals and NGOs. During FY 2003, ACAC provided technical assistance to the GoA on crafting legislation for the law on the Declaration of Assets of the top 3,000 public officials in Albania and then lobbied Parliament tirelessly to ensure its passage. USAID's support for the broadcast media helped focus public attention on the intractable issue of corruption; facilitated the organization of local election campaign debates based on the American model of limited time to speak to a specific question; and, enabled the National Council on Radio and Television to enforce, for the first-time in the country's history, broadcast regulations that protect intellectual property rights.