



Peer to Peer Program 2016-2017

Final Narrative Report

Project ID

Project Partners:	Albanian Society of Program Evaluation (ASPE) Romanian Society of Evaluators (RoSE) Kosovo Evaluation Network (KEN)
Project Title:	ARK2GEA - Transnational cooperation Albania-Romania-Kosovo towards the implementation of Global Evaluation Agenda 2016-2020
Project Managed by:	Fation Luli (ASPE)
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Project start date	1 November 2016
Project end date	31 July 2017

Project team for this project

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- 1. What was the purpose of the project? What did the project plan to achieve and how? (Brief description of the project, max 100 words).**

The general objective of the Project **ARK2GEA - Transnational cooperation Albania-Romania-Kosovo towards the implementation of Global Evaluation Agenda 2016-2020** was to enhance capacities of 3 National VOPEs of Balkan countries (**ASPE of Albania, RoSE of Romania** and **KEN from Kosovo**), members of IOCE and EvalPartners Network to play strategic roles to enabling environment for evaluation in their countries according to the vision for the future of evaluation profession established by the Global Evaluation Agenda (GEA).

Following to the successful results in the *EvALRO* project¹ the partnership has been extended by including the national VOPE from Kosovo, new comer in P2P, to join efforts in implementing GEA to a wider geographical area and provide sustainability of previous project results.

The Project specific objectives (SO) were:

1. Enhancing VOPEs' strategic roles to strengthen enabling environments for evaluation within their countries, contributing to improved national evaluation systems and policies according to GEA vision
2. Strengthening VOPEs' institutional and operational capacities and to develop participatory approaches with stakeholders concerned with evaluation according to GEA vision
3. Strengthening the individual capacities of evaluators in each country and promoting professional education and occupational framework

All project activities had joint work and specific deliverables as contribution of each VOPE clearly identified. They were structured as 4 work packages:

- the first three packages related to a specific objective and were fully in line with GEA actions. A special attention was given to ensure fully compliance with P2P requirements.
- the 4th work package concerned the project management activities including coordination among partners, transnational meetings, communication plan, monitoring/evaluation and dissemination of results.

2. Did the project achieve what it planned to achieve? What were the key results? Yes, fully / partially / unfortunately, no.

Regarding to the implementation of the project, all activities and outcomes initially scheduled in the work plan are already done and reached out.

¹ EvALRO Project – implemented in 2015-2016 by ASPE and RoSE in 2016-2016 under P2P

Level of achievement of project activities is presented in the following table:

Objectives	Planned Activities	Degree of achievement	
		Activities carried out	Status
Strengthen enabling environment	Produce a map of the status of evaluation for each country with recommendations for action	✓	100 %
	Work with at least one CSO to advocate for evaluation use	✓	100 %
	Organize national events on evaluation aimed at strengthening the enabling environment	✓	100 %
Strengthen VOPEs capacity with multi-stakeholders' networks	Endorse the Global Evaluation Agenda 2016-2020 (GEA)	✓	100 %
	Disseminate information about all five EP networks to all its members	✓	100 %
	Present at least one session about an EP network during a face-to-face meeting of each partner VOPE	✓	100 %
	Distribute information about the GEA to all VOPEs' members	✓	100 %
Strengthen individual capacities of evaluators	Involvement of a diverse mix of members the activities of each VOPE, including young and emerging evaluators and gender-balanced membership	✓	100 %
	Evidence of regular activities being conducted by the VOPE, beyond those foreseen in the P2P project	✓	100 %

Some Key Results

- Organization of 3 Kick-Off meetings and 3 main public meetings: at the RoSE-Romania headquarter on May 21, 2017 where the main discussion was related to the status of Evaluation and the role of ARK2GEA for enabling environment for evaluation according to the GEA ; In Kosovo at the American University on May 26, 2017 with the main talking points being the KEN objectives, the ARK2GEA objectives, the evaluation status in Kosovo as well as showcasing a few remarkable achievements in the Kosovo policy evaluations. The 3rd meeting of ARK2GEA took

place in Albania on June 19, 2017 and its aim was to assure a follow-up of the transnational cooperation among the three national VOPEs, ongoing activities and outcomes of the current project, and to discuss new projects on the way.

- Produce a map of the status of evaluation in each country and identification of the needs and what should be done to develop and strengthen the evaluation function, to build knowledge and capacity in M&E, with recommendations for action
- Endorsement of the Global Evaluation Agenda 2016-2020 (GEA) and 4 GEA2020 objectives; Dissemination of information about all five EP networks, IOCE, EvalPartners Initiative, P2P Grant Programme and Global Evaluation Agenda to all members;
- Disseminate of the public statements about the value of evaluation based on EP Advocacy toolkit;
- Joint collaboration for a Master’s degree in Evaluation by P2P partners and University of Elbasan-Albania and new initiative developed by the P2P partners and the American University of Pristina - Training and Development Institute Transformational Leadership Program;
- Official communication sent to the Governments of three countries;
- Exchange of experience and reach agreement on the framework of documents/events/approaches to strengthen enabling environment as well as on effective policy to develop education programmes for emerging evaluators.

2.a. Please comment on degree of achievement for each of the outcomes:

Desired Results	Possible Measures (Qualitative and Quantitative) of Achievement
<p>Outcome 1: VOPEs are more influential and able to play strategic roles to strengthen an <u>enabling environment for evaluation</u> within their countries</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint achievements – exchange of experience and reach agreement on the framework of documents/events/approaches to strengthen enabling environment • ASPE² - 1 study on status of evaluation in AL; 1 customized joint statement distributed to 1 CSO and through on-line media; 1 National event organized • RoSE³ – 1 updated study on status of evaluation in RO; 1 customized joint statement distributed to 1 CSO and through on-line media; 1 National event organized • KEN⁴ – 1 study on status of evaluation in RKS; 1 customized joint statement distributed to 1 CSO; 1 National event organized
<p>Output 1.1: VOPEs advocate for demand and use of</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint achievements – 1 joint statement that advocates value of evaluation ; 1 advocacy approach based on EP⁵ Advocacy toolkit • ASPE – 1 public event organized; 1 Press release issued; 1 Official communication sent to the Government

² ASPE -- Contribution of VOPE1, namely ASPE, Albania

³ RoSE – Contribution of VOPE2, namely RoSE, Romania

⁴ KEN– Contribution of VOPE3, namely KEN, Kosovo

⁵ EP – EvalPartners Network

evaluation at national level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RoSE – 1 public event organized; 1 Press release issued; 1 Official communication sent to the Government • KEN – 1 public event organized ; 1 Press release issued; 1 Official communication sent to the Government
Outcome 2: Stronger VOPEs that actively work with multi-stakeholder new networks towards achieving Global Evaluation Agenda priorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint achievements – 1 Exchange of experience on effective using VOPEs networks and developing participatory approaches and establishing collaborative relationships
Output 2.1: VOPEs have built their institutional capacity and have established collaborative relationships with other VOPEs, academic institutions, and civil society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASPE - 1 Official Statement for endorsing GEA priorities; 1 training + 1 initiative developed with University of Elbasan, partnership agreement; • RoSE – 1 Official Statement for endorsing GEA priorities; 1 training + 1 workshop; 1 partnership agreement with 2 CSOs • KEN – 1 Official Statement for endorsing GEA priorities; 1 training + initiatives developed with the University of Pristina, the American University of Kosovo; the Planning Office of Primer Minister
Output 2.2: VOPEs actively partner with multi stakeholders in achieving expectation of new networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASPE – 1 Face-to-face meeting organized and information on all EP Networks for ASPE members; 4 ASPE member assigned to participate in EP networks; 1 Statement on ASPE Action Plan to implement GEA objectives endorsed by ASPE members and published/disseminated • RoSE – 1 Face-to-face meeting organized and information on all EP Networks published on RoSE website for RoSE members; 5 RoSE member assigned to participate EP networks; 1 Statement on RoSE Action Plan to implement GEA objectives endorsed by RoSE members and published/disseminated
Output 2.3: VOPEs adapt Global Evaluation Agenda priorities in local plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KEN –1 Face-to-face meeting organized and information on all EP Networks for KEN members; 3 KEN members assigned to participate in EP network; 1 Statement on KEN Action Plan to implement GEA objectives
Outcome 3: Strengthened individual capacities of evaluators to conduct credible and useful evaluations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint achievements – 1 Exchange of experience on effective policy to develop education programmes for emerging evaluators, • ASPE – 1-day training for emerging evaluators provided by RoSE; • 2 Partnership Agreements with Academia (ASPE & University of Elbasan and KEN & American University of Pristina ; 2 regular activities implemented beyond P2P; Improved policy to enroll new emerging evaluators; 5 emerging evaluators enrolled • RoSE – 1-day training curricula developed; 1 sustainable RoSE activity implemented and registered. 1. Membership policy improved. • KEN – 1-day training for emerging evaluators provided by RoSE; 1

	Partnership Agreement with Academia; 2 regular activities implemented beyond P2P; Improved policy to enroll new emerging evaluators; 3 emerging evaluators enrolled.
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Other achievement

- Joint achievements – 1 joint arrangements for management, communication, monitoring, evaluation and dissemination of project sustainable results;
- ASPE – 1 transnational meeting hosted; 9 transnational on-line meetings; 1 communication plan; 1 Quality and Financial report; 1 register of project activities and accounts
- RoSE –1 transnational meeting hosted; 9 transnational on-line meetings; 1 communication plan; 1 Quality and Financial report; 1 register of project activities and accounts
- KEN – – 1 transnational meeting hosted; 9 transnational on-line meetings; 1 communication plan; 1 Quality and Financial report; 1 register of project activities and accounts

3. Was the project implemented as planned? If there were changes in the planned activities, why they were necessary?

The activities of the project where implemented as planned

4. What are the main lessons/challenges learned from the experience of this project that you would like to share with other VOPEs?

ASPE - The conclusions of our research on the map of evaluation gave us more evidence on the status of evaluation and on the right path to develop an environment favorable to the development of a culture of healthy governance, managing for results and accountability. The four essential dimensions of the evaluation system were under the target: enabling environment, institutional capacities, individual capabilities for evaluation, inter-linkages among these first three dimensions. This approach took into the consideration the Global Evaluation Agenda 2016 – 2020 and it is part of a partnership between the Albanian (ASPE), Romania (RoSE) and Kosovo (KEN) supported by the international initiative EvalPartners.

Promoting and using a participatory approach, the desk review, interview and the focus group were the main methods we use to collect information, but at the beginning of the project the challenges we faced were related to the involvement of non-evaluative stakeholders to become significantly involved during the implementation of the project. After the consultation we did with various stakeholders interested in M&E, we adapted our strategy considering the stakeholders should be the real actors in the phases of the project and not merely data sources or simple observers. In particular, the working team created to develop curricula for the University of Elbasan was composed not only by the team members of the project but expanded and opened to the real actors involved in the development of

the curricula inside the university. Later, we developed a mechanism to measure the participatory approach: a member was assigned to keep on going contact with the university and regular meetings planned for each month.

Albania is in negotiations with the European Union to gain accession, and to become a member of EU but the non - involvement of central government in strengthening of National Evaluation Capacities (NEC) create an underdeveloped evaluation function. Monitoring mechanisms in place at national level are fragmented and specific organization or department-oriented rather than being cross-sector. The following lessons learned from the project are related to the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E), as an integral part of results-based management, and in that context, it should be focused on:

- Learning: Active learning through application of M&E information to the continuous improvement of strategies, programmes and other activities.
- Progress: Monitoring of progress towards development results instead of just inputs and implementation processes.
- Timeliness: Monitoring and evaluation of results in real time, as they emerge instead of as an expose activity.
- Human Resources: Strengthen Monitoring Units by increasing the number of evaluation staff, ensuring efficient Monitoring and Evaluation strategy and policy;

Ongoing advocacy: Advocacy for the establishment of the National Evaluation System on four key areas:

- Advocacy for development of a national evaluation culture and to stimulate broad high quality evaluations.
- formulation of country owned strategies to develop national M&E systems;
- development of the policies and institutional framework for the demand for and use of evaluation by governing bodies of the government;
- strengthening of skills for planning, managing and implementing evaluation projects and policies;

RoSE - Following to the agreed approach among project partners to map the evaluation in each country, RoSE has assigned a team to proceed with making an inventory of the status of evaluation in Romania. The results of the assessment have been shared with the transnational partners to use the good experience and to identify the common gaps to be further addressed with mutual support. An executive report has been delivered as part of the ARK2GEA progress report in February 2017. Within the following 4 months RoSE has completed the study by a documentary research on the evaluation culture in Romania. The main sources of information were the Annual measurements of the diffusion of evaluation culture within the Romanian Structural Instrument System and the assessment of the impact of Key Area of Intervention 1.2 "Evaluation" of Operational Program Technical Assistance in supporting evaluation culture diffusion. In this respect, the current level of diffusion of the evaluation culture has been measured through indicators, criteria and sub-criteria that are aggregated in 4 dimensions (*demand side, supply side, dissemination/utilization of*

evaluation results, institutionalization of the evaluation culture). The most recent measurement reveals a good diffusion of evaluation culture in Romania with an average achievement of the Evaluation Culture Measurement Index based on all indicators of 59% out of 100%. Although these criteria generally perform well, the analysis shows that there are still areas of improvement. Some areas of improvement have been identified and specific recommendations have been provided.

As the overall outcome of assessment of mapping the status of evaluation culture in Romania carried out under ARK2GEA project, RoSE stated that these recommendations are very much related to the implementation of Structural Instruments and should be extended by considering the appropriate guiding lines of GEA2020, to combine effective methods, techniques and values that drive policies geared to the public interest. This will be the way to improve on a practical level policy-making and programs implementation efforts. The 4 dimensions of evaluation -the core of EvalAgenda 2020 have been disseminated in Romania by RoSE through various means mostly via on-line channels and by lobbying concerned actors. The focus of its awareness was put on the need of specific legislation and implementation of evaluation standards according to best international practice.

In extent to RoSE's contribution for enabling environment in Romania other key activities under ARK2GEA were addressed to use the opportunity to share knowledge and best practice with transnational partners for enhancing evaluation competences in the Balkan Region. In this respect RoSE has brought important inputs during the transnational meetings and by developing curricula for the Master Programme in Evaluation planned to be held by Elbasan University in partnership with Pristina University, EvAlbania and RoSE.

ARK2GEA project has brought a most valuable contribution in enhancing awareness on the need of improving the quality in evaluation in Romania according to the best international practice and on joining forces with professional community of evaluators at global level to enhance competences and policy making in evaluation in line with GEA2020.

KEN - This project has served as an essential technical assistance project for Kosovo Evaluations Network (KEN) and has set the ground for the practice of the evaluation profession in Republic of Kosovo.

In the one hand, the top lessons learned by the P2P project were the hands-in-practice of our newly established VOPE in the area of evaluations in the world. Along with RoSE and ASPE, KEN has mobilized its resources to implement the project in the ground by strengthening the evaluation environment, culture and practice with its area of expertise in our respective countries. Today KEN is a better VOPE compared to day one of this project. To this day, Kosovo government through the Office of Prime Minister has endorsed the Global Evaluation Agenda 2020 which is a significant milestone achievement for the P2P project. KEN created more links and networks with other VOPEs in the region, in particular those of Western Balkan Evaluation Network. Additionally, KEN has created contacts with the University of Pristina and the American University in Kosovo Training and Development Institutes to further develop the new initiative for designing and initialization of curricula programs in evaluations as well as trainings for civil servants. Another flagship partnership

the project has facilitated is the one with the Kosovo Institute of Public Administration striving to develop capacities of the civil servants in the area of policy evaluations.

On the other hand, the project experienced a handful of challenges during the implementation of its numerous activities. For KEN, working in evaluations as a novel field in the policy making in Kosovo as a transnational partner has been a challenge on its own. First, the coordination among the multiple stakeholders was not an easy task to get done, especially in lack of the culture of evaluation at both local and central level of the government. In the past, the evaluations environment Kosovo used to be weak and very fragmented. Moreover, KEN did not exist as a VOPE making it even more not coordinated the processes and capacities of the networks and individual evaluations in Kosovo.

5. Are there plans to continue or expand collaboration started under the project? If so, please describe.

Yes. We are planning to expand our collaboration and to contribute together in the implementation of the university programs in evaluation in each country. The University of Elbasan (Albania) and the University of Pristina and the American University in Kosovo Training and Development Institutes have agreed with our VOPE-s to develop their curricula in evaluation and to be supported by our professional organizations.

Please attach any workshop material, documents, presentation material, pictures or website links related to the project listed above. This information will be presented to the UN Women auditors as proof of the project activities.

Send this final report along with the final financial report and corresponding receipts to Lynn Burgess at lynn@ioce.net
