
EXTERNAL EVALUATION

**WESTERN BALKANS ENABLING PROJECT FOR
CIVIL SOCIETY MONITORING OF PUBLIC
ADMINISTRATION REFORM (WEBER)**

EXTERNAL EVALUATOR

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
CEP	European Policy Centre
CSO	Civil society organization
EC	European Commission
EPI	European Policy Institute
EU	European Union
FPI	Foreign Policy Initiative
GLPS	Group for Legal and Political Studies
IA	Institute Alternativa
IDM	Institute for Democracy and Mediation
IPA	Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance
MDULS	Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MS	Member State
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PA	Public Administration
PAR	Public administration reform
PME	Planning, monitoring and evaluation
RCC	Regional Cooperation Council
RESPA	Regional School of Public Administration
SIGMA	Support for Improvement in Governance and Management
TEN	Think for Europe Network
ToR	Terms of Reference
WeBER	Western Balkans Enabling Project for Civil Society Monitoring of Public Administration Reform
WG	Working Group

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

Public administration reform (PAR) continues to be key priority under the Political criteria for EU accession of all countries of the Western Balkans. PAR is considered paramount to strengthening governance at all levels. Since November 2014, the Principles of Public Administration represent the latest development in PAR, and are developed by the OECD/SIGMA in close cooperation with the EC. Each country is scrutinized under the above criteria through an annual report on progress by the EC. The focus of the reform process is on the national regulatory and institutional-level compliance, while inclusion and openness of that process to CSOs, media and citizens as well as its effects at the local (municipal) level has been mainly neglected so far. WeBER overall goal is to increase the relevance, participation and capacity of CSOs and media in the Western Balkans to advocate for and influence the design and implementation of PAR. The project included an array of activities, incl. development of PAR methodology and PAR Monitor Reports to provide for an analytical framework to measure and contribute to the PAR process as well as comprehensive set of capacity-building (grant scheme included) and networking activities to enable generating capacities, knowledge among CSOs and media to be part of the PAR process in the future.

The project provided for an overall evaluation based on 5 general evaluation criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability and added-value. The evaluation applied a multi-method approach (desktop research and review, on-line self-assessment survey with project staff and in-depth interviews with WeBER staff and selected

stakeholders) in order to triangulate the findings. The data gathering commenced between mid-December 2018 and lasted till end-January 2019.

Findings and conclusions

In terms of *relevance*, the project presented a simple, straightforward idea, that resonated well with beneficiaries and stakeholders. In its design, it included an ambitious, but pragmatic, complementary approach to what other stakeholders, esp. SIGMA have been doing so far. Approach to media showed to be challenging. Overall, the project addressed complex topic, driven more by international (esp. EU) than domestic demand.

In terms of *effectiveness and efficiency*, overall project objectives have been achieved, while to lesser extent in relation to media involvement and capacities in PAR. Ambitious plan of activities was set in the project document, which put strain on resources (time, finances, HR) and relations, but which nevertheless, delivered on time, with extra activities/outputs and with highly-quality outputs. Moreover, project partners and stakeholders expressed high satisfaction with the project implementation and commended CEP for its leadership role. Internal procedures were clearly-communicated, protocols were put in place, which helped overcome the situation with partners which possessed different capacities and knowledge. The project produced a methodology in an inclusive and participatory manner and while research put strain on human resources, accessibility of data put pressure on delivery, the project key outputs – PAR Methodology and PAR Monitor Report – were produced with high quality. The project contribution was greatest in increased civil society capacities on PAR topics, and skills in

research and monitoring methodologies. Basic networking (mainly through national WGs) was established, but added-value and continuity are needed to demonstrate their effects. Strengthening of TEN network took place, but mainly as a result of day-to-day joint work of TEN network staff, rather than as a direct result of organized trainings and coaching activities.

In terms of *impact, sustainability and added-value*, comprehensive methodology was developed in participatory way, complementary to OECD/SIGMA approach. Bold advocacy strategy was put in place, with varied reactions and scattered but concrete effects on specific issues at local level. Most effect was annotated for direct activities, such as trainings, SIGMA seminars, grant scheme, monitoring reports etc. *Per se*, the greatest effect of the Grant scheme has been in “humanizing” PAR, what it meant at local level and how it can contribute to local level openness, better services etc. Capacities of CSOs have been built on unpacking PA standards, monitoring and research methodologies. Basic sustainability is insured through possibility to replicate basic activities with minimal resources, but to sustain the advocacy effects further investments are needed. Evidence-based approach with limited effects on Government and media and expertise/ evidence-based vs. advocacy potential of think-tanks need to be considered before putting in place the next phase. Greatest added-value of the projects is in bringing CSOs and local perspective into PAR and having a regional and comparative perspective to put concrete country situation into perspective and produce pressure to compete regionally.

Recommendations

Overall no drastic changes are required. In view of possible continuation, the following recommendations are given: In terms of *design and management*, development of advanced performance and impact indicator project framework that will allow to target and measure evidenced change that the project produces is recommended. Provide for internal reflection on grant scheme management. Design of next phase should consider between going deeper vs. wider and careful sequencing of activities as key to put less strain on available (time, financial, human) resources. In terms of approach to *target group*, further work with Governments and media requires refinement of approach, while for continued *impact and sustainability*, continuation of capacity through contextualization of standards and adding issues of interest to CSOs, enhancing the networking forums (esp. NWGs) into more permanent and continuous forums that provide for both exchange and advocacy platform on PAR and lastly, to provide for mainstreaming of PAR Principles at central by linking them to all sectoral policies esp. decentralization, regional and economic development as well as for localizing PAR principles.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

“Good governance matters. It has a significant impact on government performance and is therefore essential in building trust in government and delivering necessary structural reforms. A well-functioning public administration requires a professional civil service, efficient procedures for policy and legislative development, well-defined accountability arrangements between institutions and citizens as well as among institutions, ability of the administration to efficiently deliver services to citizens and businesses, and a sound public financial management system.”

OECD/SIGMA

Since 2014, the European Commission (EC) has defined the scope of public administration reform (PAR) as covering six core areas: (1) the strategic framework for public administration reform, (2) policy development and co-ordination, (3) public service and human resource management, (4) accountability, (5) service delivery, and (6) public financial management. These embody the so-called Principles of Public Administration (PA) and are developed by the OECD/SIGMA¹, which also performs country monitoring and presents reports on the state of each country. The Principles are a continuation of effort of the EC to progressively define the concept of “good administration”. Firstly, with the definition in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, and following with the concept of “European Administrative Space” that used to attach universal principles of public administration to the administrative systems and practices in the EU. The Principles of PA for the six core reform areas are accompanied by the analytical and monitoring framework for monitoring and reviewing progress of the countries in enlargement process, using detailed methodology. Ultimately, application of these Principles should indicate the capacity of administration to implement EU requirement, i.e. apply the EU *Acquis*.² Each country is scrutinized under the above criteria through an annual report on progress by the EC. The focus of the reform process is on the national regulatory and institutional-level compliance, while inclusion and openness of that process to CSOs, media and citizens as well as its effects at the local (municipal) level has been mainly neglected so far.

In the 2018 EC Communication on EU Enlargement Policy, PAR has been assessed as having moderate progress in all of the countries of the Western Balkans. While comprehensive public administration and public financial management reform strategies have been found to be in place, except in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), delays in implementation and the financial sustainability of reforms remain a concern. Budget transparency has in many cases improved. The quality of central government strategic planning and links to sector planning need to be substantially improved in the Western Balkans. Policies, legislation and public investments are still often prepared without systematic impact assessments and consultations. A key problem in most countries is the extensive use of urgent legislative procedures. Professionalization of the civil service still needs to be ensured in all countries. Despite modern civil

¹ OECD is Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, while SIGMA is Support for Improvement in Governance and Management.

² WeBER platform <http://www.par-monitor.org/pages/principles-of-public-administration>.

service legislation, exceptions are regularly used, especially for appointments and dismissals of senior civil servants. In all Enlargement countries, the structure of the state administration needs to be further rationalized. In all countries, similar administrative bodies have different statuses, many of them reporting directly to the government or the parliament rather than to their natural parent ministries. There is insufficient accountability and reporting between subordinated agencies and their parent institutions. To improve service delivery, most Enlargement countries have focused on introducing e-government services but initiatives often lack strategic steering and coordination. Most countries have also made progress with adopting modern laws on general administrative procedures, but in many countries a substantial amount of sector legislation still needs to be amended to reduce the special administrative procedures to a minimum.³

Western Balkans Enabling Project for Civil Society Monitoring of Public Administration Reform (WeBER) is a three-year project funded by the European Union and co-financed by the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The overall goal of WeBER is to increase the relevance, participation and capacity of civil society organizations (CSOs) and media in the Western Balkans to advocate for and influence the design and implementation of PAR. WeBER was created for the purposes of strengthening CSOs and media participation in PAR by educating and enabling them to: monitor its progress; assess its quality; and propose new solutions based on evidence and analysis. Among others, the project included activities such as development and testing of the monitoring methodology (PAR Methodology); organizing trainings, coaching, regional workshops and round tables for application of PAR Monitor and design of web-based solution for the Regional CSOs PAR Scoreboard and preparation of national and regional monitoring reports; media cooperation and awareness raising activities; creation and functioning of the regional PAR WeBER consultation platform and national civil society PAR Working Groups (NWGs). The project also provided for a specific grant scheme facility that funded 33 small grants (5.000-10.000 EUR, or 250.869,38 EUR in total) and trainings to enable local CSOs, grassroots and media to contribute to PAR Monitor, advocate for PAR locally and establish local PAR WGs for dialogue with local authorities. The total project worth is 1,273.411 EUR and it ran for 36 months (December 2015 - December 2018). WeBER was implemented in Albania, BiH, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia by the Think for Europe Network (TEN) network composed of EU policy-oriented think tanks in the Western Balkans: European Policy Centre (CEP), Serbia, European Policy Institute (EPI), North Macedonia, Institute Alternativa (IA), Podgorica, Group for Legal and Political Studies (GLPS), Pristina, Foreign Policy Initiative (FPI BH), Sarajevo and Institute for Democracy and Mediation (IDM), Tirana). European Policy Centre (EPC) from Brussels acted as an EU partner to the projects, while PAR ministries/offices in WB countries and Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) and Regional School of Public Administration (RESPA) acted a project associates.

The project envisaged an external, ex-post evaluation for the entire project as well as a separate one for the grant scheme. This Evaluation Report consists of Introduction section, including basic background information, evaluation concept and methodology and its limitations followed by Findings and Conclusion section focused around evaluation questions of the evaluation as requested by the Terms of

³ 2018 Communication and EU Enlargement Policy, https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/20180417_strategy_paper_en.pdf.

Reference (ToR). In section three, the Report presents recommendations to be addressed for continuation or next phase of the project. The Annexes of the report include both the original ToR, evaluation matrix, interview guide, list of interview persons and list of consulted documents.

1.2. EVALUATION CONCEPT AND METHODOLOGY

1.2.1. GENERAL APPROACH

The ToR requested that the evaluation provide a combination of process and impact evaluation, i.e. it should assess the organizational and managerial features of the project (internal division of the tasks, project management, timeliness of the outputs as opposed to the timetable set in project application); the content and relevance of its outputs (PAR Methodology, PAR Regional and National Monitor Reports, multimedia presentations etc.) against the project application goals; the sustainability of changes the project results initiated and the extent to which these changes can be attributed to the project actions. The main evaluation criteria included: (1) relevance, (2) effectiveness and efficiency, (3) impact and sustainability, and (4) added-value, including a list of 23 evaluation questions. In developing the evaluation matrix and methodology, the evaluator regrouped some the evaluation questions as per the ToR listing in order to better reflect the findings and recommendation against the set evaluation objectives.

FIGURE 1: ISSUES COVERED PER EACH EVALUATION CRITERIA

RELEVANCE

- Extent to which the project delivers results against its objectives;
- Extent to which the project aligned with the national PA policies and PAR strategies of the WB countries.

EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY

- Achievement of project objectives;
- Efficient use of resources (funds, expertise, time, etc.);
- Effectiveness and efficiency of organisational and managerial arrangements of the project team;
- Problems or limitations of the internal functioning of the project. Obstacles or unintended outcomes in the management of the project;
- Stages of data collection and processing during the research phase and their main features. Unintended circumstances;
- Effective of the organisational and managerial arrangements of the WeBER Platform and National PAR Working Groups;

- Extent to which the coaching program by EPC for the 6 Western Balkans beneficiaries/TEN network members contributed to enhance their organizational capacity;
- Extent to which the project strengthened the CSOs and media capacity to advocate for and influence the design and implementation of PAR.

IMPACT AND SUSTAINABILITY

- The impacts so far, extent it is sustainable and what further improvements are needed;
- Continuation of the benefits of the project after its completion;
- Feedback from the relevant stakeholders on the research outputs. Extent to which the research outputs induced the relevant stakeholders to perform a certain action. Level of impact produced;
- Extent to which the research outputs contributed to the realisation of the overall and specific goals of the project;
- Reactions initiated by relevant stakeholders as a result of advocacy outputs;
- Contribution of advocacy activities to the realisation of the overall and specific goals of the project;
- Sustainability of capacities for advocacy that were built during the project;
- Lessons learned regarding the financial management of the project. Limitations and problems observed.

ADDED-VALUE

- Project complementarity and how it fits within the overall WeBER initiative (work of the platform, capacity building for local CSOs, etc.);
- Likelihood of project beneficiaries' and PA stakeholder's engagement to continue, be scaled up, replicated or institutionalized after Project's end;
- Further maintenance of deliverables, i.e. established electronic portal (PAR Scoreboard).

1.2.2. METHODS APPLIED

The evaluation applied a multi-method approach in order to triangulate the findings. The approach included the following:

- (1) Desk research and document review: This included the review of WeBER project related documents, sub-grantee documents, outputs and websites as well as documents from other stakeholders and donors. The most important sources are listed in Annex 4;
- (2) On-line self-assessment survey addressed to all project implementing partners' staff, to which 21 persons responded. This survey was developed and conducted as part of the internal evaluation of CEP – the lead organization – focused on the project's design and usefulness for the target groups and the

latter linked directly to results (outputs) and activities of the project to which evaluator only gave certain suggestions;

(3) Conducting of 13 interviews with key informants (project staff in different roles, stakeholders and beneficiaries, etc.). The 13 interviews conducted during the grant scheme evaluation were also included in the data gathering and analysis, thus the interview total included 26 stakeholders and beneficiaries. The selection of key informants was based on two general criteria: (1) balance between internal (project staff) and external (institutions, external project structures, CSOs, media) informants and (2) their representativeness. The list of interviewed representatives and organizations in Annex 3 provides their overview.

The data gathering started mid-December 2018 and lasted till end-January 2019. The self-assessment survey was conducted between 19th December, 2018 and 13th January, 2019. The interviews were conducted in the period between 14th January and 23rd January, 2019.

1.2.3. LIMITATIONS

The applied methodology has the following major limitation:

The project proposal had a well and clearly-defined logic of intervention (LogFrame), which was also strictly observed and utilized for the purpose of monitoring the progress and set indicators of achievement. However, the LogFrame indicators primarily include quantitative indicators which are set to either minimum level of achievement (e.g. number of participants, number of events, reports approved) or perception measurement (e.g. percentage of CSOs and media in the WB holding the view that CSOs and media have sufficient capacity to participate actively in monitoring PAR). While there might have been a conscious decision to include such indicators, which are realistic to measure and their data gathering could rely on project instruments, it renders the project of clearly measuring and showcasing the achievements it has made in the area of capacity building and making relevant the inclusion of CSOs and media in PAR. Finally, the idea to link the indicators for overall objective contribution, where impact of the project is measured, directly to the indicators set in the DG NEAR Guidelines for Support to civil society in Enlargement Countries, 2014-2020 is commendable, but also limiting due to data availability to measure these.

Given that the intervention is geographically and thematically dispersed and that its main focus was to build a new monitoring tool and test it with production of first round of monitoring reports against the set methodology, limits the extent to which impact can be measured at the end of this project phase. Thus, the impact assessment that the evaluator was able to make is limited and sporadic.

The time constrain and limited resources for the evaluation (e.g. no budget for field mission) allowed for only face-to-face interviews to be conducted with stakeholders based in North Macedonia, while the rest were approached only by online survey or Skype interview. Moreover, the data gathering phase coincided with the winter holiday season and with the final reporting on the project, which made reaching and talking to partners and stakeholders difficult due to other obligation and influenced the synthesis phase to be conducted only end of February/beginning of March.

2. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

2.1. RELEVANCE

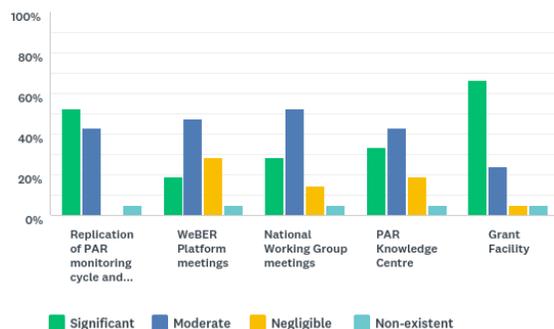
RESPONSE TO BENEFICIARY NEEDS AND DESIGN

Simple, straightforward idea, that resonated well with beneficiaries and stakeholders

The project rests on a simple idea that more involvement of CSOs in policy-making, concretely PAR, would lead to identifying root causes and issues, which require reform attention and providing options for solving those same causes and issues. In short, the project aimed to show the challenges PAR faces from a stand point of CSOs, media and ordinary citizen. This simple idea, however required a challenging approach at the same time. PAR is perceived as highly technical and complex to comprehend as well as horizontal issues having link to different thematic policy areas, such as education, health, economy, finances etc. and little attention has been given to have CSOs, media or citizens involved in the PAR process. Still, if the aim of the reform of the public institutions – both central and local – is to be more open, transparent and accountable and provide better services to citizens, then their involvement and their needs, perspectives etc. should be key guidance in deliberating both in terms of PAR implementation as well as issue that call for attention for further reform.

In designing its approach and assessing needs, the network did not undertake a formal needs assessment, but relayed on its previous experience in working both with public institutions and CSOs at country level in related areas such as good governance, rule of law, accountability, EU integration process etc.. In many cases, the need for the approach arose from previous project and initiatives and as such – esp. on specific country situations - built on them. Ex-post it seems that the grant scheme and concrete capacity-building activities, such as trainings and coaching have resonated most both with project partners and beneficiaries as they directly relate to concrete needs and in the most concrete ways (i.e. financial support, knowledge, information-sharing) with them. Finally, according to the self-assessment survey, current domestic demand for the continuation of the key activities of the project is highest for direct instruments: grant facility (67% significant, 24% moderate) and replication of PAR monitoring cycle and production of PAR Monitors (52% significant, 43% moderate), while for networking (WeBER platform, NWGs) and information-sharing (PAR Knowledge Center) activities considerably less.

Q17 Please assess the current domestic demand for the continuation of the key activities of the project:



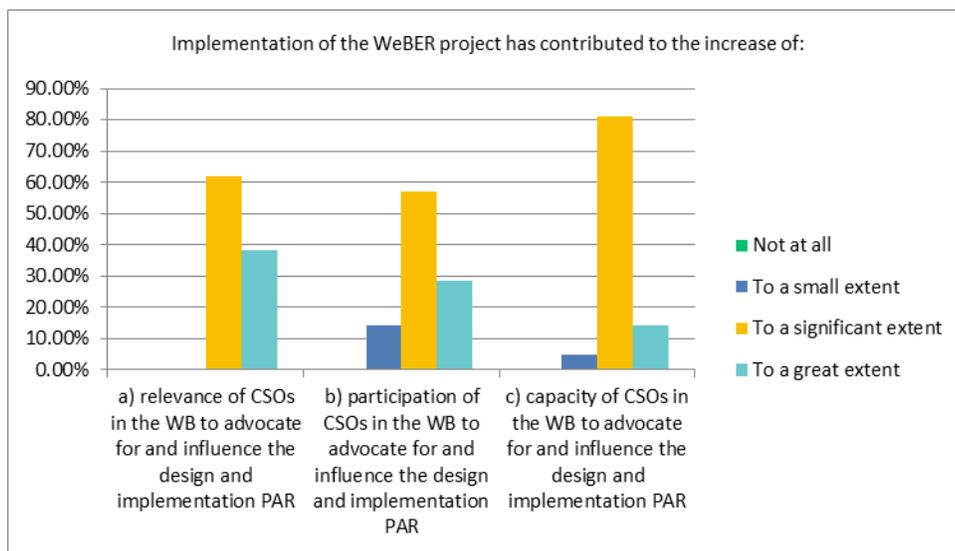
Ambitious, but pragmatic, complementary approach

The simple intervention logic rests on a comprehensive design that includes a combination of approaches (i.e. research, capacity-building, networking, financial support) and is time-, resource- and capacity-wise intensive and consuming. In a nutshell, the approach envisaged that a 3-year regional multi-partner intervention could produce a new PAR methodology measuring inclusion of CSOs in PAR, produce the first cycle of monitoring reports and promote this to Government stakeholders and the public. In parallel, the project envisaged direct capacity-building activities for CSOs and to some extent for media through trainings and grant scheme to test whether PAR principles/methodology and to what extent could be applied to the local level. Moreover, a comprehensive set of networking (national CSO Working Group (WG) and regional WeBER platform establishment) and communication activities (setting PAR Scoreboard with monitoring results, production of briefs, short videos etc.) were also envisaged.

This ambitious design was balanced with linking the development of the key methodological tool – the PAR Methodology – to EU accession process as well as basing it on the SIGMA international Principles of PA. Since SIGMA monitoring reports on the state of implementation of PAR against its Principles have become the basis for EC assessments on the progress (or lack) therefore of all EU candidate countries where WeBER project was conducted, the methodology that was developed and subsequent PAR Monitor Reports were easily linked and provided for complementarity the SIGMA assessments, presenting the CSOs/citizens view on their inclusion in these important reform process.

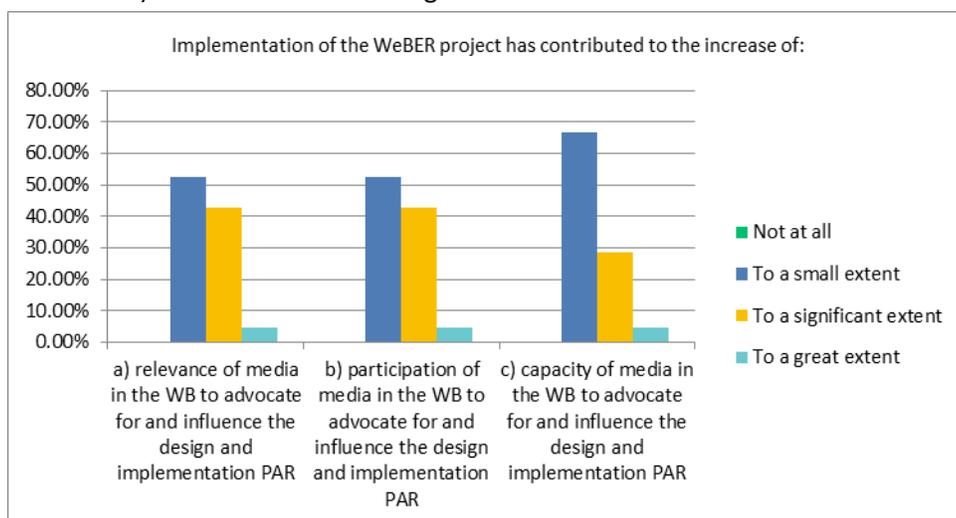
Relying on SIGMA has helped with the focus and framed the backbone of the project. According to key stakeholders, this was the right decision. Still, relying on SIGMA brought some limitations – the methodology focused only on SIGMA categories, while PAR reform is context sensitive. SIGMA indicators are broad, internationally acceptable categories, but each country has its specific characteristic. Still, the key added value was to assess participation, inclusion vs. the focus on delivery, which is the focus of SIGMA standards. Comparative approach responded to the needs of all stakeholders and resonated well with them.

While entailing so many combined approaches, the project main strength laid in building capacity of CSOs in monitoring public institutions' performance in PAR – directly responding to the main targeted group of the project – CSOs – and its general needs. This is confirmed in the internal self-assessment survey, which found that the project was most successful in strengthening the capacity of CSOs in the WB to advocate for and influence design and implementation of PAR (81% to significant extent, 14% to great extent). Contribution to their participation (57% to significant extent, 29% to great extent) and their relevance to advocate for and influence design and implementation of PAR (62% to significant extent, 38% to great extent) was assessed as making an overall high contribution. Finally, the high participation rate of CSOs representative to capacity-building activities and inclusion in developing the PAR Methodology and verifying the findings (mainly through national Working Groups) has contributed to justify the relevance of the project to CSOs.



Approach to media challenging

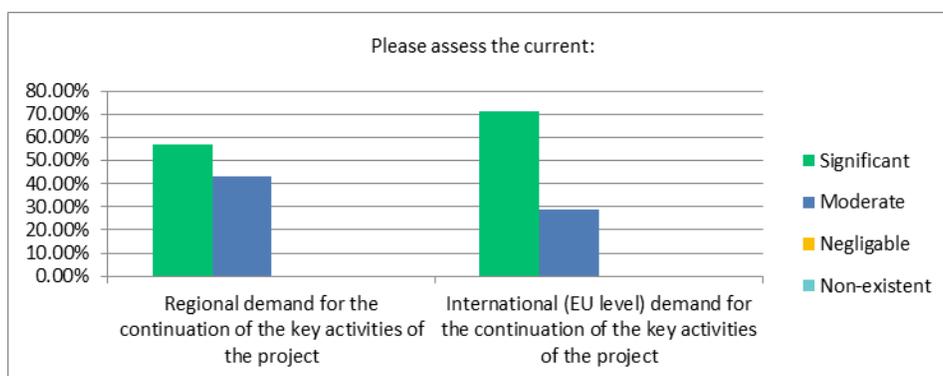
Addressing media, their capacity to be involved in PAR was another integral part of the general approach. Still, in concrete terms of activities, media were targeted directly through the grant scheme (i.e. grantees were requested to provide an MoU with a media and work with them to expose project outputs) and used in communicating PAR Methodology and PAR Monitor Report findings. Considering that media situation is precarious in all countries, there is no joint regional media space and that PAR is a highly specialized and complex topic, on which media mainly lack expertise and understanding, the project team faced challenges in involving media (e.g. targets in training and coaching media representatives on PAR were not fully achieved), while their interest was greater concerning the findings of the research. Here, the project team anticipated that greater interest can be stimulated if the research findings are presented in comparative (country-to-country) way and that this could also stimulate interest for regional findings. This situation is also confirmed by the internal self-assessment, according to which the project was to a lesser extent found to contribute to strengthening the capacity of media in the WB to advocate for and influence design and implementation of PAR (67% to small extent, 29% to significant extent). Contribution to their participation (53% to small extent, 43% to significant extent) and their relevance to advocate for and influence design and implementation of PAR (53% to small extent, 43% to significant extent) was assessed as making an overall modest contribution.



RESPONSE TO SECTOR NEEDS

Complex topic, mainly driven by international (esp. EU) demand

While no formal needs assessment has been undertaken, the self-assessment survey points to the fact that PAR process is seen as something being highly technical and complex for CSOs, media and citizens to understand and be involved. While the common perception seems to be that there is both domestic and international demand for key project activities, still international demand is assessed as significantly higher (71% significant, 29% moderate) than domestic (57% significant, 43% moderate). This again points to the perception that the main incentive for domestic actors is not based on evidence-based information as well as can be interpreted that PAR is undertaken not due to needs identified internally, but rather due to EU and international demands for good governance, rule of law etc. Moreover, this points to the fact that currently, PAR is not (yet) currently linked to citizens' demand for better services, transparent and accountable public institutions and processes and that consequently, the project has worked on raising awareness what PAR means and is about.



Thus, the project did not respond to a particular direct request of CSOs or media, but the general need the WeBER partners observed and identified in their previous work in researching and influencing the reform process in their countries. The fact was that CSOs were rarely included in the reform of public administration (PAR), but since this is a very specific and at the same time broad (horizontal) area and since CSOs rarely possess specific expertise in this.

2.2. EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY

ACHIEVEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

Overall project objectives have been achieved, while to lesser extent in relation to media involvement and capacities in PAR

All interviewed stakeholders, expressed satisfaction with both achievement and project performance. All of the indicators set as part of the LogFrame and the internal monitoring system have been achieved, although reflection on the level of overall objectives (impact) is to be followed-up at a later point. There were minor exceptions with regards to achievement indicators set for inclusion and capacity-building of media (e.g. lower participation rate for media to capacity-building events). However, this did in no way affect the overall performance of the project and neither it affected the media presence and attention devoted to findings published in the PAR Monitor Reports, which achieved good media attention, esp. at

country level. Further approaches and reasons for media inclusion and achievement are discussed in the section Impact and Sustainability.

This project was a multi-country projects including combination of different types of activities, dominated by research and capacity-building, which mutually reinforced itself. For example, beneficiaries of grant scheme were both beneficiary of capacity-building activities, as well as actively contributed to research component, by being involved in consultations on the PAR Methodology, participating to survey as part of data-gathering for the PAR Monitoring Reports and verification of findings through the national Working Groups. In this sense, the approach was comprehensive and ambitious, but at the same time well-thought planned and executed.

USE OF RESOURCES

Ambitious plan of activities, put strain on resources (time, finances, HR) and relations. Still, project delivered on time, with extra activities/outputs

The project management was centralized, whereby CEP was the overall coordinator and manager of the project. The organization also managed the most intensive set of activities – methodology development and PAR Monitor preparation. From start of the project, CEP set the pace for the ambitious and multi-faceted design of the project to be implemented timely. Different project management-related tools (e.g. Slack online project management tool) and protocols were introduced to facilitate timely and coordinated implementation. Still, the ambition to develop a methodology that would measure inclusion of CSO in PAR in an inclusive and participatory manner, required more skills, knowledge, time and resources than originally anticipated. The needed adaptation, both in terms of knowledge, human resources and budget allocations were conducted and these were successfully overcome. Some of the activities were implemented in sequence, to utilize both resources and time, by joining capacity-building with presentation and consultation on outputs being developed. All partners appreciated the lead role of CEP and consider this key to project quality and timeliness.

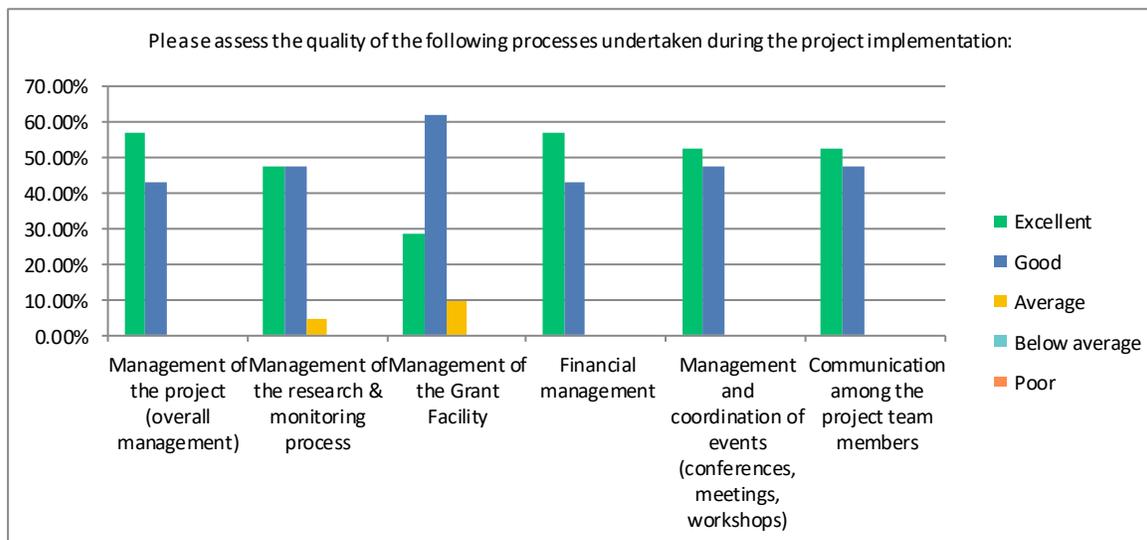
Interestingly, the Grant scheme, which has been internally assessed as one of the most useful and impact-full activities, was the only project component that was assessed as being managed less satisfactory than other components⁴. The Grant scheme was managed in decentralized manner by project partner EPI and which included EPI coordinating all individual activities and developing templates (project application, the call, reporting etc.), but each partner being in charge of the sub-grantees administration and mentoring in their own countries. While staff turnover could have affected this, the difference of approach and the heavier burden that project partners felt for managing the grant scheme (incl. administrative, reporting and financial) might have contributed to this feedback. Moreover, as found per Grant scheme evaluation, there is a difference of opinion with regards to future management of the Grant scheme in terms of pros and cons to introduce centralized management, so this needs to be taken up in planning of the next phase of the project.

⁴ See graph from self-assessment satisfaction with internal management below.

Moreover, project partners consistently identified the same types of challenges faces in the internal self-assessment survey, incl. time-management, ambitious planning, respect for deadlines and different capacities of partners for implementation of activities. A list of improvements in terms of particular process or procedure that could be established within the project framework in the future could include: better use of platforms and network (regional-WeBER platform, national-NWGs), better and less ambitious plan, more allocated resources, esp. for research in data gathering and analysis phase, respect for deadlines by all partners, equal division of labour (pros and cons on leadership and partner role: CEP has control was also overburdened, takes the heaviest load in project management and delivery pressure) etc.

High satisfaction with the project implementation, commendable leadership role of CEP

Project partners expressed high satisfaction with overall and financial management (57% excellent, 43% good) as well as individual components of the project (research and monitoring 48% excellent, 48% good; events 52% excellent, 48% good; internal communication 52% excellent, 48% good). Still, the management of the grant scheme satisfaction by partners is lower – 29% excellent, 62% good as discussed above.



The leadership role and capacity of CEP for overall management and for leading the most intensive component – research and monitoring process - has been appreciated by all project partners as well as external stakeholders. Although there was some internal staff turnover (both the project manager and responsible communication person changed during the project) in CEP, this did not affect the project performance. Moreover, the personal dedication of the project manager and other CEP staff as well as the learning and adaptability attitude made it possible for the ambitious plan of activities to be implemented timely and that the pressure on performance, budget and time did not put too much strain on internal network relation, but rather strengthened as partners felt supported through the project duration.

COORDINATION AND MANAGEMENT

Clearly-communicated procedures, but partners with different capacities and knowledge

Clear and comprehensive procedures and protocols were put in place from the start of the project, including financial, communication, administrative. They were clearly communicated to all partners in the first workshop. A comprehensive structure was put in place to enable joint monitoring and coordination of activities, composed of several structures, e.g. Steering Committee (SC), Management Support Team (MST), which brought staff from project partners together at different levels in order to enable direct horizontal communication. Clear protocols and tools were put in place in parallel to enable for these structures to run smoothly and to avoid overlap. While some project partners reported this to have been time-consuming and intensive (e.g. communication on daily or weekly basis) it has provided for a smooth operation and timely implementation. Such intensiveness also enabled for project partners at different levels (e.g. project coordinator, researchers) to work as one team through the project, quick identification of issues and follow-up etc.

Partners have entered the project with different capacities for implementing certain activities. While all had previous experience and capacities as thin-tanks to undertake development of monitoring methodologies, data-gathering and interpretation of results (analysis), some have for the first time been faced with implementing activities such as grant scheme and dealing with related administrative and financial procedures. Support offered by CEP as the leader and EPI grant manager for the Grant scheme as well as a learning attitude of most project partners helped overcome these without major difficulties and strengthen internal network and individual member capacities in these fields.

RESEARCH EFFECTIVENESS

Inclusive and participatory developed monitoring tool

Developing the PAR Methodology on the basis of the SIGMA Principles on PA made it initially easier, faster and more strategic approach. Still, one of the main qualities according to stakeholders was that it relied on internal expert resources where each of the project partners was assigned as specific area to lead on in order to use the exiting internal capacities. Moreover, where needed, the project team would invite contribution from external organizations or individual experts, although the quality of feedback might not have always been at the expected and satisfactory level. In a nutshell, all stakeholders agree that CSOs inclusion in PAR Methodology development was beneficial and important (as a matter of principle), but sometime the trade-off between the usefulness of input and the time, effort put to received was not satisfactory. Finally, the open approach to consulting the draft PAR Methodology and the monitoring findings strengthen the legitimacy, brought the buy in by CSOs and stakeholders and ultimately not produced only a very sound methodology, but demonstrated how an inclusive process, for which the methodology and reports advocate looks like in practice.

Strained human resources, accessibility of data put pressure on delivery of quality outputs

The data gathering was more intensive for partner organization than initially anticipated. It was extremely intensive in the second third of the project lifespan and cooped with time pressure to gather, analyse and publish PAR Monitor Reports by end of project made it necessary for introduction of

additional research assistants. Still, partners who are larger organizations could rely on other staff to temporary step in for support, while in other the research coordinator was left alone to deal with this. Considering the specific topic and scarce availability of data, organization also report that accessibility of data through regular channels (e.g. checking the website of the ministry, reports) did not work and in many cases access to data needed was based on their good relations with the institution and access they have established in order to obtain this. Building a relation was important for data gathering as it was latter in the phase of presenting the findings to advocate for their implementation. Ultimately, with all strains put on human resources and time needed to obtain necessary data, the project delivered high-quality outputs both in terms of research and in terms of capacity-building components.

CONTRIBUTION TO CAPACITY-BUILDING AND NETWORKING

Increased civil society capacities on PAR topics, research and monitoring methodologies

One of the main goals of the project has been raising the capacities of CSOs, esp. via the Grant scheme. Most useful of capacity-building activities reported in interviews are the initial workshops where CSOs were introduced to the SIGMA PA Principles and the accompanying methodology. The workshop helped raising awareness about what is PAR and how it related to the work of CSOs. It has facilitated CSOs' understanding in how PAR can be integrated into their work as a horizontal issue (i.e. mainstreamed). Thus, capacities to monitor the work of public institutions of these organizations has been enhanced.

Exposure and possibility to network with national organizations and institutions (among others via the establishment of national PAR WG and regional WeBER platform) has been especially appreciated and acknowledged. Links with project partners and inclusion into discussion with PAR-related institutions have been established or strengthened. Also, regional networking activities for selected CSOs was also important. It enabled cross-sector networking for local organizations for peer-to-peer exchange and presenting their work (as methodologies) as a model to be potentially applied in other countries.

While not *per se* capacity-building effect, but the insistence to work side by side with (local) media in the Grant scheme, many of the grantees reported that due to cooperation they were able to enhance their links and capacities in how to approach, prepare and work with media and increase their outreach and effect of their work. Consequentially, 52% organizations in the Grant scheme survey stated that they are confident in their capacities, while 36% stated that they would need further investment in their organizations. This also potentially paws the way to strategize for future engagement of media and stimulate their interest to be part of project activities.

Networking (mainly through national WGs) established, but added-value and continuity needed to demonstrate effect

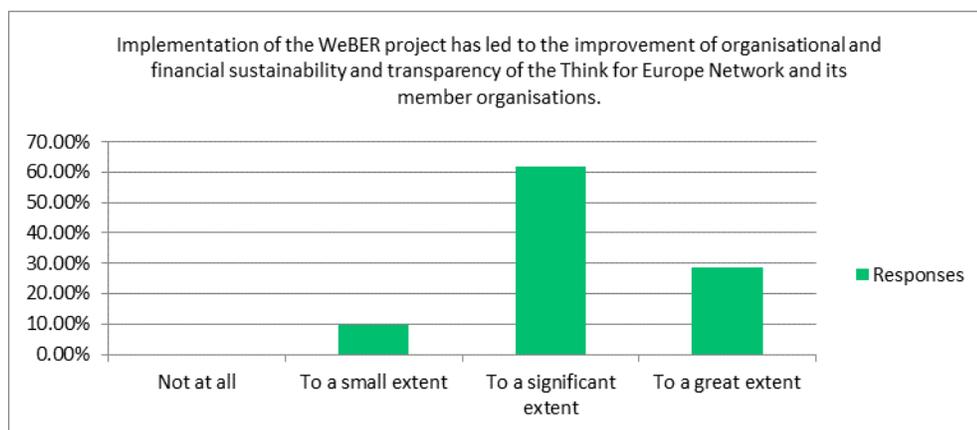
Establishment of national WG (NWG) has been one of the planned activities of the overall project. Relevant CSO as well as Grant scheme beneficiaries were invited to attend and participate to this WGs. In the Grant scheme survey, 76% or 19 organizations stated that they are members of the (NWG). Due to limited capacities, the main initial effect of their participation has been learning, exchange and networking with national level counterparts and institutions. The main contribution the local grantees seem to have made to the NWGs have been: provision of local level data, knowledge, experience, also to

lesser extent exchange and base for future joint advocacy. If CSOs choose not to take part to the NWG, reasons cited lack of capacity or staff. In some countries, though, such as Montenegro, organizations failed to recognize the NWG as a possible forum for them to promote local issues and concern in the PAR processes and understand its added-value vis-a-vis other similar civil society forums. Also, in some cases similar forums already exist (e.g. Serbia), so demonstrating added-value was essential. Moreover, the extent to which grantees joined the NWGs also depended on the networking capacity and needs of the particular project partner. Some of the hampering factors affecting the NWGs mentioned in the Grant scheme survey are: uncooperative (also fear, distrust), closed institutions, slow, but also citizens (not interested, fear), local elections and change of state structure. Most accounts of meeting were that it is an ad-hoc (e.g. on margins of other WeBER-related activities), so more structure approach and communication, esp. vis-à-vis relevant PAR institutions is needed.

INTERNAL NETWORK STRENGTHENING

Day-to-day joint work key in strengthening internal TEN network vs. organized trainings and coaching

Concrete activities included training and support on developing (further) internal governance, organizational development and fundraising strategies by individual think-tanks and TEN network as such. The activities were led by EPC- established think-tank at EU level. 60% of project staff in the internal self-assessment stated that the project contributed to the improvement of organizational and financial sustainability and transparency of TEN network and its members to significant extent, while 29% states to a great extent. In interviews, two main reasons were given for these: the idea on what the network and individual organizations needed in terms organizational development was not clear and neither was the main focus of the project. Comparatively, the position and the experience of EPC as an EU-level think-tank is set in a different context and thus, does not correspond that of TEN network and its country contexts. Still, EPC’s contribution and added-value were strongly commended by project partner in supporting and facilitating EU-level presentations of PAR Methodology and PAR Monitor and in facilitating and capacity-building in improving research methods (national level seminars, per-to-per exchange etc.).



After the project, TEN is seen as stronger as non-formal network. As a result of the project, 3 organization – GLPS, FPI, IDM became its members. Moreover, the effect of project staff working daily side by side at different levels improved direct communication, exchange and support to each other.

2.3. IMPACT, SUSTAINABILITY

While it is early to report long-term impact, since the project has only finished several months ago, the following can be noted as its concrete achievements and affect so far:

Comprehensive methodology, developed in participatory way, complementary to OECD/SIGMA approach

While the methodology was initially developed based on internal project expertise, incl. Advisory Council composed of prominent practitioners and academics on PA, its fine tuning included an approach to consult CSOs and interested stakeholders. In this endeavour, 217 representatives were consulted and further 174 representatives of CSOs and 12 representatives of media (186 in total) were trained and coached for implementation of the PAR Monitor Reports. While the quality of feedback received in terms of its usefulness and applicability, might have varied, the approach and rate of inclusion is both commendable and laid the building block for wide feedback received during the data-gathering phase.

In terms of data-gathering phase, the final project report informs that overall, 15 focus groups were organized to gather feedback on fulfilment of PAR principles and 59 interviews with stakeholders were conducted. Public perception survey was also organized with support of external agency, included 6172 citizens. The survey of civil servants included a total of 3359 civil servants, while the CSO survey included 566 CSOs actively participating. Again, the rate of response is commendable and makes the PAR Monitor Reports a strong ground to be hold representative views from all stakeholders. Draft Reports were also verified, most frequently through the NWGs established as part of the project to confirm the evidence and survey feedback.

Moreover, basing its methodology on SIGMA Principles of PA and having closely worked with SIGMA during the duration of the project, the methodology both built its credibility on SIGMA as well as added-value to SIGMA reports in presenting CSOs and citizens perspective on how PAR should be improved for PAR to create public institutions and services to the needs of citizens. Finally, while SIGMA does not produce comparative or regional reports on the state of PAR, the PAR Monitoring Reports incl. both national and regional report for the first time enabled systematic comparison of country performance against the PAR Methodology.

Bold advocacy strategy, with varied reactions and scattered but concrete effects on specific issues at local level

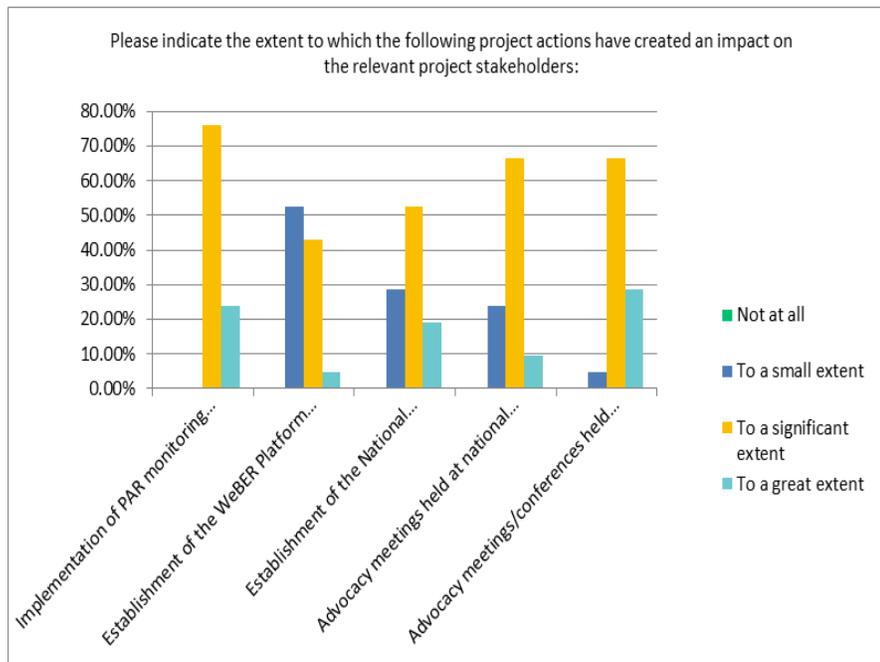
The advocacy strategy on the PAR Monitor Report findings employed both national- and international-level, esp. EU advocacy. The chosen approach to presenting research findings was underlined by the thinking that peer-to-peer exposure ignites competition (incl. showcasing best and worst-case examples), which translates into triggering changes in the responsible institution to improve the situation. This follows the approach, which has been tested and has mostly worked for instigating reforms under the EU accession process. There have been cases reported where this has happened relatively quickly after publishing the report (e.g. example with SAI in BIH). But in cases (e.g. Montenegro, Serbia) where the findings were more critical to the implementation of PAR reform, the uptake of the report has initially been met negatively at political level, while at bureaucratic one the

reports seem to be taken on board. Moreover, the inclusion of CSOs in the project has stimulated in many countries for CSOs to be included in the PAR Special Groups, a forum whereby EC and national PAR-related authorities discuss the state of reforms and progress being made. The project was able to capitalize and organized for CSOs to be included in this process either directly or by providing indirect contribution before its commencement. Moreover, on the recommendations given to the EC on establishing a uniform practice of publishing the agenda and minutes of each PAR SG meeting, some of the countries (e.g. Montenegro, Serbia) have improved their practise in this area. Still, since only a couple of months have commenced since findings have been published, it is too early to report concrete impact and changes. Since the end of project, reports suggest that the EC has been using PAR Monitor Report findings in the dialogue with national authorities on PAR implementation progress and it is thus expected that the EC Country Reports to be published in late spring 2019 would reflect findings and recommendations of the PAR Monitor Reports, which will further facilitate the advocacy effort of the project.

On the other hand, the grant scheme through implementation and experimentation with Principles of PA at local level, the separate Grant scheme evaluation documented concrete cases of effect in specific communities or organizations: E.g. Grantees reports and interviews report an array of concrete effects as a direct result of sub-grant projects implemented. According to the Grant scheme report, in BiH, several municipalities' websites have been updated with public information and offices for contact with citizens were moved from 1st to ground floor to make them more accessible to citizens with disabilities etc. In Montenegro, the Podgorica city budget for 2018 contains a direct allocation for the financing of the personal assistance service for a few residents-persons with disabilities. In Uljcin, several documents have been put on the website and made available in Albanian language. Percentage of proactive publishing of information has increased to on average 5-10% during the lifetime of projects period. In North Macedonia, the city of Skopje administration made several documents related to property tax administration publicly available (e.g. templates for property taxes, Methodology for assessing the properties' market value). Public procurement plan was established in municipality of Prilep, Krushevo and Krivogastani and the civic parliament as a tool for participatory budgeting was improved in Prilep. In Albania, the Roma community in Fier is better information about available online services and means of communication with the municipal staff and have been more frequent to demand and receive quality and timely services. Assemblies in 3 municipalities are more transparent (e.g. they publish decisions on the web, bulletin board), some recommendations related to budget allocation for a better life of women in the village have been adopted. Tirana and Kamza municipalities have become more responsive and have accepted the violations in recruitment of personnel (via an official letter). In Serbia, in municipality of Becej participatory budgeting process (with over 200 citizens) was implemented including better needs of local citizens in 2018 budget. In Kraljevo, the research into effects of decisions, which were not consulted with citizens lead to uncovering that large portions of citizens, especially marginalized (IDPs, Roma etc.) have been discriminated against. The organization complained to the Commissioner, which resulted in confirming violation and the municipality had to react by committing to changing the budget and allocating appropriate sums for the needs of marginalized.

Most effect from direct activities

At the activity level, highest perception of impact was reported for direct advocacy activities where partners directly engaged with target institutions. Such activities included: implementation of PAR monitoring and production of the PAR Monitor (76% significant extent, 24% great extent), advocacy meetings at national level (67% significant extent, 29% great extent), advocacy meetings/conference in Brussels (67% significant extent, 10% great extent). Indirect activities (networking approach) directed to establishing platforms for exchange and joint advocacy at regional level -WeBER platform (43% significant extent, 5% great extent) and national level – NWGs (52% significant extent, 19% great extent) perceived to have produced less impact so far.



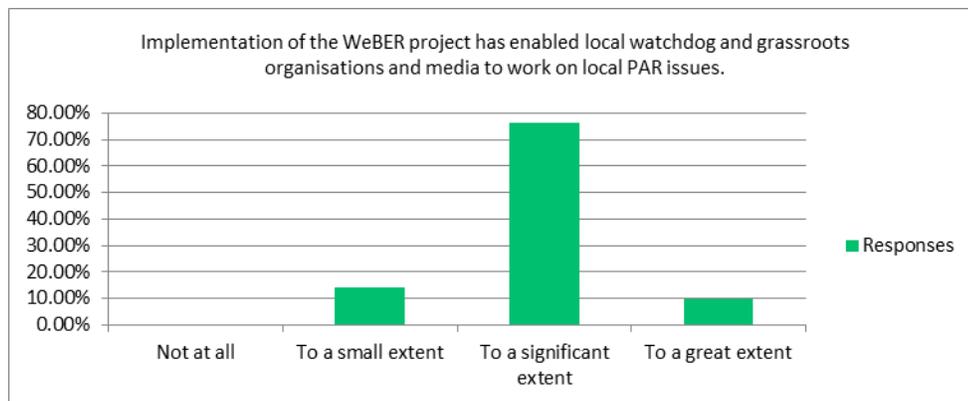
Grant scheme humanized PAR, what it meant at local level and how it can contribute to local level openness, better services etc.

The specific added-value of the grant scheme and the WeBER project overall that has been reported is the link of PAR to the local level, community and citizens closes to experience institutions (e.g. basic public services, employment, paying taxes, distribution of public funds etc.).

Design of the Grant scheme came as a response to two issues the project team encountered:

- The SIGMA PAR Principles focus on central level processes and institutions and it does not touch upon or include local level institutions, which is the level where most citizens get in everyday contact with institutions;
- Local CSOs do not have capacities on their own to address PAR issues. They show lack of interested and understanding of the PAR process. They often see it as expert, complex thing, about which they are not sure how it is related to their work and how they would benefit in exploring it.

The design of the Grant scheme allowed for these two to be bridged and linked. This approach also enabled to blend and translate a top-down PAR process into an adapted approach to stimulate bottom-up understanding and initiatives. The Grant scheme allowed for CSOs' needs to derive and define the intervention areas and activities, to define specific issues and focus on variety topics within PAR and not vice-versa. Thus, combination of top down PAR Principles and what local CSOs need in their community made the grant scheme relevant and timely both for the local CSO grantees and the project partners to be able to contextualize and localize PAR Principles. This is also confirmed in the internal self-assessment survey (bellow).



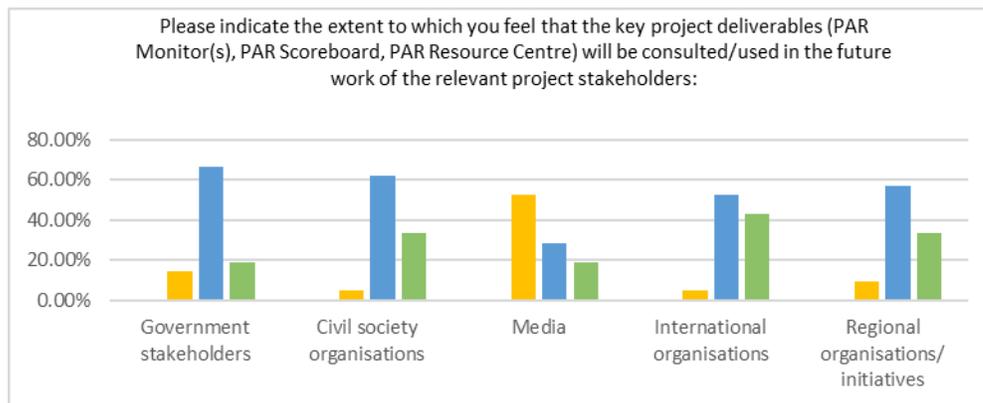
Capacities built on unpacking PA standards, monitoring and research methodologies

One of the most visible and direct effects of the project has certainly been the capacities and know-how on research and monitoring methodologies as well as policy findings formulation and outreach. CSOs, but esp. grantees were supported by project coordinators with advice and guidance in structuring their research and data collection methodologies as well as data analysis, synthesis and presentation in form appropriate for the local audience – local decision-makers, media and citizens. In several cases more capacitated grantees were able to experiment new methodologies and ideas how to stimulate reactive and open local institutions. Some of these also offer possibility for the project to replicate in other contexts and countries to test their framework and use it for potential development of PAR Principles at the local level (Local PAR Monitor).

Adjusted advocacy strategy, pockets of concrete media success, but contribution to inclusion and capacity of media weak

The effects the project had on media, both in terms of getting them interested to learn, build capacities and be involved in PAR have been weaker than for CSOs. According to the internal self-assessment survey, 67% of respondents stated that the project was to a lesser extent found to contribute to strengthening the capacity of media in the WB to advocate for and influence design and implementation of PAR and to their participation in the WB to advocate for and influence design and implementation of PAR, while 53% stated that the project contribution to their relevance to advocate for and influence design and implementation of PAR. This assessment shows the overall modest contribution (see details in section Relevance), reflecting that the project in fact had main focus on CSOs and that working intensively with media, would have acquired additional and specific methods of work.

Additional ways and tools of engagement with Government and esp. media are needed. Evidence-based advocacy is necessary, but not sufficient to engage with them. While there is the perception that CSOs (62% significant extent, 33% great extent) and international (52% significant extent, 43% great extent) as well as regional organizations/initiative (57% significant, 33% great extent) will use the key project deliverables (PAR Monitor(s), PAR Scoreboard, PAR Resource Centre), there is a contrast with regards to Government' (67% significant extent, 19% great extent) and esp. media' (52% small extent, 29% significant extent) expectations. This might point to the fact evidence-based advocacy is important for the project, but other ways and channels will need to be find to engage with these two important stakeholders.



Still, work with media in transmitting research and advocacy work was more successful as well as media engagement through the Grant scheme projects. Two main factors seem to have contributed here: adjusted advocacy strategy, through highlighting comparison between countries in achieving PAR principles spotlighting findings from the PAR Monitor Reports and second, by relying on good media relations (esp. media using investigative journalism in its work) of each project partner in their country. Finally, by requesting grantees to sign a MoU with a local media and having the ability to offer very concrete outputs (research findings, really people stories etc.) spurred an array of media attention at local and national level into specific issues and themes under PAR.

SUSTAINABILITY

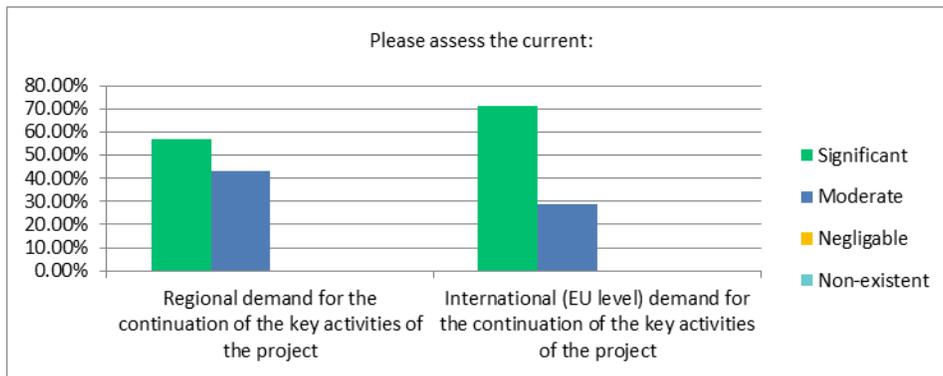
Replication of basic activities is possible with minimal resources, but to sustain the advocacy effects further investment needed

As part of the project, 4 scenarios were developed to strategize on how to sustain the project effect and sustain its activities. While some activities have been developed in such a way to be easily sustainable (e.g. PAR Scoreboard platform needs little resources to be maintained), others have been continued as part of other projects' activities (e.g. holding meetings of NWGs on margins of other events, further presentation of PAR Monitor Reports ad advocacy meetings with institutions) adding to using resources and knowledge effectively. Still, further financial resources are need for core activities, such as repeating of the monitoring cycle, grant scheme support to local CSOs and trainings, in order for the projects effects to have long term impact. Important is also that scenarios are not understood only in terms of how much money and which activities to replicate, but also to contemplate on lessons-learned and

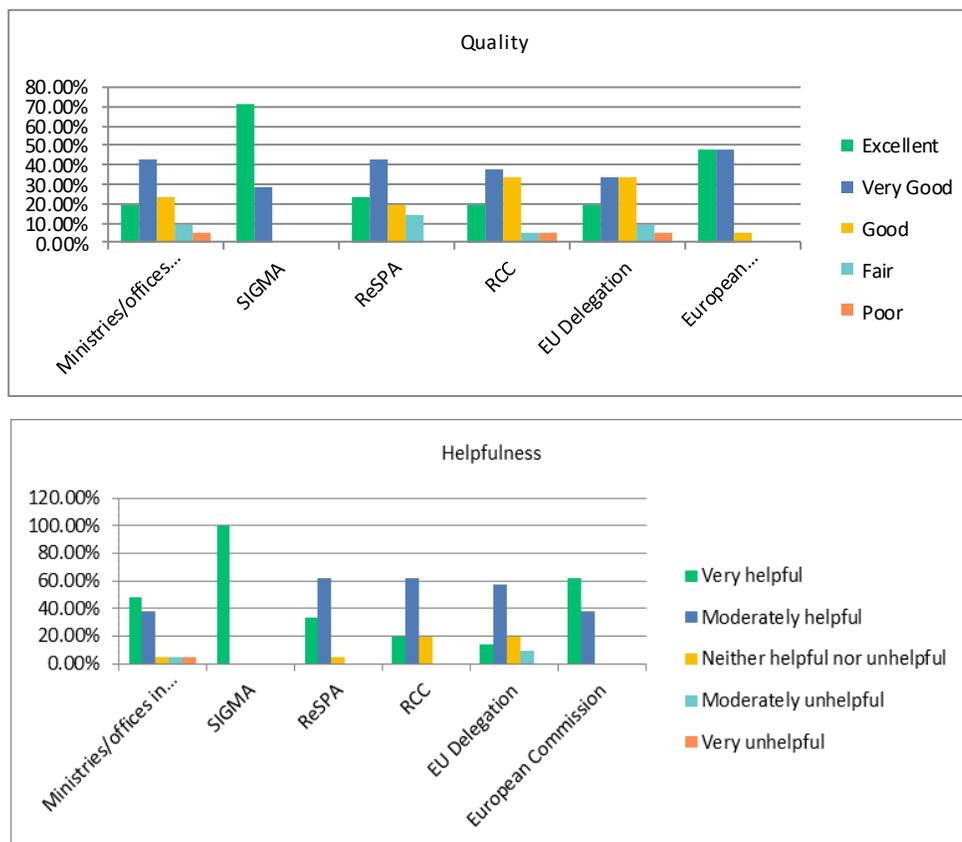
define what approaches and to what (long-term) effects that can lead the network working on PAR in the future: e.g. if more focus on media, then different and add tools need to be prepared, if idea is to go for local level, the PAR Methodology for local level and strengthened grant scheme etc. might be needed. It is expected that a combination of tools and activities, both tested and new would be included in the next phase, but all should be complementary and be targeted to the long-term effects the project can have. In the meantime, focus on communicating findings in different ways to different target groups is key in order to maintain the momentum and maintain the interested of project stakeholders and beneficiaries.

Evidence-based approach with limited effects on Government and media

While common perception seems to be there is both domestic and international demand for continuation of key project activities, according to the internal self-assessment survey, the international (EU level) demand is assessed as significantly higher (71% significant, 29% moderate) than domestic one (57% significant, 43% moderate). This points to the perception that the main incentive for domestic actors is not based solely on evidence-based information and that in order to enable and strengthen its impact, future follow-up strategy needs to consider both the risks and opportunities with engaging with domestic actors, esp. here Governments and media, in a different way. While this might require a certain trade-off, it might lead to greater long-term impact and can be built upon the good relations developed with the stakeholders during the project durations as confirmed by project staff in the self-assessment survey.



Indeed, high quality of cooperation assessed with international stakeholders (EC-48% excellent, SIGMA 71% excellent) and also good with domestic (Ministries/Offices in charge of PAR, EU Delegation – 19% excellent) points to the relation capital that the TEN network possesses vis-à-vis the main actors in PAR area. This is also collaborated with assessment of usefulness of the relationships, i.e. helpfulness of project stakeholders is equally assessed higher for international ones (SIGMA-100% excellent, EU-62% excellent), while domestic again lower, but with significantly better score for Government (48% excellent), with lower for EU Delegations (14% excellent, 57% moderately helpful) and regional actors – ReSPA (33% excellent) and RCC (19% excellent).



Expertise/ evidence-based vs. advocacy potential of think-tanks

The TEN network is composed of well-established think-tanks in their countries working on EU accession process and good governance related issues. Their core expertise includes research, while having to adapt to local circumstances, the network has worked on networking, capacity-building and advocacy in order to gain support and add pressure for research findings to be recognised and taken on board by public institutions. This has also been the case of this project, which combined both roles, research and advocacy respectfully. The networking activities (e.g. establishing of NWGs and WeBER platform) have been found useful, but further investment is needed in order for them to have full value. While this might not be a natural role for think-tanks, further consideration could be given on how to insure a strong long-term advocacy base for the monitoring/research findings and for CSOs, media and citizens alliance-building on demanding PA Principles embodied in the PAR Methodology.

2.4. ADDED-VALUE

Bringing CSOs and especially local perspective into PAR

This project has been the first systematic endeavour to build knowledge, capacities of CSOs on PAR process and enable – through developing a specific methodology and build research and advocacy – showcasing concrete added-value CSOs can have in the process. Moreover, the inclusion of Grant scheme focused on local level public administration performance and improvement has added another layer of strengthening local CSOs, raising knowledge on standards of quality local public administration and has given a concrete citizen-flavour to the project and its potential to humanize PAR for ordinary citizen.

Regional and comparative research

All stakeholders agree that the main outputs – PAR Methodology and PAR Monitor Reports – have had strongest added-value in bringing regional and comparative perspective on national situations in PAR and has helped putting the local situations into perspective. While many organizations and donors (incl. EU) are active on PAR and related issues at national level, the project was unique in its regional and comparative dimension and has overcome some of the overlaps identified in some countries in PAR-related activities (e.g. in North Macedonia, the EUD launched a call for civil society including among others a focus on PAR which resulted in 3 projects being implemented on similar issues as the project. Although the work under this project has been used to map the needs for the call, with timely information, the North Macedonia project partner approached the projects to avoid overlaps and identify possible synergies. All of the main grantees were involved in the national PAR WGs. In Serbia, the civil society IPA-related consultative mechanism SECO includes a PAR sub-group of CSOs, so Serbian partner (CEP) invited all to participate in the national PAR WGs to avoid overlap. In Montenegro, IA included the organizations from their Nasa uprava network to trainings, networking between CSOs working on PAR in same municipality, consultations, presentation of SIGMA report).

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall no drastic changes are required for the project to continue in the next phase. In view of possible continuation, the following recommendations are structured according to three themes: (1) Design & management; (2) Approach to target group; and (3) Impact & sustainability.

Design & management

Recommendation 1: Develop advanced performance and impact indicator project framework that will allow to target and measure evidenced change that the project produces

The project LogFrame indicators primarily include quantitative indicators which are set to either minimum level of achievement or perception measurement. This allowed for easy data gathering through project instruments, but did not facilitate measuring and demonstrating concrete tangible evidence of change that the project has helped bring about. To do this, the next phase should include a refined LogFrame with a combination of quantitative and qualitative indicators and where needed really less on perceptions (i.e. surveys), but rather opt for evidencing project effects with case studies, testimonials etc.

Recommendation 2: Provide for internal reflection on grant scheme management

While the decentralized management of the grant scheme has worked well, a decision is needed among project partners whether to continue or change to a more centralized approach based on internal reflection of the pros and cons of each approach due to different perceptions of some partners on what is the most appropriate approach and added-value to existing capacities of each partner organization in order to introduce a tailored-approach based on capacities and needs of each project partner.

Recommendation 3: Design of next phase should consider between going deeper vs. wider

It is important the 4 scenarios identifying way forward for the project next phase, are not understood only in terms of how much money and which activities to replicate, but also to contemplate on lessons-learned and define what approaches and to what (long-term) effects that can lead the network working on PAR in the future. Here, the main consideration should be between how to balance going deeper (i.e. focus on grant scheme, localizing PAR) and wider (i.e. adapted approach and more focus on media, balancing evidence-based with other advocacy and promotion tools) and what pros and cons and long-term effect of this could be. In this, the ultimate weight should be put on the advocacy effects on governments and the ability for the network to carry forward strengthening of CSOs and media advocacy alliances and base.

Recommendation 4: Careful sequencing of activities is key to put less strain on available (time, financial, human) resources

Make sure the Grant scheme does not directly coincide with peaks on data gathering and monitoring so that the human resources and pressure to stick to the agreed timeframe is not put to the test continuously. If monitoring cycles and Grant scheme support are to become regular undertakings, they should be able to implemented smoothly and without overburdening the organizations involved.

Approach to target group

Recommendations 5: Work with Governments and media requires further refinement of approach

To work with media, different ways, approaches need to be considered (including a more comprehensive media needs assessment), in order for them to become interested in learning and building capacities about PAR as well as to go beyond superficial reporting on PAR Monitor Reports and do follow-up investigation into causes that could help galvanize greater pressure on Governments to change. The concrete experience of cooperation between local CSOs/grantees and media can lead the way in thinking how to refine the approach. Moreover, advocacy work with public institutions might require a double approach (political vs bureaucratic level) as well as consider the trade-offs in presenting and targeting the findings, without jeopardizing integrity and independence of the network, since the feedback suggests that there is so far limited reach with evidenced-based pressure, i.e. the PAR Monitor Reports.

Impact & sustainability

Recommendation 6: Continual of capacity also through contextualization of standards and adding issues of interest to CSOs

Further impact in terms capacity building and influence can be achieved if PAR Methodology is refined into investigating further the general SIGMA principles, by their contextualization and refinement. For example, different public administration set-ups in the beneficiary countries such as BiH might need further contextualization as well as issues of key importance to CSOs and citizens, such as public service delivery. This might better resonate with domestic actors and add-value to engage them to produce ownership and by-into the evidence-based approach. This could be fully complementary to the idea of further localizing and mainstreaming (i.e. thematic issues/policies) PAR.

Recommendation 7: Enhance the networking forums (esp. NWGs) into more permanent and continues forums that provide for both exchange and advocacy platform on PAR

For CSOs, esp. grantees, NWGs provided for a unique forum where they can interact and contribute their specific and often-times neglected local perspective together with their national counterparts. It also gave them the possibility to get in direct contact with key national institutions, something that they lack as CSOs focused on local communities. While more ad-hoc in the current phase of the project, the NWG should take a more structured and continued approach to its work in order to serve as a useful and effective forum for exchange on monitoring and influencing PAR.

Recommendations 8: PAR is horizontal issue. Provide for mainstreaming of local PAR principles and link to key policies and frameworks esp. decentralization, regional and economic development.

While PAR is oftentimes understood as a specific topic area, the concept of PAR inter-relates with issues such as rule of law, good governance, anti-corruption, transparency, management of public finances, decentralization, economic development etc. Thinking of how PA principles, esp. at local level can be integrated into mentioned policies and regulatory framework can bring about more effective strategy for permeating the work of both local CSOs but especially public institutions on the long-run. Such an endeavour would entail integration of PA principles, i.e. mainstreaming into all sector policies, while also testing this and mainstreaming them into the progress measurement under EU negotiation chapters.

ANNEX 1: TERMS OF REFERENCE

Grant Contract No. 2015/370-038
EXTERNAL ACTION OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

TERMS OF REFERENCE

for ex post evaluation of the project:

“Western Balkans Enabling Project for Civil Society Monitoring of Public Administration Reform - WeBER”

I. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

This evaluation is to be carried out upon the completion of the multi-country, three-year-long project “Western Balkans Enabling Project for Civil Society Monitoring of Public Administration Reform - WeBER” (hereinafter: the Project), implemented by European Policy Centre (CEP) from Serbia as a Coordinator, and Institute for Democracy and Mediation (IDM) from Albania, Foreign Policy Initiative (FPI) from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Group for Legal and Political Studies (GLPS) from Kosovo, Institute Alternative (IA) from Montenegro, European Policy Institute (EPI) from North Macedonia, European Policy Centre (EPC) Brussels, Belgium as Beneficiaries. The three-year project is funded by the European Union and co-financed by the Kingdom of Netherlands.

This project aimed to increase the relevance, participation and capacity of civil society organizations (CSOs) and media in the Western Balkans (WB) to advocate for and influence the design and implementation of public administration reform (PAR). Specific objectives of the project are:

- Facilitate civil society monitoring of PAR based on evidence and analysis in the WB;
- Facilitate sustainable regional and national level government-CSO consultation platforms, policy dialogue and quality media reporting on PAR;
- Enable local watchdog and grassroots organizations and media to work on local PAR issues;
- Improve organizational and financial sustainability and transparency of the Think for Europe Network (TEN) and its member organizations.

The project focused on PAR at national level of the Coordinator and Beneficiaries, and at the same time, methodology developed within the project was used for benchmarking in the Western Balkans region. Therefore, project results were spread over the WB region.

Rationale to be focused on PAR were the very similar challenges of civil societies (CS) and governments of the Region in reforming their administrations, as the countries emerged from the same system and are now pursuing the same strategic objective of EU membership. Prioritization of PAR in the EC Enlargement Strategy for 2014/2015 as one of the three pillars of fundamental reforms early in the enlargement process, and the publishing of “The Principles of Public Administration” by SIGMA/OECD, additionally boosted the motivation to pursue PAR as a common regional goal. Focusing on PAR in line

with the Principles not only offered a comprehensive framework for guiding and monitoring PAR with CS participation (Principle 2 under PAR Strategic Framework chapter requires CS involvement in PAR monitoring and review processes), but it also created spill-over effects on greater CSO involvement in all policy areas (Principle 11, Policy Development and Coordination chapter, requires active and effective CS participation in all policy and legislation making).

Main stakeholders are WB CSOs, media and governments (institutions in charge of PAR - involved as associates in all countries), with whom consultations were made in previous projects, revealing insufficient CSO and media activity and competence for most PAR areas covered by the Principles. Consultations showed many CSOs prefer own, CS consultative platforms with government participation, instead of entering governmental consultation WGs, so the action adopts this approach. Governments are opening up, though unevenly across the Region, rendering a regional approach particularly effective as it creates peer pressure. The media show low interest in CS work and PAR policy, mainly due to insufficient knowledge. Key stakeholders are also regional and international organizations working on PAR in WB, especially ReSPA, and RCC, who support the action as associates, and SIGMA whose experts expressed strong support.

More background information can be found at the dedicated project website: www.par-monitor.org

II. EVALUATION PURPOSE AND TARGET AUDIENCE

The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the relevance of the Project for participation and capacity of civil society organizations (CSOs) and media in the Western Balkans (WB) to advocate for and influence the design and implementation of public administration reform (PAR), its effectiveness and impact. The evaluation will also address the efficiency and sustainability of the project and its activity, in order to learn how to maintain the beneficial effects of the project after its conclusion. It will also provide information for donor on the effectiveness of its support.

Specific aims of this evaluation are:

- To assess the level of the strengthening of the CSOs and media capacity to advocate for and influence the design and implementation of public administration reform (PAR)
- To assess the extent of the achievement of the expected results of the project?
- To assess the effectiveness of organizational arrangements and management of the project team, during the project implementation;
- To conduct analysis on the process of data collection and reports preparation, during the research phase of the project;
- To assess the impact on relevant stakeholders (the ministries, CSOs) of the research outputs of the project;
- To assess the effects and potential impact of advocacy activities of the project;
- To provide analysis of the set project objective and outputs (as in project LogFrame) compared with achieved objectives and outputs;
- To provide observations and if possible, recommendations on how the observed flaws or limitations could be improved or resolved in the future.

The evaluation should be based upon and take note of the findings of the self-assessment questionnaire that was developed and used during the project implementation.

III. EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND TASKS

The evaluation should be a combination of process and impact evaluation: it should assess the organizational and managerial features of the project (internal division of the tasks, project management, timeliness of the outputs as opposed to the timetable set in project application); the content and relevance of its outputs (PAR Monitor Methodology, Regional and National PAR Monitors, multimedia presentations etc.) against the project application goals; the sustainability of changes the project results initiated and the extent to which these changes can be attributed to the project actions.

The evaluator should provide answers to the following questions:

Relevance

- To what extent does the project deliver results against its objectives?
- To what extent did the project strengthen the CSOs and media capacity to advocate for and influence the design and implementation of PAR?
- To what extent did the coaching program by EPC for the 6 Western Balkans beneficiaries contribute to enhance their organizational capacity?
- What was the feedback from the relevant stakeholders on the research outputs? Did the research outputs induce the relevant stakeholders to perform a certain action? If yes, to what extent can the observed change be attributed to the research outputs?
- To what extent is the project aligned with the national PA policies and PAR strategies of the WB countries?

Effectiveness and efficiency

- Have the project objectives been achieved?
- Have the resources been used in efficient manner?
- How effective and efficient were the organizational and managerial arrangements of the project team?
- Were there any problems or limitations of the internal functioning of the project?
- Were there any obstacles or unintended outcomes in the management of the project? If so, why did they occur?
- What were the stages of data collection and processing during the research phase and what were their main features? Were there any unintended circumstances?
- How effective were the organizational and managerial arrangements of the WeBER Platform and National PAR Working Groups?

Impact and sustainability

- What have been the impact so far? To what extent are these impacts sustainable and what further improvements are needed?
- Did the research outputs of the project produce a significant impact?

- To what extent did the research outputs contribute to the realization of the overall and specific goals of the project?
- Did the advocacy outputs of the project initiate a reaction of the relevant stakeholders? What was that reaction?
- To what extent did the advocacy activities contribute to the realization of the overall and specific goals of the project? Are the capacities for advocacy that were built during the project sustainable? To what extent?
- What are the lessons learned regarding the financial management of the project? What limitations and problems could be observed?

Added value

- How has the project ensured complementary and how well it fits with general donor support to PAR?
- To what extent will the benefits of the project continue after completion of the Project?
- How is the Project beneficiaries' engagement likely to continue, be scaled up, replicated or institutionalized after Project ceases?
- How is the PA stakeholders' engagement likely to continue, be scaled up, replicated or institutionalized after Project ceases?
- How will the established electronic portal (PAR Scoreboard) be further maintained?

IV. APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

Evaluator should outline the proposed methodology, evidence and data that will be collected and analysed.

The report should outline the type and quantity of primary and secondary data to be undertaken for the evaluation. Depending on the selected methodology, ways in which evidence could be gathered include:

- Interviews with the project researchers;
- Interviews with key stakeholders – beneficiaries of the project;
- Desk review of monitoring and project data (including expenditure, outputs and outcomes);
- Monitoring data available through national or local databases.

Final report should preferably include the following parts:

- Executive summary
- Evaluation purpose
- Evaluation methodology
- Project description: purpose and conducted activities
- Findings
- Conclusions
- Recommendations
- Annexes (list of people interviewed, key documents consulted, data collection instruments)

V. TIMING AND DELIVERABLES

The evaluation is to be realized by 20th January 2019. The activities to be carried out include developing evaluation methodology, collection of data and writing the evaluation report. It will use 5 evaluation criteria: impact and sustainability, effectiveness, efficiency, relevance and added value.

The evaluation will be provided by a professional evaluator, preferably with the expertise in the PAR sector. They will be coordinated by CEP and contracted by EPI, and will work on the evaluation of the overall Project (the evaluation report of the entire Project, which will be done in the last month of project implementation)

The evaluator is required to submit evaluation report in English language, following the structure indicated in evaluation methodology.

VI. REQUIRED COMPETENCIES FROM THE EVALUATOR

Education:

- University degree in law, political sciences, economics (human sciences). Advanced degree is an asset.

Work experience:

- At least 7 years working experience with both civil society and government bodies preferably in the region (Western Balkans and Turkey)
- At least 5 years of experience in conducting research with complex methods, with a focus on writing analyses and performing evaluations

Language Skills:

- Fluent in Serbian and English

Other necessary skills:

- Excellent knowledge of Western Balkans context (regional, national and local level)
- Excellent research, analysis and writing skills

VII. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

The evaluator is tasked to perform evaluation in 20 working days. The activities to be performed are as follows:

Activity	Working days
1. Designing evaluation methodology	2
2. Data collection	10
3. Data processing	2
4. Preparing evaluation report	6

VIII. BUDGET AND PAYMENT

The evaluator will be paid 175 euros per working day, for 20 working days (gross amount, in total three thousand five hundred euros).

ANNEX 2: EVALUATION MATRIX

Evaluation Questions (EQ)	Judgment criteria/Indicators	Sources of Information	Guiding questions	
RELEVANCE			Internal (staff)	External (stakeholders, beneficiaries)
1. To what extent does the project deliver results against its objectives?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alignment between planned and achieved project objectives Alignment between achievements (outputs, results) of the project and PAR strategies/challenges at country level (<i>if data sources allow</i>) 	Project proposal, reports PAR sector-specific documents (EC, SIGMA etc reports) Products/papers Interviews (beneficiaries, stakeholders), survey/CEP self-assessment	What were the planned results (overall) of the project? Did you achieve them? If not, why not? What were mitigation measures put in place?	Are you familiar with the project objectives? Were they achieved? If not, why? How does the project contribute to the PAR reform? Can you give concrete examples or cases of such contribution?
2. To what extent is the project aligned with the national PA policies and PAR strategies of the WB countries?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alignment between PAR sector-specific priorities and project objectives Alignment between the project approach/methodology to those of the target group needs, their capacities Alignment and responsiveness of target group in terms of technical, organizational, project requirements of the project against the capacity of beneficiaries 	Project proposal, reports PAR sector-specific documents (EC, SIGMA etc reports) Application package, formats Products/papers Interviews (beneficiaries, stakeholders), survey/CEP self-assessment	What prompted you do design the WeBER project? Did you have to divert from the original approach/methodology envisaged? If yes, what were the reasons? Did you conduct the needs assessment of the target group, i.e. incl. the target group into the design? What were the findings, i.e. specificities did you find? How did you incorporate these into the project design? What is your previous experience in designing and managing such projects?	How does the project relate to your work and what was your role in it? Did the project activities respond to your needs as organization/institution, country and sector context?
EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY				
3. Have the project objectives been achieved?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alignment/link between the project objectives and objectives of activities and their achieved results (coverage of topics, links, reported outputs, results etc.) Degree to which the project has facilitated timely attainment of planned results and has been flexible to changing needs of 	Project proposal, reports Interviews (beneficiaries, stakeholders), survey/CEP self-assessment	Were the planned objectives achieved (as a whole)? Are you satisfied with them? If no, why not? Were there any need to change the approach once the project activities were launched? Did the target group request/need any adjustments?	What were the type of outputs you produced/participated in producing? Are you satisfied with their quality? Are you satisfied with the expertise provided? For implementers, grantees: Did you request any change to the original project, incl extensions? What were the reasons? Were the resources provided enough to implement it successfully?

Evaluation Questions (EQ)	Judgment criteria/Indicators	Sources of Information	Guiding questions	
	beneficiaries			
4. Have the resources (funds, expertise, time, etc.) been used in efficient manner?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent of the use of funds, quality of products delivered by partners, action plan Appropriateness of the project methodology to PAR sector-specific priorities 	Project proposal, reports Products/papers Interviews (beneficiaries, stakeholders), survey/CEP self-assessment	Were the project funds fully used (as per budget) incl. per country and topics? Were activities, outputs and reports delivered on time? If not, what were the reasons from the delay?	For implementers, grantees: Were the funds fully used (as per budget)? Were activities, outputs and reports delivered on time? If not, what were the reasons from the delay?
5. How effective and efficient were the organisational and managerial arrangements of the project team?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procedures put in place for project management (incl. coordination between partners) Timely fulfilment of requirements, met deadlines, internal flow of information, structures in place for management, M&E (at org and project/network level) Extent of the matching expertise (both management and sector-specific) between partner organizations Perception of key stakeholders and staff on effect 	Project proposal, reports Project structure documents/protocols Project reports Reporting format, guidelines, protocols Interviews (beneficiaries, stakeholders), survey/CEP self-assessment	Do you have previous experience in designing and managing such project activities? What were the main issues you faced in coordinating the project? Were all deadlines met? How was the communication flow with partners, their responsiveness, capacities to meet obligations, stick to protocols? Why did you decide for a decentralized management structure for the grant scheme? How was the expertise managed? Did partners have previous experience/capacities to manage project activities? How about their topic expertise?	How do you think the project has been managed? Were activities organized on time, did you receive timely information, documents and feedback?
6. Were there any problems or limitations of the internal functioning of the project? 7. Were there any obstacles or unintended outcomes in the management of the project? If so, why did they occur?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No of reported delays, underperformed activities and other deviations from project action plan Reasons for such deviations, mitigation measure taken to correct them Type, quantity of factors (positive/ negative) influencing outcomes/ impact Evidence of administrative processes that have 	Project proposal, reports Project structure documents/protocols Interviews (beneficiaries, stakeholders), survey/CEP self-assessment	Did you face any delays in project activities? If yes, what and why? How did you overcome these? What were the factors that influenced this?	Did you face any delays in project activities? If yes, how did this affect you? What were the reasons?

Evaluation Questions (EQ)	Judgment criteria/Indicators	Sources of Information	Guiding questions	
	contributed to or detracted from outcomes/ impact			
8. What were the stages of data collection and processing during the research phase and what were their main features? Were there any unintended circumstances?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Types of methods used and their appropriateness Comparison between the research plan and execution No of deviations and reasons for this (factors) 	Project proposal, reports Project structure documents/protocols Interviews (beneficiaries, stakeholders), survey/CEP self-assessment	In which stages of data collection were you included? Were they executed according to plan? If not, why not? What mitigation measures have been taken to correct this? Were they effective?	N/A
9. How effective were the organisational and managerial arrangements of the WeBER Platform and National PAR Working Groups?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procedures put in place for management (incl coordination between partners) Timely fulfilment of requirements, met deadlines, internal flow of information, structures in place for management, M&E Extent of the matching expertise (both management and sector-specific) between partner organizations Perception of key stakeholders and staff on effect 	Project proposal, reports Project structure documents/protocols Interviews (beneficiaries, stakeholders), survey/CEP self-assessment	Was it easy to manage? How often did the WG meet? How useful were the participation of stakeholders? What was the main added-value?	How often did the WG meet? How useful were the participation of other stakeholders? What was the main added-value?
10. To what extent did the coaching program by EPC for the 6 Western Balkans beneficiaries contribute to enhance their organizational capacity? (transferred from RELEVANCE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No of CB activities, their use of know-how/skills attained Perception of key stakeholders and staff on effects 	Project proposal, reports Interviews (beneficiaries, stakeholders), survey/CEP self-assessment	How many participants attended the activities? What were the initial capacities of supported organizations? How has the programe improved their capacities? Give examples, cases... How were the skills used to produce, improve projects/products?	N/A
11. To what extent did the project strengthen the CSOs and media capacity to advocate for and influence the design and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No, types of capacity-building, media activities, their use in producing products, results (related both to specific PAR 	Project proposal, reports Interviews (beneficiaries, stakeholders), survey/CEP self-	What activities were organized? Did they achieve their objective? How many participants attended activities? What were the initial capacities of supported organizations? How have the activities improved	Did you participate to capacity building activities (info session, workshop etc.)? Did you feel capacitated? How did these help you improve advocacy and influence of your work?

Evaluation Questions (EQ)	Judgment criteria/Indicators	Sources of Information	Guiding questions	
implementation of PAR? (transferred from RELEVANCE)	expertise and genera organizational growth) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perception of key stakeholders and staff on effect 	assessment	their capacities? Give examples, cases... How were the skills used to produce, improve projects/products?	Would you need further support?
IMPACT AND SUSTAINABILITY				
12. What have been the impacts so far? To what extent are these impacts sustainable and what further improvements are needed? 13. To what extent will the benefits of the project continue after completion of the project? (transfer from ADDED-VALUE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of policy advice/outputs effect on public institution behaviour, legislative framework or its implementation at local level Extent to which the results achieved by financed projects are indicating a sustainability of action/output Perception of key stakeholders and staff on effect 	Project proposal, reports Publications, research outputs Media reports Interviews (beneficiaries, stakeholders), survey/CEP self-assessment	What have been the effects of the project and their outputs as a whole? What changes have they produced? Cases, examples How are these sustainable? How have they supported the work of WeBER locally, nationally, esp. the national PAR WG?	What have been the effects of the project and their outputs? What changes have they produced? Cases, examples How will you make them sustainable?
14. What was the feedback from the relevant stakeholders on the research outputs? Did the research outputs induce the relevant stakeholders to perform a certain action? If yes, to what extent can the observed change be attributed to the research outputs? (transferred from RELEVANCE) 15. Did the research outputs of the project produce a significant impact?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No of actions as a result of research outputs Examples of action taken as result of research outputs Evidence of use of project products Extent its influence was sustained Perception of key stakeholders and staff on effect 	Project proposal, reports Publications, research outputs Media reports Interviews/testimonials (beneficiaries, stakeholders), survey/CEP self-assessment	Can you name examples of concrete actions (change of legislation or implementation) as result of your research/presentation? What was the concrete action? What factors affected being taken on board? If no, what is the reason?	Can you recall making an action in your work based on the research recommendation coming from WeBER? What was it? What were the effects? If not yet, do you see prospects of this happening ? When and under which conditions ?
16. To what extent did the research outputs contribute to the realisation of the overall and specific goals of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alignment between planned and realized research outputs Alignment between research 	Project proposal, reports Publications, research outputs Media reports Interviews	How satisfied are you with the research outputs? Were they realized as planned? What was their main contribution to project	How satisfied are you with the research outputs? What was their main contribution to your work, their quality?

Evaluation Questions (EQ)	Judgment criteria/Indicators	Sources of Information	Guiding questions	
the project?	outputs and project objectives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perception of key stakeholders and staff on effect 	(beneficiaries, stakeholders), survey/CEP self-assessment	goals?	
17. Did the advocacy outputs of the project initiate a reaction of the relevant stakeholders? What was that reaction? 18. To what extent did the advocacy activities contribute to the realisation of the overall and specific goals of the project? Are the capacities for advocacy that were built during the project sustainable? To what extent?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No and types of reactions of relevant stakeholders Examples/case of reaction and their follow-up Alignment between planned and realized advocacy outputs Alignment between advocacy outputs and project goals Perception of key stakeholders and staff on effect 	Project proposal, reports Publications, research outputs Media reports Interviews (beneficiaries, stakeholders), survey/CEP self-assessment	Were reactions of stakeholders positive or negative? If positive, how have they been taken on board? Can you name examples of concrete actions (change of legislation or implementation) as result of your advocacy? What was the concrete action? What factors affected being taken on board? If no, what is the reason?	Coming from your context, did the WeBER findings and recommendations correspond to factual situation and your strategy/approach/work? Can you recall making an action in your work based on the advocacy coming from WeBER? What was it? What were the effects?
19. What are the lessons learned regarding the financial management of the project? What limitations and problems could be observed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of administrative processes that have contributed to or detracted from outcomes/ impact Types of issues, delays, underperformed activities, etc. arising from project implementation Reasons for such deviations, mitigation measure taken to correct them Type, quantity of factors (positive/ negative) influencing outcomes/ impact 	Project proposal, reports Publications, research outputs Media reports Interviews (beneficiaries, stakeholders), survey/CEP self-assessment	What were the main issues you faced in financial management of the project? When issues arose, how were these followed-up, addressed?	N/A
ADDED-VALUE				
20. How has the project ensured complementarity and how well it fits within the overall WeBER initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existence of added-value, synergies to other project components (in terms of topics, methodologies, 	Project proposal, reports Publications, research outputs Interviews (beneficiaries,	Links to your other previous projects and initiatives (incl. TEN) as a network, organizations? What was the main contribution of this project	What was the main added-value of the project for your organization? What for your community? Public admin body (municipality)? Were you able to create synergies with your

Evaluation Questions (EQ)	Judgment criteria/Indicators	Sources of Information	Guiding questions	
(work of the platform, capacity building for local CSOs, etc.)?	capacities, expertise, outreach, advocacy) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution to capacity building (individual and organizational) of financed CSOs 	stakeholders), survey/CEP self-assessment	to the PAR effort of your organization/TEN network?	other activities and activities of other actors? Cases, examples
21. How is the Project beneficiaries' engagement likely to continue, be scaled up, replicated or institutionalized after Project ceases?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No and types of measure put in place of continuation of capacities, know-how and beneficiaries' engagement • No and types of sustainability actions (institutionalization, replication etc.) 	Project reports Media reports Interviews (beneficiaries, stakeholders), survey/CEP self-assessment	Will you continue to use the project products and information? If yes, how? Do you think it can (if yes, how) inspire further action, serve as example etc.?	Will you continue to use the project products and information? If yes, how? Do you think it can (if yes, how) inspire further action, serve as example etc.?
22. How is the PA stakeholders' engagement likely to continue, be scaled up, replicated or institutionalized after Project ceases?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No and types of measure put in place of continuation of capacities, know-how and PA engagement • No and types of sustainability actions (institutionalization, replication etc.) 	Project reports Media reports Interviews (beneficiaries, stakeholders) Survey	Will you continue to use the project products and information? If yes, how? Do you think it can (if yes, how) inspire further action, serve as example etc.?	Will you continue to use the project products and information? If yes, how? Do you think it can (if yes, how) inspire further action, serve as example etc.?
23. How will the established electronic portal (PAR Scoreboard) be further maintained?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No and types of measure put in place for continuation of the Scoreboard • Capacities and knowledge built to be maintained, mitigation plan in case of lack of resources in place 	Project reports Media reports Interviews (beneficiaries, stakeholders) Survey	How will you maintain it?	Will you continue to use the Scoreboard? If how and for what purpose?

ANNEX 3: LIST OF INTERVIEWED PERSONS

Name	Last name	Organization/Project role
Milena	Lazarevic	CEP, Serbia/WeBER Project Manager
Jovana	Knezevic	CEP, Serbia/WeBER Project Assistant
Natasa	Ristic	CEP, Serbia/WeBER Communication Officer
Simonida	Kacarska	EPI Director, North Macedonia/ WeBER Steering Committee
Arberesha	Loxha	GPLS, Kosovo/ WeBER Project Officer/Researcher
Anida	Sabanovic	FPI, BiH/WeBER Researcher
Marko	Sosic	Institute Alternativa, Montenegro/WeBER Researcher Montenegro
Corina	Stratulat	EPC, Brussels/WeBER Expert Team member
Bojana	Selakovic	CI, Serbia/WeBER platform member
Gentian	Elezi	Agenda Institute, Albania/ National Working Group member
Brian	Finn	OECD-SIGMA team
Tiina	Randma Liiv	Professor and Chair of Public Management and Policy at Tallinn University of Technology, Estonia/WeBER Advisory Council member
Gordana	Dimitrovska	Ministry of Information Society and Administration (MISA), North Macedonia

List of the interviewed persons during the grant scheme evaluation:

Name	Last name	Organization
Ardita	Abazi Imeri	EPI, WeBER Grant manager, North Macedonia
Aleksandra	Ivanovska	EPI, WeBER Researcher, North Macedonia
Vaska	Ristovska	EPI, Administrative officer, North Macedonia
Ana	Djurnic	Institute Alternativa, WeBER Project Officer, Montenegro
Aleka	Papa	IDM, WeBER Researcher, Albania
Romario	Shehu	IDM, WeBER Project Officer Albania
Ana	Bukovac	FPI, WeBER Project Officer, BiH
Andrija	Nesovic	Media Pulse, Kosovo
Velibor	Boskovic	Natura, Montenegro
Marija	Drazovic	Praxis, Serbia
Bojan	Kovacevic	EDA, BiH
Dusko	Todorovski	Zenith, North Macedonia

ANNEX 4: DOCUMENTS CONSULTED

- Project application (incl. Logical Framework)
- COM (2018) 450 final 2018 Communication Strategy on Enlargement Policy
- Inception Project Report
- Interim Report Year One
- Interim Report Year Two
- Final Project Report
- CSOs Comms Strategy
- Design of future WeBER scenarios
- WeBER Communication Output
- Weber Major Achievements (September 2018)
- Financial procedures
- Graphic Book of Standards
- PIU communication
- Stakeholder Analysis Report
- Stakeholder Analysis Input for Presentation
- Rules, procedures Kick-off Report
- Visibility and Communication Plan
- Final WeBER Team Workshop Pristina Report
- Researchers' workshop 29-30 May, 2018, Budva Report
- Researchers' workshop September, 2017, Belgrade Report
- Researchers' workshop 5-7 June, 2017, Budva Report
- WeBER June Initial Regional Workshop Report
- Memorandum of Cooperation of the National Working Group (for each of project countries)
- Concept Note on WeBER Platform
- Constitutive Meeting of the WeBER Platform Report
- Fourth WeBER Platform VC Meeting Report
- Third WeBER Platform Meeting Skopje
- Second WeBER Platform VC Meeting Report
- WeBER Platform MoC
- PAR Monitor Methodology, August 2018
- National PAR Monitor Albania
- National PAR Monitor BiH
- National PAR Monitor Kosovo
- National PAR Monitor North Macedonia
- National PAR Monitor Montenegro
- National PAR Monitor Serbia
- WB PAR Monito
- Minutes of Research Team meetings
- Minutes, Monthly meetings of PIU