



Final Report: Gender and Socially Just Energy Communities in Albania



Project Duration: 27th of November 2023 until 31st of December 2025

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1. Summary

The project aimed to promote renewable energy in Albania by strengthening citizen participation in the energy transition and advancing gender equality. Against the backdrop of Albania's strong dependence on hydropower and its commitment to diversify energy sources in line with EU integration goals, the project focused on empowering women, youth, and low-income households to actively engage in renewable energy solutions, particularly through the concept of renewable energy communities (RECs).

The project was implemented through a comprehensive approach combining research, capacity building, policy advocacy, and stakeholder engagement. Key activities included a gender analysis of the Albanian energy sector, a legal and procedural assessment of renewable energy frameworks, targeted trainings on photovoltaic technologies and community energy models, and the development of practical tools such as a curriculum and a roadmap for socially and gender-just energy communities. In addition, national and international exchanges, as well as policy roundtables, facilitated knowledge sharing and strengthened dialogue between civil society, municipalities, and decision-makers.

As a result, the project significantly increased awareness and technical capacities among the target groups and successfully introduced the concept of energy communities in the Albanian context. Strong interest from participants and the active engagement of municipalities demonstrated the relevance and potential of community-based renewable energy initiatives. At the policy level, the project contributed to placing gender-just energy communities on the political agenda and provided concrete recommendations for improving the regulatory framework.

While all planned activities and deliverables were successfully achieved, the project also identified key challenges, particularly the lack of an enabling legal framework and the absence of pilot energy communities to demonstrate feasibility in practice. Nevertheless, the project laid a solid foundation for future action by equipping stakeholders with knowledge, tools, and networks, and by initiating a multi-level dialogue to support a socially inclusive and community-driven energy transition in Albania.



2. Subject and Objective of the Project

Albania is almost entirely dependent on hydropower for more than 90% of its electricity generation, making it vulnerable to projected hydrological extremes and potential issues with energy security in the future. Despite this, as a member of the European Energy Community and a candidate for EU accession, the country has committed to decarbonizing its economy, improving energy efficiency, harnessing the potential of renewable energy sources, and diversifying its electricity generation away from hydropower.

Motivated by the need to enhance energy security, protect against rising energy prices, and actively combat climate change, citizens and businesses in the region are increasingly turning to renewable energy sources, despite facing numerous obstacles.

The initiative aims to promote renewable energy in Albania and encourage citizen participation in the energy transition, while also strengthening gender equality. Specifically targeting Albanian female entrepreneurs in rural areas, low-income households, and young people, the project will provide training and exchange events to help them recognize, understand, and implement the potential of citizen energy initiatives, self-consumption, and self-generation of renewable energy.

The goal is to empower these groups to take ownership of the energy transition, ensure their own energy supply, and ideally create green jobs. Additionally, the project focuses on gradually changing the country's regulatory framework related to various renewable energy sources and the establishment of renewable energy communities, through dialogue with political decision-makers and capacity building efforts.

3. Project Modul Overview and applied Methods

The project was structured across six main Working Packages (WP):

<p>WP 1</p> <p>(M1–M8)</p>	<p>Gender Analysis and Assessment of Energy Communities</p> <p>WP1 focused on assessing the status quo of gender equality in the Albanian energy sector and evaluating the potential for renewable energy communities. Surveys, interviews, and stakeholder consultations were conducted to gather baseline data. The results informed subsequent project activities, including the design of training curricula and policy recommendations.</p> <p>The outcomes of WP1 were summarized in the Publication <i>“Current state of gender in the energy sector in Albania”</i></p>
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<p>WP 2 (M8–M12)</p>	<p>Analysis of Procedures and Improving Practical Implementation</p> <p>WP2 addressed legal and bureaucratic barriers that hinder the establishment of Renewable Energy Communities (RECs). Therefore, an analysis of the current situation regarding legal processes and economic incentives for the implementation of renewable energy projects was conducted. Activities included a comprehensive legal review, semi-structured interviews with households, small businesses, and prospective PV investors.</p> <p>The outcomes of WP 2 were summarized in the Publication <i>“Efficient and Transparent Processes for Renewable Energy Projects”</i></p>
<p>WP 3 (M9–M18)</p>	<p>Capacity Building, Knowledge Transfer, and Networking</p> <p>WP3 developed and delivered training programs tailored to the needs of the target groups. Training materials were co-created by WECF and Milieukontakt and included practical workshops on photovoltaic (PV) technologies, financial models for energy projects, and energy community frameworks. Exchange with international actors provided insights into best practices for establishing gender-inclusive RECs.</p> <p>Next to the delivered on-site Training in Permeti, a curriculum on renewable energy technologies and communities was created, tested and finalized.</p>
<p>WP 4 (M15-M20)</p>	<p>Planning of Gender-Just Renewable Energy Communities</p> <p>WP4 focused on creating a practical roadmap and handbook for the establishment of gender-just RECs in Albania. The outputs integrated findings from WP1–WP3, addressing technical, social, and financial aspects of community energy development.</p> <p>The results were summarized in the second part of the <i>“Roadmap for socially and gender just energy communities in Albania”</i></p>
<p>WP5 M20–M24</p>	<p>Policy Advocacy for Gender-Just RECs</p> <p>WP5 aimed to leverage the knowledge generated to influence local and national policy frameworks, including drafting policy briefs and organizing roundtables with political representatives. The first part of the <i>“Roadmap for socially and gender just energy communities in Albania”</i> contains the policy brief, which was presented at a high-level conference in Tirana.</p>

<p>WP6 M1–M24</p>	<p>Management, Communication, and Dissemination</p> <p>WP6 ensured project visibility, stakeholder engagement, and strategic communication. Activities included website updates, social media campaigns, participation in national and international conferences, and outreach through Albanian regional networks.</p>
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4. Results of implemented Measures

WP1: Gender Analysis and Assessment of Energy Communities

The survey design was structured in two parts, while the first part focused on the status quo on gender equality in Albania’s energy sector. The second part analyzed the potential of a gender- and socially just energy transition. Thereby the drivers for gender equality, the potential of prosumer concepts and the potential for democratization of energy supply were elaborated.

The survey included 10 relevant energy stakeholders in and outside Albania, representing a broad scale of institutions from local to national level. The framework for the screening of relevant stakeholders was jointly created by WECF and Milieukontakt, while the latter searched adequate actors from local and regional decisionmakers, energy agencies, utility companies, energy associations, NGOs and international organizations.

The survey results were included in the final deliverable of WP1, a report on the “Current state of gender in the energy sector in Albania”. This report offers a comprehensive analysis of gender aspects in Albania's energy sector and explores the potential for a gender- and socially just energy transition. Drawing on insights from a wide-ranging survey involving stakeholders at various levels, it provides a detailed examination of current challenges and future opportunities.

<p>Deliverable 1</p>	<p>Report on the “Current state of gender in the energy sector in Albania”</p>
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WP2: Legal and Procedural Analysis

WP2 systematically analyzed the regulatory framework governing renewable energy development in Albania. First, Milieukontakt and WECF analyzed the legal framework for energy cooperatives and the practical implementation. An analysis of gaps in the current legal frameworks and practical implementation was conducted which includes results from the assessment report under Working Package 1. Next to the main identified barriers in the legal framework, semi structured interviews with several interview partners (families, small business and individuals that have invested or plan to invest in photovoltaic panels) have been conducted. Through these interviews, the perception of gaps and the bureaucracy procedures for people who want to invest in photovoltaic were reflected. The research under this Work Package was included into the final report on “efficient and transparent processes for renewable energy projects”, which provides a comprehensive legal overview of the regulatory framework governing renewable energy development in Albania. It examines international legislation, national laws and programs and analyzes the barriers to implementing EU directives. The report also explores the legal procedures for self-producers, the skills and capacities of authorities, and the challenges identified by stakeholders. Finally, it presents key conclusions and recommendations to enhance the efficiency and transparency of renewable energy project implementation.

Deliverable 2	Report on “Efficient and Transparent Processes for Renewable Energy Projects”
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WP3: Capacity Building and Knowledge Transfer

The preparation of training materials for the on-site training in Albania involved a collaborative effort of both partners to ensure effective capacity-building. Milieukontakt was responsible for identifying the target community, organizing participant invitations, and managing all logistical aspects of the training. The training materials were jointly developed by WECF and Milieukontakt, combining expertise to create comprehensive and relevant content tailored to the needs of the participants. The training on solar energy and photovoltaic (PV) technology took place on September 13-14, 2024, in Përmet, targeting female entrepreneurs, energy-poor households, and young people. The event aimed to provide practical knowledge about PV technologies and introduce sustainable business models. The training began with an introduction to the project's objectives, emphasizing the role of renewable energy in supporting low-income households and promoting female entrepreneurship. The first day covered the benefits of renewable energy, PV technology basics, and a hands-on workshop where participants assembled a small PV system. On the second day, discussions focused on financial models for solar energy, followed by a site visit

to a crowd-funded PV installation, demonstrating real-world applications and economic opportunities.



Figure 1: Technical PV-Training in Përmet, Albania (Source: WECF)

Furthermore, the curriculum "Renewable Energy: The Path to a Sustainable Future" was developed in exchange with relevant education organizations and is designed to provide young people with practical knowledge of photovoltaic (PV) technologies, self-consumption, and energy communities. Prepared by Milieukontakt and written in Albanian, it covers key topics such as energy community models, renewable energy technologies, economic and environmental benefits, legal procedures, and hands-on applications. The program consists of ten comprehensive chapters, combining theoretical knowledge with real-world case studies and practical workshops. Developed in collaboration with vocational training centers, it aims to equip future professionals with the necessary skills to promote and implement renewable energy solutions in Albania. The curriculum prepared was tested for the first time at the University of Vlora on the 13th of March 2025. Around 40 students of the Technical and Natural Science of Ismail Qemali University participated. Students showed great interest on the situation in Albania and RES in general. The curricula has been revised and the final version can be deployed by education organisations.

An exchange of experience with foreign energy community actors was done with Koordinierungsstelle Energiegemeinschaften (Austria) and with ZEZ (Croatia) to gather insights on establishing gender-just renewable energy communities in Albania. The interviews were recorded and transcribed, providing valuable input for the Roadmap under Work



Package 4. The interviews focused on social and economic drivers, barriers and solutions, best practices for gender-just RECs, effective political and financial measures, and recommended steps for Albania. Experts shared experiences on overcoming legal and financial challenges and highlighted funding models that support low-income households.

Further exchange of experience with foreign energy community actors was during international events:

- Milieukontakt participated on March 6th and 7th in Rimini, at the international event “Renewable Energy Communities: Engine of Cohesion in the Western Balkans” aiming on fostering cohesion in the Western Balkans through the promotion of renewable energy and energy communities. The event offered networking opportunities with other stakeholders and influencers in the renewable energy sector.
- Milieukontakt Albania in cooperation with Electra Energy from Greece organized in the beginning of March 2025 visits in the municipality of Vlora and Lushnja to present RE communities and practical tools, guides and templates specifically designed for municipalities demonstrating foresightedness in energy community matters. The idea is to support both municipalities in engaging with and developing community energy projects alongside local citizens and small and medium enterprises. Partners also plan to organize advocacy meetings with local policymakers to convey the needs and the support required for implementing such projects.
- WECF and Milieukontakt Albania participated in the *Citizen Energy in Central and Eastern Europe Conference* held in Budapest in May 2025. The conference provided a valuable platform for exchange with other actors working on community energy across the region, enabling the sharing of experiences, challenges, and emerging opportunities. As part of the program, WECF and Milieukontakt contributed to the session on “Presentation of Good Practices” where they highlighted the progress achieved within their projects since inception. This session offered an opportunity to showcase concrete results, reflect on lessons learned, and inspire further development of community energy initiatives.
- Milieukontakt Albania shared and presented an overview of best practices in the establishment and operation of Local Energy Communities in one national event organised by DBU and HBS, and two regional workshops, one in Tirana (May 2025) organised by Tirana Municipality and the other in Terlizzi, Italy (July 2025).

Deliverable 3	Curricula in Albanian “Renewable Energy: The Path to a Sustainable Future”
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WP4: Roadmap for Gender-Just RECs

Building on these insights, and integrating the results of Work Packages 1, 2, and 3, the *“Roadmap for socially and gender just energy communities in Albania”* presents a comprehensive, hands-on guide for creating inclusive and gender-just energy communities across Albania. Available in both English and Albanian, it is rooted in recent legal, social, and economic developments and responds directly to the country’s evolving energy landscape, where new opportunities for community participation in renewable energy are emerging alongside significant challenges. By combining strategic recommendations with practical methods, the roadmap empowers citizens, municipalities, NGOs, and policymakers to build community-led renewable energy initiatives that are both resilient and socially equitable.

Focus group discussions were held throughout the project timeframe with different stakeholders in Tirana (March 2025) and in Vlora (October) to discuss the results of the roadmap. These meetings revealed a strong interest among citizens in renewable energy sources, while also highlighting a significant lack of accessible information. A key message emerging from these exchanges was the urgent need to move beyond strategic recommendations toward concrete, visible action.

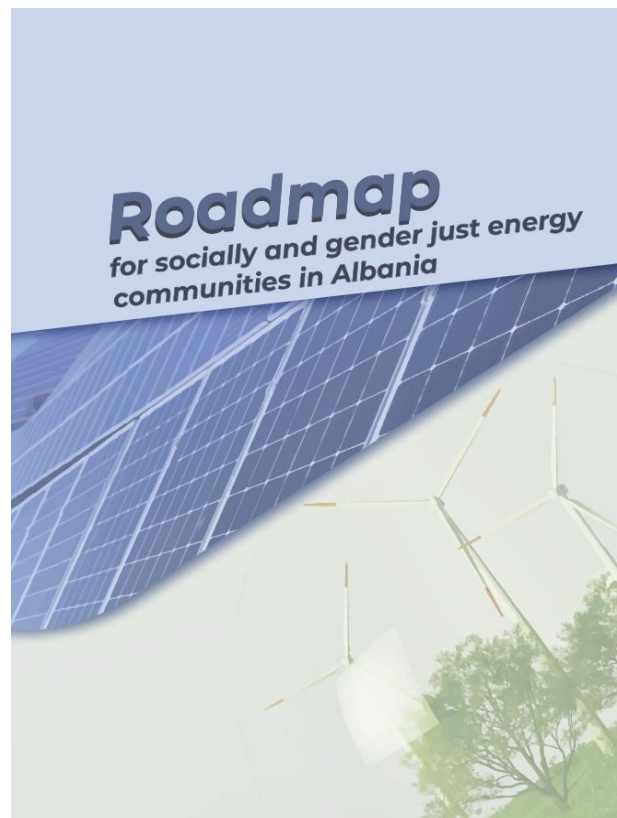


Figure 2: Cover of the *“Roadmap for socially and gender just energy communities in Albania”* (Source: WECF, Milieukontakt Albania)



Overall, the roadmap is structured in two focused sections. The first part follows the design and features of a policy brief, strengthening the enabling environment for energy communities through a concise yet thorough analysis of the current framework, including legal ambiguities, administrative and technical barriers, financing constraints, and gaps in public awareness. It provides clear, actionable recommendations, identifies responsible actors, and outlines timelines, drawing on international best practices. The second section translates these insights into a step-by-step guide for establishing and operating an energy community in Albania, covering needs assessment, team building, governance structures, legal forms, financing, and technical implementation, with a strong emphasis on inclusivity, gender equality, and long-term sustainability. Overall, the roadmap serves as both inspiration and practical guidance for advancing a community-driven and just energy transition in Albania.

Deliverable 4	Roadmap for socially and gender just energy communities in Albania
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WP5: Policy Advocacy

Building on the “Roadmap for socially and gender just energy communities”, WP5 aimed to influence policy at local and national levels.

Two Roundtables with policymakers were held in 2025. The first one was organised in September 2025 in Shkodra, where 23 participants representing 13 entities (private and public) were present. The second one was organised one week later in the southeast of Albania, where 15 participants representing 12 entities had the chance to get information on the roadmap for establishing a renewable energy cooperative and find out challenges in practice, or the support needed to succeed. Participants confirmed that the topic is very important for the local territorial development and strengthening their private initiatives and at the same time, the roadmap introduced was assessed as informative/descriptive and well designed.

The final conference of the project took place in November 2025 in Albania as a Policy Round Table, bringing together representatives from government, municipalities, civil society, academia, international organizations, and the energy sector. The event aimed to foster dialogue on the development of renewable energy communities and to formulate concrete policy recommendations for a citizen-centered and socially just energy transition in Albania. A key objective was to discuss existing policy frameworks and identify pathways to accelerate the establishment of inclusive and gender-just energy communities.



Figure 3: Final Conference of the Project in Tirana, November 2025 (source: Milieukontakt Albania)

A central input of the conference was the presentation of the first part of the *“Roadmap for Socially and Gender-Just Energy Communities in Albania”*, which comprehends a policy brief with concrete recommendations and actions for relevant actors. The presentation emphasized the multiple benefits of energy communities, demonstrating how they can contribute not only to the diversification and decentralization of the energy system, but also to social inclusion, local economic development, and gender equality. Drawing on international best practices, it was shown that successful energy communities depend on a combination of clear legal frameworks, public acceptance, and accessible financing mechanisms. Such approaches can strengthen municipalities, support vulnerable groups, and create new opportunities for women’s participation in the energy sector.



Figure 4: Presentation of the first part of the “Roadmap for Socially and Gender-Just Energy Communities in Albania” (source: Milieukontakt Albania)

The following round table discussion provided an open platform for stakeholders to exchange perspectives on how these recommendations can be translated into actionable policies at both local and national levels. Participants agreed on the importance of establishing a continuous dialogue platform between communities, policymakers, and other stakeholders. It was concluded that interventions should be developed on two key levels: municipalities and the Energy Efficiency Agency. At the municipal level, pilot projects were proposed to test local energy community models, including the installation of photovoltaic systems for rural households, with up to 70% of collective investment costs potentially covered by the agency for Energy Efficiency. At the national level, it was recommended that the Energy Efficiency Agency adapt existing support schemes—such as those for water heating—towards electricity generation, supported by clear technical frameworks and targeted incentives.

Furthermore, the importance of collaboration with international partners was highlighted, particularly in the areas of capacity building, training, and knowledge transfer. These pilot initiatives are expected to inform the development of context-specific legal and regulatory frameworks, ensuring that energy communities in Albania are both functional and economically sustainable. **The conference concluded with a strong commitment to continue cooperation between civil society and public authorities. As a concrete follow-up, a joint**



letter was submitted to the Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy, expressing support for the development of necessary bylaws to advance renewable energy communities in Albania.

WP6: Management, Communication, and Dissemination

The overall management and coordination of the project proceeded smoothly throughout its duration, both among the project partners and in cooperation with the donor. Communication was efficient, roles and responsibilities were clearly defined, and all partners contributed constructively to the successful implementation of project activities.

The project timeline was extended by one month through a cost-neutral prolongation. This extension was necessary to accommodate the scheduling of the final conference in the last project month and to allow sufficient time for organizational aspects, particularly with regard to follow-up activities and administrative closure. The additional time ensured that all outputs could be finalized properly and that the project results were consolidated and communicated effectively.

The project results were presented to several stakeholders in Albania, including municipalities, civil society organizations, and academic institutions, fostering awareness and support for renewable energy communities. Next to national dissemination and networking activities, multiple international Events and Conferences were joint:

Event	Date	Activity
Online Workshop held by the Technical University Berlin on Energy Communities	November 2024	Presentation and Workshop participation
Interactive Dialogue at the United Nations in New York	March 2025	Speaker
Citizen Energy in Central and Eastern Europe Conference held in Budapest	May 2025	Presentation and Workshop participation
Conference on Local Energy Communities in Terlizz, Italy	July 2025	Presentation and Discussion participation
Energy Transition, Decarbonisation & Investment Conference in Kosovo	December 2025	Presentation and Discussion participation

Several visibility materials were produced and disseminated through social media channels, including promotional posters and videos related to the Policy Round Table on Gender-Just Renewable Energy Communities in Albania, as well as communication materials highlighting project trainings and local activities:

Social Media Activity	Date:
Poster on Policy round table on Gender Just renewable Energy community in Albania	November 2025
Policy Round Table on Gender-Just Renewable Energy Communities in Albania	November 2025
Përmet training/roundtable “Gender and Socially Just Energy Communities in Albania”	September 2025
Roundtable in Permet	September 2025
Shkodër training “Gender and Socially Just Energy Communities in Albania”	September 2025
Conference in Budapest, share experiences and network with other initiatives	May 2025
Conference in Budapest – general post	May 2025
Report of the legal framework governing renewable energy projects in Albania	April 2025
Event – Renewable Energy Communities: Engine of Cohesion in the Western Balkans	March 2025
Meeting with Students of the University of Vlora, to present the curriculum on renewable energy	March 2025
Interactive Dialogue Environmental conservation, protection, and rehabilitation – Event in New York	March 2025
Albania 2030: 100% Renewable Energy Production and Consumption	November 2024
Video promotion of renewable energy communities in Albania	Oktober 2024
Post about the training in Permet	September 2024
Video on the training in Permet	September 2024
Promotional poster on the training in Permet	September 2024
Presentation of the project in international event	July 2024
Study: Current State of Gender in the Energy Sector in Albania	July 2024

Next to social media channels the project presentation and activities are visible on the partners websites:

Website	Item
Website WECF Germany	Project Presentation
Website Milieukontakt	Project Presentation
Training Report Permet - WECF	Article
Report Final Conference Tirana - WECF	Article
Current state of gender in the energy sector in Albania – Milieukontakt	Report
Roadmap for socially and gender just energy communities in Albania - Milieukontakt	Report

Report on efficient and transparent processes for renewable energy projects - Milieukontakt	Report
Current state of gender in the energy sector in Albania – WECF	Report
Roadmap for socially and gender just energy communities in Albania - WECF	Report
Report on efficient and transparent processes for renewable energy projects - WECF	Report

5. Discussion on project results and impact

The implementation of the project ran very smoothly throughout its duration, with all planned activities successfully carried out and all deliverables achieved. The strong coordination among partners and effective project management ensured that timelines were met and outputs of high quality were produced.

The project made substantial progress toward achieving its core objectives of promoting renewable energy in Albania, strengthening citizen participation, and advancing gender equality within the energy transition. The targeted groups—particularly women in rural areas, low-income households, and young people—were successfully reached through trainings, exchanges, and awareness-raising activities. These measures not only increased technical knowledge, especially regarding photovoltaic (PV) systems and self-consumption models, but also empowered participants to envision active engagement in community-based energy solutions. More detailed information can be taken from the table below which contains direct beneficiaries from project activities:

Nr	Activity	Location	Date	Direct Beneficiaries(F/M)
1	Training on solar energy and energy communities	Permet	13/14 September 2024	22 (13F/9M)
2	Training with developed Curriculum on Renewable Energy/Communities	Vlore	13 March 2025	40 (25F/15M)
3	Training on establishment of Renewable Energy Communities	Tirana	6 February 2025	15
4	Training on establishment of Renewable Energy Communities	Tirana	6 May 2025	33 (11F/22M)
5	Focus group discussions on the Roadmap	Tirana	27 March 2025	16 (10F/6M)
6	Focus group discussions on the Roadmap	Vlore	15 October 2025	20 (10F/10M)
7	Roundtables with policymakers	Shkodra	10 September 2025	23 (9F/12M)
8	Roundtables with policymakers	Permet	12 September 2025	15 (6F/9M)
9	National final Conference	Tirana	25 November 2025	24 (12F/12M)



When assessing the sustainability of the project, two key elements stand out. First, the concept of energy communities was effectively introduced and widely embraced. Participants demonstrated strong interest, recognizing their potential to enable joint investments, improve local livelihoods, and address social and gender inequalities. In this regard, the project can be considered highly successful in terms of capacity building, awareness-raising, and the development of tangible outputs such as the **Roadmap and policy recommendations**. Early results can be highlighted at two levels:

At the regional policy level, **Milieukontakt Albania has been rapporteur for the Berlin Process**, specifically for the theme *Environment, Energy, and Decarbonisation* within the Civil Society Forum (CSF) of the Western Balkans. Among the recommendations addressed to various stakeholders was the promotion of citizen-led solutions, including Renewable Energy Communities (RECs), municipal renewable energy projects, and local just transition funds.

At the local implementation level, two civil society organizations (CSOs), in partnership with their respective municipalities, have applied to international funding mechanisms to pilot lighthouse projects on Renewable Energy Communities in Përmet and Rrëshen. These initiatives were directly inspired by the project's activities and interventions in the REC-field, demonstrating its catalytic impact at local level.

At the same time, some limitations and deviations from the intended impact became evident. While the project succeeded in stimulating interest and building capacities, the lack of a fully developed and operational legal framework—particularly regarding by-laws, concrete procedures, and financial incentives—remains a significant barrier to implementation. This regulatory gap limited the transition from knowledge and motivation to the actual establishment of renewable energy communities. **A key challenge identified throughout the project was the absence of a “lighthouse” or pilot energy community in Albania that could serve as a concrete, locally relevant example. Many stakeholders expressed the need for a tangible reference point to build trust and momentum, especially in a context where large-scale renewable projects are already being developed by private actors, while citizen-led initiatives still lack visibility and support.**

The collaboration with project partners, including NGOs, municipalities, and international actors, was overall very positive and constructive. The coordination between partners functioned smoothly, enabling the successful implementation of all planned activities and the production of high-quality outputs. Particularly noteworthy was the strong engagement and willingness of municipalities to support and potentially initiate local energy community projects. This local-level commitment represents a crucial foundation for future implementation. Cooperation with national stakeholders also improved over time, culminating in the final conference, where key actors from government organizations, municipalities and civil society sector engaged in dialogue and expressed openness to further



collaboration. The joint letter addressed to the Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy illustrates the project's contribution to placing the topic of energy communities and gender-just energy transition on the political agenda. **This letter expresses willingness for the co-development of necessary bylaws to advance renewable energy communities in Albania.**

Overall, the project achieved significant results in terms of knowledge generation, capacity building, networking, and policy groundwork. It successfully raised awareness of energy poverty, gender disparities, and the opportunities of renewable energy, while fostering a sense of ownership among communities. However, the long-term impact will depend on the extent to which the identified regulatory gaps are addressed and whether concrete pilot projects can be realized in the near future. The project has laid a strong foundation for this next phase by equipping stakeholders with the necessary knowledge, tools, and motivation, and by initiating a multi-level dialogue that should be continued through close cooperation between civil society, municipalities, and national authorities.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, the project has clearly demonstrated that its overall approach – combining research, capacity building, stakeholder engagement, and policy advocacy – has been well designed and effective. The chosen methodology proved successful in addressing both the technical and social dimensions of renewable energy communities, while placing a strong emphasis on gender equality and inclusion. The smooth implementation of all work packages, the high level of stakeholder engagement, and the quality of the outputs confirm that the approach was appropriate to the Albanian context. In particular, the combination of practical trainings, international exchange, and the **development of concrete tools such as the Roadmap enabled participants to move from awareness to a deeper understanding of how energy communities can be realized in practice.**

At the same time, the project highlighted important areas where the approach can be further strengthened. While awareness, motivation, and capacities were significantly increased, the transition to actual implementation of RECs remains limited due to external factors – most notably the lack of a fully developed legal and regulatory framework, including by-laws, clear procedures, and financial incentives. This indicates that future approaches should place a stronger focus on accompanying pilot or “lighthouse” projects that demonstrate feasibility under real conditions in Albania. Such practical examples would help build trust, create visibility, and accelerate replication. Therefore, while the overall methodology has proven its value, it should be complemented by more implementation-oriented components in future initiatives.

Regarding the project's objectives, no changes were required, as they remain highly relevant and aligned with Albania's energy and climate ambitions, as well as with the needs of the target groups. However, the findings suggest a need to further operationalize these objectives



by strengthening the link between capacity building and concrete implementation. In particular, continued engagement with policymakers will be essential to translate the project’s recommendations into an enabling legal and financial framework. The project has already made important contributions in this regard, for example through policy briefs, roundtables, and the joint letter to the Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy supporting the development of by-laws. Building on this, future efforts should focus on ensuring that energy communities can rely on stable business models and planning security.

The project successfully laid a strong foundation for the development of gender-just renewable energy communities in Albania. It enhanced knowledge, built capacities, and fostered networks among women, youth, municipalities, and other stakeholders. At the same time, it demonstrated that the energy transition can be both socially inclusive and environmentally sustainable. By promoting community ownership, the project highlighted the potential to strengthen local economies, create green jobs, and increase social cohesion.

To consolidate and sustain these achievements, several next steps are recommended. These include the further dissemination of the roadmap to municipalities and emerging initiatives, further exchange with local authorities and community leaders, and continued policy engagement. The application of the developed curriculum can further anchor the topic in Albania’s education system. In parallel, ongoing support for pilot energy communities – guided with the established roadmap – will be crucial to translate the project’s results into practice.

Overall, the project has created a solid and necessary foundation for a community-driven and gender-just energy transition in Albania. Its long-term impact will depend on continued cooperation between civil society, local and national authorities, and international partners, as well as on the successful implementation of supportive regulatory frameworks and pilot initiatives.

Appendices:

Annex 1	Report on the “Current state of gender in the energy sector in Albania”
Annex 2	Report on “Efficient and Transparent Processes for Renewable Energy Projects”
Annex 3	Roadmap for socially and gender just energy communities in Albania (English and Albanian)
Annex 4	Interview and survey material
Annex 5	Training curricula in Albanian “Renewable Energy: The Path to a Sustainable Future”