



Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Water Administration

Republic of Albania

IPARD II Programme 2014-2020

Draft Evaluation Plan

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List of Acronyms

AA	Audit Authority
AIR	Annual Implementation Report
DPERP	Directorate for Programming and Evaluation of Rural Policy
EC	European Commission
EIB	European Investment Bank
ESG	Evaluation Steering Group
EU	European Union
EUR	Euro
FWA	Framework Agreement
INSTAT	Institute of Statistics of Albania
IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance
IPARD	Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance for Rural Development
LAG	Local Action Group
MA	Managing Authority
MARDWA	Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Water Administration
MIS	Management Information System
NAO	National Authorising Officer
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NIPAC	National IPA Coordinator
NRDN	National Rural Development Network
SA	Sectoral Agreement
SMD	Sector for Monitoring and Delivery
TA	Technical Assistance
ToR	Terms of Reference

1. Objectives and purpose of the Evaluation Plan

This Evaluation Plan is prepared in line with the provisions of Article 57 of the Framework Agreement (FWA) and Article 56 of the Sectoral Agreement (SA), which establish an obligation for the Managing Authority (MA), in consultation with the National IPA Coordinator (NIPAC), to prepare an Evaluation Plan presenting the evaluation activities planned for the different phases of implementation of the IPARD II programme. The Evaluation Plan has to be submitted to the IPARD II Monitoring Committee (MC) no later than one year after the adoption by the Commission of the IPARD II programme.

The overall objective of this Evaluation Plan is to ensure that sufficient and appropriate evaluation activities are undertaken to allow the MA, the IPARD II MC and other evaluation stakeholders to:

- examine the progress of the IPARD II programme in relation to its goals by means of result and, where appropriate, impact indicators;
- improve the quality of the IPARD II programme and its implementation;
- examine proposals for substantial changes to the IPARD II programme;
- prepare for interim and ex-post evaluation.

The purpose of this Evaluation Plan is to effectively plan evaluation activities and capacity building actions undertaken in different phases of the implementation of the IPARD II programme in order to ensure that:

- evaluation activities are completed in a timely manner and their findings provide information needed for the IPARD II programme steering, annual reports and for the programming of future interventions;
- data needed for IPARD II interim and ex-post evaluation is available.

This Evaluation Plan sets out the responsibilities and arrangements for effective monitoring and evaluation of the IPARD II programme, outlines planned evaluation activities and their timing, resources and capacity building actions needed, communication of the evaluation results.

The principles of the evaluation from Article 54 of the SA of the IPARD II programme will be followed.

2. Governance and Coordination

The main actors involved in the monitoring and evaluation system of the IPARD II programme are: the MA, IPARD Agency, the IPARD II MC, the Evaluation Steering Group (ESG), recipients and independent evaluators. Their role is established in Chapter 11.2 of the IPARD II programme and it respects the provisions of the SA.

Managing Authority

The MA has the primary responsibility for the functioning and governance of the monitoring and evaluation system for IPARD II programme and for ensuring timeliness, quality and communication of evaluation results. The main responsibilities of the MA are as follows:

- Timely organizing and planning of evaluation activities: identifying programme evaluation–related needs, drawing of Evaluation Plan, drafting proposals for its amendments and updating it annually in order to align evaluation activities with implementation of the programme, in consultation with NIPAC, Commission, IPARD II MC and other relevant stakeholders;
- Setting up a secure electronic system to gather monitoring and context related data on progress of the IPARD II programme and conducting analysis of the collected data;
- Ensuring that all relevant information needed for effective monitoring and evaluation of the progress and results of the programme is available;
- Facilitating cooperation of IPARD stakeholders and setting up, chairing and facilitating of the activities of the Evaluation Steering Group (ESG);
- Informing IPARD II MC by providing the documents necessary for monitoring quality and effectiveness of implementation of the IPARD II programme;
- Reporting on the results of evaluations, by preparation in consultation with IPARD Agency, of Annual and Final implementation reports within time limits set in the SA;
- Organising interim and ex-post evaluations of the IPARD II programme and evaluation studies, including writing Terms of Reference and tendering, selection of independent evaluators, supporting of the evaluations, and assessment of the quality of the evaluations;
- Communicating of the results of monitoring and evaluation activities to the IPARD II MC, the NIPAC, Commission, other relevant stakeholders and wider public;
- Publishing the results of evaluations on the IPARD website.
- Following-up the recommendations of the evaluations and ensuring that the results of the evaluations are taken into account in the programming and implementation cycle;
- Planning and organising evaluation capacity building activities.
- Publishing the results of evaluations on the IPARD website

The MA will report each year on the evaluation activities to the IPARD II Monitoring Committee with copies to the National Authorising Officer (NAO), National IPA Coordinator (NIPAC) and the Audit Authority (AA). A summary of the activities will be included in the Annual Implementation Report.

IPARD Agency

The IPARD Agency contributes to the monitoring and evaluation activities by collection and storing of monitoring data and participation in planning and supporting of the evaluation activities. It will execute tasks related to collection of information on financial, output and result indicators regarding applications, supported projects, payments as well as data on executed controls. The IPARD Agency will timely provide data for the Annual/ Final Implementation Reports and will work in close cooperation with the MA. The IPARD Agency will take part in the Evaluation Steering Group. The cooperation between the MA and IPARD Agency and the IPARD Agency's responsibilities related to monitoring and evaluation is formalised in the Memorandum of Understanding between the two bodies.

IPARD II Monitoring Committee

The IPARD II MC has the following responsibilities related to the evaluation of the programme:

- *examine* progress and results of IPARD II programme, in particular the achievement of the targets set for the different measures and the progress on utilisation of the financial allocations to those measures;
- *periodically review* progress made towards achieving the objectives set out in the IPARD II programme, review information on any sectors or measures where difficulties are experienced and information on the results of verifications carried out;
- *consider and approve* the Annual/Final implementation reports;
- *examine* the activities and outputs related to the programme evaluation, including Evaluation Plan and quality and implications of evaluations;
- *propose* to the MA for submission to the Commission with a copy to NIPAC and NAO, after consultation with the MA and the IPARD Agency, amendments or reviews of the IPARD II programme to ensure the achievements of the programme's objectives and enhance the efficiency of the assistance provided.

Evaluation Steering Group

In order to ensure a high quality of planning and execution of evaluation activities, an Evaluation Steering Group (ESG) will be established as part of the IPARD II MC. The ESG will include members from MA, IPARD agency, IPARD II MC and other experts with relevant professional background. The representatives from Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Water Administration (MARDWA) technical departments, Ministry of Environment, Institute of Statistics (INSTAT) and other relevant authorities will be invited to attend meetings of the ESG to provide access to additional information and expertise. The ESG will be established with a Decision of the MA. The ESG responsibility is to assist MA, in particular:

- provide advice on planning of the evaluation activities;
- review progress and advise on any necessary amendment of this Evaluation Plan and support preparation of the annual Evaluation Plan;
- formulate evaluation questions;
- review Terms of Reference (ToR) for the use of independent evaluators;
- support and monitor the work of the evaluator;
- facilitate access to information needed for the evaluation to the evaluator;
- assess quality of the evaluation reports;
- monitor the process of implementation of the recommendations formulated as the result of the conducted evaluations.

The ESG will meet at least once a year to discuss annual evaluation needs and progress in Evaluation Plan implementation and will have other meetings aligned with the needs of the evaluation cycle (e.g. review of ToR, review of methodology proposed by the evaluators, assessment of the quality of the evaluation reports).

National Rural Development Network

National Rural Development Network will support dissemination of the evaluation results. It will also support monitoring and evaluation activities of the Local Action Groups (LAG) by provision of training and dissemination of good practice.

Recipients

Recipients of IPARD II support will be required to provide data on monitoring indicators and to provide information for evaluations.

The supported *Local Action Groups* (LAG) will be required to establish a system for monitoring and self-evaluation of results. The MA will prepare guidelines on monitoring and evaluation for LAGs, including list of common monitoring indicators and instructions for minimum standards on self-evaluation activities, including progress in strategy implementation and quality of partnerships. The guidelines will specify methods of collection and frequency of reporting of data on monitoring indicators and frequency and content of the self-evaluation activities.

Independent evaluators

Evaluations will be carried out by independent evaluators without direct involvement in the implementation and management of the programme. The evaluators should be competent regarding up-to-date evaluation practices and experienced in the evaluation of the rural development programmes.

The evaluators will be responsible for designing methodology of the evaluations in consultation with MA and ESG and conducting planned evaluations, presentation of evaluation results on workshops and IPARD II MC and on-the-job training of MA (e.g. provision of advice on preparation of Annual Implementation Reports, conducting workshops on specific evaluation topics, guidance on activities for self-study, involving MA staff in evaluation activities, e.g. drafting questionnaires, conducting interviews, etc.). MA will ensure that the evaluators have access to good quality monitoring data on outputs and results and context data.

3. Evaluation topics and activities

In line with the requirements of Article 55 of the FWA, which sets out general principles of evaluation of IPA II assistance, and Article 54 of the SA, the evaluations of the IPARD II programme *will aim to improve the quality, effectiveness and consistency of the assistance from Union funds and the strategy and implementation of the IPARD II programme.*

The objectives of the evaluations are as follows:

1. to examine the degree of utilisation of resources, the effectiveness and efficiency of the IPARD II programme implementation;
2. to assess the achievement of objectives laid down in the FWA (Article 4 16(5)) and of the defined programme objectives and priorities and socio-economic impact;
3. to identify the factors which contributed to the success or failure of the implementation of the IPARD II programme, including the sustainability of actions;
4. to identify best practices and lessons learned concerning rural development policy.

The evaluations will be used for the improvement of the implementation of the programme by contributing to informed decision making, for better planning of future interventions and will ensure for accountability and transparency of use of public funds.

3.1 Evaluation topics

The major evaluation topics by evaluation criteria are given below:

Issues related to continuous relevance of the IPARD programme and its measures

- Development of the socio-economic context and its influence on the continuous relevance of the IPARD II programme;
- Development of the national policies and their influence on the programme relevance;
- Level of co-ordination of IPARD II programme with national policies;
- Development and level of adopting of EU standards by various sectors.

Issues related to efficiency and quality of the programme management

- Quality of the monitoring system – relevance of monitoring indicators, quality of the data collection and reliability of the data fed into the monitoring system;
- Availability and quality of support to potential beneficiaries;
- Barriers to absorption and administrative burden;
- Efficiency of programme administration, delivery and management.

Issues related to effectiveness, impact and sustainability

- Achievement of the targets set for the different measures and the progress on utilisation of the financial allocations to those measures;
- Effectiveness of targeting of measures in relation to sectors' needs (with issues of deadweight and long-term economic viability);
- Progress of the implemented measures and of IPARD II programme as a whole in relation to its goals by means of result and, where appropriate, impact indicators based on measure and programme specific evaluation questions, that will be specified in the beginning of programme implementation. The evaluation will focus on:
 - Assessment of the IPARD II programme progress in relation to targets on output and results indicators;
 - Results / impacts of the measures on the competitiveness of agri-food sector;
 - Results / impacts of the on adopting of EU standards in the agri-food sector;
 - Effects of advisory services measure on the adoption of new practices or technologies;
 - Results / impacts on diversification of economic activities and job creation in rural areas;
 - Results / impacts on capacity for local development;
 - Results / impacts on restoring, preserving, and enhancing ecosystems dependent on agriculture.
- Effectiveness of the actions of the National Rural Development Network.

The above listed evaluation topics will be addressed in interim and *ex-post* evaluation reports or in the planned evaluation studies.

3.2 Evaluation activities

Evaluation activities cover all evaluations, which will to be carried out during the IPARD II programme implementation. The following evaluation activities are planned to be executed.

1. Regular collection and analysis of data on monitoring indicators and context

The data on indicators of financial execution, output and result indicators will be regularly collected by the IPARD agency and analysed by the MA. The MA will monitor progress towards targets set in the programme and will report achievements bi-annually to the IPARD II MC and in the Annual Implementation Reports (AIR), which will include annexes with Common indicator tables for monitoring and evaluation. The monitoring data on output and results will be also used in the evaluations.

The MA will collect data and will conduct analysis of the changes of the context – main macroeconomic and sectoral development trends, changes in national, regional or sectoral policies, evolution of national support programmes. The collected data will be used to periodically assess the continuous relevance of the programme and for the interpretation of the achievements of the programme in AIRs and in evaluations.

2. Strategic evaluations

Interim evaluation (if required by the Commission)

The interim evaluation will examine the initial results of the IPARD II programme, their consistency with the *ex-ante* appraisal, the relevance of the targets and objectives and the extent to which they have been attained. It shall also assess the quality of Programme monitoring and implementation and the experience gained in setting-up the system for implementation.

Ex-post evaluation

The *ex-post* evaluation will assess the utilisation of resources and the effectiveness and efficiency of the IPARD II programme, its impact and its consistency with the *ex-ante* evaluation. It will assess factors contributing to the success or failure of implementation, the achievements of the IPARD II programme, including sustainability of results, and will draw conclusions relevant to the Programme and to the enlargement process.

The interim and *ex-post* evaluations will be carried out by independent evaluators.

3. Evaluation studies for assessment of specific aspects of the programme management, efficiency and effectiveness of implementation

During the programme implementation, evaluation studies for assessment of specific important issues will be carried out. The topics of the in-depth evaluations are presented in Section 3.1 and their indicative timing - in Section 6.

In the first two years of implementation, it is planned to implement evaluation studies focused on the efficiency of programme administration, delivery and management, mainly:

- Assessment of the functioning of the monitoring system – relevance of monitoring indicators, quality of the data collection and reliability of the data fed into the monitoring system;
- Assessment of availability and quality of support to potential beneficiaries, barriers to absorption and administrative burden.

If Interim evaluation is not required by the Commission, in the third year of implementation the evaluation activities will include:

- Assessment of the preliminary results of the implemented measures;

- Assessment of efficiency of programme administration, delivery and management.

In the next years of implementation, evaluation studies will focus on assessment of progress in implementation and preliminary results of agri-environment-climate and organic farming measure, implementation of local development strategies – LEADER approach.

The evaluation studies will be executed the by independent evaluators.

4. Collection of data

MA will have the responsibility to ensure that there is sufficient statistical data for evaluations. After the start of the IPARD II programme implementation, a review of data availability on context indicators (especially objective related indicators) will be carried out. With the use of external evaluators, evaluation questions and evaluation data requirements will be reviewed, the gaps in evaluation data will be analysed in order to identify the appropriate methods for the collection of missing data – including engaging of other institutions in data collection, conducting specialised surveys, and purchase of data. If needed, the MA will commission the data collection on context indicators, if essential for the evaluation of results and impacts of the programme.

5. Ad hoc evaluation studies

In addition to the activities described above, ad-hoc evaluations may be carried out in response to the newly emerging needs, such as:

- identified problems in implementation;
- proposals for substantial changes to the IPARD II programme.

3.3 Governance and co-ordination activities

The governance and coordination of evaluation activities during the programming period include all activities related to coordinating, monitoring, promoting the quality of evaluation activities and dissemination of evaluation results throughout the whole programme cycle. The following activities will be delivered or co-ordinated by the MA:

- Setting up of the monitoring and evaluation system, including preparation of the Manuals of procedure, establishing of the MA with IPARD agency and development of MIS;
- Establishment of the ESG and co-ordination of the activities of the ESG (see section 2);
- Assessment of the evaluation capacity needs and conducting training of the MA, IPARD Agency, ESG and MC (see section 5);
- Preparation of the ToR and conducting of a tendering procedure for external evaluation and monitoring and quality control of the evaluation activities;
- Regular assessment of the evaluation needs, preparation of annual Evaluation Plan and review of this Evaluation Plan;
- Reporting on evaluation activities to MC and EC;
- Dissemination of results of evaluations;
- Follow-up of evaluation results.

4. Data and information

The IPARD II programme will be monitored and evaluated based on following types of indicators:

Context indicators, which provide information on relevant aspects of the external environment that are likely to have an influence on the design and performance of the policy, e.g. GDP per capita, rate of unemployment, water quality, etc. Table of the context indicators is given in Section 3.6 of the IPARD II programme.

Input indicators measure financial or other resources allocated to operations, measures and the programme. Financial execution indicators are used to monitor progress in terms of the (annual) commitment and payment of funds available for any operation, measure or programme in relation to its eligible costs. For example, expenditure per measure declared to the Commission.

Output indicators measure activities directly realized within programmes. These activities are the first step towards realising the operational objectives of the intervention. Examples: number of training sessions organized, number of farms receiving investment support, total volume of investment.

Result indicators measure the direct and immediate effects of the intervention. They provide information on changes in, for example, the behaviour, capacity or performance of recipients. Example: gross number of jobs created.

Impact indicators refer to the benefits of the programme beyond the immediate effects on its direct beneficiaries both at the level of the intervention, but also more generally in the programme area. They are linked to the wider objectives of the programme. They are normally expressed in “net” terms, which means subtracting effects that cannot be attributed to the intervention (e.g. double counting, deadweight), and taking into account indirect effects (displacement and multipliers). Example: increase in employment in rural areas, increased productivity of agricultural sector, increased production of renewable energy.

The sources of information on indicators are described bellow.

1. Monitoring data

The monitoring data will be collected on indicators for financial execution, output and result indicators included in the IPARD II programme and the Common indicator tables for monitoring and evaluation of IPARD Programmes 2014-2020.

The data on monitoring indicators will be collected on application/contract level by the IPARD Agency and inserted into the MIS. The MIS contains data on each operation (submitted, assessed, selected for funding, as well as completed operations, including key characteristics of the recipient and the project), which are recorded and processed electronically by the IPARD Agency. The data will be provided on a quarterly basis - not later than 10th of the month for the previous month, on semi-annual basis and on annual basis – not later than end of February each year for the previous year.

MA will aggregate and analyse information / data on indicators, received from the IPARD Agency. There will be a common IPARD Agency and MA data system / interface to facilitate the transfer and handling of data.

To ensure quality and reliability of the monitoring data, during the first year of the programme implementation, an independent assessment will be carried out focusing on adequacy, reliability

of the data and quality of selected indicators. The MA will recruit external expertise to fine tune the indicators and for the development of monitoring systems of new measures.

2. Context data

Data on context indicators will be collected from various sources:

INSTAT – data sets on macro economic and socio-economic development trends completed from demographic, social and business statistics and representative surveys, such as Labour Force Survey, Living Standard Measurement Survey, etc.

MARDWA – data on agriculture, farming structure, farming labour force – regular statistics and agricultural census data.

Ministry of Environment – data on biodiversity, forestry, water quality, production of renewable energy from agriculture and forestry, etc.

Eurostat database of enlargement countries.

Statistics from the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations.

Programming of the IPARD II programme revealed that there is a lack of data on a number of the common context indicators. To ensure availability of data for evaluation of the results of the programme, in the first year of implementation, an analysis of the data needs and data availability will be carried out, based on which a strategy for data collection will be prepared, including setting of proxy indicators, conducting surveys or purchase of data sets. The MA will make necessary arrangements with data providers to ensure access to data in the required format and quality, or will organise other activities related to data collection.

3. Targeted data collection for the needs of evaluations

Targeted data collection for the needs of evaluation of progress and achievements of the IPARD II programme will be carried out by independent evaluators based on methodologies designed for the Interim/*ex-post* evaluations or evaluation studies. These may include representative surveys of beneficiaries, non-beneficiaries, stakeholders, etc.

5. Training on evaluation

The training on evaluation will aim to create or strengthen evaluation-related skills necessary to fulfil evaluation tasks and activities included in this Evaluation Plan and for effective use of evaluation results. The MA will develop and implement a capacity building plan on monitoring and evaluation for MA, IPARD Agency, ESG, IPARD II MC in line with their roles, responsibilities and tasks.

The training for the MA and ESG will aim at building necessary knowledge and skills for:

- identifying programme-specific evaluation needs and planning of the evaluation activities;
- defining evaluation questions and indicators;
- drafting terms of reference of evaluations;
- evaluation methodology;
- evaluation steering;
- evaluation quality.

These skills are necessary to ensure correct preparation of tenders for external evaluation, assessment of the submitted tenders, judgment of the quality and robustness of the evaluation methods proposed by the evaluators and assessment of the quality of the evaluation reports.

The training programme will be based on specific needs assessment with regard to monitoring and evaluation capacity building, which will be carried out prior the start of implementation and updated regularly.

Prior to the start of implementation, an introductory training will be carried out for the members of ESG and MC. In the first year of IPARD implementation, a detailed training programme will be designed and implemented for the members of the MA, IPARD agency and ESG (approximately 10 people). In the subsequent years of the programme implementation, additional trainings will be planned focused on specific skills related to activities included in the Evaluation Plan. In addition to formal training, external evaluators will be required to provide on-the job training of the MA through targeted workshops on specific evaluation topics, on-going advice, advice on self-study and working with the evaluators.

The MA and IPARD Agency will need to strengthen also capacity for the monitoring and reporting on programme implementation. A special training will be planned on the preparation of the first AIR.

The members of the IPARD II MC need to have understanding and knowledge about respective responsibilities within the monitoring and evaluation system, including reviewing quality and implications of evaluations. Therefore, a training of the IPARD II MC will be planned and executed before the start of implementation, in the first year of implementation of the programme and before Interim and *ex-post* evaluation. The training will take various forms - seminars and workshops.

The LAGs will be required to monitor and self-evaluate implementation of local development strategies. To ensure adequacy and consistency of monitoring and evaluation activities, training and on-going support will be provided to the LAGs.

6. Timeline

The timeline for evaluation activities takes into account the major evaluation milestones and information needs at various stages of the programme implementation.

The major evaluation milestones are as follows:

Annual implementation reports – 30 June each year following a full calendar year of implementation of the IPARD II programme (Article 59(1) SA).

Interim evaluation (if considered appropriate by the Commission) - end of the third year following the year of adoption of the first entrustment of budget implementation tasks for the IPARD II programme (indicative 2019) (Article 57(1) SA). The preparation of the Interim evaluation reports will start at least one year prior to the year of implementation and will include identification of data requirements, development of methodology and capacity building.

Final implementation report, which has to be submitted at the latest six months after the final date of eligibility of expenditure under the IPARD II programme (2024) (Article 59(2) SA).

Ex-post evaluation, which has to be submitted at the latest by the end of the first year after the programme implementation period (2024) (Article 59(1) SA). Similarly to the Interim

evaluation, the preparation of the *ex-post* evaluation will start one year prior to the year of its implementation.

The planned *evaluation studies* are linked with IPARD implementation cycles in terms of content and timing. Thus, in the first years of implementation, the evaluation activities target in-depth assessment of the efficiency of programme management and monitoring, while in the following years they will focus on preliminary results of the programme and the uptake of the new measures (agri-environment-climate and organic farming measure, implementation of local development strategies – LEADER approach, Advisory services).

The annual evaluation activities will be further specified in an annual Evaluation Plan, which will contain detailed objectives and scope of the evaluation studies, trainings and dissemination actions.

The indicative timeline of implementation of the planned activities of the Evaluation Plan is given in the table below.

Table 1: Timeline of evaluation activities and reporting

Year	Evaluation activities	Reporting
2016	<i>Establishment of monitoring and evaluation system</i> <i>Establishment of the ESG</i> <i>Assessment of evaluation capacity-building needs of MC, IPARD Agency, ESG, MC</i> <i>One training of the ESG and of members of the MC</i> <i>Drafting ToR for external evaluation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reporting to the MC
2017	<i>Regular collection and analysis of data on monitoring indicators and context</i> <i>Assessment of the functioning of the monitoring system – relevance of monitoring indicators, quality of the data collection and reliability of the data fed into the monitoring system</i> <i>Formulation of the evaluation questions and data needs/methodology</i> <i>Analysis of availability of data on context indicators and design of data collection methodology</i> <i>Training of the MA, ESG, MC</i> Estimated TA measure budget: EUR 50,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring reports to the IPARD II MC • Annual report on the evaluation activities and assessment reports • AIR
2018	<i>Regular collection and analysis of data on monitoring indicators and context</i> <i>Start of the preparation for the interim evaluation of the IPARD II programme</i> <i>Assessment of availability and quality of support to potential beneficiaries, barriers to absorption and administrative burden;</i> <i>Assessment of the financial allocation per measures, absorption capacity and barriers to access to finance</i> <i>Setting-up of the monitoring system of the LAGs</i> Estimated TA measure budget: EUR 75,000	As above
2019	<i>Regular collection and analysis of data on monitoring indicators and context</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As above, and • Interim evaluation

Year	Evaluation activities	Reporting
	<p><i>Interim evaluation or in-depth assessment</i> of the preliminary results of implementation of measures and assessment of efficiency of programme administration, delivery and management</p> <p><i>Assessment</i> of developments and the level of adopting of EU standards by various sectors and contribution of the IPARD measures</p> <p>Training of the MA, ESG, MC</p> <p>Estimated TA measure budget: 200,000</p>	report (if implemented)
2020	<p><i>Regular collection and analysis of data</i> on monitoring indicators and context</p> <p><i>Assessment of progress in implementation and preliminary results</i> of agri-environment-climate and organic farming measure, implementation of local development strategies – LEADER approach</p> <p>Assessment of the use of resources from “Technical assistance” measure</p> <p><i>Ad-hoc</i> evaluation studies</p> <p>Estimated TA measure budget: EUR 75,000</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring reports to the IPARD II MC • Annual report on the evaluation activities and assessment reports • AIR
2021-2024	<p><i>Regular collection and analysis of data</i> on monitoring indicators and context</p> <p>Assessment of the functioning of the monitoring system</p> <p><i>Ad-hoc</i> evaluation studies</p> <p>Preparation of <i>Final Implementation report</i> (2023)</p> <p>Preparation (2022) and execution (2024) of <i>ex-post</i> evaluation</p> <p>Estimated TA measure budget: EUR 250,000</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring reports to the IPARD II MC • Annual and report on the evaluation activities and assessment reports • AIR and Final IR • <i>Ex-post</i> evaluation report

7. Communication

The results of the evaluations will be communicated to all stakeholders involved in the management and monitoring of the IPARD II programme - MA, IPARD Agency, IPARD II MC, NIPAC, NAO, AA, Commission, and to the wider public.

The results of the evaluations will be communicated to stakeholders involved in the management and monitoring through following main channels:

1. *Circulation of draft /final evaluation reports* to all relevant stakeholders;
2. *Workshops for the presentation of evaluation results*. At the end of each evaluation, findings and recommendations will be presented by the evaluators in workshops. Depending on the purpose and scope of evaluation, relevant stakeholders will be invited to attend the workshops and discuss evaluation findings and recommendations.
3. *Meetings of the IPARD II MC*. Findings and recommendations of the completed evaluations and evaluation studies will be presented during IPARD II MC meetings by the MA or evaluators. The IPARD II MC will discuss and consider the quality and implications of the evaluations with a view to improving quality of the IPARD II programme – including modification of the programme or its implementation system.

4. *Annual implementation reports* will include present synthesis of the findings of conducted evaluations of the programme, adopted recommendations and progress in the implementation of the Evaluation Plan.

The MA is responsible for providing follow-up on implementation of approved / adopted recommendations of the evaluations. The MA will inform the IPARD II MC and the Commission about the follow-up of recommendations. The MA will use the evaluation results (lessons learned, good practices) in programming of new interventions.

The Managing Authority shall inform the Commission about the follow-up to the recommendations in the evaluation report.

The results of the evaluations will be also disseminated through the National Rural Development Network (NRDN), and, where relevant, the findings of evaluation will be presented during meetings and conferences organised by the NRDN.

To ensure transparency and accountability, all evaluation reports will be published on the website of the Programme / MARDWA in English and Albanian after their approval. For the need of communication of results to wider public, citizens' summaries will be elaborated and published on the website.

8. Resources

The MA will allocate sufficient human resources to the timely and adequate implementation of evaluation activities. The Sector for Monitoring and Delivery (SMD) within the Directorate for Programming and Evaluation of Rural Policy is responsible for organizing the process of evaluation of the IPARD II programme. The SMD is responsible for drafting of the Evaluation plan and its amendments, consultation with all relevant evaluation stakeholders, preparation of ToR for independent evaluators (in consultation with EC), cooperation and support with the evaluation team, assessment of quality of the reports, and dissemination of evaluation information. The SMD has two experts responsible for monitoring an evaluation. The IPARD agency has also appointed one expert responsible for the collection and validation of monitoring data.

The evaluation studies and Interim and *ex-post* evaluations will be carried out by independent evaluators selected through transparent procedure. Additional resources will be mobilised, where necessary, for conducting studies or surveys focused on data collection.

Activities included under the Evaluation Plan will be supported under Technical Assistance measure of the IPARD II programme. The indicative budget for the period 2017-2020 of the evaluation activities (conducting strategic evaluations, evaluation studies, data collection – studies or purchase, training and capacity building) is **EUR 650,000**.

The MA will select external evaluators via transparent and competitive procurement procedure in accordance with PRAG rules. It is planned to have two service contracts, covering evaluation activities for the period 2017-2019 and 2020-2024. The first contract will cover evaluation activities until the end of 2019 with the following scope of work:

- Formulation of the evaluation questions, defining judgement criteria and assessing data needs and elaboration of proposal for the data collection methods;
- Conducting evaluation studies included in this Evaluation Plan for the period 2017-2019;
- Conducting Interim evaluation/ or in-depth survey of the results of the implementation;

- Conducting training needs assessments and execution of trainings on evaluation for MA, IPARD agency, ESG and MC;
- On-going advice and on-the job training of the MA staff, responsible for evaluation.

The activities in the service contract will be structured along the six evaluation missions (two per year) focused on execution of planned evaluation activities.