

QUALITY ASSESSMENT FORM¹

Title of the study: "Potential for diversification of the rural sectors in Albania and Montenegro"

DG/Unit: DG AGRI, Unit G.4, L.4

Officials managing the study: Marius Lazdinis, John Rowe

Contractor: Naccon

Participants of the Steering group:

Units G.4, B.2, L.2, G.1, L.4 of DG AGRI and DG ELARG Unit C.4

Date of the Quality Assessment: September 2011

¹ Refer to the ['Guide on Scoring the Criteria' for how to assess each criterion.](#)

(1) RELEVANCE

Does the study respond to information needs, in particular as expressed in the terms of references?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
		X			

Arguments for scoring:

The scope formulated in the Terms of Reference was covered. The study contains information on the possibilities for economic diversification in rural areas in Albania and Montenegro. It developed criteria for identifying regions/territories with a potential for diversifying activities of rural populations in Albania and Montenegro. However, due to the complexity of the issue, the criteria are also complex, difficult to use and interpret. The study has identified areas with potential for certain types of economic diversification, but these findings may be of limited value because of the lack of data. The study contains sufficient information in order to contribute to assessing the feasibility of using individual measures under IPARD in both countries to facilitate diversification in rural economies and enabling designing the content of such measures or sub-measures.

(2) APPROPRIATE DESIGN

Is the design of the study adequate for obtaining the results needed to answer the study questions?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
			X		

Arguments for scoring:

Availability of reliable information needed for the purposes of this study is limited in both countries. Therefore, the consultant had to design a methodology which would enable acquiring reliable results under these difficult circumstances. The methodology used by Naccon is complex. It contains both the analyses of quantitative sources and collection of qualitative information. The use of the mixture of qualitative and quantitative information seems to be appropriate. The methodology, the sources and the reliability of the data as well as the limitations are to a large extent described and taken into account in the study.

(3) RELIABLE DATA

Are data collected adequate for their intended use and has their reliability been ascertained?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
		X			

Arguments for scoring:

Results of the study to a large extent are based on qualitative data. A weakness in implementation of the study was the lack of reliable quantitative data, which is reflected by the reported information gaps. Nevertheless, this was overcome by qualitative analyses, based on the expertise of key stakeholders.

(4) SOUND ANALYSIS

Are data systematically analysed to answer study questions and cover other information needs in a valid manner?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
		X			

Arguments for scoring:

The theoretical and empirical analyses are carried out in a systematic way, based on quantitative and qualitative tools, which seem to be appropriate, given the circumstances. However, the information on an appropriate level was available only for a limited number of variables. Even though the work carried out covers the scope of Terms of Reference, some information gaps are reported and reflected in the study.

(5) CREDIBLE FINDINGS

Do findings follow logically from and are justified by, the data/information analysis and interpretations based on pre-established criteria and rational?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
			X		

Arguments for scoring:

The findings are well explained, stem from and reflect the results of the analysis carried out.

(6) VALID CONCLUSIONS

Are conclusions non-biased and fully based on findings?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
		X			

Arguments for scoring:

The recommendations, which serve as conclusions, are sufficiently detailed and clearly formulated and reflect the results of the study. However, due to the limitations which study had to face, the conclusions are restricted in scope.

(7) HELPFUL RECOMENDATIONS

Are areas needing improvements identified in coherence with the conclusions? Are the suggested options realistic and impartial?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
			X		

Arguments for scoring:

The recommendations are logically derived from the study results.

(8) CLARITY

Is the report well structured, balanced and written in an understandable manner?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
			X		

Arguments for scoring:

The report has a clear structure. However, probably due to the complexity of the subject of the study and limited availability of information, the methodology applied by the contractors sometimes is difficult to follow. An in-depth and careful examination of all aspects of this study is necessary in order to fully appreciate the work carried out.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF THE FINAL STUDY REPORT

Overall, the quality of the report is assessed to be **good**.

- Does the study fulfil contractual conditions?

Yes.

- Are the findings and conclusions of the report reliable, and are there any specific limitations to their validity and completeness?

The findings and conclusions of the report should be viewed and interpreted in the context of low availability of reliable information on the subject matter in both countries.

- Is the information in the report potentially useful for designing intervention, setting priorities, allocating resources or improving interventions?

The results and conclusions of the study can be used in preparation of the IPARD programmes in both countries. From a broader point of view, the study was also useful in demonstrating the difficulties in acquiring reliable information on a lower administrative level in the Western Balkan region. In this context, the study is useful and relevant.