

# Annual Report 2015



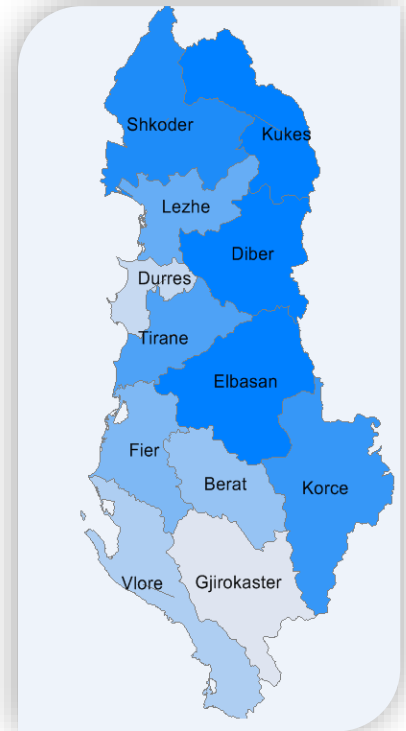
*Observatory for Children's Rights*

*January 2016*

## About Observatory for Children's Rights

Observatory for Children's Rights (Observatory) in Albania is a non-governmental entity established in 2009 as a civil society network intended to monitor the situation of children in the country. Through its representatives at the sub-national (regional) level and in collaboration with local government units in municipalities and communes, the Observatory is collecting statistical information from administrative records of health, education, social protection and other local authorities. Using the DevInfo software the wealth of statistical information is consolidated into a database accessible online at: <http://observator.org.al/odf2/qarqet-en.html>

So far, the Observatory database has been a unique source of such disaggregated data: a user-friendly interface allows zooming into the specifics of Albania's 374 municipalities and communes. Using this data complemented by survey-generated evidence, the Observatory has been producing situation reports and contributed to action plans for children developed at the national and regional levels. In 2013 it produced the first comprehensive report on various dimensions of child poverty and deprivation in Albania.



An important spill-off of the Observatory's strong presence on the ground has been their ability to advocate with government authorities for enhanced local measures to address the needs of children and families, especially from vulnerable backgrounds. Lately, the Observatory has been among the leaders behind a nation-wide initiative of "Every Roma Child in Kindergarten". Their credibility of those who "know" the real situation has been instrumental in the role of advocates for early inclusion of Roma children.

Within the framework of the post-MDG discourse, the Observatory will continue to play a critical role of an independent screening instrument to measure Albania's progress towards more socially just and inclusive society. This work is being increasingly aligned with the effort of the national statistical agency (INSTAT) to strengthen social statistics, with the understanding that the degree of detail in Observatory's records is likely to remain a unique feature complementing regular data gathering on a more aggregated level.

For more information about Observatory, may contact on:

Email address : [info@observator.org.al](mailto:info@observator.org.al)

Telephone: 00355 4 22 58 987



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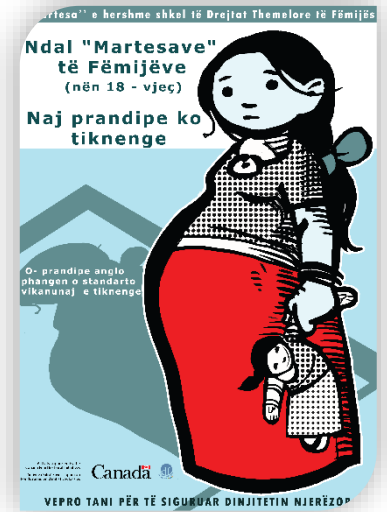
## 1. Projects and initiatives developed by Observatory during the year 2015 (January – December 2015)

### Child Marriage in Albania specific focus on Roma community

This study that the Observatory has undertaken is focused on early marriages and its special focus is the phenomenon of early marriage in the Roma community. Study has been focused in the 3 pilot areas (Shkoza, Tufina and Liqeni areas) and which have Roma Community living in it. The Project goal was to develop a comprehensive and sustainable approach to implement the human and child's rights for preventing domestic violence, early child 'marriage' and human trafficking, by ensure family and community sensitization on the child and human rights protection with primary target Roma community. During the realization of this study, we faced lot of limitations; starting from the absence of the researches in this field for this phenomenon in Albania, continuing to the lack and updated data in the desk review process, and the cultural barrier of talking about this phenomenon to the Roma communities which have been as pilot areas in this initiative.

*The initiative was focused on following intervention:*

- To make public awareness and information dissemination among Roma communities, about the damages and risks that face children in their early marriage engagements, violation behavior within their house, which could result tragically on human trafficking net.
- To identify and monitor the phenomena of domestic violence, early child marriage and human trafficking in areas of project implementation.
- To follow up this initiative with other needed actions and to build up a model of intervention that could replied in other settlements when Roma communities leave.

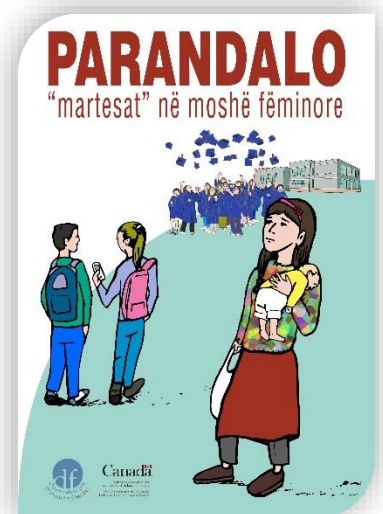


### 1. Prevent early marriage in Albania

Observatory for Children's Rights have prepared the second study on "Prevent early marriage in Albania" over the period 1<sup>st</sup> November 2015- 26<sup>th</sup> February 2016, an initiative supported by the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives. The project goal was to address the enhancement of child protection mechanisms and services to effectively reach, support and refer the cases of children and families in the situation of such particular vulnerability as early forced marriages.

*The initiative was focused on following intervention:*

- To raise public awareness about the phenomena of child early forced marriage (CEFM) by focusing on the empowerment of young girls and by mobilizing families and communities, by covering all the regions of the country.
- To identify and monitor the phenomena of early forced marriage in children covering all the regions of Albania, and focusing mainly in sub urban and developing areas.



- To disseminate the findings of the project and all the process involved in it, with all the local and central stakeholders who have contributed throughout the process of the project implementation.

## II. Mobilization of young people for accountability of public officials

Observatory has implemented the project "Mobilization of young people for accountability of public officials" during the period April 2016- December 2016, an initiative supported by Agency for Supporting Civil Society.

Project goal was increasing the dynamic participation of young people in order to be active citizens, protagonists of their development. This project has helped and supported young people (18-25), to participate actively in decision-making, in building a community that holds public officials accountable.

*The initiative was focused on following intervention:*

- To inform and sensitize young people for active citizens participation in decision-making;
- Encourage public debate and political dialogue between the candidates for mayor of local government and youth groups;
- To measure perceptions of youth about the role and influence in the political priorities of the strategy selected candidate;
- To monitor the program and the responsibility of elected mayors, if the needs and priorities mentioned by young people and promised by the mayor (during the campaign) are included in the priorities of their local policy.



## III. Every Roma Child in Kindergarten (Year 2)

The second phase of the initiative "Every Roma child in kindergarten: Building advocacy networks and evidence based practices for Roma Children's access to early childhood development" aimed to set up and support local networks for evidence based advocacy for Roma children early development, by working with social services (social workers) and other institutions that provide care and protection for children, NGO's and other social partners. Ensuring that Roma and non-Roma children alike receive an equal start in life is one of the main focuses of the cooperation between the Albanian Government and UNICEF. This initiative was designed to play an important role in providing periodical information, data and evidence collection, best practices exchange, gaps identified and analyzed policies implementation for the Roma inclusion, – which result on road mapping practices.

*The initiative focuses on the following interventions:*

- Facilitate and foster alliances with the local authorities, Roma parents, Youth activist of Roma community for the inclusion in pre-school education of Roma Children;
- Gather continuously data/evidence/good practices and gaps of implementation of policies for Roma children (based on a unified protocol for data and evidence collection);



- Prepare periodic action monitoring reports and to advocate for change and in support of Roma children inclusion in kindergartens;

It implemented a list of actions that targets the role, functions and duties of the local institutions in regards of issuing early social inclusion of Roma children in their locality. These actions were designed in a networking role and duties of government and non-government actors, by producing and conducting permanent collection of data and evidence, case by case solution and exchange the best practices gained, identifying the gaps and finding the proper solution

#### IV. Flooding Situation on Fier Region

In support of critical and emergency situation created as a result of floods in South part of Albania, the Government of Canada and BANKERS Petroleum, express their solidarity in these difficult days for citizens of these affected areas. Government of Canada and BANKERS Petroleum, in cooperation with Observatory for Children Rights, provided support to 145 families in the commune of Dërmenas (village Povelcë and Darzezë), by offering humanitarian assistance according to the main needs identified by Fier Prefecture and inveterate in the field, on: mattress, blanket, bed sheets and pillows, in the amount of 70.000 Canadian Dollar. This aid aims to assist in faster recover of families living in extreme difficulties in this post-emergency situation, with high quality products for issuing/providing to them comfort and safety for a long period of time. The process of distributing the aid directly to affected families, is facilitated and guaranteed thanks' to the cooperation with: Civil Emergency Headquarters in Albania; Fier Prefecture; Commune of Dërmenas, Fier.



#### V. Youth Voice – The Future we want in Albania

Youth Voice campaign in Albania is being carried out by a network of 11 formal youth organizations, and 2 youth groups/clubs, specialized and working in different areas, especially with vulnerable young people, supported by UNFPA Albania and coordinated by the Observatory for the Children's Rights. The organizations are networking with each-other and implementing various activities at National level, in different regions throughout Albania for the period July – November 2015.

The planned activities for this year's campaign are focused on reaching out to decision makers and presenting the youth vision and advocacy messages to the national stakeholders and decision-makers and to further advocate for their inclusion into national action plans and budgets.





## VI. Gender Equality and Women Empowerment: The key to success in undertaken policies – locals and youth involvement

Observatory has implemented the project "Gender Equality and Women Empowerment- The key to success in undertaken policies – locals and youth involvement" over the period September 2015- September 2016, an initiative supported by UNDP and UN Women.

The project goal was to influence in the reduction of the domestic and gender-based violence and promote gender equality in 2 different areas in Albania by engaging men and boys in partnership with women and girls as allies, role models and agents of change, by involving local actors as well as youth.

*The initiative focuses on the following interventions:*

- To involve local actors in being engaged and pro-active in the campaign for reducing the domestic and gender-based violence and promote gender equality in Albania;
- To encourage and mobilize youth as promoting agents to advocate in the reduction of the domestic violence and promote gender equality.



### 2. Partner contributions

No	Project title	Period of Implementation	Supported by
1.	Child Marriage in Albania, specific focus on Roma Community	January –March 2015	CFLI
2.	Prevent Early Marriage in Albania	October 2015- February 2016	CFLI
3.	Mobilization of Youth people for accountability of public officials	April – December 2015	AMSHC
4.	Every Roma Child in Kindergarten (Year II)	April 2015- May 2016	UNICEF
5.	Flooding situation on Fier Region	February 2015	CFLI
6.	Youth Voice- the future we want in Albania	July – December 2015	UNFPA
7.	Gender Equality and Women Empowerment: The key to success in undertaken policies – locals and youth involvement	September 2015- September 2016	UN Women

### 3. Reviews about Observatory for Children's Rights, during this year (2015)

*"Observatory has appeared to be a well- respected organization, with good contacts and well-established branch offices national wide, good reach different age target groups, especially the most vulnerable and young people. The work carried out by them has been a valuable contribution towards raising awareness among communities and youth groups, as well as tracking and monitoring arising issues and their address by local governments and civil society operation in the field. Observatory has consistently demonstrated a very correct and responsible approach in working with UNFPA"* **Mrs. Manuela Bello Assistant Representative UNFPA Albania**

*"Observatory contribution and commitment for supporting the campaign and partnering in #HeForShe activities and initiatives is key for reaching targeted audience and helping to build an equal society, free from gender discrimination and gender based violence"* **Mr. David Saunders, UN Women Albania Representative.**

*"We appreciate and admire the commitment of the Observatory for the Children's Rights, your concrete help in both the material and the moral aspect, to help families in need and cope with the emergency situation created in the Fier Region"* **Mr. Xhevit Bushaj Prefect of Fier Region**

