

Annual Report 2017



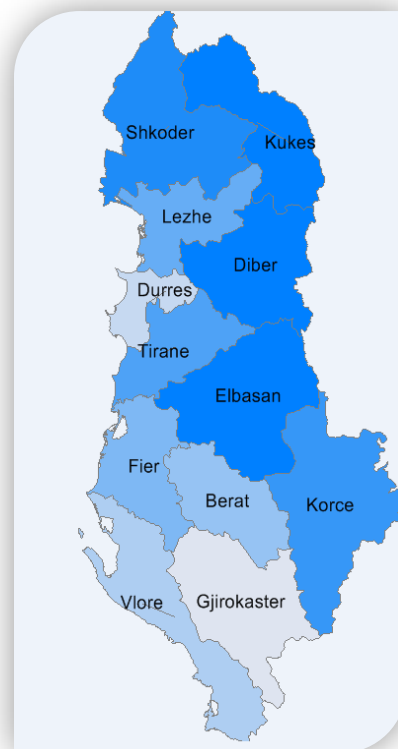
Observatory for Children's Rights

January 2018

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.

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1. Projects and initiatives developed by Observatory during the year 2017 (January-December 2017)



I. Mapping Returned Migrants with Special Focus on Children and Families

The Observatory for Children's Rights (Observatory), with the support of the Austrian Development Agency (ADA), implemented the study " Mapping Returned Migrants with Special Focus on Children and Families"

Believing that returnees are a vulnerable group and should be prioritized to facilitate their reintegration process in the country, this initiative has been undertaken to identify their needs for services and the extent to which they are complemented by any institution. For each district, an assessment of access to each of the basic services has been carried out, with some recommendations for each of the local institutions.

II. Child Rights Observatory supports evidence-based Child focused policy planning with focus on decentralization actions.

Observatory in partnership with UNICEF Albania has intensively worked with child-focused data management at the subnational level. The efforts have intended to identify, understand, address and monitor critical bottlenecks in regards to data collection, analysis, reporting and utilization to inform effective policy and practice decisions at all governance level.



The process of data collection in nation, regional and local level for children, because of the wide range of indicators, is delicate and it has faced different difficulties despite the good will to collaborate by the local institutions. Anyway the progress for the period 2009-2015 has been improving from year to year, which shows a growing awareness of the institutions in this regard. The new territorial division causes a shrink of the data because their collection is conducted in Municipality level and not in Administrative Unit level as integral part of these Municipalities

The initiative focuses on the following interventions:

- National system of data collection to monitor the situation of children is strengthened, to track compliance with

CRC obligations

- Analyze the challenges/bottlenecks for child-focused data management, in order to inform improved interventions to potentially address them

III. Out of school

This initiative, piloted in Durres region, is fulfilled in partnership between UNICEF and Observatory for Children's Rights, with the attention of the Ministry of Education and Sports and with the support of all local structures. The purpose is to identify and register in school every child, despite the fact that they were born in the area or not, creating a favorable environment to live.

In January 5th was signed the Common order of the three Ministries (U3M – Ministry of Education and Sports (MAS), Ministry of the Internal Affairs (MPB) and Ministry of Health (MSH)) "To identify and register in school every child at compulsory age", in order to coordinate the inter institutional collaboration to make possible that every resident child attend school.

In this context several important steps have been taken regarding the children education including:

- Raising a work practice for the workbook of the roles of the responsible institutions for the implementation of U3M.
- The practice of the intersection training between the staffs of the schooling and local institutions which are charged with responsibility and role by the U3M signing.
- The guides and instructions for monitoring the best schooling practices for reducing the school abundance and for integrating in school the out of school children.
- The training practices for the actors in the base educational institutions in order to ensure the regular attendance and the completion of the base education by every children.
- The work practice for the extraction of the data for international indicators of the educational system.
- The practice of the intersection of the lists from different sources in order to identify out of school children.
- The practice of the inter institutional collaboration to intensifies the work regarding the case of out of school children



The call for the children education is addressed to everyone. The education of every child is an every day mission, the implementation of which asks for attention and commitment in time of everyone.

IV. Youth Voice Network in Albania



The Observatory for Children's Rights (Observatory) has worked on establishment of the CSOs national advocacy platform. In this framework, the network of organizations called "Youth Voice" is established formally, composed by 17 NGOs and 2 youth clubs, specialized in various fields of sexual and reproductive health, education, social and health services, human rights, community work and work with marginalized and most vulnerable groups. The activities carried out by this network have encouraged the membership of organizations and youth from various cities of Albania. The Observatory has coordinated the activities of this network. The Strategic Plan of the 'Youth Voice' network of organizations is designed for the upcoming 3 years (2017 - 2020) based on the best models of network functioning and operating in 4 priority program areas: raising awareness and activating the community in issues related to reproductive health, education, gender equality including fight against GBV, increasing participation in decision making, education and training to provide skills and

empower young people, care and protection for the most vulnerable and marginalised including young people without parental care.

V. Monitoring the effectiveness of public administration in the local government through evaluation of citizen opinion.



The Observatory for Children's Rights (Observatory) under the Public Administration Reform (PAR) has implemented the "WeBER" initiative on "Monitoring the effectiveness of local government administration performance through citizen's opinion assessment". This initiative was implemented in the Municipality of Tirana and the Municipality of Cërrik, specifically in some pilot areas: Administrative Units no. 5, 6, Dajt and Petrelë for the Municipality of Tirana and in Cërrik and Gostimi Municipal Unitsof Cërrik. The main purpose of the initiative is to evaluate public opinion (residents) about the transparency of local government, the services provided, the best forms of public information and the effectiveness of public administration.

This initiative was funded by the European Union and co-financed by the Kingdom of the Netherlands through the Small Grants Instrument of the "WeBER - Enabling Western Balkan Countries for Monitoring the Reform in Public Administration by

Civil Society" project implemented in Albania by the Institute for Democracy and

Mediation (IDM). The project was implemented through the implementation of some measuring instruments that will serve to measure the perceptions of community opinion and local administration staff as; questionnaires and interviews.

VI. International Days

Observatory for Children's Rights (Observatory) is a non-governmental entity established in 2013, with the mission to ensure the dignity and well-being of children and youth across Albania through observation, research and analysis, communication and advocacy; by collaborating with other stakeholders/institutions; and by engaging in public awareness and education campaigns.

Observatory has coordinated all activities in the framework of the "Youth Voice" campaign in Albania. Youth Voice Campaign in Albania was supported by UNFPA of Albania, coordinated by Observatory, with the participation of approximate 20 organizations and youth clubs. The activities undertaken have been national- wide spread

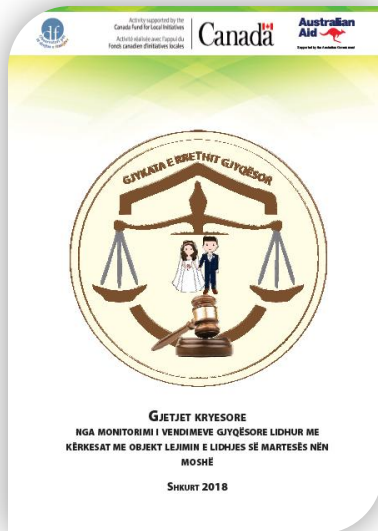
Though realizing awareness activities, Observatory has been engaged on three International Days:

- International day of Girl Child;
- International Day of Elimination of Violence Against Women;
- Human Rights Day;

VII. Implementing Norms-Changing Minds - National Study

The Observatory has gradually increased its engagement on issues of gender equality and violence against women and girls in data collection and processing as evidence to influence policymakers and improve services. The purpose of this initiative is to: Collect data on the main indicators of the program at the beginning and at the end of its implementation. This data is expected to raise the level of information on the attitudes and perceptions of society on stereotypes and gender roles and violence against women, and to identify awareness campaigns that have had a positive impact on the community. Understanding gender attitudes is key to understanding the main causes of violence against women. Consequently, the findings of this project are expected to support the Albanian Government and civil society in implementing the most effective preventive measures. The Observatory will collect quantitative and qualitative data, based on UN Women's methodology, including a study with key stakeholders. The survey sample is representative at the national level and the data will be collected in urban and rural areas of municipalities, where other Regional Program projects will be implemented. The treatment of multiple discrimination is also a priority and issues related to gender-based

discrimination and related to other factors such as ethnicity, disability and poverty will be considered more specifically explored.



VIII. Youth Decides – Objectives of Sustainable Development

The Observatory in cooperation with the Youth Voice Network and with the support of the United Nations in Albania have conducted public consultations with young people on the “Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 2030” in 3 cities: Tirana, Korça and Shkodra. Consultative meetings aimed at generating priority SDGs for youth.

At the same time, young people became more aware of the main SDGs and objectives for each SDG.

IX. Implementing Legal Mechanisms as a means of preventing early marriages

With the support of the Canadian Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI) and the Australian Government, Observatory has implemented the initiative "Enforcing Legal Mechanisms as a Prevention Tool of early marriages". The piloting of the initiative is oriented towards monitoring judicial decisions of the District Court of Shkodra, Kukës, Fier and Kavaja for the period 2011 - 2017.

This project implemented by the Observatory and the School of Magistrates has attracted the attention and interest of national and international agencies. Since the beginning of 2014, the Observatory has partners with line ministries and other institutions aiming to build a common understanding of the cases and the reality of early child marriage in Albania.

The initiative aimed at intervening in:

- Improving the legal process regarding juvenile delinquency cases, taking into account the rights and well-being of children during and after the judiciary process.
- Implementation of a national campaign against early marriage to raise the issue to the general public. Throughout the campaign, the results of the project are shared by encouraging actions that encourage and provide tools and knowledge about the dangers and effects of marriage of boys and girls of childbearing age.

2. Partner Contribution

No	Project Title	Period of implementation	Supported by
1.	Mapping of Albanian returnees (special focus on children and families)	March 2017 – May 2017	ADA
2.	Child Rights Observatory supports evidence- based Child focused on policy planning with focus on decentralization actions	April- December 2017	UNICEF
3.	Out of School Children - OOSC Durres and Elbasan	June- February 2018	Word Vision UNICEF
4.	Youth Voice Network in Albania	May – December 2017	UNFPA
5.	Monitoring the effectiveness of public administration in the local government through evaluation of citizen opinion	June – December 2017	WEBER
6.	International Days	October– December 2017	UN
7.	Implementing Norms Changing Minds - National Study	November- December 2017	UN WOMEN
8.	Youth Decides - Sustainable Development Goals, SDG	December 2017	UN
9.	Implementing Legal Mechanisms as a means of preventing early marriages	October 2017- February 2018	CFLI –Australian Aid

3. Reviews about Observatory for Children's Rights, during this year (2017)

The Ministry of Internal Affairs has supported the initiatives undertaken by the Observatory for a more detailed exploration of the issue of underage marriages and its effects on the issue of security and protection of juveniles from the realization of underage marriage for trafficking, exploitation or any other form of abuse. The Observatory has become part of the promotion community policing and policing in the lives of children, youth, families and society as a whole. So far cooperation with the Observatory has been successful and with concrete commitments.

Elona Gjebrea Deputy Minister, Ministry of Internal Affairs

The projects we have collaborated have always been successful in addressing common values and bringing change. The commitment of your organization is demonstrated in the topics it addresses and in the issue in which the projects are implemented. Your organization has always proven to be very responsive and transparent in managing and using funds. Moreover, your extensive network of contacts across Albania has proven to be very valuable.

Marc-Antonie Dumas Canadian Embassy Consul