

Observatory for the Children and Youth Rights

ANNUAL REPORT 2021



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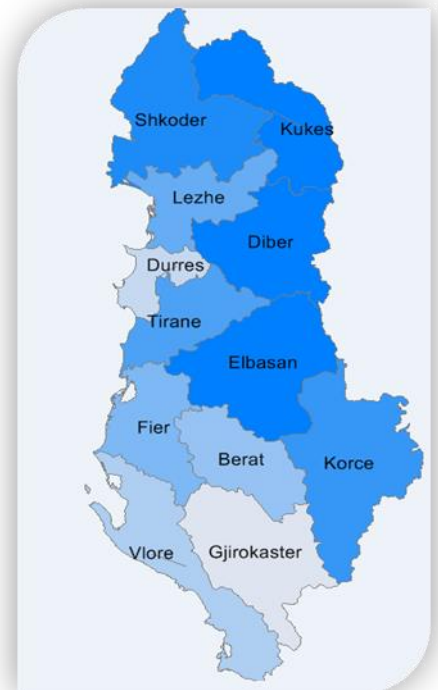
Observatory for Children and Youth Rights

Observatory for Children and Youth Rights, hereby known as Observatory, is a non-governmental entity established in 2013 in Albania whose mission is to improve children, youth, women and vulnerable groups rights situation. Observatory engages everyday in monitoring the situation of children and youth at the national and strategic level.

Our mission is to ensure the dignity and well-being of children and young people across Albania through observation, research and analysis, communication and advocacy; by cooperating with other stakeholders / institutions; and getting involved in public awareness and education campaigns.

To fulfill its mission, Observatory, operates in twelve regional nationwide branches (one in each main municipality in Albania). A qualified and experienced local staff supports us to monitor the situation of children and young people and allows to address issues related to their rights from local to national level.

Through its representatives at the 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://www.observator.org.al/odf-map/>.



So far, the database provided by Observatory has served as a unique source of information in the designing of a range of interventions at national and local level by collaborating closely with public institutions and NGOs, and has served in different strategic plans of international and national institutions.



Using this data obtained from different institutions at central and local level, Observatory has conducted several monitoring and assessments on the situation of children and youth in Albania, by contributing to the drafting of action plans for children and youth at the national and local level.

An important contribution of the Observatory's strong presence on the ground is their ability to advocate with government authorities to expand central and local measures to address the needs of children and young people in Albania.

During these seven years, Observatory has been one of the initiators and mobilizers of the establishment of the “Youth Voice network, enabling to address the local policies for young people to authorities and supporting national and international activities with and for young people.

Observatory is the first and the only entity in Albania that has raised the voice and has undertaken four years intensive engagement in making public the underage marriage for saving the life of girls and boys; Observatory voice has been raised from local community awareness initiatives, up to central Government attention and policy, by making part of the discussion tables representatives of line Ministries.

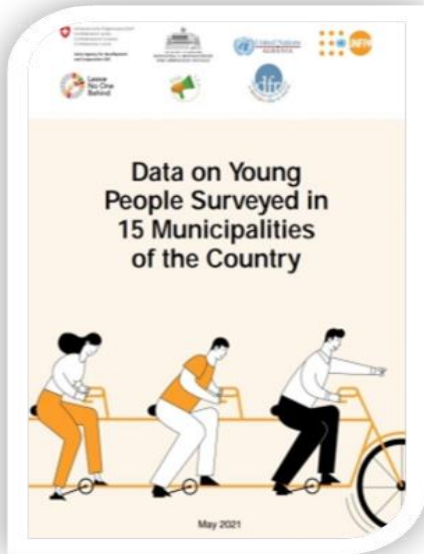
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»» PROJECT IN 2021

For the Establishment, Coordination, and Expansion of the Civil Society Protection Platform for ICPD Issues and Sustainable Development Objectives

Observatory in partnership with the UNFPA office in Albania, has been engaged since 2017 for the implementation of the Youth Voice program: “To create, coordinate and expand the civil society protection platform for ICPD issues and Development Goals Sustainable (SDG)”. In 2019, this network consists of 21 organizations and youth clubs specializing in various areas of sexual and reproductive health, education, social and health services, human rights, community work and working with marginalized groups and in need. Organizations are networked with each other, implementing various activities at national and regional level. During the implementation of the youth program in 2019, Observatory conducted *surveys with 500 young people on their knowledge and perceptions about sexual and reproductive health, in 5 municipalities (Pogradec, Maliq, Kruja, UraVajgurore, Shijak)*. The most interesting findings from the surveys were conducted as factsheet on the knowledge and perceptions of young people regarding sexual and reproductive health, SDGs and municipal programs, in each municipality.



Also, through the expertise of the Observatory, *plans of activities and budget for young people have been drafted in 4 Municipalities (Dibra, Lezha, Pogradec and Maliq)*, giving concrete suggestions for initiatives, programs that should be run by the municipality taking into account all competencies according to Law 75/2019 “On Youth”, Law on Local Government and the National Action Plan for Youth 2015-2020.

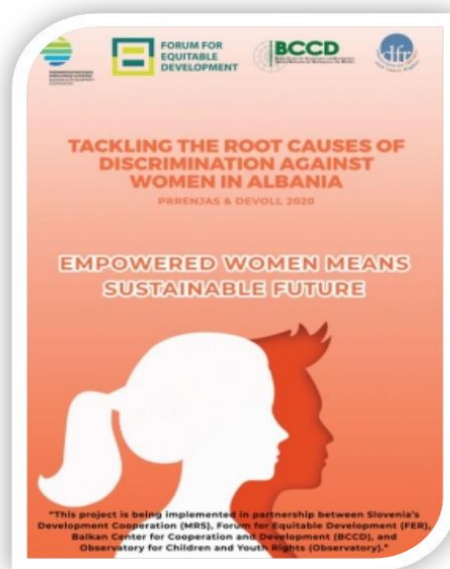
Observatory has *monitored the Declaration of Commitments for Youth*, signed by the Municipality of Tirana since 2015.

Surveys of young people about knowledge of SDGs showed that 1 in 10 young people have heard what SDGs are. In terms of young people's knowledge of SHSR it turned out that 1 in 7 young people have never received information on sexual and reproductive health. The most favorite programs that young people would like to benefit from the Municipality are; social activities, information, awareness, training, entertainment and sports activities, environmental and cultural activities, etc. Regarding youth budgeting, 15 Action Plans and Youth Budgeting at the municipal level have been drafted.

For more information click on the link: <https://observator.org.al/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Summary-of-the-youth-work-in-15-Municipalities.pdf>

Tackling the root causes of discrimination against women in Albania

The project aims at eliminating the root causes of discrimination against girls and women in Prrenjas and Devoll, due to which they do not have full access to their rights in both the private and public spheres. The norms and values are responsible for keeping the women in a subordinate position, which also negatively influences the economic and social progress of the municipalities. The project addresses societal inequalities through the 4 SIGI dimensions. Through the same 4 dimensions, the reasons for discrimination against girls and women, the lack of information for women about waste management, and for better access for girls and women to safe, inclusive and green public spaces. To achieve that, youth trainers were trained, who will then transfer their knowledge within their respective municipalities. Decision makers at local and national levels will be informed and their awareness will be raised with the aim of ensuring gender mainstreaming into new laws, as well as with the implementation of already existing ones. Partners; Balkan Center for Cooperation and Development (BCCD); Forum for Equitable Development (Forum za enakopraven razvoj, društvo); For more information about the initiative, you can read the report at the link: <https://observator.org.al/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/anglisht-OK.pdf>



Media Monitoring on Violence against Women on Elections in Albania

This media monitoring study aimed to:

- identify the main forms of VAWE that are facilitated or amplified by broadcast, print, online, and social media in Albania and
- provide information on gender bias in media coverage during the elections.

The findings are based on a quantitative and qualitative analysis of a sample of relevant television broadcasts and articles published in the Albanian print media and in online news portals, as well as social media posts from the official social media pages of political parties and individual politicians. The monitored outlets included: 12 News Tv channels, 20 newspapers and magazines, 20 online portals, and 14 official Facebook pages and was realized during the following periods:

- The month leading up to the elections (25 March – 24 April 2021)
- Election day & post-election period (25 April – 31 August 2021)
- The period during the formation of the new cabinet of ministers (1 – 25 September 2021).

This study, conducted by Observatory for Children and Youth Rights, with the support of UN Women in Albania, tries to explore the role of media, in promoting gender equality in a context marked by the decline of paper-based journalism and COVID-19 limitations on reporting. It further seeks to identify whether and how media (particularly online and digital media) facilitates violence against women in political processes and during elections.

Out of School Children in Albania

U-Report 2021 - main aim :

Promote the use of U-Report Western Balkan among young people 15-24 years old and helping increase the engagement rate including among hard-to-reach young people. Since May 16, 2018 Albania, Montenegro and Kosovo are part of the U-Report community under the U-Report Western Balkans framework that represents a unique joint effort to address issues of the young people in a sub-regional context. U-Report is a free and anonymous digital tool, created by UNICEF Global that interacts with young people ages 15 and higher, (with a focus on those ages 15 to 24), who sign up to become U-Reporters through simple polls sent via Viber (soon they will be able to use Facebook Messenger and WhatsApp). This platform seeks to address the challenges of voicing youth concerns in policy processes and solutions particularly at the local level. U-Report promotes dialogue, freedom of expression, and gives youth the platform and the voice to actively participate and help shape policy development, and to become more informed about matters that are important to them so that they can make a difference in their communities. Through this platform, About 8000 young people are reached with promotional materials on U-Report and about 3,000 young people get engaged with the different polls promoted throughout the year.

Citizens and Public Administration for a good local governance

Main goal: Improving accountability and transparency at the local governance level through civic engagement.

Target group: Citizens (women/girls, young people, people with disabilities, civil society), public administration, leaders and politicians in Dibra and Bulqiza municipality.

Main activities: 1-Kick off meetings in the pilot municipalities for the project presentation. 2-Design and preparation of measuring instruments (questionnaires). 3- Realization of publications such as leaflets 200 pieces, posters 20 pieces and 1 banner. 4-Open day of information for the wide public (1 activity for each municipality). 5-Realization of 4 workshops (2 for each municipality). 6-Realization of 4 consulting meetings (2 for each municipality). 7-Realization of 2 closing meetings for decision making (1 for each municipality). 8-Collection & data processing and results. Main activities, project results and a short report will be made public with the relevant photos on the Observatory website www.observator.org.al and fb. <https://www.facebook.com/observator.org.al>

Results:

1-Citizens are more informed regarding the forms of public information and the practical implementation by the municipality of the law "On the right to public information", the transparency programs (TP) and its constituent elements as well as public administration reform (PAR).

2-Public administration of local government is more sensitized and responsible to the priorities, needs, proposals and suggestions of the citizens.

3- As result of project activities there is a revival of civic engagement in governance.

4- Concrete results on evaluation of public opinion regarding the transparency and public information (PI) of the local government (100 questionnaires and videos on citizens' experiences with public administration).

Some of the project findings are as follows:

- The realization of public videos about their experiences with public administration was a new experience that highlighted the needs of citizens, their problems and the effectiveness of public administration.
- 27% of respondents in Dibër municipality and 47% in Bulqiza municipality prefer administration offices as the best form of access to information.
- 74% of the respondents in the Dibër municipality and 60% in the Bulqiza municipality said that they are not aware of the municipality Transparency Program.
- Regarding the question on the effectiveness of municipal offices 54% of respondents in the Dibër municipality and 61% in the Bulqiza municipality think they are *effective* while 28% of them in the Dibër municipality and 20% in the Bulqiza municipality think they are *less effective*.
- Asked about the effectiveness of the official municipality website, 46.5% of the respondents in the Dibër municipality think that it is *less effective*, 22.5% *not at all effective* and 22% *effective*. In Bulqiza municipality 50% think it is *less effective* and 42% *effective*.

Sustainable community- based reintegration of Albania nationals returning from Syria

Program Description: The main goal of the program "Sustainable reintegration into the community of Albanian citizens returning from Syria" is to enable the sustainable and effective rehabilitation and reintegration of Albanian men, women and children returning from Syria.

Objectives: Our intervention consists of three main components: capacity building, cross-sectoral cooperation and community empowerment, which aim to create an enabling environment for institutions and front-line professionals and at the same time strengthen social cohesion and resilience to violent extremism.

- The first component aims to improve the capacities, knowledge and skills of front-line professionals and institutions regarding reintegration and rehabilitation (R&R) practices. This component includes a range of activities such as: conducting research to identify current threats to extremism. violent; training of front-line professionals and local actors on practices and steps needed to ensure efficient services, improving referral mechanisms, identifying, reporting and preventing cases of radicalization by local actors.
- The second component aims to strengthen cooperation and partnerships between institutions involved in the policy-making process and the provision of reintegration and rehabilitation services. This will be achieved through advocacy for prioritizing issues related to the prevention of violent extremism (VE) on the political agenda and improving inter-institutional coordination.
- Finally, the third component aims to contribute to the reintegration of returnees into host communities; their acceptance by the community and the increase of social cohesion as a whole. This component includes a range of activities, such as paid vocational courses and internships for returnees and their families; supporting community initiatives, activities with religious and community leaders; as well as cultural, educational, recreational and sports activities with returnees and local communities.

Results:

- Institutions and front-line professionals improve capacities (knowledge and skills) to provide rehabilitation and reintegration services

- Media partners improve capacity in reporting on (VE) issues and R&R practices
- Institutional actors gain up-to-date knowledge on the needs of communities and threats from VE
- Social Social workers and psychologists gain knowledge and skills to support children, returnees and their families
- Institutions and front line professionals improve cross-sectoral and effective cooperation in the framework of reintegration and rehabilitation of returnees
- Frontline institutions and professionals prioritize R&R policies and practices on their agendas
- Returned persons and their families integrate into host communities, which express a lower level of stigma and greater acceptance
- Returned persons and their families receive professional training and business skills to integrate into socio-economic life

Advancing Child Protection and Care in Albania 2019-2021

Evaluation of Child Protection program “Advancing Child Protection and Care in Albania 2019 -2021

This evaluation is developed in response to the request provided in the ToR, intended to outline:

- The proposed methodology for the evaluation
- Timeline and distribution of working days per deliverable
- Summary information of the team proposed to conduct the evaluation.

Proposed methodology of the evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation is two-folded, to:

- Strengthen the accountability of Save the Children towards the Program donor and the national stakeholders.
- Draw lessons and provide concrete recommendations on how to improve similar programs in the future.

The object of the evaluation is the implementation of the program “Advancing Child Protection and Care in Albania 2019 -2021” (hereafter referred as Program), implemented by Save the Children in Albania.

The scope of the evaluation is the entire programmatic portfolio of the Program, with its geographic target in Gjirokaster, Mat, Saranda, Shkoder, Tirana.

The specific objectives of the evaluation are to:

1. Assess Program results against planned activities, examining its efficiency, effectiveness, relevance, sustainability, coherence and impact.
2. Examine how the program has mainstreamed cross-cutting issues such as promotion of gender equality and children's rights.
3. Capture lessons learned, good practices and recommendations upon which Save the Children and stakeholders can build on for future programming.

» OBSERVATORY'S PARTNERS

Partners Contribution

PROJECT TITLE	IMPLEMENT PERIOD	DONOR
For the Establishment, Coordination, and Expansion of the Civil Society Protection Platform for ICPD Issues and Sustainable Development Objectives	January – December 2021	UNFPA
Tackling the root causes of discrimination against women in Albania	March 2020 – October 2022	BCCD
Media Monitoring on Violence against Women on Elections in Albania	April – October 2021	UNWomen
Out of School Children in Albania	May – December 2021	UNICEF

Citizens and Public
Administration for a
good local government

June 2021 – March
2022

IDM Albania -
WeBER

Sustainable
community- based
reintegration of Albania
nationals returning
from Syria

June 2021 – November
2023

IDM-GCERF

Advancing Child
Protection and Care in
Albania 2019-2021

November – December
2021

Save the Children