

Success Stories

from the implemented actions in

Albania in the frame of

the **Civil Society Programme for
Albania and Kosovo**

2018 - 2022



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Tirana, Albania 2022

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Norwegian Embassy

The "Civil Society programme for Albania and Kosovo" is financed by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and managed by the Kosovar Civil Society Foundation (KCSF) in partnership with Partners Albania for Change and Development (PA).

Introduction

The Civil Society Programme for Albania and Kosovo, a four-year (2018-2022) programme funded by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs represented by the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Pristina, was implemented by the Kosovar Civil Society Foundation (KCSF) in partnership with Partners Albania for Change and Development (PA).



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In Albania, since 2018, nineteen NPOs benefited from the program, intervening in addressing various issues in five thematic areas of the program.

| THE CIVIL SOCIETY PROGRAMME FOR ALBANIA AND KOSOVO

Grant beneficiaries in Albania

Through 3 Calls for Proposals the program has supported projects in the five thematic areas:

32%

Non-discrimination and gender equality

21%

Independent media

11%

Minorities and marginalized groups

16%

Environment protection

21%

Anti-corruption

The overall goal of the programme is the support of the democratic participation and development of a strong and vibrant civil society in Albania and Kosovo, by supporting NPOs that advance the EU accession process.

3
Calls for
Proposals
announced

7 winners

I Call

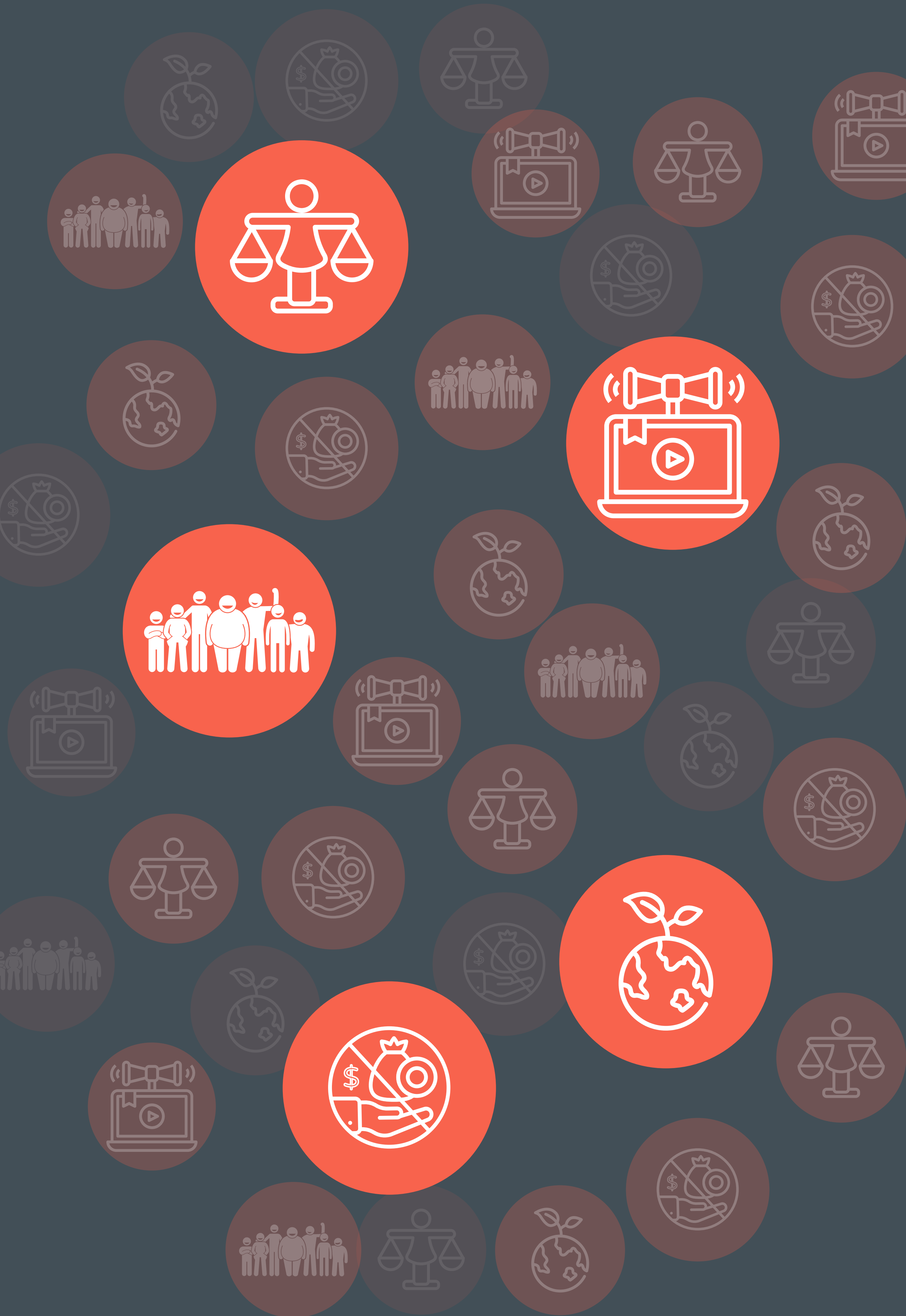
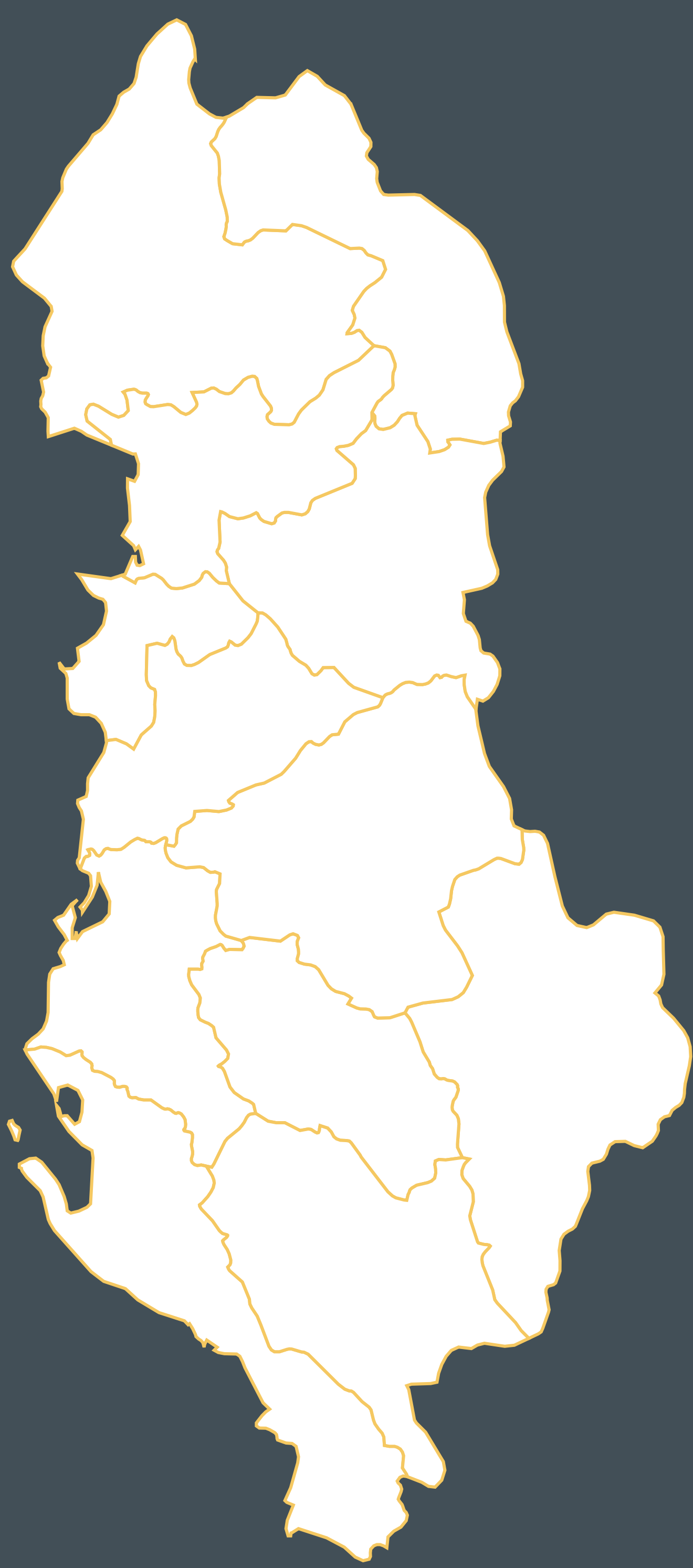
7 winners

II Call

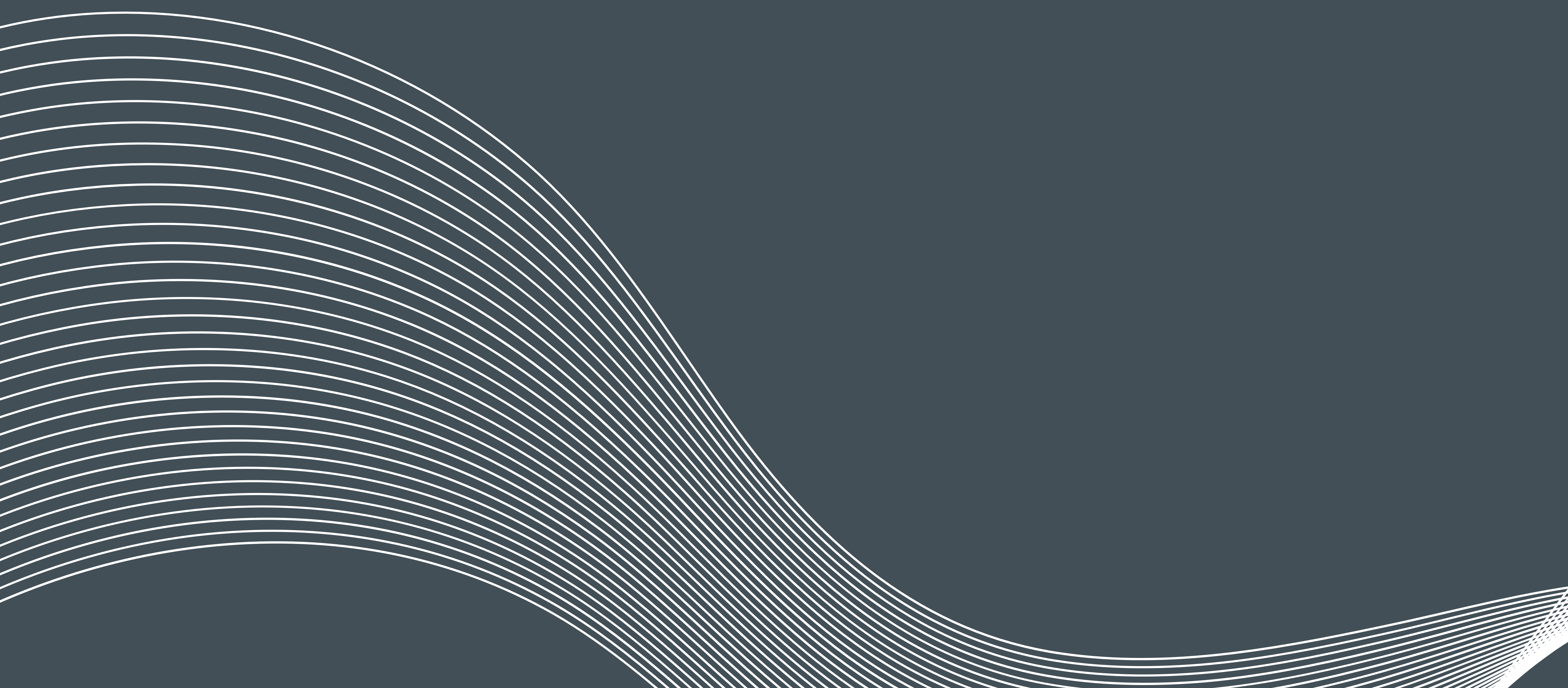
5 winners

III Call

National Coverage



Success



stories



“Vatra” Psycho-Social Centre

Year of establishment: **1999**

Executive Director: **Brikena Puka**

M i s s i o n



Preventing trafficking in human beings, domestic and gender-based violence and socio-economic empowerment of victims of these phenomena through information, education, advocacy, social, residential and community services.

Address:

Str: “Nermin Vlora Falaski”, No. 13.

Floor III.

Vlora, Albania.

Phone: +355 33227048

Mobile: +355 692083339

| www.qendravatra.org.al

About the project

Provision of sustainable reintegration assistance to former victims of trafficking in Albania.

Project objective:

Empowerment of social and economic position of the victims and potential victims of trafficking for a successful reintegration and social inclusion.

Provision of quality services and access to community services for former victims/potential victims of trafficking for their reintegration in social life and enhancing capacities and coordination among governmental and non-governmental counter trafficking (CT) stakeholders contributing to the effective implementation of the National Anti-Trafficking Policies and the National Referral Mechanism.

Thematic priority area: *Non-discrimination and gender equality*

Implementation period: *1/1/2019 - 31/12/2019*

Geographical coverage: *National*



Successful reintegration - a story of a victim of trafficking

Era is a 20 years old girl who has been identified as a victim of trafficking by the Police when she was a minor girl and later was referred for protection to Vatra Psycho-Social Center. Because of trafficking, she had dropped out of school, she has been neglected by her family and left totally unprotected. She was supported in Vatra Shelter by the multidisciplinary team of the center in the framework of the reintegration program: case management; medical, psychological and legal support; strengthening relationships with the family of origin; school registration and educational assistance; vocational training and improving of social skills. When turned 19, Era started a part-time job at a mosaic factory and later decided to move on to the second phase of the program; in the monitored living in rented apartment. During 2019, Era was provided with a rented apartment and moved for living in her community of origin, near her family. During this time, she has been working and attending the part-time school. At the beginning of 2020, with the support of Vatra Center, Era was mediated to the Municipality to benefit from Social Housing Scheme as former victim of trafficking and currently she is being supported by the Municipality with the rental apartment bonus. Era presents significant progress in personal, social, academic and professional development and has been evaluated by the Center's staff as a case of success in the long process of reintegration. The goals she has set for herself motivated her for her future life. She is also involved in the activities organized by Vatra as a volunteer with a great will to learn and motivate other girls who share stories of exploitation and violence. Era is one of the 120 beneficiaries supported with multidisciplinary services through the "Providing sustainable reintegration assistance to former victims of trafficking in Albania" project, implemented by Vatra Psycho-Social Center.

Albanian Local Capacity Development Foundation (ALCDF)

Year of establishment: **October 20, 2010**

Executive Director: **Lindita Manga**

Mission



Realization of viable livelihoods and economic well-being in rural areas through strengthening demand articulation for different types of services, structurally improving service environments, and increasing effectiveness of end-user's investment and finance.

Address:

Str: Shyqyri Ishmi, Shpresa Building,
25/4, Tirana, Albania.

Phone: +355 44518628

Mobile: +355 672089375

| www.alcdf.org

About the project

Better environment applying integrated agriculture

Project objective:

Improving the environment through the minimization of the soil and water pollution applying integrated agriculture practices in Divjaka municipality.

Thematic priority area: *Environment protection*

Implementation period: *1/1/2019 - 31/12/2019*

Geographical coverage: *Divjaka municipality*



For Divjaka farmers, fertilizer is the key to reducing costs and protecting their community

Apostol Qato is the administrator of one farm located in Miza, a village in Divjaka municipality. His family operates in agriculture since 1990's and their farm has been identified as one of the oldest farms in the country. After working in agriculture in Greece for around one decade, he decided to come back home and at that time he became part of the project "Better Environment applying integrated agriculture". Participating in the project activities such as; performing the soil and water analysis before the plant's cultivation, technical assistances, theoretical trainings and on site demonstrations made him learn several techniques which helped him to reduce the costs and improve the way he cared for his land. He admits that farmers cannot change their fertilization procedures overnight and his experience as a small-scale farmer might be a model for the other farmers. Apostol emphasizes that he has been interested for the long-term benefits of using these techniques and EU controlled/approved fertilizers particularly for the health of his family, for the community and for the environment. Apostol considers the participation in the project as a unique opportunity to properly cultivate the plants, to improve the operations and protect the health of his family and community. According to him, the environmental and economic benefits will continue to become more visible if the farmers will continue to apply these techniques over the years. Today Apostol is farming nearly 3,2 ha of vegetables. Depending on the season of cultivation, the vegetables he cultivates are watermelons, melons, carrots, onions, potatoes, etc. He admits that he has always planned to pass the land to his children and this is the main reason he wants to protect it the best and keep it viable. Apostol is part of the group of 50 farmers of Divjaka municipality who have improved their capacities through training programmes and site visits provided by the staff of the project. The one-year support and assistance on behalf of the project has led to better soil and irrigation for the farms of the whole municipality.

Institute for Political Studies (ISP)

Year of establishment: **March 27, 2006**

Executive Director: **Afrim Krasniqi**

Mission



The Albanian Institute for Political Studies (IPS) is a non-governmental organization operating in the field of democracy development in Albania. Its focus in monitoring of the political transition process, political engagement, the parliament and constitutional institutions, and public education by upholding the principles of transparency, participation, representation, and recognition of fundamental concepts for a functional democracy.

Address:

Str: "Luigj Gurakuqi", Building A/89,
Floor 3, Apt 16A, 1001, Tirana, Albania.

Phone: +355 684040722

Email: contactaips@isp.com.al

| www.isp.com.al

About the project

A Clean Parliament – Transparency and Accountability.

Project objective:

Piloting the establishment of an anti-corruption framework aimed at the prevention of conflict of interest, enhanced transparency, and extended accountability from the MPs in relation to their parliamentary activity; Establishment of an effective monitoring system on all political decision-making of the MPs, provision of disclosure and analysis of the possible cases of conflict of interest; Creating a tradition of institutional response against possible infringement of the law on conflict of interests by the MPs and by the Parliament; Raising awareness among MPs, Parliament, and political and institutional stakeholders on the importance of good practices in the field of prevention of conflict of interest and Involving the NGO community, especially watchdog organisations and whistle-blowers in the public discussion of conflict of interest in the parliament.

Thematic priority area: *Anti-corruption*

Implementation period: *1/1/2019 - 30/4/2020*

Geographical coverage: *National*



Legal proceeding and case tracking - Mr. Sadri Abazi's case

Based on the data collected as part of the monitoring process in the framework of the project “A clean parliament – transparency and accountability”, in August 2019, ISP addressed an official letter to the High Inspectorate of Declaration and Audit of Assets and Conflicts of Interest (HIDAACI) asking for the initiation and investigation for MP Sadri Abazi. Data collected by ISP proved the flagrant act of the conflict of interest of this MP, regarding some contracts with state entities and specifically with Albanian Post. The state of conflict of interest was found by the ISP to be in flagrant violation of the law. For this reason, a full investigation was requested by HIDAACI, which responded positively by imposing a fine on the MP. At the end of the above investigation and findings that were supported by law and evidence, as advertised by the ISP in its previous communications and requests, HIDAACI informed that it had decided to impose a fine of 800,000 ALL on MP Sadri Abazi. *The appreciated work of HIDAACI, which in support of the ISP documentation and requirements, made possible the positive and lawful disposition of this case by taking concrete punitive measures.* Under these conditions, independent investigations, punishing officials who have abused their office is a clear message of determination for independent institutions, as well as creating a favorable climate of public trust in protecting and respecting the rule of law in our country.

Albanian Media Institute (AMI)

Year of establishment: **1996**

Executive Director: **Remzi Lani**

Mission



To become a training center for the journalists of Albania; to co-ordinate and support the activities related to the training of journalists and the overall development of media in Albania; to undertake studies and projects in support of the development of the free and independent Albanian media; to establish relations with similar foreign and international organizations and to participate in the legislative processes in the field of media.

Address:

Str: Gjin Bue Shpata, No 8, Tirana, Albania.

Phone: +355 42 229800

Mobile: +355 682023952

| www.institutemedia.org

About the project

Strengthening the Role of the Independent Media in the Justice Reform Process in Albania.

Project objective:

To strengthen the role of the Albanian media in the implementation of the new justice reform in Albania; To improve the professional skills and capacities of Albanian journalists in reporting justice issues.

Thematic priority area: *Independent media*

Implementation period: *1/2/2019 - 1/2/2020*

Geographical coverage: *Tirana*



Justice Reform Media Academy Training

In the framework of the project “Strengthening the role of independent media in the justice reform process in Albania” project, implemented by *Albanian Media Institute* a number of 20 journalists benefited from the Media Academy training learning how to cover the judiciary reform in the media. *After the completion of the Academy and an intense coaching and mentoring process by Albanian Media Institute (AMI), 29 articles have been prepared and published with the support of the project, instead of 20 planned.* In the process, nine of the articles were not of sufficient quality to be published, and AMI invited nine other, more experienced reporters, to cover this topic. After discussing the issue with Partners Albania, it was decided that the nine remaining journalist would also improve their articles. In this context, AMI has also proceeded with further training of the nine journalists that did not publish article, together with the coaches, and eventually they also published their own articles. As a result, 29 articles on justice reform were published on different online media. The journalists focused on different topics and took various approaches on reporting the justice reform. A considerable part of the articles focused on the vetting process, as the most public and interesting part of the justice reform. This was an important activity and case for journalists, since the whole process enabled the journalists to have a slower and more reflective process in writing and reporting on the justice reform, focusing on its overall impact, but also analyzing the problems, challenges and effects up to this point. This was true both for experienced and inexperienced journalists, since they work in the same environment.

Help the Life Association

Year of establishment: **September 14, 1998**

Executive Director: **Afërdita Seiti**

M i s s i o n



Improve capacities and change the social status of children, adolescents, youth, and other groups who are above this age with disability. Protecting their rights to integrate them into society.

Address:

Str: Fshati Prush, Administrative Unit
Vaqarr, Tirana, Albania.

Phone: +355 (044) 803370

Mobile: +355 682084945

Email: info@helphthelife.org.al

| www.helphthelife.org

About the project

Early intervention, the best approach to advance the child development.

Project objective:

Improve the benefits of children with disability in terms of their mental, social, and educational development, and help them to have a more productive and independent life in the future. Established a cross cutting intervention that provides support services for children with disability at an early age.

Thematic priority area: *Minorities and marginalized groups*

Implementation period: *1/1/2019 - 31/4/2020*

Geographical coverage: *Tirana*



The case of "R", one of the children with autism spectrum disorder

When started to attend the kindergarten, R has showed a lot of difficulties in conducting social relationships with other children during games, educational hours and other developmental activities. According to his teacher, R has showed difficulties in understanding and implementing several instructions, he also used to display quite repetitive behaviors and failed to concentrate. Along with the difficulties of R, his teacher emphasizes that even for her it was difficult to work with him considering that at the same time she had to work with the rest of the group as well. Meanwhile, she admits that the situation changed after she started participating in the trainings and technical assistance sessions conducted by "Help Life Association" where she has been equipped with many professional skills and techniques in terms of supporting children with special needs. She declares that now she is more focused on how to communicate, how to instruct, how to engage R in groups and how to manage some inappropriate behaviors of him. According to her, R has made rapid improvements, he has been more involved in playing with peers and has acquired some social skills that facilitate his social interaction. His improvements have been made evident by his parents, his family and other children within the kindergarten. The staff of "Avatar 28" considers his case as a success story due to his rapid improvement which came just after their engagement on the trainings and technical assistance sessions provided by Help the Life Association. Similar to case of this educator, there have been 300 educators of 79 early education institutions in the city of Tirana which have been supported by the "Help the Life Association" and have improved their skills in the framework of the project "Early intervention, the best approach to advance child development".

Tirana Legal Aid Society (TLAS)

Year of establishment: **2006**

Executive Director: **Raimonda Bozo**

Mission



Fulfillment of the legal and social needs of the people in need, education and raising of the awareness of the Albanian society on the rule of law and human rights; initiatives on the improvement of the legal system, development of the community and strengthening of the democracy in Albania.

Address:

“Bajram Curri” Boulevard, “Agimi”
Buildings, Entrance.18, Apt.322,
Tirana, Albania.

Phone: +355 225844

Mobile: +355 692087930

| www.tlas.org.al;

| www.portal.tlas.org.al;

About the project

*Free public good available
in several languages.*

Project objective:

The overall objective of this project is to help access to justice that enable the poor minorities and marginalized groups to enjoy their rights and ensure their inclusion in social state programs.

Thematic priority area: *Minorities and marginalized groups*

Implementation period: *1/1/2019 - 31/12/2019*

Geographical coverage: *Elbasan, Librazhd, Gramsh, Peqin, Cerrik, Shkodra, Malësi e Madhe, Puka, Tirana and Rrogozhina.*



Legal custody for a child remained without parental responsibility

After her parents were arrested because they were found to carry narcotics for trafficking purposes, A.Ç, a 4-year-old girl now, was born in the prison of Edirne-Turkey. In 2016 Turkish court issued the final verdict for the A.Ç.'s parents, who were sentenced to 25 years in prison each and child spent the first year of her life in prison together with her mother. Later, the child was picked up from the prison she was staying with her mother and has been living with her grandparents that have been taking care of her since early 2017, but without having any legal title or a court decision for taking her to custody. *The case was referred to TLAS on January 2019 by the Civil Registrar's Office of Administrative Unit no. 6, in Tirana and was closed on December 16th, 2019.* TLAS interviewed first the grandparents of the child and gathered all the necessary legal information and documents. Afterward, it was necessary to open a court procedure to appoint the grandparents as the legal custodians of the child. In the situation of the present case, no action was taken by the state to secure the life of the child and on the other hand, the family was particularly vulnerable and without any social support and impossible to follow a legal procedure for placing the child into their custody. *After the successful representation of the case by TLAS, finally A.Ç. will have a more secure living environment, her situation is more visible and her social support enhanced.* A.Ç. is one of the 344 beneficiaries (194 of them coming from minorities) supported with a range of legal aid services through the "Increasing the social inclusion through access to justice" project, implemented by *Tirana Legal Aid Society*.

Counselling Line for Women and Girls

20

Year of establishment: **1996**

Executive Director: **Iris Luarasi**

Mission



To promote, advocate for and ensure women's rights in Albania. To work towards the achievement of gender equality.

Address:

Str: "Muhamet Gjollesha" Building. 122,
Entrance.4, Apt.8, 1023,
Tirana, Albania.

Phone: +355 422 33408

Hotline: 116 117

| www.hotlinealbania.org

About the project

Promotion of gender equality in Albania: A multidisciplinary approach through capacity building and provision of services for women.

Project objective:

To ensure gender equality and reduce gender-based discrimination by providing services to women victims of gender-based violence and male perpetrators and raising capacities of relevant professionals.

Thematic priority area: *Non-discrimination and gender equality*

Implementation period: *7/1/2019 - 7/1/2020*

Geographical coverage: *Shkodër, Lezhë, Malësi e Madhe, Tirana, Durrës, Krujë, Elbasan and Bulqizë.*



A training program for students of the School of Magistrates

13 students of the School of Magistrates, judges and prosecutors, have been trained by the Counselling Line for Women and Girls on the notions of gender equality, gender mainstreaming in the justice system, gender discrimination in courts, gender based violence, perpetrator rehabilitation programs, etc. The training was quite unique for them, as they are rarely trained on issues of gender equality and gender based violence. On the other hand, they have not been provided before with the right information by true experts who have dedicated their career to these issues. The attendees were sensitized on the abovementioned topics and were encouraged to mainstream gender in their day-to-day work, especially when it comes to the court cases. The trainers also addressed the issue of gender stereotyping and discrimination in courts and methods on how to challenge and avoid them. By the end of the training, the future judges and prosecutors' knowledge on issues of gender equality, gender stereotypes and discrimination in courts, gender-based violence and social services offered to victims of such violence, were substantially improved. Before the training, the students of the School of Magistrates had little to no information on the dynamics and particularities of gender-based violence cases, gender mainstreaming, how to avoid gender stereotypes and discrimination in courts, etc. After the training their knowledge and awareness on these matters was improved. It is crucial for the achievement of gender equality and obliteration of gender discrimination in the justice system, that judges and prosecutors are sensitized and informed on the implications of gender equality in their work. In parallel, during the implementation of the project, CLWG has been able to counsel 3010 women primarily victims of gender-based violence and carry out a rehabilitation program with 80 men perpetrators.

Albanian Disability Rights Foundation (ADRF)

Year of establishment: **1996**

Executive Director: **Blerta Çani Drenofci**

M i s s i o n



Promote equal opportunities and constant protection of the rights of persons with disabilities aiming at improving the quality of their life and the life of their family members.

Address:

Str: Bogdani. Apt. 15, Tirana, Albania,
1001

Phone: +355 42269426

Mobile: +355 682049160

E-mail: adrf@albmail.com

| www.adrf.al

About the project

Equality, non-discrimination, and inclusion of persons with disabilities through self - advocacy.

Project objective:

To promote the respect for human rights of persons with disabilities in Albania, through enforcement of non-discrimination and inclusion. Empowering the community of persons with disabilities to claim their rights on anti-discrimination and inclusion and enhance access to knowledge on human rights and the disability legislation, especially on the Law on Protection against Discrimination amongst state and non-state stakeholders as preconditions to eliminate discrimination and influence social inclusion.

Thematic priority area: *Non-discrimination and marginalized groups*

Implementation period: 15/1/2020 - 15/01/2021

Geographical coverage: *Tirana, Elbasan, Shkodra, Vlora.*



Complaint for discrimination against F.R., a child with disabilities

In April 2020, a 14-year-old boy with Down Syndrome was diagnosed with acute leucemia and a week after receiving the diagnosis he was admitted to Mother Teresa University Hospital Centre (QSUNT) in the department of Oncohematology. The costs of medications were not covered by the (QSUNT) even though F.R. was an inpatient. The child was recommended therapy with Methotrexate, one of the essential medicines for fighting the disease. It is worth mentioning that the price of the drug is extremely high while the lack of medicines for children with leucemia in QSUNT has become a practice of several years now. Parents of F.R., on behalf of their minor child, with the assistance of the Albanian Disability Rights Foundation and Down Syndrome Albania raised a claim at the Commissioner for the Protection against Discrimination. Based on articles 32, 33, of Law no. 10 221, date. 04.02.2010, "On protection from discrimination", parents of F.R. requested the Commissioner to carry out all necessary investigations and order the necessary measures by:

- Providing full reimbursement by state institutions for the expenses of the F.R. family;
- Providing information and making public the realistic budget for handling cases in the last 10 years and notifying the parties;
- Providing systematic forecasting of medicines for children with leucemia in QSUNT.

This is one of the 20 cases identified and addressed to the respective institutions by individuals of disability organisations, persons with disabilities and their family members in the framework of the project "Equality, non-discrimination and inclusion of persons with disabilities through self - advocacy", implemented by ADRF. The project has promoted the respect for human rights of persons with disabilities in Albania through enforcement of non-discrimination/inclusion and through comprehensive interventions.

Forum of Free Thought

Year of establishment: **2006**

Executive Director: **Mentor Kikia**

M i s s i o n



To undertake legal and social initiatives to serve the central and local governmental improvements. To enhance governmental accountability and promote civil activity in the service of accountability, as well as the improvement of human and media rights and freedom.

Address:

Str: "Artan Lenja", Bldg. 6, Apt. 13,
Lapraka. Tirana.

Phone: +355 422 70478

Mobile: +355 692021604

| www.fml.al

About the project

Media freedom under the threats of PR from public institutions.

Project objective:

To provide data and testimony on the scale of the phenomenon of transmitting readymade news in visual media, as well as to identify and denounce the mechanisms that cause censoring media freedom to report independently the governmental and political parties' activity.

Thematic priority area: *Independent media*

Implementation period: 15/1/2020 – 14/1/2021

Geographical coverage: *National*



The reaction of the community of journalists toward the ready-made media materials

Based on the data collected in the framework of the project “Media freedom under the threats of PR from public institutions” during January 2020-January 2021, FoFTh managed for the first time to make public the opinions of journalists and editors who agreed to speak out and denounce the practice of ready-made news and the violation of the professional standards of journalism.

18 journalists and editors talked about the lack of communication with the press offices which did not notified or allowed them to participate in activities organized by public institutions where senior officials participate. Journalists and editors denounced the practice of ready-made materials of institutions, through the interviews and focus groups that FoFTh conducted with them. The final report prepared by Forum of Free Thought represents a significant denunciation of the violation of media freedom in Albania, emphasizing the refusal of journalists to participate in activities organized by public institutions and political parties. According to the organization, this is a unique practice in terms of size and a very important valve of the media breathing, which is currently blocked from the political interest of the government and the parties. Meanwhile the beneficiaries include the community of journalists, the media community and the whole society which will benefit from a more accurate, fairer and more professional information.

European Movement in Albania (EMA)

26

Year of establishment: **2007**

Executive Director: **Gledis Gjipali**

M i s s i o n



EMA aims to establish a European model in Albanian society. EMA shall be engaged particularly in spreading the ideas and the European spirit within Republic of Albania; shall be engaged on the integration process of Albania, in representing the core values of EU integration; and will work for an active involvement of Albania of being part of Europe and promoting a more unified Europe.

Address:

Blvd. Gjergj Fishta, Building 3, Apt. 2/1,
1001 Tirana, Albania

Phone: +355 4 630 6280

| www.em-al.org

About the project

EuroSpeak Online Portal.

Project objective:

The overall aim of the project is to ensure the establishment of a daily online independent analytical media, that will specifically fill the current limited coverage of EU topics, striving to provide quality, independent analysis which goes beyond fact listing or politicized statements.

Thematic priority area: *Independent media*

Implementation period: *1/1/2020 - 30/4/2021*

Geographical coverage: *Shkodër, Elbasan, Durrës, Vlorë, Tiranë, web.*



Recommendations on new methodologies that can be used to improve the quality of teaching

The Covid-19 pandemic brought many changes to our social and economic lives. It changed many concepts of everyday life, familiarizing us with situations, such as work from home or school from home. For our education system Covid-19 was a lightning strike and served to stimulate the response at the institutional and family level in the further development of our educational curriculum with new standards. Also, to raise awareness about the need to update the teaching methodology, Dr. Aida Magjistari Myrto responded to one of the open calls of EuroSpeak to contribute with articles. In her article, Aida, in addition to presenting the current situation, gives recommendations on new methodologies that can be used to improve the quality of teaching. Aida's article is among the most read on EuroSpeak, mainly as a result of these recommendations. Following the publication of the article on EuroSpeak, a morning show "Dita Jonë" at A2CNN television invited the author to discuss the topic in more detail. The promotion of our online media through other media, especially traditional ones such as TV is an indicator that EuroSpeak has not been only a focal reference point to citizens, but also to journalists and experts of the field, such as in this case. The reference and quotations of EuroSpeak work from other media in the country, shows the necessity of the existence of this online portal in Albanian environment.

Albanian Helsinki Committee (AHC)

28

Year of establishment: **December 19, 1990**

Executive Director: **Erida Skëndaj**

Mission



AHC's mission is to contribute to respect for human rights, strengthening the rule of law, and the conduct of free and fair elections, in accordance with the Constitution and international acts applicable to the Republic of Albania.

About the project

Empowering local government to implement the Law on Whistleblowers.

Project objective:

The overall objective of this project is to increase the public's awareness and faith in the legislation on whistleblowers, through contributing to the fight against corruption in Albania through a better implementation of the Law on Whistleblowers on the local level.

Thematic priority area: *Anti-corruption*

Implementation period: *15/1/2020 - 15/1/2021*

Geographical coverage: *Tirana, Durrës, Elbasan, Shkoder, Lezhe, Kukes, Vlora, Diber, Gjirokastra and Korca.*

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Str: Brigada e VIII, "Tekno Projekt",
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Albania

Phone: +355 42233671

Mobile: +355 6820236 99; 694075732

[| www.ahc.org.al](http://www.ahc.org.al)



Respect for the general public's right to transparency by the Municipality of Tirana

During the monitoring conducted by AHC, it was found that the 10 largest municipalities of our country were far from the standards provided by Directive 2019/1937. The transparency programs of each municipality did not implement the recommendations of the Commissioner for the Right to Information and Personal Data Protection, by not providing secure mechanisms for making public information on the existence of the unit responsible for whistleblowing. Also, different forms of mechanisms for transmitting a whistleblowing' case electronically were provided by different Municipalities. To a large extent, it was found that the Municipalities had special sections for the contact of the Mayor or the coordinator for the right to information, but in no case for the contact of the unit responsible for whistleblowing. The Municipality of Tirana, which is the only Municipality that has registered a whistleblowing' denunciation, administered and handled by the responsible unit, after being informed within the project undertaken by AHC, took a very positive action creating an important precedent in the interest of public' transparency. On February 2021, under the section "Transparency Program" the Municipality has incorporated the necessity information relating the legal framework on whistleblowing and has publicly promoted the e-mail address administered by the Responsible Unit on Whistle-blowers: sinjalizim@tirana.al. Now any interested official or ex-official can address his denunciation electronically to the Responsible Unit on Whistleblowing at the Municipality of Tirana, without fear that his right to confidentiality will be violated.

Institute for Democracy and Mediation (IDM)

Year of establishment: **November 25, 1999**

Executive Director: **Sotiraq Hroni**

M i s s i o n



IDM mission is to advance societal capacities, generate and provide knowledge, skills and expertise for inclusive policy making and evidence-based alternatives to bolster democracy and sustainable development.

Address:

Str: Shenasi Dishnica, Building.35,
Entrance.1, 1017

Phone: +355 42400241

Mobile: +355 682049345

| www.idmalbania.org

About the project

Civic Monitoring of Transparency and Accountability at Local Self-Government Level.

Project objective:

The project aims to contribute towards reduced corruption at local government level in Albania through improved municipal transparency and accountability (due to strengthened civic monitoring capacities).

Thematic priority area: *Anti-corruption*

Implementation period: 15/1/2020 - 15/4/2021

Geographical coverage: *Shkodër, Lezhë, Kukës, Dibër, Durrës, Tiranë, Elbasan, Fier, Berat, Vlorë, Korçë, Gjirokastër.*



Strengthening the capacities of the local organizations - a case of “Tjeter Vizion” Elbasan

During the period May-October 2020 IDM strengthened the capacities of the local organization “Tjeter Vizion” Elbasan to monitor and assess the Transparency Program (TP) in the municipality of Elbasan. Through the technical assistance of IDM, the CSO monitored and evaluated the TP and prepared a monitoring report on “Transparency and Accountability at the local level”. The TP municipal area with the least performance was the “Other information”, where the municipality hesitated to publish information on community structures, data on CSOs and independent reports. The municipality demonstrated limited willingness and capacity to disclose information especially in the area of financial transparency and accountability. Also, despite the great importance that the services area holds for citizens, the municipality disclosed limited information in this area. After the monitoring exercise a community dialogue meeting was organized to share and consult the monitoring report with municipal staff and key local stakeholders. In addition, senior level officials from municipalities, such as the Deputy Mayor of Elbasan Municipality and high ranking academic staff, such as Deputy Dean and Deputy Rector of Elbasan University as well as local CSOs and media joined the roundtable and gave their constructive feedback on the monitoring report. The community dialogue served as a wide platform to promote Transparency and Accountability by using evidence based policy advocacy tools. The report’s findings encouraged the Municipality of Elbasan to increase its transparency level through the proactive publication of information in the TP. The report was particularly useful for municipal senior staff, who displayed their willingness to take into consideration all the recommendations and revise/update the TPs accordingly. The active engagement of the representative from the Right to Information Commissioner was important to establish synergies between municipal staff and create better communication mechanism among them. The participation of these stakeholders was highly important, considering that they have a crucial role in the ownership of the process and serve as internal oversight mechanisms to ensure the implementation of TPs from the municipal administration. Moreover, the local CSO has now more expertise to monitor the right to information at local level and can act as a mobiliser at community level to engage other non-public actors to act as watchdog. It has the potential to carry out its watchdog role and guarantee more effective checks and balances for the local government, as it is equipped with the necessary capacities and practical skills.

Resource Environmental Center (REC) Albania

Year of establishment: **2018**

Executive Director: **Mihallaq Qirjo**

M i s s i o n



Assisting in the environmental protection, protection of natural values and regional development as well as European integration through the development, promotion and implementation of new methodologies for change within the concept of sustainable development of the country, by serving as a (i) partner, (ii) training and qualification center, (iii) expert resource center, (iv) project management center aimed at achieving the organization's objectives, and (v) an information resource center and consulting on various development policies of the society and public and private organizations. REC Albania contributes directly to the UNESCO's Sustainable Development Education (ESD) Action Plan and the UNECE Strategic Development Strategy and facilitates the achievement of UN Sustainable Development Goals by building capacity in relation to the Agenda of UN Sustainable Development 2030. REC Albania aims at increasing and activating human resources through the promotion of professional training for environmental protection and sustainable development of the country.

About the project

NET-CLIMATE: “Network as a tool for climate changemakers in Albania”.

Project objective:

To encourage the active participation of civil society in policymaking and contributing to the fulfilment of Albania's obligations under the Global Action for Climate Change.

Thematic priority area: *Environment protection*

Implementation period: *1/1/2020 - 31/3/2021*

Geographical coverage: *National*

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| www.recshqiperi.org



“Friday for Future” - addressing the issues of climate change

There is more than one year since the first groups of youth started to appear on Fridays along main boulevard of Tirana. Many youngsters in Albania have mentioned the issue of climate change as a major issue for several years, but these voices were drowned out by the multitude of other issues or indifference. Endri Haxhiraj who is leading the Institute for Environmental Policies, a local NGO, took the lead of organizing those events. Many youngsters in Albania saw it as the best opportunity to raise their voice. Ina, a post graduate student, and many other NGO representatives joined youth gatherings in Tirana. “Friday for Future” became an umbrella for all young people around the country to address the issue of climate change to decision makers. In this frame, many organizations, activists, vulnerable communities and high school students and youth across the country joined the movement. REC Albania supported the youth activism through the “Climate Net” project by supporting visual elements of the campaign. During the COVID pandemic, innovative elements were developed such as the “Climate” bicycle and big banners, which were placed around the city.

With a stronger voice together, the youth of “Friday for Future” in Albania saw that the attention of decision makers was already visible by offering the opportunity for discussion and dialogue. A public hearing with the Parliamentary Commission on the draft Climate Law is held on November 2020, where NGO representatives articulated the need for more aggressive objectives on the Climate agenda. Those active NGOs have set the first solid steps towards stronger movement for climate in Albania.

Murialdo Social Center

Year of establishment: **1995**

Executive Director: **Giovanni Salustri**

Mission



The mission of QSM is the human development, vocational and educational training and social inclusion of young people. It mainly it principally operates in three areas of activity:

- a) Vocational and Educational Training (VET) for young people (14-26 years old);*
- b) Social Inclusion of vulnerable groups like Roma people, children with disabilities, young prisoners and victims of human trafficking and*
- c) Active Lifestyle and citizenship of youngsters.*

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| www.facebook.com/Qendra-Sociale-Murialdo-336990703059572/

About the project

Ndërthurje: Rights, Skills, and Textures for the Roma women of Drizë.

Project objective:

The project aims to contribute to the socio-economic integration of Roma community, through the promotion of Roma women empowerment, giving them the capacity to define their own choices in life and to pursue their own goals and to remove social and cultural barriers. Moreover, the proposed project promotes the integration of Roma youth and children, through intercultural dialogue to reduce social disparities.

Thematic priority area: *Non-discrimination and marginalized groups*

Implementation period: *1/1/2020 -31/12/2020*

Geographical coverage: *Drizë, Fier, National*



Integration of a Roma woman, a positive example of education and economic independence within the Roma community in Drize, Fier

"B.A. is a 32-year-old woman. She is illiterate and unmarried. Due to several reasons, mostly because of her health problems since her childhood, she never went to school and never received support from her family, as set by the traditional norms of her cultural group. Being an orphan adolescent, she has always lived with her mother, helping her raise her brothers and sister and maintain the house. These conditions implicated an additional disadvantage for her, as she became totally dependent on her mother and on her brother's family she has been living with. Meanwhile, her relatives always took an active role in the events organized by QSM in the village. Since the opening of the "Filli i Drizës" Centre in the village, "B" has always participated in all activities, along with the 203 women who have had access to the centre in some way. At the centre she first started with literacy courses. Later, she participated in all the workshops about economic and financial skills, self-determination and rights awareness. In particular, she has learnt how to use the loom and she now is able to produce beautiful and well refined handcrafts. She produced various fabrics that were then used to create purses, cases and centrepieces, which were sold later and contributed on creating an incipient market (together with other Roma women). Thanks to this activity, she gained independence from her family and increased her sense of self-awareness about her capabilities. The project *Ndërthurje: rights, skills and textures for the Roma women of Drize*, implemented by Murialdo Social Centre, enabled the creation of a women's centre in the village of Drizë (Fier) which became a "safety zone" where women could speak and meet freely. All women who attended the centre's activities acquired both professional skills and soft skills, such as perseverance, work methodology and work planning, which they can now apply in the local labour market. Considering the sales of the recent months, "B" and other women of the centre, have contributed to the income of their households, enhancing their role within their families.

Institute of Romani Culture in Albania (IRCA)

Year of establishment: **2011**

Executive Director: **Bledar Taho**

Mission



Advocating for Roma equal access in citizens' rights as well as public and social services; Providing educational and career advice to Romani students; Increasing capacities of Romani youth for participation in public life; Conducting research studies for documenting and institutionalizing Romani cultural heritage; Promoting intercultural exchange and friendly relations between Roma and non-Roma youth within the country and abroad.

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[| www.irca.al](http://www.irca.al)

About the project

YES – to integration of national minorities in Albania.

Project objective:

To contribute to the reduction of racial prejudices and intolerant attitudes against national minorities through promotion of diversity and inter-cultural dialog.

- The rise the public awareness on the importance human rights protection and fight against racial discrimination.
- To build the capacities of young people on intercultural dialog and advocacy and engage them in youth work.
- To promote the identity, culture, and values of national minorities.

Thematic priority area: *Non-discrimination and marginalized groups*

Implementation period: 15/10/2021- 15/10/2022

Geographical coverage: *National*



Awareness raising and advocacy on national minorities rights

The project "Yes - to integration of national minorities in Albania", brought together representatives of national minorities, mainly young people, providing the opportunity to establish contacts with each other participate in awareness raising activities promoting the national minorities' identity and undertake joint advocacy actions. The Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination, the Committee for National Minorities and Tirana Municipality were the main targeted institutions, engaged in the promotional activities and advocacy roundtables.

The adoption of bylaws of the law nr.96 / 2017 "On the protection of national minorities" was one of the main achievement of this action. In fulfillment of constitutional and international obligations, Albania has adopted law no. 96/2017 "On the protection of national minorities", but 9 out of 12 bylaws are approved so far. IRCA undertook an advocacy campaign to address the 3 remaining by-laws as: "Creation of an *ad hoc Committee for recognition of minorities*", "Use of language in relations with local authorities", and "Data collection based on self-identification".

The advocacy meetings contributed to the discussion and addressing of the following important issues as: 1). *Specifying the form and content of the request for the recognition of other minorities and the accompanying historical documentation, defining time limits that avoid unjustified recognition of communities that have settled in Albania with the status of asylum seekers or immigrants after a certain date historically significant*; 2) *The identification of persons belonging to recognized minorities should be based on the fundamental principle of self-identification, in individual and community dimensions and in accordance with the jurisprudence of the Constitutional Court, which abolished as incompatible with the Constitution the competence of the Civil Registry to administer data related to the distinguishing characteristics of minorities*; 3) *Enabling the use of minority languages and facilitating intercultural communication to ensure equal access to public services as well as during the development of electoral processes, and in relations with law enforcement bodies*; and 4) *The preparation of textbooks for the teaching of the Romani language as well as the financial support and training of teachers and instructors of the Romani language who have alternative qualifications*.

Albanian Legal and Territorial Research Institute (ALTRI)

Year of establishment: 2011

Executive Director: **Eda Noçka**

M i s s i o n



ALTRI aims to achieve its objectives, mainly through conducting research, evaluation, legal drafting, awareness raising, capacity building and at the same time advocacy and lobby, with regard to issues of good-governance, rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms, empowerment of vulnerable groups (women and girls, youth, returned migrants, people with disabilities), decentralization, and EU integration, in the light of the approximation of the national legislation with the acquis.

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About the project

Improvement of media environment to ensure a policy of zero tolerance for intimidation and attacks against journalists.

Project objective:

The **project aims** to improve media environment to ensure a policy of zero tolerance for intimidation and attacks against journalists, through three main interventions:

- identification and evaluation of cases, analysis of judicial and prosecution practice to provide recommendations on how to promote and guarantee the freedom of expression.
- Creation of the ongoing practice for the identification and evaluation of the cases related to journalists by creating a database.
- Increasing the awareness of policymakers (parliament, government & independent institutions), journalists, police, judges, prosecutors, and NGO-s that operate in media field about the statistics and track record for the cases against journalists, encouraging their reaction to implement recommendations and to continue monitoring the journalists' cases.

Thematic priority area: *Independent media*

Implementation period: 15/10/2021 – 15/10/2022

Geographical coverage: *Tirana, Vlore, Shkodra, Gjirokaster, Korca and Elbasan.*



”On criminal and civil court cases involving journalists and media representatives in the framework of guaranteeing a policy of zero tolerance for intimidation and attacks against journalists”

The main and very important product achieved through the realization of this project is the drafting for the first time of the study on *"On criminal and civil court cases involving journalists and media representatives in the framework of guaranteeing a policy of zero tolerance for intimidation and attacks against journalists"*. The study did not only aim to collect judicial cases (criminal and civil) but also to analyse their progress and treatment according to European standards. What this study brought as innovation are as follows:

- Identification of civil and criminal court cases involving journalists and media representatives at the national level (2020-2021);
- Determines the methodology of data collection and processing;
- The analysis of 30 judicial decisions (civil and criminal) of the court of the judicial district of Tirana to see and evaluate whether the judges during their reasoning referred to the decisions of the European Court of Human Rights for freedom of expression and media;
- The study brings for the first time the tracking in court of 107 concrete cases identified by the media and reports (track record) to understand if a case reported in the media such as defamation, insult, attack, harassment or bullying, has started a judicial process and what was the progress of the case at all levels of the judge as well as the disposition of the given decision.

One of the achievements of the project is that at the end of it, we have found that one of the recommendations addressed by the study is realized, which is: Ministry of Justice has considered the need for the collection and processing of data on court cases involving journalists in the framework of drafting the statistical yearbook. In the framework of the negotiations with the European Union, as well as specifically the Media and freedom of expression component, the data collected in this study are necessary not only for the evaluation of the European Commission and the fulfilment of the European standards, but will also serve the institutions in terms of improving current situation. Through this study, the responsible institutions will have an initial methodology to collect and analyse court cases (criminal and civil against journalists within the framework of freedom of expression and media), which can be changed and improved later. Also, the study contributes to the policymakers (parliament & government) to have a complete picture of the statistics related to the interference of politics and business in the freedom of media, the international and EU applicable standards for ensuring the freedom of media that could contribute also to the actual revision of the draft law on media. The project was developed at the national level, while advocacy and information activities were developed in 6 cities: Lezha, Shkodra, Lushnja, Vlora, Elbasan and Korça. The main actors of this project are: Ministry of Justice, Assembly of Albania, Courts of judicial districts and prosecutor's office, Union of Albanian Journalists, media representatives and civil society organizations.

Streha Centre

Year of establishment: **2015**

Executive Director: **Adelajda Alikaj**

M i s s i o n



The mission of the Centre Streha is to support LGBTI young people through multi-disciplinary services, by empowering them to overcome the challenges raised by the society with the aim to integrate them into the society.

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| www.strehacenter.org

About the project

Improving the situation of LGBTI+ people in Albania.

Project objective:

To improve the situation of LGBTI+ people in Albania through empowering local professionals and changing negative stereotypes.

Thematic priority area: *Non-discrimination and marginalized groups*

Implementation period: *3/11/2021 - 3/11/2022*

Geographical coverage: *Tirana, Korca, Fier, Shkodra.*



Ana's story, a story of success

Ana is a 28-year-old transgender girl who asked the help of “Streha” Center in a very critical moment in her life. After 6 years of working as a sex worker, suffering from drug addiction and history of domestic abuse she decides to leave her city of origin. She contacted “Streha” and after some interviews and after the evaluation of her situation she became part of the shelter, that is a safe and accepting space for all the LGBT+ community facing violence, discrimination and have less chances for a dignity life because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

The multidisciplinary team made an evaluation of her medical, psychological and legal situation and offered continues support for Ana in order to help her to reintegrate in a new environment and also improve her social skills and raise her capacities for the accordance of the requirements of the labor market. Ana dropped off high school, she claims that: “In my family education is not a tradition, but also, I couldn't do it. In the high school age, the peers were even more aggressive, I couldn't change my attitude even though I tried for many years, I was targeted as the “gay” or sometimes “the girl” and many other insults and physical violence in daily bases”.

In the framework of the project Ana is supported with the English language course. Meanwhile Ana started her first job in a cleaning service company, and at the moment she has managed to have her savings in order to become economically independent and to afford living on her own as a long-lasting goal. She aims to improve her English skills and working in a call center is her new goal. Ana has had a noticeable improvement in terms of health due to the referral to the health institutions (the family doctor, the public health institute,). She was diagnosed with HIV and is referred and to “HIV and STI Outpatient Clinic”. With the assistance in referral and procedures, she is now part of the scheme for patients with HIV in Albania and benefits free of costs treatment.

Cooperating closely with psycho- social staff of “Streha” she has managed to work hard on her objectives to start a new life and feel integrated in the society. During the Gala Event that “Streha” organized, Ana dressed up and had her make-up and hair done after a long time and she really enjoyed the evening where she felt truly herself and accepted as she will mention after: “I really enjoyed the event, I enjoyed being around so many people that came there to support us. I felt accepted and loved by many people just the way I am, I didn't have to hide or explain! The evening made me so happy”. Ana presents significant progress in personal, social and professional development and has been evaluated by the staff of “Streha” as a case of success in the long process of reintegration and empowerment. What most makes her successful is the self- motivation and persistence that she has had during this time of life changing process.

Mjaft Movement

Year of establishment: **2006**

Executive Director: **Aldo Merkoci**

M i s s i o n



The mission of the organization is to promote active citizenship, strengthen communities, promote responsible governance, and improve the Albanian image in the world.

Address:

Str: Jul Variboba, 1, Ap. 5, Tirana,
Albania

| www.mjaft.org

About the project

Accountability, Technology, and Institutional Openness Albania – Action Albania.

Project objective:

Enhancing the general environment of good governance issues in Albania, increasing openness in public institutions, and strengthening civil society and youth participation in the rule of law process.

Thematic priority area: *Anti-corruption*

Implementation period: *15/10/2021 – 9/12/2022*

Geographical coverage: *National*



Accountability, Technology and Institutional Openness – ActionALBANIA

The Tirana Court of Appeal scored the lowest performance among the appeal courts in the Republic of Albania. The indicators fulfilled from this institution perform only 34.83% of openness, according to the ActionALBANIA monitoring methodology, based on international standards of transparency and accountability. During the presentation of the main findings of the National Index of Openness for the judicial bodies, this court was emphasized by media channels as the worst performance in meeting these standards. Right after the presentation, the Judge for Media of this court, Mrs. Edlira Petri, contacted with us to require a meeting at their premises and hold a short training with their staff, in order to improve their performance. In the last week of November 2022, Mjaft held two meetings with Mrs. Petri and the Freedom of Information Coordinator, appointed according to the Albanian law no. 119/2014 on Freedom of Information, Mrs. Jonida Capo. Also, Mjaft mediated on arranging a training session for this institution by the Office of Information and Data Protection Commissioner of Albania, beneficial to the administrative staff of the Tirana Court of Appeal.

After the meeting, the performance of the institution is increased with 39.42 percentage points (the current score of institutional openness 74.25%). Tirana Court of Appeal has increased its openness by responding to the designed questionnaire and publishing documents related to: CVs of staff, salaries, annual work plans and reports, current strategies, communication with media, trainings on freedom of information and anti-corruption, accessibility of courtrooms, publishing anonymized cases against juveniles, code of ethics, annual statistics of the institutions. Currently, the Tirana Court of Appeal represents the most opened institution in the Republic of Albania, in fulfilling most of the indicators based on documents that are published on their website, information provided through questionnaire and the legal frame in force in our country. It is important to emphasize that the institution is engaged to increase their score in the near future, while it is working on designed the required documents of the international standards of good governance, and Mjaft is going to provide its assistance in this process.

”Qendra Sociale në Ndihmë të Njerëzve në Nevojë” Fushë-Arrëz (QSNNN)

Year of establishment: **2014**

Executive Director: **Hil Curri**

M i s s i o n



Our mission is to support, mobilize and activate in the social life and decision-making of young people and women; care for the third age and undertaking awareness raising initiatives for the protection of the environment, forests and flora & fauna; study of development trends, problems facing residents in the development process.

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| www.qsnnn.org

About the project

Engaging youth of Puka and Fushë-Arrëz in Environmental Protection.

Project objective:

The overall objective of the proposed project is to provide new spaces for active citizenship for youth to promote Sustainable Development Goals and good environmental local policies.

Thematic priority area: *Environment protection*

Implementation period: 15/10/2021 – 15/10/2022

Geographical coverage: *Municipality of Fushë-Arrëz and Pukë.*



Young people promote SDSs and good local environmental policies in Puka and Fushë-Arrëz

One of the biggest problems on a global scale today is environmental protection, which has also affected the areas of Fushë-Arrëz and Puka. These two areas are known as two of the places with the highest biodiversity and wonderful nature in Albania. After 1990, waste mismanagement became a serious problem. Illegal interventions in forests such as; illegal cutting, massive fires, loss of forest areas, erosion, damage to flora and fauna, have brought impact on the life of the communities of Puka and Fushë-Arrëz. Young people from United High School "8-Dhjetori", Qelez-Pukë, Fushë-Arrëz High School and young people from the community came together to put SDS in the foreground at the local level. Environmentally friendly behavior was encouraged through the direct engagement of young people as the best promoters of SDS in local communities. Griselda Topjanasi, an excellent student at United High School "8-Dhjetori", Qelez-Pukë and leader of the "Changes Makers" group, took part in all the activities of the project. She also, being part of all the meetings organized between young people and Puka Municipality, presented all the problems related to waste management and the rehabilitation of forest areas damaged over the years in Puka, requesting more budget from the municipality for the issues environmental issues that directly affect the life of the community. At the meeting of the Puka Municipal Council, Griselda together with other youth representatives of the "Changes Makers" group, presented requests for environmental issues which were welcomed by the Puka Municipal Council with the promise that they will be taken into account for the 2023 budget. Youth of Qelez successfully implemented the intervention plan selected by a professional jury in the environmental competition "Young people in Qelez promote SDSs". Decorative trees were planted in the public areas, waste bins were placed in the external and internal areas of the school, as well as decorative flowers. This intervention directly reflected the local actions in fulfillment of specific SDS no. 12 and 15. Now all communication bridges with the local government have been established. The implementation of concrete actions with intervention served as a good example of the youth community in Puka and Fushë-Arrëz to be followed in the future by the local government as a legal obligation to fulfill its mission.

Partners Albania for Change and Development



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www.partnersalbania.org

2022