****

**Short Info about Observatory**

Observatory for children’s rights experience is introduced for the first time in the Albanian society on year 2009, and it aims to function as *an observer structure, based on local level*, regarding the implementation and realization of children rights, by acting and supporting as part of civil society.

Year by year of project implementation, we acknowledge that the project has attracted the attention of the civil society, policy makers at central, regional and local level as well as the interest of the public officials, especially at the regional and district level. During the period of these 6 years of project implementation we have built up our network in all the regions, we have been visible with our reports in web page, we have made stronger our presence in Albanian society and we have advanced our networking cooperation from National level to local one. Year by year, Observatory networking is improving its reports by implementing new ideas based on needs and international practices.

Thanks to UNICEF support, partnership cooperation with local and central actor, and based in our experience we understand that how important is to monitor and report day by day children rights realisation in local district, municipality and commune level. These six working years, demonstrated us the necessity and the importance of strengthening this experience in all districts of the country and the existing observatories as well as the need to improve and deepen this process through monitoring- research study.

The strengthening of the Observatories network, harmonized with local institutions vision, strategy and policy is a positive evident progress in the process of institutionalization of the rights of the child. It helps to strengthen social awareness on children’s rights. Being present in each region, the observatories offices now are the first mitigating local actors who identify and project social needs which are prior in the region, in the framework of realizing the children’s rights. Observatories offices in regional level are playing a crucial role in identifying the prior needs and developing local strategies, focused in children’s rights and social services. It contributes to people’s participation in the decision making, especially at local level. It is a new and effective tool in evidence based on policy making process, which supports better governance at regional/local level and supports the decentralization reform of social services at local level

These 6 years of intensive cooperation and project development, we have support all Regional offices of the country to initiate, craft and develop the local Strategy focused on children rights. As a result of our intensive efforts and support, today children rights and issues are part of regional institutions agenda.

On the other side, the Observatories of Children, established at district level as structures of civil society , established with the support of UNICEF such as in Shkodra, Elbasan, Korca and Dibra, Kukes , Durres, Gjirokastar , Vlora , Tirana, Lezha, Fier and Berat are demonstrating *independent monitoring as watch dog* institutions on children’s’ rights , playing a crucial role. In the course of these years of project implementation, Observatory succeeded to make present the situation of children rights in national level, district, municipality and commune level. There were the Observatory annual reports, that were used as one of the basic documents for initiating the compilation of regional Strategies for Children Rights (as: Diber, Shkoder, Elbasan, Vlore, Fier, Gjirokaster, Kukes, etc).

The last report of the Observatory (for 2011) is focused on 6 themes, from which each region has analyzed a theme. Themes per region are:

1. Analyzing the new indicators for children’s rights, presented by the Albanian Government; Diber and Berat region
2. Budgeting for the children; Fier and Tirane region
3. Children’s rights situation focused on children with special needs; Gjirokaster, Korçe and Elbasan region
4. Poverty and children; lezhe and Kukes region
5. Children out of parental care; Vlore and Durres region
6. Roma children; Shkoder region

A strategic approach to welfare for children needs to go deeper than normative agreements, child-sensitive policies, capacity building for government actors on children, etc, which do not always expose the children biases inherent within the system. Good governance for children must also address the root causes of the lack of public sector responsiveness to children. The place to examine the quality of good governance from a children’s perspective is in the points of contact between children and the state. It is at the regional and local level where children often have the most frequent access to the state’s response to children exclusion, where the factors limiting children’s welfare and participation in social environment can be most visible and readily addressed

The main role and effectiveness of each Observatory office in the district, recognized through these 6 years of intensive and professional engagements, are summarised below:

1. Strengthening of Observatories in the 12 districts, paying particular attention to bridge their activities with CRU-s and CPU-s where they exist.
2. Strengthening existing links and collaboration with all actors at local level.
3. Involve and empower local actors in the process by informing and motivating them to undertake the role of “watch dog” organizations in order to insure proper implementation of children’s rights by the governmental institutions through these activities: open discussions, round tables, meetings and seminars with regional stakeholders;
4. Support the implementation of the right of the child in District level by sharing the use of Observatory’s reports and recommendations on research results at municipality/commune level;
5. Approaching the problems of children and their families in the field by conducting research regarding key child rights issues; This engagement gives a direct contact and message of children themselves, parents and other professionals at community level;
6. Continues updating of National web page of central Observatory ensuring the free access of children, young people and other interested actors.
7. Observatories in close collaboration with Child Rights units at local level must draw the attention of policy –makers about the necessity to involve the rights of children in their policies and regional strategies ensuring and proper budgeting as well.
8. Observatories, as part of institutional mechanisms must be considered as nucleus of social development ; each office and expert of Observatory in District level must do their persistent efforts to find out new effective ways related to our mission.
9. Mapping of children rights situation (including child poverty, disabled children, children without parental care, Roma children, budgeting for children and analyze of the 80th new indicators, introduces in the Decision of Government).

For more information about Observatory for Children’s Rights, please visit our web page: [www.observator.org.al](http://www.observator.org.al)