



SOS CHILDREN'S
VILLAGES
ALBANIA

REPORT ON CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IN ALBANIA TO THE UN COMMITTEE ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS (UPR)

coordinated by

SOS Children's Villages Albania

Tirana, April 2024

Contact information: Leonard Guni
National Advocacy and Public Funding Advisor
leonard.guni@soskd.org.al

Introduction

On March 2024, children and adolescents aged 14-18 years, in alternative care at SOS Children's Villages Albania gathered in Tirana to be consulted and provide input on children's rights based on their views and observations. It was a workshop with the participation of 13 children (4 boys and 9 girls) facilitated by the professionals of SOS Children's Villages Albania. They received information and capacity building on child and youth participation, how to contribute through UPR child-led report to the monitoring work of the Committee on the Human Rights in Geneva. Through a participatory approach, in the first session they discussed the achievements, positive changes and the difficulties, challenges of children in Albania. In the second session children grouped the issues of greatest concern highlighted by them such as health care, alternative care, education, bullying and violence. Children proposed concrete solutions and suggestions to improve the situation in their school, community and country. They produced a modest contribution with their input to address the children's concerns and challenges.

General overview

Positive changes according to children perspective:

Provision of psychological services in schools, it is increased the number and sessions with the psychologist

"Our voice is heard" (psychologists, social workers, etc.)

Children in alternative care have good care from professionals, social workers

More social services and social assistance is offered to families in need

The number of homeless children has decreased

Support for people with disabilities has increased. Children with different abilities are helped by a dedicated teacher for them

There are organizations that provide care for differently abled children

Assistance in cases of need and emergency, reconstruction of houses after the earthquake

Reconstruction of schools, higher quality with better conditions

Motivation and scholarships by schools for children in alternative care, children with good results, children with different abilities, children with one parent. Are offered scholarships and social support for children (free textbooks, amount of money etc.)

Therapy sessions, re-education school for children who are drug users or with other problems

Extracurricular activities in schools

All children have the right to a good education

Children have the right to be treated in health centers

Children have support to have the things they need

Problems and challenges according to children perspective

Violence (psychological, verbal, physical) in schools and on the street, from adults to children and vice versa and between teenagers

Prejudice of children based on: appearance, differently abled, Roma, economic situation

Exploitation of children (children in street situation, trafficking)

Increased number of bullying children

Excessive bullying from society

Bullying of color people

Low-quality service for street children in public hospitals, to have a good health treatment

Lack of interest in caring for children from biological relatives

Drugs, alcohol and tobacco have a large percentage of consumption by children and teenagers

Some children in schools have difficulties in reading and writing despite the fact they are in upper classes

Some children suffer by illiteracy, lack of education or learning problems

Neglecting the class by students and leaving the teaching hours

Children and young people use of mobile phones for many hours

Using phones in middle school or at a young age

In some schools, the library is neglected, no information and low visibility for the library

During the discussions children paid special attention and highlighted the following issues:

Alternative Care

Problems and Solutions/Suggestions (P&S)

- P1: Underdevelopment of foster families in country
- S1: Encouragement and motivation to develop foster families
- P2: Families taking children out into the street to benefit by their work
- S2: Encouragement of parents toward employment
- P3: Homeless families
- S3: Providing social housing
- P4: Lack of development in rural areas
- S4: Provision of psycho-social services in rural areas
- P5: Children in alternative care, move and change the locations, institutions based in their age
- S5: Stability of children in the same location, community, school
- P6: Non-support of children and young people after leaving care
- S6: To increase the interest for children and young people, more friendly policies and support by professionals

Education

Problems & Solutions/Suggestions (P&S)

- P1: Low number of students in school, no regular attendance of teaching hours by children, students skip lessons and leave the lesson hours
- S1: Doing 2-hour trainings in week for children, giving them brochures to read and to understand the importance of the frequenting and learning in school
- P2: Students have difficulties in reading and writing in Albania, regardless of the fact that they are in high classes
- S2: Quality education in school, it is necessary the school to raise the level of teaching for children
- P3: Psychological, physical and verbal violence, etc.
- S3: There should be solutions through psychological support, measures should be taken and do not ignoring the cases
- P4: Children and students use narcotic substances (tobacco, drugs, alcohol)
- S4: In order to find solutions, we have to do many trainings in the school. Sensitization of students through training that narcotics damage the nervous system, stomach disease, various diseases

Bullying and Violence

Problems & Solutions/Suggestions (P&S)

- P1: Violence in school between children, or even teacher-student. The most widespread is psychological violence.
- S1: To organize awareness raising campaigns against violence and bullying

P2: Bullying for children with differently abled. Roma and Egyptian children are prejudiced because of their appearance and skin color.

S2: To increase psychological care and to increase the number of social workers in schools

P3: Bullying for children in street situation, in some cases they are also affected by physical violence

S3: To take measures and provide services for children and families in street situations

P4: Young people are prejudiced and discriminated against if they are capable and want to work

S4: Training of young people regard children/young people rights. To have measures and monitoring from the state and public institutions

Health

Problems & Solutions/Suggestions (P&S)

P1: Not giving proper health care to vulnerable people, Roma, Egyptians

S1: Offering quality health care and non-judgment of religion, race, color, economic status

P2: In villages, minors are not provided with medical care, lack of services, long distances

S2: In each given village there should be at least one doctor and one nurse for child health care

P3: Not enough space in hospitals

S3: Hospitals must have enough space to host children in appropriate manner

P4: Many hospitals do not provide medicines for children

S4: Should develop policies to ensure every medicine for children

P5: Unclean hygiene in hospitals

S5: There should be more sanitation and salary increase for the cleaning staff

P6: Corruption cases in hospitals

S6: The police and all other agencies must be put in motion so that this does not happen

P7: Poor dedication to duty of doctors, lack of beds, capacities

S7: Doctors should not be satisfied with just one attempt

P8: Increase in the number of people with mental problems

S8: Intensive treatment of that group