



**External evaluation of Save the Children's Education Program in Albania**

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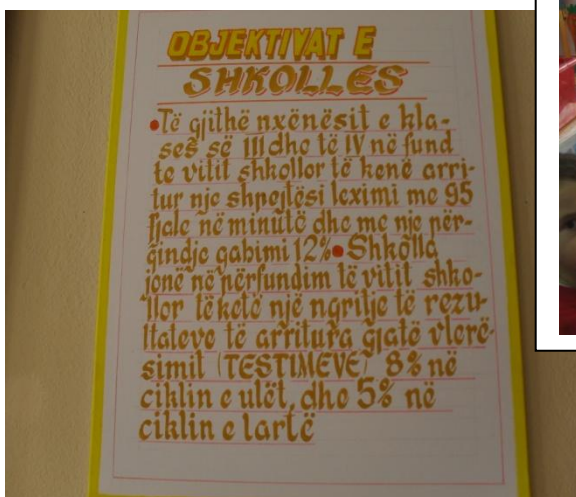
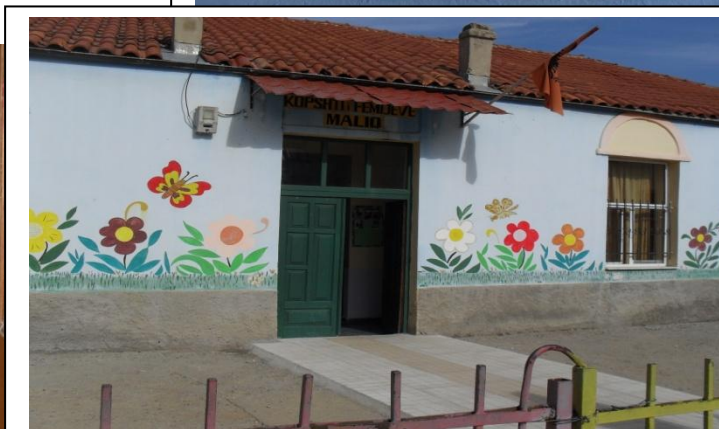
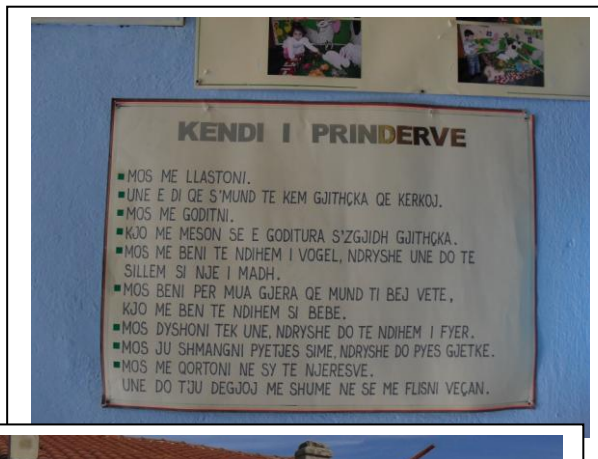
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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADRF	Albania Disability Right's Foundation
CG	Children's Governments
CWD	Children with disabilities
ECCD	Early Childhood Care and Development
EFA	Education for All
EMIS	Education Management Information Systems
GOA	Government of Albania
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
INSTAT	Instituti Shqiptar i Statistikave (Institute for statistics, Albania)
IEP	Individual Education Plan
Medpak	Albanian acronym for NGO for protection of the rights of people with disabilities
MOE	Ministry of Education
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PIA	Participatory Impact Assessment
PRA/RRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal/Rapid Rural Appraisal
QE	Quality Education
REA	Regional Education Authorities
SC	Save the Children - in this case SC in Albania
SDP	School Development Plan
SEE	South Eastern Europe
SWAP	Sector Wide Approach to Programming
TORs	Terms of reference
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

# MAP OF ALBANIA



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Save the Children Albania's three year Education programme is coming to end by year 2012 for which reason this evaluation was commissioned and took place between October 1<sup>st</sup> - November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2012. The programme was running from 2010-2013 and had a funding of around US\$900,000. It covered sixty pilot schools and kindergartens in six regions in Albania, namely Diber, Durres, Gjirokastra, Korce, Elbasan and Vlora. The programme comprised three components: (i) Quality Education (QE); (ii) Early Childhood and Care Development (ECCD), and (iii) Inclusion working with Roma/Egyptian children and Children with disabilities (CWD). Each component constituted a project. Overall the intention was, and is, to work child centred ensuring the best learning opportunities for all.

This evaluation should assess the performance of the program (in terms of efficiency, effectiveness, relevance, sustainability and outcome,) the perception of stakeholders and beneficiaries, to document lessons learned and to provide practical recommendations for follow-up action. The evaluation report will be used to plan for continuation of the education program during the new Country Strategy Plan period 2013-2015.

The evaluation should include the indicators of the projects and should aim to provide information on the following areas (but not limited to):

- Assess the efficiency, effectiveness, relevance, sustainability and impact of the program and its implemented activities;
- Measure the extent to which the response has been accountable to the local needs and the level of child participation into the program;
- Examine how the program has mainstreamed cross-cutting issues such as promotion of human rights, gender equality and children's rights.
- Identify key successes and lessons learned and other lessons learned from the program.
- Provide concrete recommendations and suggestions for future program interventions.

The scope and purpose of the evaluation<sup>1</sup> together with reading of the literature proposed by Save the Children (SC), other literature<sup>2</sup> and the education situation in Albania as described above have in total formed the basis for the choice of methods and selection of respondents.

The data were collected applying the following methods<sup>3</sup>:

- Desk review
- Semi-open interviews, and
- Participatory impact assessment (PIA)

The evaluation included five types of stakeholders, namely:

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<sup>1</sup> TORs, annex 1

<sup>2</sup> List of literature, annex 2

<sup>3</sup> The various projects have their own focus and challenges wherefore the data collection tools were designed to fit the actual situation. Details in annex 7.



- Key SC staff
- Central administration
- Regional administration
- Other national stakeholders, and
- Beneficiaries (children and parents)

Key findings and recommendations were presented to a wide range of stakeholders at a national stakeholder workshop on October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2012. The findings and recommendations were approved.

The evaluation suffered from some constraints, all of which have been taken into account in the data analysis, conclusions and recommendations. They included:

- The team leaders dependence, at times, on a translator who were not professional in education and therefore had some problems translating professional language correctly;
- The culture of asking children to “behave”, which should be understood as being quiet. This made it difficult to observe the outcome of the SC training in social skills and non-violence, which should set children free;
- The five programme components are at times overlapping, which made it difficult to measure outcome and impact of specific components;
- The SC plans have no objectives, outcome and impact, which made it render difficult to measure achievements as planned and effectiveness, efficiency, relevance and outcome as requested in TORs. This was therefore done using other factors.

The report holds two levels of conclusions and recommendations with component specific analyses, conclusions and recommendations in chapter 3, and another part with more overall and cross-cutting conclusions as follows: key successes in chapter 4; more overall and cross-cutting conclusions in chapter 5, and recommendations in chapter 6.

The key findings concern:

*Activities:*

- All programme components were relevant. Experiences from the pilot schools have caused changes in the curriculum for basic education which from 2015 will include social skills as part of all subjects;
- The cascade system for training and full involvement of MOE staff in the training and role as TOTs has ensured effective dissemination of quality education practices;
- Parents in basic education little involved in the changes affecting their children.

*Context:*

- Albania and thus the education system will face some additional challenges in the coming years, as the system will have to accommodate a significant number of children from returning families – children who may: not speak Albanian; not know the culture; who are socially devastated and who are used to different, and often better, education systems. This will have to be considered in future planning of education activities.

*SC organisational systems and structures:*

- SC has a highly committed staff without whom SC would not have had the noticed results on the ground;
- The lack of long-term strategy (ten years) to set direction and pace, a comprehensive logframe/results matrix and an M&E framework makes it difficult for SC to document the many, varied and highly relevant results. As a consequence advocacy is random and scarce.

The key recommendations include:

*Activities:*

- To phase out the present activities in QE and make the involved schools become example institutions for future teacher training;
- Make use of the robust experiences by engaging more focused and extensively in policy work within education and children's rights;
- Engage in accredited teacher training having the new curriculum in mind;
- Involve parents through meaningful activities e.g. participation in school boards and possible committees under this, training in rights, child care methods, diplomatic and strategic fundraising etc.

*Context:*

- MOE should take initiative to call all partners in education with the view to create a pool of resources, knowledge and experiences and create a substantial education network which purposefully deliver to agreed and well-defined targets. This would ensure optimum effectiveness and efficiency.

*SC organisational systems and structures:*

- SC should consider future focus and specialisations. The choice will determine the proposed ten-year vision and strategy and implicitly systems, structures, staffing and relevant partners.
- Systematise all management and administrative areas including: development of long-term strategy; *one* results matrix for all SC activities as a whole; mode and timing of documentations; define media and target groups for advocacy and design materials and information accordingly.
- SC in Albania should think big and grow into the organisation it could be taking results, commitment and respect into account. Modest thinking limits the number and "size" of ideas.

# 1. SC's EDUCATION PROGRAMME AND ITS CONTEXT

## 1.1 GEOGRAPHY AND RESSOURCES

Albania lies along the Adriatic Sea in South Eastern Europe (SEE). The narrow coastal plain rises to mountains that are almost 2,000 meters (6,500 feet) high, which cover most of the country. These mountains are rich in mineral resources such as chrome, iron, nickel, and copper; however, mining requires investment that Albania lacks.

## 1.2 ECONOMY OF ALBANIA<sup>4</sup>

Albania was the last of the central and eastern European countries to embark on democratic and free market reforms, and it started from a disadvantaged position. The democratically elected government that assumed office in April 1992 launched an ambitious economic reform program meant to halt economic deterioration and put the country on the path toward a market economy. In June 2006, the Albanian Government signed a Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) with the European Union (EU), the first step in the EU accession process. In April 2009, Albania became a NATO member country and at the same time submitted its application for EU membership, both considered major milestones in the country's history.

Albania's economy has improved markedly over the last decade; reforms in infrastructure development, tax collection, property law, and business administration are progressing. The country was largely spared from the severe fallout of the 2008-2009 financial crisis since its economy is not heavily integrated into the Euro-Atlantic system. Economic output has slowed but remained positive in each year from 2009 to 2011. Major challenges are the difficult fiscal and budgetary environment and the crises in the Eurozone, especially in neighbouring Greece and Italy, which have been major trading partners of Albania with a large presence in the banking sector and also host to roughly one million Albanian emigrants).

In 2011, GDP was estimated to have reached close to \$13 billion. Major contributors to GDP according to 2010 preliminary data were: service sector with 57.6% including trade, hotels, and restaurants (20.9%), transport (6.3%), communication (3.4%), and other services 27%; agriculture 20.3%; industry 11.3%; and construction 10.7%. The government estimates growth to have reached 3% in 2011 and forecasts 4.3% growth in 2012. In 2011 unemployment officially stood at 13.3%. Half of the workforce is considered self-employed in the agriculture sector.

GDP per capita in 2011 is estimated to have reached \$4,560. Although GDP per capita has steadily increased over the years, the country still ranks as one of the poorest countries in Europe according to major income indicators. Per capita GDP figures do not fully capture remittance income from the extensive network of Albanians abroad and income from the informal market, which the International Monetary Fund (IMF) estimates at 30%-40% of GDP. Remittances, a significant catalyst for economic growth in the past, have experienced a decline over the last few years after peaking in 2007. The

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<sup>4</sup> www.state.gov., 05.04.2012

Bank of Albania estimates that remittances fell by 16% in 2010 compared to 2009, and their share of GDP declined to approximately 7.6% in 2010. The downward trend continued during the first three quarters of 2011, though on a smaller scale.

### 1.3 POPULATION AND EMPLOYMENT

The population is estimated at (2,831,741 residents as of 2011)<sup>5</sup>, with a literacy rate of around 98% and a life expectancy of 77.5 years. The age distribution is:

0-14 years: 20.6% (325,922 male/ female 292,252)

15-64 years: 68.8% (1,009,217 male/ female 1,055,824)

65 years and over: 10.6% (150,901 male/ female 168,743) (2012 est.)

The distribution shows that Albania faces a major challenge with regard to education and youth employment .

The official *unemployment rate* is 13.8% at national level, whereas in areas where SC has operated the unemployment rate is respectively: Durres 18.18%, Vlora 12.09%, Korca 10.21%, Gjirokastra 14.37% and Dibra 6.11 % (LFS 2008)- The unemployment rate is higher among Roma and Egyptians, which is estimated to be 3 times higher compared to majority population<sup>6</sup>.

Albania has 40% of working age population (approximately 700,000 Albanians, mostly men) as *migrant workers* abroad, 60% of them aged 18-29 at the time of migration. The absence of decent work opportunities, the hope for a better future and the migrant network abroad are the main push and pull factors for the youth. Remittances accounted for 12% of family income and 13% of GDP in 2007, while currently only for 6-7% of GDP. The decrease of remittances due to global economic crises has badly affected the families relying on this type of income particularly in the rural areas.

### 1.4 CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IN THE SEE<sup>7</sup> AND ALBANIA

All governments in the region have committed themselves to reform agendas that include combating corruption and organised crime; judicial reform; decentralisation; regional cohesion and stability; and social inclusion. These agendas are mainly shaped by the national EU accession and cooperation agreements and in practice are progressing slowly and unevenly. Poverty, political fragility, social exclusion and fractured administrative and service delivery systems are some of the biggest threats to children's rights in SEE. The EU annual Country Progress Reports points at the major concerns across every SEE country relate to access to education; violence against children; and discrimination against children of minority groups. Other common issues include national monitoring mechanisms, juvenile justice, de-institutionalisation, poverty, disability, Roma, health and trafficking. Governments are responding within similar legislative, policy and institutional frameworks and their common constraints include inadequate structures and

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<sup>5</sup> INSTAT

<sup>6</sup> WB, 2005

<sup>7</sup> South East Europe

systems; lack of local models and technical expertise; and insufficient resources for proper implementation of measures to promote and protect children's rights<sup>8</sup>.

Birth registration of children remains a critical issue in Albania. Children born by internal migrants or those returning from abroad do frequently not have birth certificates or other legal documentation.

The Law on Children's Rights, which was approved late 2010, is yet to be fully implemented. Municipalities were advised to establish Child Protection Units (CPUs), but no budgets have been allocated.

According to UNICEF at the time of the new law, one in two Albanian children experienced physical violence at home and one in three at school. UNICEF also reported that 13.3% of children attending school experience sexual abuse. Physical and psychological violence continue to be a disciplinary tool for children in Albania<sup>9</sup>.

Displaced and street children remain a problem, particularly Romani children, who form 90 per cent of street children. These children are continuously exploited and at high risk of trafficking.

## 1.5 EDUCATION SITUATION IN ALBANIA

Albania began the transition period with a population with more years of schooling than that in other developing countries with similar income per capita. However, during the transition period educational levels declined rapidly. Participation/access to pre-university education is low compared to OECD countries<sup>10</sup>. Budgetary allocation for education decreased from 5 percent of the GDP in 1991, to 3.3 per cent in 2010. This is below average for the sub-region, which spends an average of 4.4%, and significantly less than the OECD average, which is about 6%.<sup>11</sup>

School attendance has been falling, while drop-out rates increase resulting in widespread illiteracy reappearing, especially in poor rural areas. It is likewise a widespread phenomenon for the vulnerable children and particularly Roma children<sup>12</sup>.

Measures of learning outcomes in the region show that Albanian students lag behind their peers in both literacy and numeracy. On the OECD PISA Assessment in 2009<sup>13</sup>, Albania scored the second lowest (after Peru) out of the 41 participating countries, with only 9% of its students performing at a level designated as proficient. In math, Albania performed only slightly better, scoring third from last out of the 41 countries. These low scores indicate a need for investment in improving educational effectiveness and quality.

There is no official statistical data on disabled persons in Albania. Some associations have collected data, which estimate that 33 000 children (one of five) suffer a deficiency of which 14 000 from a mental or sensory deficiency. Ministry of Education is

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<sup>8</sup> Save the children in South East Europe - A Strategic Evaluation of Save the Children Norway's Programmes

<sup>9</sup> [www.trust.org](http://www.trust.org)

<sup>10</sup> 11.9 years in Albania versus 14 years in OECD countries

<sup>11</sup> UNICEF 2006 Country profile: Education in Albania

<sup>12</sup> National Strategy on Pre-university education

<sup>13</sup> Assessment of Child Rights situation in Albania

responsible for the education of children with disabilities and it directly manages eight specialised schools in the country<sup>14</sup>.

Besides, the Albanian education system is populated by teachers most of which have no training in special education, which implicitly deprives children with disabilities from education services.

Despite these multiple and complex challenges, UNICEF's 2006 Country Profile of Education in Albania outlines the significant efforts Albania has made to improve its education provision:

- The current SWAP represents a unique opportunity to put the system into action as well as to enhance cooperation among education partners.<sup>5</sup>
- Significant resources were raised for education from the World Bank Project – Education, Excellence and Equity. Much of these resources went to supporting the National Teacher Standard and the scaling up of the Hidden Dropout Approach.
- The government invested heavily in EMIS and thus has created the grounds for better information to be provided to schools and the MoE.
- The MoE has taken initial steps to prepare a national policy based on UNICEF's Child Friendly School pilot project.
- Regional EFA plans have been developed (Kukës and Korça Regions) in the framework of decentralization processes to act as concrete tools for strengthening the regional dimension of the National Strategy for Development and Integration.
- The government has introduced a new environmental education program into the primary school curriculum (grade 1-5) that uses 'child to child' methodology in an attempt to promote sustainable development.
- The government approved a strategy to increase the access to and improve the quality of preschool education across Albania.
- The MoE, in cooperation with UNICEF, is promoting the 'Albania Reads' initiative to improve the country's performance in reading, which trends show as its weakest subject.

The GOA priorities for the Albania's education system are to:

- Reform governance systems and strengthen system management capacity with special focus on policy development linked to research and EMIS data, as well as on decentralisation, school autonomy and accountability issues;
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning processes with special emphasis on a demand driven curriculum model, which focuses on acquisition of necessary skills for the labour market; and
- Improve the efficiency of education financing with special emphasis on mechanisms, levelled financing and budget preparation.
- Build capacity and develop human resources;
- Develop and apply national standards for teacher training programs;
- Develop and apply rights-based policies that prevent and reduce marginalization in education for all excluded groups, including Roma, Egyptian and children with special needs; and
- Promote child-centred pedagogies and curricula for all children.

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<sup>14</sup> 6 schools for 486 children presenting a light mental disorder, a residency for 200 deaf children, a school for 68 blind children

## **1.6 SAVE THE CHILDREN'S EDUCATION PROGRAMME IN ALBANIA**

Internationally, education has been recognised as a key factor for poverty reduction and development. In Albania children face a variety of challenges with regard to education due to socio-economic inequalities, disparities and social norms for education. Disadvantaged have lower access to education and the quality of education varies.

Save the Children envisions an Albania in which all children enjoy their right to access participatory, meaningful, learning opportunities, in order to realise their fullest potential and to enhance social inclusion. SC activities in education have evolved since 2006 to ensure quality education for children by providing access to marginalised groups and ensuring quality education for children in both kindergartens and schools. SC works with other education actors in supporting local communities to advocate their concerns with an informed collective voice for influencing policies. During the current Country Strategy Period (2010-2013) of Save the Children the profile of the education program centres on children's ability to know their rights, to be active participants in their own learning as well as championing the values of non-discrimination, inclusion and community participation.

The Education Programme (2010-2013) aims to ensure quality, inclusive and violence free education for all children with special focus on marginalized groups<sup>15</sup>, through advocacy and lobbying for the implementation of the education law and policy improvement through by-laws; strengthening institutional capacities at local and central level, child participation, parental and community involvement.

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<sup>15</sup> Children with disability, Roma/ Egyptian children, children at risk of abuse, poor children

## 2. EVALUATION APPROACH

### 2.1 SCOPE AND PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

This final evaluation of Save the Children Albania's three year Education programme was carried out between October 1<sup>st</sup> - November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2012 as the programme was coming an end. The programme was running from 2010-2013 and had a funding of around US\$900,000. It covered sixty pilot schools and kindergartens in six regions in Albania. The programme comprised three components: (i) Quality Education (QE); (ii) Early Childhood and Care Development (ECCD), and (iii) Inclusion working with Roma/Egyptian children and Children with disabilities (CWD).

Save the Children was therefore commissioning this evaluation in order to assess the performance of the program (in terms of efficiency, effectiveness, relevance, sustainability and outcome,) the perception of stakeholders and beneficiaries, to document lessons learned and to provide practical recommendations for follow-up action. The evaluation report will be used to plan for continuation of the education program during the new Country Strategy Plan period 2013-2015.

The evaluation should include the indicators of the projects and should aim to provide information on the following areas (but not limited to):

- Assess the efficiency, effectiveness, relevance, sustainability and impact of the program and its implemented activities;
- Measure the extent to which the response has been accountable to the local needs and the level of child participation into the program;
- Examine how the program has mainstreamed cross-cutting issues such as promotion of human rights, gender equality and children's rights.
- Identify key successes and lessons learned and other lessons learned from the program.
- Provide concrete recommendations and suggestions for future program interventions.

### 2.2 METHODS APPLIED

The scope and purpose of the evaluation<sup>16</sup> together with reading of the literature proposed by Save the Children (SC), other literature<sup>17</sup> and the education situation in Albania as described above have in total formed the basis for the choice of methods and selection of respondents.

The data were collected applying the following methods<sup>18</sup>:

- Desk review
- Semi-open interviews, and
- Participatory impact assessment (PIA), and
- National stakeholder workshop

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<sup>16</sup> TORs, annex 1

<sup>17</sup> List of literature, annex 2

<sup>18</sup> The various projects have their own focus and challenges wherefore the data collection tools were designed to fit the actual situation. Details in annex 7.



### **2.2.1 Desk review**

The desk review included a wide range of project documents covering the entire project cycle from planning, applications, donor reports, studies and evaluations which is total provided sufficient details for planning this external evaluation.

In addition other relevant documents were added for example UNICEF's annual report for Albania 2010-2011, Albania's National Strategy for Education 2004-2015, World Bank's Education Strategy 2020 (Learning for all), literature on violence against children and literature on the Roma and Egyptian history and culture.

### **2.2.2 Semi-open interviews**

It is often time-consuming to transform interviews into comparable data. The interviews were therefore carried out as semi-open questions presented in a table introducing the questions in writing. The same set of questions was used for a the same type of respondents. For example did all SC respondents answer the same questions individually to allow for different perceptions of the same matter. Similarly did the selected local and central government staff answer the same questions.

All questions were explained to the respondent before passing the word. The questionnaire consisted of 6-8 key questions concerning project design, administration, networking, sustainability etc. The respondents were told to answer the questions in the order and with the emphasis that it suited him/her. The respondents were further asked to include any issue, which was left out of the questionnaire, but relevant for future project work.

The questionnaires had six columns with agreed key questions<sup>19</sup>.

The answers were not entered into the table during the interview, but were entered later based on structured notes. The answers from each respondent were partly recorded separately to enable extraction of special experiences, and partly merged within same type of stakeholders the latter with the view to enable a comparison of experiences from different groups of key stakeholders.

In addition the consultants had interviews with 1-3 people from the regional authorities. For the latter an additional region was included, namely Durres, where one of the consultants met with one REA.

The questionnaires form part of the data used for the SWOT analysis and were used for comparison with results found in the PIA sessions.

### **2.2.3 Participatory Impact Assessment (PIA)**

PIA builds on elements of focus group discussions and PRA/RRA. It was suggested instead of focus groups discussions, since these can result in biased results, because of limited freedom to speak openly. In addition, the questions raised in Focus Group Discussions can come to centre round the interest of the consultant or the interest of some few local leaders and not so much round the major interest/priorities of the less outspoken beneficiaries.

In PIA different groups of stakeholders form focus groups of five members each, who work parallel at the same venue – but with a distance to avoid influence from other groups. If the PIA takes place in a school, the groups can have a class room each. The

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<sup>19</sup> Questionnaires, annex 3

groups discuss identical, semi-open questions<sup>20</sup> in their respective forums without presence of staff, consultant or other stakeholders. Each group has one set of questionnaires in which they enter their views on the project activities. There are no yes/no questions as it gives rise to fake answers where the respondents are not sure of the meaning of a question.

The groups list the activities they regard as positive and negative respectively, agrees on which 3 positive and which 3 negative activities are the most critical for the fight against violence. Having marked the 6 (positively and negatively) most important activities, they transfer these to a second form, where they explain how respectively the positive and negative activities have had an effect of their lives.

At least one group member should be literate. Alternatively a secretary will be attached to the group.

Each session takes no more than two hours and provides non-influenced perceptions from each type of stakeholders. The grouping of participants can vary in composition and number, but should always reflect the key stakeholders of a given project. All groups work parallel sitting spread in e.g. a school.

The respondent groups were composed as follows:

- One group of 5 girls (9-13 years)
- One group of 5 boys (9-13 years)
- One group of 5 mothers to the same children – where possible
- One group of 5 fathers to the same children – where possible
- One group of 5 teachers (mixed male and female teachers)

In the kindergartens the PIA included the following groups of stakeholders:

- One group of 5 fathers
- One group of 5 mothers
- One group of 5 teachers

In the kindergartens the PIA included the following groups of stakeholders:

- One group of 5 fathers
- One group of 5 mothers
- One group of 5 teachers



Group of girls doing PIA



All five groups receiving information about PIA

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<sup>20</sup> Questionnaires in annex 4

To have adequate sampling it was decided to have two education institutions (school and kindergarten) in respectively three rural and three urban areas. In addition the consultants had interviews with 1-3 people from the regional authorities. For the latter an additional region was included, namely Durrës, where one of the consultants met with one REA.

#### **2.2.4 National stakeholder workshop**

With the aim to have the findings and recommendations approved and used for an subsequent discussion of ways forward, SC had invited 120 stakeholders, including parent and children, to participate in a national one-day workshop on November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2012.

The workshop started providing an overall picture of the education activities presented by MOE representative and the country director for SC. This was followed by the evaluation presentation and a stakeholder introduction to the various education activities under the programme. The presentations set the frame for afternoon discussion on a common way forward in education in Albania.

#### **2.2.5 Validation**

The data were validated using triangulation of SC interviews, REA interviews and PIAs. The SC in Albania reports served as back-stopping evidence. The data validation was done by comparing same data collected from different stakeholders and compare their views on e.g. programme design or sustainability. The PIA answers implicitly provide a picture of whether e.g. the design suffers from problems, which only the beneficiaries feel or see.

This combination of methods and stakeholders will enable validation of findings while also informing each of the key areas mentioned in TORs.

### **2.3 CHOICE OF RESPONDENTS**

The evaluation included five types of stakeholders, namely:

- Key SC staff
- Central administration
- Regional administration
- Other national stakeholders
- Beneficiaries (children and parents)

#### **2.3.1 Key SC staff**

The consultants interviewed seven key SC staff. This group provided details on the education programme and SC mode of operations, all of which contributed towards the analysis of effectiveness, efficiency, participation and sustainability.

#### **2.3.2 Central administration**

The desk review makes it clear that Albania has signed all conventions with regard to Children's Rights, laws and regulations which still lack enforcement. The central administration was a relevant target for discussion of the education situation and the

relevance of the programme since MOE has throughout been fully involved in implementation of the programme.

With a central role in Children's Rights also the Ombudsman's office was included in the interviews with the aim to assess the role and powers of this office. The latter with the view to determine to what extent the Ombudsman system can assist in having laws and regulations be enforced through adequate budgeting.

### **2.3.3 Regional government administration**

The regional education authorities have played a central role in the entire roll out of SC activities. They have been part of designing the programme and have acted as programme implementers through training of teachers and monthly meetings with SC. Their views on and experiences with the SC activities were thus of great importance.

The consultants interviewed 1-3 REAs at each region.

### **2.3.4 Other national stakeholders**

These were primarily development agencies working in education and/or complementary projects – in this case UNICEF, World Vision, ADRF and Medpak. They provided a context (cultural, social, political, logistical) for the SC activities through hands-on experience in the same or parallel activities. The aim is to have a wider set of experiences; to know about "other" best practices and to determine opportunities for future collaboration.

### **2.3.5 Beneficiaries**

The beneficiary perception of the positive and negative impact of program activities is essential for several of the analyses. The method for involvement and definition of the sampling is accounted for under "PIA".

## **2.4. EVALUATION CONSTRAINTS**

A few aspects influenced the evaluation. The effect of the same are taken into consideration in the data analysis and conclusions.

One constraint was the team leader's linguistic limitations, as she was not familiar with the Albanian language and therefore depended on translations, which are not always accurate.

Another constraint was cultural. The team tried to observe the child behaviour when visiting the institutions to have an idea of the free engagement in discussions with CWD children, with adults and in playing. Since the team moved with the REA the teachers may have felt somewhat inspected. They seemed to have asked their children to "behave well" during the visit, which meant very little free engagement in any activity and with anybody – not even with each other when standing or sitting in the playground. As a consequence it was difficult to observe the outcome of the extensive SC training, wherefore conclusions are based mainly on PIAs and interviews.

The education programme consists of three components each of which are implemented in designated institutions. But when collecting data it became evident that the various

components have also been introduced ad hoc in institutions, which are officially not included. The components have to a certain extent been integrated, which makes a lot of sense. But it made it difficult to determine the effect of each component since the beneficiaries often mentioned cross-cutting effects and not always component related effects. This was acted on in the data analysis and it did not obstruct the identification of effects, which was just organised differently.

Finally, the TORs had clear descriptions of the task. However, a going through of the SC Albania annual plan for 2012 (logframe format) and the strategy 2010-2012 the consultants found that there is no overall goal<sup>21</sup>, or direction, against which to measure effectiveness, efficiency, relevance and impact of SC interventions – in other words to what extent the programme takes the desired direction. Further, there are few outcomes formulated. Most targets relate to outputs.

The analysis of results is therefore based on observations and scored results against the general education situation. It was not possible to make a comparison of whether the results match the (missing) goals and objectives of the programme.

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<sup>21</sup> The present goal is rather an (immediate) objective detailing the intervention, while a goal describes the result or which changes in child capacity or education system to look for after project/programme expiry

## 3. FINDINGS

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

The findings concern four aspects of SC's operations, namely;

- Activities,
- Future context for the work, and
- SC organisational structures, and
- Analysis of indicators

The structure of this chapter follows the above-mentioned aspects, as there is line from past activities to the future context as it will determine relevance and further to a analysis of which organisational structures SC needs to be able to fit the needs of the future context.

The following sub-chapters under Chapter 4 analyses the achievements of each of the key activities. Each activity will have activity specific conclusions and recommendations, while overall conclusion and recommendation are made in later chapters.

### 3.2 PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES

The Education Programme was composed of 3 components: *Quality Education* covering Non-violence, Social Skills, and Childrens' Governments (CG); *Early Childhood Care and Development/pre-school/kindergarten*; and *inclusive education* covering Children with Disabilities (CWD) and other marginalised groups such as the Roma and Egyptian children. The activities were carried out in 60 schools in six regions: Diber, Durres, Gjirokastra, Korce, Elbasan and Vlora. Each component constituted a project.

The various components were not all implemented in all 60 schools and kindergartens. It was assessed by SC and REAs which regions and institutions would benefit the most from each of the components and a combination of the three components were implemented accordingly.

Since the Education Programme aimed at ensuring quality education<sup>22</sup> for all in the targeted schools, it worked both downstream with schools, preschools and kindergartens, but also upstream with institutional capacity building and engagement in enforcement of policies on children's rights, child-centred education, curriculum development etc.

#### 3.2.1 Quality Education

Through regular monitoring of activities SC has followed the achievements, which were mainly based on outputs and less on outcomes or impact. The Quality Education project has operated in all six regions.

SC had the following targets for the Quality Education project:

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<sup>22</sup> Understood as child-centred education which implicitly is inclusive and violence free.

Area	Target	Children and Others
Quality Education	60 schools located in 6 regions: Diber, Durres, Elbasan, Gjirokster, Korçe and Vlore.	33,000 children to date, between the ages of 6-15. 1,850 teachers trained

Table 1. SC targets for Quality Education

The table shows the monitoring of outputs in terms of outreach and not the outcome or impact of the Quality Education project.

*Downstream* the Quality Education project was implemented in all 6 regions and has had a vast outreach through its *cascade system*<sup>23</sup>, which builds on training of core directors and REAs, who train other colleagues. The approach was praised by all stakeholders and has proven effective. In addition it prepares for a full MOE implementation at regional and national levels, as Regional Education Authority (REA) representatives were made trainers from the very launch of all activities

SC has worked directly with the schools through field visits and through *monthly meetings* with Regional Directors for Education in the six regions. These meetings focused on experience sharing with the aim to have effective, efficient and sustainable systems for quality education put in place. As a consequence MOE at regional and national level informed that they are ready to take full charge of the wider dissemination of the SC approach to quality education.

#### *Social skills*

The training in social skills covered critical thinking, communication and collaboration. The aim was to create a more joyful education environment with the view to reduce the number of drop-outs and have a more effective attendance. In addition the more joyful learning should implicitly result in better academic results, which has not been sufficiently documented.

Both teachers and children were trained in social skills<sup>24</sup> as a method for children involvement and discussion of matters a non-violent matter. Instead argumentation, presentation and discussion of different views and consensus on the same were used to find agreeable ways forward for being together as child to child and child to teacher.

The social skills is an example of overlapping of the three projects, as effective communication and collaboration entails non-violent and inclusive interaction.

The PIA results showed significant positive scores on the improved communication/collaboration<sup>25</sup>, which is a result of the teacher training in social skills. Each of the six evaluated schools had invited five groups of stakeholders to give their opinion on the SC work – or a total of thirty groups. When totalling the scores from the

<sup>23</sup> By some called cluster-system. The approach has, however, worked more as cascade than as a cluster system.

<sup>24</sup> Also called life skills

<sup>25</sup> Another overlapping as it is difficult to distinguish between the two. The one cannot do without the other.

urban and rural school, a total of 23 groups score application of social skills as an activity that has worked well. The effect varies as shown below.

The formulations quoted below are copied directly from the group scorings:

WHAT HAS WORKED WELL	HOW HAS IT AFFECTED YOUR WORK/LIFE
1. Teaching and learning takes place through interactive methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Relationship teacher-student is improved. It is observed an improvement of relationship student-student, increased participation of students in the class</li> <li>b) Children demonstrate communication skills, respect for themselves and their friends, experience exchange.</li> <li>c) Helped us better understand our children</li> <li>d) Has helped both parties for a better performance of children at school</li> <li>e) We have understood better each other and we feel more comfortable/outspoken during the classes</li> <li>f) Children speak up freely and this has led to improvement of relationship between children-teachers</li> </ul>

Table 2. PIA results: Positive effect of social skills

The indicated effect represents only a selection of the total scores<sup>26</sup>. The effects show that apart from the outreach documented by SC<sup>27</sup> then the activities have had the desired effect: namely a joyful learning based on respect and communication between teachers/children/parents.

One group of boys and one group of girls scored, though, that the parents do not support this increased openness from their children. Further, one group of mothers finds that the children have become whimsical and disobedient.

SC staff and some REAs mentioned that parents and many teachers still emphasise on academic skills and thus view social skills as an unnecessary and time-consuming approach.

### *Non-violence*

The work with non-violence was based on thorough documentation. Violence towards children in Albania is widespread and has different shapes. Some forms of violence are justified by parents, teachers and children themselves as part of the traditional educating children's culture. Two in-depth reports (UNICEF 2006, Save the Children 2007) indicated high figures of physical and psychological violence against children in the family, school settings and social institutions. Although schools should play an important role in protecting children from violence and abuse, teachers frequently use violent

<sup>26</sup> The details are found in annex 6

<sup>27</sup> Pg. 18



behaviour as a mean to drive children to improve performance and exercise their authority to obtain respect for discipline<sup>28</sup>.

Despite MOE efforts to address and prevent violence, no specific system to record and address incidents of violence had been established at the time of the documentation. SC therefore engaged with the local authorities to develop a concept for reduction of violence against children through a pilot project. Main project strategy was “to actively involve children, families and all community members in the efforts to reduce the use of violence in schools and at home; enhancing the professional capacity of teachers, psychologists, Municipality and Regional Education Authorities; and awareness raising of the communities aiming to reduce the use of violence towards children<sup>29</sup>.”

The non-violence approach was in the PIA scorings often related to communication/ social skills and inclusion. It seemed difficult for the beneficiaries to clearly distinguish between the various methods since all aim at improved and respectful relationships. The results are thus partly presented under social skills and inclusion.

### *Childrens' Governments*

This activity gives children a voice to speak their mind on issues of importance to learning. The aim was to have “increased independence and influence child participation though support to CGs in 60 schools in 6 regions”. The role of the CGs is make children participate in: making proposals for and plan extra-curriculum activities; work with the 4-year School Development Plan (SDP) including budget allocation for activities directly affecting students; definition of school regulations; monitoring of activities and report to REAs; and take up issues of relevance for quality education.

The REAs mentioned that the design focuses on urban schools, while rural schools have greater need for support. **It was the general experience that CGs in rural schools are basically non-existing.**

The CGs are supported by a coordinating teacher, who serves as a link to the teacher colleagues and school director with whom (s)he can discuss the matters arising in the CGs. The coordinating teacher is, however, not paid for this extra work. Presently idealistic teachers take this role.

The entire CG is being elected afresh every year, which seems to create a gap in knowledge and experience. This has partially been solved by attaching consultants, who are former members of the CG.

There were few PIA scores relating to CGs, which do not adequately reflect the effect of the same.

These project activities should be viewed in the light of the real-life situation on the ground. In the rural most of the scores for “what has not worked well” did to a large extent concern basic learning facilities. All groups of beneficiaries gave negative scores on the learning environment. The results were the following:

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<sup>28</sup> SC in Albania website

<sup>29</sup> www.scalbania.org

WHAT HAS NOT WORKED WELL	HOW HAS IT AFFECTED YOUR WORK/LIFE
Girls – urban  1. Basic learning facilities (2): a) Computer lab needs to be equipped with more Computers  b) Some classes are not appropriate for teaching/ learning	a) Knowledge acquired in the computer lab is not supported with practice and our knowledge remains theoretical and deficient  b) This affects our health
Fathers - urban  1. Basic facilities (5) a) Classrooms need to be more organized, lack of lighting, heating and lack of comfort, etc (2) b) The school environment where children are educated should be clean and green c) Lack of didactic means: writing boards, labs, etc affects learning capacity of students (2)	- - -

Table 3a. PIA results: Challenges faced on basic learning facilities in *urban schools*

Although only a few scores, it is obvious that academic performance renders difficult, when having no labs or classes are without heating in the winter. It is noticeable that fathers across all PIAs are more critical of the facilities and are more concerned about academic performance, which is why they emphasise on “basic facilities”.

The number *in front of* the scoring shows how “basic facilities” score out of the totals for girls and fathers respectively across all three urban schools. The girls score is the second out of three priorities, while fathers score it as number one out of three scorings. The number *behind the score* shows how many scores were given in total to that single point.

Only girls and fathers had complaints over the learning environment, while the three other groups (teachers, mothers and boys) chose to score other factors as the most negative for the learning.

Contrary to the urban institutions, the rural institutions had extensive complaints over the basic learning facilities, which the high scores below show:

WHAT HAS NOT WORKED WELL	HOW HAS IT AFFECTED YOUR WORK/LIFE
Teachers - rural  1. Basic school/learning facilities wanting (6): a) No concrete support provided to improve children’s life at school b) New gym should be built	a) Children need not only to be entertained, but also material support b) Children catch cold/flu and get dirty with mud

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c) Lack of transportation for children to school</li> <li>d) Equipment of labs with adequate means/ material base</li> <li>e) No contribution for new books for school's library</li> <li>f) No green spaces/environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c) Children spend more time with computers</li> <li>-</li> <li>-</li> <li>f) Lack of spaces to play. Many classes of physical education are not adequately organized</li> </ul>
<p>Girls</p> <p>1. Basic school facilities wanting (3):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Various teaching labs</li> <li>b) Sports playground</li> <li>c) Green spaces/environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Lack of equipments/means to make experiments/practice lab exercises</li> <li>b) Many classes of physical education are not adequately organized</li> <li>c) Lack of spaces to play</li> </ul>
<p>Fathers</p> <p>1. Basic school facilities wanting (4):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Lack of labs in the school</li> <li>b) Old school building</li> <li>c) Lacking amenities and green areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Affects learning quality in assimilating the info/knowledge</li> <li>b) We are concerned about children's safety</li> <li>c) Children have no adequate place where to spend their break time/free time</li> </ul>
<p>Boys</p> <p>3. More sports means/material base for practicing various sports</p>	<p>We are limited in our sports activities</p>

Table 3b. PIA results: Challenges faced on basic learning facilities in *rural schools*

As it shows the teachers have given six out of their total nine negative scores to basic learning facilities. Although with a lower score also girls and fathers have given it first priority.

The learning environment is highlighted here, firstly because it is the only single factor, which attracts that number of negative scores and hardly any positive. Secondly, because it determines academic performance, which is a national necessity and high desire among teachers and parents. The above scores should be viewed in the light of the focus of SC, which concerns social skills, non-violence and CGs.

These activities are, no doubt, of immense importance for good academic performance, as children who have no fear and who dare ask questions will, implicitly, perform better academically. But it cannot stand alone. Social skills cannot compensate for lack of labs; unhealthy environment, which makes children sick resulting in lower attendance; lack of books; and lack of transportation, which is of high concern among the mothers – and could result in lower attendance and drop-outs.

What further adds negatively to the learning environment in the rural areas, but is not scored here, is the fact that many teachers are not educated as teachers, and at times not educated at all. This will, of course, make attendance less attractive and relevant. Child-centred education is not only about thriving psychologically, but also physically and intellectual.

It was noted that there the rural schools generally lack basic maintenance. Examples of apparently ideal facilities are seen in the two photos below:



The schools are urban. In addition the photos show that children feel free to play – also across sex, age and culture.

Discussions with various stakeholders showed that school boards only exist by name, and not as a body, which functions. When asking parents they say that there is no need for discussing matters for which there is no money, while directors say that school board members feel like beggars when asking local business men for financial support of the planned activities.

*Upstream* SC has worked successfully with influencing the regulations for Children's Rights approved by Parliament in 2010 and by taking part in formulation of by-laws and regulations for quality education the curriculum of which will be launched in 2015. SC has further been approved to carry out accredited teacher training. An immense need for teacher training will arise as a result of the upcoming curriculum changes, which will merge social and academic skills in the teaching. Indeed an achievement for SC in Albania.

Evaluation materials have been developed for the inspectorate. The material takes schools through stages of considerations/reflection, which results in planning which is directly relevant for the individual schools.

As a result SC was encouraged to engage more intensively in both activities from upstream partners visited during the evaluation.

#### *Conclusions:*

- It was noted by several stakeholders that the design for quality schools (CGs and non-violence) does not include high schools (e.g. CGs and social skills), which leaves the children with an abrupt change from child-centred to a more authoritative education at a time in life (adolescence) where they are psychologically quite vulnerable.
- There is a general lack of direct MOE support of the CGs. It may not be sustainable to rely on teacher goodwill in relation to CGs. If the function of the

coordinating teacher cease working, the children may realise a demotivating fall-back with regard to Children’s Rights.

- Parents have not been included in the training concerning child-centred education/development. Acknowledging that many parents come from an authoritative background and still practice authoritative child upbringing methods, the child-centred method risk putting the children in trouble as the more free child behaviour, as encouraged in the child-centred approach, may not be acceptable to parents. In the worst thinkable scenario this could result in increased parental disciplining contrary to all SC and MOE intentions.
- The poor physical environment is likely to reduce the effect of SC interventions.
- A new law equips school boards with the powers to employ teacher, wherefore a review is required.
- It is hardly sustainable to rely on goodwill among teachers to run SC activities in terms of extra work a coordinating teachers without compensation. To avoid problems the teacher concern and situation need GOA recognition

*Recommendations:*

- After 10 years’ of work with child centred education in pre-primary and primary school it should be considered to support REAs in including high schools not to let down the children continuing their education.
- At policy level SC ought to work with MOE to ensure that the CG coordinating teachers are compensated for 3-5 lessons a week for this work. If not successful the future design and role of the CGs ought to be reviewed. Ultimately the CG idea may need to be revised.
- To ensure full effect of subsequent introduction of child-centred methods SC should focus on parental training and leave the teacher and child training to REAs and TOT trained directors/teachers and accredited institutions.
- SC could consider collaborating with (I)NGOs, which work with school construction/renovation and equipment to have basic facilities in place. SC would thereby move to a higher level, which has more outreach, and apply the vast experiences with quality education through engagement in policy work and accredited teacher training.
- The school boards (composition, tasks and powers) should be reviewed and maybe revised to match the new child-centred approach and the new powers.

### 3.2.2 ECCD in Pre-school and Kindergartens

With the aim to provide children with a preparedness for education and thus leave them with better chances of performing both socially and academically in primary education, SC has focused on Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) in pre-schools and kindergartens with the following outreach:

AREA	TARGET	CHILDREN AND OTHERS
Early Childhood Care and Development	60 kindergartens located in 6 regions: Diber, Durres, Elbasan, Gjirokster, Korçe and Vlore.	6,000 children between the ages of 3-6. To date. 370 kindergarten teachers, parents and REAs.

Table 4. SC ECCD targets

The project has worked with development of children age 3-6 years and included nutrition and health, ECD awareness, non-violence/positive disciplining and inclusion addressing both kindergarten staff and parents. The latter was greatly appreciated by the parents both during the field visits and in the PIAs. Some parents confided that they had not known how to raise children in the new system. But the training has taught them how best to support their children at various development levels though training in ECD. Emphasis has been on teaching children the fun of learning through games and plays.

A study in grade 1 has shown that the children coming from SC supported pre-schools and kindergartens perform better socially and academically in the school. This is further confirmed by mothers in the PIA scorings.

Teachers and parents on the ground in the rural also informed that the general interest in sending children to kindergarten is low. But the SC supported kindergartens are always full.

The REAs informed that parents in urban kindergartens are more demanding than those in rural ones, which significantly improves the kindergarten performance. Moreover, teachers are often graduates, while they often have little or no education in the rural areas.

In collaboration with UNICEF, SC has developed guidelines for work with children 3-6 years old. The REAs appreciated the guidelines, but were not aware that all ages are covered. The latest has just been published. UNICEF informed that it will soon be available at their website as well.

The training in positive disciplining and social aims at making children feel confident and free.

The evaluation visits proved that the free playing is limited and still need support to have full effect. Children still await adult initiative before playing on their own.



The two photos were taken in the same kindergarten.

Part of the SC training in kindergartens included training of parents about the importance of good nutrition.

Observations in a kindergarten showed that children carry chips and in some cases sodas for their lunch/break despite the parental training in nutrition. When asking parents and REAs they informed that it is quite common and difficult to fight, as families are regarded as poor if they cannot afford the chips. The first parents to send chips thus introduces a sort of precedence demonstrating “social competence”, which other parents have difficulties ignoring. The photo, which was found on the wall, shows that chips and soda are also common practise at social functions.



This would have been a great opportunity to focus on quality of packed lunches, schools meals and practical nutrition in general. When visiting the kindergartens it was nevertheless not immediately noticeable that the nutrition part of the training had influenced family practices

SC should be commended for their initiative to include CWDs and Roma children in kindergartens, where it has worked very well. Some kindergartens have had quite a number of CWDs.

In the kindergartens the PIA exercises included three groups only, namely: teachers, mothers and fathers. The highest scoring was the teacher’s training with the parents training mentioned as well. The effects are listed below:

WHAT HAS WORKED WELL	HOW HAS IT AFFECTED YOUR WORK/LIFE
<p>Teacher education</p> <p>All training sessions have been to benefit of our teaching-educational work and collaboration with parents (9)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Changed our teaching methods and learning and behaviour/attitude at children</li> <li>b) These trainings are serving the teaching – educational process , but there is further need for new info/knowledge</li> <li>c) Through guidebook teachers’ info is updated with contemporary info</li> <li>d) Children are happy, feel appreciated and important</li> <li>e) Parents are happy to see children active/performing in the activities</li> <li>f) Open in communication their wishes and problems</li> </ul>

	g) Kindergarten has become part of our life and how we organise our family life
Parents' education  Development/CWD issues in pre-school age and inclusion of parents in child's life (5)	a) Has contributed towards including the children with development issues and equal treatment like the other children and they feel equal b) Parents' presence has had positive impact on the teaching-educational process c) More active children at home . They are not inactive/lazy. They take initiative to share what they have done/learned in the kindergarten

Table 5. PIA results: Positive experiences with SC training, kindergartens

The nine groups of PIA participants in the kindergarten evaluation had a total of 27 scores they could use of positive experiences. Out of these 14 have been used on SC teacher and parental training, which sends a strong message about the relevance – and implicitly of the need. The effect of both the teacher and parental training on family lives is stunning.

*Conclusions:*

- A strong parents' board could forbid unhealthy food in the institutions – even more so in areas with plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables available at home.
- Distribution of materials, e.g. UNICEF/SC guidelines, seems not to be fully streamlined.
- Nutrition, which is crucial for ECD, is still wanting, as neither parents nor kindergartens have taken structured action in terms of provision of nutritious food while in kindergarten.

*Recommendations:*

- SC should take initiative to have parents' boards in kindergartens and make it a precondition for a licence to operate. This would help in setting regulations for what is possible with regard to meals, teacher behaviour etc.
- SC should take a lead in ensuring distribution of teacher materials to all SC relevant stakeholders.
- The present SC training in nutrition could include practical training in production or healthy and child-attractive school meals resulting in arrangements for provision of healthy food delivery of one healthy meal a day prepared and paid for by parents, who already pay expensive chips and soda.

### 3.2.3 Inclusive Education and Children with Disabilities (CWD)

The inclusive education covers two groups of children, namely (i) marginalised children with socially related problems (in this case Roma and Egyptian children), and children with all sorts of disabilities.

The SC targets were as follows:



AREA	TARGET	CHILDREN AND OTHERS
Inclusive Education/ Roma and Egyptian Children	2 regions: Korça and Gjirokastra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 581 children</li> </ul>

Table 6a. SC targets for inclusion of Roma/Egyptian children

### *Roma/Egyptian children*

In Albania this group continues to suffer exclusion and segregation in school, because of socially related problems such as skin colour, cleanliness, unstable attendance due to family migrations, different culture and values etc. There are thus no academic reasons for exclusion.

Nevertheless, 54% of Roma/Egyptian children of compulsory school age (6-16) have not completed or enrolled in school. One in about two Roma/Egyptian children of school age has dropped out of school, according to Save the Children in Albania and UNICEF research, 2007.

For SC in Albania the implementation of Roma/Egyptian children's equal right to education has become a priority issue in Albania as well as across the region of South-East Europe.



These children receive improved quality education and are increasingly participating in their school's community. Roma/Egyptian children are enjoying an improved school life and actively participate in most of the educational, cultural and sportive school activities. They have made friendships in schools and are socially less isolated.

Save the Children in Albania's intervention is directed to two regions of Albania (Korça and Gjirokastra) where a considerable number of Roma/Egyptian people live.

SC support to the pilot schools and kindergartens has been important in effectively engaging local authorities, teachers, parents and children from the Roma/Egyptian community<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Partly from [www.scalbania.org](http://www.scalbania.org)

Save the Children in Albania support to the pilot schools and kindergartens has been important in effectively engaging local authorities, teachers, parents and children from the Roma/Egyptian community<sup>31</sup>

Since the problems originate from their social situation psychologists, parents and teachers were involved in the capacity building and development of inclusive approaches for Roma children. The inclusion covered both pre-school and basic education. There was further development of a community-based vocational training of children over 16 years of age, who had never attended school.

Achievements as provided by SC:

Institution	No of Roma/Egyptian children
Kindergarten (62)	483
Schools (60)	2058

Table 6b. SC results with Roma/Egyptian inclusion in education

Comparing the SC targets with provided achievements, the deliverables are remarkably more than the targets. This reflects of the intervention and the efficiency with which SC in Albania works.

Since there is no disaggregation of data concerning inclusion, the PIA results in this regard will be presented together with the results for CWDs.

#### *Children with Disabilities (CWD)*

The problems of the CWDs are of a far different and much more complex nature. First of all their disabilities vary and are of different gravity, wherefore inclusion in the normal basic education requires considerable resources and insight from both the teachers and other children. Secondly they may have basic problems, which do not relate to education, but still require attention, e.g. cleanliness and eating. The SC work was carried out in close collaboration with ADRF, a coalition of organisations working with CWDs.

The targets were the following:

AREA	TARGET	CHILDREN AND OTHERS
Inclusive Education/Children with Disabilities	12 schools and 12 kindergartens in 3 regions: Gjirokster, Korçe and Vlore.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 120 children (40 kindergarten children,) between the ages of 3-12,</li> <li>• 112 kindergarten teachers,</li> <li>• 425 basic education teachers, school psychologists; Parents and other children. Regional Education Authority Specialists, and</li> </ul>

<sup>31</sup> Partly from [www.scalbania.org](http://www.scalbania.org)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Representatives from health, social and protection sectors.</li> </ul>
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Table 7a. SC targets for inclusion of CWDs

The reason for focusing on the CWDs was among others to address the shame and superstition attached to CWDs. Some parents choose to keep CWDs hidden in the home out of fear for the public reaction towards the CWD and the family per se. In some places other children in the family may face social problems - girls may for example never get married. The children were excluded from education.

Hence the parents and teachers were given knowledge about the relevant disabilities and on how best to support each disability. The training was delivered in partnership with professional institutions and mainly focused on teaching methodology, ECD, Roma integration, CWD inclusiveness, communication, surveys/observations and annual plans. Psychologist and doctors were involved and attached to the targeted institutions. A committee consisting of this group together with REAs, teachers and parents assessed each child – his/her need for support (e.g. transport) and potential gain. The learning capacity of each child was assessed and individual education plans (IEP) and targets were set to make each CWD feel that he/she had made progress. This was supported by resource classrooms to which the children could retreat for a break.

The CWD inclusion targeted mainly pre-school and lower classes, since it is difficult for a child, who may never have never attended schooling, to feel comfortable in a class of normal and long settled children. Resource classrooms, support teacher and IEP with relevant indicators for CWD operational in the targeted schools/kindergartens.

An example of how this has worked in an urban school in Korca is found in the case below<sup>32</sup>:

This is a primary school with 330 children, out of which 13 are CWD (12 are certified by the commission and 1 is currently under examination). This is a mixed school where 30% are Roma and Egyptians. Last year the school had 22 CWD.

The school has one classroom which serves as a resource class/centre for CWD, where one support teacher helps CWD with their learning up to 5<sup>th</sup> grade. The support teacher is a “novelty”, a new model in working with CWD in the school. The classroom is very child friendly and it is supported by SC with material base/didactic means and serves as a model. ( Pictures of this classroom taken).

The support teacher said that the CWD come to this classroom during the day if they have some problems in the mainstream class or in other time slots agreed with them/their parents to follow up their IEPs. Usually the CWD are supported by another child at good standing/good grades. IEPs are prepared for CWD in consultation with the parent, teacher, psychologist and the school director. The support teacher assists the CWD in the mainstream class if requested by the teacher as well and has proven to be of significant help.

There was one aggressive child who refused to sit in the mainstream class, and the support teacher assisted him in the resource classroom. Now he is showing improvement and is achieving his IEPs objectives and likes to come to the school.

Table 8: Case on CWD inclusion, Korca

CWDs, who are supported in the kindergarten are referred to the respective schools which have resource centre and support teacher

<sup>32</sup> The full case is found in annex 7

REAs and partner organisations reported that the CWD parents are happy with the inclusion and training, which the positive PIA scorings confirm:

WHAT HAS WORKED WELL	HOW HAS IT AFFECTED YOUR WORK/LIFE
Training on CWD, Roma and Egyptian and cooperation and support from CDW parents (9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Have helped us understand CWD and accept them. We are aware of integration and all inclusion</li> <li>b) Has helped us overcome our discriminating mentality, racism and our prejudices</li> <li>c) Has helped us achieve school objective for quality education to all children</li> <li>d) To understand co-existence/co-living of our children with CWD in the same class</li> <li>e) We have felt good on the response/reaction of the parents of CWDs</li> <li>f) We have understood that we are all equal and that skin colour is not/should not be important in our mind</li> <li>g) Provides us with the opportunity of all inclusiveness/active participation of all children</li> </ul>

Table 9a. PIA results: Positive experience with CWD Inclusion

The effect part of the table includes observations from both teachers, parents of CWDs and other parents and children. The effect has been a broad understanding of and positive association with the CWDs, which is in tandem with GOA education priorities.

There are, however, also some negative experiences related to inclusion. The negative scorings and resulting effects are more diverse than in the positive scorings:

WHAT HAS NOT WORKED WELL	HOW HAS IT AFFECTED YOUR WORK/LIFE
1. Training on communication and management with all-included students (3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Inhibits implementation of teaching plan and learning</li> <li>b) Lack of trainings has created difficulties in delivering in these classes</li> <li>c)</li> </ul>
2. Non-inclusion of all children in SC activities	Lack of knowledge and failure to handle issues and face problems concerning excluded children
3. Inclusive activities of various age groups wanting	Non-inclusion of all children. Discrimination leads to hidden school-drop out
4. Lack of compensations for work with CWD: a) Credits were promised for teachers' training/work and are not granted	a) Our contribution and work with CWD in implementing IEP goes unrecognised and uncertified

b) Our work with CWD does not count in the number of children we teach , as some of them have IEP, but are not certified by the medical commission	b) Clarification is needed on our workload for CWD (no of children). We are unclear on this issue
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Table 9b. PIA results: Challenges of CWD Inclusion

The challenges, which the stakeholders have faced, relate partly to inclusion as such, and partly to the management of inclusion in terms of having the work with CWDs recognised by MOE. But even the negative scores do not suggest that CWDs should be excluded, just that the required systems and expertise should be in place.

It is worth noting that the institutional set-up determines the sustainability, and thus success, of new interventions/activities. Notably, the teachers mention the inability to deliver the planned teaching, when working with inclusion.

A case from Gjirokastra confirms both the positive and negative effects above. On the positive side the mother confirms the inclusion and positive attitude from teachers and other children. On the negative, she mentions the insufficient teacher training and ability to provide the required professional support:

Girl A was a normal child until 2 years old when she started to show aggressiveness, indifference, lack of socialisation with other children. In Tirana she was diagnosed with elements of autism. The parents were recommended to send Girl A to the day-care and to start therapy with logo-paediatric and development pedagogy.

Girl A was enrolled in the kindergarten No. 7 in Gjirokastra when she was three years old. The mother chose this kindergarten which is rated as the best kindergarten in the city. The mother defines the kindergarten and the teachers/staff “supportive, friendly and caring” for Girl A and other CWDs”.

The mother adds, though, that most of the progress Girl A’s has made so far is due to the therapy Girl A receives in Tirana (two weeks out of 4-6 weeks are spent in Tirana, in a specialised public Child Development Centre), the support Girl A receives from her (mother) at home and the support from a hired logo-paediatric in the city three times a week. All this work has been supported so far in the kindergarten where the mother has established a close relationship with all teachers and particularly the support teacher in the resource centre to reinforce Girl A’s individual development plan prepared by her doctor in Tirana.

Girl A has made significant progress in two years, particularly during the last year: she speaks, is independent, can dress and eat by herself, uses logic, reacts to orders in a logical way, uses bathroom on her own, is very good with hands in assembling objects/lego. All this was observed during the interview while Girl A was in the room

The mother expressed concern that at this stage of Girl A’s development the kindergarten could do more harm than help Girl A as the teachers do not have the expertise to support Girl A’s further development. The teachers know how to handle and support CWDs, but need more training on managing autistic children at various phases of their development.

The mother said following Girl A’s good progress, she has developed a plan with the doctor in Tirana which the teachers, particularly the support teacher at the kindergarten implements in mother’s presence. She said that many times the teachers call me and ask me what to do with Girl A and other CWD. She said that “I wish I can take the teachers to Tirana and showcase them how to work with CWD”.

The children around Girl A are very supportive along with their parents.

Table 10. Girl A – a case on inclusion<sup>33</sup>

The mother’s concern is confirmed by one of the directors working in SC supported kindergartens<sup>34</sup>.

<sup>33</sup> Full interview Annex 7

<sup>34</sup> Interview and needs for changes, annex 7

The two cases in respectively table 8 and 10 show two different experiences with the inclusion, which cause some reflection, where the limit for SC is with regard to support of CWDs.

In the case in table 8 it is not clear, which disability the child suffers from, wherefore the relevance of integration cannot be assessed.

It is the experience of SC that “parents of CWD are divided mainly in two types, on those with high and unrealistic expectations on children’s learning and development and another group who feel helpless and don’t trust that their children can develop. Both groups of parents attitudes and beliefs need to be addressed in order to fight delusion or make them be realistic and help their children to achieve their potentials based on their individual pace of development”.

It should also be noted in the interviews in annex 7 that parents are concerned about the future of their children – the after-school situation.

The outputs show in the figures below:

Institution	CWD
Kindergarten	39
Schools (60)	203

Table 7b. SC results with CWD inclusion

Again the achievements exceed the targets although the children in kindergarten is one less than planned. But the number of CWDs in school is 203 children against the planned 80 children. It is laudable as this is a group of children, which has widely been invisible and excluded and for which there are no educated teachers.

*Conclusions:*

- The following activities created substantial changes in the work with and perception of CWDs:
  - Support provided by SC ( and its partners) through trainings and info sessions to CWD parents to raise their awareness to send children to mainstream kindergartens and schools, become part of IEPs and provide on-going support at home;
  - Support model provided to CWD in the kindergartens and schools through support teachers and resource classrooms/centre by building a model that has produced tangible results for CWD, parents and school; and improvement of law on pre-university education;
  - Development of a CWD support model that has ensured smooth transition from kindergarten to primary school (Korca and Gjirokastra)
- The inclusion has made non-CWDs appreciate CWDs and Roma/Egyptian children and made them realise that differences add value. However, it appears that inclusion has both advantages and disadvantages for both teachers, ordinary children and CWDs.

- Teachers receiving CWDs will still have to educate the non-CWDs to the expected level, while also catering for the special situation and needs of the CWD(s) in the class.

*Recommendations:*

- SC could continue the work with CWDs taking a lead. Being a professional demanding and highly specialised area, it should be considered to work through competent national and international organisations and just provide financial and methodological support, while direct engagement should be less not to drain resources from work with the big group on needy non-CWDs.
- SC should engage in policy work ensuring adequate recognition of CWDs and of teachers and other people working with inclusion in kindergartens, pre-schools, basic education and in the community in terms of compensation and provision of training in ability grouped education, sports and playing.

*In-service teacher training*

The precondition for all of the above (joyful learning and quality education) is qualified and committed teachers, who have the ability and courage to practice child-centred education. Coming from a Communistic system, which believes in an authoritative approach, it was an immense task to change mindset and practices so radically. But SC has succeeded, which the effects described in the PIA results evidently show.. In addition, the teacher training is praised by all PIA groups across rural and urban institutions and in both kindergartens and schools.

SC acknowledged the importance of teachers' capacity building and the need to bring changes and improve teaching and learning process, which has resulted in continued training on child-centred teaching methods and inclusive education to teachers and education specialists in six regions of Albania.

New knowledge and skills have enabled teachers to improve the quality of education for children in the targeted institutions. As the evaluation findings document most children are now actively participating in the learning process, classroom climate has positively changed and communication between teachers and children, teachers and parents and children and parents has improved significantly, because of the changed teaching approach and inclusion of the wider community in many of the changes.

### **3.3 CONTEXT**

The context in Albania has changed considerably in the last ten year moving from a very authoritative system to a system with extensive freedom and subsequently a massive change in attitude, needs, systems, values etc. This also affects the work of SC in Albania in terms of a need for reflection, revision, re-prioritisation and possibly re-design of present activities. Despite highly commendable SC efforts and amazing results the challenges are still enormous and some are new. These include:

The *European crisis* had adversely affected the job situation in the countries, which traditionally hosted most of the Albanian migrant labour force. This has resulted in migrant workers returning to Albania in big numbers bringing with them children many of whom have never lived in Albania. Therefore they are neither familiar with the language and the culture, nor the school system. In addition, the school system in

Albania is less advanced than the systems from where they migrate. The available schooling in consequence does not match their age-related knowledge and skills.

The *national economy* in Albania still has a slight growth, but is in total moderate with a GDP per capita of US\$7,803<sup>35</sup>. Globally Albania ranks as 70 out of 187 countries. This shows that the economy is tight, wherefore resources for education are similarly scarce<sup>36</sup>. This, in the view of the rapidly increasing need for more education<sup>37</sup> and more diversified education, requires thorough considerations of where the limited donor funding will have *greatest effect for most children* with the likelihood of becoming sustainable within the next ten years.

With regard to children with *special needs* the exact need for diversified education is unknown both with regard to number and type of specialisations. Albanian teachers across kindergartens, pre-school and basic education have little present education in handling and supporting special needs. Engagement in this area requires considerable, steady and long-term funding not to let down the involved children and parents.

*Rural versus urban education*: The evaluation showed that education in the rural is overall of significantly lower quality than that in the urban areas. This includes teacher qualifications, where many teachers in the rural have no education as teachers – and in some cases no considerable formal education at all. Further quality of basic school facilities are dilapidated or non-existent which visits to the sites and PIA results clearly show. Extensive efforts are needed to bring rural education up to a level which is comparable with even modest urban education.

With the *Education policy and regulations (2012)*, *Children Rights Act (2010)* in place and a new *child-centred curriculum* for basic education being launched in 2015, all of which are based of SC's practical experiences from the long-term downstream work with child-centred education, the framework for education is considerably different from the one, which was applied, when SC in Albania first designed the education programme.

### 3.4. SC SYSTEMS AND STRUCTURES

SC changed organisational structure in April, which has given implementing staff more management responsibilities. The aim was to make the implementing staff have a holistic picture of the activities for which each is responsible. This has, however, resulted in less field appearance and less attendance in meetings with partners, which has been noticed by partners and was commented on during the evaluation. The key partners find that SC has a key role to play at upstream level within teacher training in social skills and at policy level, as much still needs to be done – especially on formulation of by-laws and regulations..

SC organisational structures obviously need to match the future fields of operation.

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<sup>35</sup> UNDP International Human development Indicators, 2010 – inclusive of estimated remittance from abroad

<sup>36</sup> The challenges of the education sector are accounted for in chapter 1.5

<sup>37</sup> As above: National Gross enrolment is 68%



### 3.5 INDICATORS

A going through of the SC work plan for 2012 showed lack of long-term goals, which normally determines programme activities and the deliverables for each.

The overall goal at institutional level is normally broken down into different key projects, each of which delivers its part to the totality of the goal. This ensures that there will be no gaps and no duplications. The deliverables for each project are based on a number of activities which have:

- *outputs* (e.g. records of number of teachers trained),
- *results/outcome* (e.g. number of teacher applying child-centred learning), and
- *impact* (short-term: e.g. % of enrolled children in SC and non-SC supported schools completing school/marks – or % of children in SC and non-SC supported schools transferred to second level of education. And long-term impact: % of children in SC and non-SC supported schools who earn a living).

The SC work plan had indicators for output level, but very few at result level and none for measuring impact. Moreover, many of the indicators were not SMART<sup>38</sup> and the means of verification – or data collection tools – were in many cases resource demanding and would not generate data, which could easily be validated.

Overall, the indicators suffer from lack of vision, as they merely document outputs. Outputs alone are little relevant, e.g. number of teacher trained, as training must lead to a defined result in terms of e.g. defined change in child behaviour and/or capacities, higher attendance rate, better marks etc. Training as such is not a target.

The consultants met with some key staff and discussed the importance of setting outcome targets and formulating SMART indicators.

When using standard logical framework template or results matrix framework all factors have to be considered and defined. Both formats force institutional reflection and logical organisation of all activities across all levels of operations.

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<sup>38</sup> SMART – S: Specific M: Measurable A: Achievable R: Realistic/relevant T: Timebound

## 4. CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions made here are overall and cross-cutting and correspond with the following requests in TORs:

- Assess the efficiency, effectiveness, relevance, sustainability and impact of the program and its implemented activities;
- Measure the extent to which the response has been accountable to the local needs and the level of child participation into the program;
- Examine how the program has mainstreamed cross-cutting issues such as promotion of human rights, gender equality and children's rights.
- Identify key successes and lessons learned and other lessons learned from the program.
- Provide concrete recommendations and suggestions for future program interventions.

### 4.1 LACK OF LONG-TERM STRATEGY AND ITS IMPACT ON ASSESSMENT OF EFFICIENCY, EFFECTIVENESS, RELEVANCE, SUSTAINABILITY AND IMPACT

Efficiency, effectiveness, relevance, sustainability and impact can only be measured against an overall end-goal against which results are measured.

Since SC in Albania has no long-term strategy for their work with education it is impossible to measure if SC has been efficient and effective. This presupposes definition of targets and thus no definition of which outcomes and impacts to expect. Finally, since there are no long-term goals, it is not possible to establish relevance. Programme activities can be relevant for the targeted populations without being relevant for a given programme and its goals.

Hence the following analyses will solely discuss efficiency, effectiveness, relevance, sustainability and impact looking at the practiced mode of operation and MOE priorities.

### 4.2 EFFICIENCY

*Efficiency is understood as: The comparison of what is actually produced or performed with what can be achieved with the same consumption of resources (money, time, labor, etc.).*

On the whole SC has created the desired impact in a little resource demanding manner. The funding for this period was a little over US\$ 900,000.

*The cascade approach* applied by SC builds on training REAs and directors as trainers in the applied methods and let these train own teachers and staff in other institutions. At the same time the first trained directors have made their institutions be a sort of example institutions from which neighbouring institutions could be inspired and learn. This has been a very efficient way of having a relative fast spread effect.

The *inclusion of MOE officers* at central and regional level has insured constant support and engagement in the activities. This also why SC mode of operations in education have been adopted by MOE resulting in a new, child-centred curriculum, which builds widely on effectively combining social and academic skills. An efficient way of having dual effect.

SC has worked efficiently with *Children's Rights* through fully committed and practical interventions both at downstream level through the well-received child-centred, non-violence and inclusive approach, as well as upstream influencing policy work resulting in the new, child-centred curriculum. Again a gain from same approach.

The SC staff has been very committed, which has helped maintaining a quite high level of efficiency despite facing several challenges, which hamper the same:

There has been *no systematic choice* of activities/projects, which have been added a bit ad hoc. This makes it more difficult to ensure complementarities and so avoid gaps and overlapping, which obviously affects the efficiency.

The *collaboration with partners* has been somewhat limited, although there has been continued and well-defined and efficient collaborations with MOE, UNICEF, World Vision, Medpak<sup>39</sup> and ADRF<sup>40</sup>.

As it shows it is mainly national partners, whereas the innovative work SC has engaged in from 2010-2013 might have benefitted from international expertise. This concerns all activities under the education programme.

It could also have been relevant to have a more mainstreamed collaboration with the World Bank's project: The Education Excellence and Equity Project (EEE) for Albania will support the government in the implementation of the first phase of Albania's National Education Strategy (NES). The objective of EEE was improved quality of learning conditions for all students and increased enrolment in general secondary education, especially for the poor. The priority areas of the proposed project are: (i) strengthening leadership, management and governance of the education system, (ii) improving conditions for teaching and learning, (iii) improving and rationalizing education infrastructure, and (iv) setting the stage for higher education reform.

World Bank's project had many of the same targets as the SC programme. The potential synergy and complementarities could have added value and made the SC implementation be more efficient.

The *programme and project designs* have not been based on baselines or SC feasibility studies in the target areas, which would have specified local needs, which most likely vary from area to area. Instead SC has based priorities more on studies of other organisations and/or own less particular studies. It is assumed that choice and design of activities, if based on a feasibility study, would have made implementation be more efficient.

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<sup>39</sup> MEDPAK is a parents' association for children with disabilities, working to support their children's development and integration

<sup>40</sup> Umbrella organisation for people with disabilities

*Exclusion of parents* is exclusion of high potential and ever available resources in the work with children. Exclusion of parents from participating in the work with a child-centred approach can have adverse effect, which will negatively affect the achievements.

### **4.3 EFFECTIVENESS**

*Effectiveness is understood as: The degree to which objectives are achieved and the extent to which targeted problems are solved*

Since there were no overall goals/objectives – or definition of problems that should be solved – the effectiveness cannot be assessed.

One point should be made, though. The effective use of micro-level experiences to influence new policies, by-laws and regulations has helped in solving problems in terms of low quality education at macro level and at long-term.

### **4.4 RELEVANCE**

*Relevance is understood as: Having relation to the matter/problem at hand*

Since there were no overall goals for the activities, the relevance cannot be assessed as usual. Relevance is normally measured against the fixed objectives and not against stakeholder interests or ex-project needs and interests.

However, analysis will be made of the activities and achievements against the past education situation in the targeted areas with main reference to UNICEF's education analysis, 2006, which defines the needs for changes and the GOA focus areas for education in Albania<sup>41</sup>.

It has been mentioned severally that education in Albania was authoritative until the system change in 1992. There was then a great need to change mindsets and social behaviour to make it match reality. An effective way to do this was to start with the new generations and the care-givers, as it has widespread and multiple effects. The idea to introduce *child-centred*<sup>42</sup> methods in the education system was thus very relevant.

Likewise has the work with *CWDs and Roma/Egyptian* children had great relevance for the implicated families, as their children have experienced the bliss of being included, having friends and doing what other children do.

The establishment of *CGs* teaches children to partly take responsibility for own education and the surrounding environment through inclusion in planning of extra-curricular activities, monitoring, reporting etc. The skills will no doubt benefit them in their adult life.

It should be noted that the lack of *CGs* in high schools, VET institutions and universities will force these children to function in a more authoritative settings without having had any preparation. Their social and life skills may even create some confusion or difficulties, as they may not at this stage be appreciated in these higher systems of

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<sup>41</sup> Chapter 1.6 in this report: Education situation in Albania

<sup>42</sup> Here understood as non-violent approach supporting development of children's need for physical, psychological, intellectual and social skills

education. Notably, quite a number of SC supported children have left basic education and many must be assumed to be in other levels in the education system. Their ability to cope with another system is not known.

The relevance does therefore has some limitations.

The *in-service training of teachers* is a precondition for the child-centred approach to be implemented successfully. The immediate relevance is obvious.

But the resignation and transfer of teachers should be taken into account not to have institutions with two different, and conflicting, pedagogical camps. In that case the training may create conflicts between different teachers, new teachers and children and new teachers and parents.

*Child participation* has been implemented through CGs. Involvement already at project design level would most likely have added value and made the activities and approach even more relevant.

The massive negative PIA scorings<sup>43</sup> concerning “basic learning facilities” may indicate that the direct focus on pedagogical changes alone may not be fully relevant.

#### **4.5 IMPACT**

In this analysis impact comes before sustainability as the latter often depends on the first.

*Impact is understood as: Effect*

SC has not specified any desired impact, but mentions for example joyful learning and a wish to improve both academic and non-academic skills. The impact could have been: higher attendance rate, lower drop-out rate, higher marks in average, higher transition rate all of which is measurable through the education system.

The analysis of outcome and impact of the Education Programme is solely based on the PIA scorings since they represent the perception of the various beneficiaries whose lives should change.

When going through the *positive effects* indicated in the PIA results two factors stand out, namely the results of *teacher training* in child-centred education:

Outcome: “Change in teacher attitude”, which has led to  
Impact: “Children have increased self-confidence and self-esteem”, and  
(short-term) “Children demonstrate communication skills, respect for themselves and their friends, experience exchange”

Further, the PIA results *indicate positive effect of inclusion of CWDs*:

Outcome: “To understand co-existence/co-living of our children with CWD in the same class”  
“We have felt good on the response/reaction of the parents of CWD”

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<sup>43</sup> Examples in chapter 4.2.1 and annex 6

With regard to *negative effect* two aspects stand out, too, namely the effect of *poor learning environment*:

Outcomes: “Affects children’s health”, with the likely impact that learning is reduced partly due to absenteeism and less attention when attending classes due to discomfort in the learning situation.  
“Affects learning quality” and  
“We are limited in our sports activities”

All the mentioned outcomes affect the potential impact negatively and do implicitly have adverse effect on the SC work in the targeted institutions.

Another noticeable *negative effect* concerns *inclusion of CWDs*, which has significant positive *and* negative effect:

Outcomes: “Inhibits implementation of teaching plan and learning”  
“Non-inclusion of all children. Discrimination leads to hidden school drop-Out”

The efforts spent on inclusion have adverse outcomes, which will as well have negative impact on the quality of the general learning. In addition, not all children for inclusion are virtually included, which causes disappointments resulting in drop-outs. Such non-inclusion, or rather exclusion, creates a disappointment, which will affect the child and parental attitude towards education for long.

None of the outcomes and resulting effects are desirable and should be acted on continuously through effective monitoring. The difficulties in implementing the teaching plan should be defined and a solution found. Likewise should the reason for non-inclusion be found and action taken. A few negative effects can create a negative attitude, which makes future education of the targeted groups render difficult.

The impact of the *ECCD* was mentioned previously, when referring to a study showing that children in SC supported kindergartens perform better when starting in school.

Details are many more, when reading the full PIA scores<sup>44</sup>.

In addition the results show that it has been possible for SC to create felt and definable changes during the three-year period and also create sufficient knowledge across the different target groups to enable them to define positive and negative effects. That in itself is a healthy foundation for future involvement of all target groups in design and implementation of downstream education activities.

#### **4.6 CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES**

As emphasised on earlier then most activities seem to have been cross-cutting: social skills presupposes inclusion and non-violence; Children’s Rights is not an isolated issue, but the entire foundation for all work, although also taught to children and teachers with a very positive effect. But again it goes with training in positive disciplining (non-violence) or training in social skills, which is the best way to teach it, as it becomes a “learning-by-doing” approach.

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<sup>44</sup> Annex 6

There seems to be no direct efforts to consider gender disparities.

#### **4.7 CHILD PARTICIPATION**

Child participation is included as an activity, which is established, training provided and activities monitored by REAs and SC. This is not bad. It is, nevertheless, surprising that children were not included in a needs' assessment prior to design of the project, if SC finds child participation of great importance. If children can plan for school activities and monitor the same and report to REAs, then should, indeed, also be able to contribute constructively towards design of a project, which concerns them and their future.

Participation in activities, which exist seems more relevant than inventing activities for the sake of children's participation. Had they be included in the design they might have suggested more child relevant bodies than CGs, which have an adult fingerprint.

Finally, it seems unusual to focus on children's opinions only and totally leave out that of the parents, who have no voice in terms of functioning schools boards. These could add significantly to a better learning environment – maybe to an extent where children's inputs were not needed, because children and parents discuss school matters when at home. The parents will then know of these matters and can bring them to the school board for considerations. Likewise will parents monitor school performance, as they tend to do in the urban areas with very positive outcomes.

## 5. KEY SUCCESSES AND LESSONS LEARNED

### 5.1 KEY SUCCESSES

A wide range of positive and negative lessons have been learned during this evaluation. But three of the lessons must be labelled as key successes, namely:

- The cascade system, which is a fast, inclusive and sustainable way of implementing development activities;
- The effective use of substantial downstream experiences, which have influenced the formulation of applicable by-laws and regulations, helped ensuring quality education at national level from 2015; and
- Full involvement of MOE at central and regional level already at design level and throughout the implementation, where MOE at regional and local level acted as virtual implementer.

What there is to say about the three key successes is already said earlier in this report<sup>45</sup>.

### 5.2 LESSONS LEARNED

The lessons learnt are grouped into three areas: Activities; present and future context; and SC systems and structures. All points are made in random order.

*Activities:*

- a) All programme components were relevant. Experiences from the pilot schools have caused changes in the curriculum for basic education which from 2015 will include social skills as part of all subjects.
- b) The work with local governments was not realised during the evaluation and does not appear in the SC plans 2010-2013<sup>46</sup> for training and other activities.
- c) The value of parent involvement as entry points to child-centred education/development was apparently not considered for the Quality Education project. The lack of parental involvement and understand of the changes in education approach affecting their children may result in parents working against the practising of social skills without knowing of it. They may react violently to reflecting children, which is adverse to entire focus on child centred education.
- d) Non-inclusion of beneficiaries in programme design makes it difficult to determine relevance of project activities, as there is no surety that activities are in fact relevant for the beneficiaries.
- e) The parental language barrier experienced by parents and teachers, and which hampers constructive parental engagement with the children trained in social skills, was not considered in this programme period.

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<sup>45</sup> Chapter 4 – especially 4.4: Relevance

<sup>46</sup> This was the period evaluated



*Present and future context:*

- a) New challenges, e.g. returning Albanian families, migrating rural population should force reflection in SC over future priorities with regard to activities, partners, targets groups and approach.
- b) Donor agencies and organisations are plenty – also in the fields of SC operations. More effective collaboration with these would have: added to the work of SC; made it have a wider scope within the selected activities; be more efficient, effective and have greater impact; and/or have complementary effect where roles and responsibilities are defined and each agency/organisation take a share of deliverables towards quality education.

*SC organisational systems and structures:*

- a) SC in Albania has a highly committed staff without whom SC would not have had the noticed and appreciated results on the ground.
- b) SC has no long-term strategy/vision for where to move and who/what to be as an SC organisation in Albania. There is thus no profile, which can attract donors and/or partners.
- c) Feasibility studies or needs' assessments prior to programme design would have informed of the need to apply a holistic approach to education covering physical, psychological, intellectual and social needs. This would have revealed the vast need for basic infrastructure.
- d) The planning tools are inadequate, as they do not indicate the deliverables of each project to the overall goal/vision; they do not have SMART indicators; they do not distinguish between and define targets for output, outcome and impact. Thereby monitoring becomes an ineffectual activity, which does not define gaps and/or wrong directions (since there is no direction) and therefore does not act as a management tool allowing for timely and correct changes in implementation.
- e) Documentation and advocacy has been scarce and not systematic, which further adds to the anonymity of SC Albania. There has been some publishing of reports, but the documentation has not taken centre stage. The weak monitoring system is partly to blame for lack of interesting information worth sharing.
- f) Staff capacity building has mainly concerned internal experience sharing, and less participation in international training with other organisations and sectors e.g. in management, M&E, planning and other cross-cutting issues. This may explain the weakness in the same.
- g) With the present and future challenges SC needs organisational systems and structures, which are flexible and relevant for a possible new context. This includes number and qualifications of staff.

## 6. RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendation given below concerns only more overall and cross-cutting factors. As the more detailed recommendations on activities were given under the respective sub-chapters in chapter 3.

The recommendations do not directly match “Lessons learned”. They are presented in random order and include:

### *Implementation:*

- a) Make use of the robust experiences by engaging more focused and extensively in policy work within education and children’s rights. In general focus more on addition work more on upstream activities including accredited teacher training applying the knowledge and experiences from over ten year in the field.
- b) As a consequence phase out the present activities in QE and make the involved schools become example institutions for future teacher training. There should be a safety net for these school in terms of repeated training where necessary, monthly meetings with regional directors and similar.  
Having the new curriculum and the need for extensive teacher training in social skills in mind, it could be considered to start a few example institutions in the six non-covered regions with the view to have example institutions in all parts of the country addressing all types of challenges in education.
- c) The cascade system could be made more structured defining exact roles of the various players and include children and parents in also having a responsibility for practising and making activities become sustainable and shared. This includes the work with local governments.
- d) Parents are the “owners” of the children and thereby the first responsible adult in children’s life. They should be the entry points and ambassadors for all development of children. The training should be designed with due respect to the self-esteem that parents have. Inclusion in discussions of new project activities, in school problems or other ready-knowledge issues will implicitly train their language and make it be more elaborate enabling description of details, opinions and emotions. They will gradually adopt and apply the social skills.
- e) With new powers to the school boards their roles, responsibilities and potential should be defined and capacity building developed accordingly. Since schools are generally short of basic facilities training in diplomatic<sup>47</sup> fundraising from well-off people, bigger industries also outside their immediate community. It can be in kind: an contractor can level the playground; a blacksmith can donate some goal posts; a regional football team can donate the net and some balls etc.
  - a. Fundraising elsewhere also happens through monthly micro-contributions from staff at big industries with the owner topping up with x% of the employee contribution etc. Use of local media, maybe radio, to advertise the fundraising, the donors and size of donations may add to the goodwill.
  - b. The school board training could also include knowledge about children’s needs at different ages, rights and plights of parents/teachers/directors viewed as one shared pool and many other subjects being of indirect relevance.

- f) The training of teachers should have a wider concept and not be confined to traditional training with trainer inputs only. The training can be conducted for example as: 1-2 weeks' internships at example schools; bi-monthly 2-days training sessions with follow-up on how last training was practices, in-put on new methods/practices concluding in individual plans for how each teacher/REA/parent will make use of the new learning before meeting in two months' time; part theoretical, part practical training; or supervision by colleagues, who have longer experience. They observe the teaching of a newly trained colleague for one full day a month for the first three months after the training and give ideas to how the less experienced colleague can improve.
- g) Perfect the targeted institutions become example institutions, which can take interns as part of the accredited teacher training in social skills/new curriculum

*Context:*

- a) With the long-term downstream experience, human and children rights being part of Albanian governance, a new child-centred curriculum and an Ombudsman system, which is very interested in supporting SC, the entire scenario for what is possible and necessary has changed. To support what has already been achieved and yet move to a higher level, SC should give high priority to: parental inclusion in all targeted institutions; effective parents boards in both kindergartens and schools; policy work including by-laws and regulations; ECCD to ensure wide preparation for child-centred schooling; and last, but not least: certified teacher education in social skills.
- b) MOE should take initiative to call all partners in education with the view to create a pool of resources, knowledge and experiences and create a substantial education network which purposefully deliver to agreed and well-defined targets. This would ensure optimum effectiveness and efficiency.

*SC systems and structures:*

- a) As the work on the SC strategy 2013-2015 is ongoing, it should be considered to have a vision and goal and otherwise enhance SC policy and strategic documents.
- b) SC should consider future focus and specialisations before designing new projects. Challenges in education in Albania are many and SC cannot engage in them all. The choice will determine the ten-year vision and strategy, SC's profile, whom to partner with nationally and internationally; which staff capacity to build; which targets to set for the work and implicitly what to monitor, document and advocate for. Systems, structures and staffing should be adjusted accordingly.
- c) Include beneficiaries directly or indirectly in project design through early involvement in participatory needs' assessments or feasibility studies. After project launching they have no influence on the entire implementation, although it affects their lives considerably.
- d) Systematise all management and administrative areas including: development of *one* results matrix for all SC activities as a whole; formulate monitoring framework defining lines of communication, data collection tools, timing of data collection/reporting and design of simple reporting formats; mode and timing of documentations; define media and target groups for advocacy and design materials and information accordingly.
- e) SC in Albania should engage in focused staff capacity development through engagement in national and international fora – also outside the traditional SC sphere, for example in methodological training and conferences; M&E training

conferences etc. The training should include language training where desired and also reach out to the service staff such as drivers, messengers, cleaners etc.

- f) There is need to establish a strong and diversely composed SC national and international network with the purpose of having regular and wide experience sharing,; division of work; funding opportunities, staff exchange opportunities and much more.
- g) SC in Albania should think big and grow into the organisation it could be having the documented results, commitment and respect into mind.  
Modest thinking limits the number and “size” of ideas

## Terms of Reference

**Assignment Title: External Evaluation of Save the Children’s Education Program in Albania**

*Save the Children is pleased to invite applicants from qualified international and national consultants to assess the impact of Save the Children’s Education Program. Details are shared below.*

**1. Background:**

Internationally, education has been recognized as a critical factor for poverty reduction and development. Children in Albania face a variety of challenges with regards to their right to education, due to socio-economic inequalities, existing disparities and social norms around education. Disadvantaged groups, such as Roma, children with disabilities and children in the rural north have lower access and the quality of education remains variable. Reforms in the education system have resulted in higher levels of primary school enrolment and literacy. Inconsistency in data and the absence of updated disaggregated demographic statistics, especially among vulnerable and excluded groups of children, remain a concern. Building capacity of teachers, achieving zero drop-out and strengthening school-community partnerships are areas of importance for Albania.

Save the Children envisions an Albania in which all children enjoy their right to access participatory, meaningful, learning opportunities, in order to realize their fullest potential and to enhance social inclusion. Our work in education has proactively evolved since 2006 to ensure quality inclusive education for children by providing access to marginalized groups (Roma and children with disabilities) and ensuring quality education for children in both kindergartens and schools. Save the Children works with other education actors in supporting local communities to advocate their concerns with an informed collective voice for influencing policies. During the current Country Strategy Period (2010-2013) of Save the Children the profile of the education program centres on children’s ability to know their rights, to be active participants in their own learning as well as championing the values of non-discrimination, inclusion and community participation.

**Program Implementation**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Children and Others</b>
Quality Education	60 schools located in 6 regions: Diber, Durres, Elbasan, Gjirokster, Korçe and Vlore.	33,000 to date, between the ages of 3-6. 1,850 teachers.
Inclusive Education/Children with Disabilities	12 schools and 12 kindergartens in 3 regions: Gjirokster, Korçe and Vlore.	120 children (40 kindergarten children,) between the ages of 3-6. 112 kindergarten teachers, 112 education teachers and psychologists; parents and community representatives from health and protection sectors.
Early Childhood Care and Development	60 kindergartens located in 6 regions: Diber, Durres, Elbasan, Gjirokster, Korçe and Vlore.	6,000 children between the ages of 3-6. 370 kindergarten teachers and Regional Education Authorities.
<b>Total</b>		<b>39,120 children</b> <b>2,757 teachers</b> <b>parents</b>

Children in project schools, including Roma/Egyptian children and children with disabilities are able to exercise their life skills and have progressed academically both in literacy and numeracy skills. Regional Education Authorities report that teachers use participatory and combined approaches that enhance inclusiveness of a child-friendly academic environment. Save the Children has conducted regular internal sessions to review the performance of the education program and progress toward achieving its objectives and mission. Initial baseline data were established at the onset of each component of the program in a sample of school settings for each location; annual re-assessments have been conducted to compare data and solid learning has been documented and promoted in Albania and beyond. This includes the recent evaluations of the ‘Violence in Schools’ and ‘Children’s Government’ projects, all of which should be reviewed by the consultants and feed into the overall assessment of findings and recommendations for Save the Children (i.e. identify synergies and cross learning, especially when identifying potential ways forward.)

## **2. Purpose of Assignment:**

Save the Children is commissioning an evaluation of the education program in Albania in order to assess the performance of the program (in terms of efficiency, effectiveness, relevance, sustainability and outcome,) the perception of stakeholders and beneficiaries, to document lessons learned and to provide practical recommendations for follow-up action. The evaluation report will be used to plan for continuation of the education program during the new Country Strategy Plan period 2013-2015.

The evaluation should include the indicators of the projects and should aim to provide information on the following areas (but not limited to):

- Assess the efficiency, effectiveness, relevance, sustainability and impact of the program and its implemented activities;
- Measure the extent to which the response has been accountable to the local needs and the level of child participation into the program;
- Examine how the program has mainstreamed cross-cutting issues such as promotion of human rights, gender equality and children's rights.
- Identify key successes and lessons learned and other lessons learned from the program.
- Provide concrete recommendations and suggestions for future program interventions.

Given the various components of the education program, the proposed evaluation will need to look at the program as a whole in order to assess how the various parts have contributed to each other and real impact for children. Interim and final evaluations of some projects under the education program have already been conducted and should contribute to the final conclusions of the proposed assignment.

**It is expected that the evaluation team will conduct consultations and meetings with representatives of the following institutions/actors:**

- Save the Children project teams
- Institute of Development of Education
- National Inspectorate of Pre-university education
- Regional Education Authority representatives (3 out of 6 regions)
- Partner organization (i.e. MEDPAK)
- Children and parents
- Teachers

## **3. Methodology:**

An international lead consultant will be recruited to spear head the evaluation. The lead consultant will work in close collaboration with a national consultant selected for the purpose of the evaluation. It will be the responsibility of the lead consultant to work closely with the local consultant at all stages of the evaluation, including finalizing design of the process and methodology, data collection, analysis, reporting and drawing final conclusions. The lead consultant will develop the necessary tools and checklists for data collection and field interviews.

### **Responsibilities of the consultants**

- The international consultant holds the overall management responsibility of the evaluation, including designing and carrying out the evaluation, drafting the final report and debriefing the project team and key stakeholders.
- In conjunction with the national consultant, the international consultant will liaise with Save the Children staff throughout the process, providing regular updates and seeking their input and advice where necessary.
- The international consultant will develop an inception report, in collaboration with the national consultant, detailing the methodology-stakeholders to be interviewed, tools to be developed, time frame for the evaluation which will be shared with Save the Children.
- In conjunction with the national consultant, the international consultant will develop checklists and tools for field interviews and data collection. The tools will be reviewed by Save the Children before finalization.
- The international consultant will orient the local consultant on the data collection tools and jointly both will agree on workload and task sharing.

- In conjunction with the national consultant, present the draft evaluation results to Save the Children staff.
- In conjunction with the national consultant, share highlights of evaluation findings to stakeholders including senior representatives from Government during a forthcoming Conference in late October, 2012.
- Integrate Save the Children's feedback into the final version of the document as appropriate and present the finalized document to Save the Children.
- Both consultants will adhere to the timelines of the consultancy.
- Both consultants will ensure ethical child/parent participation.

**Responsibilities of Save the Children**

- Provide all required background materials to the consultant in a timely manner.
- Select National consultant to be involved in the evaluation.
- Oversee the service provider by managing the consultancy contract; monitor adherence to specified deadlines; facilitating access to required information.
- Provide guidance throughout all phases of execution, approving all deliverables, and facilitating access to any documentation (or any person) deemed relevant to the evaluation process.
- Share deliverables with stakeholders
- Perform quality control, as required of all deliverables.



**LIST OF LITERATURE**

## SC AVAILED LITERATURE

- Save the Children in Albania Strategy 2010 – 2013
- Ministry of Education – National Strategy of Pre-university Education 2009 -2013
- Save the Children Albania Child Rights Situation Analysis 2012
- Save the Children Global Education Initiative 2012 – 2015
- Addendum to the Albanian National Education Strategy on Integrated Early Childhood Development (UNICEF 2009)
- Annual Plan (Education)2010
- Annual Plan (Education) 2011
- Annual Plan (education) 2012
- Annual Plan of Activities 2010/2011/2012 ( for each of QPD, ECCD, CWD)
- Project Proposal to MFA 2009
- Project Proposal to IKEA –Jan 2010-June 2012
- Baseline document 2010 ( for each of QEP, QPD, ECCD and CWD)
- Baseline follow up report 2011 and 2012 ( for each of QEP, QPD, ECCD and CWD)
- Annual Report (Education) 2010 and 2011 (QPD, ECCD, CWD)
- Quarterly Reports (Q1, Q2) 2012 (QPD, ECCD, CWD)
- Progress Report to IKEA year 2010- 2011(*Child Participation and Inclusion in basic education in Albania*)
- End project Report to IKEA 2011-2012 (*Fighting Discrimination and Violence in the Albanian schools for Inclusive and Quality Education*)
- Violence against Children End Project Evaluation Report 2012
- Child Government End Project Evaluation Report 2012
- EECD baseline follow-up indicators
- QEP assessment report 2011: relationships between interaction in class and pupils’ achievements
- Mid-term evaluation Report of the “Inclusive Quality Pre-Primary and Primary Education for Roma/Egyptian Children” project -2011
- Save the Children in South East Europe: A Strategic Evaluation of Save the Children Norway’s Programmes (Albania section) August 2010
- SCiA report on best IE practices CWD, 2011
- World Bank Strategy 2012-2020: Learning for all

## OTHER LITERATURE

- National Education Strategy (Albania) 2004-2015
- UNVAC report: Violence against Children (crin.org)
- UNICEF annual report (Albania) 2010-2011
- UNICEF Education in Albania profile
- World Bank Education Strategy 2020
- Roma culture and history
- <http://romafacts.uni-graz.at/index.php/culture/introduction/roma-culture-an-introduction>
- EU Albania progress report 2011

## List of interviewed stakeholders

## LIST OF SC STAFF AND STAKEHOLDERS INTERVIEWED

NAME	ORGANISATION	JOB TITLE/RESPONSIBILITY
<b>SC STAFF</b>		
Refik Cela	SC Albania	Program Implementation Manager
Ema Kasapi	SC Albania	Program Implementation Officer
Rodika Goci	SC Albania	Program Development Specialist
Besnik Kadesha	SC Albania	PDQ and Program Quality
Mads Sørensen	SC Albania	PDQ and Program Quality
Anila Meco	SC Albania	Head of Finance and HR Director
Helen I'Anson	SC Albania	Country Director
<b>CENTRAL AND REGIONAL GVT</b>		
Robert Gjedia	National Inspectorate for Pre-University Education	Chief Inspector
Nazmi Xhomara	Institute of Education Development	-
Margarita Markja	Regional Education Authority, Diber	CG
Liljana Kallaverja	Regional Education Authority, Diber	ECCD, CWD
Alma Rakipi	Regional Education Authority, Durres	CWD
Pranvera Kamani	MOE	Head of Curriculum Department
Albana Shtylla	Institution of Ombudsman	Director of Cabinet of the Ombudsman
Alket Jaupi	Ombudsmand's Office	Expert
Juola Kamenica	Regional Education Authority, Korce	CWD, ECCD, QE
Valentina Hyskja	Regional Education Authority, Korce	QE, CWD, ECCD
<b>CSOs AND DONORS (OTHER STAKEHOLDERS)</b>		
Brisida Sahas	World Vision	Education manager

Zela Koka	MEDPAK	Coordinator
?	MEDPAK	Consultant
Narbis Ballhysa	ADRF	Programme Coordinator
?	ADRF	Programme Coordinator
Aurora Bushati	UNICEF	Education Officer
Linda Bushati	UNICEF	ECCD, Education Officer
Brisida Sahas	World Vision	Education Manager
Zhaneta Papa	School Demokracia, Korce	Director
Rajmonda Mullaymeri	School Demokracia, Korce	Support Teacher, CWD
Anila Terpo	School Agimi, Maliq, Korce	Director
Magdalena Hoxha	Kindergarten Maliqi, Korce	Director
Mimoza Gerzhita	School Koto Hoxhi,, Gjirokaster	Support Teacher, CWD
Juliana Xoxo	Kindergarten No 7, Gjirokaster	Director

**KEY SC STAFF INTERVIEW  
SUMMARISED**

**SC staff – COMPILED SCORES**

SUBJECT	WHAT HAS WORKED WELL	OUTCOME/EFFECT	FACTORS AFFECTING IMPLEMENTATION ADVERSELY	OUTCOME/EFFECT	SUGGESTED CHANGES
<b>Program design</b>	Use of cascade system for dissemination of learning	Regional authorities and teachers come to understand the entire concept of child development	MOE performance measured on non-inclusive indicators	Forces focus on non-project relevant issues	<p>Programs should respond more to needs which also appeal to the donors</p> <p>An overall strategy should guide all projects</p>
	Change in learning approach to child-centred learning with focus on child development – not solely academic performance- in all projects in terms of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-violence</li> <li>• CGs</li> <li>• Nutrition/physical dev.</li> <li>• Mental development</li> <li>• Inclusion of all: CWD, Roma, Egyptian</li> </ul>	Children feel free to express themselves and are part of school activities	Included a wide range of actors: health, education, social affairs etc as child development is not only education. Still a challenge to work with multiple sectors	Effectiveness and efficiency affected as sectors are used to work holistically	
			Projects partly arise as adds	Effect less when having no strategic complementarity	
			Parents not trained in life skills	Parents do not always understand – and agree with – the open mind of the children	

<b>Program implementation</b>	Self-implemented Only CWD is subcontracted  Baseline data	Strong control on quality	GOA not used to reporting on non-academic achievements (2)	Makes SC have no real-time picture of effect of training	Introduce performance self-evaluations not only of use of trained techniques, but also of which colleagues one has trained on the same
			Parents do not feel committed to improving quality of GOA school performance	Parents boards only a piece of paper – no activities: “Why have plans if having no funds”  Little parental participation in extra-curriculum activities	Could make schools have a wider role and maybe also offer adult education in evenings and weekends to create positive parental attitude and ownership  Next SC focus could be on school boards and school authorities to involve them more in development of the learning environment
	Parents and teachers planned activities together	Parents came to act as co-teachers Know how to deal with emotions	Lots of partner training. People keep knowledge tight	Less effect of training	-
	Programme documentation of best practices	Enables smooth GOA take-over and general mainstreaming of activities (sustainability)	Staff overloaded with activity delivery and management	A lot of administration Difficulties to manage individuals on site, to monitor their deliverables as per SC Albania formatsstandards	-
			Hiring of individuals on site to carry out project services	Difficulty to measure impact from other stakeholders	-



			M&E weak (2)	M&E carried out by PC	To improve M-E system, unify monitoring/reporting formats from the field, use of indicators in reports  Need to translate SCIA Intl M&E system into national context , measurable indicators, quantify quality and impact
			Only 45% enrolment in kindergartens in rural areas. Reasons not known	These children, who already have fewer social skills have more difficulties when starting in school	SC should have a system like UNDAF where each project delivers a certain part to an overall, joint strategy
			Teachers continue discussing academic performance only	Make schooling difficult for the less academic part of the children	-
			Curriculum too tight to open up for more inclusive (and time-consuming) methods	Hampers the idea of inclusion, use of life skills etc.	-
<b>Program administration</b>	Documentation improved over years	Enables SC reaction to activities	Grant management weak	Repeatedly under-spending of funding	-

	Work in SC office redistributed recently	Provides technical specialists with an understanding of the project context	New structure forbids SC Albania to apply for direct funding. Has to apply through major SC offices	Administration and reporting delays with risk of negative donor reactions	
	External audit and new financial system	Has made accounting easy and transparent In the future there will be <i>one</i> report irrespective of number of donors	Distance management demanding	Leaves little time for field follow-up, own capacity development etc.	Work with local NGOs as implementing partners together with building the required local capacity
<b>Communication (downstream, upstream)</b>	Monthly meetings in SC with the 6 targeted regional directors	Enables experience sharing and thus replication and utilisation of good practices	REA does not document what happens in their regions	Gaps in knowledge and in implementation when having transfers No learning from colleagues	
	SC structure accommodates downstream communication	Messages pass, experience is shared	Upstream communication – or feedback on ideas – is scarce	-	-
<b>Networking</b>	Very good relationship with MOE and other partners at national and regional level (3)	Effective cascading of work as non-targeted schools and kindergartens ask for training in SC subjects = ground for sustainability	MOE does not actively support CGs e.g. through support of coordinating teachers	CGs quite dependent on the coordinating teacher to succeed in many of the activities. Lack of MOE support may make CGs gradually fall apart  Interest too different No coordination	
	MOE sets up working groups which consult with donors and others	Facilitates a certain coordination	Tried networking on education with UNICEF, WV and 14 local NGOs	Interest too different No coordination	GOA agency should coordinate donor activities to benefit optimum

	Worked together with UNICEF and MOE	Allowed SC to take the desired role as facilitator and not implementer = MOE ownership	Networking not used to show what SC is doing	Lose out on opportunities for collaborations, experience sharing and funding	-
<b>Staffing</b>					
<b>SC capacity development</b>	Work as team with extensive experience sharing and support of capacity dev (3)	Helps in timely and relevant support of project activities and MOE	Participation in capacity building often comes with a short notice	Work disrupted resulting in inefficiency	SC should have annual plan for capacity building  SC staff needs training in M&E (2)
			Office re-organization recently	Need to make an effort to maintain, use and share expertise	
<b>Others</b>			Missing reflection in SC	Makes this evaluation relevant	
			Intermediaries in funding create layers of bureaucracy in reporting	Some reporting penalization problems would have been avoided as in the case with IKEA, which did not renew the funding	Direct contract with donors

**STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS  
CONSOLIDATED**

**NATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS – REA/MOE consolidated**

SUBJECT	WHAT HAS WORKED WELL	OUTCOME/EFFECT	WHAT HAS NOT WORKED WELL	OUTCOME/EFFECT	SUGGESTED CHANGES
Program design	Training designed as cascade training central people and directors at few key institutions, which then acted as models and TOTs (4)	Easy, effective and cheap dissemination (5) ensuring spread to neighbouring institutions  Improved cooperation between school/ kindergarten and REA	Some teachers move to become school teachers in the rural	Lost capacity due to high turnovers (2)	More focus in the future to the rural kindergartens, particularly the remote ones which have 1-2 teachers. One option can be pooling of remote kindergarten teachers in training sessions to reach out as many teachers as possible  To continue more in depth support to the targeted schools/kindergartens to build on achieved results and experience  Work as coordinating teacher should be regarded as teaching and given some weekly “lessons”  Institutionalised experience sharing between urban and rural schools could help bridging the gap
	CG: Design focused on urban schools, while rural schools have greater need for support  Coordinating teacher elected by the CG. Acts as link between CG and teachers/school mgt	CGs less effective or close to non-existing in rural areas  Provides the children with an adult voice and implicitly more adult respect	CG: Central and local authorities do not support CGs  Coordinating teachers work as volunteers with recognition of the hours spent on the work  Design does not include high schools  Example schools has served as model to other schools and institutions	Make work depend entirely on goodwill from individual schools  Will gradually be more difficult to find committed coordinating teachers which will further result in less effect of CGs  CGs here have little effect. Work hardly institutionalised  Scaling-up not supported by GOA	

			Annual election of the entire CG	Leaves gaps in knowledge and experience	Study to establish possible connection between life skills →learner friendly environment→academic performance
	<p>ECCD: Training was planned in themes</p> <p>Training of parents run as discussions forcing parental reflection and interaction</p>	<p>Easier to apply</p> <p>Provided parents with tools to support development of their children</p> <p>Has made kindergarten environment welcoming Rush on SC supported kindergartens</p>			<p>Focus on school boards (2)</p> <p>Building of parental skills/readiness to handle support of child centred development</p>
	<p>QED: The focus on school evaluations and planning and guidelines for the same</p>	<p>Has helped in ensuring quality, as the director may not be given another 4 years, if the plan has not been achieved</p> <p>Guidelines have made planning become easier for the schools</p>	-	-	-

<b>Program implementation</b>	ECCD/CWD Successful training of all stakeholders (3)	High awareness and mentality change for CWD in teachers, parents and classmates in targeted schools (3)	ECCD/CWD UNICEF/SC guidelines for children 5-6 years not developed	Teachers and parents have no support for development of this age groups, which could results in the achievements from the age of 3 years risk losing effect	Training on CWD should be extended to high REA management
	Training covered children of 3-6 years for which there are materials	Comparison in grade 1 between children from SC supported kindergartens and other children show better academic and social performance among SC supported children than other children	Teachers' resistance to inclusion of CWD in mainstream schools/kindergartens	-	To introduce full-time psychological service in schools and kindergartens
	Materials for/concerning CWD developed	Help ensuring continued and streamlined efforts	Newly hired teachers unfamiliar with and resistant to CWD	-	Induction training of new teachers on CWD, EQ, inclusiveness, ECD
	Make training/play materials from simple things	Develop creativity in children	CWD are part of big groups/classes and sometimes individual support from the teacher is difficult and the presence of support teacher is necessary	-	
	In towns parents are more demanding	Results in higher performance/quality	Training on CWDs did not target REA high management		
	In towns graduates often act as teachers	Gives higher quality education			
CG: 2 students from previous CG act as consultants trying to the new CG to cover gap in knowledge and experience	Old work not lost. New CG can be effective faster				

	QED: Evaluation materials developed and used	Assessment have become objective			
<b>Program relevance</b>	The need for teacher and parental knowledge about the wider aspects of child rights and development rampant and urgent (3)  Problems addressed highly relevant issues	Has widened the understanding of what learning is and made education more enjoyable (3)  Response has been positive with changes in behaviour (non-violence, inclusions, child centred teaching etc)	Fathers are generally less concerned/involved to a certain extent because of migration	Despite training of parents observations show considerable gaps in basic parental support of child development (e.g. food)	-
<b>Sustainability</b>	Models are tested and are effective and efficient to be maintained, replicated, scaled up or mainstreamed in the educational system (3)	SC can turn to other urgent needs  Improved /measurable results in QE, ECD, inclusiveness in CWD; Roma integration, CHG  Program results served as inputs to improve pre-university education with regard to CWD	No support from MOED to ensure continuation of the models at least in the targeted schools/kindergartens after the closure of SC program (3)  High teacher turnover  High risk to lose the support teachers, who is an important support and reference point for CWD and other teachers in the mainstream class	MOE/REA cannot implement without basic support and materials (3)  High teacher turnover  Risk of collapse	New, complementary activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CWD – more on assessment methods</li> <li>• Training of new parents</li> <li>• UNICEF/SC Guidebook on 5-6 years</li> <li>• Handling of children returning from migration (language, culture, changed social situation etc)</li> </ul> SC or MOED to allocate funding to maintain the created models particularly resource centre and support teacher for CWD



<b>Collaboration with SC</b>	<p>Has been very close and effective (4)</p> <p>SC in MOE committees, MOE part of SC strategy development</p> <p>Material support and relevant literature very helpful</p>	<p>Ensures that needs are met</p> <p>Common footstep</p> <p>Activities delivered as planned</p> <p>Expected results achieved/improved teaching and learning</p>	<p>Write reports on the work, but do not receive SC feedback</p>	<p>Reduced motivation and risk of wrong approach without timely correction</p>	
<b>Others</b>	<p>(Training) Services provided by SC stand out from other organizations including UNICEF</p> <p>Literature on ECD and CWD very helpful to teachers</p>				

**PIA RESULTS – BENEFICIARIES**  
**CONSOLIDATED**

**URBAN KINDERGARTENS**  
**CONSOLIDATED**

## URBAN KINDERGARTEN SCORES

WHAT HAS WORKED WELL	HOW DID IT AFFECT YOUR DAILY LIFE
1. All training sessions have been to benefit of our teaching-educational work together with SC and MOED guidebook “ A world to discover (3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Changed our teaching methods and learning and behaviour/attitude at children</li> <li>b) These trainings are serving the teaching – educational process , but there is further need for new info/knowledge</li> <li>c) Through guidebook teachers’ info is updated with contemporary info</li> </ul>
2 Development issues in pre-school age and inclusion of parents in child’s life (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Has contributed in including the children with development issues and equal treatment like the other children and they feel equal</li> <li>b) Parents’ presence has produced positive impact in/helped the teaching-educational process</li> </ul>

Urban kindergartens teachers

WHAT HAS WORKED WELL	HOW DID IT AFFECT YOUR DAILY LIFE
1. We have liked the organization of the activities and transfer of info by playing (4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Use of magic words</li> <li>b) The desire to attend the kindergarten and adaptation with the other children</li> <li>c) Parents’ satisfaction with demonstrations of children’s actions through play, songs, etc</li> <li>d) Pre-school children when starting the school are well prepared and do not need extra support</li> </ul>
2. Cooperation teacher-parent, in various activities that take place in the kindergarten (2)	<p>Children are happy, feel appreciated and important            Parents are happy to see children active/performing in the activities            Open in communication their wishes and problems</p>

Urban kindergarten mothers

<b>WHAT HAS WORKED WELL</b>	<b>HOW DID IT AFFECT YOUR DAILY LIFE</b>
1. Activities organized on various holidays/festive days have been effective and have impressed children and parents (2)	Living with the emotions of the activity, dealing with the preparations at home and all emotions associated with the delivery of the activity
2. Cooperation teacher-parent is very good and has positively impacted communication with children (2)	Kindergarten has become part of our life and how we organize our family life

Urban kindergarten fathers

<b>WHAT HAS NOT WORKED WELL</b>	<b>SI JU KA NDIKUAR NE JETEN TUAJ – CFARE PROBLEMESH KENI NDESHUR</b>
<p>1. Training insufficient (2):</p> <p>a) Trainings need to be accompanied with the relevant didactic means to better contribute to child’s development</p> <p>b) Teachers’ training on CWD should be more frequent</p>	<p>a) Trainings are accompanied with teachers’ book but lack the didactic means for children.</p> <p>b) Have faced difficulties in our work with CWD</p>

Urban kindergarten teachers

<b>WHAT HAS NOT WORKED WELL</b>	<b>SI JU KA NDIKUAR NE JETEN TUAJ – CFARE PROBLEMESH KENI NDESHUR</b>
<p>1. Basic facilities not in order (3):</p> <p>a) One of the classrooms on the ground floor is humid</p> <p>b) Lack of heating system</p> <p>c) Floor is cold in winter</p>	<p>a) Children get sick often</p> <p>b) Classrooms are cold and children are dressed with heavy clothes which physical activities render difficult</p> <p>c) A carpet would protect them from cold when they sit on the floor or from getting hurt when falling down</p>

Urban kindergarten mothers

<b>WHAT HAS NOT WORKED WELL</b>	<b>SI JU KA NDIKUAR NE JETEN TUAJ – CFARE PROBLEMESH KENI NDESHUR</b>
<p>1. Use of inappropriate language/words</p>	<p>Felt uncomfortable and lack of good manners</p>
<p>2. Feeding the children with potato chips and sweets by the parents</p>	<p>Puts at risk children’s health and upbringing</p>

Urban kindergarten fathers

**RURAL KINDERGARTENS**  
**CONSOLIDATED**

## RURAL KINDERGARTENS

WHAT WORKED WELL	HOW DID IT IMPROVE YOUR DAILY LIFE
1. Positive Discipline (2)	Improved our approach/behaviour with children and have resolved conflicts fairly

Rural kindergarten teachers

WHAT WORKED WELL	HOW DID IT IMPROVE YOUR DAILY LIFE
1. Parents' training (2)	a) Have made us more responsible as parents and has increased our dedication/commitment to the children b) Children have become less aggressive

Rural kindergarten mothers

WHAT WORKED WELL	HOW DID IT IMPROVE YOUR DAILY LIFE
1. SC training positive (3)	Children react positively in the family Richer vocabulary, better behaviour and music/singing Children's performance and development has improved
2. We are satisfied with the teachers' care (3)	We feel that teacher care about our children and us as parents

Rural kindergartens fathers



WHAT DID NOT WORK WELL	HOW DID IT AFFECT YOUR DAILY LIFE – WHICH PROBLEMS DID YOU FACE
1. More material base and age relevant material (2)	It helps in our work with children and the community is poor. Cannot ask for support from the community.

Rural kindergarten teachers

WHAT DID NOT WORK WELL	HOW DID IT AFFECT YOUR DAILY LIFE – WHICH PROBLEMS DID YOU FACE
1. Facilities wanting (4): a) Lack of carpet for the kindergarten floors b) Lack of TV and DVD in the kindergarten c) Material base d) Various games/plays	a) Affects children's health b) Children need other ways of entertainment/to improve/diversify their entertainment c) It does not help the children to learn through illustrations d) Games/plays according to age-groups

Rural kindergarten mothers

WHAT DID NOT WORK WELL	HOW DID IT AFFECT YOUR DAILY LIFE – WHICH PROBLEMS DID YOU FACE
1. Material base for children inclusive of playground (2)	-

Rural kindergarten fathers

**URBAN SCHOOLS**  
**CONSOLIDATED**

## URBAN SCHOOLS

WHAT HAS WORKED WELL	HOW HAS IT AFFECTED YOUR WORK/LIFE
1. Training on CWD, Roma and Egyptian and cooperation and support from CDW parents (3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Have helped us understand better CWD and accept them. We are aware of integration and all inclusion</li> <li>b) Has helped us overcome our discriminating mentality, racism and our prejudices</li> <li>c) Has helped us achieve school objective for quality education to all children</li> </ul>
2. Training on teaching methodologies, students' assessment and test compilation (2)	Better planning of class, students' assessment according to established criteria to be objective in assessment and effective in teaching
2. Training on communication and inclusion (2)	<p>Relationship teacher-student is improved. It is observed an improvement of relationship student-student, increased participation of students in the class</p> <p>We have felt support and help and children feel good to be in the resource class</p>

Urban schools teachers

WHAT HAS WORKED WELL	HOW HAS IT AFFECTED YOUR LIFE
1. Open communication btw parents-teachers (3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Children demonstrate communication skills, respect for themselves and their friends, experience exchange.</li> <li>b) Helped us understand better our children</li> <li>c) Has helped both parties for a better performance of children at school</li> </ul>
2. Discussions on children with disabilities (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) To understand co-existence/co-living of our children with CWD in the same class</li> <li>b) We have felt good on the response/reaction of the parents of CWD</li> </ul>

Urban school mothers

WHAT HAS WORKED WELL	HOW HAS IT AFFECTED YOUR LIFE
1. Teaching and learning takes place through interactive methods (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) We have understood better each other and we feel more comfortable/outspoken during the classes</li> <li>b) Children speak up freely in any moment and this has led to improvement of relationship btw children-teachers</li> </ul>
2. There are organized activities for int'l days such as: Int'l Peace Day, Children's Day, Day Against Violence etc. (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Children show more interest in other activities organized by SC</li> <li>b) We have the opportunity to be entertained//have fun</li> </ul>
3. Support/help provided to vulnerable children, Roma and Egyptians (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) We have understood that we are all equal and that skin colour is not/should not be important in our mind</li> <li>b) Provides to us the opportunity of all inclusiveness/active participation in the class of all children</li> </ul>

Urban school girls

WHAT HAS WORKED WELL	HOW HAS IT AFFECTED YOUR LIFE
1. Periodic regular meetings btw teachers- parents, where various issues are discussed including how to improve school activities (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Good relationship developed which affects positively students' performance</li> <li>b) We are informed on issues/problems at school and get more info on our children's performance</li> </ul>
2. Basic facilities (2): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) School reconstruction and school yard</li> <li>b) External environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Positive impact in keeping order (no chaos) and discipline</li> <li>b) Enabling to organize sports activities</li> </ul>

Urban school fathers

<b>WHAT HAS WORKED WELL</b>	<b>HOW DID IT AFFECT YOUR DAILY LIFE-WHICH PROBLEMS DID YOU FACE</b>
1. Participation in activities organized at national and international level has provided new ideas to implement in school (2)	a) We have come with new ideas to implement in our school. Increased our self-confidence/self-esteem and more open to discuss/express freely our ideas/more outgoing b) It has contributed to our civic education
2. Information about and support provided to vulnerable children/families, Romas (2)	a) We have understood that we have to support such people and help our friends b) Have learned to be humanitarian in our life

Urban school - boys

<b>WHAT HAS NOT WORKED WELL</b>	<b>SI JU KA NDIKUAR NE JETEN TUAJ – CFARE PROBLEMESH KENI NDESHUR</b>
1.Low participation of parents in the activities organized by SC	Disappointed that our parents did not support/show up as they should be the main drivers to our success

Urban school boys

<b>WHAT HAS NOT WORKED WELL</b>	<b>HOW DID IT AFFECT YOUR DAILY LIFE-WHICH PROBLEMS DID YOU FACE</b>
1.Training on communication and management with all-included students (3)	d) Inhibits implementation of teaching plan and learning e) Lack of trainings has created difficulties in delivering these classes
2. Lack of compensations for work with CWD (2): a) Credits were promised for teachers' training/work and are not granted b) Our work with CWD does not count in the number of children we teach , as some of them have IEP, but are not certified by the medical commission	a) Our contribution and work with CWD in implementing IEP goes unrecognized and uncertified b) Clarification is needed on our workload for CWD (no of children). We are unclear on this issue
3. Extra-curricular classes: (2)  a) More trainings to be organized for teachers who teach the extracurricular classes b) More materials/texts/guides to be provided for extracurricular classes	a) - b) Lack of materials (texts) has created difficulties in delivering these classes

<p>4. Lack of compensations for work with CWD (2):</p> <p>a) Credits were promised for teachers' training/work and are not granted</p> <p>b) Our work with CWD does not count in the number of children we teach , as some of them have IEP, but are not certified by the medical commission</p>	<p>a) Our contribution and work with CWD in implementing IEP goes unrecognized and uncertified</p> <p>b) Clarification is needed on our workload for CWD (no of children). We are unclear on this issue</p>
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Urban school teachers

WHAT HAS NOT WORKED WELL	HOW DID IT AFFECT YOUR DAILY LIFE-WHICH PROBLEMS DID YOU FACE
<p>1. Lack of capacity to transfer training knowledge (3)</p> <p>a) Selection of right persons for training</p> <p>b) Quality not satisfactory</p> <p>c) Ineffective teaching and learning</p>	<p>a) Lack of info</p> <p>b) Source of conflict</p> <p>c) -</p>

Urban school mothers

WHAT HAS NOT WORKED WELL	HOW DID IT AFFECT YOUR DAILY LIFE-WHICH PROBLEMS DID YOU FACE
<p>1. More modern learning (2):</p> <p>a) Foreign language should be supported with listening to original discs/recordings</p> <p>b) More excursions should be organized to practice our learning/link theory with practice</p>	<p>a) We face problems in speaking/pronouncing the foreign languages</p> <p>b) We have no opportunity to practice our acquired knowledge in the biology lab</p>
<p>2. Basic learning facilities (2):</p> <p>c) Computer lab needs to be equipped with more computers</p> <p>d) Some classes are not appropriate for teaching/ learning</p>	<p>c) Knowledge acquired in the computer lab is not supported with practice and our knowledge remains theoretical and deficient</p> <p>d) This affects our health</p>

Urban school girls

WHAT HAS NOT WORKED WELL	HOW DID IT AFFECT YOUR DAILY LIFE- WHICH PROBLEMS DID YOU FACE
1. Basic facilities (3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Classrooms need to be more organized, lack of lighting, heating and lack of comfort, etc</li> <li>b) The school environment where children are educated should be clean and green</li> <li>c) Lack of didactic means: writing boards, labs, etc affects learning capacity of students</li> </ul>

Urban school fathers (only 2 school)

**RURAL SCHOOLS**  
**CONSOLIDATED**



## RURAL SCHOOLS

WHAT WORKED WELL	HOW DID IT IMPROVE YOUR DAILY LIFE
1. Organization of summer camps and other Activities (6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Has helped children's education and entertainment and children's inclusion. This has been very positive for our small town which has very limited entertainment opportunities</li> <li>b) The summer camp has made good use of children's free time, has trained them physically and improved the communication btw children</li> <li>c) This camps has helped us improve our English</li> <li>d) Increased humanism towards vulnerable people</li> <li>e) Increased feeling of patriotism among children and other participants in this activity when celebrating national days</li> </ul>
2. Communication between teachers and children (5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Better communication between teacher-teacher, teacher-parent, teacher-children. children feel more at ease and comfortable</li> <li>b) We get info about the children's performance at school and their behaviour</li> <li>c) Children are capable to defend their ideas and actions and they are more open to express their ideas</li> </ul>
3. Various children trainings (4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Has helped us increase our knowledge on various topics and share with our classmates</li> <li>b) Children have been more cooperative in studying, organization of activities, etc</li> </ul>

Rural school teachers

WHAT WORKED WELL	HOW DID IT IMPROVE YOUR DAILY LIFE
<p>1. Various activities (5):</p> <p>a) Organization of annual summer</p> <p>b) Competition among schools for traditional costumes</p> <p>c) Activity on local traditional cuisine for charity fundraising</p>	<p>a) The summer camp has made good use of children's free time, has trained them physically and improved the communication btw children</p> <p>b) Preservation of our folk costume tradition from generation to generation</p> <p>c) Preservation of traditional cuisine and education of children with humanism and solidarity</p>
<p>2. Openness and freedom of expression of children in discussions and debates (2)</p>	<p>Children are capable to defend their ideas and actions and they are more open to express their ideas</p> <p>Better communication btw teacher-children, children feel more at ease and comfortable</p> <p>Better communication btw teacher-children, children feel more at ease and comfortable</p>
<p>3. Communication/meetings between teachers-parents (2)</p>	<p>d) We get info about the children's performance at school and their behaviour</p> <p>e) Positive/good behaviour of the children and improved education and teaching</p>

#### Rural school mothers

WHAT WORKED WELL	HOW DID IT IMPROVE YOUR DAILY LIFE
<p>1. Various activities (4):</p> <p>a) Summer camp (and English camp)</p> <p>b) Cinema Theatre</p> <p>c) Theatre in school</p> <p>d) Carnivals</p>	<p>a) This camps has helped us improve our English</p> <p>b) Was fun</p> <p>c) It was fun to play our roles</p> <p>d) Each child was dressed in a special costume</p>
<p>2. Various children trainings (2)</p>	<p>Has helped us increase our knowledge on various topics and share with our classmates</p>
<p>3. Communication (2)</p>	<p>Improved relationships btw teacher-teacher, children-children, teacher-children, teacher-parents</p> <p>Children have been more cooperative in studying, organization of activities, etc.</p>

#### Rural school girls

WHAT WORKED WELL	HOW DID IT IMPROVE YOUR DAILY LIFE
1. Training courses for teachers changing Methodology make teachers dedicated (5)	Teaching quality and teachers' communication with children have improved Happy with children's results We are more relaxed as teachers treat the children well Good relationship teacher-children
2. Camping and other activities for children Organised (2)	a) Vulnerable children are supported and included b) School and community are closer
3. Organization of elections for parents' board and children's government have been fair	Elections have been fair and parents and children have felt good

Rural school fathers

WHAT WORKED WELL	HOW DID IT IMPROVE YOUR DAILY LIFE
1. Summers camps and other activities (6)	a) We had a lot of entertainment and exchanged ideas with other children b) Our wish to celebrate New Year outside the school was not taken into account c) Some planned activities (kite day) never took place d) Didn't like the food at the cooking day
2. Various activities inside and outside the school such as on relationship behaviours btw student-student, teacher-student, or senator-parent (2)	Improve relationships

Rural school boys

WHAT DID NOT WORK WELL	HOW DID IT AFFECT YOUR DAILY LIFE – WHICH PROBLEMS DID YOU FACE
<p>1. Basic school/learning facilities wanting (7):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>d) No concrete support provided to improve children's life at school</li> <li>e) New gym should be built</li> <li>f) Lack of transportation for children to school</li> <li>d) Equipment of labs with adequate means/ material base</li> <li>e) No contribution for new books for school's library</li> <li>f) No green spaces/environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>d) Children need not only to be entertained, but also material support</li> <li>e) Children catch cold/flu and get dirty with mud</li> <li>f) Children spend more time with computers</li> <li>-</li> <li>f) Lack of spaces to play. Many classes of physical education are not adequately organized</li> </ul>
<p>2. Teacher learning opportunities (4)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) IT Training to be provided to all teachers along with certification</li> <li>b) Training and certification in English language</li> <li>c) Certification of trained teachers</li> <li>d) Training of teachers according to their profiles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Difficulties in preparing the teaching plans/ Tests</li> <li>b) English is become essential for accessing more info and knowledge</li> <li>c) Affects motivation to attend training</li> <li>d) Sharing of information is inadequate and quality of information from the source is affected/gets lost</li> </ul>

Rural school teachers

WHAT DID NOT WORK WELL	HOW DID IT AFFECT YOUR DAILY LIFE – WHICH PROBLEMS DID YOU FACE
<p>1. Basic school/learning facilities wanting (6):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>g) No concrete support provided to improve children's life at school</li> <li>h) New gym should be built</li> <li>i) Lack of transportation for children to school (4)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>g) Children need not only to be entertained, but also material support</li> <li>h) Children catch cold/flu and get dirty with mud</li> <li>i) We feel worried/concerned about their travel safety to schools and activities</li> </ul>

Rural school mothers

WHAT DID NOT WORK WELL	HOW DID IT AFFECT YOUR DAILY LIFE – WHICH PROBLEMS DID YOU FACE
<p>1. Basic school facilities wanting (3):</p> <p>a) Various teaching labs</p> <p>b) Sports playground</p> <p>c) Green spaces/environment</p>	<p>a) Lack of equipments/means to make experiments/practice lab exercises</p> <p>b) Many classes of physical education are not adequately organized</p> <p>c) Lack of spaces to play</p>
<p>2. Activities (2):</p> <p>a) Visit to birthplace</p> <p>b) Puppet show/theatre</p>	<p>a) We did not like the place we visited</p> <p>b) It was boring to see a theatre we had seen so many times</p>
<p>3. SC failure to maintain commitment</p>	<p>Save the Children has encouraged us to take the initiative, but has not provided support to the end</p>

#### Rural school girls

WHAT WORKED WELL	HOW DID IT IMPROVE YOUR DAILY LIFE
<p>1. Basic school facilities wanting (4):</p> <p>a) Lack of labs in the school</p> <p>b) Old school building</p> <p>c) Lacking amenities and green areas</p>	<p>a) Affects learning quality in assimilating the info/knowledge</p> <p>b) We are concerned about children's safety</p> <p>c) Children have no adequate place where to spend their break time/free time</p>
<p>2. Teachers should be more demanding in terms of learning control/check up and discipline. (2)</p>	<p>a) Affects teaching and learning quality</p> <p>b) Parents need to know the performance of their children and how they learn</p>
<p>3. Learning opportunities inadequate (2):</p> <p>a) Organization of (second) foreign language courses in the school</p> <p>b) More educational activities should be organised accompanied with films/ video projectors</p>	<p>a) Children lack the opportunity to learn an alternative/second language which would help in their development</p> <p>b) Children know theory but have difficulties to apply theory into practice</p>

#### Rural school fathers

WHAT DID NOT WORK WELL	HOW DID IT AFFECT YOUR DAILY LIFE – WHICH PROBLEMS DID YOU FACE
1. SC promises are not kept (2): a) They promised materials for the Summer Camp. They provided them last year, but forgot for this year. b) Promised a gym	-

Rural school boys

**INTERVIEWS WITH CWD PARENTS, DIRECTOR  
AND TEACHER**

## NOTES ON INTERVIEWS WITH PARENTS IN GJIROKASTRA

### INTERVIEW 1

#### Parent 1: Mother

CWD: Girl A 4 years old

I met girl A, CWD, with her mother. Girl A stayed with us most of the time during the interview.

Girl A was a normal child until 2 years old when she started to exhibit some behaviour issues like aggressiveness, indifference, lack of socialisation with other children. She was visited in Tirana and was diagnosed with elements of autism. The parents were recommended to send Girl A to the day care and to start therapy with logopaedist and development pedagogy.

Girl A s was enrolled in the kindergarten No. 7 in Gjirokastra when she was three years old. The mother chose this kindergarten which is rated as the best kindergarten in the city, but also because of the supportive director who was informed prior to enrolment on Girl A' development background.

The mother defines the kindergarten and the teachers/staff "supportive, friendly and caring" for Girl A and other CWD". She appreciates the work done with Girl A for 1 year in the kindergarten and the progress she has made.

But the mother says that most of the progress Girl A has made so far is due to the therapy Girl A receives in Tirana (two weeks out of 4-6 weeks are spent in Tirana, in a specialized public Child Development Center), the support Girl A receives from her (mother) at home and the support from a hired logopaedist in the city three times a week. All this work has been supported so far in the kindergarten where the mother has established a close relationship with all teachers and particularly the support teacher in the resource centre to reinforce Girl A's individual development plan prepared by her doctor in Tirana.

Girl A has made significant progress in two years, particularly during the last year: she speaks, is independent, can dress up and eat by herself, uses logic, reacts to orders in a logical way, uses bathroom on her own, is very good with hands in assembling objects/legos. I observed all these while Girl A was in the room with us. She talked, identified objects by saying their names, greeted when entered and left the room and said short sentences.

The mother expressed concern that at this stage of Girl A's development the kindergarten could do more harm than help Girl A as the teachers do not have the expertise to support Girl A's further development. The mother said that the teachers know how to behave with CWD, are supportive and caring, but need more training on managing autism children at various phases of their development. The mother said following Girl A's good progress, she has developed a plan with the doctor in Tirana which the teachers, particularly the support teacher at the kindergarten implements in mother's presence. She said that many times the teachers call me and ask me what to do with Girl A and other CWD. She said that "I wish I can take the teachers to Tirana and showcase them how to work with CWD".

The mother pointed out that the children are very supportive along with their parents to Girl A. She also pointed out the support received from friends and family to help Girl A and herself.

She pointed out the need to raise awareness among the other kindergartens' staff and parents to accept CWD and work to help them. She mentioned a few cases in other kindergartens where teachers refuse to enrol CWD because of additional difficulties or



parents complain/refuse to have them in the same groups with their children. Parents ask to send CWD to the special school, which does not exist in Gjirokastra.

The mother also expressed her desire to volunteer her time to talk to other parents, kindergartens on the chances of development CWD have if they are provided professional help, care and support. "Girl A's case is a success story that I want to share and motivates me to keep working".

She pointed out the key role parents can play to help CWD instead of giving up and hiding the problems.

The mother has not attended SC activities due to therapy sessions in Tirana, but had heard good feedback from other parents on the information and cooperation provided by MEDPAK.

She suggests that:

- teachers need more specialized trainings to assist CWD in their development stages
- Support teacher should work individually with CWD at least 30 min a day in close partnership with the parent
- CWD should be involved more in plays/games in the kindergarten
- Kindergarten should provide special food/nutrition for CWD, there is a lack of info on nutrition for CWD
- Need for a logopaedist in the kindergarten even on part-time basis
- More awareness among community, parents and kindergartens to accept autism and how to manage various typologies of autism/CWD

## INTERVIEW 2

### **Director of Kindergarten 7: Juliana XOXO**

The kindergarten director confirmed the need for specialized training for the teachers. She said " By now we have learned how to be supportive, behave and communicate with CWD and their parents and how to provide educational support to CWD. The overall environment is supportive and friendly and the teaching staff does not give up to parents' pressure when they ask for CWD to leave the kindergarten. I rather tell the parents to take their children away from the kindergarten than ask CWD and their parents to leave the kindergarten."

#### Suggestions:

- Need for more training for supporting CWD in various stages of their development, but also to address various typologies of CWD". Teachers do their best given their level of information and knowledge on CWD.
- Training should be extended to all teachers and not to a few teachers selected by REA. Sometimes the trained teachers are like "islands" of knowledge and information in the kindergarten. Critical mass of knowledge needs to be in-house to be more successful.
- Need to raise awareness and train parents on understanding, handling/managing and supporting CWD;
- We have seen models of resource classrooms, but the experience exchange should be extended to other teachers as well
- Need for teaching program for CWD. IEP is a standard format, but we need practical training/guidance how to implement it/operationalise it
- Need for support for material base for CWD
- Need for support to improve the kindergarten infrastructure.

## NOTES ON INTERVIEWS WITH PARENTS IN GJIROKASTRA

### INTERVIEW 3

#### Parent 2: Father

CWD: Boy A; 10 years old

I met the father accompanied by his son, Boy A, who has the Down Syndrome. Boy A used to attend the kindergarten No 7 in Gjirokastra and currently attends 5<sup>th</sup> grade with his brother in Koto Hoxhi School, which is supported by SC with a resource centre and one support teacher for CWD.

According to the father, Boy A has made improvements with the help of the support teacher namely:

- has learned to read and write and basic maths
- communicates with his friends
- is more sociable
- other teachers keep him busy with small assignments

He rated the relationship school-parents as good and close. He said that he became aware of opportunities of CWD should have only in the awareness sessions on CWD organized by MEDPAK (Zela), who encouraged him to send Boy A to school.

His main concern is that Boy A will get some basic life skills from the school, but what will happen after he completes the compulsory education. He requested support/guidance to help him and Boy A what to do afterwards.

Boy A's parents, mother and father, do not support him at home as they are very busy with their work (businesses) and so far have been mainly focused on his health issues (heart problems). On the other hand, his father is convinced that "Boy A cannot progress more".

## NOTES ON INTERVIEWS WITH PARENTS IN GJIROKASTRA

### INTERVIEW 4

#### **Parent: Returned mother**

**Child's name:** Girl B; 8 yrs old

Alma used to be an immigrant in UK where Girl B attended pre-school kindergarten and was a very happy and bright child.

She returned to Albania a few years ago and enrolled Girl B in the first grade in Gjirokstra. The child had a re-entry shock particularly in the school with a teacher that shouts and hugs the children. She was scared of the teacher, but by now had got to like her.

The first thing the mother asked the teacher was not to shout or beat Girl B. The mother noted that teachers speak at very loud voices, shout and have difficulties in managing and disciplining classes. There are hyperactive children who they fail to manage.

She also mentioned that she has another child in the kindergarten where teachers are nervous and impatient with the children.

Suggestions from the mother:

- communication with children in the school and kindergarten should radically change in Albania
- simplification of school texts which are overloaded with information and often with spelling errors.
- school schedule needs to be revised: it is too short, at 11.30-12-00 children have finished the school and somebody needs to take them back home and help them with school work. In UK there was a different system, where children would spend 7 hours in the school and do the schoolwork there.

## NOTES ON INTERVIEWS WITH PARENTS IN GJIROKASTRA

### INTERVIEW 5

**Support Teacher's Name:** Mimoza Gerzhita

**School:** Koto Hoxhi, Gjirokstar

The teacher, who used to be an unemployed teacher, has been trained by MEDPAK and is serving as support teacher since 2010. It is her third year serving as a support teacher in two schools : Koto Hoxhi and Urani Rumbo.

She said that after these 3 years of teaching experience she is aware that she has learned a lot working with the CWD. The training she has received has been very helpful, but now she needs special trainings on the specificity of the CWD: She has children with Down Syndrome, light autism, more severe autism who need tailored individual interventions given their development/progress.

She said that CWD who are supported by parents at home perform much better and there should be more training sessions for parents on CWD and sharing of positive experiences to convince them that their time investment is worth.

The school environment (management and other teachers) is supportive. IEPs are prepared in consultation with the school director, support teacher, psychologist, parents, principal teachers and progress is closely monitored

The teacher is uncertain about her position and resource center after December 2012 when the project closes. She regrets that her experience and investment will get lost if no funding is found to continue either from REA or SC/MEDPAK. Her working experience in this project does not count as work experience as she is not officially employed into school system.

## NOTE ON URBAN SCHOOL DEMOKRACIA IN KORCA

This is a primary school with 330 children, out of which 13 are CWD (12 are certified by the commission and 1 is currently under examination). This is a mixed school where 30% are Roma and Egyptians. Last year the school had 22 CWD.

The school has one classroom which serves as a resource class/center for CWD, where one support teacher helps CWD with their learning up to 5<sup>th</sup> grade. The support teacher is a “novelty”, a new model in working with CWD in the school. The classroom is very child friendly and it is supported by SC with material base/didactic means and serves as a model. ( Pictures of this classroom taken).

The support teacher said that the CWD come to this classroom during the day if they have some problems in the mainstream class or in other time slots agreed with them/their parents to follow up their IEPs. Usually the CWD are supported by another child at good standing/good grades.

IEPs are prepared for CWD in consultation with the parent, teacher, psychologist and the school director. The support teacher assists the CWD in the mainstream class if requested by the teacher as well and has proven to be of significant help.

The support teacher and the director reported that SC’ s and MEDPAK’ s trainings on CWD have helped her and the other teachers:

- i) have info on CWD
- ii) build capacities how to identify CWD assessing them by how they communicate, stand, sit, interact with the others
- iii) how to assist CWD in the class (either mainstream class or in the resource center)
- iv) how to draw up IEPs and monitor their implementation jointly with the parents
- v) how to refer CWD to the certification commission
- vi) experience exchange in Kosovo where CWD class models were showcased (one support teacher for 2 CWD; whereas in the visited school in Korca one teacher for 13 CWD, one volunteer doctor in the school , one psychologist, 5 volunteers, the parent were working/helping in the resource classroom, progress of the child was recorded on daily basis))
- vii) organize activities in the resource center (/7-8 March, 1st June, NY, birthdays

There was one aggressive child who refused to sit in the mainstream class, and the support teacher assisted him in the resource classroom. Now he is showing improvement and is achieving his IEPs objectives and likes to come to the school.

It was suggested that the psychologist should be present in the school more often (not once a week) and should have the adequate education. Currently the school has one psychologist who has a degree in philosophy and has not attended the trainings on CWD. The trainings were attended also by other teachers who were not target of this project. All provided training are not certified by Ministry of Education.

The support teacher noted that the cooperation with the parents of CWD is very good and they are very demanding. They help their children at home and work closely with the principal teacher +support teacher to implement the IEP: The cooperation and feedback with the parents is on daily basis.

When I went to the school to greet the director in her office, she was sitting with another teacher, one child and his mother of Egyptian background , to set the objectives for the

first term (IEP). The atmosphere was very friendly and I left them to visit the resource center for CWD.

The overall environment in the school can be rated as child-friendly, there are awareness posters on children's rights, COMBI posters on positive disciplining and children hang out together (I could see children of mixed background interacting together in the school corridor and school yard. Even in the PIA groups there was a mix of children (Roma and Egyptians and CWD).

The school director emphasized that inclusiveness in school particularly for CWD cannot be achieved without the support teacher. Currently the support teacher model is introduced by SC and is paid from the project funding through MEDPAK.

The director said that there is an awareness among teachers on CWD and they do not resist now to accept CWD in their classrooms as they did in the past. Children are very supportive to their fellow CWD as well.

It should be noted that while providing instructions to teachers' PI, group there was a senior male teacher, who was not part of the PIA group, who suggested that CWD should be sent to the specialized school as they hinder the progress of other children. The other teachers contradicted him.

The above info is collected after talking with the support teacher, Rajmonda Mullaymeri and school director Zhaneta Papa and a few other teachers + observations.

## NOTES ON INTERVIEWS WITH PARENTS IN KORCA

### Parent 1: Mother

CWD: Boy B; 9 years old

The interviewee is a mother parent who works as a kindergarten teacher in Korca. She has a son, 9 years old, diagnosed with autism. She enrolled the son at school Demokracia, which is supported by SC through CWD project. The main reason for enrolling her son there is the resource classroom and the support teacher, although she lives in another suburb of the city.

She reports progress of the child with regard to:

- Socialization and interaction with other children
- He feels good/likes to go to school
- Achievement of IEP objectives in first year : child capable to read the letters, numbers (IEP 2011)
- Improved behaviour

She rates as very positive the support from school director, principal teacher, support teacher and classmates. The overall atmosphere for CWD in school Demokracia is described as welcome, inclusive and supportive. The school has organized activities where her son has been active in reciting verses on June 1<sup>st</sup>. and the ABC celebration. She reported that the other parents are supportive and there is awareness among them on CWD inclusion in the mainstream school.

She reported that IEP is jointly prepared with the parent (her), school director, psychologist, and support teacher and is implemented in close partnership with support teacher, principal teacher and the parent. IEP for 2012 aims to improve child's capacity to write small letters/handwriting letters, reading through syllables, and basic maths. The parent helps the child at home and also provides additional support to him through another teacher at home.

The main issue remains his unexpected behaviour to get out of the classroom. The resource centre and the support teacher are his point of reference when he leaves the classroom.

The parents of CWD are supporting each other and have set up the Association of Parents of CWD with the support of MEDPAK. They are informed on legislation on disability and new changes in the Law on Pre-University Education. There are 30 parents in the association who are lobbying to upscale and mainstream the SC model in the other schools.

CWD Parents' main concern is the sustainability of the resource centre and support teacher in the piloted school after the closure of SC project. They are asking the support of the municipality to provide funding for the resource classroom and the support teacher, but the municipality is turning a deaf ear so far.

She noted that new teachers, who are not trained in CWD are resistant to CWD. For example the English teacher does not want him to be in the class and complained that "he is converting class into a circus"



## NOTES ON INTERVIEWS WITH PARENTS

### **Parent 2: Mother**

**CWD:** Boy C; 13 years old

The child spent the two first years at a non pilot school (Sevasti Qiriazzi) with no support from the teacher and did not know how to read and write until the completion of the second grade. The mother enrolled him at Democracia school in the first grade again when she came to know about CWD pilot school.

The child went through a preliminary assessment by the school director and then was referred to the certification commission where he was diagnosed as CWD. IEP was developed jointly with the school director, psychologist, public health doctor, support teacher, principal teacher and the parent.

The child has made good progress: he can read and write, has improved communication and behaviour. The teachers and classmates are very supportive. The objective is that the child should learn the basics for other classes as well and each year a new IEP is prepared for him. The mother helps him every day according to the IEP in close partnership with the principal and support teachers.

The child is quite good at acting/playing and the teachers have involved him in the mini-theatre/plays organized at school. The classmates are very supportive and help him a lot. The parent reports that through the trainings and information sessions on CWD delivered by MEDPAK she learned a lot how to handle and manage her son and how to communicate with him. Psychologist support was very helpful to her as well.

She expressed her concern about the transfer of her son to higher grades in the neighbouring school where there is no support teacher and resource classroom, no follow up of IEP as it is in Democracia school, and support to CWD is more on individual basis by the teacher (s) rather than mainstreamed as it is in Democracia school.