

## TOGETHER FOR EVERY CHILD'S EDUCATION, PROTECTION AND WELLBEING!



## Background

Our project aims to tackle the material and educational poverty experienced by children aged 6 to 14 and their families through integrated, sustainable, and replicable interventions. We strive to meet the educational needs of children and families in their own communities by involving schools and community centers. By doing so, we promote the social inclusion of children and families who face multiple vulnerabilities.

The primary goal of our project is to strengthen the role of Community Centers in the Municipality of Tirana, enabling them to provide coordinated and effective socio-educational services. This approach helps combat educational poverty among vulnerable children. We firmly believe that integrating formal and non-formal education is crucial for fostering the dynamic, conscious, social, and emotional growth of children. The Community Centers operate within contexts marked by various vulnerabilities, such as economic hardship, social challenges, ethnic minorities, disabilities, and low educational attainment.

Our intervention focuses on addressing the concept of "educational poverty or educational gaps," which extends beyond academic skills and formal schooling. In our methodology, educational poverty refers to children's inability to learn, grow individually, and unleash their potential, talents, and desires. It is strongly influenced by the socio-economic difficulties faced by families and communities, as well as the parenting skills and guidance provided to children. The spaces available to children within and outside of school, where they can identify and develop their talents and aspirations, also play a significant role. Ultimately, the lack of cognitive and non-cognitive skills, such as self-esteem, self-confidence, motivation, communication, and cooperation, perpetuates this cycle of educational poverty from one generation to another.

## Our Objectives

To enable all children, girls and boys, to develop their potential regardless of their background or circumstances as well as to strengthen territorial cooperation and networks, so that children receive the support they need as they grow and develop.

## Target beneficiaries

100 children 6 - 14 y.o.  
50 professionals  
150 parents  
100 schoolteachers

## Implemented by

Save the Children in Albania NO in partnership with Municipality of Tirana

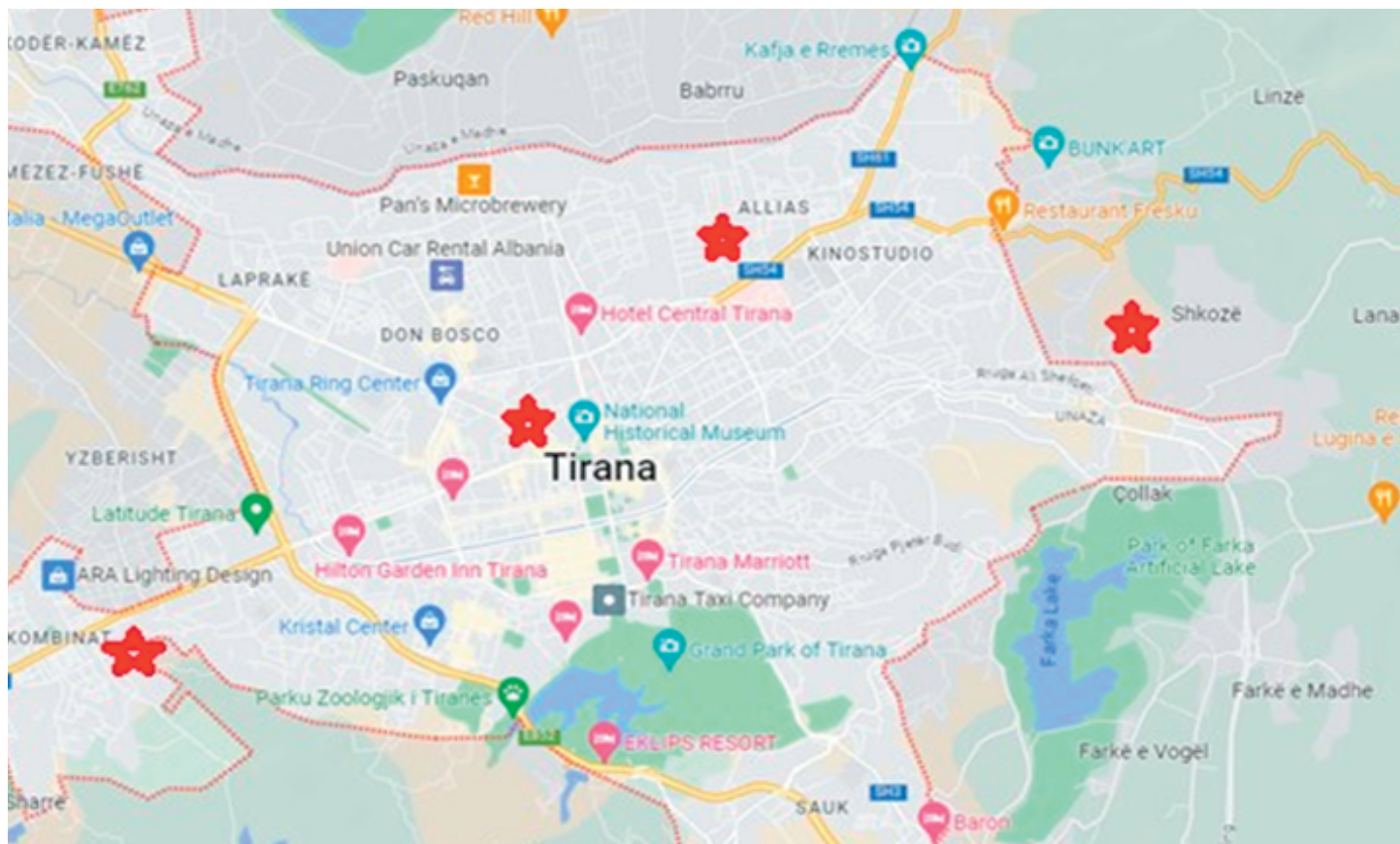
## Implemented by

Consulcesi Foundation, Otto per Mille – Waldensian Church, Save the Children Italy

**85%** of beneficiaries of **Shkoza Community Center** are of Roma/Egyptian community, while in the Multidisciplinary Community Center **50% of the beneficiaries**. (Source: findings of baseline survey of the project)

Around **18% of parents** of children beneficiaries of Community Centers in Tirana are analphabet. Only in the **Shkoza Community Center** this percentage is of **37%**. (source: findings of baseline survey of the project)

### Geographic target: Municipality of Tirana 4 Community Centers





## Multidisciplinary Community Center:



The Multidisciplinary Community Center has been established with the aim of providing support and care to various vulnerable groups. Initially, it began as a Social Center, catering to children with disabilities and elderly individuals. However, it has since expanded its services to include children in street situations, based on a model developed and introduced by Save the Children in 2008. The center now offers a comprehensive range of prevention, response, and community awareness initiatives to address the unique challenges faced by children in street situations, their families, and the wider community.



In line with its commitment to serving multiple vulnerable groups, the center has broadened its scope of services. Presently, it directly works with and provides assistance to children with disabilities, children in street situations, elderly individuals, and vulnerable families. This holistic approach allows the center to have a positive impact on the lives of a diverse range of individuals. Currently, the center's services benefit 45 children and 60 families, directly improving their well-being and providing the support they need.

**Community Center Shkoze:** It began its journey by offering essential assistance to internally displaced children and families from the Roma community. Situated in this suburban area, the Municipality has constructed social houses, which have been allocated to 385 families from various vulnerable groups, predominantly the Roma/Egyptian community. The center not only focuses on facilitating social integration activities but also extends its services to children and youth with disabilities. This inclusive Community Center plays a crucial role in supporting the well-being and development of the local community. Currently, it directly benefits 48 children and 106 families, providing them with much-needed care and support. Together, we are working towards creating a nurturing and inclusive environment where every child and family can thrive



## Community Center Gonxhe Bojaxhi:



The community center is nestled in a secluded neighborhood, lacking essential services and surrounded by an ongoing construction site due to the rebuilding efforts after the 2019 earthquake. This neighborhood primarily comprises families facing extreme poverty, and it is in this context that the newly established community center (established in 2018) has stepped in to make a difference.

At the heart of its mission is the provision of support and services to children with disabilities, as well as individuals and families in need within the community. The center offers a range of programs tailored to meet the specific needs of each group. This includes individual therapy sessions for children with disabilities, educational programs for parents, preventive initiatives, and programs focused on social integration.

The impact of their work is tangible, directly benefiting 90 children and 180 families in need. Through their dedicated efforts, the community center strives to uplift the lives of these individuals and families, providing them with the necessary resources and support to thrive in challenging circumstances. Together, we can create a brighter and more inclusive future for everyone involved.

## Community Center "We stay together":

The Center has undergone reconstruction following the impact of the 2019 earthquake, and it now stands as a beacon of hope in a suburban area predominantly occupied by internal migrant families. These families often find themselves isolated within their smaller communities, lacking opportunities to fully engage in the social life of the metropolis.

One significant aspect of the Center is its extensive experience in working with children with disabilities. It is one of the few services of its kind available at the national level. The Center provides a wide range of valuable services, including assessment and evaluation, individual and group therapy, primarily focusing on mental health support for children with disabilities, especially those within the autism spectrum.



Additionally, the Center offers parent education programs, preventive initiatives, and programs aimed at promoting social integration. Through their dedicated efforts, the Center has positively impacted the lives of 44 children and 27 families. By providing essential services, they strive to empower these children and families, helping them overcome challenges and achieve their full potential. Together, we can create a more inclusive and supportive environment where every child has the opportunity to thrive.



## Intervention Focus:

We firmly believe that educational poverty is not a fate that cannot be changed. It is not a permanent condition, and with targeted prevention and response, we can break the cycle of educational poverty. By providing parenting support, implementing policies that focus on early childhood care and education, and offering targeted learning opportunities and activities, we can contribute to breaking the intergenerational transmission of inequality and educational poverty.

**Levels of Intervention: Our intervention operates on four levels, each playing a crucial role in achieving our goals:**

01

### **SUPPORT TO SOCIAL STRUCTURES:**

We aim to support the social structures in the area to promote inclusion and provide effective and sustainable responses to the social needs of children, families, and the community. We foster collaboration and synergy among the existing structures and services in the area through a multi-sectoral approach.

02

### **STRENGTHENING PARENT-EDUCATOR-CHILD RELATIONSHIPS:**

We invest in strengthening the relationship between parents, educators, and children. This involves providing parenting support, offering learning opportunities that stimulate socio-cognitive, linguistic, and motor skills from an early age, and promoting positive parenting based on effective communication and recognizing children's developmental needs.

03

### **EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS:**

We offer a variety of educational activities across different areas, including support for studying and motivation to read, development of digital skills, cultural, artistic, and musical activities, civic education and environmental protection, sports activities and promoting a healthy lifestyle, informal education through visits to historical sites, theaters, movies, summer camps, and summer educational activities to address summer learning loss.

04

### **ADDRESSING THE "NEET" PHENOMENON:**

We focus on countering and preventing the "Neet" phenomenon, which refers to young people who are not in education, employment, or training. Our approach involves promoting youth protagonism, effective school orientation, helping young people recognize their resources and abilities, and fostering knowledge about the local territory and the opportunities it offers.

# Initial project activities for children

## Sport Activity for children:

We kicked off the project with a fun and exciting activity for the children who attend the four Community Centers in Tirana. We organized a mini-football competition that brought together 80 children, with 55 boys and 25 girls, all aged between 10 and 14. The children were divided into four teams, and they enthusiastically participated in the matches.



After a friendly and spirited competition, the team from the Shkoze Center emerged as the winners of the match. It was a great moment of celebration and teamwork as they showcased their skills and enjoyed the spirit of friendly competition.



This activity set the tone for the project, fostering a sense of friendship and engagement among the children. We are excited to continue organizing more activities and events that will inspire and empower these young individuals as the project progresses.



**Project Kickoff:** The project officially commenced in March 2023 with a coordination meeting involving all stakeholders, including the Municipality of Tirana, Social Centers, and Save the Children. During this meeting, we defined our working methods and identified the training needs of the staff involved. This collaborative effort sets the foundation for the successful implementation of the project.





## Theatrical Show “The Windmill”

About 60 children, attending the 4 Community Centers, participated in the theatrical show.



“The Windmill”, which was staged by a group of children/young people from Elbasan. The event was organized as part of the Children's Action Week trying to raise awareness on the climate change and its effects on inequalities.

The purpose of the show was to raise awareness about an important issue: climate change and its impact on inequalities. Through this engaging performance, we aimed to shed light on the importance of addressing climate change and the ways it can exacerbate existing social and economic inequalities.

The children in the audience were completely immersed in the show, enjoying the captivating storyline and the impressive performances by their peers. It was an inspiring and thought-provoking experience that allowed them to reflect on the significance of environmental issues and their role in creating a more sustainable and equitable future.



## Feedback from beneficiaries: Children and Parents

**I can't wait to come  
to the Center.  
Klaudia**

**I like very much  
coming in the Center.  
I have made many  
friends and learned  
many things - Era**

**I have learned about  
my rights in the  
Center. Leo**

**I FEEL SECURE NOW THAN MY CHILD  
ATTEND THE CENTER. I AM HAPPY THAT I  
HAVE PEOPLE WHO SUPPORT ME AND MY  
CHILD, IT GIVES ME HOPE THAT WE CAN  
MAKE IT.**

**Pranvera - mother**

**I HAVE BEEN PART OF PARENTING  
GROUPS. IT HAS HELPED ME. NOW I  
UNDERSTAND BETTER MY DAUGHTER  
AND OUR COMMUNICATION HAS  
IMPROVED.**

**Entela - mother**