



**Save the  
Children**



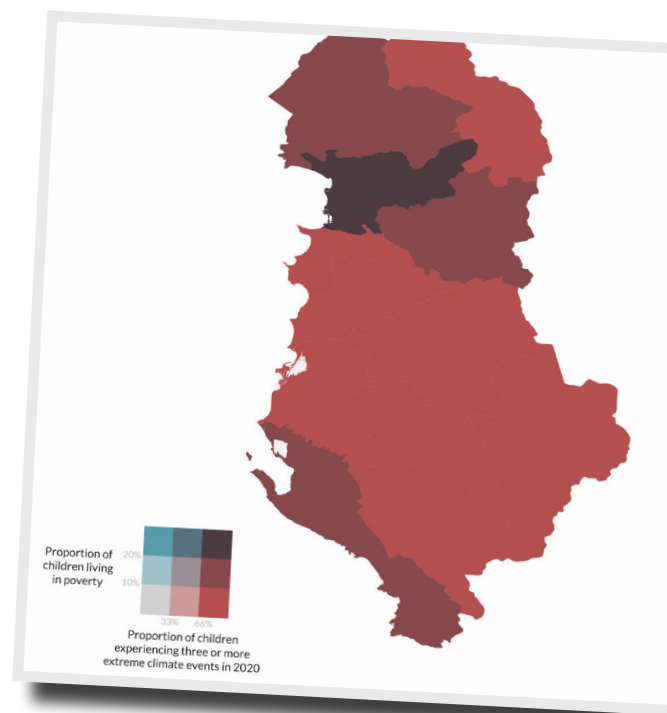
## Tackling the climate and inequality crisis for children Albania Data Snapshot



### Introduction

Albania is a middle-income country in Eastern Europe and is home to 611,364 children. Like many middle-income countries, despite economic growth, inequalities remain between families based on income and other factors such as gender, ethnicity and disability. As a middle-income country, Albania is not eligible for the same international support for its poorest families that may be available to poor families in poorer countries. The climate crisis is exacerbating these inequalities for Albanian children and they must be included in the decisions made today that will affect their lives and the lives of generations to come.

Save the Children supported Child Led Groups (CLGs) to submit a child led report on UNCRC mechanisms related to the climate change and environmental issues. Two representatives from Child – Led Groups in Albania (one girl and one boy), supported from Save the Children in Albania National Office presented the child friendly policy brief to presession meeting held in September 2022 as part of Alternative CRC Reporting Process for Albania. This report deals with the impact that climate changes have on children.

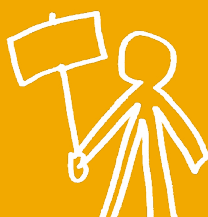


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**Economic inequality is like a disease ... and it is a threat to human rights. It is a great threat to all children and youths of today... In Albania, wealth is concentrated in very few people. 17-year-old girl**

**Children living  
in poverty:**

**10%**



**Children affected  
by climate risk:**

**96%**



**Children affected by  
both poverty and climate:**

**9% (57,000)**

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## Are Albania's climate policies sufficiently ambitious & focused on children?

Albania has taken steps to address climate change and reduce GHG [greenhouse gas] emissions. In 2017, Albania ratified the Paris Climate Agreement. Albania's NDC [Nationally Determined Contribution] under the Paris Agreement includes a target to reduce GHG emissions by 11.5% by 2030, compared to 2005 levels.

In terms of policies focused on children, Albania has implemented programs aimed at educating and raising awareness about the importance of protecting the environment and addressing climate change.

Is the NDC child-sensitive?	Somewhat Child Sensitive
Does the NDC identify children as a vulnerable group?	Yes
Is the NDC rights-based (human rights and intergenerational justice)?	Yes

Source: Climate Watch 2021



Climate change has affected our ecosystem... Scientists talk about the problems of the ozone layer. The ice in the earth's poles is melting fast... People are accustomed to the temperatures of the place where they live. Rising temperatures may be hard to deal with. **18-year-old, girl**

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## Is Albania investing in children and ensuring no child is left behind?

The "Leave No One Behind" (LNB) Program aims at improving social services in Albania and at boosting vulnerable groups' participation in decision-making that affects their own lives.

The program's interventions target local people and has a particular focus on persons with disabilities as well as Roma and Egyptian communities in need of social protection and care. At the same time, the project supports national institutions, municipalities and local service providers to deliver more effective and efficient services and promote social inclusion.

	Is progress inclusive?	Are all groups on track to meet the SDG target?
Stunting (SDG2)	✓	✗ No group
Under-five mortality (SDG 3)	✓	✓ All groups
Child marriage (SDG 5)	✓	✓ Only some groups

SPENDING ON SOCIAL SECTORS (% GDP)		
Health	Education	Social protection
3%	3.4%	1.3%

Source: WHO Global Health Expenditure Database 2020, UNESCO 2020, World Social Protection Report 2020-2022/IMF 2020



## Is Albania doing enough to protect and support children affected by crisis?

According to the Situation Analysis of Children and Adolescents in Albania (UNICEF 2021 report), the greatest practical obstacle to realizing children's rights is the government's consistent refusal to invest in children's targeted services, even within the constraints of the national finances. Successive governments over many years have under-funded health, education, protection and welfare services, consistently allocating budgets below the OECD member countries, EU member states and regional averages, even as Gross Domestic Product (GDP) have risen, and the country has achieved upper-middle-income status. This deficit has inevitably eroded infrastructure, stifled innovation, lowered quality standards, encouraged petty

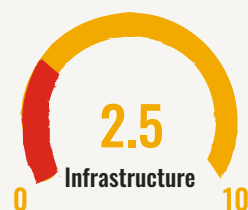
corruption and incrementally reduced the fitness for purpose of services. The next few years are likely to be particularly difficult for children and families as the country copes with an anticipated drop in GDP due to the global pandemic. It is likely that services for children, which are not robust, will struggle to respond and it is important to ensure that there is no further erosion of child-related budgets, that the national pattern of underinvestment in children is reversed, and that services for them and their families are protected, expanded and strengthened. At the same time, the pandemic has demonstrated the government's real capacity to respond and clearly demonstrated the strengths and weaknesses of the various child related services.

### DATA ON LEVEL OF DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

**Inform** Index - lack of coping capacity (0 is best score, 10 worst)



**Institutional capacity** includes Disaster Risk Reduction and Governance



**Infrastructure** includes communication, physical infrastructure, access to health systems

Source: Inform Risk Index 2023

#### DOES ALBANIA HAVE CHILD-SENSITIVE CLIMATE ADAPTATION PLANS?

Does the NDC have child-sensitive adaptation commitments for:

	<b>Health</b>	No
	<b>Food Security and Nutrition</b>	No
	<b>Education</b>	No
	<b>Social Protection</b>	No

Source: Climate Watch 2021

## Are children's rights to be heard and participate in decision making upheld?

Albania has adopted national legislation that protects the rights of children to be heard and participate in decision making, including the Law on the Protection of Children's Rights, that recognize the importance of involving children in decision making processes that affect their lives and provide mechanisms for ensuring their participation. One of the key mechanisms for promoting children's participation in decision making is the Albanian National Children's Council. Despite these efforts, there are still challenges in fully upholding children's rights to be heard and participate in decision making in Albania.

#### CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION IN CLIMATE POLICY MAKING

<b>NDC process was overall inclusive and participatory</b>	Yes
<b>NDC recognises children as drivers of change</b>	No

**Civic space** refers to the environment that enables civil society to enjoy freedoms of association, peaceful assembly, and expression; it requires respect in policy, law, and practice to protect these fundamental rights. An open and pluralistic civic space is a prerequisite condition for making development and peace sustainable.

<b>CIVICUS Measure of civic space.</b>	Narrowed
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## Is Albania receiving sufficient support to tackle the climate & inequality crisis?

In terms of support, Albania has received funding and technical assistance from international organizations, such as the European Union, the United Nations Development Programme, and the World Bank, among others. Overall, addressing the climate and inequality crisis in Albania requires continued support and targeted interventions from the Albanian government and local and international organizations. It also involves promoting a culture of respect for human rights, including the rights of children and marginalized groups, and ensuring that these groups are meaningfully involved in the development and implementation of policies and programs.



### KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Shock-proof essential services for children and respond to the climate and inequality crisis in a way that recognises its multidimensional impacts. This includes ensuring that Emergency Plans help families facing natural disasters access to social protection, education, nutrition, health, and reproductive services, and prevent discrimination on gender and other grounds.
2. Treat the climate crisis as the emergency it is. This means introducing public information campaigns to educate all sectors - including schools, communities, the private sector, and media - on the multidimensional impacts of climate change and their critical role in addressing the climate crisis.
3. Develop climate and inequality policy that recognises the short and long-term economic and other impacts of climate disasters, particularly for most-excluded groups. Interventions must look beyond social protection and the immediate impact of crises on household survival to lasting impacts on rates of gender-based violence, access to nutrition and early school leaving.
4. Work with all stakeholders - including children - to deliver a holistic response to climate change ensuring that they are supported by access to evidence and the education and capacities to take effective action.

PP Inequalities have always existed in Albania. **18-year-old, girl**

PP The seasons have changed and are losing their characteristics... We have very high temperatures in the autumn and very low temperatures in the spring. It happens in Albania, but also in the rest of the world ... We can no longer distinguish the seasons and this is becoming very worrying with each passing day.

**18-year-old, boy**

