



**Save the Children**



**Syri i Vizionit**



## **SUPPORTING LOCAL CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS**

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**Capacity building for child rights defenders in Kosovo**



Save the Children



## LOCAL PARTNER: Syri i Vizionit

### Who they were

Operating from early 1999 as a Community-Based Organization (CBO) in the city of Pejë/Pec to coordinate the publication and release of a Youth Magazine in Kosovo, **Syri i Vizionit (SiV)** is now a registered locally based grass-root non-governmental organization, recognized locally and nationally as a very important actor working in advocacy, information and awareness raising in the field of social dialogue, democratization, human rights issues, environment, urban development and urban mobility, and since 2012 in the area of **children's rights**. SiV has shown their interest in continually expanding their knowledge on project development, as well as in the field of understanding and advocating more strongly for children and young people's rights at both local and national level.

### Who are they now?

SiV has gained in professionalism through implementation of large spectrum multi-faced projects, proving itself as a genuine civil society actor in Kosovo. Today, SiV is known as one of the forefront local organization by all stakeholders in country in matters of children's rights, hence empowering them to represent vulnerable groups in planning and monitoring processes, promoting and advocating for favourable children's policies while holding the government accountable. Furthermore, SiV is at the forefront in terms of mobilizing child and youth-led advocacy initiatives in order to promote children's rights on education, protection and monitoring of the UNCRC, where children themselves are active participants.

### What was done?

Throughout eight years of partnership, Save the Children in Kosovo has built close working relations with SiV, developing and strengthening their capacities to work **for** and **with children** in advocating for children's rights, while acting as a watch dog to hold duty bearers accountable on child rights issues. Various opportunities and capacity building is provided both for organisational (i.e. finance, development of OCD plans, etc) and programmatic issues, specifically support in two thematic areas - Child Protection and Child Rights Governance (i.e. child participation, investment in children, child rights monitoring ,etc).

#### More specifically, SiV enhanced capacities on:

- Advocacy and campaigning, with the perspective of Child Participation;
- Staff knowledge and skills on Child Protection and Child Rights Governance;
- Advocacy and Campaigning, focusing on Banning Corporal Punishment, including awareness and development of 4 year strategy);
- Implementing and monitoring of child rights (project design, strategy development etc);
- Increasing and strengthening of partnerships and networking at different levels, enhancing the collaborations between SiV, SCI advocacy global offices and other Save the Children in Kosovo national and regional CSO;
- Positive Discipline in Every day Parenting – in house capacities through trainers;
- Establishing and enhancing the capacities of child led groups at national and local level.

*It is Save the Children's belief that by shifting greater capacity, means and ownership to national and local actors, it will result in more timely, appropriate and effective outcomes for the most deprived, vulnerable and marginalized children and their communities and better fulfil the rights of children.*



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## Results

Successful advocacy toward the Draft Law on Child Protection, with a focus on banning Corporal Punishment in all settings, resulted in the passing of the Law on Child Protection, **and for the first time a ban on Corporal Punishment in all settings**, with the Law in implementation beginning July 2020.

## What difference has it made for the CSO?

The continued capacity building and strengthening of the organization in the field of children's rights has enabled SiV to represent vulnerable groups in planning and monitoring processes, to promote and advocate for favourable children's policies while holding the government accountable. Further, it has enabled them to mobilize child and youth-led advocacy initiatives toward the promotion of children's rights on education, protection and monitoring of the UNCRC, where children themselves are active participants.

Government agencies and other local partners now view SiV as one of the leading local NGOs in the field of children's rights, many times being invited on various initiatives even without the presence of Save the Children.

Additionally, as result of increased in house capacities over the years, SiV is now one of the most reputable civil society organizations in support of other smaller local non-governmental organizations, through provision of trainings and capacity building on issues around child rights approach, including campaigning and child participation.

## What difference does it make for children?

- **GIVING CHILDREN A PLATFORM AND VOICE:** the establishment of child led groups at local level with representation at the municipal assemblies, and at national level with representation nationally, has slowly began to positively change the patriarchal mind set, with children actively partaking in numerous advocacy and campaigns initiatives, including the Law on Child Protection.
- **BUILDING IN COUNTRY CAPACITIES:** Child led groups have in place mechanisms and are equipped to advocate and voice their views, as well as to monitor the Child Rights Convention and bring issues forward to duty holders, through school parliaments, the Respect our Rights (ROR) group at national level and Child Municipal Assemblies at local level. Children have developed a two year strategy and action plan with the office of Ombudsman on a numerous child rights issues, currently being implemented.

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- **PARTICIPATION AT ITS BEST:** More than ever before, children are now participating on local and national initiatives, from local budget hearings, project designs, implementation all the way to monitoring of a number of initiatives.



## Why is this important?

Having strong civil society in a country makes possible for improved cooperation between the government and civil society, where input from civil society will continue to be systematically sought and followed up by the government, including public consultations. Furthermore, a strong civil society will continue to ensure effective and consistent implementation and monitoring of the government's commitments (both locally and nationally), including international requirements, toward the fulfilment of children's rights.

SiV continues to advocate in the community to ensure stakeholders such as children, parents, teachers and other community members are part of public mobilization toward positive change in children's rights.

## PARTNER QUOTE

“Professional support offered by Save the Children in Kosovo, not only during the implementation of our program but also with regards to capacity building through professional training for staff (as part of Organizational Capacity Development), has resulted in increased professionalism of human and logistical resources, and hence enabled the drafting and revision of many policies in the field of children's rights, while always including the voice of children through direct participation. Therefore, we are humbled to say that thanks to this support, and joint collaboration and partnership with Save the Children, SiV has managed to become one of the most powerful local organizations in the field of child protection and child rights governance.”

NASER LAJCI, SYRI I VIZIONIT

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