CHILD PROTECTION HUB
FOR SOTH EAST EUROPE

IICRD

Regional Research

ON VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN IN SCHOOLS IN SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE

Country Report: Albania

In partnership with the International Institute for Child Rights and Development and Child Hub

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Executive Summary

Introduction

Violence among children has been considered one of the fundamental issues influencing optimal child development and education. Although this phenomenon is widespread in Albania, it is important to understand, in depth, the factors that affect it. Because of the complex nature of violence itself, to understand this phenomenon one must look at its roots within social, cultural and economic factors. Therefore, the aim of this study was to explore the social and gender norms impacting school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV), and the potential role of children in challenging these social norms. This study was conducted within a larger research initiative in South Eastern Europe, where, along with Albania, seven other countries were included: Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo, Moldova, Romania and Serbia. Child Hub Europe has partnered with Terre des hommes and the Institute for International Child Rights and Development to address this critical issue through this research.

The key findings and recommendations of the research on violence against children in schools in Albania include:

Key findings

- Violence against children is widespread. It happens in high frequency and brings heavy consequences. Children, both boys and girls, are exposed to all types of violence. For girls, bullying and sexual violence is the most highly ranked in terms of frequency and impact. For boys, this is psychological and physical violence. The most common perpetrators include peers, adults (family and teachers) and media.

- There is a perceived increase in cyberbullying and domestic violence, by children and adults, due to COVID-19.

- Children and adults identify various harmful social norms that perpetuate violence: a culture of acceptance and tolerance towards violence, (especially "deserved" violence), violence for self-protection, aggression as a value, obedience to authority figures, "doing it on your own". Specifically, in terms of gender-based violence, these social norms include traditional gender roles, male honour, viewing the man as the protector of the family, a limitation of female roles, "keeping secrets", sexuality and sexual violence as a taboo topic, sexual violence as shame, victim blaming, and the adage that "boys will be boys".

- Safety looks like safe figures (close friends, parents, favourite teachers and the psychologist) and safe areas (schools sund areas close to their neighbourhood).

Still, children only feel partially protected because of violent fathers, missing/unavailable psychologists, violence at school, on the way to school and in the community (especially far from home and at night, for girls).

- Children's informal protection network includes trusted parents, closest friends and older brothers. The formal protection network within school includes a favourite teacher and psychologist/social worker of the psycho-social service unit at school (where available). Outside of school is less known or accessible. There are harmful social norms that reduce access to psychologists and create ambivalence towards police (seen as sometimes helpful, but also corrupt). Reporting is accepted by children only in "serious" cases, because of the harmful social norms and fear of consequences. Only the school reporting system is known (younger children are reported to be less familiar with it). The community value of supporting each other is healthy, but doesn't apply in cases of sexual violence. Associations working with victims of violence, community centres for children and discussions at school around protection from violence, though not regularly promoted or necessarily direct protection activities, are reported as forms of support.

- Children's agency is not strong. The bystander effect is quite evident, and is linked to fear of consequences. Only children with a strong support system feel protected. Therefore, violence is addressed individually more than collectively. Some child-led actions that protect children from violence and promote children's well-being include: walking together to school, reporting the violent situation of a friend, and sometimes supporting bullied friends.

- The children's main hope is that all children will be protected from violence. Their ideas to achieve that include: talking regularly about violence with family, school and the community; parents being supported in improving their communication; changes in community and media attitudes, especially towards gender-based violence; services becoming more accessible; and perpetrators receiving adequate punishment.

Key recommendations

Policy recommendations related to developing policies and programs focusing on prevention of child violence include: implementing existing policies and laws to improve the response of the child protection system to cases of child abuse, and implementing existing policies on ethical media conduct in addressing cases of child abuse.

Practical recommendations include: developing violence prevention school programs, community-based interventions that challenge harmful social and gender norms, and improve parenting practices.

Table of contens

1 Introduction

It is no longer possible to ignore the significant and widespread impact violence has on children. It influences children in the short and long term, and even across generations. Despite the three decades that have passed since the international community came together to launch the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, Hollis, Marcy, Amboy and Kress (2016) found that over 1 billion, half of all children between the ages of 2 and 17, had experienced violence, abuse or neglect within the previous year. Violence against children happens in schools, homes, communities and across systems. In South East Europe, violence against children is pervasive.

Understanding that direct and indirect experiences of violence in childhood undermines our investments in children in health, education, and development, this research focuses on further understanding the social and gender norms impacting school-related (gender-based) violence (SRGBV), and the role of children in challenging these social norms.

For this research, Child Hub Europe partnered with Terre des hommes and the Institute for International Child Rights and Development to address this critical issue.

Methodological Overview: Overview of multi-country study

This study was conducted in South Eastern Europe, specifically in **Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo, Moldova, Romania, and Serbia.**

The purpose of the research was: **To measure the social and gender norms impacting school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV), and the potential role of children in challenging these social norms (RFP Child Hub).**

Guiding Questions and Contextual Lens of Analysis

The following questions guided all aspects of the study, and were integrated into the study framework and relevant data collection instruments:

1. What do we know about the incidence and type of violence that children are facing in and around school in Southern and Eastern Europe, as well as the children that are most impacted by it?
2. What are the social and gender norms of school children, community members and school professionals related to violence against children?
3. What are the social and gender norms of school children, community members and school professionals related to gender-based violence against children?
4. What are the informal and formal mechanisms, child-led actions, community resources, values and services that protect children from violence and promote a child's well-being?
5. To what degree do children feel able to prevent or respond to violence (and GBV specifically) against themselves and their peers, and what ideas do they have for preventing and responding to violence?
6. How has children's experience of violence in and around school changed since COVID-19?

Note: due to measures related to the COVID-19 pandemic, data collection was temporarily suspended until it could be resumed in accordance with national and local requirements to ensure the safety of participants and researchers. To maintain the consistency and legitimacy of the data collection, the research

questions remained the same, but additional contextual information provides clarity on data that refers to retrospective perspectives of what was occurring prior to pandemic policies and school closures, and any changes that have occurred as a result of lockdown measures. Some additional questions were added to explore the perception of the change in experiences of violence in schools and other educational experiences (including online, learning from home) that occurred as a result of COVID-19 measures.

In order to gather information on the current status and practice of violence against children, as well as on social norms, attitudes, practices and knowledge around violence against children, this study explored educational settings in addition to the full context of children's lives within which violence takes place. This study focused on:

1. Girls' and boys' experiences and life stories (in general),

2. Educational settings (including formal and informal educational settings [in person, at a distance, online], for teachers, principals and fellow students),

3. The route to educational settings (including outdoor spaces, recreational areas, business areas, roads, etc.),

4. Formal and informal support services (including social services, state care and the judicial system)

5. Cultural values, beliefs and norms that shape children and adults' social and gender norms with respect to violence against children.

6. Children in exceptionally difficult circumstances, such as children with disabilities, children living on the street, migrant children, ethnic or religious groups, etc.

2.2 Research Methods and Approach

This is a mixed methodology study with a "qualitatively driven approach" (Hesse-Bibber & Johnson, 2015). It is both inductive and deductive, as well as exploratory, drawing on participatory methods. Using a variety of research instruments with groups of children and adults (see the table below), the researchers' understanding of children's lived realities gradually deepened. Further exploration of children's lives will yield stronger indications of social norms and practices, and will enable clearer direction for future programming and policy, rather than a process that reaches larger numbers of participants with less depth.

Within the participatory methodology, the focus of the instruments was to provide children and adults with a framework in which they could explore the violence that is taking place in children's lives. Rather than asking closed questions, researchers created the space for children to name what they perceive as violence, explain its prevalence and its impact on their daily lives, discuss their attitudes towards violence as well as the attitudes of their peers, parents and the broader community, and the impact of these attitudes. In addition, attention was given to creating space for children to identify strategies for prevention and support services, as well as for social change.

Researchers in each project country identified the most appropriate sites based on the sampling frame. In Albania, two sites were included in the research: Lezhë, an urban area, and Levan, a rural area.

The sampling frame aimed to include the following:
- Children aged 13–18 (approximately 30 children/site [2 groups of 10–15 children, one boy group and one girl group], in approximately 2-4 sites)
- Adults, including: parents, teachers, principals, other school professionals, community and religious leaders, social service providers and community members (approximately 15 people/site)

However, given the added complications associated with COVID-19 distancing protocols, the following sampling frame was used in Albania:

- 32 children aged 13–18 (four groups of children: 8 girls and 7 boys for the Lezhë site, 9 girls and 8 boys for the Levan site)
- 18 adults, including: mothers, fathers, teachers, school psychologists, nurses, community leaders and social services providers (8 adults at the Lezhë site, 10 adults at the Levan site)

Methods conducted with Children and Adults

Children	Adults
Tool 1: Social Mapping- Part 1	Tool 6: Vignettes
Tool 2: Vignettes	Tool 7: Focus Group
Tool 3: Participative Ranking Methodology	
Tool 4: Social Network Mapping	
Tool 5: Focus Group	

Note: due to COVID-related measures introduced during data collection, tools were adapted to fit one or both of the following formats:

Method 1: In person, respecting physical distancing

Method 2: With access to a smartphone or computer with internet, or remote participation

All efforts were made to conduct research in person to avoid the ethical complications of conducting distance-based research with children on violence. In the end, the research was conducted in person at both sites, with smaller groups and respecting physical distancing protocols (using personal protection measures, disinfectants for hands and tools, and spacious and well-ventilated meeting rooms).

2.3 Ethical Considerations

Research on sensitive subjects, such as violence against children, can cause unintended harm to participants, for example, if confidentiality is breached, informed consent is not obtained, or a group of people is stigmatized. Researchers need to be careful not to raise expectations, which can lead to mistrust of outsiders and disillusionment. Researchers also need to be cautious not to increase power imbalances that may cause a particular group to become vulnerable.

The research on violence may ask children and adults, even without direct questions concerning personal experience, to re-live painful and difficult trauma. For researchers working with children who may have suffered from violence, abuse, neglect and/or exploitation, there is a critical responsibility to "do no harm" in their interactions with children and youth.

The researchers in this study were trained to watch for signs of distress (both verbal and non-verbal) among children. They ensured that the environment within the activities remained respectful and supportive, and took time to speak with children who may have needed extra support outside of the activity. The name and contact details of a support worker, as well as emergency numbers and local reporting protocol, were listed on a flipchart at all times, enabling children to reach out for additional support on their own. Where a flipchart was not practical, handouts were given to young participants before each session. When, for example, a researcher saw that a young person required support, they were able to discuss this with the child and call a support person to request a personal visit be made to the community. The researcher was then able to follow-up with both the child and the support worker using appropriate child safeguarding protocol, as per the TdH Child Safeguarding Policy and national legislation.

Please also see Appendix B for Ethical Research Protocols, including further ethical guidelines, recommendations and practices for working with children, informed consent and limited confidentiality procedures and considerations.

Country-Level Methodology

Research Team

The research team was composed of four members, or two teams of two persons. Each team was composed of a researcher (the national researcher) or co-researcher/ group facilitator selected to facilitate the boy groups, and a note-taker. This meant two women for the girls' groups and two men for the boys' groups.

Site Selection

In Albania, two sites were included in the research: Lezhë, an urban area, and Levan, a rural area. These sites were chosen to represent the perspectives of both rural and urban communities. Furthermore, both had been identified by Terre des hommes as areas where social norms, gender-based issues and violence in relation to children deserved attention.

Despite COVID-19 restrictions, Terre des hommes' contacts with community members, adults and children, and its logistical support, made full participation in the research possible. Even so, due to the protection measures, the focus groups were conducted with a smaller number of participants than planned.

Participants

The following individuals participated:
- 32 children aged 13–18 (four groups of children: 8 girls and 7 boys at the Lezhë site, and 9 girls and 8 boys at the Levan site)
- 18 adults, including: mothers, fathers, teachers, school psychologists, nurses, community leaders and social services providers (8 adults in Lezhë and 10 adults in Levan)

- Locations:
- In each country, researchers worked with children and adults in 1–2 locations. These locations were selected based on:

  – An area that is specifically compelling based on social norms, gender-based issues and violence.

- In each location, the research teams worked with the 3 groups: 2 groups of children (boys and girls) and 1 group of adults, for each activity, over the course of 2 days.

Given the nature of the research, children aged 13–18 were selected as they have reached a developmental stage that can understand the complexities of violence and the systems that influence it. Given the gendered nature of experiences of violence, there needed to be a nearly equal number of participants of both genders.

Group size was determined by engaging the largest number of participants without compromising the depth of the research. In each research site, the researchers (1–2 people) worked with 2 gender-specific groups of children, and 1 separate groups of adults, for a maximum total of 32 children and 18 adults for both sites. An almost equal number of boys and girls were achieved for each site, while for the adults, male participation was much more difficult to achieve. In the end, 3 men and 15 women participated in the adult groups.

Because of the sensitivity of the issues discussed, the gender of the group was matched with the gender of the researchers and note-takers.

3.4 Sampling

The target population was children aged 13–18 years old in school in South and Eastern Europe. Choosing the appropriate school was limited by numerous pragmatic and sampling constraints. The research is exploratory in nature and the sampling strategy will draw on convenience sampling, allowing researchers to choose schools that are accessible to them and for schools to identify children who meet the criteria for inclusion in the study. Therefore, the schools were identified via convenience and purposive sampling, in order to select specific populations representing a diverse range of children in a diverse range of settings. This was set collaboratively by the national researchers, but included schools representing urban or rural contexts, or schools with a high percentage of indigenous, migrant, or various ethnic groups, or low-income families. Schools could also be chosen on the basis of perceived higher rates of violence concerning gender-based issues.

It is important to note that we worked closely with schools, community organisations and local governments to ensure that we could conduct the research with the **same children and adults over the course of the research. Therefore, the same group of children moved through all the research tools identified,** *allowing researchers and participants to deepen their understanding as each tool progressed.*

Children in the Sample
Local partners, secondary schools and community organizations were contacted in advance to inform them of the research. Based on the sampling frame provided above, the national researcher identified schools and invited them to participate.

In Albania, each site included 2 groups of 15 boys and 17 girls, aged 13–18, who were purposely selected by the Terre des hommes community centre contact points, in cooperation with the national researcher, to participate in the research.

Adults in the Sample

For adults, including: mothers, fathers, teachers, school psychologists, nurses, community leaders and social services providers, 1 mixed-gender group of 10 people was found in
Levan, and one mixed-gender group of 10 people was included in Lezhë.

Data Analysis

An in-depth, taped recording of each tool was achieved (with the permission of each participant), to ensure full data collection. Data confidentiality was fully preserved. Transcripts of each recording were produced. The qualitative data were coded and organised around the main themes of primary data collection. Sub-codes were further developed, merged and rearranged based on the variations and insights emerging during narrations. (These were organised in Excel sheets).

Ethical Issues

3.5

Please also see Appendix B for more details on the Ethical Protocol.

Special note during COVID-19: During COVID-19, each local context changed rapidly for both children and project staff (for example, government restrictions on physical distancing were suddenly relaxed). Hence, ethical protocols needed to be examined regularly (at each point of change).

During fieldwork preparation, the need to adapt the number of participants in focus groups arose, due to COVID-19 restrictions. Therefore, groups were capped with a maximum of 10 participants.

Consent was documented by asking parents (in cooperation with children) to sign consent forms days before the focus group meetings. At the start of each tool, participants were reminded of the confidentiality of the work, were asked permission to record, were reminded of their right to drop out of the meeting at any time, and were also reminded of the contact number of a school/psychologist/ other child protection worker, in case of need.

Research Tools: Adaptations and Reflections on their Implementation

3.6

The tools were easy to use, and they flowed from more "superficial" information in the Social Mapping tool (which doubled as an icebreaker and established trust in the researchers and the process), to more sensitive information.

In the original tool package, a second/optional Social Network Map tool was suggested. Since the fieldwork for each site was reduced to two days, the researchers decided not to use this optional tool in order to allow more time for going deeper into the topics that arose.

3.7 Limitations

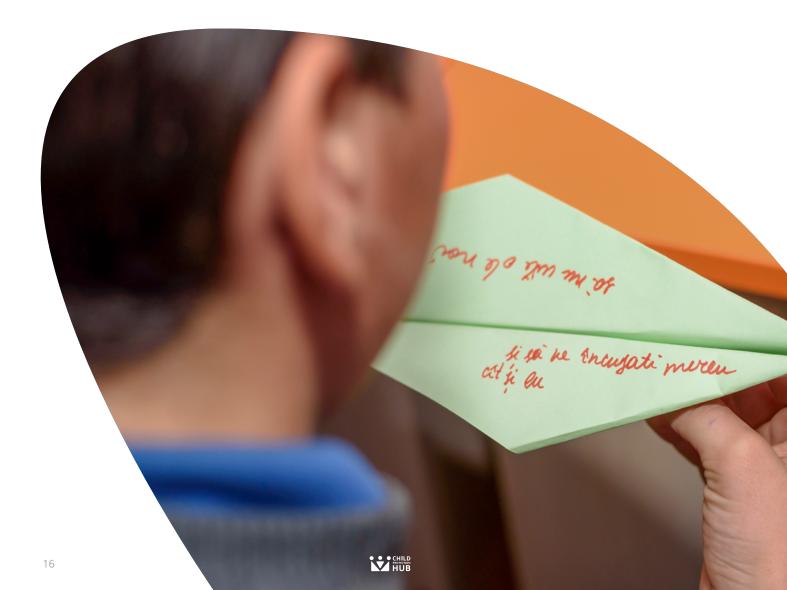As mentioned above, the limitations of this research were related to COVID-19 restrictions and included:

- Choosing two research sites rather than a maximum of four, which was initially proposed by the research-guiding group.

- Capping focus groups with a maximum of 10 adults, rather than 15

- Not using the optional Social Networking tool, because of time limits at each site (two days instead of three).

Violence Against Children in Schools in Albania

In Albania, there is a high prevalence of abuse and neglect of children in both homes and schools. The most frequently reported forms of abuse and neglect were psychological (50%), physical (40%), and sexual (6%) (WHO 2016). A variety of persons in the school setting, including teachers, students, parents and school staff are involved in unethical behaviours in the education systems (ACER, 2017). In schools, it is suggested that all forms of violence are still perceived and used as a means of education or discipline, from pre-school to upper-secondary education (UNICEF Albania, 2018). During their years in school, 48.4% of Albanian children experienced at least one form of physical violence (prevalence), and 59.45% of the children reported to have experienced physical violence during the past year (incidence) (Hazizaj, et al, 2013).

Peer-to-peer violence in the form of school bullying is a major form of violence that exists in schools. Psychological violence is not considered abuse in the Albanian context, given its high prevalence and cultural acceptance. However, it is the most commonly reported form of violence by children (61.69%) (Hazizaj, et al, 2013). The most widespread form of bullying is psychological. A higher number of students have been subject to bullying or involved in bullying two or three times a month. Physical appearance (e.g., being overweight, having language difficulties and being perceived as having physical weaknesses) is cited as the foremost reason why some children are singled out and experience higher rates of school bullying (Dragoti & Ismaili, 2017).

Teachers have displayed a wide range of unethical behaviours, varying from minor behaviours to major acts. The most concerning unethical behaviours amongst teachers in schools includes: excluding students from classrooms, threatening them with low marks, or failing them in an examination; using inappropriate communication, such as insults, sarcastic language, or derogatory nicknames; and showing favouritism to particular students based on personal relations or preferences (ACER, 2017). The school norms that support favouritism impact students negatively. According to UNICEF Albania (2018), this prompts students to respond physically and verbally violent towards their peers, and rude and disrespectful toward teachers and school staff. Teachers perceive bullying as normal behaviour related to child growth and development (Kashahu, 2014).

Sexual violence is another concerning type of violence, partially because it is more hidden. The CRCA (Hazizaj, et al, 2013) proposes that boys experience higher rates of sexual violence and contact in schools. However, the literature reports a hesitancy of girls to disclose forms of sexual and gender-based violence. Thus, it can be assumed that the number of incidents is likely much higher than reported for girls (Hazizaj, et al, 2013). The authors posited a link between strong social norms, such as the patriarchal mentality of the culture, and girl's hesitancy to disclose sexual abuse or exposure to sexual violence (Hazizaj, et al, 2013).

Gender plays a more influential role in the prevalence of certain types of violence in school. On the one hand, it is reported that boys are the main perpetrators of bullying in schools and are less likely to be victims, but girls are more likely to be victims (Dragoti & Ismaili, 2017). On the other hand, in Albania, boys experience higher rates of both sexual violence and contact sexual violence in schools, whereas girls experience higher levels of feelings of neglect (Hazizaj, et al, 2013). Girls are the most common victims of sex trafficking, forced labour and early marriage (Byrne, 2014). In high schools, 68% of boys are victims of violence, whereas 32% of girls identified themselves as victims (Brahja, 2017).

Violence against children is often not considered abuse in the Albanian context due to its social and cultural acceptance in certain contexts. Corporal punishment is largely accepted as a form of discipline in school and society (Hazizaj, et al, 2013). Parents approve of school authorities using psychological and physical violence against their children to teach discipline. In Albania, parents themselves may encourage the use of violent behaviours against their children in school premises, and in front of peers and teachers (ACER, 2017).

Child sexual abuse is kept under strict secrecy in Albanian society due to the existing socio-cultural norms that seek to preserve "honour" and refrain from sexual activity until marriage (Burazeri, et al, 2015). This precludes some from discussing or reporting it. Early marriage (often involving 14 and 15-year-old girls) is a prevalent practice in rural and Roma communities to ensure virginity before marriage (Cenko & Thartori, 2016). According to Cenko and Thartori (2016), people believe that if they educate children about sex or sexual abuse, they encourage children to have sex. Cenko and Thartori (2016) and Burazeri, et al (2015) suggest that due to a patriarchal mentality, girls are not allowed to disclose sexual abuse or exposure to sexual violence because of the high risk of destroying the reputation ("good name") of the family. Albania has deep-seated roots in the patriarchal traditions characterized by parental authority, adherence to an honour-and-shame system, and customs of hierarchical ordering with the nuclear and intergenerational family (Cenko & Thartori, 2016, p. 310). Large-scale child sexual abuse happens within schools and communities, and children are left unprotected due to the norm of shame and the affiliated secrecy, especially in rural areas (Cenko & Thartori, 2016). Bryne (2014) suggests that children are not considered rights-holders in Albanian

families, schools or society. Roma and Egyptian families are the most excluded and vulnerable groups in Albania, and girls from these communities are also victims of sexual trafficking, forced labour and child marriage (Byrne, 2014).

The academic and grey literature suggests that a large number of students display violent behaviour on school premises. A study by Brahja (2017), among students in grades 10, 11 and 12 in 2 Albanian cities, revealed that children believe their violent behaviour was caused by their parents, teachers or society not acknowledging their rights or allowing them to make decisions for themselves. The majority of students preferred to report violence to the school psychologist rather than the teacher or school principal (Brahja, 2017). The majority of teachers are aware of anti-bullying policies in schools, but they are neither trained nor confident enough to address bullying in school (Dragoti & Ismaili, 2017).

Based on grey and academic literature, it is clear that violence against children is common in Albania in schools, at home and in communities. While there was not a lot of literature exploring social norms, there was enough to suggest that they support levels of corporal punishment and sexual violence, and impede reporting violence against children. Overall, the literature review illustrated a dearth of recent literature articulating the severity, prevalence and types of violence experienced by children, as well as the heightened risk for children from different genders, abilities, ethnicities or other groupings. Few studies explored the response children have to violence in schools.

5 Findings

5.1 Incidence, Type and Perpetrators of Violence Against Children

From the reports of children and adults, it seems that violence is widespread in children's surroundings. Participants sometimes discussed cases of mild violence, but most were cases of damaging to severe violence. There were reports of boys being involved in situations of extreme violence, especially in Levan, that included bloody fights and the use of "cold" weapons, such as in the example below:

"I have seen at my school that they also fight with knives... One day our school became a battleground, and the students were covered in blood. Those boys were in the fourth grade. Two classes fought together." (Boy, 17 years old, Levan)

The frequency of violence is high. Both children and adults report that children are regularly exposed to situations of violence in their daily lives — at school, on the way to school, at home and in the community. These cases are all recent.

"I think, personally, but also from my experience of working as a school psychologist, that violence in Albanian schools is very widespread." (Psychologist, Lezhë)

Through their own ranking and categorization, children reported the various types of violence they encounter in their daily life:

- The most common type of violence faced by girls, aged 0–12, both in Levan and Lezhë, was bullying; for boys in Levan it was verbal offence, while for boys in Lezhë it was physical violence;

- The most common type of violence faced by girls aged 13–18, both in Levan and Lezhë, was sexual harassment; for boys in Levan it was physical violence, while for boys in Lezhë it was psychological violence;

- The most common type of violence faced by girls in school, both in Levan and Lezhë, was bullying; for boys in Levan it was verbal offence, while for boys in Lezhë it was physical violence;

- The most common type of violence faced by girls on the way to school, both in Levan and Lezhë, was sexual harassment; for boys in Levan it was verbal offences, while for boys in Lezhë it was physical violence;

- The most common type of violence faced by girls outside of school (home, community) in Levan was bullying, and in Lezhë was physical violence; while for boys in Levan it was verbal offences, and for boys in Lezhë it was domestic violence;

- The type of violence that has the greatest impact on girls in Levan was rape, while in Lezhë it was sexual exploitation; for boys in Levan, it was suffocation, while for boys in Lezhë it was sexual violence;
- The most common type of violence at school (likely online or remote schooling during COVID-19) for girls in Levan was bullying, and in Lezhë was cyberbullying; for boys in Levan it was isolation and sexual violence, while for boys in Lezhë it was cyberbullying.

Both boys and girls are victims of violence. Physical violence is mostly reported as affecting boys, but there are also more cases of girls modelling boys' behaviour and getting into physical fights with each other.

"In the last few years, the number of girls behaving like the boys we talked about, is increasing." (Girl, 13, Lezhë)

While sexual violence (including sexual harassment and violence, bullying and cyberbullying), is reported as mostly affecting girls, it is a serious concern among children and adults, but there is almost no talk about sexual violence against boys.

"I have experienced sexual harassment by boys on the street and physical violence because I did not respond to them. They stopped me, grabbed me forcefully by the arm, and it has remained bruised for weeks. I remember high school as traumatic." (Girl, 18, Levan)

"Of all the types of violence, sexual violence is the most sensitive to address, but the most serious. There is a 'red alarm light'." (Psychologist, Lezhë)

"Sexual violence doesn't happen to boys." (Boy, 16, Levan)

Bullying and cyberbullying (especially during COVID-19) are widespread and reportedly on the rise. These types of violence are highly concerning to the children themselves, their parents and other adults, primarily because the consequences can be very strong. The children are bullied more because of their appearance, disability, economic situation, being withdrawn or having few or no friends, as the children reported.

"Bullying happens constantly. I think it is dangerous." (Boy, 13, Lezhë)
"I have been a victim of bullying, only because of my economic situation...because I couldn't afford clothes or things like the others did. I have experienced bullying so badly that I thought I would even commit suicide. I even tried several times, but I was scared. I thought about my mom, about my life...I had also taken a knife, I thought several times, I would do it or I will explode, because I'm going crazy in this world." (Girl, 15, Lezhë)

The most frequently mentioned perpetrators of violence are peers, followed by adults, such as family and teachers. Fathers are reportedly more physically violent, while teachers are reported to exert their authority through yelling and intimidation, giving lower grades as punishment, etc.

"In my school and on the way to school, I have seen peers and adults that hurt others." (Boy, 16, Levan)

"I noticed that after the teacher shouted at my child, she didn't talk for almost a whole week." (Parent, Levan)

Police are perceived by children as perpetrators of violence in some cases, because they use physical violence as a means of keeping control, or because of corruption in various situations that further harm children (breaking confidentiality in reporting cases of sexual violence to the media; releasing perpetrators, etc.).

"I have seen physical violence committed by police officers." (Boy, 17, Levan)

Children and adults see the media as a perpetrator in cases of sexual abuse of children because of the way they handle such cases: the identity and exact location of the child and the family is exposed. The case is treated as a scoop, and the child and family are harmed as a result.

"I think the media plays a very negative role." (Teacher, Lezhë)

Participants reported some changes in the types of violence most frequently encountered by children due to COVID-19. Both adults and children have noticed an increase in cyberbullying, which they perceive as shifting school-based violence online because of the increase of time spent online and the decrease of physical contact. Also, some students were bullied because they were potentially infected with COVID-19. Both groups of participants reported an increase in domestic violence as families are forced to spend more time together, especially in cases where an abusive person was already living within the family.

"During COVID-19, cyber violence has increased, not directly, because they did not have the opportunity to have physical contact at school." (Psychologist, Lezhë)

"Cyberbullying has increased. It happens more online because you can express anything easily, whereas if you are [physically] in front of a person, you must restrain yourself more." (Girl, 15, Levan)

"Those who were violated at home used to have an escape. For example, they could go out and hang out with their friend, at least spend some time outside. Especially during the quarantine, isolation became extreme. Now it's a bit different, but [during quarantine] it was the worst, and they were the most at risk." (Boy, 15, Lezhë)

Social and Gender Norms Around Violence Against Children, including Gender-Based Violence

Several harmful social and gender norms around violence were identified by children and adults from both groups. The norms perpetuate violence and do not protect the victims.

Participants report cases that speak of a culture of acceptance and tolerance when it comes to violence in Albanian society. Children report that many children and families are not aware or not fully aware of the various types of violence, and do not consider them as such. Often mild bullying and hitting is not considered violence.

"When the child tells the parent, he might say: it's just a word, it doesn't matter." (Girl, 13, Lezhë)

Children report that "deserved" violence is even more accepted; if, for example, a child makes a mistake, violence is justified. In a vignette about a girl named Valentina, many adults and children justified the girl's teacher yelling at her for falling asleep during class, which to them constitutes a punishable mistake.

"It is the child's fault; the teachers are trying to do their job." (Mother, Levan)

Adults also report inheriting this attitude from the previous generation, and how it influenced them to accept violence towards their children.

"In some cases, I even allowed the violence that the teacher used against my child...I am a student of the 80s and I lived in Malësi e Madhe. At that time, when I was a student, I took a stick from home and brought it to the teacher to beat me when I was not studying." (Mother, Lezhë)

Also, violence is accepted when used as a means of self-protection; if someone harms you or hits you, revenge is justified, especially in boys.

"When you get harassed, the expectation is that it will always be returned; you will fight back " (Boy, 18, Levan).

On the other hand, many participants show awareness of the harmful consequences of tolerating violence. There are differences in the responses from adults and children in this regard: while some adults see violence as a cultural issue that cannot change ("Albanians don't change" [Father, Levan]), some children discuss the need for change ("The old generation cannot change. Our generation needs to." [Girl, 14, Lezhë]). There are reports of adults refusing to accept violence, "deserved" or not, and emphasizing the need to stand up for their children's rights.

Another norm that promotes violence and bullying among children is considering aggression/violence as a value or strength, children reported.

"In our school there was this talk about strong and weak groups. In the ninth grade there was a group that was considered the toughest, and they bullied others. Those who joined that group were the toughest in the school. They would make noise, disturb the teachers, leave the classroom. In one case, they attacked the teacher physically and were sent to the police. Still, this wasn't considered a bad thing by them. They considered this a show of strength — showing the teacher their place. If you said, 'this is not strength', everyone would turn against you." (Girl, 13, Lezhë)

Children report that parents and peers expect them to stand up for themselves and solve their problems on their own — "take care of yourself". This is especially the case for boys, and increasingly girls, which, by not reporting the bullying, can prolong it.

"There was a girl who studied very hard. She was a very good student. Her father had a very good opinion of his daughter, and when she was bullied, she was ashamed to tell him… she didn't want him to be disappointed that his daughter couldn't handle the situation herself." (Girl, 13, Lezhë)

Traditional attitudes towards power, those that require children, boys and girls, to be obedient to authority figures such as parents and teachers, were identified by adults and children. These attitudes put children in a lower position of power and make them vulnerable to violence. Fearing the consequences of disobeying authority and reluctance to complain as it might show "disrespect", were also reported by adults,.

"I am embarrassed to admit it, but the teacher hit my child and I didn't complain. I knew her and had a friendly relationship with her, so I thought she understood her mistake. But I think it was wrong not to react because I later learned that she hit other children too. I didn't say anything for fear that she would be even more aggressive towards my child, or would dislike and neglect him." (Mother, Lezhë)

The cultural concept of male honour, as part of a traditional gender role, seems to play a role in the violent behaviour of boys; they are expected, by their own parents, peers, and community, to use violence to maintain their honour, when needed. As part of this role, boys are also expected to act as "protectors" for their family, and this may also require violence.

"His friend beat him, and his father told him, 'If you do not go and kill that other boy, you are no longer my son.' So, the boy killed his friend." (Boy, 13, Levan)

"It is different for a boy, he can defend himself, while girls cannot. Also, in the future, this boy will lead a family, his family." (Boy, 16, Levan)

Overall, preservation of traditional gender roles is expected from boys and girls, as reported by them through various examples. This is sometimes challenged,

or considered unfair, but they are aware of the obligations this norm brings. For example, while boys have freedom of movement, girls report being restricted in their activities after school due to patriarchal norms, the limitations of female roles, and also, to protect them from violence.

"Girls' movements and activity are more judged by society, while boys aren't." (Girl, 14, Lezhë)

"As for the girls, they must enter the house before 5 p.m., because you don't know what might happen if girls go out after that hour." (Boy, 17, Levan).

"Privacy", "don't make a big issue of it" and keeping secrets are reported as part of an existing mentality which stigmatizes victims and reporters, and discourages reporting cases of violence. In discussing Valentina's vignette, many child and adult participants expected Valentina not to report the teacher to the director immediately, but to try to solve the situation with the teacher on her own.

"It is not right to go directly to complain to the director." (Parent, Levan)

"They do not report it because the community will learn about it. Due to this, most abused girls do not report the case [of sexual violence]." (Psychologist, Lezhë)

This becomes more pronounced in cases of **sexual violence** where children and adults report that <u>even **talking** about it is still **taboo**</u>. This was first observed when child participants did not list sexual violence as a type of violence (without being prompted), in the ranking exercise. In particular, there is almost no talk of sexual violence occurring with boys, although one boy brought an example of it.

"In my neighbourhood, a 9-year-old boy was sexually abused by a 19-year-old boy. The child went and talked to his mother and she reported him to the police. The person who sexually abused the child is in prison." (Boy, 17, Levan)

"When it comes to sexual violence, it does not happen to boys." (Boy, 16, Levan)

Also, talking about sexuality in general is still taboo. Children report that discussing sexual topics in general, and sexual violence in particular, rarely or never happens in their classrooms, with teachers, psychologists or other adults. Only some of the girls in Lezhë reported discussions with teachers, which they consider to be very valuable, but not enough.

"The school psychologist, the teacher, do not talk about sexual violence, because they are embarrassed to talk to students about these topics." (Boy, 16, Levan)

"The teacher even skipped the lecture on sexuality during biology class." (Girl, 18, Levan)

Shame, as a consequence of sexual abuse, is frequently reported by children. Victims experience shame as a result of abuse, and their families as well.

Furthermore, there is public shaming and victim blaming. Girls who are victims of sexual violence are judged by the community, stigmatized and forced to bear the negative reactions of the community. In some cases, these girls are even forced to marry their perpetrator and move to another place, as reported by children. Also, many child participants blame these victims.

"In the case of sexual violence, the one who has sexually abused a girl is forced to marry her." (Boy, 17, Levan)

"If a girl is sexually violated, the family think of themselves as shamed."
(Girl, 14, Lezhë)

"We do not get ourselves in these situations." (Girl, 15, Levan)

On the other hand, sexuality is considered a marker of masculinity, as children's reports show. For some, this acts as justification for boys' sexual violence — a "boys will be boys" attitude. Furthermore, boys who are sexual perpetrators do not suffer the effects of public shaming like their victims do.

"They would say the girl wanted it and provoked him." (Girl, 18, Levan)

5.3 Protection from Violence and the Promotion of Well-being

Children report feeling safest with their close friends and parents. Mothers are more often perceived as safety figures, while fathers are sometimes feared. School and home are reported to be safer places than the route to school, or community areas in general. One boy also mentioned the school gym as a safe place within the school. On the other hand, there is violence at school, especially bullying, so it is not fully safe. Children are also aware that for those experiencing domestic violence, home is not a safe place.

"It is sometimes not even safe at home." (Girl, 15, Levan)

"In the classroom, however, you are not very physically safe, because students can be harassed, threatened and hurt when the teacher leaves. They may say, do my homework or I will kill you." (Boy, 13, Levan)

In the community, the safer areas are those close to children's homes, which are not always populated areas. Furthermore, daytime is safer than night-time, especially for girls.

"Personally, I only feel safe at school and at home. In the street, I don't have any guaranteed security. At school, I know I have the presence of the authorities, that is, the director, the school guard, and you feel safe. In the street, there is no security. You have maniacs who move on the street, you have people with mental health problems who need rehabilitation." (Girl, 14, Lezhë)

"If 7 p.m. passes, you must be inside the house, because no place is safe."
(Boy, 16, Levan)

A child's informal network of protection against violence is reportedly made up of people very close to the child: a closest friend, older brother and parents (the mother more often than the father). These are the main people, and often the only ones, that children said they would go to if they needed support.

"The most important people for me are my father, mom, brother and my close friend." (Boy, 13, Lezhë)

"My parents. I know I'm safe as long as I have my parents, because if someone bullies me or someone bothers me, the first people I would talk to are my parents. Dad is always ready and says to me that if anyone bullies me, or if I have a concern, just tell him and he will solve it." (Girl, 14, Lezhë)

In terms of a formal protection network, children most trust their favourite teachers, who are important people for them, and to whom they would go to if they needed help or protection. Favourite teachers are described as having some specific traits, such as maintaining confidentiality, good communication skills, openness toward children and being non-judgemental — essentially, those who are non-aggressive or do not have an authoritarian style of communication. Sometimes this is the class head-teacher or teachers of "soft subjects", such as music and civic education, while for the boys in particular, it is often the gym teacher.

"He didn't differentiate if you were a girl or a boy, if you were noisy or not, if you studied more or less than others...he would even ignored some stupidity ...no hard feelings with us. Differently from the other teachers, he was very tolerant. Even if you reached a limit, he wouldn't yell or offend you in front of the class." (Girl, 18, Levan)

School directors are the next link in addressing cases of violence, especially bullying, if a teacher needs extra support or the situation needs to be reported. The psychologist and social worker working in the school's psycho-social unit are also part of this network in Lezhë, where children give examples of their work and expressed appreciation for it. It is not the same situation in Levan, where the children report that the psychologists and social workers split their time among many schools, and even when at school, they feel distant to the children. Another barrier to using this service are the harmful social norms related to mental health, such as, "the psychologist is for crazy people" (Girl, 15, Lezhë), a view shared by the wider community and other children. Boys reportedly seek psychological help even less frequently than girls.

"Any child who experiences any form of violence would not go to talk to a psychologist because his friends will make fun of him, call him stupid." (Boy, 13, Lezhë)

"Here in Albania, they have the mentality that whoever goes to the psychologist is afraid, he is a coward." (Boy, 16, Levan)

Child protection services outside of school are less known to the children. In Lezhë, some children in the girls' group knew about the Child Protection Unit in the municipality, though they reported that not all children know about it or how to access it.

"I have heard a case where the friends of the bullied person went to the Child Protection Unit and said that they did not get a solution from the school. They reported the case there and then the case was resolved." (Girl, 15, Lezhë)

Children in Levan did not recognize this service. Some children knew about the school security officer, a recently-installed service at the school, but they didn't know who this person is or what services they provide.

"The school security officer does not play a major role at the school. He comes only once a month." (Boy, 17, Levan)

Police services are also recognized as part of the formal protection network and are considered support figures by the children. Yet, due to late responses to emergency situations, some children stated a lack of trust in the police: "Sometimes the police don't even respond to the phone call' (Girl, 13, Lezhë). Cases of corruption, such as dropping cases of violence when the perpetrator is powerful and/or gives bribes, or sharing confidential information with the media, especially in cases of sexual violence, has further hindered the trust of adults and children in the police.

"The person, the perpetrator, might know someone corrupt in the police station." (Girl, 14, Lezhë)

"Reporting is a real problem. Where to report is a problem. The state promises and does not deliver, and the victim remains exposed." (School psychologist, Lezhë)

In terms of **reporting systems**, children are familiar with the procedures of reporting within school, such as reporting to the head-teacher, the director and the school psycho-social service. Yet, as mentioned above, they are unfamiliar with reporting systems outside of school, such as the child protection unit. Their perception is that younger children are unfamiliar with the services in general, and reporting in particular. They also are familiar with the ethics committee of the school and its three-step disciplinary measures in cases of unethical behaviour or discipline violations.

A tendency not to report "mild" cases and to solve situations in as small a group as possible, only with teachers, or within school, was noticed. This can sometimes discourage reporting, or postpone asking for help. Reporting is only accepted by children and adults in what are considered "serious" cases. This was noticed in their comments to Valentina's and Felix's vignette. Their hesitance to report is linked to social norms, as mentioned in the previous section, and fear of repercussions if the person reported is the teacher.

"I think my classmates would not approve of Valentina's decision to report, as despite her problems, sleeping in the classroom is unethical." (Boy, 15, Lezhë)

"In Felix's case, I do not agree with reporting it to the class head-teacher, because the other teacher will say, 'Why did you tell them? What do they have that I don't?' There are these jealousies within the teaching staff." (Psychologist, Lezhë)

"The community would only notify the police in very serious cases." (Boy, 13, Lezhë)

There are some child-led actions that protect children from violence and promote children's well-being, such as walking together to school, which many children do to enjoy the trip and to protect each other, especially when school is not close to home or if they have to go through unsafe areas. Children also report violent situations their friends are in, (but not those they themselves are involved in). Supporting children who are being bullied occurs, but not frequently; only a few children stand up to bullies, usually when the other child is a friend. The bystander effect is strong, as reported by children, because of fear of repercussions by their peers, such as being ignored, losing friendships or being bullied themselves.

"Yes, there are some people who, for example, do not talk about their problems at all, but their friends go and tell the teacher." (Girl, 15, Levan)

Some children mentioned the value of supporting each other in the community. This is shown by adult neighbours intervening in cases of violence, mostly physical and bullying, but less so in cases such as sexual violence.

"I always react. Even when two children are fighting on the street, I come out of my garden and ask them, 'What are you doing?' They do not know that they are doing, they are children." (Preschool teacher, Levan)

"It is the parents and neighbourhood who support." (Boy, 13, Levan).

Some community services were identified in this regard, such as associations supporting victims of violence and community centres (in Lezhë only), where children pass some of their time and feel safe. Children in Lezhë mentioned activities within the school that promote support and protection. These usually are discussions with teachers on relevant topics, with a main focus on bullying. They mentioned only one activity (part of a national protest against violence in reaction to a sexual violence case), which was very impressive to them, but they stated that they wished these activities would become a regular part of their school life, and locally initiated.

"For me, besides home, another place is the community centre. I consider it the safest place." (Girl, 15 years old, Lezhë)

"We held a silent protest for women's rights, and we even had big banners, flowers, and surprisingly, more boys than girls participated. Before going out, we gathered at school to talk about it first. Everyone had written letters to their parents, to thank them for their support. To tell you the truth, girls were serious and hugged them, while boys burst into tears when they read those thank-you letters." (Girl, 13, Lezhë)

5,4 Children's Agency and their Responses to Violence

Children's agency, with regard to preventing or responding to violence towards themselves and their peers, is not strong. On the one hand, there are some child-led actions in this regard, as mentioned above, and some formal and informal support systems in place. On the other hand, it seems that only those who have a strong support system (supportive parents, older brother, close friends, and sometimes a teacher and psychologist), are able to stand up for themselves, while it is more difficult for their peers. Furthermore, the bystander effect is strong among these children.

"There are those who remain indifferent when they see such cases and do not say that this is wrong." (Boy, 16, Levan)

Children's failure to stand up for themselves, or the fact that peer support happens only within very small groups of friends, but not as a collective response to violence, seems to be related to peer pressure, fear of bullying, fear of repercussions by authority figures, parents (especially in cases of domestic violence) and teachers, and harmful social and gender norms in general, as mentioned by children. This becomes even more pronounced in cases of sexual violence. Overall, it can be said that situations of violence are addressed through an individual (tertiary level) approach, and much less through collective approaches, or prevention at group, community and institutional levels.

"Children are afraid to protect another child being attacked. If all of them became a group, they could defend the victim, but something stops them."
(Girl, 16 years old, Levan).

Children have several ideas and hopes for preventing and/or responding to violence. First, they think that there is a strong need to have ongoing talks about this topic within school, with parents and within the community.

"We need to talk more about it." (Girl, 13, Lezhë)

The idea of peers and community responding collectively to violence isn't one they were fully aware of, but it emerged gradually during the discussions.

"I think that peers have a key role in preventing violence through talking to the victim or the abuser. The solution to the problem is related to the opinion of their peers." (Boy, 15, Lezhë)

Many of the children expressed the idea that parents need to change, to be more communicative and supportive of their children, to be exposed to new ideas on parenting and supporting children in violent situations through training and discussions.

"I think it should all start from the parents. They should know what society we are living in. Every decade things are changing. When the parent knows how to educate their child, tomorrow this child won't be a danger to society. It all starts with parental education, when they teach the children from the time they are young not to offend, not to insult." (Girl, 14, Lezhë).

Community and media attitudes toward gender-based violence also need to change, according to the children, and services need to be easily and safely accessed. The media should talk about violence, because it is important for awareness, while preserving the anonymity of the victims. The community should react supportively and not blame the victims. Although children are not very hopeful that such a change can happen in their parents' and grandparents' generations, they hope that it can happen in theirs.

"I wish these rumours didn't exist, but they are always there and we can't do anything about them." (Girl, 15, Lezhë)

"To have a centre for abused girls that deals specifically with this, but to have no connection with the media, to have no contact with the media at all. To be a secret centre for anyone who wanted to go, and could go there without fear. A centre where they will not think twice — the parent of the girl, as well as the girl herself. Even if she was in a situation where the parents themselves would not believe her, she would have a safe place. Here, if the parent does not trust you, you are hopeless." (Girl, 18, Levan).

According to the children, adequate punishment for the perpetrators is necessary in order to reduce cases of violence.

"The boy should be punished, and it should be a lesson for him for the future." (Girl, 15, Levan).

Their main hope and vision is that all children can be protected from violence, and that the community comes together to support each other.

6 Discussion

In this study about children's experience with violence, it emerged that violence is widespread, highly frequent, of all types and often of strong consequences. The last epidemiological study (BECAN), in Albania, found that all forms of violence are present in children's lives, and the data tells us that children are victims of different forms of violence throughout their childhood (Hazizaj, Coku, Cenko, & Haxhiymeri, 2013). The highest ranked types of violence, according to children's own categories, were bullying and sexual violence (including harassment and cyberbullying) for girls, and psychological and physical violence for boys. Similarly, the latest ACE study for Albania showed a high prevalence of child maltreatment (higher than the 8 other countries that conducted the same study), and that the most frequent forms of child abuse were physical (40%), psychological (50%), witnessing violence towards their mother (30%), and sexual (6%) (ACE 2012). Although domestic violence emerges as a sub-theme in our study, the hidden nature of it might explain why it was not more highly ranked. Both boys and girls are victims of violence, while sexual violence is reported as affecting mostly girls, which is in line with the BECAN findings that states there are no major differences in forms of violence, except girls reporting a higher rate of sexual violence, compared to boys (75% of 28 reported cases of sexual violence were girls) (Hazizaj, Coku, Cenko, & Haxhiymeri, 2013). Bullying and cyberbullying are reportedly increasing and very concerning to children and adults. This is also in line with the findings of the latest studies on bullying and ethics in pre-university education, showing that 19.4% of children say they have been bullied 2–3 times per month or more, 60% of teachers affirming that bullying happens in their schools, and 23% of parents affirming that their child was a victim of bullying (Hazizaj, Coku, Cenko, & Haxhiymeri, 2013). Furthermore, a high level of violence is demonstrated among peers in the pre-university system (ACER, 2017). Children are bullied due to their appearance, disability, being withdrawn or having few or no friends. Dragoti & Ismaili (2017) noted that some children are singled out and experience high rates of school bullying because of physical appearance (e.g., being overweight, having language difficulties and being perceived as having physical weakness).

Besides peers, the participants most often mentioned that adults, such as family and teachers, are the perpetrators of violence by using various violent control methods, with fathers reported as more physically violent. According to the BECAN findings, 73% of abusers were fathers, and men were the most aggressive perpetrators (Hazizaj, Coku, Cenko, & Haxhiymeri, 2013), but teachers also use verbal violence and various punitive practices to manage their class (ACER, 2017). The media is considered another perpetrator of violence, especially in the unethical and damaging way that they report cases of sexual violence, which further harms the victims. The latest study on child abuse within the circle of trust indicates the same phenomenon, reported media representatives who participated in the study (Burazeri, Qirjako & Tahsini, 2015).

Perceived changes in violence against children because of COVID-19 are reported by children and adults, such as an increase in cyberbullying and domestic violence. Although there has not yet been research in this regard, data published by AWEN (Network of Woman Empowerment in Albania) show that the National Line for Girls and Women has received 2,000 phones calls during the quarantine (March–May 2020), which is three-times more calls than were received in the same period a year ago (CSSP, 2020).

Violence against children is perpetuated through various harmful social norms, identified by both children and adults, such as: a culture accepting and tolerating violence, especially "deserved" violence, violence for self-protection, aggression as a value, obedience to authority figures, "doing it on your own"; and more gender-based norms, such as: traditional gender roles, male honour, viewing the man as family protector, a limitation of female roles, "keeping secrets", sexuality and sexual violence as a taboo topic, sexual violence as shame, victim blaming, and the attitude that "boys will be boys". Though the literature on social and gender norms is scarce, especially in terms of quantitative data, some studies speak of the existence of some of the norms explored in our study, such as cultural and social acceptance of violence, the acceptance of corporal punishment, (Hazizaj, Coku, Cenko, & Haxhiymeri, 2013), and parents encouraging aggressive behaviour among children (ACER, 2017). Some qualitative studies explore other norms, such as obedience to authority figures, secrecy shame, patriarchal gender roles and victim blaming (Cenko & Thartori, 2016; Burazeri, Qirjako & Tahsini, 2015). The World Vision Albania & Kosovo annual report shows that the percentage of primary caregivers in Albania who believe that any type of violence, including physical, verbal, neglect, denial of right to know, is necessary to properly bring up a child, is high and increasing, from 60.7% in 2018, to 66.4% in 2019 (World Vision Albania & Kosovo, 2020).

Children feel partially protected around safety figures and in their living spaces. On the one hand, some safe figures, such as close friends, parents, favourite teachers and the psychologist were identified. Children consider schools and the surrounding areas safe. On the other hand, fathers are often feared, the psychologist might be missing/unavailable, there is violence at school, on the way to school and in the community, especially in areas far from home, or at night (which is particularly dangerous for girls). A qualitative study exploring children's perceptions of their safety has identified similar sources of safety and insecurity in all three settings: family, school and community (Tahsini & Duci, 2012).The informal protection network is made of a trusted parent, close friend and older brother, while the formal network includes a favourite teacher and the psychologist of the psycho-social service unit at school (only in Lezhë, not in Levan). The BECAN study also shows that there is an uneven distribution of protection services, which mainly function in the largest urban centres, not in rural areas (Hazizaj, Coku, Cenko, & Haxhiymeri, 2013). Protection structures outside of school are less known, or children don't know how to access them. Harmful social norms discourage use of psychological services, and there is ambivalence toward the police, who are perceived as helpful in stopping fights, but also corrupt. The reporting system is known only inside school, not outside of it, and younger children are less familiar with it. Also, social norms hinder reporting in "mild" cases, as do fear of consequences. The BECAN

study notes that child protection services in Albania face the most severe cases, because only a fraction of cases of violence are reported (Hazizaj, Coku, Cenko, & Haxhiymeri, 2013). A recent situation analysis by WHO states that school's psycho-social service is inefficient and ineffective due to low staff numbers and lack of proper education/training for those who are hired (WHO, 2016).

Reportedly, the community supports each other in some contexts, but not regarding sexual violence. Associations working with victims of violence are identified as valuable. In Lezhë, this includes community centres for children, and discussions at school around protection from violence — though these are not a regular occurrence and are not see as protection activities. Some child-led actions that protect children from violence and promote children's well-being were reported: walking to school together, reporting a friend's violent situation, and sometimes supporting bullied friends. Still, the children's agency is not strong. Only those with a strong support system feel protected. They are impacted by the bystander effect due to their fear of consequences. The lack of preventative measures and the continued practice of addressing violence individually, encourage this. The BECAN study notes that the prevention of child abuse and neglect in Albania is not streamlined in child protection services or other child-related services (Hazizaj, Coku, Cenko, & Haxhiymeri, 2013). Only 56.1% of teachers are aware of anti-bullying policies in their schools, while 77.2% have not been trained on this topic (Dragoti & Ismaili, 2017).

Even so, children themselves have ideas and hopes for preventing and responding to violence, such as regular discussions about it in their family, school and community; support to improve parents' communication; a change in community and media attitudes toward gender-based violence; services becoming more accessible; and perpetrators receiving adequate punishment in order for all children to be protected from violence.

Key Recommendations

Policy recommendations

- Developing policies and programs that focus on the prevention of child violence versus treatment of abuse after it happens in communities and schools, such as primary prevention programs for the whole community, and secondary prevention programs for groups at risk.

- Implementing existing policies and laws with regard to the child protection system and related services, also through appropriate budget support for: increasing the number of psychologists and social workers in schools, social workers at child protection units, and other related professionals in the system; hiring professionals that fulfil the required criteria for the position; improving the systemic response to child protection cases.

- Implementing existing policies on ethics in media, especially pertaining to child abuse cases, and taking disciplinary measures and awarding fines in cases of unethical conduct, with the aim of reducing the negative role of media in this regard, especially in relation of child sexual violence.

Practice recommendations

- Developing school programs that focus on violence prevention, raising awareness, reinforcing anti-bullying policies and peer-to-peer support.

- Developing community-based services and interventions with the aim of changing harmful social and gender norms that perpetuate violence towards children, especially sexual violence.

- Developing community-based parenting programs with the aim of improving parenting practices, especially communication skills toward children, and supporting them in protecting themselves and their peers from violence.

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9 Appendices

Appendix A: Key Definitions

Violence Against Children: *"All forms of physical or mental violence, injury and abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse."* (UNCRC, Art 19)

Sexual violence: An umbrella term used to refer to all forms of sexual victimization of adult women, men and children, including different forms of child sexual abuse and exploitation. *"Any sexual act or attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic, or otherwise directed against a person's sexuality using coercion, by any person, regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting, including but not limited to home and work."* (Kewkes, Sen, Garcia-Moreno, 2002, p.149)

Child sexual abuse: *"Engaging in sexual activities with a child who, according to the relevant provisions of national law, has not reached the legal age for sexual activities (this does not apply to consensual sexual activities between minors), and engaging in sexual activities with a child where use is made of coercion, force or threats; or abuse is made of a recognised position of trust, authority or influence over the child."* (UNICEF, 2017, p.6)

Types of Violence Against Children (Adapted from Dawes, Bray, & Van Der Merwe, 2007)

Particular types of violence against children are elaborated below:

Physical Violence: Intentionally inflicting injury or death on a child.

Emotional Violence: Exposing a child to or inflicting psychological or emotional harm on a child.

Sexual Violence: Sexual activities, with or without the child's consent, where the perpetrator is older or in a position of authority. (This may also involve force or trickery.)

Neglect: Lack of care provided by caregivers, usually over a longer period of time that results in physical or psychological harm to a child.

Exploitation: Broader term usually referring to the use of a child for another person's gains, that has a negative impact on the child, such as harmful child labour, early marriage, child trafficking, child prostitution or pornography, etc.

Categories of Violence Against Children CRIN (n.d.)

Physical and Psychological Violence

- Abduction
- Bullying
- Death Penalty
- Domestic Violence
- Extra-judicial Execution
- Gang Violence
- Harmful Traditional Practices
- Honour Killings
- Infanticide

- Judicial use of Physical Punishment
- Kidnapping
- Physical Abuse
- Physical Punishment
- Psychological Abuse
- Psychological Punishment
- State Violence
- Torture and Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment

Neglect:

- Abandonment
- Dangerous, Harmful or Hazardous Work
- Deprivation
- State Neglect

Exploitation:

- Pornography
- Sex Tourism
- Sexual Exploitation
- Slavery
- Trafficking
- Violence at Work

Child: The Convention defines a "child" as a person below the age of 18, unless relevant laws recognize an earlier age of majority.

Child Protection: UNICEF's definition of child protection is the *"strengthening of country environments, capacities and responses to prevent and protect children from violence, exploitation, abuse, neglect and the effects of conflict."* (UNICEF, 2008)

Child Participation: *"Participation is the term used to encapsulate activities that ensure a child's right to participate in matters that affect them are adhered to. This draws on the concept that 'children are not merely passive recipients, entitled to adult protective care'. Rather, they are subjects of rights who are entitled to be involved, in accordance with their evolving capacities, in decisions that affect them, and are entitled to exercise growing responsibility for decisions they are competent to make for themselves."* (Lansdowne & O'Kane, 2014, p. 3)

Child Well-being: *"Child well-being is a dynamic, subjective and objective state of physical, cognitive, emotional, spiritual and social health in which children:*
- *are safe from abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence.*
- *meet their basic needs, including survival and development.*
- *are connected to and cared for by primary caregivers.*
- *have the opportunity for supportive relationships with relatives, peers, teachers, community members and society at large; and*
- *have the opportunity and elements required to exercise their agency based on their emerging capacities." (ACPHA, 2019, p.10) Please see Appendix F: Tdh Conceptual Framework on Well-being Pillars.*

Child Safeguarding: *"The responsibility that organisations have to make sure their staff, operations, and programmes do no harm to children, that is that they do not expose children to the risk of harm and abuse, and that any concerns the organisation has about children's safety within the communities in which they work, are reported."* (Keeping Children Safe, 2014, p.3)

Social Norms: *"The full range of these definitions includes a constellation of social rules ranging from mere etiquette to the most fundamental moral duties [13, 14, 37, 38]. In their simplest definition, social norms are the informal, mostly unwritten, rules that define acceptable, appropriate, and obligatory actions in a given group or society."* (Cislaghi & Heise, 2018)

Gender Norms: A simple definition suggests, *"gender norms are the social rules and expectations that keep the gender system intact." (Cislaghi & Heise, 2019, p.4)* However, a more nuanced and complex definition suggests that *"gender norms are social norms defining acceptable and appropriate actions for women and men in a given group or society. They are embedded in formal and informal institutions, nested in the mind, and produced and reproduced through social interaction. They play a role in shaping women and men's (often unequal) access to resources and freedoms, thus affecting their voice, power and sense of self."* (Cislaghi & Heise, 2019, pp.9–10)

Appendix B: Ethical Protocols

In addition to the information contained in section 2.3, the following ethical protocols were considered.

Research on sensitive subjects, such as violence against children, can cause unintended harm to participants. For example, if confidentiality is breached, informed consent is not obtained, or a group of people is stigmatized. Researchers need to be careful not to raise expectations, which can lead to mistrust of outsiders and disillusionment. Researchers also need to be cautious not to increase power imbalances that may cause a particular group to be vulnerable.

Given the timing of the research with the COVID-19 pandemic, protocols will be more stringent for online interactions. It is strongly recommended that remote violence against children (VAC) data collection does not take place with children while lockdown measures are in place (Bhatia, Peterman & Guedes 2020). Where it is deemed appropriate for research to continue, adaptations will take into consideration the kinds of questions being asked and the level of privacy afforded participants in the setting where they are joining. Given the potential for heightened levels of violence experienced by children and young people during the COVID-19 pandemic, and in keeping with recommendations by UNICEF–IRC 2020, no direct questions will be asked about participants' experiences of violence, but rather their understanding of violence occurring in their communities.

Research on violence may ask children and adults, even without direct questions concerning personal experience, to re-live painful and difficult experiences. As researchers working with children who may have suffered from violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation, there is a critical responsibility to "do no harm" in our interactions with children and youth.

Researchers will be trained to watch for signs of children expressing distress (both verbal and non-verbal). Researchers will ensure that the environment within the activities remains respectful and supportive, and will take time to speak with children who may need extra support outside of the activity, from a safe distance. The name and contact details of a support worker, as well as emergency numbers and local reporting protocol, will be listed on a flipchart at all times, enabling children to reach out on their own for additional support (for example, the psychosocial service of the school and Child Protection Unity in Albania). Where a flipchart is not practical, handouts will be made to give to young people before each session. Should a researcher see that a young person requires support, the researcher will discuss this with the young person and call the support person to request a personal visit to the community. The researcher will follow-up with both the child and the support worker using appropriate child safeguarding protocol, as per the TdH Child Safeguarding Policy and national legislation.

When working with participants, researchers will pay close attention to the following ethical guidelines, recommendations and practices:

Confidentiality:
- Inform children that you will be collecting quotes and stories, but no names will be attached, only gender, age and community.
- Ensure that you obtain children's written permission as well as the written permission of their parents or caregivers. In some cases, permission might need to be gained from the Ministry of Education in each country. Please see Appendix A for a sample Consent Form.
- Ensure that you obtain the written permission of adults as well. Please see Appendix B.
- Remember, informed consent is an ongoing process. Participants should be regularly reminded of their options. No child should be made to feel that they must participate.
- If you plan to use a recording device, be sure to inform children of this and obtain their consent. Explain how the recordings will be used and what will happen to the recordings at the end of the project.
- If attending virtually, request that participants have a place that offers some privacy, and where this is not possible, that they share who else is in the room and when with the group (as noted below).

Voluntary informed Assent/Consent Conversations

Special note during COVID-19: As the local context may change rapidly during COVID-19 for both children and project staff (for example, if governmental restrictions on physical distancing are suddenly relaxed), it is recommended to regularly address voluntary informed consent (at each point of change). It is useful to think of consent as an ongoing conversation that you have with children (and their parents/carers). You can document consent by asking children/parents to sign consent forms, and you can digitally record their verbal consent if physical distancing is required, or if children and/or their parents/carers have low levels of literacy. Signed consent forms or recordings of consent should be kept securely. It may be useful to use a "script" or checklist when having a consent conversation to ensure that you do not forget anything.

Make sure participants are comfortable and fully informed:
- Select a suitable location where children feel comfortable and at ease.
- Be open and honest with children.
- Explain the entire process, including how the tools could affect young participants.
- Don't raise expectations. Be clear about what can and cannot be achieved through the research.
- Privacy and confidentiality are extremely important, but cannot be guaranteed due to the involvement of the group of participants in the research. Make sure that limited confidentiality is clearly communicated before the start.
- Let children know that they can always ask questions: No question is a bad question.

Know yourself:
- Learn about and be reflective of your lived experiences, biases, assumptions, and trigger points.
- Be comfortable with the uncomfortable. Change can often include feelings of discomfort and confusion. Recognize and pause during these moments.
- Be emotionally present and available to engage with children and listen effectively.
- Communicate genuinely and honestly.

Develop an understanding of the local culture, context and understanding of children and youth:
- Understand the local culture and context you are working in.
- Remember child protection factors differ across gender, age, race, culture, socio-economic status, ability, and other factors.
- Learn about local power dynamics as they may undermine genuine participation.
- Be open to learning. Inquire and ask questions to seek understanding.

Build relationships:
- Build relationships with organizations, communities, families, children and youth.
- Learn from and with children, youth, families and communities.
- Work in partnership, not opposition. Exercise humility.

Be prepared:
- Remember that children may be resilient in one area of their lives but not in others due to their social-ecological framework.
- Remember that talking about one's experiences can be harmful in some contexts.
- Make sure to identify someone to provide follow-up support for those who may need help or want to have a more in-depth conversation.

Be inclusive:
- Be inclusive and involve the most vulnerable populations.
- Remember that most victimized children and youth do not receive services.

Support the group:
- Be flexible and adaptable. Situations and circumstances change, and sometimes things do not work out as planned.
- Hold people accountable. Do not be afraid to hold people accountable for their actions. Be firm but respectful and create an opportunity outside the group to talk through any issues.

Build from strengths and bolster resilience:
- Build from the strengths in people (e.g., positive behaviours, coping techniques), cultures and systems.

- Build capacity. Nurture innate self-healing and protection capacities.

- Recognize people's agency and capacity. See people as experts and survivors and not as victims.

Follow-up:
- Follow-up with participants afterwards to make sure they are doing okay. For example, you might want to check in with them at the end of the session.

- Leave participants the phone number of someone they can talk to, and with information on how to access helpful resources.

- Remember, if you hear about violence or abuse, you have a responsibility to connect that young person with a support person, and to report it the appropriate organization following local protocol.

Informed Consent (Adapted from Columbia Group for Children in Adversity [2011])

Participation in research must be voluntary, and people must be free to decline or end participation without any negative consequences. The decision to participate should be informed by an understanding of the purpose of the research, how and what information will be collected, how the information will be used, and potential risks and benefits to participants. When participants are children, informed consent must be obtained from the children themselves and from their parents or guardians.

Obtaining informed consent is inherently difficult for many reasons, such as the power imbalance between researchers and participants, the pervasive expectations that participation will bring material improvements now or at a later point in time, and the prevailing norms of hospitality, among others. Obtaining written consent may not be feasible because of low literacy levels and/or prospective participants' fears that written documents will be used against them. Because of this, it is important to treat informed consent as an ongoing process rather than a one-off action.

Specific steps to ensure informed consent:
- Use a child-friendly approach in explaining to children the purpose of the research, what and how information will be used, and their right to say "No" without negative consequences.

- If the participant is a child under the age of 18, obtain the informed consent of both the child and his or her parent or caretaker.

- Tailor the approach to obtaining informed consent to local circumstances. Where appropriate, use the forms provided in the Appendices and request signatures to indicate voluntary and informed consent.

- The process of obtaining informed consent must be implemented for each individual participant.

- Avoid the subtle coercion that can occur. For example, if a parent tells a child "you should participate" or if a village leader says, "we should welcome the researchers and answer their questions", explain informed consent to the person in power and ask them to explain to others that they are free not to participate, and that there will be no disadvantages or penalties for people who decide not to participate.

- Manage expectations by explaining in simple, clear language that no material benefits will come from participating in the research. Add, however, that the information collected will be fed back to communities and countries, which may find the information useful in taking stock of and improving community-based mechanisms of child protection.

- Explain that, should someone begin to participate and decide that they are not comfortable, they can always leave the research without any penalty.·

Limited Confidentiality (Adapted from Columbia Group for Children in Adversity [2011])

Research participants will be informed that the information they provide is confidential, unless they share anything that puts themselves or others at risk. If there is an incident, suspicion, or disclosure of current violence or abuse, the researcher will work with the child or adult to follow up and explore appropriate services of support using the TdH Child Safeguarding Policy, Research Ethics Protocol of the local University research partner, and the legal protocol in the country. The researchers will not publicly share any personal information such as names that could be used to identify specific individuals or sources of information. Where identity information is collected, it will be maintained in a separate, locked file, and will be made available only to people who have a legitimate need to know. Pseudonyms will be used when data is being quoted. Specific steps to ensure confidentiality include:

- Conduct discussions in a private setting. When conducting interviews with young people, ensure that there is always a minimum of three people present (either two children or two adults) and if not, there is a third person within vision for child safeguarding purposes. If there are departures from privacy, make sure all participants know who else is present and listening or observing, and get their informed consent to continue.

- Keep any records of names and other identifying information in a safe, locked place that is not open for public access.

- Do not leave confidential files open on a desk or computer. Always close them and put them out of public access, even if you leave your desk only for a minute or two.

- Use general descriptors (e.g., 13-year-old girl) rather than a specific name or other identifying information in writing up your data and reports.

- Share information from your field notes, including identifiers, with members of the research team, but not with people outside the research team.

- Hold information about specific cases of abuse, exploitation, violence and neglect in strict confidence, sharing information only with the Lead National Researcher or the UNICEF Focal Point.

Please note: It is important to be clear with participants, that they should only share information in the activities that they want the group to know; you cannot guarantee that other participants will keep the information they hear confidential, though you will strongly encourage it. Participants are welcome to speak with you after the activity in private, should they want to share additional information.

Remote adaptations: Restrictions in meeting children face-to-face due to the COVID-19 pandemic means that online interactions and participatory activities via devices, such as smartphones and computers, are likely to increase. This increases risks to children that are specific to the online environment, such as increasing the likelihood that family members will be present, through to more significant risks like the dissemination of false information, exposure to violent extremist messaging, or surveillance and censorship. For the former, transparency and good communication allows participants to be clear on the level of privacy they are able to maintain within their physical environment (as noted above). For the latter, digital applications, platforms and services need to be safe, secure and should not result in inappropriate or unethical capture and/or use of data on children. Safeguarding considerations for online communication and interaction fall into three key areas:

Safe behaviour online

- Guidelines are developed for users of digital platforms and products. These explain expectations regarding posting, speaking, commenting on the site or platform, and establish consequences for misuse.

- Build relational safety by having regular "safety" check-ins with children at the beginning or end of virtual sessions, where a key worker listens carefully and responds sensitively to the child.

- All websites, phone lines and platforms where children are commenting or sharing information, photos and stories are moderated by staff to maximise safety and privacy and minimise risks. Where concerns of harm or abuse are identified, reporting procedures are followed.

- Procedures for reporting and responding to harm or abuse exist for each digital platform or product. These take into account local laws, cultural norms and the availability of protection services.

The Canadian Women's Foundation developed the following hand signals for people who want to safely disclose violence in the home while on a video-call.

THE VIOLENCE AT HOME SIGNAL FOR HELP

Ethical access to and use of children's data
- Children using digital platforms must be given the opportunity to agree to a specified use of their personal data. This consent should not be assumed based on their consent for other activities (e.g., for their photo to be used in media activities).

- Active consent must be captured in a way so that consent is not the default option.

- A written agreement is in place to control and authorise the release of information on children (data, images) to partner organisations, the Internet, the public domain or any third party. Consent conversations with children (see above) should include an assessment of the need/benefit of sharing information that is balanced against potential risks, before consent is given by children for use of their data.

Responding online to disclosures and allegations of child abuse during COVID-19
If a case of abuse is reported or disclosed when physical distancing restrictions are in place the following issues will need to be addressed for responding online:
- Seek the views of the child victim/survivor (where it is possible to establish safe, direct contact) on their situation that will inform a risk assessment for responding to the report of abuse. It may be useful to connect to child helplines to identify services that might support the child victim/survivor.

- Conducting remote interviews, focus groups and other participative activities (e.g., via Zoom or WhatsApp): Outline the process in advance to participants. Make sure they can safely participate online and are able to use the software.

If it is not safe to do so (e.g., a child is in the same room as a violent parent/carer) do NOT conduct the process. Establish the identity of the participant and ensure you are communicating with the person you are intending to speak to. Provide information on local support services at the end of every interview.

- Ensure privacy and manage confidentiality: participants should use a computer that is private or isolated, make use of headphones and limit the use of identifying information (i.e., agree to refer to Mr. Smith as Mr. X). Check there is no one else in the room or nearby and record interviews if possible.

Appendix C: Country-Level Consent Forms

Formulari i Miratimit të Prindit

Organizata Terre des hommes po realizon një studim në të gjithë rajonin tonë, përfshirë edhe Shqipërinë, mbi tematikën e dhunës në shkollë në përpjekje për të kuptuar a) si është situata në shkollat që janë përzgjedhur për studimin, b) cilat janë llojet e dhunës më të hasura në to, c) si janë qëndrimet e nxënësve, mësuesve dhe prindërve ndaj kësaj dhune, etj me synimin për të ngritur programe ndërhyrjeje për të reduktuar fenomenin në të ardhmen.

Në studim do të marrin pjesë fëmijë të moshës 13-18 vjeç, të cilët do të organizohen në grupe prej nga 7-8 pjesëmarrësish dhe do të angazhohen në aktivitete loje që gjenerojnë të menduarin dhe të shprehurin lidhur me subjektin kryesor të studimit.

Aktiviteti do të zhvillohet në dy ditë të njëpasnjëshme në ambientet e qendrës _____, nën supervizimin dhe mbështetjen e punonjësve të Terre des hommes.
Informacioni i dhënë nga fëmijët do të mbahet tërësisht konfidencial dhe do të ruhet anonimati i fëmijës. Fëmija ka mundësinë të heqë dorë nga studimi në çdo moment, nëse kështu deshiron.

Parimi ynë kryesor është se në të gjitha situatat interesi më i lartë i fëmijës është parësor. Kjo do të thotë që në të gjitha veprimet dhe vendimet duhet të kemi parasysh nevojat dhe të drejtat e fëmijëve si një çështje thelbësore.

Pëlqimi për veprimtarinë (Ju lutemi shënjoni elementët për të cilët jepni pëlqimin):

- Unë/Ne jap/japim pëlqimin tim/tonë për fëmijën tim/tonë_____ (emri i fëmijës) për të udhëtuar dhe marrë pjesë në veprimtaritë e _____ (emri i Qendrës).

- Unë/Ne autorizoj/autorizojmë _____ (emri i Qendrës) që të jetë përgjegjëse për fëmijën tim/tonë gjatë veprimtarive dhe të marrë vendime lidhur me ndonjë trajtim urgjent mjekësor për fëmijën tim/tonë, që mund të nevojitet gjatë këtij udhëtimi.

- Unë/Ne konfirmoj/konfirmojmë se unë/ne e kam autoritetin e plotë të japim pëlqimin e kërkuar në këtë dokument.

Unë/Ne konfirmoj/konfirmojmë se unë/ne e kam/kemi lexuar dhe kuptuar Formularin e Pëlqimit të Prindit, dhe jam dakord të veproj në përputhje me përmbajtjen e tij.

Emri i fëmijës………………………………………………………………………………

Data……………………………………………………në……………………………………

Emri dhe nënshkrimi (emrat e prindit(ërve)/kujdestarit(ëve)
… ……………………………………………

Historiku mjekësor

Të dhënat në këtë formular do të mbahen konfidenciale. Vetëm profesionistët mjekësorë dhe organizatorët e veprimtarive do të lejohen të kenë akses në to.

_____

Emri i fëmijës (duke përfshirë nofkat):

_____

Data e lindjes:

_____

Numri i letërnjoftimit:

_____

Ndonjë alergji e njohur (p.sh. ushqimi, kushtet, kafshimi i insekteve, barna):

_____

Përdorues aktual i barnave :
Jo   Po

Nëse po, përshkruani çfarëlloji/doze:

Ju lutemi sillni kopjet e recetave (të barnave apo okulistit)dhe mjekim të mjaftueshëm për kohëzgjatjen e veprimtarisë, duke përfshirë kohën e udhëtimit

_____

Ndonjë gjendje ekzistuese (p.sh. astma, epilepsia, aftësia e kufizuar, tensioni i ulët i gjakut, diabeti, prirje për migrenë/zalisje/marramendje, depresion/ankth):

_____

Ndonjë operacion kirurgjikal dhe regjim spitalor:

_____

Ju lutemi ofroni hollësi për ndonjë sigurim mjekësor:

_____

Emri i kompanisë së sigurimit:

_____

Numri i politikës së sigurimit:

_____

Ju lutemi na vini në dijeni nëse ka diçka tjetër që duhet ta dimë me qëllimin që të sigurojmë që fëmija juaj të jetë i sigurt, i mbrojtur, i përkujdesur mirë për të qenë në gjendje të marrë pjesë plotësisht:

Formulari i Miratimit të Pjesëmarrjes në Studim

Organizata Terre des hommes po realizon një studim në rajonin tonë, përfshirë Shqipërinë, mbi tematikën e dhunës në shkolla në përpjekje për të kuptuar a) si është situata në shkollat që janë përzgjedhur për studimin, b) cilat janë llojet e dhunës më të hasura në to, c) si janë qëndrimet e nxënësve, mësuesve dhe prindërve ndaj kësaj dhune, etj, me synimin për të informuar programe ndërhyrjeje në të ardhmen.

Në studim do të marrin pjesë:

1. fëmijë të moshës 13-18 vjeç të cilët do të organizohen në grupe prej nga 7-8 pjesëmarrësish dhe do të angazhohen në aktivitete loje që ndihmojnë të menduarin dhe të shprehurin lidhur me subjektin kryesor të studimit.

2. Anëtarë të komunitetit si psh prindër, mësues, punonjës administrate, punonjës të shërbimit shëndetësor etj, të cilët do të organizohen në një grup prej rreth 10 pjesëmarrësish e ku do të përfshihen në diskutime dhe ndarje informacioni lidhur me subjektin e studimit.

Aktiviteti me anëtarët e komunitetit do të zhvillohet me një kohëzgjatje prej rreth 3 orësh në ambientet e qendrës _____, nën supervizimin dhe mbështetjen e punonjësve të Terre des hommes.

Informacioni i dhënë nga pjesëmarrësit në aktivitet do të mbahet tërësisht konfidencial dhe do të përdoret vetëm për qëllimin e studimit duke ruajtur njëkohësisht anonimatin. Anëtari i grupit ka mundësinë të heqë dorë nga pjesëmarrja në studim në çdo moment, nëse kështu dëshiron.

Pëlqimi për veprimtarinë:
Unë konfirmoj se kam lexuar dhe kuptuar Formularin dhe jam dakord të veproj në përputhje me përmbajtjen e tij.

Emri/Mbiemri/Firma……………………………………………………………………………

Data……………………………………………………në………………………………………

Regional Research
**ON VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN
IN SCHOOLS IN SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE**

Country Report: Albania

In partnership with the International Institute for Child Rights and Development and Child Hub

Researcher: Izela Tahsini
Date: November 2020