

## Report Narrativ Vjetor 2023

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### 1. Progresi i Përgjithshëm Programatik

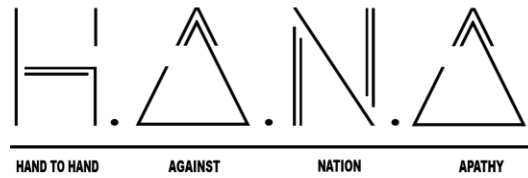
During this reporting period, we at H.A.N.A believe that we have made significant progress in various areas of our work, despite the ongoing challenges of operating with limited funding for our program. Below is a summary of our overall progress:

H.A.N.A has been actively advocating for gender equality and women's rights in Albania, with a particular focus in Lezha Municipality. We organized a series of impactful events, including public gatherings, exhibitions, and open discussions, to shed light on the chronic impunity of crimes against women and address the structural inequalities that pervade our society. One notable event was held on March 8th, International Women's Day, at "Besëlidhja" Square in Lezhë. During this event, we addressed the continued violence and injustices faced by women in Albania, with particular emphasis on the tragic incidents in Kamëz and Paskuqan. The event called for preventative and healing measures, rather than a narrow focus on punishment, and urged collective accountability for gender-based violence. We emphasized solidarity and encouraged women not to celebrate superficially but to stand united in rejecting preferential treatment toward men. March 8th was declared a day for wiping away the hypocritical smiles of indifference, and the event represented a significant step forward in our Gender Equality pillar.

In addition to the March 8th event, we continued with a silent exhibition titled "N'Shesh t'Burrave, Pa Burrni" (In Men's Square, Without Manhood), held to give voice to the disheartening statistics and unspoken truths about the unequal treatment of women in our society. Over the course of 1.5 hours, participants shared personal testimonies, and we discussed the failures of social justice and legal systems in supporting victims of violence. This exhibition was a step towards raising awareness about the structural challenges that women face, and it reiterated our commitment to gender education as a critical part of our mission.

On a broader level, H.A.N.A has remained dedicated to engaging and empowering young people in Lezhë through our program, which is built on four strategic pillars. In our media education pillar, we established the Newsroom of Progressive Thought—an innovative platform designed to empower young people to voice their ideas and perspectives. Recognizing the disconnect that young people often feel from traditional forms of civic engagement, we created this platform to give young citizen journalists the tools to critically analyze and articulate their views on societal issues. While it has been challenging to engage youth in this unconventional approach, particularly due to a lack of proper training resources, we have made progress through over 15 meetings held by our team. The focus has been on building youth leaders capable of contributing meaningfully to community discourse.

Another key initiative has been our political education program, "Embracing the European Identity." This initiative aims to deepen young people's understanding of political processes, European integration, and



their role in shaping the future. The program has been designed to be engaging and enjoyable, integrating interactive games and energizers to maintain participants' interest, especially during the summer when focus tends to wane. Despite these seasonal challenges, we have continued to innovate and adapt our methods to ensure that our sessions remain impactful. The program has been supported by our relationship with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Luxembourg, which has been instrumental in sustaining the initiative and allowing us to nurture the intellectual curiosity of our young participants.

H.A.N.A.'s involvement in the Local Elections of May 2023 marked a significant step forward in our mission to uphold transparency, neutrality, and accountability in the democratic process. Despite reaching out to several prominent institutions in Albania for support—including the EU Delegation, Westminster Foundation, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, National Democratic Institute, and the British Embassy—our requests went unanswered. While this lack of support was disappointing, we remained committed to our goal and recruited, trained, and deployed seven election observers to monitor the voting process in Lezhë. We organized comprehensive training sessions to equip our observers with the skills necessary to ensure the integrity of the voting process, emphasizing the importance of neutrality and accountability.

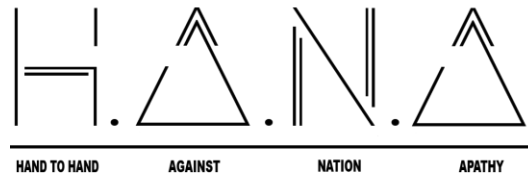
In addition to election monitoring, we launched the "Përballë" initiative, which provided a platform for City Council candidates to present their visions and connect with the public. This initiative allowed seven out of nine candidates to pass the voting threshold, and it served as a bridge between political candidates and the community. While our efforts to include mayoral candidates in this format were unsuccessful, the "Përballë" initiative set a precedent for transparency and accountability, and we are committed to continuing our work in holding elected officials accountable.

We also partnered with the Swedish Embassy to organize the exhibition "Re - How Sweden is Rethinking Resources?", promoting sustainable waste management practices. The exhibition toured schools, community centers, and public spaces, engaging young people and community members in discussions on reducing, reusing, and recycling waste. The initiative aimed to raise awareness about the environmental impact of waste mismanagement and encourage a shift towards a circular economy.

Our collaborations and partnerships throughout 2023 have been instrumental in expanding our reach and impact. We have worked with the Local Youth Council of Lezhë Municipality, KRIIK Albania, and the International Institute for Peace (IIP), among others, to achieve our common goals. Our partnerships with the embassies of the Netherlands and Germany have been particularly noteworthy, as they have provided essential support for our project ideas in 2023 and 2024, enabling us to continue our mission to empower youth and promote social change.

H.A.N.A. also celebrated a significant milestone in 2023, marking five years since the establishment of our Youth Center in Lezha. From March 2018 to March 2023, we implemented 15 projects across our four programmatic pillars, engaging 1,910 participants and providing services that benefited over 5,358 individuals. Our social media presence has also grown significantly, with our content reaching a combined audience of over 268,000 people across different platforms. This milestone is a testament to our ability to deliver valuable programs and position ourselves as a key player in Albanian civil society.

In the latter half of 2023, H.A.N.A. faced leadership challenges as we worked towards ensuring organizational sustainability. A transition in leadership took place, but the proposed shift in our



organizational mission—from a youth-focused center to a more politically active entity—was ultimately rejected by our Board of Directors. This period of reflection has allowed us to reaffirm our commitment to our original mission of empowering youth through non-formal education and skill-building.

Although the conclusion of our core support from the European Endowment for Democracy (EED) poses new challenges, we have successfully secured support from five new donors. The German Embassy has provided laptops for our ICT courses, the Dutch Embassy is supporting a substantial 26-month project, and we have received core funding from SMART Balkans. Despite financial constraints, including reduced funding for administrative expenses, we continue to strive for financial sustainability and remain committed to our mission.

Overall, 2023 has been a year of progress and resilience for H.A.N.A. We have faced challenges, from limited funding to leadership transitions, but we have emerged with a renewed commitment to our foundational mission. We remain hopeful for the future, prepared to navigate the uncertainties ahead, and determined to continue making a meaningful impact in Lezha and beyond.

## 2. Projekte

Throughout 2023, H.A.N.A. Youth Center has actively worked to engage and empower the youth of Lezhë, with a consistent focus on political education, gender equality, environmental sustainability, and skill-building initiatives. Our activities have aimed to foster awareness, provide valuable educational opportunities, and cultivate a sense of active citizenship among young people in our community. Below is a comprehensive summary of the key activities and accomplishments made during the year, reflecting our multifaceted approach to youth empowerment.

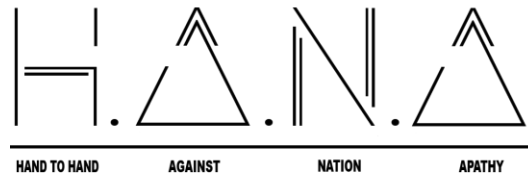
### ***First Half of 2023 (January - June)***

The first half of 2023 saw H.A.N.A. implement a wide array of activities focusing on civic engagement, cultural education, and environmental initiatives. A total of 44 activities were organized, which collectively engaged 1244 participants across different locations in Lezhë and beyond.

We began the year with discussions surrounding H.A.N.A.'s contributions to waste management. On January 17, a meeting was held to discuss the progress on the establishment of metallic waste differentiation bins in schools, attended by 12 participants. On January 19, an info session introduced 17 participants to the academic opportunities available through LCC University, emphasizing higher education options for local youth.

On January 29, 27 young people participated in an immersive visit to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Albania, providing firsthand insights into diplomatic processes. A planning session on January 28 and a Cultural Afternoon on January 31 further set the stage for youth engagement, each attended by more than 12 participants.

The focus on political education continued into February with a series of sessions highlighting topics such as disinformation and Albania's EU accession. A notable event was the February 15 session titled "Albania as Part of the EU," attended by 149 participants. Discussions on truth versus propaganda, the



Berlin Process, and the EU's efforts to fight disinformation collectively engaged more than 69 young people throughout the month.

Throughout March, the emphasis was on gender equality and youth journalism. On March 8, we hosted a public awareness event titled "In the Square of Men Without Manhood" to raise awareness about gender issues, followed by meetings with the Youth Municipality Council and newsroom discussions to foster youth-driven journalism. Activities also included a session titled "Conversing, Friends, and Good Music," providing a relaxed environment for 18 participants.

The environmental initiative "Re | How Sweden is Rethinking Resources" commenced in May, touring multiple schools and community centers across Lezhë. This initiative aimed at promoting sustainable resource management and reached more than 1000 students and pedagogic staff. In addition, a public debate series titled "Përballë" was launched on May 10, allowing local political candidates to share their visions with the youth. The debates engaged a total of 84 participants.

May and June also saw a number of Open Day events, celebrating Europe Day and promoting girls in IT careers. These initiatives collectively reached over 280 students and staff, encouraging their involvement in H.A.N.A.'s activities and offering valuable exposure to opportunities in technology and the EU integration process.

### ***Second Half of 2023 (July - December)***

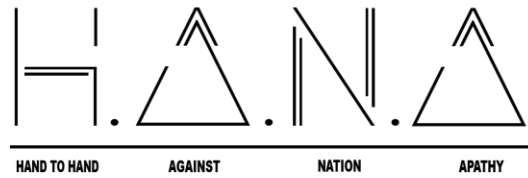
The second half of the year was characterized by a continued emphasis on community involvement, skills-building workshops, and political discussions. H.A.N.A. hosted 83 activities, drawing in 1098 participants from across Lezhë, reflecting a steady expansion of our engagement efforts.

The summer period started with interactive psycho-social games like "Fox and Chickens" and "States," fostering teamwork among the youth. July also included cultural sessions, such as discussions on Át Gjergj Fishta's literary contributions and a visit by representatives of the Youth Express Network.

August featured documentary screenings to encourage discussions on historical education reforms. As we moved into September, we hosted multiple political awareness sessions, including "The History of Albania's Membership in the EU," attended by 15 participants, and life skills sessions facilitated by guest speakers. These activities aimed to empower youth with practical skills and provide deeper insights into Albania's political landscape.

The fall months were equally vibrant, with activities focused on socio-political discussions, editorial office meetings, and cultural programs. October saw a variety of events, including public discussions on regional issues, such as the Kosovo-Serbia conflict, and Literature Day, which celebrated Albanian literary figures. An online visit by the Ambassador of Luxembourg on October 11 brought 50 participants together for an informative session on international diplomacy.

A highlight of November was the "Community Forum for Refugee Centers in Lezha," where 28 participants came together to discuss inclusivity and the social challenges associated with refugee integration. Several IT courses on web coding and social media management were also held, engaging more than 40 participants in developing technical skills that are increasingly important for employability in today's digital age.



In December, the emphasis was on rights-based discussions, including sessions on human rights and gender equality, which gathered 22 participants. Activities also included screenings of impactful movies such as "Mama Bears," which sparked discussions on family, faith, and LGBTQI+ rights, and IT training sessions to conclude the year.

The environmental awareness campaign culminated with activities like "Carving the Heart of Integration," where youth used artistic expression to engage with the theme of European integration. Our institutional visits during the latter half of the year, including trips to the Council of Europe office and the Delegation of Europe in Tirana, gave participants direct exposure to European governance structures and provided an invaluable learning opportunity.

In total, 127 activities were organized by H.A.N.A. Youth Center throughout 2023, engaging 2342 participants. These activities showcased our dedication to empowering young people through knowledge, advocacy, skill development, and cultural exchange. We actively sought partnerships, engaged with local communities, and strived to provide diverse opportunities to the youth of Lezhë, nurturing their potential as future leaders and active citizens.

The growth in participant numbers, coupled with the variety of activities offered, underscores H.A.N.A.'s expanding influence in the region. We remain committed to building on these accomplishments, fostering a culture of engagement and empowerment in the years to come.

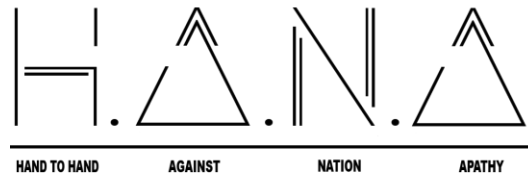
### 3. Mësimet, Sfidat & Mundësitë

Reflecting on the past year, H.A.N.A.'s journey has been marked by key lessons, significant challenges, and emerging opportunities that have collectively shaped our efforts to empower the youth of Lezha. Below, we provide a comprehensive overview of the lessons learned, challenges faced, and opportunities that have emerged during 2023, highlighting the resilience and dedication of our organization to continue making a positive impact.

#### ***Learning***

One of the most important lessons we have learned is the significance of building and nurturing strong relationships and partnerships. Collaborating with various stakeholders, including international organizations, donors, and educational institutions, has proven instrumental in expanding our impact. These relationships have been essential in helping us move closer to achieving our goals, whether through resource sharing, strategic guidance, or broader outreach. Specifically, we have strengthened collaborations with embassies and other international actors, which has opened new avenues for impactful projects.

Another key takeaway from this year has been the reinforcement of the value of non-formal education as a core methodology in youth empowerment. Our focus on experiential learning has demonstrated its effectiveness in fostering both personal and professional development among young people. However, we have also come to understand the challenges involved in aligning this approach with the formal



educational system. The rejection of partnership requests by the Ministry of Education and the cancellation of active agreements with local schools have underscored the need for innovative strategies to navigate formal-informal education linkages.

We have also learned the importance of adaptability within our organizational structure. Our experience with a temporary leadership transition has tested our ability to remain focused on our mission while balancing new leadership perspectives. This period of adaptation has reinforced our commitment to constructive civic engagement rather than confrontational political activism, highlighting the importance of staying true to our core values even during times of internal change.

### ***Challenges***

The past year has presented several notable challenges for H.A.N.A. Foremost among these has been financial constraints. Beginning the new fiscal year with reduced funding led us to make the difficult decision to cut down on staff. This was not just a logistical challenge but also a symbolic one, representing the need to adapt to a leaner, more resource-efficient operational model. This financial tightening also meant navigating donor expectations with limited resources, adding complexity to our implementation efforts.

Our efforts to formalize partnerships with educational institutions faced significant setbacks, including the Ministry of Education's rejection of our collaboration requests. These limitations have restricted our ability to integrate non-formal education into the broader educational framework, hindering our efforts to effectively support students within the formal system.

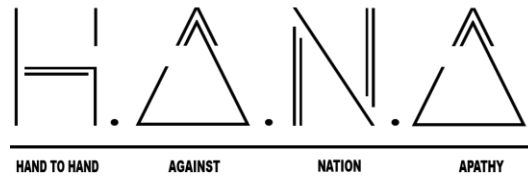
Another ongoing challenge has been the prevailing trend of young people seeking opportunities abroad. Despite our best efforts, H.A.N.A. has felt limited in its capacity to counteract this trend and retain local talent. This challenge is exacerbated by the local government's promotion of youth groups that lack a critical approach to civic engagement. By supporting organizations that do not encourage independent thinking, the local government has inadvertently hampered our efforts to cultivate a more informed, critically-minded youth.

Internally, the temporary leadership transition during the year was a major hurdle. The shift in focus towards a more politically confrontational approach created confusion and tension within the team, as it deviated from H.A.N.A.'s foundational mission of empowering youth through constructive and educational engagement. This period highlighted the challenges of reconciling differing visions within the organization and emphasized the need for clear communication and alignment on core values.

Communicating with new donors and aligning their expectations with our mission also proved challenging. The extended back-and-forth communication required to finalize new implementation arrangements took several months, which delayed some of our planned initiatives. The uncertainty regarding the continuation of support from key donors, such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Luxembourg, has also added an element of unpredictability to our future planning.

### ***Opportunities***

Despite these challenges, 2023 has also been a year filled with promising opportunities for H.A.N.A. One of the most exciting developments has been the establishment of a vocational course center focused on



ICT skills, supported by the German Embassy. This initiative holds the potential to equip young people with valuable, in-demand skills, empowering them to pursue rewarding careers in technology and reducing the trend of youth emigration. However, this opportunity also comes with the challenge of securing ongoing funding to ensure that the courses are accessible to all youth, regardless of their financial situation. We view this as an opportunity to strengthen our fundraising efforts and develop new partnerships to sustain the program.

Our current engagements with international partners, such as the Embassies of the Netherlands and Germany in Albania, have laid the groundwork for future collaboration. If these partnerships prove successful, they could open doors to additional funding, resources, and expertise, significantly strengthening H.A.N.A.'s capacity to implement impactful projects. Furthermore, these collaborations provide an avenue for advocacy—to raise awareness about the importance of formal partnerships, critical thinking, and non-formal education in youth development—with influential stakeholders who can help us drive systemic change.

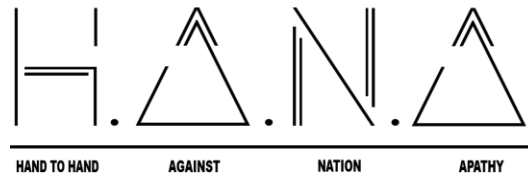
Finally, while the uncertainty surrounding the continuation of support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Luxembourg poses a challenge, it also presents an opportunity to diversify our donor base and reduce dependence on a single funding source. The positive impact of our winter school on political education and EU integration for young people, which has now entered its fourth edition, stands as a testament to the value of our programs. We remain hopeful that we can leverage this success to attract new supporters and ensure the continuity of this impactful initiative.

As we reflect on the challenges, lessons, and opportunities of 2023, it is clear that our journey at H.A.N.A. has been one of resilience, learning, and growth. Despite financial constraints, leadership transitions, and setbacks in formalizing educational partnerships, our commitment to empowering youth in Lezha remains unwavering. By building strong relationships, embracing non-formal education, and staying true to our core values, we believe we can overcome these challenges and continue to create lasting positive change in our community. The opportunities that have emerged this year—particularly in vocational training, international partnerships, and advocacy—offer a path forward filled with promise. We are committed to seizing these opportunities and continuing our work to uplift and empower the young people of Lezha.

#### **4. Balanca Gjinore dhe Çështje tjera Ndërsektoriale**

Throughout 2023, H.A.N.A has actively integrated gender balance and inclusivity as a crosscutting theme across all our activities and initiatives. Recognizing the significance of gender mainstreaming, we have sought to challenge societal norms and stereotypes while providing equal opportunities for all participants, especially girls and women, within our programs. Our commitment to creating a more inclusive and equitable environment is informed by the unique challenges we face in Lezha, which significantly differ from the realities in Tirana, Albania's capital.

One of the major learnings over the past year has been the importance of embedding a gender perspective within all our work, ensuring that both girls and boys are equally encouraged and supported. This approach has been particularly evident in our activities, such as the Winter School, where gender equality was woven into the curriculum. In every event, we ensured balanced participation by conducting targeted outreach to both genders, addressing the needs of girls and women while also involving boys to



challenge the typical gender dynamics present in our locality. By introducing mentors and role models who exemplify gender equity, we aimed to inspire all participants and show the practical aspects of building an inclusive society.

Our gender-focused activities spanned the entire year, with targeted initiatives that specifically addressed gender-related issues and empowered marginalized groups. For instance, we engaged in collaboration with organizations like Center Streha, an LGBT+ rights organization, which allowed us to create safe and supportive spaces for youth from all backgrounds, including those who identify as LGBT+. By working with partners who share our commitment to inclusivity, we aimed to amplify the impact of our initiatives and reach those who may face barriers to participation.

Our efforts in gender mainstreaming also extended to breaking down barriers in traditionally male-dominated fields, such as STEM. As we launched ICT courses for young people, we prioritized balanced gender representation by ensuring that girls were actively encouraged to participate. Overcoming resistance and stereotypes required targeted strategies, such as organizing workshops, mentorship programs, and awareness campaigns that specifically addressed gender disparities. These initiatives were instrumental in providing girls and women with opportunities to engage in high-demand fields, thereby empowering them to pursue fulfilling careers and break free from the limitations placed upon them by societal expectations.

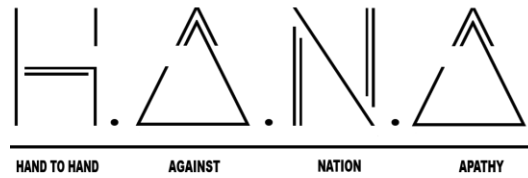
H.A.N.A's commitment to gender balance and inclusivity was evident throughout our entire program cycle. We continuously monitored and evaluated the gender balance within our activities, allowing us to make necessary adjustments to ensure equitable participation. We also gathered feedback from participants and stakeholders, which provided valuable insights into how our strategies could be refined to better address gender issues in the community. This feedback mechanism played a crucial role in making our programs more effective and inclusive.

In total, H.A.N.A conducted 127 activities throughout 2023, drawing participation from a diverse group of individuals. These activities engaged 2342 participants, with a substantial representation (57% or 1337) of girls and women, reflecting our focus on empowering underrepresented groups. Each month, we ensured that at least one activity was dedicated to promoting gender equality or addressing crosscutting societal issues, which underscores our dedication to fostering an environment where all young people, regardless of gender, have the opportunity to thrive.

Moreover, our initiatives extended beyond program participants to include the wider Lezha community. We engaged parents, local leaders, and other community members in discussions and workshops aimed at promoting gender awareness and inclusivity. This broader community engagement was crucial for amplifying the impact of our gender-focused initiatives and creating a supportive environment for all young people.

Looking forward, H.A.N.A remains committed to further promoting gender equality and addressing crosscutting themes in all our work. We see opportunities to deepen our partnerships with local, national, and international organizations specializing in gender equality and social inclusion. By doing so, we can leverage their expertise, resources, and networks to strengthen our initiatives and expand our reach. As we continue our journey, we aim to be more attentive to the needs of marginalized youth,





including those from disadvantaged backgrounds or ethnic minorities, ensuring that our programs provide equal access and support to all.

In conclusion, the work of H.A.N.A. in 2023 has demonstrated the importance of integrating gender and inclusivity as foundational elements in youth development programs. Our holistic approach, combining direct engagement with young people, collaboration with like-minded organizations, and broader community involvement, has allowed us to make meaningful progress towards creating a more inclusive society in Lezha. While challenges remain, particularly in addressing gender disparities in specific fields like STEM, our dedication to promoting gender equality and inclusivity remains unwavering, and we look forward to building on these successes in the years to come.

## **5. Komunikimi, Shtrirja dhe Dukshmëria**

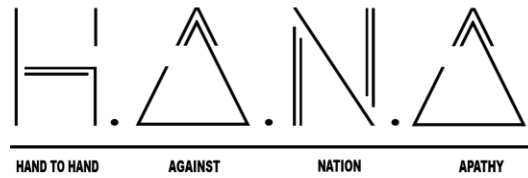
In 2023, H.A.N.A. prioritized effective communication and visibility to ensure that the impact of our work resonated broadly and deeply within our community and beyond. Throughout the year, we achieved comprehensive coverage for all 118 activities undertaken, leveraging a range of communication channels to reach diverse audiences and document our initiatives.

Our communication strategy focused on maintaining a strong online presence across platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and our official website. By regularly sharing updates, photos, videos, and information about our projects, we engaged actively with our online community. We emphasized interactive content, such as reels, tweets, and posts, that encouraged audience participation through likes, comments, and shares. This not only fostered a sense of connection but also highlighted the significance of our initiatives, such as the themes of European identity, youth empowerment, and community engagement.

We made it a priority to ensure that each event—whether it was a workshop, cultural event, public discussion, or training—was effectively documented through multimedia formats. This included capturing high-quality photographs, creating engaging videos, and compiling comprehensive reports that showcased the essence and outcomes of our activities. Both hard and soft copies of these records were maintained to serve the dual purpose of internal monitoring and evaluation as well as for external reporting to stakeholders and donors.

Our efforts extended beyond documenting activities to actively involving our community in our mission. By utilizing real-time updates and dynamic visuals, we not only raised awareness about pressing issues but also inspired others to join our cause. Each activity's progress and impact were transparently communicated, fostering trust and a sense of ownership among our audience.

To further demonstrate the reach and engagement of our work, we have included a Social Media and Website Analytics document as part of our evidence. This document provides detailed insights into our digital engagement, showcasing the breadth of our audience reach and the significant interactions generated. Analytics highlight that our posts, tweets, and reels consistently attracted viewership, with a high level of engagement indicated by the number of likes, comments, and shares. This digital footprint speaks to the success of our communication strategy in engaging with our target demographic, particularly on themes related to European integration, human rights, and youth initiatives.



In every piece of content shared online, we ensured appropriate acknowledgment of our donors and partners. This consistent recognition reflected our commitment to honoring the support we received, strengthening relationships with our stakeholders, and demonstrating our gratitude. Moreover, our digital visibility efforts contributed to increased recognition of H.A.N.A.'s role within the community, as an organization dedicated to youth empowerment, social inclusion, and proactive civic engagement.

The visibility of our work has not only contributed to amplifying our impact but has also served as a vital tool for transparency. It allowed us to create a narrative that connected our audience with the activities on the ground, making them part of our journey. By doing so, we built a community that not only observed our efforts but actively participated in them, ultimately enhancing the efficacy and reach of our initiatives.

As we move forward, H.A.N.A. remains committed to refining and expanding our communication strategies. We aim to continue engaging with our community and stakeholders, utilizing both traditional and innovative channels to share our successes, address challenges, and inspire positive change. Our communication and visibility work remains a cornerstone of our broader mission to empower youth and foster an inclusive, vibrant, and resilient community in Lezha and beyond.

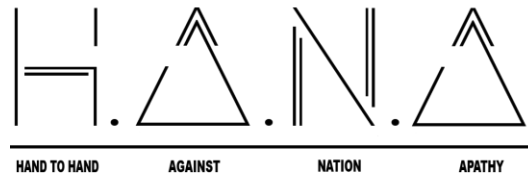
## 6. Vlerësime Përfundimtare

As we close this chapter in H.A.N.A.'s journey, we reflect on a year marked by both triumphs and trials, growth and growing pains. Through experience and recognition within the donor community in Albania, H.A.N.A. finds itself better equipped to navigate the challenges facing NGOs, particularly those based outside the capital, Tirana. This geographical distance continues to present obstacles, with a concentration of donors and opportunities often favoring well-established organizations in the capital. However, our growing consolidation and heightened profile among donors are valuable assets, giving us strength and hope as we strategically push forward.

Despite the competitive environment, our proactive and determined approach allowed us to establish five new donor relationships this year—an important milestone for H.A.N.A. Notably, engagements with the Delegation of the EU in Albania and the Council of Europe emerged as fruitful endeavors, strengthening our network and setting the stage for our focus over the next two years. The support from the Dutch Embassy further affirms our efforts, and we are optimistic about continuing these relationships for the benefit of Lezha's community. Another notable success has been the launch of free ICT courses to empower and foster self-employment among vulnerable youth, marking our venture into new and promising territories of impact and empowerment.

Our progress this year has underscored an important truth: resilience and capacity-building are forged under pressure and sustained by determination and persistence. These attributes have become part of H.A.N.A.'s DNA, informing our actions and inspiring our team to rise to meet future challenges. The support we've received from donors such as EED has been transformative, reshaping our leadership and our model for professional development. When we reflect on our growth from 2020 to 2024, the change has been remarkable—a testament to the hard work, dedication, and lessons learned along the way.

Our journey has not been without its challenges. We have experienced moments where difficult decisions were necessary, where we had to let people down or navigate turbulent times—particularly with



leadership changes and financial constraints. However, this journey has also been about establishing meaningful friendships, creating impactful work, and embracing invaluable life lessons. Each experience—positive or challenging—has contributed to our resilience, our adaptability, and our steadfast commitment to supporting and empowering Lezha's youth and community.

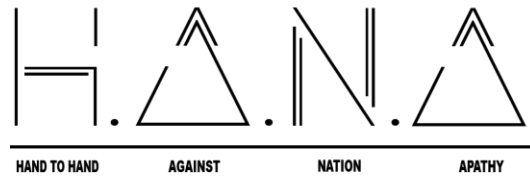
Through this period of reflection, H.A.N.A. has internalized several key lessons that will guide our path forward. We have learned the undeniable importance of core funding, and that diversifying our sources of support is key to remaining sustainable as a local organization. We have also realized that teamwork remains central to our success—collective effort is at the core of every impactful intervention we make. Adaptability to the evolving needs of our community, especially the youth, has been an essential part of our learning. We have embraced the role of balancing between youth work, good governance, and acting as a watchdog—preparing young people for civic participation while holding institutions accountable for public service. Our mission has evolved to not only focus on empowering young people but also to remain a critical, constructive force in our community.

We are confident that the lessons learned, the relationships nurtured, and the accomplishments achieved will lay a strong foundation for what comes next. As we move forward, H.A.N.A. remains steadfast in its commitment to making a lasting difference in Lezha—one that uplifts, empowers, and inspires the community to reach its fullest potential.

## 7. Ndryshimi Madhor i Arritur

The most impactful change achieved through EED support for H.A.N.A has been the establishment of a youth centre in Lezha. This centre serves as a hub for a variety of non-formal learning experiences, significantly distinguishing us from other civil society organizations. This distinction has garnered recognition and respect for our work and identity. Gratifyingly, new donors have approached us with statements like, "we have heard so much about you, it was about time you came to us for support." Such acknowledgments are a testament to the profound influence of EED's support, enabling us to reach these milestones and gain such positive visibility.

Our journey at H.A.N.A has been like a rollercoaster, full of ups and downs. Along the way, we've made both friends and enemies. The truth is, not everyone's thrilled about an organization that doesn't just fit in, especially one that stirs the pot with events that challenge the norm and spotlight the softer sides of our society. We never aimed to cozy up with the higher-ups in government; instead, we focused on what the community really needed, like our youth centre. This approach has left some scratching their heads, wondering how we managed to thrive without playing the usual games though it wasn't a walk in the park. But the support from EED and the amazing network of supportive people around us that initially EED introduced us to made a world of difference. It's like having a safety net that catches you when you leap. That's what's kept us going, even when things got tough.



**Raporti i dorëzuar nga**  
*(Emri i plotë, titulli, nënshkrimi dhe data)*