

# Decade of Meeting the Needs of the Community!

“LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND”

## Decade of Healthy Aging 2020-2030



## & COMMUNITIES

### Health Promotion

Active ageing a global reality!

“Active Ageing makes the difference”

- COVID-19: providing adequate health care and health promotion for **older people**

### The international aid system is political

*Increasing representation of **elderly women** is an obvious first step to change the vision from dependence to independence*

### The Hungry

*Elderly Women's contributions makes our planet safe and secure. They have the broader and long-term interest of society in mind and improve the gender architecture.*



Gender inequality is an established, proven and undisputed reality – it is all pervasive. It is a real threat to human progress!

#ItsAboutRights #ElderlyUNconvention

# Broken Ecological Civilization: In Depth



## COVID-19:

For some of the most vulnerable populations, social and physical distancing is simply impossible and we urgently need to think about best alternatives.

The path toward an ecological civilization moves us from an uncivilized society based on selfish wealth accumulation to one that is community-oriented and life-affirming.

There is increasing interest throughout people in Albania and internationally in building community capacity – the combined influence of a community's commitment, resources and skills that can be deployed to build on community strengths and address community problems and opportunities.

**ASAG believes**  
**development should be**  
**a process that enables all**  
**people to uphold and**  
**claim their rights, live**  
**with dignity and thrive**  
**on the land they love.**

## **The First Health Promotion Center was organized in Tirana in 1997.**

The role of Health Promotion, in the context of preventive measures, is based on the principle that it is easier to prevent than to treat. It aims to raise awareness and give more opportunities to people at the individual or community level to protect and improve their health.

The good news from the WHO is that most of these premature deaths as well as associated disabilities can be reduced through the application of active and healthy ageing principles!

**Today 2021, after 24 years, the Municipality Tirana places benches for the residents near the garbage bins, upon eradicating green spaces and asphaltting a community park!**



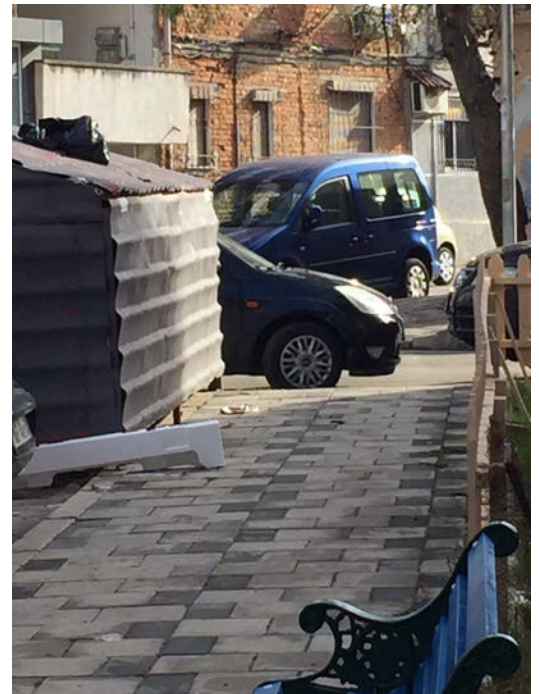
16 June 1997, Health Promotion Conference in the media and society organized by Mira Pirdeni



**“Little things that make a big difference in people's lives”**



These projects have been conceived, designed and funded by a very small number of people - often people who have never visited the community, let alone spoken to those in the community themselves. It is extremely rare for those to be affected - whether positively or negatively. In fact, they often do not even know what is going on until the project is set in motion.



## The 'sad' life of benches in the parks of Tirana. Photo: Loreta Cuka

<http://www.time.al/17-04-25-Jeta-e-trishtuar-e-stolave-ne-parqet-e-Tiranes-Fotoreportazh-/Jeta-e-trishtuar-e-stolave-ne-parqet-e-Tiranes-Fotoreportazh-.aspx>



## the disappearing Big Parks of Tirana

Adult children now recall a park that used to be: A majestic big park near the sanatorium, where young people would venture every day in search of nature and beauty. There used to be - woodpeckers pecking in the trees, linden flowers one could collect for tea, chirping of birds, colorful flowers, dragonflies and many more to awe. Autumn and spring would revive the colors and freshness of the park. A park that today is merely a memory fragment. It does no longer exist and can no longer welcome the adventure of youth. What is the purpose of such an eradication?

Many of us have not forgotten that our cultural heritage as elderly people includes ecological humility, the idea that humans are kin to, not masters of, nature. Despite the binding pressures that converted our green parks (created by our voluntary unpaid work) into concrete, the elderly persist in believing that the land and waters are our family and can assist all of community on our path to an ecological civilization.

**This happens right in the heart of Tirana city, which urgently needs better management. The community wants to bring nature's elements back, so as increase harmony and boost health.**

**ASAG opposes local government's greedy plan to increase construction space at every corner of the city sacrificing nature and urban planning disregarding the community needs.**

**Getting local residents on board is an emergency!**



### In Media:

When something happens to derail a plan, like the pandemic, our team is flexible and able to shift direction, to encourage social participation of persons of all ages. People and communities need to play a leading role in determining their development. Their first-hand knowledge equips them with the experience and expertise to create campaigns and policy solutions that really work. Community action demystifies the development process, introduces the actors

involved, and provides community-led development strategies for development. One way to do that is by exercising empathy, we think about how empathy requires you to walk in someone else's shoes to understand what they are facing, especially amid all this uncertainty. Great leadership starts with listening and understanding what everyone needs to excel at their jobs. When we choose to open our minds and hearts to engage empathy, we acquire more tools for strategies that transform our current models and succeed in unforeseen ways.

- The elderly and poor people work more than the young do.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pc2qW4kcIXE>
- Community Today - Addressing Demographic Aging in Albania through a Multilateral Approach - By ERMIRA PIRDENI By [voal.ch](http://voal.ch) | November 19, 2020 <https://www.voal.ch/tag/ermira-pirdeni/>
- Once upon a time on stage today, the former singer now sells flowers to survive.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PeQKLAf-Jf8>



"Development" has become a scary word for many communities.

Today's prevailing development model is broken – or it has never really worked.

Development projects and programs repeatedly cause harm and often leave communities worse off than before.

"The development should be designed and lived by the same people!"

To achieve the promises of real development, communities must be regarded as experts and leaders.





## Community experts:

A flower shop is the only thing that adorns the community. It is the small business of 26-year-old Miss. **Armela Kamberaj**, a resident of the community. She graduated in **landscape architecture**.

“We suppress our mistakes, and thus deny our ability to change.” Now is the time for central and local government to recognize the severity of this problem in community.

The 2020 World Economic Forum together with its Global Future Council on Longevity will continue to accelerate progress and drive collective action towards promoting healthy ageing, combating ageism and developing communities that promote the abilities of older people.

COVID-19 has upended how we work, learn, connect socially, receive care and participate in the marketplace. COVID-19 has affected everyone, yet this great disruption has been particularly devastating for older people, who have suffered economic hardship, become socially isolated and faced the sting of ageism – a sting that, like the virus itself, can be deadly.

Future actions must preserve the fundamental human rights and dignity of people regardless of age, and properly recognize and value older people as essential members of society. The pandemic underscores that it is now time to focus on the intersectionality of ageism with gender, culture, strengthen intergenerational solidarity in workplaces and wider society:



**Mr. Sadik Hasanbelli**

Building and Construction Engineering  
Mechanical Engineering

Now is the time for global leaders to decide: Will we succumb to chaos, division and inequality? Will we right the wrongs of the past and move forward together, for the good of all?

*Antonio Guterres,  
Secretary-General of the United Nations*



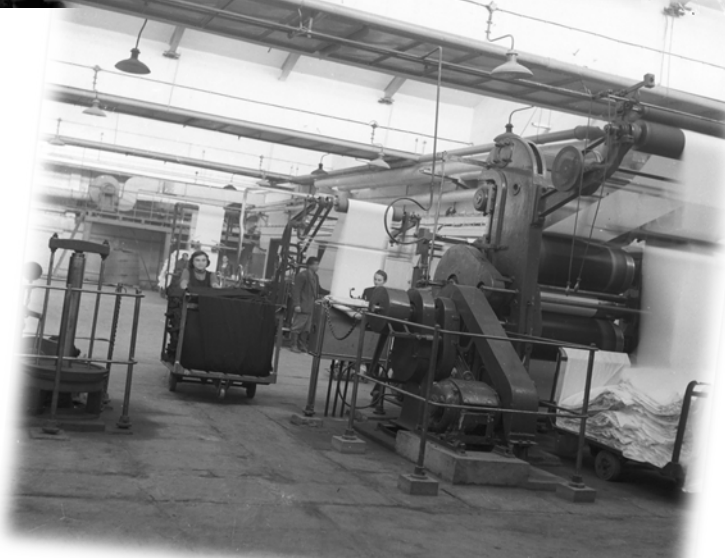
# Some Photos!

These images preserve the faces of Albanian women workers in different vocations during the communism period. These unique pictures from ASAG's archive document Albanian women's working conditions, period fashion and leisure time.

We can see a different time and a different lifestyle. Generations, traditions and faces that have now become older women. These pictures are a reflection of time long lost. The women in these pictures are the ones that worked in the harshest conditions, forced to prolonged physical positions and low-income recipients. "Their hard work and contributions were erased along with the cultural footprint. They are already old and inherited nothing from the previous regime.



Tirana textile  
factory  
'KOMBINAT'  
had 7,500  
women  
workers



The women worked 8 hours, 6 days a week, with three shifts and on Sunday were obligated to unpaid voluntary contributions (harvesting, rail network etc.)



Mira Pirdeni during “forced” voluntary work harvesting wheat / Institute of Public Health



Master Fatbardh Marku, “the woman during the wheat harvest in painting”



## Print media after 1990

“Care for women is a social obligation”

Study data on women in textile, knitwear, cotton garment factories

Appeal to improve working conditions in the confectionery industry.



Pirdeni: I tell you the history of occupational diseases



## Social Activity

ASAG in cooperation with the National Chamber of Mediators chaired by Mrs. Drita Avdyli lobbying to solve pension disparities for the elderly, who face obstacles by the administration office.

## Activity in 'Home Nurse' by ASAG volunteers



### Volunteers:

**Vasjana Zhidro** - completed her Bachelor of Psychology studies at City College (Greece) and her specialization in Clinical Psychology at the University of South Wales, Cardiff, United Kingdom.

**Gerta Xhaferaj** - Graduated in Architecture

## Philanthropy has a critical role to play.

It can fill gaps left by government indifference or incompetence. Effective philanthropy actively supports communities and social groups living with social injustice, human rights abuse, or discrimination. The principle of Reciprocal Philanthropy to remember is “That the act of giving creates a three-way relationship between the giver, the receiver, and the society in which they live.” National and international donors have created the oligarchy of associations close to the government, lowering the image of civil society. We need to ensure that external funding recognizes, respects and builds on local resources and assets, rather than over looks, undermines or displaces. There is plenty to fix in our community.

The charitable giving at its core is rooted – deeply rooted – in what it means to be part of a human community.

Here is a shocking case of the use of philanthropy by various donors, who bear responsibility for failing to provide efficient support to the poor community in the Durres region. Their investment to build a community center ended up in becoming a derelict non-functional object with no value for the community.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dSpCFXZHNBI>



I was a participant in the democratic developments of the '90s in my country. Since the first wave of the movement for change, prior to becoming an artificial pose, I had hoped for support by global philanthropy in order to educate and provide a new sense of purpose in life to active youth. I expected a transformation of their role into chief architects of the new democracy era in order to promote responsive policy-making. Nevertheless, at my aghast they never addressed the root causes of poverty. Albania a country of natural sources of water, the communities suffer from lack of supply. The failure is evident when you notice that people are not encouraged to identify their own needs, problems and thus empowering them to make their own decisions. They are no longer active participants in local development planning. One of the key philosophies of mass mobilization, concerted community action and awareness generation is participation, a sense of belonging. We do not belong! Mira Pirdeni

# The Hungry

**T**he People's Artist, Odhise Paskali can be unequivocally described as the founder of Albanian sculpture and one of the most important personalities of Albanian art.

"The Hungry" is the first work in sculpture by Odise and one of the masterpieces of Albanian sculpture.

It was realized in **1924** in Turin, Italy.

Until 1939, the work was housed in the Royal Palace.

It was later taken by the Italians as booty and it was not found anymore.

*"I was working on this portrait, which is life-size, when a 5-year-old girl approached me from the half-open gate.*

*She approached the job I was working on and asked me:*

*-What is this old man like that?*

*-He is hungry, I told her, and he has nothing to eat.*

*She did not say a word and left.*

*After a while, she returned with a piece of bread in her hand and said:*

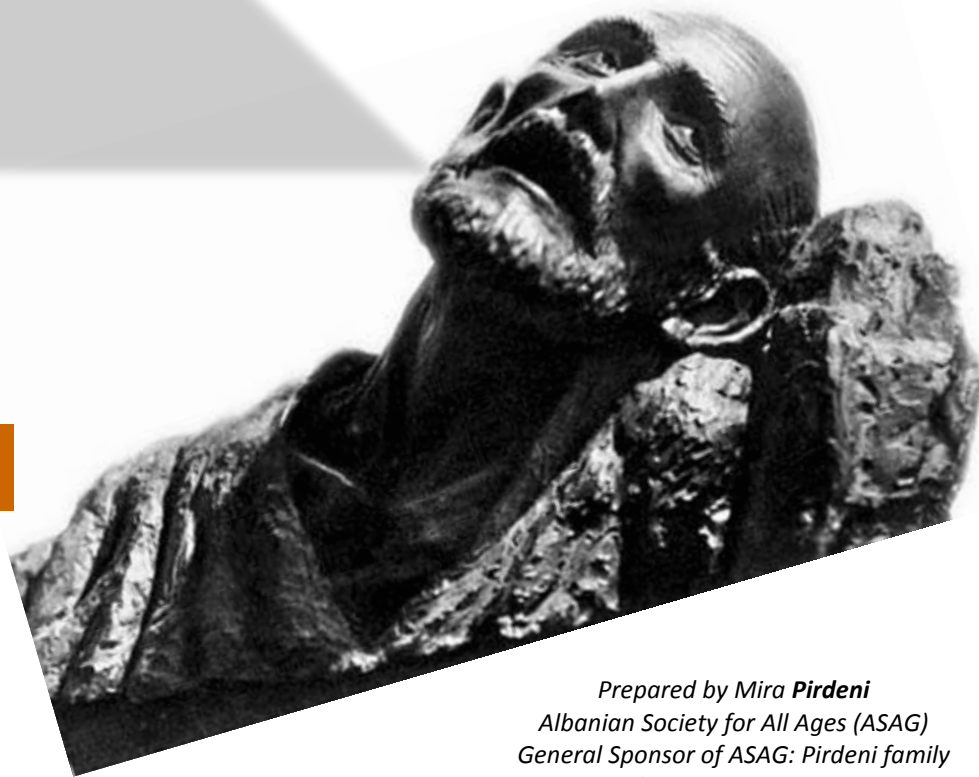
*-I let him eat, and he came out.*

*I was excited with the piece of bread in my hand, but with the pleasure that it was a good omen for the path of art I had chosen"*

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POVERTY CONTINUES

1924



Prepared by Mira **Pirdeni**  
Albanian Society for All Ages (ASAG)  
General Sponsor of ASAG: Pirdeni family  
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