

**EVALUATION REPORT**

**PILOTING IN ALBANIA THE  
REGGIO EMILIA EXPERIENCE IN  
PRESCHOOL EDUCATION**

**Tirana, august, 2003**

# **CONTENT**

## **1. SECTION I: GENERAL EVALUATION**

## **2. SECTION II: GENERAL BACKGROUND OF THE EVALUATED PROJECT**

- 2.1 Origin of the project
- 2.2 Scope of the Project
- 2.3 Objectives of the Project
- 2.4 Activities of the Project
- 2.5 Institutions and groups involved in the project
- 2.6 Material and Human Resources of the project
- 2.7 Donors

## **3. SECTION III: DESCRIPTION OF THE EVALUATION**

- 3.1 Object of the evaluation
- 3.2 The need for evaluation
- 3.3 Scope of the evaluation
- 3.4 Objectives of the evaluation
- 3.5 Methodology of the evaluation
- 3.6 Role of the Evaluation Team

## **4. SECTION IV: EVALUATION'S RESULTS**

## **5. SECTION V: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 5.1 Conclusions
- 5.2 Recommendations

## **6. ANNEXES**

**SECTION I: GENERAL EVALUATION**

**Title of the project:** Evaluation of “ Piloting Reggio Emilia educative model in Albania” Project

**Venue of the Piloting:** 6 kindergartens in Tirana, Shkodra, Elbasan

**People involved:** Children 3-6 years old, directors, teachers and assistant personnel of pilot kindergartens, professors of the pedagogic faculties in Shkodra and Elbasan.

**Names of Evaluators:**

**Prof.Asoc.Dr. Erlehta Mato** - Director of Pedagogic Studies Institute, preschool education specialist.

**Prof.Asoc.Dr. Pranvera Kamani** – Preschool Education Inspector at the Ministry of Education and Sciences.

**Prof. Dr. Nikoleta Mita** – Professor in Social Sciences Faculty, Tirana University, specialist of the evaluation.

The evaluation team was established for purposes of this evaluation activity.

**Report Submission Agency:**

UNICEF

**Period covered by the report:**

Activities from ----- to 30 June 2003

## **SECTION II: GENERAL BACKGROUND OF THE EVALUATED PROJECT**

### **2.1. ORIGIN OF THE PROJECT**

The application of the Reggio educative experience in the pilot kindergartens is the achievement of one of the objectives of the National Preschool Education Development Programme. This objective is related to the experimentation and application of contemporary educative models, which would serve as a basis for changes in the preschool education curricula.

The accomplishment of this objective was rendered possible thank to the contribution of UNICEF Office in Tirana within the “Cooperation Programme” between UNICEF and the Ministry of Education and Science as well as the solidarity initiative “Children” undertaken by Reggio Emilia Commune and Emilia-Albania Association in Italy.

The selection of this educative experience was not accidental. During the identification of suitable educative models for experimentation in our country, experts from the Ministry of Education and Science and the Pedagogic Studies Institute were guided by the conviction that among traditional alternatives, it had to be experimented as well educative alternatives carrying the constructive philosophy values interactive in theory, and their practical application. One of them is certainly the educative experience of Reggio Emilia, which is well known and esteemed by the contemporary pedagogic opinion as one of the most advanced experiences of preschool education.

The successful application of this educative experience in some other countries of Europe, United States and Asia has proved the opinion of its founder Loris Malaguzzi, who affirmed that this experience was applicable in all countries of the world, regardless their cultural and socio-economic background, because children are the same everywhere.

One of the challenges that the Albanian education has to overcome is also the courageous endeavour to experiment one of the most famous pedagogic experiences of preschool institutions nowadays in the world.

It was clear since the beginning of the project that Reggio Emilia experience would be offered as a possibility to analyse and reflect and not as a model to be transplanted and applied automatically in the Albanian reality.

#### **Following are the decisive factors, which made possible this initiative:**

- The financial support of UNICEF
- Capable local human resources to apply this method
- Serious and devoted commitment of Reggio Emilia Commune and particularly the personnel of infant-toddler centers and Kindergartens Directorate of this commune who provided a serious professional assistance during all phases of the project implementation.

- Serious and professional commitment of the Ministry of Education and Science as well as the Pedagogic Studies Institute in formulating and following up the implementation of the project.

**The gradual implementation of the project was focused on the following main directions:**

- Construction, refurbishment and supply of kindergartens with equipments, didactic materials and toys.
- Arrangement of training and consulting activities with teachers, education inspectors of various cities, other preschool education specialists and University professors.
- Transformation in training centres of the pilot kindergartens.
- Publications in support of the theoretic and practical qualification of the teachers, preschool education specialists and professors who educate teachers of preschool education.
- Initiation of changes and improvement of preschool education standards and official documentation.

**a. The construction, refurbishment and supply of the kindergartens.**

During 1994-2000:

- Two kindergartens were built, kindergarten no. 26 in Tirana and kindergarten in Lushnja (100 children capacity for each). The last one was destroyed and changed destination in 1997.
- One kindergarten was refurbished in Elbasan and 3 kindergartens in Tirana (100 children capacity for each)
- Six kindergartens in Elbasan and Tirana were supplied with equipments.
- Eight kindergartens in Shkodra, Elbasan and Tirana were supplied with didactic materials and toys.

**b. Training and consulting activities**

**Training activities during 1994-2000 have involved about 800 teachers, preschool education specialists and university professors. During this period the following activities have taken place:**

- Training 6 people (4 teachers/12 weeks each and 2 specialists/ 6 weeks each) in Reggio Emilia, (march-may 1995)
- A study visit to Reggio Emilia kindergartens applying the Reggian experience of 36 teachers and inspectors from various cities. (December 1996, January 2000)

- National training activities attended by 300 teachers and preschool education inspectors (December 1994, September 1996, September 1996, September 1998, June 1999).
- National Conference of preschool education attended by 200 directors and inspectors of education directorates from various cities, specialists and representatives of the Ministry of Education and Science and the Pedagogic Studies Institute (PSI), professors from various universities who educate teachers of preschool education, teachers, guests from UNESCO and specialists of Reggio Emilia.
- Training and Consulting activities in kindergartens applying Reggio Emilia educative experience in Tirana, Shkodra and Elbasan, at the beginning and the end of every academic year, during 1996-2000 (12 activities)
- 5 training workshops during September-October 2000 attended by 185 teachers, preschool education inspectors and university professors.

### **c. Publications**

The following literature has been translated and published from Reggio Emilia:

- “Ideas in support of the educative activity”– Carla Rinaldi, (1996)
- “Fountains” – Project – (1997)
- “Everything creates a shadow except for the ants”– (1997)

A book (“In search of knowledge” - E. Mato&P. Kamani, 2000) that introduces the philosophy of Reggio Emilia education and the application of this experience in the Albanian reality, has been prepared and published aiming to assist the teachers, the university professors and the specialists “

### **d. The contribution on renovating the official documentation**

In this regard it was prepared the draft of “General Standards of preschool education” (2000).

## **2.2. SCOPE OF THE PROJECT**

- Establishing a new experience of education for preschool children as a support for changes in early childhood education.
- Qualitative improvement of the early childhood curricula and its development in accordance with the international standards of preschool education.
- Increasing the variety of philosophies and educative methods applied in our country.
- A larger involvement of the parents and the community in the preschool children education.

### **2.3. OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT**

- Being informed of various methods and techniques in order to present, explain and reinforce knowledge and special capabilities of preschool children.
- Functioning of strategies and working techniques in order to increase the involvement of preschool children in the education process.
- Utilizing resources and various didactic materials to increase children's learning capabilities in this educative experience.
- Increasing the democracy level during the kindergarten's work.
- Organizing training activities with various groups in order to spread the key elements of the educative experience's content and infrastructure.

### **2.4. ACTIVITIES OF THE PROJECT**

#### **First Phase**

The following activities were organized during the first phase:

- A workshop organized in Tirana with kindergartens' directors to present Reggio Emilia educative experience.
- A 3-month study visit of Albanian teachers in Reggio Emilia kindergartens.
- A study visit of Mrs. Pranvera Kamani and Mrs. Erlehta Mato in Italy to establish the contacts with the respective Italian institutions.
- A pilot kindergarten was opened in Tirana.
- Inclusion of the atelierista in the kindergarten
- Preparing the documentation with the formulating strategy for teachers and the communication strategy for family and children.
- Individualization of teachers' education
- Evaluation of the activities performed by the teachers
- Preparation of a video to pilot Reggio Emilia experience in Albanian kindergartens.

#### **Second phase**

The following activities were organized during the second phase:

- Training of the Albanian teachers by Italian teachers.
- Training in the pilot kindergarten.
- A 10 days visit of an Albanian teachers group to Reggio Emilia
- Presenting in an international conference the Albanian kindergartens experience gained from Reggio Emilia experience compared also to other educative experiences as "step by step", Montessori, Frobel.
- Evaluation of the Albanian kindergartens experience.

### **Third phase**

- Further extension of the Albanian kindergarten network working with Reggio Emilia method.
- Training workshop with Albanian kindergarten educators.
- General assessment of the experience gained.

### **2.5. GROUPS AND INSTITUTIONS INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT**

- Ministry of Education and Sciences
- Pedagogic Studies Institute
- Pedagogic Faculties
- Education Directorates
- Kindergartens
- UNICEF
- Parents

### **2.6. HUMAN AND MATERIAL RESOURCES OF THE PROJECT**

- Public kindergarten buildings in three different cities.
- Government budget
- Parents and community's contributions.
- Teachers and kindergartens' supporting personnel.
- National and local preschool education experts.
- Permanent and short-term partners etc.

### **2.7. DONORS**

- REGGIO EMILIA COMMUNE
- UNICEF

## **SECTION III: DESCRIPTION OF THE EVALUATION**

### **3.1. OBJECT OF THE EVALUATION**

Evaluation of the project “Piloting the educative model of Reggio Emilia in Albania”

### **3.2. THE NEED FOR EVALUATION**

It is the sixth year that Reggio Emilia methodology is being applied in Albanian kindergartens. UNICEF and the Ministry of Education and Sciences as project implementing consider useful an internal evaluation of the methodology in order to highlight the achievements and the difficulties faced during its application. This evaluation will also contribute to the development of an effective strategy for the future.

### **3.3. SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION**

To evaluate the effectiveness and the impact of Reggio Emilia educative methodology piloted in preschool education in Albania. In accordance with the national objectives to revise the methodologies applied in preschool education.

To evaluate the outcomes of the piloting of Reggio Emilia methodology in Albanian kindergartens in the following aspects:

- The completion of the curricula
- The achievements in the development of children following this education method.
- Professional development of the pedagogic and supportive personnel involved in the project
- Involvement of parents and the community during the implementation of the project.

### **3.4. OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION**

- To evaluate the effectiveness of Reggio Emilia model in the development of children in Albania.
- To evaluate adoption of goals, objectives, standards, and the curriculum content of Reggio Emilia into the Albanian context.
- To assess the achievements of the children who have followed this educative model.
- To evaluate the professional development effectiveness of the pedagogic and supportive personnel involved in the application of Reggio Emilia model.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of parents and community involvement in support of the kindergarten activity.

- To identify and evaluate the strong and weak points of Reggio Emilia model in Albania and give recommendations for improvements and the future of the project.
- To evaluate the efficiency of the application of Reggio Emilia model in Albania.

### **3.5. METHODOLOGY OF EVALUATION**

The evaluation is a summary type and it aims to determine the effectiveness of piloting Reggio Emilia model in Albania. The evaluation is focused on the achievements indicators and gives recommendations for the future of this model in Albania.

#### **Sources, instruments and the information gathering procedure**

The evaluation is based on the information collected from primary and secondary sources as:

- The Development strategy of UNICEF office in Tirana;
- Activities' Plans
- The existing evaluation reports of the project
- Published materials about Reggio Emilia model in Albania
- Children's files
- The documentation and kindergartens' educative projects.
- Results of the questionnaire done with teachers, parents, university professors.
- Face to face interviews with kindergarten directors and preschool education inspectors.
- In site inspections of the premises and kindergartens' activities.
- Assessment of children's knowledge and capabilities.

#### **The following are expected as effectiveness indicators:**

- The progress in three years of the children in the kindergarten.
- The progress of children in school
- The quality of didactic materials
- How satisfied are the parents
- How satisfied are the inspectors
- How satisfied is the Ministry of Education and Sciences
- How satisfied is the community
- The number of kindergartens supporting this methodology
- The number of kindergartens working with this methodology.
- Quality of the teachers
- The attitude of the university professors on this model
- The impact of this experience on the official curricula and the country preschool institutions practice.

## **Plan of Action**

### **1. Preparatory phase, April 2003**

- Identifying the documentation
- Preparing the questionnaires for teachers, parents and preschool education inspectors.
- Preparing the platform for parents and teachers interviews.
- Preparing the platform for kindergartens' inspection and children's testing.

### **2. Gathering the information may – june 2003**

- Conducting inspections in kindergartens.
- Filling out the questionnaires.
- Administration of interviews.
- Administration of tests
- Studying the documentation and published materials.

**Processing the information, 1 – 30 July 2003**

**Preparing the report, 15 – 30 August 2003**

**Delivering the report, 30 August 2003.**

### **3.6. ROLE OF THE EVALUATION TEAM**

- Conduct a professional evaluation
- Respect the evaluation deadline
- Prepare supporting materials for the evaluation
- Prepare the final report

## **SECTION IV: RESULTS OF THE EVALUATION**

The results of piloting Reggio Emilia educative methodology in Albanian kindergartens are presented in four main aspects:

### **4.1. Implementation of the curricula**

The Reggio Emilia approach has embodied the most progressive ideas of the most famous education theorists. Among them we can mention Montessori, Piaget, Vygotsky, Dewey, Bruner and Gardner. The unique experience of this region can distinguish the symbolic languages of children in the context of curricula directed in projects.

By knowing this methodology and due to the benevolent cooperation with its representatives for long this dream has become a reality for many developed countries.

#### ***Role of the environment***

The environment is crucial to Reggio Emilia's early childhood education program. Creating of new spaces and remodelling of old ones is based on the criteria of integrating each classroom with the rest of the kindergarten and the kindergarten with the community. The classrooms are connected often in the kindergarten corridors; kitchens are open to view, and access to the surrounding community is assured through windows, corridors and doors of the classrooms, which differently from the other experiences are mostly open.

The observations and the interviews in Reggio Emilia approach kindergartens of Tirana, Shkodra and Elbasan have shown that entries capture the attention of both children and adults by using mirrors and figurative exhibits (on the walls, floors and ceilings) photographs and children's work accompanied by transcriptions of their discussions. These features characterize each classroom interiors, where displays of children project work are reflected in objects and classroom materials. In each step in the kindergarten, the environment informs and engages the viewer.

Other supportive elements of the environment as the ample space for supplies are distinguished for the aesthetic features. The majority of the classrooms have studio spaces in the form of large, centrally located ateliers and space for other supplies. In the mean time, there are clearly designated spaces for large and small group activities. The whole building is structured to create opportunities for children to interact. For instance the dress-up area in the observed kindergartens is in the main corridor, classrooms are connected with passageways; lunchrooms and bathrooms are designed to encourage children to communicate and encounter each other. The teachers of these kindergartens consider the environment as "a third teacher" in the classroom.

Interviews with teachers not applying the Reggio Emilia model have concluded that they see the environment of Reggio Emilia approach kindergartens as very motivating, inviting and hospitable for children and parents and that “ *even though they don’t have many tools and supplies, are unique in regards of the colours, light and the transparency of children’s work*”.

### ***Long-term projects as tools for learning***

Regular observations in kindergartens applying Reggio Emilia approach highlighted again that the curriculum is characterized by the embodying of contemporary researches in preschool education creating numerous opportunities for creative thinking and exploration. Teachers often work on projects with small groups of children, while the rest of the class engages in a variety of self-selected activities.

The inspection of a full day in Reggio Emilia approach kindergartens compared to the control groups reveals that projects where teachers and children engage in are distinct from the classical concept of the lectures divided in themes and hours, part of the kindergartens not applying this experience routine. The topic of investigation usually derives directly from teacher observations of children’s spontaneous play and exploration. Project topics are also selected on the basis of an academic curiosity or social conviction on the part of teachers and parents, and of an event that has drawn the attention kindergarten people. Teachers of this model have the ability to improvise and respond to children’s predisposition to enjoy the unexpected differently from other kindergartens working with fixed schemes becoming so, a routine.

In regards of the origin, interviews with children of these kindergartens showed that successful projects are those that generate interest and provoke children’s creative thinking and problem solving and are open to different ways of exploration. Because curriculum requirements are based on developmental and sociocultural convictions, small groups of children of varying abilities and interests, including those with special needs, work together on projects by not being differentiated and not getting involved in competition which is not very positive for these ages.

All kindergartens working with this experience have in common that the project begins with teachers observing and questioning about the topics of children’s interest. Based on children’s responses, teachers introduce materials and questions that provoke children to faster explore the topic. In not few cases projects often move in unanticipated direction as a result of problems identification by children. Thus, for instance curriculum planning and implementation revolve around open-ended and often long-term projects are based on the reciprocal nature of teacher-directed and children-initiated activities. Even in kindergartens that do not have a long working experience with this approach, teachers insist in enlarging children’s knowledge basing on their interests and requests.

### ***The hundred languages of children***

One of the main points of the observations in the kindergartens is the use of the hundred languages by the preschool children. As children proceed in an investigation, generating and testing the hypothesis, they are encouraged to depict their understanding through the symbolic languages including drawing, sculpture, dramatic play and writing. They work together toward the solution of problems that arise.

### ***Conclusions on the curricula...***

The Reggio Emilia approach applied in our country challenges some affirmed conceptions of teacher's competences and the development of appropriate practices. During the application of this model, teachers assert the importance of being confused to the end, which they consider as a contributor to the learning process. Thus, a part of the teaching strategy aims to fully allow for mistakes to happen or to begin a project with no clear sense of where it might end. Another characteristic is the importance of the child's ability to communicate in the peer group where teacher's intervention in children's conflicts is minimal.

A challenging aspect of Reggio Emilia approach is the acceptance and encouragement of multiple points of view regarding children's needs, interests, and abilities, the firm faith that parents, children and teachers contribute in many ways to the determination of educative experiences. Differently from other kindergartens' experiences teachers trust themselves to respond to children's ideas and interests; they trust children to be interested to learn things they know about; parents should be informed and active members of the cooperative educational team.

In meetings with different groups of "Reggian experience and other kindergartens" preschool institutions actors, is clearly noticed the sympathy of the teachers and parents for this educational method which they describe as "open, natural, motivating, challenging and democratic"

### **Following are some opinions of kindergartens' directors regarding the influence of the Reggian Experience:**

- 32 kindergarten directors were interviewed where 8 directors from kindergartens applying the Reggian experience and 30 from other public and private kindergartens. The majority considers very important the refurbishment and the supply with didactic tools and toys of the kindergartens. The directors of other kindergartens consider primary the supply with tools and toys while the Reggian experience applicants give more importance to the tools or makeshift objects, staying in open air and observing various phenomenon, children's behaviour in the classroom. In addition, the majority considers essential the didactic video, publications in assistance of the teachers, which according to them recently have been numerous and have helped a lot in propagating this experience in other

kindergartens. The support of the Albanian Ministry of Education and Sciences is considered very important by all directors, while  $\frac{3}{4}$  of them consider also important the support of the Education Directorate. Two aspects considered as an influence of the Reggio methodology are: a change of parents image for the kindergarten and the management of kindergarten's financial resources.

#### **Opinions of Pedagogic Faculties Professors:**

- There were 12 professors interviewed from the pedagogic faculties. 100% of them assessed as very good the integration of the contemporary experience with the traditional experience in preschool education. Most of them, among the traditional: "Step by Step", Reggio Emilia, Montessori, Froebel models, listed on top the Reggio Model. Although the majority considers insufficient the trainings of the professors on the educational models of preschool education. They highlight as very good the approach of the universities with the preschool institutions practice but affirming also that they scarcely use the literature of the preschool education practice in the university auditoriums.

#### **4.2. Achievements in the development of children following this education method**

In order to determine the achievements of the children in kindergartens where was piloted the Reggio Emilia approach were used two special forms. These forms measured the social-emotional, motor, cognitive, communicative, logic-mathematics development and the statements of the teachers and parents. They were prepared and utilized as per age groups: 3-4 years old, 4-5 years old, 5-6 years old.

- **3-4 years old children** following the reggian model gladly go to the kindergarten. They are clean and organized, make friends easily, are not aggressive, they can dress up and undress by themselves, they can use spoon and fork, can go to the toilet, can find by themselves what to do, they know the parts of the body, can move independently, have a good visual-motor coordination, can distinguish the objects by size, recognize smells, tastes, distinguish the strong noises from the weak ones, can distinguish separate elements from the whole object, they can express their needs, can pronounce correctly their name, understand simple questions, can talk to the friends and adults, can answer properly.
- Some children do not name formally the geometric shapes, have difficulties in specifying correctly the colours, have defects in pronunciation, but they are very active to know and to act. The project offers much better progress possibilities than the mechanic reproduction, which is the basis of knowledge in other kindergartens. In the mean time it

encourages utmost the fantasy and the imagination of the preschool children applying the reggian experience.

- **4-5 years old children** are integrated in the peer group, they know and respect the classroom and game rules, act independently, they are cooperative with the friends, the teacher, they know friends' names, the parts of the face, lower and upper limbs, they move freely, manipulate the letter, play in group and separately, they know the main colours, understand spatial concepts, can distinguish objects features, noises and sounds, main tastes, properly communicate with the adults and friends, learn to use new words, learn simple poetries and songs, can group objects by shape and colour, can recognize different quantities.
- Some of them need attention to develop the initiative spirit, to exercise in distinguishing the colours, recognize some kinds of instruments, to use the mimic and gestures, use materials in a creative manner, to recognize and complete certain sequences, to identify horizontal, vertical and oblique lines. These children differently from their peers, who follow other programs, are creative, non-conformist, in continuous search of original solutions, which makes them more active and cooperative.
- **5-6 years old children** are cooperative with friends and teachers, they accept suggestions from adults, know and respect the game's rules, they are self acting, have appropriate behaviour in certain situations, possess a good dynamic coordination, can draw a human sketch with the main parts of the human body, have orientation abilities, have good reflexes, understand spatial concepts, perceive the physical space, can recognize objects by touching, distinguish internal and external noises, understand seasons' continuity and change, the relation cause-effect, the content of tales and narrations, know to verbally express living experiences, can tell short stories and poetries, group objects by colour and shape, put objects in sequence, distinguish and connect objects by size.
- A part of children of this age need more individual guide from teachers and parents.

**The interviews of 46 teachers regarding the development of children under the reggian experience influence concluded the following:**

**In regards of the classroom activity**

- 100% affirm that the lecture is held with activity centres.
- 95,7% of the teachers affirms that children chose the activity by themselves.
- 84,8% affirms that the classroom has mini atelier.
- 52,9% of the teachers admits that parents are present in the classroom during the development of the project.

- 87% of the teachers declare that the class activities prepare the children for the first grade of school.
- 89,1% says that children participate in the project according to their abilities.

### **In regards of kindergarten premises**

- 89,1% of the teachers affirms that the kindergarten has suitable premises to develop Reggio Emilia model.
- According to 76,1%, the kindergarten has suitable equipments for children's growth and education.
- 90 % of them are happy by using of recycled materials in the educative projects.
- 60,9% states that the kindergarten doesn't have a multifunctional room.

### **In regards of the children**

- 98,7% of the teachers says that the children gladly go to the kindergarten.
- 97,8% says that the children are independent
- 95,7% affirm the cooperation among children
- 87% of the teachers state that children show respect for the adults.

## **4.3 Professional development of the pedagogic and supportive personnel involved in the project.**

### ***Administrative Policies and Organizational Features***

Each kindergarten observed in Tirana, Elbasan or Shkodra is staffed with two teachers per classroom (with a larger number of children per group than decided by the Albanian Ministry of Education and Sciences, also due to the popularity that this method enjoys in these cities), one atelierista (a teacher trained in arts who works with the classroom teachers in curriculum development and documentation). The preschool institution with a principal doesn't have hierarchical relationships among the teachers. This manner of organization and keeping the same group of children and teachers together for a period of three years has considerably facilitated the participation and the cooperation kindergarten-community-children.

Other features of Reggio Emilia's approach to early education that have generated interest among many educators in our country, not applying this experience include the concept of teachers as learners, the importance attributed to the educative role of the environment, the use of long-term projects with small groups of children as the curriculum strategy, the acquisition by children of the symbolic languages, etc.

### ***The new role of the teacher***

- By long observations conducted in kindergartens of three cities resulted that teachers' long-term commitment to know and understand the children

is at the crux of Reggio Emilia approach, which shows the continuing evolution of the ideas and educative practices. This offers many opportunities to the teachers to increase the professional competence allowing them after the required training to determine goals and working objectives.

- Teachers' autonomy in this experience is evident, demonstrated also in the absence of teacher manuals, curriculum guides, or progress tests. The lack of externally mandates is joined with the fact that teachers become skilled observers of children in order to be informed of the curriculum planning and implementation.
- Teachers divide responsibilities in the class so that can observe, take notes, and record conversations between children. These observations are shared with other teachers, the *atelierista* and parents in order for them to contribute in curriculum planning and evaluation. Teachers of several kindergartens as for instance in Tirana city, where there are many kindergartens applying this method, work and learn together to explore the most effective ways of intervening on children's spontaneous activities. The diversity of the experiences enhances the selection quality of the projects topics, their development, teachers' qualification etc.

#### **4.4. The Contribution of Documentation to the Quality of Education**

One of the most impressive features of this model and perhaps the unique contribution to early childhood education is the documentation of children's experience as a standard part of preschool classroom practice.

- Documentation of children's observation and systematic record keeping has long been encouraged and practiced in early childhood programs. Comparing to other experiences in public or private kindergartens, documentation in Reggio Emilia practice focuses mainly on children's experiences, memories, thoughts, and ideas during their daily activities. During the documentation process, the observations highlighted that attention is paid to children's work interlinked with its aesthetic aspects.
- Documentation includes samples of a child's work at different stages of project completion as for example photographs show work in progress, comments written by the teacher or other adults working with children; transcriptions of children's discussions; all comments and explanations related to the activity, and comments by parents.
- Observations, notes, transcriptions of tape recordings and photographs of children discussing are part of the documentation. Examples of children's work and written reflections were displayed in classroom or in the main hall. The documentation reveals how the children plan, carry out and complete the project.

The common fact resulted from observations of this experience compared to other kindergartens is that the documentation of the ideas and children's work significantly contributes in their education.

- *Enhancement of children's learning*

Documentation contributes to the extensiveness and depth of children's learning. In explaining this fact the studious L. Malagaci points out: " through documentation children become even more curious, interested, and confident as they understand what they have achieved". Preparing and displaying documentaries of children's experiences, displaying the projects, preparing project's albums or books is an effort to provide a debriefing or the review of experiences where new understandings can be clarified, deepened and strengthened. Children learn from and are stimulated by each other's work and the way this is displayed during documentation.

The documentation of ideas, thoughts, feelings and relationships is also valuable to the children to record, preserve and stimulate the most significant experiences, to enhance the knowledge on the topic investigated. In addition, a display documenting the work of a child or a group encourages other children to get involved enthusiastically in the new topic.

Many interviews with the children concluded that differently from other kindergartens' children, they often refer to previous works in order to enhance their knowledge and capabilities showed in the beginning of the year or the project.

- *Respecting children's ideas and work*

Careful and attractive documentation convince children that their efforts, intentions and ideas are respected from people around them. For example, an important element in the project approach was the preparation of documents for display, where children's groups work together in some topics and separately for particular topics. Evaluating and documenting the activity encourages these children to approach their work delightfully and responsibly, showing satisfaction for the results achieved.

- *Planning and Evaluation*

A salient feature of the project work turned out to be planning based on the evaluation of work as it progresses. As the children undertake complex individual or group tasks, over several days or weeks, the teachers examine and discuss with the children the ideas and options for future solutions. The educative activity program plans everything interesting, stimulating or challenging.

Activities are not planned too far in advance so that new elements often emerge by documentation. At the end of the daily activity, teachers reflect on the work progress, discuss about it, consider suggestions and new work directions. The awareness enables the teachers to optimise the children's chances of expressing the ideas in an interesting way. When teachers and children plan together, the

activity is more successful and interesting than the activity planned only by the teacher or the preschoolers.

- *Teacher Research and awareness process*

The interviewees commented documentation as a kind of teacher's research, which focuses her attention on children's plans, their understanding and the assistance to be given to them. The examination of preschoolers work and its documentation make possible that the understanding of children's development to not occur from tests which in this case are not efficient, but just formal. The documentation provides the basis for modification and adjustment of teaching strategies and a source of ideas for new strategies while deepening teachers' awareness for each child's progress. Using the data made available from the documentation, teachers are able to make right decisions about each child's development and learning.

The analysis of the steps taken by the children and the presentation of their activity make possible for teachers and parents to appreciate the construction of each child's unique experience and the group's contribution in the daily educative activity.

- *Children's learning made visible*

Differently from other preschool education experiences, the documentation provides the information about children's learning and progress that cannot be demonstrated by standardized tests or checks that teachers commonly use. In case teachers not applying Reggio Emilia experience receive the information by checking children's notebooks, the documentation of children's work in media provides evidence of the intellectual power of young children who do not have a more rational way to show what they know.

- *Conclusions...*

The most powerful contribution of documentation in these ways is the one that engages completely the children in projects, complex and interesting for their age. If, in many other classrooms, children will do the same drawings, with the same material and about the same topic, on the same day in the same way, the documentation would be fragile and as a result would not provide vivacity and worthiness to the discussion teacher-parent and children-parent.

#### **4.5. Involvement of parents and community in the implementation of the project**

##### ***Community Support and parental involvement***

Reggio Emilia's tradition of community support for families with young children as a collective and state responsibility has been very well transmitted in our kindergartens. The kindergarten programs are now a vital part of parents' community, as reflected in the financial support. The apparent and transparent community involvement is shown also by the parents' membership in

kindergartens boards, a school committee that exerts significant influence funds mobilization policy.

The parents' activity reflects the community at classroom and kindergarten level. Parents participate seriously in discussing and evaluating the curricula, which implies projects development. Meetings are held often in order for parents to have the possibility to discuss and debate.

- Documentation makes it possible for parents to become aware of their children's experience in the school. Referring once again to L. Malaguzzi, who points out that, "Documentation introduces parents to a quality of knowing, tangibly changing their expectations. They examine their responsibilities by living with their children's experiences, and taking a new and more inquisitive experience of the whole school work" In many cases parents commented on how they were attracted by their child's work, which were their efforts to make children's ideas and projects function by bringing in various materials.
- Parents' comments on children's work can also contribute to increase the value of documentation. Through learning about the activity in which their children are engaged, parents may be able to contribute with ideas in fields where they have a longer experience than the teachers, especially when parents can offer practical assistance as experts or with their artisan capabilities. In the kindergartens observed was noticed the involvement of parents having professions as doctors, carpenters, drivers, agronomist etc. who have contributed directly to the improvement of kindergarten's premises or in projects' development.
- The opportunity to examine the documentation of a project in progress can also help parents to think of ways they might contribute their time and energy in their child's classroom. Parents assist the progress of the kindergarten's activity by listening to children's ideas, helping them find the materials they need, making suggestions, offering assistance in finding and reading books, etc.

### **Relations with the kindergarten and participation in kindergarten's activity.**

69 parents were interviewed, 48 females and 25 males. The majority had one child to the kindergarten.

- 75,4% of parents visits their child's classroom and participates always in educative activities of the classroom.
- 50.7% affirm that are informed daily on the project activities.
- 98.6% feel welcomed in the kindergarten and classroom.
- 88.4% are interested to have larger information on the activities of the kindergarten.
- 85.5% state that teachers respect parents' ideas and suggestions.
- The majority of the parents, 75.4% know exactly what does his child do in the kindergarten.

## **The child**

- 10% of the parents affirm that the child goes gladly to the kindergarten.
- 49.3% of parents think that their child is totally prepared for the first grade.
- 40.6% think that the child is more or less prepared.
- 8.7% respond that their child is not prepared.
- 71% of parents affirm that during the kindergarten period the child has been taught to be completely independent in his actions.
- According to the majority of parents (75.4%) teachers have been working separately with the child when necessary.
- 15.9% say that teachers have always worked separately with their child.
- While 8.7% of parents state that the teacher has not been working separately with their child.

## **Parents contribution**

- The participation of parents in kindergarten's activity according to most of them (87%) is as a response of teacher's request.
- According to 78,3% due to a response to child's request.
- While 46.4% have volunteered in participating.
- Regarding parents contribution, 55.1% says that have been observers of the education process;
- 39,1% have provided to the children informing materials regarding the project;
- 31.9% have given opinions on how an activity could be implemented;
- 24,6% have provided funds for the kindergarten, classroom;
- 8,7% have been organizers and implementers of the activities out of the kindergarten.

## **SECTION V: CONCLUSIONS AND RECCOMENDATIONS**

### **5.1. CONCLUSIONS**

In a general assessment we think that the gradual implementation of the project has been successful. The clear objectives and goals of the project have been transplanted in formulating and implementing step by step and correctly the respective activities by the implementing staff of the project.

The opinions, considerations, and assessments of the teachers, professors, preschool education inspectors, experts, particularly during round tables, workshops etc. have been numerous and positive. Among them can be mentioned evaluations regarding:

- Contemporaneous parameters applied during the refurbishment of kindergartens buildings expressing clear visions of the present and the future of the kindergartens parameters.
- Provision of the kindergartens with functional and educative equipments.
- Providing a rich and varied didactic base and toys, which are not only brand new for our kindergartens but have created an educative and entertaining environment that encourages children to be active.
- The rich and varied educative activity of the kindergarten, which focuses the child with his interests and desires, considering him as an active subject of his knowledge and development. In comparison with the previous method where prevails the verbalism, the process of knowledge and education has radically changed. In this method are prioritised the knowledge processes based on observation, research, debate and group activity based on acting to learn. A special value in this experience has the high degree of children's socializing, the democratic way of taking decisions and solving the problems, the high spirit of initiative and self-acting of children.
- The pedagogic staff that using the up to date training and based on their own experience as teachers could successfully put into practice the educative methodology of this experience.
- The successful involvement of parents' community in the educative activity of the kindergartens considering it as a complementary activity of child's education in the family.

The value and the contribution of the implementation of Reggio Emilia educative experience have been reflected in the qualitative improvement of the educative activity in public kindergartens applying single elements of reggian methodology. This was made possible because of the systematic involvement in training activities of the preschool education inspectors, teachers of public kindergartens and University professors.

In addition, the successful implementation of this methodology, among other methodologies applied in the preschool system, has been a great support in formulating the draft of "General Standards in preschool education", a very important document which delineates the physiognomy that must have the preschool education institutions in the future.

Evaluated as an early childhood education model, the Reggio Emilia experience is a result of providing the conditions which facilitate and deepen children's learning by building his powers of thinking through synthesis of all expressing, communication and knowing means. This experience, as a source of inspiration and optimism, helps the teachers, parents and children to work together in implementing the programs and educative projects. Among the main principles of this experience, which will be extended in the whole national curricula, we mention:

**Emergent Curriculum:** that builds upon the interests of children. Topics for study are captured from children's discussions in community or family, as well as the curiosity to know new things. Team activity planning is an essential component of the emergent curriculum. Teachers work together to formulate hypotheses about the possible directions of a project, the materials needed, and possible parents and community support.

**Project Work:** Projects, also emergent, are studies of concepts, ideas, and interests, which arise within the group. Starting as by chance, the project may last one week or could continue throughout the academic year. Throughout projects, teachers help children to make decisions about the direction of study, the ways in which the group will research the topic, the media that will demonstrate the project and the selection of materials needed to work.

**Representational Development:** Based on Gardner's notion for multiple intelligences, the Reggio Emilia approach calls for the utilization of graphic arts as powerful tools for cognitive, linguistic, and social development. Presentation of concepts and hypotheses in multiple forms of representation -- print, art, construction, drama, music, puppets and shadow play -- are viewed as essential to children's understanding.

**Collaboration:** Children's collaboration in both large and small groups has a great influence in the acceleration of the cognitive development. For this purpose, children are encouraged to dialogue, criticize, compare, negotiate, hypothesize, and problem solve through group work.

**Teachers as Researchers:** Teacher's role within the Reggio Emilia approach is complex. Her/his role is first and foremost to be that of a learner alongside the children. The teacher is a researcher and in the same time a guide of the educative activities; he/she is always willing to listen, observe, and document

children's work; teachers are committed to reflection in order to enhance the efficiency of teaching and learning; they work to increase the influence of the community in their classroom, co-construct, and stimulate thinking and children's collaboration with peers.

**Documentation:** There is nothing in common with the traditional children's working files. Documentation of children's work in progress is an important tool in the learning process for children, teachers, and parents. Pictures of children engaged in project works, their words about what they discuss and do, feel and think, and children's experiences displayed in the visual media are a presentation of the dynamics of learning.

**Environment:** Within the Reggio Emilia kindergartens, great attention is given to the environment, which is considered as the "third teacher." Documentation of children's work, plants, and collections that children have brought and prepared are displayed both at the children's eye level. Common spaces available to all children include dramatic play areas and worktables for children from different classrooms to come together.

***Features of Reggio Emilia approach, which must become part of the early childhood in our country, are as follows:***

**Teacher's Role:**

- to co-explore the learning experiences with the children
- to guide problem and conflict solving,
- to return children's ideas for further exploration
- to organize the classroom and materials to be aesthetically pleasing for children
- to document children's progress through visual means, files, videotape, tape recording,
- to help children see the connections between learning and experience
- to help children express their knowledge through representing the work
- to have a dialogue about the projects with parents and colleagues
- to foster the cooperation with parents and community

**Projects:**

- can emerge from children's ideas and interests
- can be provoked by teachers
- can be introduced by teachers knowing what is of interest to children: construction sites, nature, etc.
- terminate when new ideas are discussed and negotiated over, potential conflicts are solved, progress and steps taken are reviewed and,
- should be concrete and important to children, should be "large" enough for diversity of ideas and achievements in everybody's expression.

Media :

- explore to the children what is this “material”, what can be done with it before they use it.
- should have variation in colours to help children "see" the colours, tones, hues in order to distinguish the similarities and differences
- should be aesthetically pleasing in order to invite children to actively participate in educative activities.

\* \* \*

The reggian model is a challenge to the preschool education development in our country. Knowing and implementing an experience, which permits the child to express himself in many ways, which enables him in an early age to have cognitive and acting competences, from non-conflictual decision taking and cooperation, from the real and visual life understanding, is a successful starting in the period of re-conceiving and renovating the working experiences with children. Now, we have our seven-years experience of applying the Reggio approach in some kindergartens.

This experience has become a reference point for preschool education specialists in solving early childhood education problems, making possible the renovation of the curricula and the enhancement of training activities for preschool institutions employees.

### **STRONG POINTS OF THE PROJECT**

- It introduced in the Albanian experience a very interacting philosophy and methodology of early childhood education releasing the traditional experience from the frames of the adults' dictate;
- The influence of this experience is present in various documents formulated on the policies and development of the preschooler in our country.
- It had and continues to have an effect on the enrichment and increase of the new preschool education curricula diversity.
- It created capable professional capacities in order to qualify more preschool education teachers.
- It has a strong influence in creating a new collaborative environment with parents and community;
- It serves as a reference point to successfully introduce contemporaneous education experiences in the Albanian socio-cultural conditions.

### **WEAK POINTS OF THE PROJECT**

- This experience could not be expanded in a larger number of public kindergartens.

- It was not overcome through better information on the reggian approach, the opinion of the supportive institutions as “ a very expensive approach for country’s conditions” even though in reality comparing to other methodologies as Montessori or Step-by-Step, it had a much lower financial cost.
- The university professors have limited knowledge on this methodology also for the fact that kindergartens applying this approach were not extended in all cities where pedagogic faculties are based and preschool teachers are graduated.
- The support of the national trainers network, which would enable the practical introduction of many reggian elements considered very effective in preschool education, could not be achieved.

## **5.2. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE ACTIVITIES OF THE PROJECT**

### **General Recommendations**

In the actual phase of the project we think that it must be worked to further extend the project in order to not remain just a goal. To this aim it will serve:

- The increase of investments for preschool education.
- Knowing and identifying the curricular elements of these models by the formulators of the new curricula, which would reflect directly their important influence in creating an Albanian educative model.
- Ensuring reciprocal exchanges of suitable elements of different alternatives applied in Albania in order to enrich the real experiences of each alternative according to our conditions.
- Joint workshops, visits and continuous debates in exchanging pedagogic opinions on these alternatives would assist in consolidating a democratic and open education for Albania.
- In creating the necessary spaces that ensure the study of the philosophic basis of these models in the education program of our Universities, where preschool education teachers are graduated in conformity with the structure of the national curricula applied in the kindergartens.
- Transforming some existing kindergartens of these models in training centres for the preschool education teachers. Ensuring the financial support from the project in order to enable the multiplication of the projects documented in Reggian kindergartens, which will be as a supporting material for all other kindergartens applying this method.

## **Special Recommendations**

### **To the Ministry of Education and Science**

- To ensure a larger expansion of the kindergartens applying this educative methodology;
- To improve the legislation, so kindergartens applying this method can benefit directly from the financial contributions of the communities, private business, and various donors by having an own current account.
- Giving a special status for two kindergartens of Tirana, which can be used as centres for propagating the reggian experience.

### **To the Pedagogic Studies Institute**

- To prioritise the development of the new curricula based on the Reggio Emilia philosophy;
- To strengthen the local trainers network working with the reggian methodology;
- To increase the number of publications in our country regarding the reggian educative experience (books, bulletins, leaflets, videos, etc.)

### **To the UNICEF office in Tirana**

- To support the inclusion of reggian experience elements in all early childhood projects, taking in consideration that this methodology is in avant-garde;
- To support common programs of governmental institutions (central and local level) with preschool institutions applying the reggian experience.
- To ensure the continuity of local contacts with Reggio Emilia in order for the country experience to not remain isolated, but to be always in enhancement and renovation process.

## ANNEXES

### FORM FOR CHILDREN 3-4 YEARS OLD

Completed the form Total 62

#### OBSERVATION OF SOCIO – EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

No	Abilities	Yes	%	No	%	Notes
1	Parents show interest for their child	60	96.8	-	-	
2	Comes gladly to the kindergarten	54	87.1	3	4.8	
3	Comes on time to the kindergarten	58	93.5	2	3.2	
4	Is clean and tidy	62	100	-	-	
5	Is sociable	50	80.6	11	17.7	
6	Has the tendency to stay apart from the others	12	19.4	49	79	
7	Is aggressive	-	-	61	98.4	
8	Is capable to defend himself	56	90.3	6	9.7	
9	Needs continuous attention	16	25.8	46	74.2	
10	Dresses and undresses by himself	56	90.3	6	9.7	
11	Respects the hygienic rules	60	96.8	2	3.2	
12	Uses well the fork and the spoon	59	95.2	1	1.6	
13	Goes to the toilet by himself	59	95.2	3	4.8	
14	Finds by himself what to do	60	96.8	2	3.2	
15	Concludes the activity he is engaged	52	83.9	9	14.5	

#### OBSERVATION OF MOTOR DEVELOPMENT

No.	Abilities	Yes	%	No	%	Notes
1	Moves independently	60	96.8	1	1.6	
2	Moves on order	56	90.3	4	6.5	
3	Goes up and down stairs easily	59	95.2	3	4.8	
4	Runs spontaneously	59	95.2	3	4.8	
5	Runs when he is asked to	61	98.4	1	1.6	
6	Knows the parts of the human body	62	100	-	-	
7	Has visual - motor	61	98.4	1	1.6	

	coordination					
<b>8</b>	Catches and passes the ball	60	96.8	1	1.6	

### OBSERVATION OF COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

<b>No.</b>	<b>Abilities</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Notes</b>
1	Distinguishes and names the colours	30	48.4	20	32.3	
2	Distinguishes and names the geometric shapes	17	27.4	28	45.2	
3	Distinguishes a small object from a big one	62	100	-	-	
4	Distinguishes smells and tastes	57	91.9	4	6.5	
5	Distinguishes strong noises from weak ones	61	98.4	1	1.6	
6	Distinguishes specific elements from the total	56	90.3	6	9.7	
7	Casts the sight in different directions	58	93.5	3	4.8	

### OBSERVATION OF COMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT

<b>No</b>	<b>Abilities</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Notes</b>
1	Has problems in pronunciation	21	33.9	40	64.5	
1	Spells correctly his own name	52	83.9	9	14.5	
2	Able to express his own needs	59	95.2	2	3.2	
3	Able to communicate with friends and adults	56	90.3	2	3.2	
4	Names objects of common use	56	90.3	5	8.1	
5	Follows the advices	57	91.9	4	6.5	
6	Understands easy questions	60	96.8	1	1.6	
7	Responds in a proper manner	52	83.9	7	11.3	

## FORM FOR CHILDREN 4 – 5 YEARS OLD

Completed the form in total 58

### OBSERVATION OF SOCIO – EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

No	Abilities	Yes	%	No	%	Notes
1	Parents show interest for their child	58	100	-	-	
2	Comes gladly to the kindergarten	58	100	-	-	
3	Comes on time to the kindergarten	56	96.6	2	3.4	
4	Is integrated in the peer's group	57	98.3	1	1.7	
5	Recognises and respects the class' rules	58	100	-	-	
6	Recognises and respects the game's rules	57	98.3	1	1.7	
7	Has gained independency in actions	55	94.8	3	5.2	
8	Has an initiative spirit	45	77.6	12	20.7	
9	Cooperates with friends	58	100	-	-	
10	Cooperates with the teacher	58	100	-	-	
11	Accepts suggestions from adults	54	93.1	4	6.9	
12	Acts by himself in the table, in the toilet	55	94.8	3	5.2	
13	Concludes the activity started	48	82.8	10	17.2	
14	Does by himself various activities	48	82.8	10	17.2	
15	Knows the names of his fiends	58	100	1	1.7	
16	Tells where he lives (the address)	56	96.6	1	1.7	
17	Needs a continuous attention	35	60.3	23	39.7	
18	Has the tendency to stay apart from the others	23	39.7	32	55.2	
19	Knows how to use fork and spoon	55	94.8	3	5.2	

## OBSERVATION OF MOTOR DEVELOPMENT

No	Abilities	Yes	%	No	%	Notes
1	Recognises and names the components of the face	58	100	-	-	
2	Recognizes upper and lower limbs	58	100	-	-	
3	Walks following a straight line (forward/ backward)	56	96.6	2	3.4	
4	Goes easily up and down stairs	58	100	-	-	
5	Runs spontaneously	40	69	18	3.1	
6	Runs when asked by the teacher	58	100	-	-	
7	Jumps on one foot	53	91.4	5	8.6	
8	Catches and passes the ball	58	100	-	-	
9	Folds the paper with his hands	58	100	-	-	
10	Tears the paper with his hands	57	98.3	1	1.7	
11	Cut papers and newspapers	58	100	-	-	
12	Strings beads or the pasta	50	86.2	8	13.8	
13	Coordinates hand and fingers moves	48	82.8	8	13.8	
14	Plays in group and on his own	58	100	-	-	
15	Has gained a certain orientation in the space	53	91.4	4	6.9	

## OBSERVATION OF COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

No	Abilities	Yes	%	No	%	Notes
1	Recognizes the main colours	58	100	-	-	
2	Recognises some of the colours' derivatives	43	74.1	13	22.4	
3	Distinguishes the right hand from the left one	49	84.5	9	15.5	
4	Instinctively understands the time concept before/after	55	94.8	3	5.2	
5	Instinctively understands spatial concepts: up/down on one side/on the other side above/below near/far in line	46 28 22 22 19	79.3 48.3 37.9 37.9 32.8	5	8.6	
6	Distinguishes a heavy object from a light one	58	100	-	-	
7	Distinguishes by touching if an object is: smooth/ rough Cold / warm	50 20	86.2 34.5	3	5.2	

8	Recognizes and distinguishes external sounds and noises.	55	94.8	3	5.2	
9	Recognizes and distinguishes internal sounds and noises	55	94.8	3	5.2	
10	Accompanies simple rhythms	56	96.6	2	3.4	
11	Knows some types of instruments and uses any of them	35	60.3	22	37.9	
12	Recognises and distinguishes by tasting the tastes: Sweet/ sour Salty/ bitter	57 23	98.3 39.7		-	

## OBSERVATION OF LINGUISTIC AND COMMUNICATION CAPABILITIES DEVELOPMENT

No	Abilities	Yes	%	No	%	Notes
1	Communicates properly with his friends	50	86.2	1	1.	
2	Communicates properly with adults	58	100	-	-	
3	Listens to friends and the teacher	58	100	-	-	
4	Learns and uses new words	58	100	-	-	
5	Communicates by mimics and gestures	42	72.4	16	27.6	

6	Answers to the questions correctly	53	91.4	5	8.6	
7	Spells the words correctly	50	86.2	8	13.8	
8	Uses the materials in a creative manner	45	77.6	12	20.7	
9	Learns easy poetries by heart	51	98.3	1	1.7	
10	Lists on sequences a simple story	52	89.7	6	10.3	
11	Learns easy songs	57	98.3	1	1.7	

### OBSERVATION OF LOGICAL-ARITHMETIC DEVELOPMENT

No.	Abilities	Yes	%	No	%	Notes
1	Groups objects by colour	56	96.6	1	1.7	
2	Groups objects by shape	57	98.3	1	1.7	
3	Groups objects by both colour and shape	56	96.6	2	3.4	
4	Recognises and reproduces shapes: circular rectangle triangle	34 41 20	58.6 70.7 34.5	1	1.7	
5	Recognises and completes certain series	40	69	17	29.3	
6	Identifies equal and different quantities	50	86.2	8	13.8	
7	Recognises quantity one	57	98.3	-	-	
8	Recognises quantity two	57	98.3	-	-	
9	Recognises quantity three	57	98.3	-	-	
10	Identifies and recognises the lines: horizontal vertical oblique	25 26 11	43.1 44.4 19	17	29.3	
11	Identifies and recognises identical shapes	57	98.3	-	-	
12	Distinguishes a big object from a small one	57	98.3	-	-	
13	Recognises the quantity: much little at all	32 44 17	55.2 79.9 2.3		-	

## FORM FOR CHILDREN 5 - 6 YEARS OLD

Completed the form      Total 64

### OBSERVATION OF SOCIO - EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

No.	Abilities	Yes	%	No	%	Notes
1	Parents show interest about their child	63	98.4	1	1.6	
2	Comes gladly to the kindergarten	61	95.3	3	4.7	
3	Comes on time to the kindergarten	58	90.6	6	9.4	
4	Cooperates with friends and the teacher	61	95.3	3	4.7	
5	Accepts suggestions from adults	58	90.6	6	9.4	
6	Respects and takes part in the rules determined collectively	60	93.8	4	6.3	
7	Recognises and respects game's	63	98.4	-	-	

	rules					
8	Is able to organise simple games	62	96.9	2	3.1	
9	Helps the friends in difficulty	54	84.4	10	15.6	
10	Is auto sufficient	58	90.6	3	4.7	
11	Is self confident	58	90.6	5	7.8	
12	Completes to the end the activities he undertakes	55	85.9	9	14.1	
13	Communicates his emotions and feelings	61	95.3	3	4.7	
14	Has the tendency to get self-isolated	7	10.9	57	89.1	
15	Has proper behaviour in different situations	61	95.3	3	4.7	
16	Listens and answers properly to the adults	61	95.3	3	4.7	

### OBSERVATION FOR MOTOR DEVELOPMENT

No	Abilities	Yes	%	No	%	Notes
1	It possesses a good dynamic coordination	63	98.4	1	1.6	
2	He can draw the human sketch by not forgetting the most important parts of the body.	58	90.6	6	9.4	
3	Recognises and names various parts of his own and others' body	60	93.	2	3.	
4	Has a correct visual – motor coordination	62	96.9	2	3.1	
5	Coordinates hand and fingers moves	61	95.3	3	4.7	
6	Usually uses the right hand	60	93.8	4	6.3	
7	Usually uses the left hand	7	10.9	55	85.9	
8	Distinguishes the right hand from the left	60	93.8	3	4.7	
9	It perceives the physical space	64	100	-	-	
10	Has orientation skills	63	98.4	1	1.6	
11	Moves energetically	61	95.3	3	4.7	
12	Can stand in one foot	62	96.9	2	3.1	
13	Goes up and down stairs easily	63	98.4	1	1.6	
14	Plays in group and respects the rules	63	98.4	-	-	
15	Expresses with body moves certain emotional states	61	95.3	2	3.1	
16	Has good reflexes	61	95.3	3	4.7	

### OBSERVATION OF COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

No	Abilities	Yes	%	No	%	Notes
1	Can find the direction	51		-		
2	Has assimilated spatial and time concepts: open / closed inside/ outside behind/before/in front, at side near / far above/ below up/ down first / last before / after Recognises and distinguishes: big / small fat/ slim biggest / medium / smallest	56 55 55 55 58 57 53 54 56 55 54	87.5 85.9 85.9 85.9 90.6 89.1 82.8 84.4 87.5 85.9 84.4			
3	Recognises objects by touch	61	95.3	2	3.1	
4	Recognises smells and tastes	60	93.8	-		
5	Perceives and distinguishes internal and external sounds and noises	61	95.3	2	3.1	
6	Recognises the source of a sound	59	92.2	5	7.8	
7	Knows some types of instruments and uses any	12	18.8	52	81.3	
8	Accompanies with hands some rhythms	57	89.1	6	9.4	
9	Understands the relation cause - effect	56	87.5	7	10.9	
10	Places facts and events according to a logic sequence	55	85.9	8	12.5	
11	Identifies unusual situations	32	50	30	46.9	
12	Has good concentration abilities	53	82.8	10	15.6	
13	Understands continuity and simultaneity concepts	57	89.1	6	9.4	
14	Understands the continuity of season's change	62	96.9	1	1.6	

### OBSERVATION OF LINGUISTIC AND COMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT

No	Abilities	Yes	%	No	%	Notes
1	Communicates with the peer and the teacher	60	93.8	2	3.1	
2	Understands complex instructions	59	92.2	4	6.3	
3	Understands the content of the	62	96.9	-	-	

	stories and tales					
4	Distinguishes the reality by the fantasy	58	90.6	4	6.3	
5	Learns and uses new words	60	93.8	3	4.7	
6	Spells words and names of different phenomena correctly	59	92.2	3	4.7	
7	Speaks using the linguistic categories, as: gender, cases, tense, etc.	50	78.1	10	15.6	
8	Expresses with words real experiences	60	93.8	1	1.6	
9	Answers logically to the questions	59	92.2	4	6.3	
10	Is able to finish interrupted stories or tales	59	92.2	4	6.3	
11	Is able to communicate through mimic and gestures	56	87.5	5	7.8	
12	Respects the time sequences of the events	58	90.6	5	7.8	
13	Is able to tell a story briefly	62	96.9	1	1.6	
14	Is able to memorize simple poetries and songs	62	96.9	1	1.6	
15	Uses different materials in a creative manner	58	90.6	4	6.3	
16.	Is able to invent short stories	60	93.8	3	4.7	
17	Organises and well uses the writing paper space.	57	89.1	6	9.4	

### OBSERVATION OF LOGICAL – ARITHMETIC DEVELOPMENT

No.	Abilities	Yes	%	No	%	Notes
1	Groups objects by shape	62	96.9	-	-	
2	Groups objects by colour	63	98.4	-	-	
3	Keeps correspondence	58	90.6	2	3.1	
4	Distinguishes and names the basic geometric shapes: circle square rectangle triangle	55 54 51 49	85.9 84.4 79.7 76.6		-	
5	Makes comparisons and accompanying	57	89.1	4	6.3	
6	Has gained the concept of equality and inequality	59	92.2	3	4.7	
7	Recognizes quantities many / few / at all	61	95.3	-	-	
8	Recognizes the quantity: one	51	79.7		-	

	two	56	87.5			
	three	52	81.3			
	four	51	79.7			
	Recognizes quantities over four	29	45.3			
<b>9</b>	Sets up the objects in sequence	63	98.4	-	-	
<b>10</b>	Forms and presents equal groups	59	92.2	4	6.3	
<b>11</b>	Identifies and points out quantity relations	63	98.4	-	-	
<b>12</b>	Perceives, distinguishes and liase objects by size	62	96.9	-	-	

### **Questionnaire for parents**

Please answer the questions basing on your experience and that of your child, frequenting the reggian approach kindergarten.

We happily welcome any comments, ideas and suggestions. The questionnaire is anonymous so please do not sign it.

Complete the answers:

City -----

Kindergarten -----

Parent F M

Other children 1 2 3 4

If "yes" in preschool age \_\_\_\_\_ in school age \_\_\_\_\_

### **I. Relationships with the kindergarten and participation in kindergarten's activity**

#### **1. I visit my child's class and take part in educative activities of the class**

Always more or less Never

#### **2. I get informed on the educative project of the class**

Every day once a week  
Once a month when the teacher gathers us

#### **3. Do you feel welcome in the kindergarten and in the child's class?**

Totally more or less not at all

#### **4. Are you interested on having a broaden information of what happens in the kindergarten?**

Yes No

#### **5. If yes, in what fields?**

#### **6. Do you feel that the teachers take your ideas and suggestions into account?**

Totally more or less not at all

#### **7. Do you know what does your child do in the kindergarten?**

Totally more or less not at all

### **II. The child**

#### **8. Does he like to go to the kindergarten?**

Yes

No

**9. Do you think your child is prepared for the first grade?**

Totally            more or less    is not prepared

**10. During the period spent in the kindergarten did your child learn to be independent in his actions?**

Absolutely for his age            more or less            No

**11. Has it been worked individually with your child?**

Always                    When needed            No

**III. Parents' contribution**

**Mark one or more answers:**

**12. Your involvement in kindergarten's activity has occurred because:**

- You responded voluntarily;
- You responded to teacher's request;
- You responded to your child's request;
- You observed the educative process;
- You gave opinions how to conduct an activity;
- You provided to the children awareness materials on the project;
- You provided funds for the kindergarten, classroom;
- You have been the organizer and implementer of activities outside the kindergarten;
- Other (please feel free to add activities not included in the above list)

**13. Do you have adult sons who have frequented the kindergarten? If "yes" what is your opinion on the working method of the reggian model kindergarten comparing to the other kindergarten frequented by the adult son.**

**14. Have you noticed any changes (positive or negative) in your child's behaviour since he started frequenting the kindergarten?**

Please feel free to make your comments on the Reggio Emilia educative experience.

## **Questionnaire for Reggio Emilia Kindergarten Directors**

Please kindly fill the questionnaire. We are interested to know your opinion in order to further improve the application of reggian education in our country.

Thank you!

City

No. of classes in your kindergarten

No. of children in your kindergarten

### **1. Which are the main changes you observe in the kindergarten as a result of the Reggian methodology application:**

In kindergarten's children.

In their families.

In the teachers working in your kindergarten.

In the community.

### **2. Indicate three strong points of the reggian experience**

### **3. Indicate three weak points of the reggian experience**

## The experimentation process

How important have been the reggian methodology experimentation components?  
Please, kindly mark next to each program component how “very important”, “important”, or “not important” has been during the successful application of the methodology. In addition, if you are not sure of any of the components please write “I don’t know”.

Experimentation process components	Very important (The experimentation would be impossible)		Important (It has contributed in a certain degree in the experimentation)		Not important (It has not influenced the success of the experimentation)		I don't know	
Reconstruction of the kindergartens	7	87.5	1	12.5	-	-	-	-
Supply of the kindergartens	7	87.5	1	12.5	-	-	-	-
Didactic tools and toys	5	62.5	3	37.5	-	-	-	-
Application of the didactic video for the project methodology	5	62.5	2	25	1	12.5	-	-
The publication of a set of books in support of the teachers	6	75	2	25	-	-	-	-
The liaison of the most important projects by classes	4	50	3	37.5	1	12.5	-	-
Training workshops by international experts	6	75	2	25	-	-	-	-
Workshops by local specialists	6	75	2	25	-	-	-	-



1. Your role as a manager of the financial resources has been changed as a result of the reggian methodology experimentation?

Yes                      No (Please explain)

2. Has the cooperation between kindergarten's teachers been changed as a result of the reggian methodology experimentation?

3. What is your personal benefit as a result of the involvement of your kindergarten in the reggian methodology experimentation?

### **Questionnaire for teachers**

Dear teacher,

The questionnaire that you will complete will be used to evaluate the results of the reggian methodology experimentation in the pilot kindergarten. Your feedback will help us to evaluate: the outcomes of the implementation of this methodology in enabling a contemporary education of preschool children; the identification of the new role of the teacher within the active pedagogy which focuses the child; the necessity for additional changes in order to ensure the application in a larger extent of this educative model.

Your answers will be anonymous and will be further processed and presented in-group. Please, we kindly request you to be sincere.

Thank you for your cooperation.

#### I. General data

Fill the data in the empty space

City \_\_\_\_\_  
Kindergarten \_\_\_\_\_  
Group \_\_\_\_\_

**II. Answer the questions by marking with “+” in the selected column**

Designation	Yes	%	Partially	%	No	%
-------------	-----	---	-----------	---	----	---

<p><b>The class</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The children choose the activity by themselves.</li> <li>▪ The class has activity centres</li> <li>▪ The classroom has miniateliers</li> <li>▪ Each child is followed individually</li> <li>▪ Parents are present in the classroom during the educative project.</li> <li>▪ The activities held in the class prepare the children for the first grade.</li> <li>▪ All the children according to their abilities are active during the implementation of the educative project.</li> </ul> <p><b>The kindergarten</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The kindergarten has suitable premises to implement the Reggio-Emilia model.</li> <li>▪ The kindergarten has suitable tools for the education of the children.</li> <li>▪ The kindergarten has a patio.</li> <li>▪ Equipped</li> <li>▪ Not equipped</li> <li>▪ The kitchen is equipped</li> <li>▪ There are directorates.</li> <li>▪ There is a multi functional room.</li> </ul> <p><b>Children</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Children gladly go to the kindergarten</li> <li>▪ Children show respect for the adults.</li> <li>▪ Children are cooperative with each other.</li> <li>▪ Children correctly choose what they want to do.</li> <li>▪ Children are more independent.</li> <li>▪ Children feel good about the results achieved.</li> </ul>						
---	--	--	--	--	--	--

### III. Your role as a teacher

Choose one of the answers:

1. Would you like to apply the reggian methodology in the education activity?

Yes                      Partially                      No -

2. I cooperate with the colleague to decide the project's topic.

Yes                      Partially                      No -

3. I cooperate with other teachers to resolve problems arising during the implementation of the project.

Yes                      Partially                      No -

4. I request the cooperation of the children's parents

Yes                      Partly                      No -

5. I document the project implementation process basing on children's individual abilities.

Yes                      Partially                      No

6. Which method of documentation suits better to you?

- Taking notes
- Making pictures
- Recording
- Conserving the work made by the children

7. Do you adapt the class activities to children's interests and abilities?

Yes                      Partially                      No -

8. Is it important for you to work in-group?

9. Describe briefly parents' assistance in the implementation of the project.

10. How did the project documentation help you in adapting the educative activity to children's interests and abilities?

11. How did the miniatelier and the atelier assist you during the education activity?

12. Do you think that education of children working with projects differs from other children in the following aspects?

Academic                      Social

13. What was the influence of your involvement in the reggian methodology from the professional point of view?

14. Highlight some important aspects of your work (if any) which have enhanced your teacher profession and that you have never used before during your work as a teacher.

**15. Your involvement in the project has changed your personal life?**

Yes

Partially

No

**If “yes”, in which way?**

**16. Do you think that organizing educative activities in an educative project method is inappropriate to our reality?**

Yes

No

**17. Would you like to change something about the project procedures?**

## Questionnaire for Professors

Dear professor,

In regards of the evaluation of the preschool education curricula in Albania, and models that are already integrated in the system, we would like to have your opinion on the following issues:

### **1. How do you assess the introduction of contemporary experiences beside the traditional experience in preschool education?**

Very good  
good  
insufficient  
Negative

### **2. Which of the following models are you more familiar with?**

Traditional  
Step by step  
Reggio Emilia  
Montessori  
Frobel  
None

### **3. Which of the following models is your favourite?**

Traditional  
Step by step  
Reggio Emilia  
Montessori  
Frobel  
None

### **4. Mention three strong points of your favourite model**

a.  
b.  
c.

### **5. Mention three weak points of other models you know**

- a.
- b.
- c.

**6. What model you had most information about and home literature?**

- a.
- b.

**7. Did the professors have enough preschool education training courses?**

- many
- so-so
- few
- not at all

**8. How familiar are our universities with the preschool education practice?**

- very
- so-so
- little
- not at all

**9. How much is the preschool practice literature used to the university auditoriums?**

- Very much
- So-so
- few
- not at all

**10. Which will be the main factors influencing the new positive development of preschool education? Kindly mention some of them:**

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.

## **The development of preschool children in kindergartens of different models**

Dear teachers!

In regards to the general evaluation of preschool education models in our country we are addressing you a special form, which will help us to improve the existing curricula and the future planning of the kindergartens. Try to fill it in for each child of the group you are working with. Do they profit enough from the programs implemented? Where do you see progress and where deficiencies? Perhaps this observation form doesn't show everything, but it will guide all of us toward clearer visions.

Thank you for the cooperation!

### **Special Instructions**

Following are some instructions about the answers to be given in order to fill in this form correctly:

1. The form must be completed for each child of the group
2. The data published will conserve the anonymity of the children observed
3. In lined spaces you will mark with "V" and "No" according to the directions indicated hereunder.
4. The column "The evidence" will be completed as in the following examples:

### **Subject: The emotional development**

---V--- It shows interest and attention for the class activities.  
The evidence: Walks around the classroom watching attentively what are all doing.

### **Subject: The social game**

---V--- Plays by his own with or without objects  
The evidence: Plays by his own with colours and books

---V--- Plays concurrently with the others constructing or creating something.  
The evidence: Colours independently next to another child

### **Subject: Small motor development**

---V--- Uses drawing and control writing tools  
The evidence: Draws puppets by using the brush

### **Subject: The spoken language**

----V----- Speaks in long sentences

The evidence: "She took me away the orange pencil, so I can't finish my puppet."

**Subject: Artistic Capabilities**

---V----- Draws pictures  
 Draws a puppet.

**Subject: Self-identity**

----- Asks to other children to play with him  
 The evidence "Plays by his own but asks others to play with him as well"

**FORM 1**

Name_____ Observer_____	
Program_____	
Dates_____	
<b>Directions</b>	
Mark with V subjects that are being completed correctly by the children Mark with "No" the subjects you could not observe. You can leave blank the other subjects	
<b>SUBJECTS</b>	<b>EVIDENCES</b>
<b>1. Self-identification</b>	
----- He detaches with difficulty from his parents	
----- Communicates with adults by eye contact	
-----It doesn't have a closer relationship with any staff member	
-----Chooses the activities helped by the teachers	
----- Requests other children to play	

with him	
-----Plays roles credibly in the dramatic game	
-----Is demanding for his own rights	
-----Shows enthusiasm for the things he does by himself	
<b>2. Emotional evolution</b>	
-----Is quite during his working time	
-----Eats, sleeps, is careful about his own hygiene even far from home	
-----Manages unexpected changes and new situations with his self-control	
-----Can express more anger in words than in actions	
-----Permits his aggressive behaviours to change	
-----Shows interest and attention for class activities	
----- Smiles and seems to be happy most of the time	
----- It doesn't stay apart from the others all the time	
<b>3. The Social Game</b>	
-----Plays by himself with or without	

objects	
----- Plays by himself in the types of the pretended game	
----- Does parallel games with the others with or without objects	
-----Plays concurrently with the others in the types of the pretended game.	
-----Plays concurrently with the others to construct or create something	
-----Plays in group with or without objects	
-----Plays in group in the types of the pretended game	
-----Plays in group to construct or create something	
<b>4. The pro-social behaviour</b>	
-----Shows concern for someone not in good conditions	
-----Shows happiness for someone who is having pleasant experiences	
-----Shares something with the others	
-----Gives something of his property to the others	
-----Waits for his turn to take a toy or to speak during an activity	

-----Waits for his turn without getting angry	
-----Helps the others to do a task	
-----Helps somebody in need	
<b>5. The large motor development</b>	
----- Goes down stairs alternating legs	
-----Runs controlling speed and direction	
----- Overcomes obstacles in one or two feet	
-----Walks in one foot	
-----Climbs up and down to easily catch the objects.	
-----Move the limbs by hands clapping rhythm.	
-----Claps the hands following the rhythm.	
-----Keeps the rhythm with hands on table or on other object alternating the hands.	
<b>6. Small motor development</b>	
-----Shows his favourite hand	
----- Buttons up and unbuttons buttons, lace shoelaces, etc.	

-----Removes and places easily various objects.	
-----Uses with full control the drawing or writing tools.	
-----Uses the scissors	
-----Uses the hammer	
<b>7. Cognitive Development: Classification and series</b>	
-----Recognises the basic geometric shapes	
-----Recognises the colours	
-----Recognizes the differences in quantity	
-----Recognizes the differences in musical tones	
-----Reproduces the musical tones by voice	
----- Classifies objects by view	
-----Tells stories in sequence from the first to the last one	
-----Shows objects in sequence according to an order	
<b>8. Cognitive Development: Number, Time, Space, Memory</b>	

-----Counts from zero to ten	
-----Counts objects up to ten	
-----Knows daily regime in various parts	
----- Knows what have happened one day before	
-----Can build a block with bricks or with construction toys	
-----Can locate an object in front or behind something	
-----Repeats the words of a song or a poetry	
-----Can dance in a musical game	
<b>9. Spoken language</b>	
-----Speaks freely in the classroom	
-----Speaks considerably clear to be understood by adults	
-----Speaks in long sentences	
-----Participates in conversations with other children	
-----Makes questions putting words in the right sequence	
----- Responds negatively using the right word	

-----Use verbs in past tense in a proper manner	
-----Plays with words that rhymes	
<b>10. Written language</b>	
-----Pretends to write by signs horizontally	
-----Includes the features of real letters in his writing.	
-----Identifies his name written	
-----Identifies labels of his class	
-----Recognizes some alphabet letters	
-----Writes some alphabet letters	
-----Writes some letters of his name	
-----Writes correctly his name in a linear manner	
<b>11. Artistic abilities</b>	
-----Draws and paints with pencil and other markers.	
----- Writes nonsense in paper	
-----Draws the basic shapes	
----- Draws people in a circle or rectangular shape with arms and legs.	

-----Draws animals, trees	
-----Draws pictures	
<b>12. Imagination</b>	
-----Pretends to reproduce scenes from family life	
----- Needs a special support to do the pretended game	
-----Evaluates roles or chooses them	
----- Can change roles without consulting anyone.	
-----Uses different expressive languages to create and replace the planned scheme	
-----Uses movements and invented and dangerous topics	
----- Assimilates characteristics and actions related to the role.	
-----Uses topics, details, and selected and creative ideas.	