

ADOLESCENT's ADVISORY BOARD for UNICEF Albania (AAB)

ToR for UNICEF Albania COUNTRY OFFICE

Name of entity	UNICEF Albania Adolescents Advisory Board (AAB) 2024- 2026

Purpose of the Adolescent Advisory Board	To this end, the **Adolescent Advisory Board** (AAB) is established at UNICEF Albania for two key purposes: (i) Strengthening UNICEF internal processes for engaging with adolescents and young people. - Increase UNICEF's understanding of the aspirations, rights violations, and different experiences of adolescents, because of gender, age, ethnicity, abilities, and socio-economic background - Increase programmatic relevance and credibility. - Enhance accountability to adolescents themselves. - Build the capacity of adolescents to acquire new skills (leadership, advocacy, communication, etc.) and improve their understanding of their communities and country. (ii) secondly, influencing policies that affect the right of adolescents to have their voice heard on matters that affect them, especially in the framework of the country's efforts for the EU accession process: - AAB get acknowledged and participate/ contribute to key advocacy processes in the country with focus on education/ youth/ adolescents' wellbeing etc; Monitoring processes in the framework of the Youth Strategy; technical round tables in the framework of the EU Accessions process (ex. Participation in discussions on Chapter 26/ 27 as well as dedicated chapters on Social Protection, Environment, Health/ Mental Health, Juvenile Justice etc). - Promote and disseminate in youth friendly language the Child Rights Convention (CRC) recommendations": awareness raising, advocacy, policy dialogue with relevant institutions. - Support and promote as young influencers UNICEF flagship projects like UPSHIFT, PONDER, U-Report etc. - AAB get acknowledged with other UN youth bodies (Youth Advisory Group, Youth Delegates, UN Association) and under the leadership of UNICEF coordinate for synergies/ processes. - Under the guidance of UNICEF cooperate with other youth groups from partner organizations or government supported structures like for ex. Youth Municipal Councils, Students' Governments, or the National Students' Parliament. - Participate in the design of activities for UNICEF/ UN SDG week of activities showcasing and serving as ambassadors of UNICEF work. - Work closely with UNICEF program and communications team to promote through social media content from Country Program implementation. - Participate in national or international events/ conferences upon opportunities created by UNICEF or partner agencies. - Engage in thematic yearly campaigns advocating jointly with UNICEF based on evidence and data, country priorities etc, ex. Youth Year for Climate change and so on.

Adolescents Advisory Board Guiding Principles	In its General Comment No. 12, the Committee on the Rights of the Child has outlined **nice basic requirements for effective and ethical participation**. These are outlined below with reference to adolescents (these principles will be guidance during the selection, work with the AAB and while different cohorts' transition): 1. **Transparent and informative** – Adolescents must receive full, accessible, diversity-sensitive, and age-appropriate information about their right to express their views and the purpose of scope of participation opportunities. 2. **Voluntary** – Adolescents should never be coerced into expressing views against their wishes, and they should be informed that they can cease involvement at any stage. 3. **Respectful** – Adults should acknowledge, respect and support adolescents' ideas, actions and existing contributions to their families, schools, cultures and work environments. 4. **Relevant** – Adolescents should have opportunities to draw on their knowledge, skills, and abilities and to express their views on issues that have real relevance to their lives. 5. **Child-/Adolescent-friendly** – Environments and working methods should consider and reflect adolescents evolving capacities and interests. 6. **Inclusive** – Participation opportunities should include marginalized adolescents of different ages, genders, (dis)abilities and backgrounds. 7. **Supported by training** - Adults and adolescents should be trained and mentored in facilitating adolescent participation so they can serve as trainers and facilitators. 8. **Safe and sensitive to risk** – Expression of views may involve risks. Adolescents should participate in risk assessment and mitigation and know where to go for help if needed. 9. **Accountable** – Adolescents should receive clear feedback on how their participation has influenced outcomes and should be supported to share that feedback with their peers.

Roles and Responsibilities	The AAB members are engaged in UNICEF strategies and programmes at all levels. Members of the AAB will act as the sounding board to the UNICEF CO, ensuring that the voices of adolescents, especially the most vulnerable and marginalized, are heard by UNICEF and partners, and taken into consideration in the planning and implementation of UNICEF strategies, programmes and initiatives. On the same time, the AAB will be supported to act as the adolescents' voice of UNICEF Albania in national and international platforms, advocacy processes, awareness raising, digital awareness campaigns etc. The roles and responsibilities of the AAB will be clustered around the following areas: 1. **Participation in UNICEF's Programme Cycle**: AAB members inform and influence UNICEF's programme design, monitoring and evaluation. This includes engagement in Situation Analysis, Country Programme Development, strategic moment of reflections, mid-year and annual reviews, for example. The AAB will be supported to present the progress of their work in mid-year or annual review processes as well as provide recommendations for future actions. 2. **Direct engagement with adolescents or other youth groups for information sharing and consultation purposes:** AAB members conduct consultations with other adolescents (school/ community level) to identify emerging issues in young people's lives, through different engagement methods (focus group discussions, interviews, U-Report, etc, engage as peer influencers for UPSHIFT, PONDER flagships etc. 3. **Advocacy**. AAB members, together with UNICEF, identify opportunities to share the voice of adolescents and engage in UNICEF's advocacy events (in person and online) at local, national, regional or global levels. They also support the development of the content of advocacy materials targeting children and adolescents, and contribute to disseminating key messages through webinars, social media and digital platforms, vlogs and blogs. 4. **Partnership building**. AAB members identify dynamic like-minded youth groups, organizations and networks that could join UNICEF's cause and support the delivering of UNICEF's programmes for children and adolescents. 5. **External engagement for building European Youth in Albania**. AAB members under the guidance of UNICEF identify each quarter key external processes, events, international days/ weeks that they would be willing to engage and contribute to. Key objectives under this component will be youth active contributions in key moments/ events to amplify the needs of youth (especially the most vulnerable) and UNICEF models of youth engagement/ activism/ innovation etc.

Criteria for Membership	The Adolescents Advisory Board is composed of around 12-15 members aged 15-18 years old (4 girls and 4 boys). Fair representation needs to be ensured by geographical area (urban and rural), gender, age, ethnicity, disability, socio-economic background, and specific areas of interest related to children's rights through adolescent's activism. The following membership criteria will apply: • A broad understanding of the rights of children and adolescents. • Proven interest and engagement in at least one of the following areas related to adolescents' rights: health, education, protection, participation, employability, climate change and environmental protection, etc. • A willingness to influence UNICEF programming and to disseminate results of joint initiatives with UNICEF. • A willingness to contribute to developing, monitoring and providing recommendations to country strategies affecting children's, adolescents and youth wellbeing and enabling a thriving environment for every child and adolescent in Albania. • Good knowledge and understanding of the local/national/regional/global issues that are relevant to adolescents in the 21st century. • Good communication skills, and the ability to dialogue with other young people, represent a broad range of views that reflect the diversity of their communities, and ensure that their inputs are translated into actionable proposals to UNICEF. • Ability to engage other young adolescents, particularly the most vulnerable and marginalized it the schools and communities where they come from (adolescents can be active individuals or adolescents who are/ have been members of a formal or informal youth group). • Represent a group, network, or formal/informal youth groups (not politically affiliated) • Interest/experience in social media and communications, public policy, child and youth rights, human rights, and youth activism, climate change etc. • A two-year commitment. • Knowledge of English is an asset.

Selection of Members	Members of the Adolescent Advisory Board will be selected through a competitive, inclusive, and transparent process organized by UNICEF Albania Office. At the time of applications, candidates must be aged **15-17 years** to be able to serve for two years and possess a good command of the English language. Adolescent candidates will require to submit: - A short extract (max 1 page) on what is a cause they are passionate about and what would they do to address it (In the English language). - A short self-made video message (1 minute max) presenting oneself and why they think they would be a valuable team member of the AAB (in English) - A CV including previous expertise in activism/ platforms etc. - Letter of motivation for applying for the UNICEF AAB in Albania. - One reference letter from a teacher/ local NGOs/ community leader/ peer they have collaborated on past social projects. **<u>Selection Committee</u>** The UNICEF Albania CO will lead the process of selecting the members of the AAB, with the support also from relevant strategic partners. The selection process will be based on the criteria described on Criteria on Members where preference will be given to the following criteria: geographical spread, gender, vulnerability representation, previous experience on youth activism and the documents that adolescents will submit.
Quorum and Voting	The Adolescents Advisory Board will operate with “one half plus one” of the total membership. The decisions will be made by a simple majority. Each member is entitled to one vote. (In the case of a tie another voting process will take place) For a meeting to be organized effectively, at least ¾ of the AAB members should be present.
Meetings and Communication Channels	The Adolescent Advisory Board and the UNICEF CO will engage in regular communication via: • Quarterly meetings. • Ad-hoc meetings, by agreement between the AAB and UNICEF Albania. • Virtual communication through e-mails, Whatsapp or another social media group. Meetings of the AAB will take place both virtually and in person (provided available funding). Meeting dates and agenda items will be agreed between AAB members and UNICEF Albania. Materials for the meeting will be shared by UNICEF with AAB members at least one week before the meeting.

UNICEF's Support	The UNICEF Country Office is expected to be the primary channel of interaction with the AAB through regular in person meetings (when possible and safe), as well as online meetings and social media channels. The Adolescents Development Officer will be the primary focal point and facilitator of the group while closely liasoning with other UNICEF staff to create synergies for the AAB involvement and contribution in UNICEF overall programing. • UNICEF is expected to provide Adolescent Advisory Board members with resources, relevant documents, and information about the role of UNICEF in the country and its programmes and facilitate their interactions with relevant CO leadership and colleagues or UNICEF in other countries • Provide, as appropriate, capacity building opportunities and trainings to build the AAB skills and enhance their capacities to fulfil their tasks. • With the support of the Operations team in UNICEF identify training opportunities in terms of values promotion, accountability, involve team members from Operations' teams to provide feedback and engage in youth lead initiatives jointly with Program staff. • Respond to issues and/or inquiries raised by the Adolescent Advisory Board members. • Arrange the logistic of Adolescent Advisory Board meetings, ensuring safeguarding measures are in place. • Monitor and evaluate the outcomes of the Adolescents Advisory Board activities. • The actual members of UNICEF AAB will serve as senior peers to support and guide the newly elected members of the UNICEF AAB.
Reporting	A report of the Adolescents Advisory Board activities will be presented to UNICEF Albania twice a year highlighting: - Progress of the initiative of the AAB - Challenges encountered throughout the process - Key successes/ initiatives that the AAB has contributed to - Thematic activities designed and implemented with and through the AAB - Links from social media engagement - Follow up and plans for the following period

Ethics and safeguarding	- For all adolescents under 18, clear guidance and parental forms will be designed to receive parental consent for their involvement, photos, videos, and other products that will be produced - For adolescents 18-19 years old, specific consent forms will be prepared and have their signed agreement prior to being involved in the process - For all documents there will be included a note that the participation in this structure is voluntary and that they can withdraw at any time by providing a written rationale to UNICEF - Key do not harm, and safeguarding principles will be highly considered in all processes that adolescents will be involved by creating safe spaces to engage in dialogue, advocacy etc. - When opportunities for travel will emerge within or outside Albania, specific parental consent forms will be produced and signed prior to activities.
Incentives and recognitions	NOTE: The participation of adolescents in this structure will be voluntarily and no specific payment is predicted for their participation and contribution. However, UNICEF is willing to explore the following opportunities for members of the AAB in the form of incentives and/or recognitions: - Books/ online e-courses, in the areas of advocacy, policy design, monitoring and accountability or other forms of support - Include AAB members in UNICEF free learning platforms when possible - Provide public transportation fee-s when adolescents will have to travel for UNICEF requested/ arranged events - DSA in those cases when AAB members will travel outside their home cities for a workshop/ training/ representation event outside Albania in an event organized by UNICEF - Organize at least two general meetings in the form of team building or retreat format with all members of the AAB and guests supporting the overall functioning or capacity building of the members of this structure - Provide mentoring opportunities from UNICEF staff (Program and Operations) or other influential individuals as per needs and interests of the AAB members. - Certificates acknowledging their participation and contribution as UNICEF Albania AAB members upon the competition of their term.