



2024

**MANE**  
FOUNDATION

---

**YEARLY ACTIVITY**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

A group of diverse people, including children and adults, are forming a human pyramid with their hands against a clear blue sky. The image is overlaid with a repeating pattern of the word 'MANE' in a pink, sans-serif font, arranged in horizontal lines across the top and bottom sections.

# ABOUT US

Mane Foundation concluded its first complete calendar year of activity, and this is concisely summerized in this publication. It encompasses the ever evolving tradition of supporting the education system, renovating and upgrading institutions that take care of children and vulnerable groups, making art and culture available to a broader audience, all while taking into consideration the environment.

We have witnessed crucial infrastructure interventions on part of companies, as well as yearly cases of corporate volunteerism. It has all been made with passion and comittment.

A wide range of projects across its five areas of activity – Education, Health and Well-Being, Fight Against Poverty and Inequality, Environment, Art and Culture – and often in collaboration with the companies of BALFIN Group, are nicely put together, for your information and your feedback as well. Talking about BALFIN Group, it became one of the founding members of the Albanian ESG Network in 2024, and this is surely intertwined with everything that Mane Foundation will implement in the future.

# PILLARS OF SUSTAINABILITY



## EDUCATION

Improving the education system, curricula and infrastructure.

Empowerment of initiatives that build capacities of students and academic staff.



## ART AND CULTURE

Promoting arts, culture, heritage and innovation for the people and economy.

Identify projects that enrich the art landscape in the country.



## FIGHT AGAINST POVERTY AND INEQUALITY

Meeting basic needs of most vulnerable groups of society.

Own products (home appliances, clothes, food) for organizations and institutions that target these people.



## HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Better living conditions, especially for categories of people in need.

Cooperation with public institutions to address issues concerning groups of people.



## ENVIRONMENT

Enhancing green areas, encouraging conservation of natural resources usage.

Awareness of people about the importance of a clean environment.

# OUR HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2024



**800,000 EURO**  
allocated to social projects



**42,000 BENEFICIARIES**  
in 5 countries



**8 LONG-TERM**  
partnerships with organizations



**43 PROJECTS**  
implemented in the region



**EDUCATION**





Here2Empower  
- Workshop on  
business talk.

EDUCATION

# Fostering entrepreneurship and innovation



B4Students initiative represents a clear commitment to the development and empowerment of students in the fields of entrepreneurship and innovation. By incorporating projects such as Here2Empower, Business Challenge Competition, and Business Ideas Contest, B4Students has established an important platform for the youth of Albania.

Here2Empower: This initiative brings together experts from BALFIN Group to offer training sessions and open discussions at various universities. The focus is on key topics such as property management, digital transformation, job applications, interviews, and business plan writing. Workshops led by experts like Marlind Maksuti, who covers Artificial

Intelligence, and Andi Muhametaj, who focuses on business planning, have helped students bridge theory with practice, equipping them with valuable insights for their future careers.



Business  
Challenge  
Competition with  
On Solutions.

EDUCATION

# Fostering entrepreneurship and innovation



**Business Challenge Competition:** In its fourth edition, Business Challenge Competition celebrated student Kejsi Ibranji as the first-place winner for her innovative game designed to enhance user skills. The competition aims to promote creativity and develop impactful digital solutions in Albania.

**Business Ideas Contest:** The fifth edition of this contest has produced a new wave of young entrepreneurs. First-place winner Mexhit Kastrati presented the Unify application for restaurant reservations.

Overall, these initiatives underscore B4Students' dedication to empower-

ing students by equipping them with the knowledge and skills necessary for their future success in the job market and entrepreneurship.



## EDUCATION

# Empowering young innovators

Mane Foundation and Tirana Bank are making significant contributions to support young innovators and entrepreneurs in Albania. They have backed projects like "The Raspberry Farm," where Sentiljana Marku has achieved impressive progress by acquiring modern equipment, expanding her farm, and obtaining or-

ganic certification for her strawberry production. Meanwhile, Tirana Bank has been a key supporter of the National Entrepreneurship Festival for three consecutive years, partnering with Junior Achievement Albania and other organizations to empower youth through financial education. This year's festival engaged

over 2,100 students who created their companies, with a notable 74% led by girls. Tirana Bank's involvement in the festival went beyond mere participation, as it served on the jury and awarded top prizes, including a chance for the winning Eco Empathy company to represent Albania at a European festival in Italy.



Tirana Bank and the winners of National Entrepreneurship Festival.





Reflection at  
TEG— Layers  
Exhibition.

## EDUCATION

# Nurturing creativity and supporting young talent

Mane Foundation is nurturing creativity and talent among young artists and architects in Albania by partnering with B4Students and Tirana East Gate (TEG). Recently, they supported innovative events like “Riciklo Kreativ,” an exhibition featuring sustainable designs from architecture students in Albania, North Macedonia, and Kosovo, which emphasizes recycling and environmental awareness.

TEG also hosted the “Layers” exhibition by talented student Blerta Isufi, celebrating traditional Albanian crafts and local heritage. Additionally, the foundation facilitated a seaside painting exhibition at TEG, showcasing works by eight students from the Academy of Arts, inspired by the beau-

tiful landscape of the Green Coast. These initiatives not only highlight the creativity of young talents but also foster meaningful engagement with Albanian culture and the arts. This underscores Mane Foundation’s commitment to promoting academic and professional development for youth.



Visit at  
Aleksandër  
Moisiu University.

EDUCATION

# Building Bridges





Samir Mane, President of BALFIN Group, emphasized the importance of innovation and entrepreneurship during two events in Albania, including a visit to “Aleksandër Moisiu” University in Durrës, where he encouraged students to engage in tourism and highlighted the need for

collaboration between universities and businesses. He assured students of BALFIN Group’s support for their entrepreneurial ambitions, recognizing their potential to shape the future economy.

At Tirana Slush’D, a gathering of officials and busi-

ness leaders to celebrate local startups, he shared his insights on innovation in sectors like real estate, tourism, and banking. He underscored that success in entrepreneurship requires courage to take calculated risks and adapt international business models.



EDUCATION

# Educating for a sustainable future



Tirana Bank and Mane Foundation, in collaboration with Save the Children Albania, have launched the “Eco-Schools” project, a 12-month initiative aimed at fostering environmental responsibility and sustainability among young peo-

ple. The program seeks to inspire students to adopt eco-friendly practices, raise awareness about environmental challenges, and cultivate a culture of accountability toward nature. By equipping young peo-

ple with the knowledge and tools to address ecological issues, the initiative aims to empower future generations to lead sustainable change, while positively influencing families, educators, and communities at large.

EDUCATION

# Investing in tomorrow's leaders

Their dreams  
need our  
support.





JUMBO Bosnia and Herzegovina, in collaboration with Mane Foundation and World Vision, has launched "Their Dreams Need Your Support" program, which empowers children from vulnerable communities by providing

education and personal growth opportunities. The initiative supports 15 children, addressing financial hardship, limited access to quality education, and extracurricular challenges. The program ensures these children have the

resources to pursue their dreams, covering educational expenses, extracurricular activities, and mentorship. By fostering resilience and self-confidence, this initiative contributes to their long-term development and success.



Renovated  
playground in  
school.

EDUCATION

# Fostering learning through modern recreational spaces



In the city of Lezha, “Nënë Tereza” elementary school has a newly renovated, modern playground, thanks to the support of Jumbo and Mane Foundation. This transformed space

offers safe and contemporary conditions, encouraging children to develop physical and social skills through play and engaging activities. The project aims to create an inspiring

and suitable environment for children’s development, providing them with quality time during breaks and extracurricular activities.



# **HEALTH AND WELL-BEING**



## HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

# Building Joy

Jumbo has demonstrated a strong commitment to enhancing the well-being and joy of children across the region through various initiatives.

In Podgorica, they renovated the Đina Vrbica kindergarten, providing a new playground for 500 children to enjoy a safer, more entertaining environment. They also supported the

construction of a sensory park in Banja Luka to aid children with malignant diseases, fostering emotional healing through sensory play.



The kindergarten  
in Podgorica.



Joy and support  
to children  
in Tuzla.

## HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

# Building Joy

In Tirana, Jumbo's annual tradition involves visiting SOS Children's Village, where employees actively engage with the children by delivering essential supplies and personalized gifts, reinforcing their belief in the importance of giving back.

Along the same lines, Neptun Macedonia launched the "Round Up your Receipt" campaign to help the local SOS Children's Village.

It encourages customers to contribute to humanitarian causes by rounding up their purchase totals in Neptun stores, turning small acts of generosity into impactful support for those in need. This campaign benefits the SOS Children's Village.





Jumbo has expanded its community support by donating an advanced Erbe Vio C medical device to Kotor's Clinical-Hospital Center. This cutting-edge technology enhances surgical precision, shortens recovery times, and provides critical support to healthcare professionals. The

Gynecology and Obstetrics Department, pivotal in women's health, stands to benefit significantly from this device.

Additionally, Jumbo donated to the June 1<sup>st</sup> Resource Center in Montenegro, supporting education and rehabilitation for chil-

dren with intellectual disabilities. Lastly, they provided school supplies and toys to over 70 children in Tuzla, ensuring they are well-prepared for the school year. These efforts reflect Jumbo's dedication to positively impacting the lives of the youngest members of society.



HEALTH AND  
WELL-BEING

# Spreading smiles



In Shkodër, “Hans Christian Andersen” orphanage has been transformed into a brighter, more joyful place for children, thanks to Jumbo, Fashion Group Albania, and Mane Foundation. The new play areas, filled with interactive toys, cozy furniture, and cheerful decorations, create a

welcoming space where children can laugh, play, and grow. The combined efforts have brought a sense of warmth and hope to the orphanage, ensuring that every child feels valued and loved. This transformation not only enhances their daily lives but also lays the foundation for

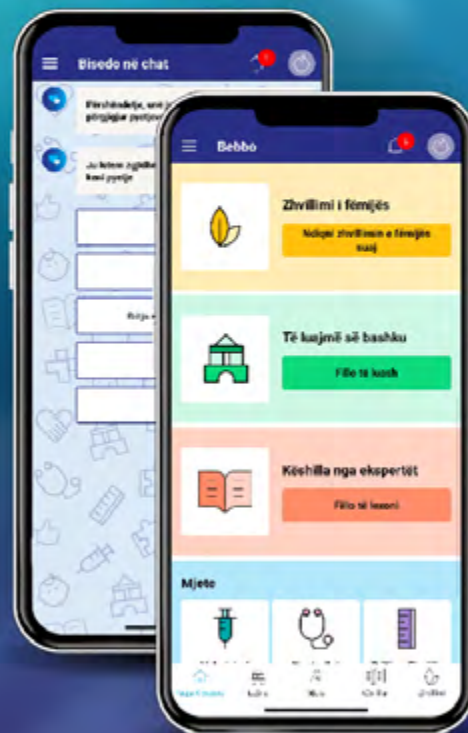
brighter futures, reminding them that they are cared for and supported in their journey.



# FIGHT AGAINST POVERTY



# IN SUPPORT OF BEBBO APP



Supporting  
Bebbo app.



**FIGHT AGAINST  
POVERTY**

## Together for tomorrow

Mane Foundation works to improve the lives of people in Albania, focusing particularly on children and young adults with Down Syndrome. In collaboration with QTU, the foundation provides therapies and educational resources that help these children become more skilled and independent.

# IN SUPPORT OF BEBBO APP



The Foundation also supports the Bebbbo app, a free tool that offers expert advice on important topics for all children from birth to age six. This app ensures that all families can access helpful information. Together, these

initiatives demonstrate Mane Foundation's commitment to enhancing quality of life, empowering families, and ensuring every child has the resources they need to succeed.

Love Bag  
campaign.



Multicolored  
Socks  
campaign.



In line with this mission, Fashion Group Albania (FGA) has joined the awareness campaign "Multicolored Socks" in co-operation with Down Syndrome Albania Foundation. As part of this initiative, the company displayed colorful socks in their dedicated children's stores, allowing customers to participate in this meaningful cause. Funds raised from the sale of these socks were donated to provide therapeutic services for children with disabilities at the PRO PAK Service Center.

FGA believes in the importance of social responsibility and aims to build a more inclusive community. Fashion Group Albania has also contributed through initiatives like "Love Bag" campaign. This year, FGA collected an impressive 2,427 garments for children in need, doubling last year's donations. Their collaboration with World Vision Albania ensured that these contributions reached communities that require assistance.



“Buy with your heart” was a joint campaign between SPAR Albania, World Vision, and Food Bank, focusing on disadvantaged families. Customers had the opportunity made disadvantaged families part of their purchases, resulting in more than 2.4 tons of food collected, which provided more than 100 aid packages for those families.



# **ART AND CULTURE**

HERE

MAIM

MAIM





Porto  
Palermo  
Festival.

## ART AND CULTURE

# Revitalizing Albanian Culture

Mane Foundation plays a pivotal role in revitalizing culture and the arts in Albania by supporting events and initiatives that promote the country's cultural and artistic heritage. One of the foundation's standout projects is Porto Palermo Festival, an event that beautifully intertwines music, culture, and environmental awareness, providing a platform for talented artists while engaging

the local community. This effort not only introduces visitors to the cultural heritage of the area but also emphasizes Mane Foundation's dedication to preserving and promoting this valuable legacy.

Another noteworthy instance of Mane Foundation's support is the performance by the Albanian Symphony Orchestra at the Royal Albert Hall in Lon-

don. Featuring 33 talented musicians, the orchestra, backed by the foundation, delivered an enchanting performance alongside renowned Greek singer Konstantinos Argiros. This exceptional event showcased not only the skills and artistry of Albanian performers but also played a crucial role in promoting Albanian music on one of the world's most prestigious stages.



Albanian  
orchestra  
for Argiros.





Behind the  
wall there  
is a wall.



## ART AND CULTURE

# GALLERY OF CONTEMPORARY ART TIRANA

### A haven for artistic expression

GOCAT Gallery, a remarkable initiative by Mane Foundation, serves as a free space for artists and art enthusiasts alike, enriching the cultural landscape of Tirana. Open to the public, GOCAT has hosted its initial exhibitions, starting with "those who tried to put the rainbow back in the sky" by Driant Zeneli, whose works invited visitors to explore the human potential.

Naim Spahiu's thought-provoking "Behind the Wall, There Are Other Walls," invited contemplation on the scars of time and humani-

ty's resilience following past conflicts. This exhibition followed the impactful "Visual Poetry on Social Photography," featuring renowned international photographers like Paul Lowe, Fabrizio Belomo, Seamus Murphy, and P.J. Harvey, alongside Albanian talents such as Burim Myftiu and Bevis Fusha.

Most recently, GOCAT unveiled Ardian Isufi's "Unidentified False Objects", which critically examines Albania's communist era. Through reassembled objects and symbolic installa-

tions, Isufi reflects on propaganda, manipulation, and the absurdities of that period, fostering dialogue on social and urban challenges while oscillating between utopian and dystopian visions.

The exhibitions underscore GOCAT's commitment to fostering creativity and dialogue, making contemporary art accessible to all, while Mane Foundation continues its mission to inspire and elevate the artistic community in Albania.



Visual Poetry on Social Photography.





# MANE

FOUNDATION

[manefoundation.org](http://manefoundation.org)

[info@manefoundation.org](mailto:info@manefoundation.org)

St "Papa Gjon Pali II", ABA Business Center, 11 Floor, Tirana, Albania

Copyright © 2024 by Mane Foundation

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of Mane Foundation.