



**Active youth for a better community**

# Strategic Plan

**2024 - 2027**

## Our Vision

The vision of Rin'ON is a future where active youth are the driving force behind a vibrant and improved community.

## Our Mission

Rin'ON mission is to actively engage and empower youth in rural areas, amplifying their voices and dismantling the barriers that hinder their civic engagement. Through our initiatives and partnerships, we aim to equip young individuals with the tools, knowledge, opportunities, and confidence they need to become catalysts for positive change within their communities.



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## About Rin'ON

Rin'ON was established in December 2013, **born out of the collective passion and inspiration of a group of young individuals.**

Our story began with our involvement in the project 'Rinia dhe Qytetaria Aktive' (Youth and Active Citizenship) organized by the Youth Sector of Ferizaj and supported by ForumCiv (formerly known as Forum Syd). The project ignited a shared desire to work towards a better community. The energy we experienced while working together was incredibly motivating, and it was clear that **we wanted to continue making a positive impact in our community by activating youth.**

Initially, Rin'ON was a non-formal youth club, where we could channel our enthusiasm and commitment by volunteering for the community and making a small impact. It was an exciting time as we formalized our group and carved out our unique identity. This journey of self-discovery and community service led us to officially register Rin'ON as a non-governmental organization (NGO) in 2017.

## Core values

### Integrity & Respect

At Rin'ON, integrity and respect are the cornerstones of our work. We operate with unwavering honesty and a deep sense of responsibility to our community. In our interactions with beneficiaries, we uphold the highest ethical standards, ensuring that our actions consistently align with our mission and values. Internally, we maintain a culture of respect and open communication, valuing the contributions of every team member.

### Diversity & Inclusivity

Our commitment to diversity and inclusivity extends into every aspect of our organization. In our work with beneficiaries, we strive to create opportunities that reach every corner of rural areas and different minorities living in our community, ensuring that no one is left behind. We recognize that true progress can only be achieved when all voices are heard, and all individuals have the chance to participate. Internally, this value guides us in fostering a welcoming and inclusive environment where everyone's ideas and perspectives are valued.

### Making a Difference

We strive to provide youth with the tools, knowledge, and confidence to be change-makers within their community. This value drives us to develop impactful programs that empower young individuals to create a positive and lasting impact. Internally, our passion for making a difference fuels our dedication to continuous improvement and innovation.

### Youth-Led

We firmly believe in the power of youth as catalysts for change. This value is deeply ingrained in our approach, ensuring that young people are at the forefront of our initiatives. In our work with beneficiaries, we implement a participatory approach, ensuring young individuals take ownership of projects that directly affect them. Internally, we foster an organizational culture that encourages young team members to take on leadership roles, driving the organizations' mission with their fresh perspectives and energy.

## Theory of change

Civic participation among young people in Kosovo is low. Youth are not actively involved in their communities, even less so in rural areas. However, Rin'ON has identified that youth are willing to do so, but simply lack the tools, confidence, and motivation. This low participation also means that there is a lack of youth-driven approaches and peer-to-peer engagement on common youth issues such as online disinformation, bullying, unemployment and lack of inclusion among young people of different genders, ages, and socio-economic backgrounds.

### What does rural youth say they need?

- A cool group or place to belong to
- More social opportunities to meet other young people
- Guidance on how to speak up for the things they believe in

### Why are young people key agents of change?

Communities are stronger when youth participate. Young people are connected to their communities, schools, and peer networks. Engaging them in initiatives that address local issues ensures that interventions are relevant, culturally sensitive, and embraced by the community. Investing in youth is an investment in the future. Equipping young individuals with skills, values, and a sense of social responsibility can lead to lasting positive changes as they grow into leaders, professionals, and active citizens.

## How will Rin'ON contribute to the empowerment of rural youth?

Rin'ON will engage and empower youth in rural areas, amplifying their voices and dismantling the barriers that hinder their civic engagement. Through our initiatives and partnerships, we aim to equip young individuals with the tools, knowledge, opportunities, and confidence they need to become catalysts for positive change within their communities.

### In particular, Rin'ON plans to provide:

- 1. A safe space and cool group to belong to** by providing an accessible platform for young people to openly express their opinions and concerns and to join the network of RinONistas who are agents of change across Ferizaj.
- 2. Community Service Initiatives** and other educational, social and cultural opportunities to engage young people from different backgrounds to engage with their peers in their communities in a fun way.
- 3. Trainings and tools** to build both the personal and professional skills they need to work towards a better future for themselves and their community.

## Rri'ON program

The Rri'ON program was piloted in the village Balaj, from February 2023 to July 2023. The program strengthened local youth engagement in the community, generated visible changes in the environment, and fostered long-term improvement in the quality of life and sustainable positive changes in the community. This program also kickstarted the non-formal youth group of RinONistas, which Rin'ON hopes to grow into a network of agents of change across Ferizaj.

### The program achieved this through:

**Recruitment and Training:** Identify and train over 40 young volunteers from Balaj village through 12 workshops on the topics of agents of change, community, volunteering in the community and teamwork.

**Community Needs Assessment:** Conduct surveys, games, and activities to identify and prioritize community needs.

**Solution Development:** Engage volunteers in brainstorming and implementing solutions to address identified needs.

**Skill Development:** Through various activities, focus on critical thinking, professional skills, communication, social skills, decision-making, leadership, and civic awareness.

**Innovative Projects:** such as "Change through Art" mural on the school's front wall and an ambient improvement mini-campaign with trash bins along the main street of Balaj village.





# Key achievements



Funded by the US Embassy as part of the Bridge 2 Project

## Brigde 2

**60 children aged 14-18 from Ferizaj took part in interactive training modules designed to foster inter-ethnic communication and collaboration among youth in Kosovo**

60 children aged 14-18 from Ferizaj took part in interactive training modules designed to foster inter-ethnic communication and collaboration among youth in Kosovo. Using English as a common language the training modules aimed to stimulate inter-ethnic collaboration in the social, academic, and professional areas among youth in Kosovo. In turn, strengthens sociocultural cohesion and tolerance, academic collaboration, economic prospects, and international integration of Kosovo youth.

## Friday night - Movie Nights

**100 young people came together to watch thought-provoking films and engaged in in sightful debates on Rin'ON .**

Every Friday we transformed our space into an improvised cinema, offering a platform for the community to come together, watch films and discuss them. It drew in a lot of youth, reaching a peak of over 150 registered volunteers, with more than 40 young people actively participating in various activities



Rin'ON volunteers



## #Soshtkompliment (# it is not a compliment)

Fifteen volunteers participated in an awareness campaign initiated by them to spread awareness about sexual harassment and encourage its reporting.

This is a current issue that we are all addressing together to decrease its prevalence. The campaign was highly successful, reaching over 10,000 people who showed their support by liking and sharing it on their social networks.



Funded by NGO 'TOKA'



Funded by KCSF, European Union, Sweden and CBM

## Rri'ON program

Creating change agents in Balajvillage through leadership development and training.

Through 12 workshops, 40 young individuals have cultivated critical-thinking, and social skills, problem-solving, and decision-making abilities. They now recognize the value of volunteering as a positive influence on society. Additionally, these participants have been equipped to serve as community advocates, honing leadership and active citizenship skills. Their exposure to group work has further transformed them into effective agents of change within the community.

## Our strategic priorities

1

Expand the Rri'ON program into at least nine new villages. After a successful implementation and visible impact of the pilot project in Balaj, Rin'ON will replicate its Rri'ON program to nine more villages to empower more youth and grow the network of agents of change.

Increase outreach to beneficiaries and stakeholders in order to promote a safe space for young people, increase engagement with our target group, increase awareness on key issues, and inform young people about opportunities.

2

3

Work towards sustainable growth of Rin'ON and its programs through improvement of our processes, capacity building of our staff, and strengthen resource mobilization.

## Key partners

- **Municipality of Ferizaj**, including the Mayor's Office, the Directory of Education (DKA) and the Directory of Culture, Youth and Sports (DKRS).
- **Local schools:** "Tefik Canga" in the city center and "Pavaresia" in Balaj village. These institutions provide valuable support and venues for our activities.
- **NGO Toka:** The Rin'ON team was part of program of super-volunteers (2019-2021).
- **Kosovar Civil Society Foundation (KCSF)** funded Rin'ON's pilot program and the team was part of their program "School of Activism". Collaboration with other NGOs has expanded our reach and amplified our impact on the community.
- **The American University of Kosovo (AUK):** working on the Bridge 2 program for the Ferizaj region is made possible by funding from the US Embassy in Kosovo. The partnership extends our ability to empower youth and enhance civic engagement in our municipality.

## About this strategy

Throughout the development of our strategy, our dedicated team, each member having been a part of Rin'ON for over 5 years, played a crucial role. Drawing on our deep understanding of the organization's values and mission, we collaborated closely under the guidance of the **Advocacy Training and Resource Center (ATRC)**.

To ensure that our strategy aligns with the aspirations and needs of our community, we actively sought input from various stakeholders. We engaged in meaningful discussions with our groups of young volunteers in the villages of **Dubrave** (30 participants), **Balaj** (20 participants), and at the school of **“Tefik Canga”**; (30 participants) in the city center of Ferizaj. These sessions provided valuable insights into how our volunteers perceive Rin'ON and the goals they envision accomplishing with us.

Additionally, we reached out to key community figures and influencers, including **the mayor of the city of Ferizaj, the director of youth, the director of education, and school directors** from “Tefik Canga” primary school in the city center, “Pavaresia” at Balaj, and “Dy deshmoret” at Talinoc i Muhaxherve. Through these conversations, **we explored collaborative opportunities and identified ways to better contribute to the evolving needs and aspirations of the youth.** This inclusive approach ensures that our strategy reflects the collective vision of our team, volunteers, and the broader community we serve and work with every day.