

Newsletter – JUNE 2009

Project: *Strengthening the Participation of Persons with Mental Disabilities in Kosovar Society*

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Ne per Ne members of Kamenica peer support / self-advocacy group visited students of a special class in Kamenica.

Prishtina, June 4th, 2009:
With the goal of

networking and outreach, during one of their weekly meetings, members of Ne per Ne organization, self-advocates from Kamenica peer support group went to visit the students of a special class. During their visit, self-advocates had the chance to promote the Ne per Ne organization and present to the participants its goals and achievements. They also demonstrated to the students of this class the importance of joining the peer support / self-advocacy group.

As a result, two students with intellectual disabilities joined the Kamenica peer support group of Ne per Ne organization for and by people with intellectual disabilities.

Self-advocates who visited SHSI and SHIC were Qendrim Jashari and Fatime Berisha, both working for K-MDRI. In addition to meeting with the residents of both parts of the institutions, they also had a meeting with the director of Shtime Integration Center, Arben Cami and asked for his collaboration for establishing a peer support group within the SHIC.

"Persons with disabilities are also part of our society and they should live in the community, exactly where they are supposed to" – said to the Director, Fatime Berisha.

"We are here to tell the residents that they have to get out of this institution as soon as possible, and live together with us in the community" – said Qendrim Jashari. *"With a little support from the others, we can easily become empowered and run our own lives independently"* – he finished.

K-MDRI will continue its monthly meetings within Shtime Special Institute and Shtime Integration Center.



K-MDRI, Ne per Ne and Students of Psychology visited Shtime Institutions

On June 8th, K-MDRI staff together with two self-advocates of Prishtina peer support / self advocacy

group for and by persons with intellectual disabilities and two students of the Department of Psychology, visited Shtime Special Institute (SHSI) and Shtime Integration Center (SHIC). During the visit, self-advocates had the chance to get to know more closely the residents and the conditions they are living in. This was also a preparation activity of establishing two peer support groups within the institutions.



Soundpainting Workshop

Prishtina, June 15th, 2009:

During the International Music Festival "Flute Sounds 2009", K-MDRI in collaboration with "Flute Sounds" Festival,

organized a Soundpainting workshop dedicated to members of Ne per Ne – organization for and by people with intellectual disabilities.

Soundpainting is a live composing sign language created for musicians, dancers, actors, poets, and visual artists working in the medium of structured improvisation.

There were 20 participants during this art workshop, from which, 12 persons with intellectual disabilities and 8 persons with physical disabilities. The participants had the chance to learn some of the basic gestures of

soundpainting and develop a unique form of communication within the group. This art workshop was led by the well known local and international artist: Angelika Sheridan, flutist working internationally as a performer of contemporary written and improvised music; Ute Völker, accordionist who specializes in improvised music; Trio NewBorn (Katie Down, Jeffrey Lependorf and Miguel Frasoni) who play handmade and found instruments of glass, along with flutes around the world; and Eremira Citaku, a well known local flutist and "Flute Sounds 2009" Festival Director.



and who shared their experiences and gave recommendations for an adequate leadership. The personalities who expressed their willingness to share their

leadership experiences with the participants were: Driton Bajraktari – Director of Down Syndrome Kosova; Petrit Zogaj – Researcher in FOL'08 organization; and Ramadan Ilazi – Coordinator of FOL'08, a civil society initiative.

In this workshop participated 32 persons with intellectual disabilities, 14 people with psychiatric disabilities, 3 support persons, and 9 students of Department of Psychology.



How to Become Successful Leaders?

Prishtina, June 23rd – 26th, 2009: With the goal of informing and training the members of Ne per Ne and Surviving Together

organizations, and other participants with mental disabilities on becoming successful leaders, and strengthening the participation of persons with mental disabilities in Kosovo society, K-MDRI / MDRI during the period of 23 – 26 June, conducted a four-day workshop, named: "How to Become Successful Leaders?". The main goal of this workshop was training the community of people with mental disabilities in raising their capacities, while informing them about adequate methods of leadership.

The workshop was held in Prishtina, Resource Center for People with Disabilities. The first two days of the workshop (June 23rd & 24th) were dedicated to members of Ne per Ne organization and other persons with intellectual disabilities, while the last two days of the workshop (June 25th & 26th) were dedicated to members of Surviving Together and other persons with psychiatric disabilities living in the community. This workshop offered the participants the opportunity to learn from the workshop trainer Shpend Qamili about leadership characteristics such as: leadership definition, its activities, qualities, and leadership models.

While learning about the above mentioned topics, participants who were mainly members of Ne per Ne and Surviving Together organization; as well as students of Department of Psychology; members of Club House Dëshira and residents of Integration Center and Mental Health Center in Ferizaj, were also able to work together in groups on "Definition of a leadership plan within the organization". Moreover, during this four-day workshop, the attendees had the chance to meet with personalities who have been identified as good civil society leaders

Besides the above mentioned achievements, during the month of June self-advocates of Ne per Ne organization have been able to increase their organization's membership by having eight (8) new persons with intellectual disabilities join its existing peer support / self-advocacy groups.

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