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Empowered civil society and institutions

Read about workshops with civil society and representatives of institutions and our joint efforts for a better position of children and young people



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New Mediators

We have started a new cycle of peer mediation programs, which are a powerful tool in the fight against peer violence



Children first!

The third edition of the newsletter covers the period from August to December 2022. Within this period, we worked hard, guided by the vision and mission of our organization, as shown by the implemented activities, which you can read about on the following pages. Our youth group is stronger, larger in number, and more independent; it participates in the training and campaigns of our

partners but also organizes and runs workshops on its own. We have new peer mediators who are, as a third, impartial party, empowered to identify and help resolve conflicts between peers. Civil society and representatives of municipal departments dealing with children and youth issues are familiar with the legal frameworks and legislation related to the Law on Child Protection, aiming

for more comprehensive action for the better position of children and youth. We strive to positively influence the development path of each organization member, expand our partnerships, and work on improving organizational capacities. Browse through the pages before you and see all of the above-mentioned.



Be part of the positive value microsystem

In addition to formal education, informal education is equally important for every individual to realize their full potential for personal and community development. This will be achieved if they focus on engaging in activism. In addition to improving their capacities, creating new experiences and friendships, and maintaining the existing ones, they will contribute to the overall quality of life and thus become a part of the microsystem of positive values. First, it is necessary to influence and motivate others around us to dare to work towards creating a society that genuinely wants to contribute to its community.

Isidora Jovanović

Editor Leaderonline.net

Strengthening and improving child protection services in the Mitrovica region

In September 2022, we started implementing the project Strengthening and improving child protection services in the Mitrovica region with the support of UNICEF. Part of the program we are implementing is focused on training peer mediators, establishing peer teams for the prevention of violence within schools, and organizing additional training for members of these teams. The training will relate to the capacity building of peer team members on multiculturalism, non-discrimination, participation, and global sustainable goals. In addition to peer teams for the prevention of violence, the set of trainings will also include members of the already existing school teams for the prevention of violence, composed of teaching staff.

The second part of the program focuses on working with municipal teams for children's rights composed of representatives of all relevant institutions dealing with children and their rights. We will work on building their capacities, exchanging experiences and examples of good practice, and providing support in mapping the existing legal frameworks and available services related to children from vulnerable social groups and children in the foster care system to improve the already available services. A particular focus will be placed on strengthening foster care services by providing training for professionals in this field and foster families.



Improving the capacity of civil society representatives

Joint activities to improve the situation of children and

In the previous period, workshops were held to improve the capacities of civil society to better implement the Law on Child Protection, that is, to get acquainted with the mechanism for monitoring the child's rights. The first workshop was held in Prizren from 29.09 until 01.10.2022, attended by 22 participants from different organizations (Podrži me, Caritas, Primo la tolleranza, Santa Maria, Nevo Koncepti, Syri i Visionit, Paths of the Sun, Terre des hommes, as well as a representative of the Ombudsman Office). This workshop aimed to ensure active participation and improve the civil society representatives' capacity to strengthen the mechanisms and quality of protection of children's rights to enable a more robust platform for changes in the field of children's rights, especially related to the Law on Child

Protection.

The second workshop was held from 25 to 26 October 2022 in Banjska and was attended by 16 participants from the organizations Support Me, Caritas, Primo la tolleranza, Santa Maria, and DEA. The workshop aims to strengthen capacities and improve the knowledge of civil society about existing tools and mechanisms for inclusive monitoring of children's rights for them to become more vital actors in the implementation of systems and mechanisms for the protection of children's rights, as well as laws and other legal regulations for improving the position of children.

Domovik's instrument for data collection was also presented at the workshop.

Training for municipal officials

At the end of September 2022, a second training module for municipal officials was held to improve the mechanism for improving the position of children at the local level. Representatives of the municipalities of Zubin Potok, Zvečan, and Prizren attended this training. The training aimed to

familiarize municipal actors with the existing Law on Child Protection and other relevant laws, bylaws, and measures for their implementation. Also, during the training process, a particular focus was on the new administrative instructions for establishing a team for the child's rights

at the local level by Article 20. of the Law on Child Protection. This body represents the basis for the effective operation of municipal structures in creating and implementing policies and measures for improving the position of children.

Workshop top-

- » Presentation of the law on child protection with a focus on general provisions of the law, basic principles of child rights, mechanisms for the protection of children's rights, as well as the relationship of the Law on Child Protection with the Law on Local Self-government, Family Law, the Law on Social Protection and the role of Ombudsman.
- » The role of civil society in promoting and protecting the child's rights;
- » The importance of forming a coordination team for the child's rights. Prioritization and measures to be taken to improve the child's rights and protection situation. The role of civil society in the process of forming a coordination team for the child's rights;
- » Monitoring of child's rights – monitoring mechanisms, the goal of monitoring in general, the mechanism of reporting before the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, indicators, data sources, analysis of data collection instruments, interpretation of data, and composition of reports.



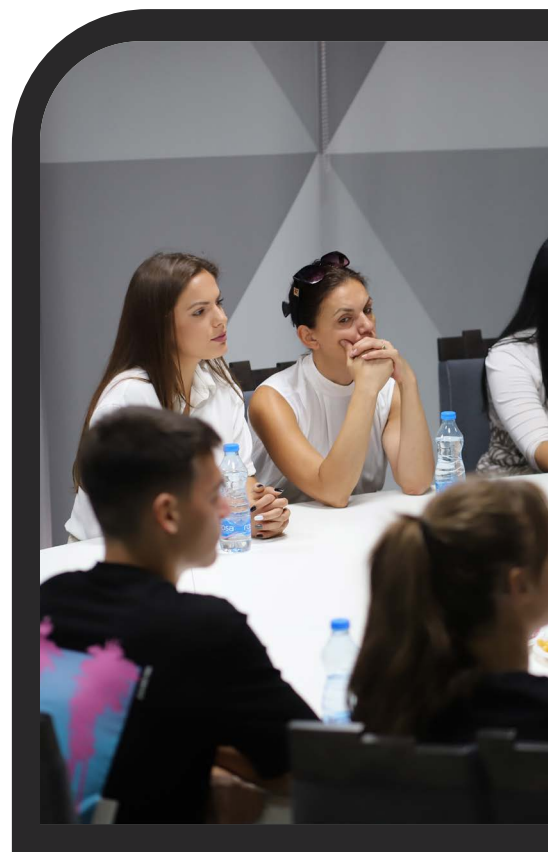
Young advocates for change in society

The practical use of knowledge for social change is how the process of public advocacy can be defined. Our young people attended Advocacy training.



How and in what way they can influence decision-makers, how they can get public support, how to engage in the decision-making process, and then advocate for improving their position and quality of life – are the skills that members of our youth group “UM za decu” were trained in through two rounds of workshops that were held in the previous period. The focus of the first workshop held in October was children’s rights and skills of public advocacy and how to represent their needs at different levels through a theoretical approach. Participants were introduced to practical examples of running an advocacy campaign during the second workshop in November. They applied the previously acquired knowledge by developing a campaign and initiatives they would like to work

on. Through practical work, they discussed steps in an advocacy campaign and how to offer concrete solutions. Also, there was a discussion on potential topics, i.e., issues that our group members would like to speak publicly about through the campaign that is planned to be implemented in 2023. Elementary school students from Gracanica had the opportunity to participate in the workshop; they joined our “UM za decu” group members in one part of the workshop and exchanged opinions with them regarding the challenges they face in their community.



“This workshop is of great importance to me because it allows us to learn more and treat others correctly. Today I learned that I should always put myself in the position of other people and think about it before I say anything”

Ognjen Radivojević
about the advocacy



Meeting with the parents of “UM za decu” group members

While working with young people and children, we strive to include their parents so that they are also familiar with the programs we implement and, in general, for them to get to know the work of our organization as close as possible. In this regard, before the beginning of the new cycle of the program, we held a meeting with the parents of members of our youth group, which was also attended by representatives of the Save the Children organization. In addition to discussing youth pro-

grams, the emphasis was placed on safe and secure participation in the activities we organize with our partners. Our partners from Save the Children presented their policies on the protection and safety of children to the parents. Parents, on the other hand, talked about the challenges of today from their perspective and potential fears and praised the invitation of our organization to familiarize themselves with the programs for youth empowerment that we are implementing.

40 new peer mediators and 10 new educators

One way to resolve conflict among students is through peer mediation. As a third, impartial party, a peer mediator helps the other two conflicting parties conduct a dialogue and peacefully resolve the conflict. Through a peer mediation program, educated students promote respect for human rights and empathy; help peers improve their verbal and non-verbal communication skills, teach them to resolve conflicts constructively, and influence the creation of a friendly atmosphere at school.

The Peer Mediation Program, a powerful weapon in combating peer violence, is also implemented in this project cycle with the support of UNICEF.

Forty pupils of secondary and primary schools from the municipalities of Mitrovica (Sveti Sava Elementary School, Grammar School), Zubin Potok (Jovan Cvijić Elementary School, Grigorije Božović Secondary School), Leposavić (Leposavić Elementary School) and Zvečan (Sveti Sava Elementary School in the village of Žerovnica) participated in a peer mediation program that included two-day training conducted in October 2022. Mediation skills empowered the new 40 peer educators; they were trained to recognize

conflict and mediate, i.e., act within their schools and spread their knowledge further to their peers.

After the training for peer mediators, a three-day training for peer educators was conducted, attended by 10 participants – previously trained peer mediators. This training was completed in early December 2022. Primary and secondary school students were additionally trained, i.e., familiar with

the basic principles of human and child rights, (non)discrimination, participation, and global sustainable goals. This group of peer educators has been taught how to make a plan for organizing and leading workshops within their schools. Students will transfer the knowledge acquired in this training to their peers within the school workshops.





What did members of the “UM za decu” do?

In addition to participating in the programs organized and implemented by our organization, members of our youth group were also active in our partners' programs. In addition, they organized workshops on topics of their choosing. After the pandemic, a large number of new members are there, ready to acquire new knowledge; our youth group is now larger in number and more empowered. Please read below about the workshops and the campaign they participated in in the previous period.

Media Content

The editorial team of the youth media platform Leaderonline has produced several media contents (articles, podcasts) to promote positive stories of individuals, engage young people, and talk about issues that concern the youth and that young people have chosen to talk about. Young people talked

about mental health, advocacy, art and culture, youth activism, and environmental issues.

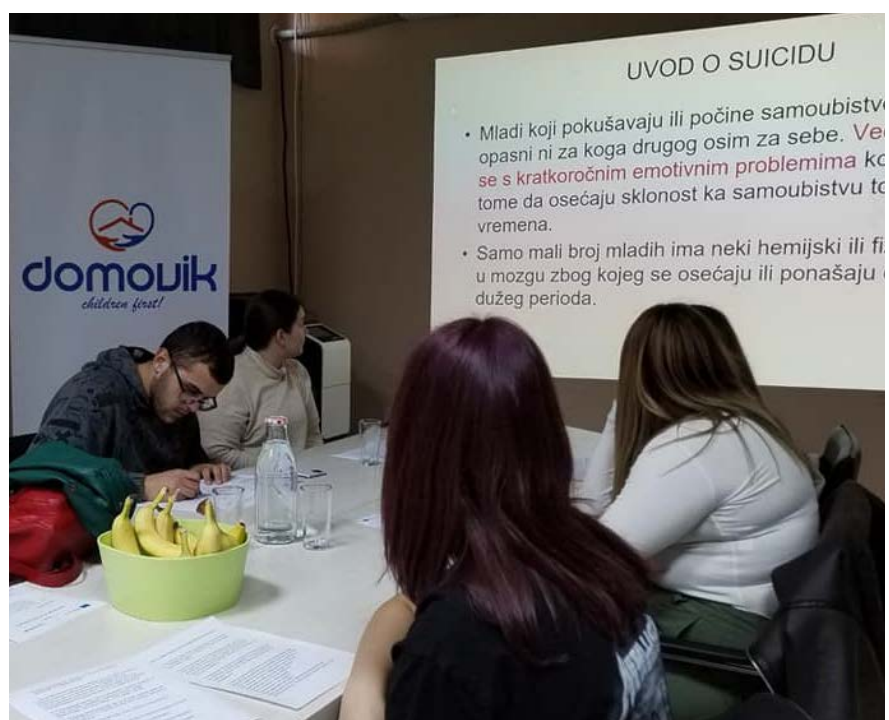
The content is available on the mentioned platform in two languages, Serbian and Albanian.

Below are the links where you can view the above content:

- ✓ <https://bit.ly/3wU79aQ>
- ✓ <https://bit.ly/3Yf4X9J>
- ✓ <https://bit.ly/3YmpVUj>
- ✓ <https://bit.ly/3Y4qhzE>
- ✓ <https://bit.ly/3Ryf5Za>
- ✓ <https://bit.ly/3wNnD4z>
- ✓ <https://bit.ly/3WYqoe0>

How to Identify and Prevent Suicidal Thoughts in Young

The editor of our Leaderonline.net platform, Isidora Jovanović, a third-year student at the Faculty of Medicine in Mitrovica, held a workshop on suicidal thoughts among young people at the end of October. The Mind for Children group members attended the workshop, and they discussed, among other things, how to recognize suicidal thoughts, how to prevent them, and whom to turn to for help and support.





Generation Hope: Combating climate change together

“UM za decu” group members were part of the global Generation Hope campaign, which was carried out with the support of Save the Children. Youth groups of organizations Syri e Visionit and ROR are also part of this global campaign. The beginning of this campaign was represented by a joint workshop of all groups in Prizren, where the plan and activities of the campaign were developed. At the end of the workshop, each group carried out planned activities in their environments, so our group members organized workshops on art in the service of ecology. Also, our young people posted visuals on the “UM za decu” social networks that contained exciting facts on environmental protection.

Workshop on civic space

In mid-September, members of our youth group “UM za decu” attended a workshop on civic space held by representatives of Save the Children organization, which was held on our organization’s premises. Our young people got acquainted with the concept of civic space, what opportunities lie within it, and how they can work together with other youth groups and speak out about issues that concern them.

This workshop is part of a civil society empowerment program supported by SIDA.



What is civic space?

Open civic space is the foundation of any society. Freedom of expression, assembly, and association are the key pillars of civic space. This area allows citizens to gather, exercise their civil rights and freedoms, and share interests and problems.





Initiate, Motivate!

Civic engagement and activism are topics that we have dealt with throughout almost the entire 2022. Through various positive stories of community members, promotional video clips, and actions, we discussed the importance of the overall contribution to society through each individual's small or significant impact. Continue reading to find out how we conducted the "Initiate, Motivate" campaign.

In the second half of the year, Domovik continued the campaign on civic engagement "Initiate, motivate!" to promote volunteerism, i.e., activism, and raise awareness of the importance of engaging community members for the common good and contribution to the entire community and society. As part of the campaign, a mini-research was conducted, that is, an examination of citizens' attitudes, among other things, their engagement, contribution to the community, opportunities for volunteer actions, and benefits that the society has from them.... The questionnaire is [HERE](#). The mini-research results are published through interactive visuals on our organization's

social networks. All published visuals are under the common hashtags [#pokreni_motivisi](#) i [#pokrenimotivisi](#). Visuals can be viewed individually at the following links:

<https://fb.watch/i0Za8RFzcM/>

<https://fb.watch/i0ZIA3ERXa/>

<https://fb.watch/i0ZmQlt0ZV/>

<https://fb.watch/i0Zojt-gHm/>

<https://fb.watch/i0ZpGs8ISf/>

<https://fb.watch/i0Zr1oGB5-/>

All content within the campaign reached approximately 10,000 users of social networks (YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Tik Tok).



Eco Action

In October, with our associates and children from the Little Atelier of the PKC Akvarijus, we conducted an [eco-cleaning action](#) of the Mitrovica parks and the Ibar quay. Some video content was created during this eco action, which you can see [HERE](#).

"You are the leader" Award ceremony

On International Volunteer Day, we organized the ["You are a leader" award ceremony](#) – for young individuals who have distinguished themselves by their contribution to the community. With the award winners, at the end of December, video content in the format of a double-angle was recorded, which you can see [HERE](#).

Who are our leaders?

Antigona is a Department of English Language and Literature student at the Faculty of Philology. She attended Upshift, Podium, and Ponder workshops, where she had the opportunity to win the award with her team and help young people in her community get an outdoor recreation center. Still, she also showed interest in the topic of young marriages in the Roma community, as part of which a mini movie was made. After the youth programs, she joined Domovik's youth group "UM za decu," where she attended workshops on children's rights and advocacy, civic space, and suicide prevention among young people. She was an active member of the Generation Hope environmental campaign conducted by Save the Children. She is also a volunteer at the organization ZRAM.



Aleksa is a student at the Faculty of Technical Sciences. He participated in the Ponder workshop on media literacy, won the award, and had the opportunity to get acquainted with the work of a media company through an internship in the local media. He is also a longtime member of the Red Cross; through the Erasmus+ program, he had the opportunity to spend a semester in Spain at an exchange of students, participated in humanitarian actions during floods, trained to react in case of extreme winter conditions, and trained as a rescuer at swimming pools.



We celebrated World Children's

On World Children's Day, we made a promotional video in cooperation with partner organizations. We held a creative workshop with the "UM za decu" group members and participants of the "Little Atelier."

With the support of our partners, we marked World Children's Day on the 20th of November. A video with a critical message was addressed to every child that they should know what their rights are; it was created with our partner organizations, members of our youth group, young people with developmental difficulties, and our youngest friends. You can watch the video [HERE](#). In addition to the workshop, on November 19, 2022, an art-educational workshop was held in which our group members, together with children from PKC Akvarijus, worked on the creation of a joint panel containing the basic postulates of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child with which our youngest fellow citizens learned.





» We were visited by...

In mid-September, we hosted a group of students from the European Master Studies in Human Rights and Democratization and the Vienna Master Studies in Applied Human Rights.

We introduced them to the program of our organization and talked about the challenges we face during our work.

Our long-term partner in protecting children's rights and improving the quality of life of young people is the Save the Children organization. We had the pleasure of hosting the regional director of Save the Children, Ekin Ogutogullari, and the director of Save the Children in Kosovo, Ahmet Kryeziu, on our organization's premises. We talked about daily challenges, programs that await us, and the results we achieved in the past.



» Take my book to know me!

In partnership with Environment & Youth Capacity Development from Prizren, we set up an open-air library at Mitrovica International Business College in early September. Such an action aims to encourage networking among young people through reading and books. A reader is free to borrow a book from an open library, read it, and return it or exchange it with one of their own. The same library was opened in Prizren in September. This activity is part of the READ-Regional Network for Cultural Diversity project.



» Improving the personal capacities of each employee

In the previous period, we also worked on creating a portfolio for each employee in our organization. This process included several workshops held with the support of an external consultant and an evaluation by colleagues and external associates. The end product of this process is an individual assessment of each employee with a focus on the fields that need to be improved professionally.

Please find us at!

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