

# WHOLE CHILD DEVELOPMENT THROUGH SERVICE LEARNING

**SERVICE LEARNING FOR MORE  
INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES**





**Whole Child Development Through Service Learning**  
*Service Learning for More Inclusive Communities*

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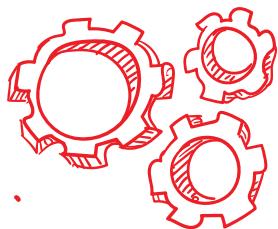
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# INTRODUCTION



This publication was made as part of the project “Service Learning for More Inclusive Communities”, implemented by Forum MNE. The aim of the project is to promote the concept of service learning in Montenegro and spread its application both in formal and non-formal education. Service learning is a concept that brings multiple benefits to the process of knowledge adoption and improves the cooperation between the different actors in society (educational institutions, NGOs, media, wider community etc.).

Forum MNE initiated the promotion of the service learning concept in Montenegro through the successful implementation of the two-year project called Service Learning (2017 - 2019). The project was implemented in cooperation with the Faculty of Political Science (University of Montenegro), the Faculty of Visual Arts (University Mediteran) and the Directorate for Youth (Ministry of Sports and Youth of Montenegro). During this project, 45 young people implemented nine different service learning projects. Forum MNE continued working on the promotion of use of this educational approach through various initiatives, regional Erasmus+ projects, as well as through active involvement in the Central and Eastern European Service Learning Network.

This publication is based on the experience in the implementation of service learning projects, lessons learned and the inputs received from the participants. Its goal is to provide information and guidelines to teaching staff, youth workers and all those dealing with young people - to help them in the process. The publication consists of two parts. The first part is dedicated to the presentation of the service learning concept and its application in formal and non-formal education. This part presents the main advantages of this concept and offers specific and practical advice for those willing to use the concept in their work.



The second part of the publication presents a total number of 14 service learning initiatives implemented through the project in 2022: more than 60 young people from Nikšić, Budva and Podgorica took part in the service learning training programme and had the opportunity to learn how this concept can improve their learning process and help them develop various skills. After that, divided into small teams and assisted by their mentors, they implemented the service learning projects based on the research and assessment of the target groups' needs. These projects dealt with peer violence prevention, healthy lifestyles, legal awareness, sexual education, mental health etc.

We hope that this publication will be useful to all those eager to improve their work with the children and youth through service learning, and that it will provide the guidelines and the ideas to encourage active involvement of children and young people in community development.



# WHAT IS SERVICE LEARNING?

## THE HISTORY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SERVICE LEARNING CONCEPT

The service learning concept is a relative novelty, and the term itself was first mentioned in 1967 to describe a programme that enabled American students to gain a certain number of credits through the implementation of activities in the community. The service learning concept was defined as a new pedagogic approach at the conference held in Atlanta in 1969.<sup>1</sup> Service learning took its place as a specific concept in the education system in the eighties, with clear distinction from volunteering and other community-based activities unrelated to the curriculum. Service learning became more present in the formal education system throughout the nineties, especially at the American colleges and universities.<sup>2</sup> After that, the approach gradually spread through educational institutions in the rest of the world.

One of the most important actors in the promotion of the service learning concept is the Latin American Center for Service-Learning (Centro Latinoamericano de Aprendizaje y Servicio Solidario – CLAYSS). Since its establishment in 2002, CLAYSS works on capacity building of the stakeholders that take interest in the application of service learning as an innovative pedagogical method, and they are present in Central and Eastern Europe since 2015. It is also important to mention the formation of the European Service-Learning Association in 2003, which was the landmark of a period of intense promotion of service learning on this continent. There are specialized organizations and networks that promote service learning at certain levels, such as the European Observatory of Service-Learning in Higher Education. This initiative started with the desire to additionally promote service learning at the high-education institutions in Europe, seeing the lack of cooperation between the universities and the communities. In 2015 the representatives of CLAYSS visited Vienna, where they spoke about service learning and its advantages with the teachers and students from this part of Europe. That was the start of the Central and Eastern European Service Learning Network, which has been continuously involved in the promotion of this concept, strengthening the capacities of schools and organizations and the development and implementation of training programmes ever since. The dynamics of the development of service learning varies, depending on the sector, education degree and on the region as well. While some countries apply the concept predominantly in formal education, in others it is more often present in the work of civil society organizations and the non-formal education sector.

Forum MNE had the most prominent role in the promotion of service learning in Montenegro, with numerous projects and initiatives aimed at popularization of this method of education and strengthening the capacities of the interested institutions and organizations. Cooperation with certain educational institutions has been established, so it can be said that service learning becomes more present in formal education too. Forum MNE plans to continue the promotion of this concept and organize additional initiatives in cooperation with non-governmental organizations and educational institutions.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: EDUCATION AND EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

The significance of practical work in the education process is not a new concept. It is well-known that knowledge is best adopted when it comes from a specific experience and goes beyond mere memorization of information. Hence the well-known quote: “Tell me and I forget, teach me and I remember, involve me and I learn.”

That is the best explanation of the concept of **experiential learning**, a form of active and engaged learning where the students acquire knowledge based on the specific experience and the reflection process. There are several theoretical frameworks of importance in order to understand the relations between learning, experiential learning, and service learning too, which will be additionally explained.

In 1938 Dewey published a famous principle, which segments education into five steps:

1. Identifying the problem
2. Formulating the problem as a question that needs to be answered
3. Hypothesis drafting
4. Hypothesis testing
5. Drawing conclusions

Kolb (1984) adjusted this model several decades later and brought it down to a four-stage cycle process that can be used to understand service learning. According to his concept, a **specific experience** causes **reflective observation**, which then results in **abstract conceptualization** (in the classroom), and ends with the **active experimentation**.

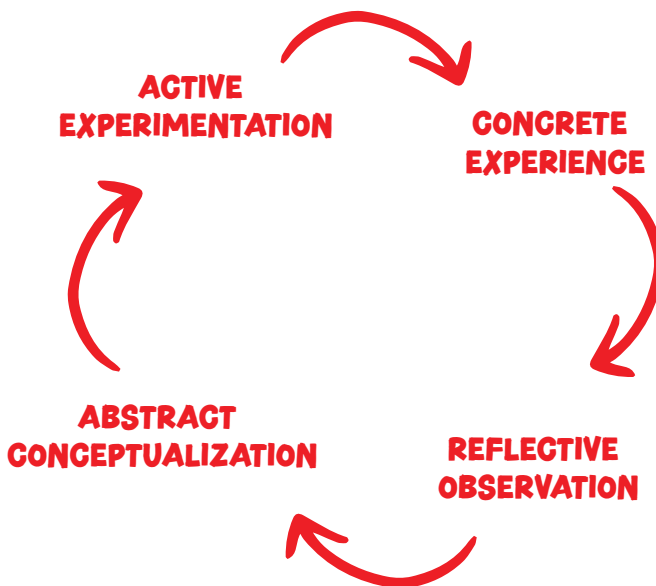


Figure 1: Kolb's four-stage cycle model of education, 1984

The concept of experiential learning that can be manifested in various forms – such as practical education, experiment, work practice, professionalization, etc., is based on this principle. The essence of experiential learning is to put the knowledge adopted in theory into practice, i.e. to reach theoretical findings through practical use.

The concept of service learning completely matches this principle and it is based on the same idea, yet it has an additional component – contribution to the community. While most forms of experiential learning such as experiments, work practice and the like, focus on the process of knowledge adoption and academic improvement, service learning has a segment that contributes to the community's well-being. In other words: YES, improved adoption of knowledge is the goal, however **ALONG WITH** the benefit to the community. Because of this, some theorists see service learning as a concept that overcame experiential learning.<sup>3</sup> According to this, service learning represents a concept broader than experiential learning, since it implies the community's well-being along with the experiential learning component (Figure 2).

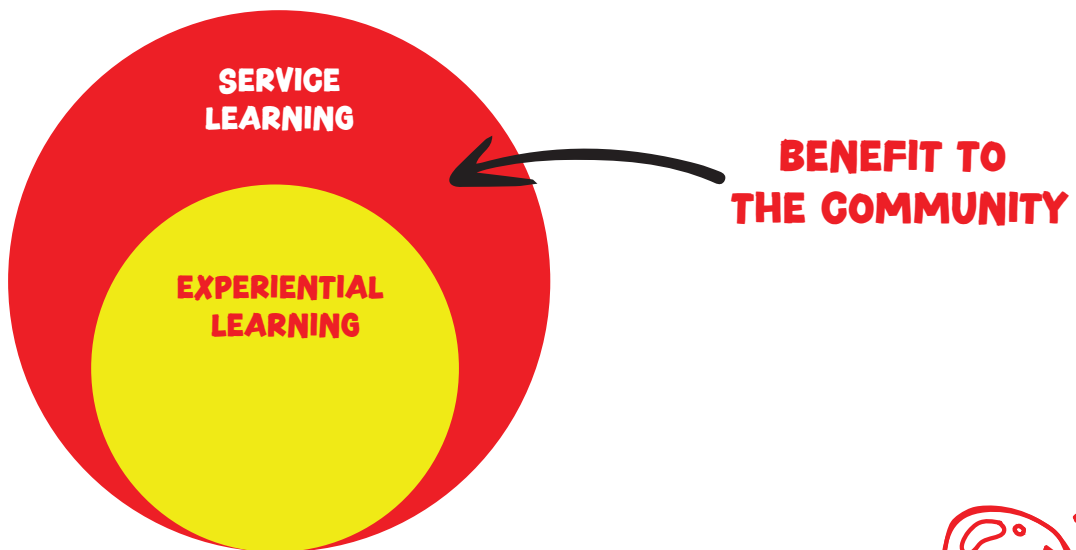


Figure 2: Relation between experiential and service learning



Service learning is called “aprendizaje y servicio solidario” in Spanish, i.e. the term “solidarity” is incorporated in the concept’s title. That accents the community contribution component and the joint desire for a better society.



## Service learning: concept and definition

Service learning as an educational method is based on the principle that social engagement can be a powerful tool for gaining and applying academic knowledge, skills and opinions. It is a concept that brings in several actors in its implementation, and it bases the learning process on the cooperation of the wider community. Service learning insists on the full application of academic knowledge in a way that brings specific benefits to a certain community or society.

Even though service learning emerged as a method in formal education, with time the concept spread into non-formal education as well. Activities in both formal and non-formal education have their own plans and curricula, as well as the desired learning outcomes that can be related to the needs of the community and result in specific, practical activities. Therefore, when we think of the formal curricula in the context of formal education, the work plans and programmes and learning outcomes would represent the parallel in non-formal education.

**The whole process is cyclic and interdependent in both formal and non-formal education. The theoretically gained knowledge is used to solve a problem in the community, and at the same time the process of solving the problem helps assert the adopted knowledge through practical application and learn new skills and knowledge.**

The main components of service learning are:

- Curriculum connection<sup>4</sup>;
- Connection with the community needs;
- Active involvement of the participants and other actors from the community in the overall process.

Certain activities such as volunteering can often be misinterpreted as service learning since they focus on the practical component too. Because of this any activity taking place outside the classroom involving some form of practical work can be mistaken for service learning. An activity, however, has to have two components to be considered service learning. The first one is that the activity must be connected with the curriculum in formal, i.e. to the plan and programme of work in non-formal education – in other words, the activity must lead to the achievement of the desired learning outcomes (in formal and non-formal education). The second component implies that the activity has to suit the community's needs and that it is guided to meet them. The following sections contain the detailed explanation of the two components, to better explain the service learning concept and its differences from other activities implemented in schools or the community (Table 1).

## Curriculum / work plan connection

Each service learning project must be connected with the curriculum in formal, i.e. with the plan and programme of work in non-formal education. In the context of formal education, the project must lead to realization of the desired learning outcomes and relate to the education material in order to be considered a service learning project. In non-formal education and youth work, the service learning project has to be aligned with the plan and programme of work and the planned learning outcomes. This is precisely what separates service learning from volunteering, for example. Volunteering is an action that contributes to the solution of a certain problem in the community, usually organized in cooperation with the community. Let's say there is an organized action to clean a river bed, repaint the park furniture, distribute food to socially disadvantaged families, etc. – all of these are examples of volunteering that undoubtedly contribute to the community, mitigate or even solve a problem. These activities surely encourage the feeling of active citizenship and a sense of responsibility for the community too, however they are not necessarily connected with the curriculum goals and the desired learning outcomes, and even though they have an important educational role their goal is usually unrelated to the better adoption of the school programme or the improvement of certain skills defined by the youth work programme. That's the difference in comparison to the service learning concept. **Therefore, an activity has to be connected with the curriculum, i.e. the plan and programme in non-formal education and its goal has to be the realization of the defined learning outcomes in order to be considered a service learning activity.**

## Adjustment to the community's needs

One of the main features of service learning is that it has to be connected with the community's needs. In the context of service learning in formal education, this component separates service learning from the experiment or practical education. While these two categories aim to apply the theoretical knowledge in practice, service learning has to be adjusted to the community's needs and implemented in cooperation with the community (Table 1). In the context of non-formal education, civil society organizations and youth workers organize practical activities involving children and youth on a regular basis, and such activities often contribute to the community, therefore this precondition is usually met in most cases of specific activities in non-formal education. **Therefore, along with aiding the participants additionally assert the acquired knowledge through practical use, service learning contributes to problem-solving in the community, both in formal and non-formal education.** It is based on the effort to connect education with a wider social context and make the gained knowledge applicable. The idea is to promote the principle by which the things learned in school or in a civil society organization, volunteer club, etc. are applicable in practice and have a specific use. This principle is not only important because practical work contributes to the better adoption of knowledge, but because it promotes the idea of active citizenship. By applying the knowledge gained in school or in the youth club to solve a problem in the community, the service learning project participants learn about civic responsibility and the importance of civic activism from an early age. This way both the formal and the non-formal educational system gain an important component, and that is a contribution to the development of young active citizens and socially responsible individuals.

	Curriculum connection	Connection with the community needs
Experiment/practice	✓	✗
Volunteering	✗	✓
Service learning	✓	✓

Table 1: Service learning and other activities

# THE ADVANTAGES OF SERVICE LEARNING

As explained in the previous section, service learning has certain advantages over the traditional ways of teaching, and it is especially important to point out that multiple actors have direct benefits from service learning, and that the benefits of this concept don't affect solely the youth and children, participants<sup>5</sup> in formal and non-formal education, but also the wider pool of actors.

When it comes to formal education, numerous research<sup>6</sup> showed that service learning has a positive effect on the level of learning outcomes and that it helps the students apply the adopted knowledge more easily and efficiently. Along with the advantages related to academic success, service learning also contributes to the development of interpersonal skills and the awareness of one's potential and capacities. In comparison to educational institutions, service learning leads to a higher degree of satisfaction among the students, better connections with other institutions and the community in general, and it also contributes to the continuous development of the teaching staff. In non-formal education, the application of the service learning concept adds to the youth club's speed and efficiency in target achievement, i.e. to the building of young people's skills and their whole development. To add to that, the communities, aside from reaping the tangible rewards from the implemented projects which usually contribute to the solution of some of their problems, strengthen their relations with educational institutions and civil society organizations. The following sections present some of the basic advantages of service learning over the other approaches that are either not based on practical work or don't encourage cooperation with the community. It is, however, important to say that there are even more advantages, and that service learning contributes to the development of the students, educational institution, teaching staff and the overall community in many different ways.

## **Contributes to the development of responsible citizens**

Service learning helps the participants to become aware of the importance of their active role in society and explains why it is important that we all contribute to the improvement of the living conditions in our communities. By developing and implementing the service learning projects, the participants learn how to recognize the problem, and what's even more important is that they become aware that they are the ones who can contribute to the solution of that problem. By starting from the minor issues on the local level, the participants learn about their potential and realize that it is the citizens who can and should affect the perspective of their communities and the quality of life in them.

"During the implementation of the project we felt useful and it's the best thing we've done so far." Ružica, Anđela, Jovana, Kristina, Tina, Ana, and Ksenija on the experience of implementing the project aimed to help the children of migrant families.

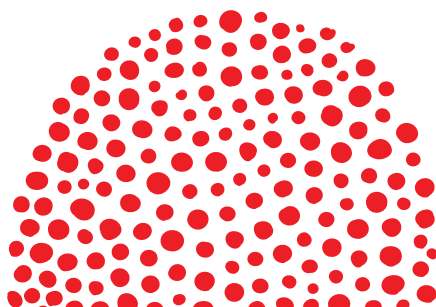


## **Fits the context and helps understand the society**

A theoretical approach, especially in formal education, is often based on examples which are not relatable to our context and refer to the domains that young people can't understand well enough since the subject is not familiar. It can cause a decrease in motivation and thus lower results. On the other hand, service learning is based on the specific needs of the community and the problems, occurrences and needs we can spot ourselves in our environment. A chance to work on a familiar subject increases their motivation, and hence it also improves their understanding of the subject. By working on the specific issues affecting them as society members, young people improve their understanding of the community they belong to, recognize the pros and cons of their environment, learn how to spot the problems of their fellow citizens and develop the ideas that can make their community a better place. For example, it is one thing when young people learn about the democratic processes and citizen participation, and a totally different when they get the chance to initiate a petition regarding some issue of importance to their community.

## **Contributes to the development of cooperation between the actors in the society**

As already explained in the introductory part, two essential components of service learning are the connection with the curriculum and the contribution to the community. It means that participation of at least two sides is required – a formal/non-formal educational institution (school, faculty, organization, volunteering club etc.) and the community. The span of actors is often wider in practice, including the local media, organizations, individuals etc. It means that service learning contributes to cooperation on the level of community, settlement, local self-government etc. The cooperation of several actors and the merging of ideas, efforts and time create a synergy that helps achieve better, more permanent and far-reaching results. This is especially important in the context of formal education since non-formal education most often includes cooperation with other actors. Even though there have been numerous joint activities by schools and communities in recent times, there is a space for a significantly higher degree of cooperation between educational institutions and the wider community. Service learning actually upgrades this relationship by creating a synergy that both sides can benefit from. Educational institutions build their educational capacities and also the general educational experience of their students through a significant increase in the share of practical teaching, while the community has specific benefits, varying from one project to another. Of course, the omnipresent aspect and a good thing by itself is the cooperation between the various actors of society which often represents the basis for the future cooperative project and initiatives.



In 2017, Jovana, Ena, Ermina, Ivana, Goran, and Jovan implemented a service learning project that dealt with addiction prevention. The process involved the Faculty of Political Science of the University of Montenegro, the Faculty of Visual Arts of the University Mediteran and the Public Institution for Placement, Rehabilitation and Resocialization of Psychoactive Substance Users "Kakaricka Gora". This cooperation brought together the actors that did not have the chance to cooperate much before, and besides resulting in a quality final product based on the complementary skills and knowledge of the participants, it set the basis for further cooperation.

### **Builds empathy and solidarity**

Empathy is a skill we all need to successfully function in society. The fact that empathy is a skill indicates that it can be learned and upgraded. Even though there are several scientific definitions of empathy, all of them basically focus on some of the following segments:

- Understanding the emotions and needs of others;
- Sense of concern for others;
- Motivation to help another person;
- Ability to put oneself in other people's position, etc.

The lack of empathy can be related with the increase in peer violence, so it is clear that the development of empathy in students encourages a better school environment, reduction of violence and promotion of positive behaviour.<sup>7</sup>

One of the most efficient ways to develop empathy is the so-called experiential learning, and thus is service learning as well. By having the chance to work directly with the community, learn about the needs of the people who live in their community and seeing the problems and challenges they face with, the participants develop a sense of understanding and get the opportunity to see things from a different perspective, finally leading to a higher degree of empathy. To add to that, the fact that service learning implies the participants' engagement in solving an issue and that they have the chance to contribute to the improvement of someone's life adds an extra value. The fact that they will use their time and knowledge and put in the effort to help someone or create a value for the community is a precondition for the development of emphatic young persons and a solidarity-based society as a whole.

in 2017 Ivana, Saška, Irena, Miloš, Bojana, Tijana, Matija, and Dimitrije implemented a service learning project that dealt with the issue of begging. Through direct work with the children who had experienced begging, they had the chance to learn about the real problems and daily challenges such children face, and thus to better understand their position. They contributed to the awareness of the wider community and influenced the development of empathy and solidarity among citizens through photographs and the exhibition they organized.

# WHOLE CHILD DEVELOPMENT APPROACH AND SERVICE LEARNING

Educational circles have been insisting on the concept of the whole child development approach for quite some time now. This approach may be used in various contexts: in school, non-formal education, family or community, and it can also refer to young people. This concept is mostly discussed in the context of formal education; to point out that the school's role is not only to contribute to the academic advancement of the child and the adoption of school curriculum, but that it is much more comprehensive. In line with that concept, the role of the educational system is to contribute to the psychophysical development of children, their active role in society and the development of all the competences required for active functioning in society. This is especially important in those educational systems that, like ours, have often been accused of being based on simple memorization of information, without encouraging critical thinking, thinking outside the box, questioning etc. The whole child development approach is on a totally different level that demands additional skills alongside with the academic in order to be implemented. So much more is expected from schools than to simply teach the children how to write and deal with numbers - they are expected to teach them to question the given information, to compare different situations and make informed decisions, to manage their emotions, to develop healthy relations with their family members and the environment, to respect themselves, to know how to take up the leadership role, to feel empathy towards others, etc. The whole child development approach enables just that.

We won't be making a mistake if we claim that in Montenegro it is the non-formal education sector that started with the application of the whole child development approach significantly earlier. The activities implemented in the non-formal education were mostly based on approaches that encourage the development of psychophysical skills, interaction with the community, the sense of civic responsibility, leadership and teamwork. Persons dealing with young people in the non-formal education system are called trainers and facilitators, stressing their role in transferring certain knowledge and skills, yet paired with the approach that implies mentorship, while the main role is reserved for the children and youth. In non-formal education, the children and youth got what's often missing in formal education, and that is the opportunity to state their opinions and work on the development of their own ideas, lead social change, work with their peers to jointly solve an issue in the community etc. These activities contribute to the whole child development, enabling them to acquire a broader set of skills and knowledge.

The concept of service learning contributes to the whole child development in the best possible way, since it affects the development of all the aforementioned skills, while encouraging the close cooperation of different actors of society. Of course, depending on the actual service learning project, the accent can be on different skills, some of them may be more pronounced than others, but the base of the service learning is to provide the children and young people the experience that affects the development of a wide spectre of skills.

Because of this service learning can be a simple yet, efficient way to bring schools closer to the idea of using the whole child development concept in their work, i.e. to additionally improve their work by using this tool. By following the suggestions and principles presented in this guide and similar literature on service learning, the teachers, pedagogues and others can contribute to the development of the children's skill sets that will enable them to reach their full potential and be useful to their respective communities as well.

	Development type	Goal
1.	<b>Physical</b>	Generate knowledge on physical development and use it in making decisions that lead to healthy lifestyles (physical health, physical activities, nutrition, responsible decision making etc.)
2.	<b>Cognitive</b>	Strengthen the capacities for information analysis, synthesis and evaluation, problem-solving, content analysis. Some of the examples include flexible thinking, comparison, information handling, adjustment of the content to different environments etc.
3.	<b>Language</b>	Strengthen the capacities for the receptive and expressive use of language in various contexts. Some of the examples include understanding nonverbal communication, understanding verbal communication, writing, reading etc.
4.	<b>Psychological</b>	Strengthen the capacities for the efficient management of emotions, awareness of one's personality, self-control etc.
5.	<b>Social</b>	Prepare the child for successful communication and interaction with the environment, development of social relations and social intelligence skills.
6.	<b>Ethical</b>	Develop an understanding for other people's needs and a sense of justice, encourage understanding of human rights and integrity-based decision making.

Table 2: The adjusted concept of Comer's six developmental pathways<sup>8</sup>



# SERVICE LEARNING AS A TOOL TO ACQUIRE KEY COMPETENCES

The concept of key competences has been an integral part of education for quite some time. The accent is on the acquisition of practical skills that can be used in actual situations, in comparison to the previous focus on gaining theoretical knowledge. Key competences combine the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed for active citizenship and are required to adequately act in various situations in school, at work, in relations with other people and so on.

European reference framework contains eight key competences:

- Literacy competence;
- Multilingual competence;
- Mathematical competence and competence in science, technology and engineering;
- Digital competence;
- Personal, social and “learning to learn” competence;
- Citizenship competence;
- Entrepreneurship competence;
- Cultural awareness and expression competence<sup>9</sup>

Acquisition of these skills is best encouraged through experiential learning based on the involvement of youth in specific activities. The change of environment, i.e. moving the learning process outside the classroom additionally motivates the students and encourages the process of achieving the desired outcomes. The research<sup>10</sup> also indicate that the involvement of other actors such as local organizations, institutions, community members etc. in the learning process has the same positive effect on the process of acquisition or building key competences.

These are the integral elements of service learning; therefore it is clear that this approach undoubtedly contributes to the acquisition of key competences in children and young people. As we know that the key competences help the adoption of the life-essential skills, contributing to the formation of capable, socially aware and critical individuals, it can be concluded that it can also be achieved through the application of the service learning concept, in both formal and non-formal education.



# STEPS TO IMPLEMENT A SUCCESSFUL SERVICE LEARNING PROJECT

This section presents the five steps in the process of development of the service learning projects. As pointed out in the text, these five steps should not be necessarily seen as the processes divided by precise boundaries, but as a general guide as the phases often overlap and the process depends on the interaction between the participants, the nature of the project and many other factors. The five steps in the process of implementation of the service learning projects are defined as:

1. Analysis
2. Project design
3. Implementation
4. Reflection
5. Finalization

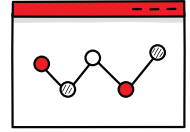


Figure 3: Steps in implementation of the service learning projects

## 1. Analysis

As in the most of the major processes, especially those related to education, the first step consists of the analysis. This is a comprehensive and broad process that may encompass data processing and research of different aspects. First and foremost, the accent is on the analysis of the situation in the community in which the project is planned to be implemented. As already stated, the goal is to implement a project that is in line with the community's needs and that will bring tangible benefits to the community. With that in mind, this phase may also include interviews with the community members, organization of focus groups, survey, and also activities such as analysis of newspaper articles and official documents. However, in the context of the analysis, it is the educator's task to also examine the needs, potentials and tendencies of the students, to tailor the duration, scope and demands of the project according to them, their interests, capacities and available time.

Natalija, Ivona, Amar, and Ivan surveyed the young people in the selected communities on the subject of peer violence in their service learning project. There were 137 participants, and the collected data were used in the project design. The research showed that young people believe that the theme of peer violence should be more present in the public, so the team implemented an educational campaign and created a corresponding Instagram account as part of the project.



## 2. Project design

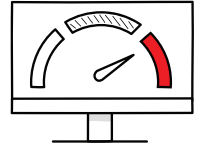
Project development may start once all the information is collected. In this phase, just as in the previous one, the students should be given the lead role and the educator should take up the role of the facilitator. The educator is there to point the participants in a certain direction, to provide all the required resources and information, encourage their curiosity and creativity, give suggestions, yet the project idea itself should come from the participants. The two key questions that need to be answered in this phase are:

- a) Does the envisaged activity contribute to the achievement of the learning results defined in the curriculum?
- b) Does the envisaged idea bring a specific benefit to society?

An affirmative answer to both questions is a precondition for the envisaged idea to be called a service learning project. Along with these two key questions, the following aspects should be considered too:

- Is the project adjusted to the interests and skills of the students to the extent that they can have a leading role in its implementation?
- Is there a plan to include the community in the process of project implementation?
- Does the project involve other actors (institutions, media, NGOs, schools etc.)
- Does the project have a pronounced sustainability feature, i.e. is there an aspect of continuity after the project completion?

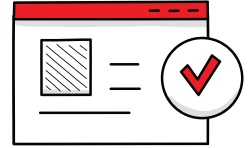
The analysis and the design phase are often intertwined in practice. In these processes the participants often tend to design the idea first, that is to think of what they wish to do, and then to try to reach the data to “justify” the need for the initiative through the analysis. In case that happens, the educator’s role is to facilitate the process to prevent the pre-designed idea to affect the analysis process and to encourage the participants to be as objective and realistic as possible. In addition, too demanding and detailed analysis processes should not be demanded in cases where the situation itself does not require such thing. In certain cases, the situation is pretty clear without an in-depth research, so insisting on the detailed analysis process could demotivate the participants and make them weary, which can reduce their motivation during the project implementation too.



### 3. Implementation

This should be the most interesting phase of the whole project and the one which the participants look forward to the most. This is when the implementation of the joint idea of the participants and educators takes place. The guidelines for the implementation of this phase will mostly depend on the nature of the project, hence they vary from one project to another. In this phase, however, there must be a clear division of tasks and all the project participants should have a clear task and goals to reach. Taking notes and documenting all the activities (by taking photos, recording, etc.) is constantly required. There are several things an educator should bear in mind to ensure the successful implementation of the service learning project:

- All the participants should participate equally: Naturally, some children will take up the leadership role in the group work, while others will be less active, and everyone has a different learning process. One may learn while working, the other could find it more useful to observe and thus gain knowledge. It is upon the educator to provide an equal chance for active involvement to all the participants, so all of them could have the opportunity to contribute and express their opinion.
- The connection with the curriculum should be prominent throughout the project implementation: Distancing from the main goal of the project – support in the adoption of knowledge defined in the curriculum - is a possibility during the project implementation, hence the educator has to ensure that the participants constantly connect the work process with the curriculum segments it is related to.
- Participation of the community should be ensured if required by the project: The degree of the community's participation depends on the nature of the project. Sometimes the community participates throughout the process, in all six phases, and there are cases when it gets involved only in certain phases. Community participation is especially important in the context of sustainability. In case the project implies the creation of a content that remains in the community, it is advisable to reach an agreement by which the community obliges to maintain the sustainability of the project's results. For example, if the project results in the establishment of a mini open-air library for the community, it would be good if the community continues to take care of it - repairs the potential damage, takes care of the availability of books etc.



#### 4. Reflection

Reflection is a process which formally comes at the end of the project, but it is important that its segments are present throughout the overall process and that the participants are continuously encouraged to evaluate their contribution and learning process. Recalling the two key service learning roles, in this phase it is important to find the answers to these 2 questions:

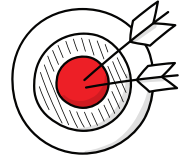
- a) Did the project contribute to the achievement of the desired learning outcomes and competence development, and if so, in what ways?
- b) Did the project contribute to the community, and if so, in what ways?

The educator's role to lead the process of finding the answer, yet in a gradual and structured way, with the participants coming to their own conclusions, is crucial. In this phase, a special accent should be on the relation between the project and the curriculum and the participants should be enabled to form their own opinion on the subject of learning from their practical work. The participants should be encouraged to see each segment of the project individually in the context of what they learned from the particular segment.

The following questions can be useful: What did we learn from (a specific example)? What should have been done to (\_\_\_\_)? What would have happened if we did the opposite? Could we have done something else? Why?

Therefore, the reflection process is mainly important to establish a connection with the curriculum and assert the acquired knowledge. Along with that, it is also used to determine the contribution of the process to the community. Reflection is, however, also important to test the satisfaction of the participants with the learning process, cooperation with the other actors, dynamics of work etc. It is the chance to critically review the overall process, starting from the analysis, through the development of the idea, all the way to the implementation of the project, and to determine the potential shortcomings or the parts that need improvement in the future. This is important for all educators as the lessons learned in this process can be used for all future service learning projects, and doing that improves their educational approach and thus the educational process and the quality of service learning projects.

Even though the reflection process is described at the end and it makes sense that the results of the actions, the satisfaction of all the participants and the achievement of the set goals are reviewed at the very end, reflection actually runs through the whole process and it is very important that the educators continuously encourage the process of reflection and ask questions that will help the participants analyse their own activities and the actions in the community during the project implementation.



## 5. Finalization

Finalization and demonstration are at the very end of the project and refer to the presentation of the project's results to the wider community. Although not necessary, and often not planned, it is good to have an activity solely dealing with the presentation of the outcomes in the final implementation phase. It's an opportunity to gather all the stakeholders, first and foremost the participants, the educators and the community, but also school representatives, parents etc. A chance for their families and the community to see the results of their work will be some sort of reward and acknowledgement to the participants, and it may have a positive influence on their motivation for further activities. Of course, it is also a chance to additionally promote the service learning concept among the non-involved teaching staff, institutions and NGOs. This is also a phase when the results are "handed over" to the community, depending on the project's goals (joint garden, library, space development etc.).

Once the participants implemented their projects, Forum MNE organized the Festival of Service Learning Projects to present the results of the projects and celebrate the achievement of goals. The Festival gathered young participants from Podgorica, Budva and Nikšić, as well as the partners and wider community. This way the young people were given the opportunity to celebrate their successes and share the outcomes of their actions, learning and efforts with the public. It was a nice way to end a successful project, and to once again show the importance of cooperation of the various actors with the community, and the role of the youth in the creation of social changes on a local level.

## FEATURES OF A SUCCESSFUL SERVICE LEARNING PROJECT

All the service learning projects are different, depending on the persons implementing them, the place of their implementation, the age of the children participating in the projects and many other factors. When implementing the service learning projects it is important that they really are the products of the ideas and the initiatives of the children and youth working on them, and of the needs of the community they are implemented in. Hence it is good to know that each project is a story of its own, that there's no universal example of a successful service learning project, and that copying the ideas already implemented somewhere with the expectation that they will be a similar success in the new context should be avoided as much as possible. However, previous experience resulted in the knowledge based on which we can define some of the components a successful service learning project should contain, and these are:

- Students take a lead role in the overall process:

Service learning is a concept that aims to empower young people and allow them to develop their potential to the maximum. Because of this, it is of utmost importance that the participants have the leading role throughout the process of the service learning project implementation. Even though it is a part of the formal education process, service learning leans on the principles of non-formal education which include interactive aspects and maximum involvement of the young people. A special accent is on the active involvement during the whole duration of the project, meaning that the idea itself must come from the participants. A service learning project won't be completely successful if the participants only get the task they have to complete. The point is that they should be the ones leading the whole process, from recognizing the community's needs, through the design of the idea, project implementation, all the way to the evaluation. The participants must be the ones to come up with the project idea because that results in a higher degree of motivation during the implementation and a higher sense of ownership of the project.

- The project provides the space for reflection and self-reflection:

One of the most important points is to give the participants the chance to critically review the results during the project implementation and after its completion. That way the participants are involved in the evaluation process and can review and understand the impact of their work, to assess the actual changes in the community, the specific outcome of their work and its contribution to the community members etc. This process additionally helps acquire knowledge, because if the participants could put the gained theoretical knowledge into practice during the project implementation, now they can do the reverse – they can review their practical work and actions through the theoretical prism and analyse it accordingly. Along with that, it is of special importance that young people get involved in the evaluation processes, with an additional accent on their role in the whole process. That way the young people will be able to better understand themselves, their way of work, their strengths and also the sides they might want to work on in the future.

- Community participation:

As stated before, service learning projects should be based on the needs of the communities and answer such needs with the results. However, it is equally important that the members of the community take part in the implementation, and especially to participate in the development of ideas. Just as the situation where the adults define the project while the young people implement it, the situation where the conclusion on the community's needs is made without the involvement of the community itself should be avoided. Hence, it is important to involve the community in the process of the development of ideas and create the project based on its needs and the potential for continuation. It is good to include the community in the implementation of the projects because that builds social cohesion, and the cooperation of different actors may only bring positive results. This way the community develops a higher sense of ownership of the project, which is important in case the project involves certain infrastructural facilities that remain in the community, or certain periodical practices.

Tijana, Milica D., Aleksandra, Aleksa, and Milica K. involved the community in the implementation of the Open-Air Library project, so they jointly participated in the donors' night for the collection of books for the library. The community will remain involved by taking care of the library, refilling the books etc.

- Sharing the results and acknowledging the success:

As in any process, it is important to share the results with the community and the stakeholders upon completion and to spare some time to acknowledge the effort. Quite often the educational processes don't provide much time to congratulate the participants and to let the young people know that their efforts and contribution are appreciated, yet that is a very significant factor in motivation for further learning and work. Because of this, the youth should be made aware of the importance of their project to the community, of the change they brought and of their contribution in general. Depending on the nature of the service learning project, the implementation may be followed by a small-scale event for the community members and families and friends of the participants, in order to share the outcomes of their work with the wider audience. Social networks can be used to promote the results of the project as an alternative, and the support and positive feedback of the online community shall have a similar positive effect.

Forum MNE organized the Festival of Service Learning Projects at which the young people were awarded the certificates, thus expressing the gratitude for their contribution to the community. The whole event was designed as a celebration of their work and as an act of gratitude for their effort.

- Ensuring the project's continuity

It is not always possible to provide the continuity of the project; however it is important to ensure that its results remain in place upon completion, where possible. For example, if the participants worked on the establishment of a mini botanical garden in a community, it would be good if the community members continued maintaining it. That way the garden could educate the upcoming generations as well.

Filip, Sara, Vaskrsija, and Tamara organized a project to renovate a playground in one of the settlements of Podgorica. They involved the community in the process and jointly sent a letter to the local administration service with the requests for further development. By doing that, their work will be upgraded and the sustainability of the results will increase.



# SERVICE LEARNING PROJECTS IN MONTENEGRO

As already stated, 14 service learning projects were implemented through the “Service Learning for More Inclusive Communities” project, with more than 60 young people from Podgorica, Nikšić and Budva involved. They implemented these projects in cooperation with their mentors (Jelena, Katica, Katarina, Olivera, and Admir). The following text contains the overview of the implemented projects.

## 1. RAISING AWARENESS ON THE EXTENT OF PEER VIOLENCE IN PODGORICA

Natalija, Ivona, Amar, and Ivan recognized the increased frequency of the various forms of peer violence in Podgorica, both inside and outside the schools. This group of young people implemented the research to assess the needs of the targeted communities via online surveys and interviews, and based on the answers of 173 interviewees they came to the conclusion that 38.2% of them had experienced peer violence at a certain point in their lives. Most of the interviewees thought that it is necessary to speak more about this problem and organize educational activities. Because of that, the team created an educational leaflet which, inter alia, contains a detailed explanation of the forms of behaviour that can be characterized as peer violence, its forms of appearance, and also the contacts of organizations and institutions to report such violence. The leaflets were distributed throughout Podgorica, and during that activity the team spoke with the children and youth, and with their parents too. This action resulted in a higher degree of knowledge about the peer violence and the ways to report it. Along with that, an Instagram account entitled “Hey youth, you’re not alone” was created which, alongside with sharing and publishing the educational materials, premiered the story of a peer violence victim. The growing presence of this problem was presented to a wide audience in a very personal and direct way, as well as the consequences peer violence may have on the development of a young person. This project brought many positive reactions from the public, especially on social networks. The group of young people who implemented the project was encouraged by numerous experts, including psychologists and teachers, and also some artists who expressed their desire to participate in the promotion of peer violence prevention.



The project increased my personal awareness on the problem. By providing the youth the opportunity to open up about their traumatic experiences we helped them get over their painful memories. We wish to continue the story initiated with Forum MNE's assistance once the project is finished, since children and young people in Podgorica, and beyond, deserve another chance by setting themselves as an example of a change in society. We got new acquaintances and habits through the project, and with the help of our mentors our tolerance and understanding towards each other have also increased. - Natalija

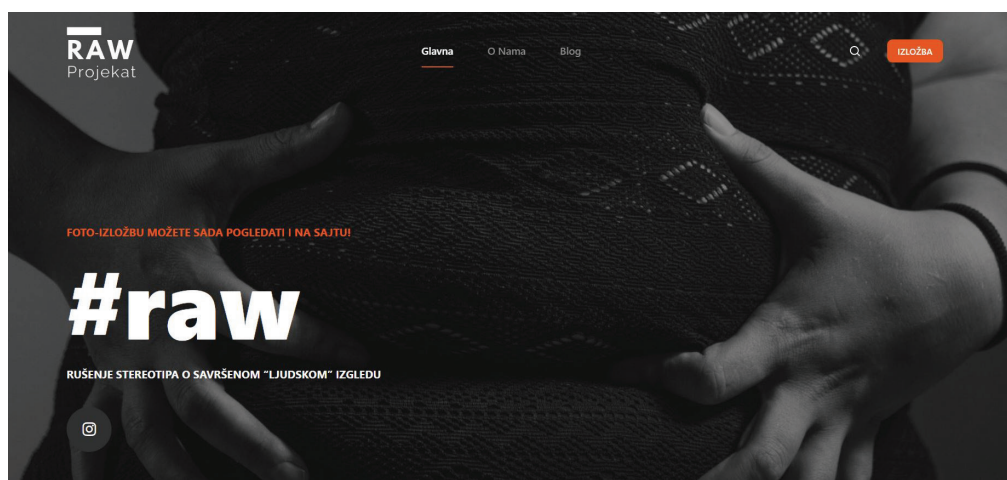


## 2. BREAKING THE STEREOTYPE OF A PERFECT HUMAN BODY PROMOTED ON THE SOCIAL NETWORKS

A group of young people including Luka, Dina, Zorka, Aleksandra, and Anđela recognized that youth is often exposed to an image of a perfect human body via social networks, which can have a significant impact on their self-confidence. The conducted research additionally confirmed that young people often use digital tools and photo-editing applications to bring themselves closer to that ideal of beauty which has been imposed to them. Eager to bring this theme to the public and impact young people to be happy with their bodies and themselves, and point out the dangers of looking up to artificially created trends, this group organized a photography exhibition entitled "RAW". This exhibition aimed to show that all the features we perceive as imperfections and visually unattractive parts of our bodies actually make us authentic and ourselves. A workshop entitled "Trends of body image through centuries" was organized on the opening night of the exhibition, where the participants discussed the change of trends in the desired shape of the human body through time and the utmost importance of nurturing love towards oneself and one's body. The young people spoke about their insecurities and the lack of self-confidence, and then they jointly discussed the ways to overcome these issues. A project website, [www.rawprojekat.me](http://www.rawprojekat.me), was designed as well, on which the group can update the content on this subject. The exhibition attracted a large audience. The members of the community expressed their delight by the initiative and the quality of implementation, and the ideas for further cooperation in similar projects in the future were also discussed.



This project helped me develop and perfect myself in the discipline I selected, since I choose art, i.e. photography as the method, and by doing so I dealt with this topic of major importance in our society, especially among young people. I would recommend the service learning project to everyone as it is really hard to name all the benefits gained from the process. - Luka



### 3.PROMOTION OF HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

The young people from the Capital are aware of the importance of healthy lifestyles, yet they usually don't practice them much. Kristina, Sunčica, and Milica concluded from the surveys and the focus group they conducted with the young people that they are eager to improve their nutrition and increase their physical activity, yet they usually don't know how to start with it, they lack the motivation and the practical advice. That encouraged the participants to implement the workshop focused on healthy habits and thus contribute to education in this area. After the success of the first one, the second workshop on the calculation of micro and macronutrients was organized on the participants' demand. Body fat measurement for the participants was organized as well, followed by educational activities and practical advice on the regulation of body fat levels. The booklet with the fit recipes<sup>11</sup> was also created, and it is publicly available to all those willing to try out the principles of healthy nutrition.

I believe that this project is an indicator of what can young people achieve if given the chance to step forward as leaders in their respective communities. I would recommend this incredible experience to all those willing to acquire new knowledge, skills and most importantly friends.  
- Kristina



#### 4. YES ART, NO HARM

As there has been a case of peer violence in elementary school "Mirko Srzentić" in Petrovac recently, and since the school does not have a school psychologist, a team involving Fatma, Jelena, Aleksandra, and Nataša decided to tackle this problem and contribute to the prevention of similar cases in the future through art. The "Yes Art, No Harm" project was implemented at the premises of the Petrovac elementary school "Mirko Srzentić". The students who applied took part in the workshop that was coordinated by psychologist Ivana Mihović. The workshop dealt with the problem of peer violence, its consequences, and ways to provide support to the victims. The second part of the project involved the painting of the murals on the school walls, under the mentorship of Jelena Vušurović, the painter. More than 40 students took part in this action.

Summer sometimes means having a good time and partying, and sometimes projects and great friendship - Fatma



## 5. MENTAL HEALTH IN FOCUS

Montenegro has an extraordinarily high suicide rate. Mental health is rarely the talk of the day, and the act of seeking help is an even rarer occurrence. To encourage the open discussion on the issue of mental health, the creative team of the “Mental health in focus” project - Jasmina, Sara, Bogdan, Mario, and Varja, organized an interactive mental health-themed exhibition in Budva. The concept of the exhibition was such that each of the 11 photos represented a different mental state. The exhibition was interactive, as the visitors got the papers with the titles of the photos at the entrance and they had to recognize the photos by the titles and match each photo with the corresponding title. Along with the exhibition, the visitors could check out the presentation of the results of the conducted survey and the statistics regarding mental health in Montenegro. The photos represented various mental states and disorders, such as addiction, bipolar disorder, anxiety, eating disorders, obsessive-compulsive disorder etc., in a specific and artistic manner. A public discussion on mental health followed up after the exhibition. Along with the panellists that included psychologists, professors and activists, the visitors, and also the passers-by and tourists, who took interest in the matter, participated in the discussion. There were talks on the capacities of the Montenegrin institutions dealing with mental health, and also on the stigma surrounding this subject.

The positive energy, present throughout the project, gave us all a lift. - Jasmina

The experience which marked our summer - it helped us form life-long friendships and showed that we can achieve so much more than we initially thought. - Sara



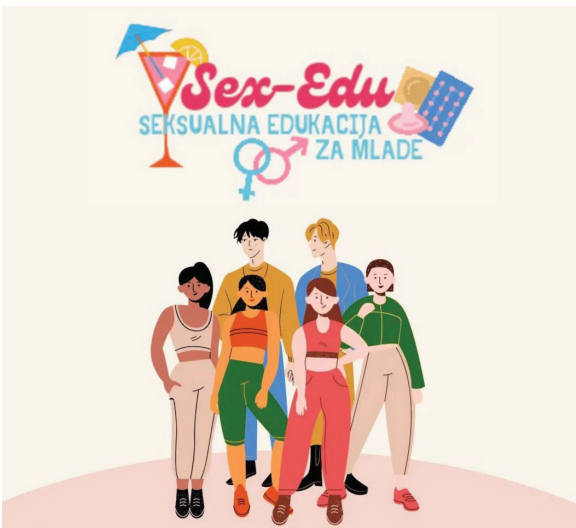
## 6. SEX-EDU

Sara, Balša, Bogdan, Marta, Teodora, and Jana recognized the problem of the lack of sexual education and the low level of knowledge on sexual and reproductive health in their environment, so they decided to deal with this issue in their service learning project.

The first activity of their project was the organization of a workshop at the Budva youth club.

The workshop was led by Milica Marović, a gynaecologist, and Danica Stevović, a paediatrician. Their straightforward approach motivated the participants to ask questions and share their experiences. There were stories on sexual and reproductive health, contraceptive methods, and sexually transmitted diseases. Menstrual health was also discussed. The workshop contributed to the awareness of the youth on these subjects and once again pointed out the danger of stigma when it comes to subjects such as sexual and reproductive health. The workshop participants were also given the contact information to reach out in case of any questions on these subjects. It was concluded that there should be more space for these subjects, both in formal and non-formal education. The group who implemented the project plans to continue contributing to the awareness levels in this field through social media-based activities.

By bravely facing the taboos, stereotypes and prejudice on sexual education, we try to use experts in this domain as the source of information, not our friends. - Sara



## 7. EMPOWER

Marija, Majda, and Zorana recognized that young people feel unsafe and that this issue predominantly affects the females in the Capital. They interviewed a certain number of girls who confirmed what they often felt themselves – that the women often feel unsafe on the city streets, especially in the late evening hours.

Because of this, they decided to help their female citizens gain basic self-defence skills, in cooperation with Montenegro Sports and Fitness and the MMA club “Octagon”. The women who participated in the course learned the skills and what to do if threatened or attacked. After the course, the participants were joined by the representative of the Ministry of the Interior dealing with cases of domestic violence. She shared her experience of working with victims of violence and provided some useful advice. The participants also learned more about the jurisdiction of the Ministry and were informed whom to address in case of feeling threatened. With the new skills acquired, it is expected that the participants should feel safer on the streets since they know how to defend and protect themselves.



This is an unexpected and positive experience we will surely remember, in hope that we won't ever have to use the skills we gained. - Marija, Majda i Zorana



## 8. REACH THE GOAL EASILY

Magdalena, Lejla, Marina, and Katarina recognized the problem of social exclusion of persons with disabilities and wanted to contribute to a higher degree of social interaction. In communication with the members of the swimming club for persons with disabilities "Mako" from Podgorica, they came to the conclusion that they also wish to participate more in various activities together with their peers. Some of them said that they sometimes feel anxious, so a workshop on emotional intelligence led by an experienced psychologist was also organized as a part of the project. The workshop attendees had the chance to learn how to recognize certain feelings, how to deal with negative emotions, which steps to take to face anxiety etc. An informal meeting was arranged after the workshop to improve social interaction and to create a space for peer meetings and learning.

“We enjoyed meeting our peers, the jokes and humour we shared, and we hope that there will be similar opportunities in the future. - Magdalena, Lejla, Marina i Katarina





## 9. ADD SOME COLOUR TO THE WORLD, MY WONDER

It is scientifically proven that our living environment has a strong influence on our physical and mental health. A house or a flat represents the area where we spend most of our time, hence the quality of such space is very important.

The appearance of the hallway in a residential building presents a certain image of the building and its tenants, and also affects the sense of belonging to the collective. It is the area where the neighbours meet, and yet it is often neglected. Most of the entrances are characterized by bad illumination and the lack of plants, and the hygiene is often not on a satisfactory level. These areas don't encourage people to spend there a minute longer than required, and often don't look safe. It affects the motivation of the tenants, who usually don't have a positive stance towards such spaces and thus are not too eager to maintain them. The general public is mostly unaware of the impact certain colours can have on a person's mental state, which was recognized by Lejla, Ajša, Hazir, and Nađa who presented this to the young people during the interactive workshop. A short video material on this subject was also recorded during the workshop, followed by the action of decorating the entrance of a building in the Stari Aerodrom neighbourhood. The passers-by and tenants also took part in the activities. The tenants were glad to get a cleaner and merrier space in their building, and the agreement was made for all of them to have a proactive role in preserving this area in the future.

With the help of this project we saw that we, the young ones, can truly make a difference. That's something we might have been aware of in theory, but it's special when you put it into practice.  
- Lejla, Ajša, Hazir i Nađa



## 10. LEGAL ILLITERACY IS HARMFUL

Bojana, Ivana, Staša, and Maja recognized that the young people aren't familiar enough with their rights and obligations in school and generally in society. They surveyed their peers and concluded that the level of legal awareness is very low. For example, most of their peers didn't know who to address in case they required legal aid. To add to that, most of them believed that legal awareness is not presented enough in the educational system, confirmed by the fact that most young people are not familiar with the mechanisms that may help protect their rights.

Because of this, they decided to make a handbook entitled "Legal illiteracy is harmful" that should help young people improve their legal awareness. The handbook is available online<sup>12</sup>, and it contains useful information that can help young people understand their rights and legal procedures, institutions and organizations which are at their disposal in case of infringement of their rights.



Throughout the participation in this project and drafting of the handbook not only did we improve our knowledge of the law, but we also learned how to draft and implement a project and how to plan a budget. We have improved our communication skills and teamwork. We are aware that we only scratched the surface with this handbook, however we will be happy and we will consider this project a success if we help even a small number of citizens understand some of the terms. - Bojana, Ivana, Staša, Maja



## 11. OUR NEIGHBOURHOOD - OUR RESPONSIBILITY

Filip, Sara, Vaskrsija, and Tamara identified the problem of an undeveloped and non-functional playing field in Vranići community. The lack of an adequate playing field means that the people in that settlement don't have an area for physical activities in their immediate vicinity. They also saw that the arranged recreation grounds in other communities became the meeting points of various generations and brought back the vibrancy of these communities, hence they decided to help the residents achieve that goal. Driven by the desire, Filip, Sara, Vaskrsija, and Tamara initiated the action to redecorate the playing field in cooperation with the community members. They repainted the goal frames and basketball backboards, refreshed the terrain lines, replaced the nets on goals and hoops and cleared out the surrounding area. They also informed the corresponding Capital City services about the lack of public waste bins, which are expected to be installed in the upcoming period. This project increased cooperation in this community, which is now expected to have a higher sense of responsibility for the playing field since its members were personally involved in its renovation. .

“The success of our project ‘Our neighbourhood – our responsibility’ has motivated us to keep on fighting to solve the issues our community is facing with. Our country could look better and more developed if only we took care of our local communities. We can do a lot as individuals, however united, we can do anything. - Filip, Sara, Vaskrsija, Tamara



## 12. AN OPEN-AIR LIBRARY

Tijana, Milica D., Aleksandra, Aleksa, and Milica K. believe that their peers don't read enough, so they decided to put this presumption to a test by checking the opinion of the youth and discussing with the librarians and bookshop employees.

The results indicated that the rise in popularity of various internet tools had a negative effect on reading habits, but also that online books are being read more. 57% of the respondents read at least one book during the past year. When asked if they would read more or start reading if the books were more available (easier to borrow, cheaper etc.), 74% said yes.

In order to promote reading, our attendees developed a project called "An open-air library", which involved the installation of a mini-library in the centre of Nikšić. This library contains books of various genres intended for different age groups. The library functions by the principle "take one, leave one", which instigates the interaction of the broader community. A donors' night for the community members was organized to collect the books for the library, resulting in some 100 books being collected. The plan is to have a weekly refill of the library until the community fully adopts the principle of book exchange.



We believe that this project improves the quality of life in the community and that we brought the positive changes which have the potential to become permanent and inspire the new ones in the future - Tijana



### 13. GIRLS CAN DO ANYTHING

Marija, Jovana, Andrea, Sara, and Mara wanted to promote sports among girls and make a positive impact on the participation of women in sports. They were guided by the Olympic principle that every individual must be granted the right of practicing sport, without discrimination, in the Olympic spirit which requires mutual understanding, friendship, solidarity and fair play.

They recorded a promotional video in cooperation with former and active sportswomen of Nikšić for their service learning project. The video was posted on YouTube and the For Youth.me blogspot. This activity was followed by the performance in the city square, where the attendees participated in sports activities with passers-by and distributed promotional materials. They passed on the leaflets with the contacts of the sports clubs the girls could join. There was also a workshop with the psychologist/psychotherapist Nena Mitrović Radojčić, who elaborated on the sport-related themes to the participants. Motivation in sports, self-confidence, concentration and determination were some of the topics discussed. She also explained how to deal with the emotions in sports, how to tackle competition anxiety, how to work in a team and how to communicate.

The increased participation of girls and women in general in the physical education classes and sports activities helps their confidence and promotes social integration. The involvement of girls in sports together with boys may help overcome the prejudice which often leads to the social exclusion of girls and women. When people do sport they play, rejoice and it brings out the best emotions to the forefront: loyalty, tolerance, friendship, teamwork, dedication and determination. - Marija, Jovana, Andrea, Sara i Mara



## 14. FORYOUTH.ME

The project aims to contribute to developing young people into engaged, informed and responsible democratic citizens through media and digital presence. The project's activities focused on the improvement of media and digital literacy of young people and the provision of tools and channels for them to express their opinions and attitudes through a youth blog.

The young people believe that the media don't cover enough of the youth's themes of interest, such as employment, youth programmes, and cultural events.

Dragana, Dušan, Luka, Petar, and Teodora organized educational workshops on media and digital literacy to expand the knowledge and skills in these areas as they provide the framework and methodology for the new literacy required for the living, work and active citizenship in the 21st century. Learning about the media and digital literacy is also a way to learn how to use the technology to their advantage, and not against it.

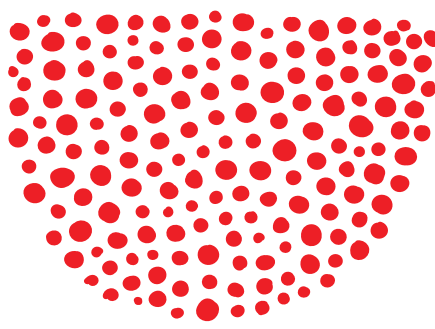
They created the profiles on Facebook, TikTok and Instagram platforms. A youth blog [www.foryouth.me](http://www.foryouth.me) was created so the young people of Nikšić could find information on the ongoing topics and opportunities, but also educate and motivate themselves.



I'm thrilled that I got to work on the creation of a youth media, i.e. our blogspot. The young people of Nikšić may contribute through the "Youth stories" and "Recommendations" sections. We will additionally strengthen the local community to recognize the themes that are important to young people, and also the youth as the audience and participants in all topics of importance to society, and we will aim to increase the visibility of issues relevant to the young people. This is the best thing we've accomplished, the team was great and the results speak for themselves. We did it!



forYouth



**WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK EVERYONE WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THE REALIZATION OF THE 14 SERVICE LEARNING PROJECTS IN MONTENEGRO IN 2022 AND HELPED US JOINTLY BRING THE CHANGES TO THE COMMUNITIES: LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENTS, ORGANIZATIONS, INSTITUTIONS, ALL THE INDIVIDUALS...**

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO JOIN US AND TAKE PART IN SERVICE LEARNING CONTACT US:**



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 [Forum MNE](https://www.youtube.com/ForumMNE)

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.socialchange101.org/history-of-service-learning/>

<sup>2</sup> Ehrlich, T. (1996). Forward. In B. Jacoby (Ed.), *Service learning in higher education: Concepts and practices*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

<sup>3</sup> Furco (1996), Seifer (1998)

<sup>4</sup> In this case, curriculum includes formal education plans (curricula), as well as plans and programmes of work present in non-formal education.

<sup>5</sup> Term “participants” includes the students participating in formal education, as well as the children and youth involved in non-formal education activities.

<sup>6</sup> Astin et al., Eyler et al., Eyler and Giles

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.outwardboundcroatia.com/blog/kako-iskustveno-ucenje-u-prirodi-razvija-empatiju-kod-djece/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.758788/full>

<sup>9</sup> More on the concept of key competences: [https://www.ikces.me/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/4.-Crnogorski-okvirni-program-kljucnih-kompetencija\\_9.10..pdf](https://www.ikces.me/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/4.-Crnogorski-okvirni-program-kljucnih-kompetencija_9.10..pdf)

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<sup>11</sup> <https://www.forum-mne.com/?mdocs-file=3705>

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# INTERNET SOURCES

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[https://www.ikces.me/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/4.-Crnogorski-okvirni-program-kljucnih-kompetencija\\_9.10..pdf](https://www.ikces.me/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/4.-Crnogorski-okvirni-program-kljucnih-kompetencija_9.10..pdf)

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