

¡YOUTH Act!

Development Education Summer School Newsletter

Cheile Gradistei, Romania, June 21 –28 2009

First steps...

The long expected DESS 2009 has officially started and on Sunday evening already a pleasant atmosphere as floating in the air. This was not only due to the welcome



Building relations—spider web

drink *palinka*, traditional Romanian prune liquor but mainly due to the enthusiastic participants coming from 36 countries (some traveling for more than 30 hours!) to share their views, ideas and practices. First contacts were made, ideas exchanged. Monday morning was time to start the work. After the welcome of the participants by the DESS co-organizer An-

dra Tanase, three interesting and already challenging speeches by Adela Rusu, coordinator of the Romanian platform FOND, Monica Alexandru from the Romanian Ministry of foreign affairs and Jan Sorensen from the UNDP Romania, were made. The speakers provided some 'food for thought' by highlighting shifts in the development discourse, moving from the North-South or donor-recipient dichotomy to a discourse based on experience sharing, information and cooperation. After the provoking debate facilitated by Tobias Troll, the working groups wasted no time and started their work even before the clock' stroked noon.

Snapshots of the working groups

Environment and Sustainable Development WG managed to build a model of how this hotel complex looks like from an environmental point of view. This is displayed on the 2nd floor of the coffee break space.

Gender Equality WG 'felt, thought

and did' a mapping of the causes and consequences of gender



Welcoming the participants

inequality and its connection to development. They highlighted some possible solutions that will be addressed in the following days.

Migration and Multiculturalism WG decided to provide skills and capacities for youth through tools and methodologies they can implement effectively in their communities.

Media and Development WGs, after exchanging experiences and discussing on understanding of DE and the role of the media, joined forces and came up with an idea of DESS news. Everyone is welcome to see it everyday at 20:45.



Andrea Loredana Tudorache works with A.R.T. Fusion and she is the expert for the thematic session How to be creative in Public Action for development education

How to use art in development education

How did you start working in the field of arts and development education (DE) ?

During the time I was studying psychology I became more interested in the social aspect of this field and I engaged with different NGOs working with different target groups (e.g. youth, women, elderly, children). At some point I got familiar with the Forum Theater (type of social theater developed by Augusto Boal) and start

using this method tackling topics like discrimination, conflict, corruption etc. I saw the impact on the society and the change in the attitudes of people which motivated me to go deeper in using this type of methodology in working with people.

How do you connect DE with arts and how do you use it in working with youth?

Participatory art is a tool that activates creativity and critical thinking of young people, it engages them personally and makes them act towards issues within the society. Art method can influence the attitudes through emotional and rational channels; it can be used as a tools for awareness raising especially when the characteristics of young people are dynamic and changeable and looking for inno-

vation.

What are you planning to focus on in your thematic session?

The session will go through a series of projects and best practices around the world in the DE topic, using a large variety of creative and innovative methods. This session is also going to activate the critical thinking of the participants and give inputs about methods to develop creativity. The ultimate aim of the session will be to motivate and make the participants responsible to start "acting" in this field. The aim will also be to contribute to the achievement of the summer school objectives because it tackles the activation of youth in development as such and in deeper the DE and enables them to make use of creative tools and methods.

Young people need optimism

Henna Lehtonen is the member of Plan's Finland Children's Board and with 16 years the youngest DESS 2009 participants

How and why did you get involved in Plan's Finland Children's Board?

I got an email from a girl saying something about the Plan's Finland Children's Board where it said they are searching for new youth members. So I thought I should give it a try. I have been in the board now for around 1,5 years. I got involved because I wanted to do something and not just wait for things to happen.

How do you see the role of the youth in the field of development education?

I think it is very important to involve youth as much as possible. The main problem is that a lot of young people think: "Oh, I can't do nothing, I can't influence anything". What they need is optimism. If the attitude is that you

can't influence anything then nothing will change. Youth should realize that they themselves can do something in this world. We should change attitudes and this can already start with the people around us, our friends. And also, by setting an example.

How do you understand DE?

To me DE it is taking care of those who maybe don't have the basic needs covered; it means striving for equality. It can start with little things, you don't necessarily have to make things happen on a big scale. DE is also about solidarity and cooperation with people; something that goes deeper and beyond just projects.

Is the youth of your age in Finland familiar with, interested in and active in the field of development education?

I really don't think so. Even my friends sometimes tell me not to talk about certain things. They are not really running to save the world. I don't know whether this is because

they are so young; but they are just more interested into things related to their own life.

What are your expectations from DESS 2009?

To get the use of what we have learned here, to meet new people and get acquainted with organisations.

How do you plan to implement the things you learn at the summer school in your future involvement in Plan Finland?

First, by informing the other members of the Children's board what has been happening here; and second, by using what I learned here in my own life. I will do my best that nothing that I have learned here goes to waste.

Do not miss

17.15: Open space:

Be prepared to be surprised!

20.45: DESS NEWS:

For those who missed it yesterday we can tell you it is worth coming to see what Media and Development working groups came up with!

21.00: Audiovisual Tool Exhibition



More than 30 organizations presented their work in the **market place** yesterday. Their exposition material ranged from leaflets, pins, stickers, cards to games, movies, annual reports, manuals etc.

"The WORLD desperately need us! I hear it crying every day so I can not sit and pretend I don't hear it! Can you just sit and pretend?"

Andrea Tudorache



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