

**Working with vulnerable
families at community level
– support for social integration**

St. Jeanne Antide Foundation

Annual Report

2009

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- The Mental Health Association, Malta
- Anti-Poverty Forum – Malta
- The Malta Health Network
- SKOP (Solidarjetà u Koperazzjoni)
- Church Secretariat for Social and Charitable Action

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Introduction

The St. Jeanne Antide Foundation (SJAF) is a family- and community-focused not-for-profit organisation committed to identifying and supporting in a holistic manner very vulnerable and poor families. The Foundation was set up by the Malta Province of the Sisters of Charity of St Jeanne Antide in collaboration with lay persons and is administered by a Governing Board with a Chief Executive Officer. It is registered as an NGO with the Office of the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations (VO/0005).

SJAF is based in a community and works in partnership with community-based organisations and other state entities and NGOs that are national in scope. It engages in outreach work as a means of identifying and supporting hard-to-reach vulnerable and poor families, assisting them as close as possible to where they live. Since its establishment, the Foundation has set up a number of core services and is in the process of developing others. Being based in a local community, SJAF has naturally evolved into an organisation that is at the service of the local parish community and its neighbouring ones. Its scope is both local and national.

SJAF is an affiliate member of the Mental Health Association, the Anti-Poverty Forum – Malta, the Malta Health Network and the NGDO Forum SKOP (Solidarjetà u Koperazzjoni) and the Church Secretariat for Social and Charitable Action.

Mission Statement

The Foundation shall be run and its mission fulfilled by a community of Sisters and lay people working in partnership systematically in teams for the support and self-empowerment of socially excluded persons, families and minority groups. As a Christian community, it aims to reflect the love of God in all that is done, and to see and love Jesus Christ in persons who are in need. The mission of the Foundation is to be present for individuals and families who need someone who can listen to them with compassion, link or guide them to appropriate existing support services, support them in the restoration of their dignity, and guide them towards self-reliance. Looking holistically at persons in need, the Foundation's mission is to give moral and spiritual support to such persons in need.

Objectives

The objectives of the Foundation are:-

- (a) to identify, understand and raise awareness about under-served and un-served categories of excluded or vulnerable persons;
- (b) to develop and implement programmes in support of identified under-served and un-served categories of vulnerable persons, families, and minority groups;
- (c) to support and train a number of persons to make their own contributions to society and to persons in need;
- (d) to provide the opportunity and training to service users so that they themselves can provide services to others in need;
- (e) to be open to voluntary service of young people who would like to offer time and energy at the service of others in order to gain experience and insight;
- (f) to create links with overseas agencies that work in line with our mission, to share experiences, give and get support and widen our vision.

Core Services

During 2009, the core services of the Foundation were the following:

1. The Antide drop-in Centre
2. The Social Work and Counselling Service
3. The Learning Support Programme
4. The Caring for Family Caregivers Programme
5. The Vinci Community Work Project



The Antide drop-in Centre Ċentru Antida

The Antide Centre is based in Tarxien but is easily accessible by residents of other neighbouring localities such as Paola, Fgura and Santa Lucia. Parish Priests, their deputies, parish groups and parish service (diaconia) commissions are highly appreciative of the collaborative socio-pastoral relationship that has evolved. SJAF is officially a member of the Tarxien Diaconia Commission and works closely with the the Diaconia Commissions of the parishes of Paola Parish, Fgura and Żabbar.

Working closely with local structures has brought SJAF in touch with parish-level pastoral voluntary workers who support families in difficulty. Parish priests regularly make announcements during masses about SJAF and its services – thus enabling individuals and families to drop-by at the Antide drop-in Centre to seek support for themselves or for relatives, friends and neighbours.

Ċentru Antida contributes to the fulfilment of these statutory aims of the Foundation: .

- to develop and implement programmes in support of identified under-served and un-served categories of vulnerable persons, families, and minority groups;
- to support and train a number of persons to make their own contributions to society and to persons in need;
- to provide the opportunity and training to service users so that they themselves can provide services to others in need;
- to be open to voluntary service of young people who would like to offer time and energy at the service of others in order to gain experience and insight.

The Antide Centre has increasingly become known to local people. People drop by to talk to someone, to access social work or counselling support, join group-based learning activities or support groups or to become a volunteer. Individuals with mental health problems and their care-givers have become regular visitors. Some mental health service users have become regular volunteers and take up roles compatible with their current ability and state of mind.

The Centre is based on the ground floor of 51 Tarxien Road in Tarxien, part of the Provincial House of the Sisters of Charity. It has a welcoming environment with space for group-work, courses, offices, counselling rooms, socialising and relaxation space and a kitchen where courses are also carried out. There are showers as well for temporarily homeless persons and a library for young and adult service users. SJAF additionally hosts meetings of other organisations and offers the use of its facilities to social workers from state agencies who need to meet service users from the vicinity.

The following chart presents the number of different persons who accessed a Foundation service during 2009; some of these persons also participated in support groups and courses at the Antide Centre. The Centre is visited by around 15 to 20 persons a day.

Table 1: Overview of service users accessing different services

<i>Persons provided with a service:</i>	Community Social Work & Counselling Service	Nanna-Kola Clubs	Bridge Progr.	Mentoring	Learning Support (homework)	Volunteers who needed support
<i>TOT for 2009</i>	185 from 150 families + 150 active from 2008	83 grand-parents - 5 clubs	21 - 2 intakes	11 from Bridge + 7 others	34 children from 24 families	16

The Antide Centre continued to publish its monthly e-Magazine for volunteers, Foundation personnel and collaborators; it is available through the SJAF website at www.antidemalta.com. The official daily opening hours of the Centre are from 8.00 am to 5.30 pm in winter time and from 7.30am to 1.30pm between mid-July and mid-September. However, the Centre has longer opening hours on those weekdays where a regular service is offered beyond closing time.

Volunteering

Volunteering is a way for people to engage in a meaningful activity beyond their personal and professional sphere and to develop an interest outside of their family and working lives. Volunteering has many positive side effects, irrespective of one's age:

- it significantly improves the volunteer's quality of life and sense of well-being;
- it provides a sense of satisfaction that is often not derived from other spheres of life;
- it injects meaning in an often materialistic life-style devoid of altruism;
- it provides an opportunity for forging new friendships;
- it makes it possible for social care organisations to create new and better ways of supporting vulnerable individuals and families;
- it creates the fabric of a robust welfare society;
- it is, above all, a powerful way of living one's faith and stimulating hope in lives that are bereft of love and compassion.

Volunteering is a cornerstone of the Foundation's mission. The Foundation encourages and nurtures volunteering within its range of service provision, in line with three of the Foundation's key objectives:

- to support and train a number of persons to make their own contributions to society and to persons in need;
- to provide the opportunity and training to service users so that they themselves can provide services to others in need;
- to be open to voluntary service of young people who would like to offer time and energy at the service of others in order to gain experience and insight;

Volunteers are screened and assessed before their induction and are given a Code of Practice to guide them in their work. There were a total of 65 volunteers at SJAF in December 2009. Some volunteers assumed dual roles.

46% of the volunteer cadre in 2009 were over 61 years of age. It is the experience of the Foundation that older volunteers are more regular than others and are more likely to dedicating more hours of service than volunteers of much younger age groups. Old age can offer older persons a meaningful opportunity to become involved in the social

care field. The situation of each older person is different. Hence, older persons should not be considered a homogeneous group; they have life-experiences, skills and time that are invaluable if used for volunteering in support of others. Volunteering is also a means of becoming or remaining a life-long learner since organisations like the Foundation that utilise the services of volunteers often provide a range of non-formal learning opportunities related to the roles being performed by volunteers.

Table 2: Volunteer roles by number of volunteers

Roles	Number of volunteers
Centru Antida reception work	8
Tutors (Homework Support) for children of service users)	18
<u>Mentors</u> for Youths at risk	6
Tutors (Bridge Programme)	5
Support to Social Work & Counselling Service Team	7
SJAF e-Magazine editing & website design and maintenance	2
Youths with mental health and other problems who volunteer	6
Support to administration	6
Governance	7
Total	65

A monthly e-Magazine was sent to volunteers, collaborators and staff during 2009. The e-Magazine is also sent electronically to parish level diaconia commissions and parish priests. It is also available on the SJAF website.



Community-based Social Work and Counselling Service

A key method of reaching out to and supporting vulnerable families is through community-based outreach work and the development of strong collaborative links with parish structures in neighbouring localities. Being a community-based organisation with a community-based drop-in centre has naturally led to a build-up of a generic case-load. Workers seek supervision and mentoring from practitioners from fields most represented by service users. The Mental Health Association provided training sessions to staff on demand.

Counselling is an integral part of the service. An experienced Nurse has taken up, on a voluntary basis, a regular case-load of around 40 frail and sick home-bound elderly who feel lonely and isolated. A few volunteers accompany the nurse during some of the daily home-visits to assist with befriending and other support work. Non-formal education courses for vulnerable persons are organised around interests expressed by service users themselves. Service users are encouraged to volunteer as part of their support and growth process.

During 2009, the service team comprised the following members:

- 1.5 full-time equivalent Social Workers. The number rose to 2.5 full-time equivalent in September;
- 1 Social Work Supervisor (Voluntary);
- 1 Counsellor (casual part-time);
- 1 Nurse (part-time; voluntary);
- 2 Social Work students who completed a 500-hour practice placement each;
- 2 Masters in Counselling students, both professionals, who carried out part of their practice placement at the Foundation.

The team additionally had access to the following professionals:

- two lawyers who offered their services on a *pro bono* basis to represent some service users in court,
- a doctor for consultations;
- a mental health expert from the Mental Health Association for regular case-consultations and family consultations.

During 2009, 54% of new referrals were referred by community-based Church-related bodies; 30% from government and public bodies; 16% from SJAF workers and service users. During 2009, SJAF worked intensively with:

- family caregivers of persons with chronic mental health problems;
- youths with mild-to-moderate cognitive development delays and mental health problems;
- disaffected youths at risk of social exclusion;
- grandparents who regularly care for their grandchildren;;
- single mothers;

- frail persons with chronic health problems who feel lonely and isolated at home;
- families facing conflicts;
- women in a marriage or other relationship who are poor since their spouse/partner leaves them unsupported financially;
- families grappling with financial problems.

Apart from the support offered to 185 individuals from 150 families referred during 2009, the service team continued to provide support to another 150 families who continued to receive support from 2008. The following chart gives an overview of the number and type of interventions by month undertaken by professional personnel:

Table 3: Social Work & Counselling Service - Intervention sessions with Service Users by month - 2009

	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOT
Office-based sessions	47	45	61	68	48	49	48	31	49	79	80	57	662
Number of Home Visits	36	37	55	41	27	22	29	16	37	48	52	22	422
Accompanying service users to other services	12	17	17	23	7	14	16	12	12	9	17	11	167
Social Work Supervision	2	4	3	2	1	4	5	2	5	4	4	4	40
Total interventions	97	103	136	134	83	89	98	61	103	140	153	94	1291

Table 4: Referral sources of families - 2009

Referral source	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Parishes	7	1	5	5	5	4	2	1	1	2	4	2	37
Social Welfare orgs.	8	4	6	9	1	11	6	8	12	9	5	3	80
SJAF Outreach work	1	1	1	4	6	1	2	0	0	6	2	5	24
TOTAL	16	6	12	18	12	16	10	9	13	17	11	10	150

Table 5: Categories of referred families by main presenting problem - 2009

Presenting problem	Number	Percentage
Mental health problems/ needs of family care-givers	39	26%
Lack of basic skills/ need for learning support	29	19%
Financial difficulties	17	11%
Disability-related difficulties	12	8%
Relationship problems	11	7%
Marriage separation	10	6%
Chronic ill-health & loneliness/ isolation	8	5%
Unemployment	7	4%
Loss	5	3%
Other problems	12	8%



Learning Support Programme

This programme aims at offering a range of learning support opportunities to vulnerable children, adolescents, youths and adults. During 2009, the programme comprised four services:

The Homework Support Service

The service targets children from families supported by the Social Work and Counselling Service. Between October 2008 and June 2009, 19 Volunteer Tutors supported 20 children. Between October and December 2009, 24 Volunteer Tutors worked with 24 children. The Service Co-ordinator is herself a Volunteer. During 2009, a resource room was set for Tutors' use. Volunteer Tutors could access materials at any time and consult both the Service Co-ordinator and Counsellor. Each Tutor kept a record of each child's learning targets, session plans and outcomes.

Following changes effected in late 2009, the service started to be offered once a week on Fridays between 4.00 pm and 6.30 pm. Changes to the way the service was being offered were effected following an internal review carried out in June. Some of review outcomes included the following:

Tutors:

- The one-to-one mode of learning support will be retained since this allows volunteer Tutors to build a personal relationship with the child they support.
- Learning support targets: at the start of each term, all Volunteer Tutors shall identify 3 to 4 learning targets for each student. These will be discussed with the Co-ordinator who will link targets to existing resources and materials in the Club's resource room. These targets are to be recorded in the Tutor's Record Book.
- The Tutor's Record Book will be modified to include a section in front where Tutors can record each term's identified academic and social learning targets.
- On an on-going basis, Tutors will have the opportunity to participate in: (a) a feedback group that meets every 3 months/term; (b) occasional specialised Tutor-enrichment workshops by experts in a particular field identified by Tutors.
- Each tutor is to have an allocated space without any disruptions.
- Tutors are encouraged to make use of ICT.
- Each Tutor shall be given a list of suggested resources and materials linked to the three term targets identified by them for their matched child.
- Each term shall start off in late September starting off with a meeting for all Tutors. At this meeting procedures, resources, and venue-related issues would be discussed and new Tutors welcomed.

Parents:

- A learning support contract is to be signed by the Co-ordinator and each parent, specifying the role of each party.

- At intake and service renewal time, the Co-ordinator is to obtain a copy from parents of last school exam results for each child's personal records and for comparative purposes.

Children:

- Intake forms have been revised. Space has been created for notes regarding renewal of support.

- Circle time is to be started – ten minutes before and ten minutes after each session. Children get to meet each other and the group of Tutors.

- Fun activities such as crafts, cooking, and storytelling will become in-built into programme activities by each Tutors with the child they support.

The Bridge Programme

Started in late January 2008, the programme offers basic skills training to youths-at-risk with mild-to-moderate cognitive developmental delays and mental health problems. The programme aims to identify hard-to-reach youths who are excluded from mainstream opportunities open to other youths. Youths are identified through community outreach. Social work personnel strive to build a relationship of trust with identified youths and their parents until they are ready to emerge from their isolation to frequent the Antide drop-in Centre where they are offered individual support. Following this, they are encouraged to join the Bridge Programme. The programme was started to fill a gap in service provision for such youths whose families would not have otherwise taken the initiative to enable their sons/daughters to access support services.

During 2009 the programme had two intakes of students: one starting in late September 2008 and concluding in May 2009 and another that started in September 2009 for conclusion in June 2010. The programme offers modules in the following areas: English, Maltese, ICT, budgeting, cooking, intra-personal and inter-personal skills and skills for independent living. During 2009, a small Pre-Bridge group was started so as to prepare youths for the group-based programme. Participants needing a personal mentor were assigned on so as to reinforce learning in particularly difficult areas.

During 2009, Bridge youths were helped to access courses and training schemes of the ETC, WasteServ and other entities. The Augustinian Order of Friars in Tarxien continued to offer sustained support through on-going access to its computer lab for the Bridge ICT module. A four-day live-in was organised at the conclusion of each Bridge Programme enabling the young persons in the programme to practice independent living skills, living-together skills and exposing them to cultural and social activities.

We are Kin (Aħn'Aħwa)

During 2009, SJAF continued to match vulnerable youths with adults who can be a source of friendship and support and learning guides. Mentors coach their mentee in an area of special interest. In 2009, coaching included art, dance and ICT. Youths come from disadvantaged backgrounds and face difficult life experiences. The one-to-one mentoring and coaching experience is often healing and liberating for the young person and can trigger the creative spirit within. During 2009, 18 youths from 17

families benefited from this service; 11 of these were from the Bridge Programme. Foundation staff are encouraged to assume a mentoring role as well.

Non-formal learning for vulnerable persons

During 2009 a number of non-formal adult learning support opportunities were organised. Groups were formed to enable participants to learn about communication skills with their children, basic ICT, self-esteem, and crafts for mental wellbeing. Other opportunities were offered to carers through the SJAF Caring for Family Caregivers Programme.



Caring for Family Caregivers Programme

During 2009, the programme continued to consolidate its various elements in support of family caregivers. Family caregivers constitute a category of citizens who lack support to continue fulfilling their challenging responsibility. It is one of the under-served categories in society that the Foundation has targeted for support interventions for the coming years.

Grandparent Education

Grandparents in Malta are shouldering a challenging caring responsibility often linked to their adult children's marriage breakup or career. For many grandparents, this role is both a source of joy and one that gives rise to resentments at being regularly imposed upon, taken for granted and criticised when child upbringing styles clash.

Grandparent education continued to be a focus of support during 2009 characterised by NannaKola Clubs – educational and fun courses organised at parish level following outreach work to identify grandparents in distress. The content and process of a NannaKola Club empowers grandparents to reflect critically about their role and how it differs from that of a parent. During club sessions, grandparents hone communication skills, practice creating educational resources for use at home with their grandchildren, learn how to handle stress and care for themselves, and become a source of fellowship and support to one another. Those requiring counselling are also offered this service. During 2009, 5 Nannakola Clubs were organised in the parishes of B'Kara, Haż-Żabbar, Marsascalea (twice), and Paola in partnership with parish priests and their Diaconia Commissions.

The aims of the NannaKola Clubs are to:

1. enable grandparents to learn strategies of how to stimulate their grandchildren to love reading through creative play and fun activities;
2. support each other to further develop and hone the skill of caring for one's grandchildren;
3. encourage other grandparents in the community to join the club and the monthly educational grandparents' forum;
4. become familiar with some of the reading and writing methods used in schools today;
5. practice using materials found at home to create educational resources for use at home such as hand puppets and story bags;
6. take an active part in the monthly educational dialogue sessions with experts in particular fields in order to continue their lifelong learning journey.

Nannakola Club is a non-formal adult education opportunity that combines the elements of a support group with structured and unstructured discussions and demonstrations of learning strategies for home trials. During 2009, five clubs were running involving 83 grandparents who regularly look after their grandchildren due to their adult child's marriage separation or career.

The club focuses on the honing of such skills as creating educational resources, effective inter-generational communication, managing stress, and other issues suggested by participants. Detailed session plans and related resources have been developed by the team.

A number of requests have been received from other parishes wishing to implement this initiative. Training for parish club animators is being planned so that a multiplier effect is created.

Locality	Duration	Participants
Paola (Christ the King Parish)	February to May 2009	16
M'Scala	October 2008 to February 2009	17
B'Kara (St Helen Parish)	October 2009 to February 2010	20
M'Scala	October 2009 to February 2010	14
Zabbar	October 2009 to February 2010	16

Grandparents' Forum: In April 2009, following a suggestion from grandparents who had participated in a NannaKola Club, the Foundation initiated a monthly forum for grandparents from various parishes through which grandparents engage in a dialogue with experts in fields of interest identified by themselves. Around 45 grandparents participated in the first forum in April. This opportunity enables grandparents who care for their grandparents to keep abreast of knowledge base in a number of fields linked to their care-giving role. Themes included:

Month	Theme of Dialogue session	Guest practitioner
April	The effects of separation and the role of a grandparent	Dr Charlie Azzopardi, Family Therapist
May	The role of a grandparent in the holistic development of grandchildren	Ms Joyce Callus, Adlerian Society
June	How grandparents can nurture spirituality through stories about Jesus Christ	Sr Mariella Agius, Psychologist
July	How grandparents can be of help when a young grandchild becomes pregnant outside marriage	Mrs Carmen Fearne, Social Worker and founder of Schoolgirls Mothers Unit
November	Communicating with older children and grandchildren	Mrs Vivien Cassar, Counsellor, St Jeanne Antide Foundation
December	Stress and how to care for ourselves and those around us	Mrs Connie Magro, Mental Health Nurse, Mental Health Association

Supporting Family Caregivers of Mentally Ill persons

Family caregivers of mentally ill persons are highly prone to become overwhelmed and depressed. The Foundation is increasingly meeting distressed family caregivers

whose financial means are drained, constraining the family to sell assets, close businesses and doing whatever it takes to pay professionals privately so as to cope with the constant strain of caring for the mentally ill family member. It is the experience of the Foundation that family caregivers rarely seek help for themselves, limiting their access to state and private mental health services for their ill family member.

Throughout 2009, Foundation personnel and interested service users continued to participate in the annual course for relatives of the mentally ill and carers run by the Mental Health Association (MHA). The Foundation's affiliation with the MHA led to collaboration in the organisation of the MHA national conference on the theme *Breaking the Silence Conference on children of mentally ill parents*. An MHA expert, moreover, was available throughout the year for case consultations as well as for meetings with families needing a consultation in a welcoming and non-rushed environment. This partnership with MHA is enabling the Foundation to fill a gap in national service provision in the field of supporting family caregivers of the mentally ill.



Community work project in Hal Kirkop

Commissioned for two years in late 2007 by the National Family Commission within the then Ministry for Social Policy, the Community Work Project in the village of Hal Kirkop commenced in early February 2008 and continued through 2009. In late 2009, community work was gradually wound down and closure achieved in early 2010 with families with whom workers had been working during the project implementation period. One aspect of the work that the Foundation decided to sustain was youth work with around 19 young persons who would have lost out on their personal transformation had the youth worker and social work support been withdrawn as well.

During 2009, outreach work continued to be undertaken with the vulnerable families living in 3 housing zones in Kirkop (17 Housing Blocks). Collaboration was sustained with the Kirkop Local Council, the Kirkop Parish and the Kirkop state Primary School.

The project team was made up of two part-time community workers, one youth worker, a social worker, and a local volunteer who heads the parish Diaconia Commission that offers support to vulnerable families in the community.

Table 6: Overview of project initiatives

Community Work	February 2008	January 2010
Youth Work with socially excluded youths	June 2008	Still active
Mother & Baby Group 1	14 March 2008	16 June 2008
Mother & Baby Group 2	January 2009	February 2009
Crafts Group 1	July 2009	September 2009
Crafts Group 2	September 2009	January 2010
Weight Loss Course	June 2008	August 2008
Social Work	February 2008	December 2009
Summer Family Educational Club	July 2008	August 2008
Drama for Children	February 2008	May 2008
CV writing support	February 2009	December 2009

Family Work

A key aim of the project was to identify the most vulnerable families living in the locality's public housing zone so as to offer much needed support including access to wider services. The team of two community workers, supported by a social worker and a counsellor, worked intensively with around 25 families requiring on-going or high support.

Problems faced by families supported during this period included:

- mental health problems, giving rise to other problems
- lack of basic skills
- sense of hopelessness and helplessness
- young carers looking after a sick family member

- abuse of children and adults
- alcoholism
- absolute dominance by a family member over the rest of the family
- more than one re-constituted family living in the same apartment
- women who abuse the welfare benefits system
- incessant loud noise leading to non-stop conflicts between neighbours living in the same block of public housing apartments
- lack of parenting and grandparenting skills
- harmful advice exchanged between adults
- indebtedness and avaricious monelylending
- disaffected youths without a routine or aim in life
- underemployment and unemployment; linked to this is involvement in the irregular employment sector
- blurring of necessary boundaries between families
- minors in residential care during the week and at their family home during weekends
- lack of public space for youths looking for informal leisure and sports
- facing overwhelming prejudice by residents from the ‘core’ of the locality.

Throughout 2009, the team made a concerted effort to assist a significant number of individuals from the public housing zone to prepare a CV. An on-going dialogue with families on the issue of undeclared work resulted in a number of individuals deciding that it would benefit them if they registered for work. Linkages to the services of the Employment and Training Corporation (ETC) were facilitated. These included links to the Supported Employment Section, appointments with employment officers and youth employment officers, demonstrations on accessing the ETC website to search for vacancies and courses, explanations about different schemes on offer, and filling in application forms.

Youth Work with at-risk youths

Youth work continued to be a key community work tool throughout 2009. The project Youth Worker and a Foundation Social Worker worked together to offer holistic support to disaffected youths on the margins of the community. The youth worker worked closely with 19 youths aged 13 to 18, two of whom were females residing in a residential care facility with weekend stays at home. All youths were from families dependent on state welfare benefits facing difficult circumstances including mental health problems, marriage separations, and indebtedness; all felt emarginated and excluded from mainstream opportunities including sports activities and youth groups. The respect they hold for the Youth Worker led to the setting up of a group – the Outlanders - with its own ethos and aims. The group met regularly on Friday evenings and during weekends, agreeing on activities of common interest.

The Youth Worker’s role within the Hal Kirkop Community Work project included:

- becoming familiar with the locations where disaffected youths on the periphery of the community gather and interact;
- engaging with them and observing their behaviour, reactions, conceptions and emotions within their own milieu so as to understand their strengths, potentials and needs;

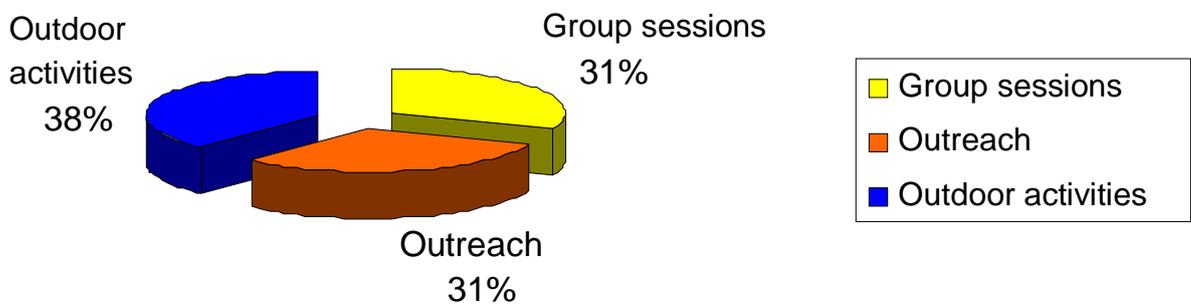
- reaching out to youths who most lack equal opportunities and opportunities to participate in society;
- gaining the young persons' trust by building a close rapport with them;
- enabling them to create a social space where to express themselves in order to lower personal and social barriers and to become actively involved in activities of common interest;
- enabling the youths to create a sense of belongingness;
- helping them identify goals, organise themselves and take action;
- engaging the youths in activities through which they grow as persons and as involved residents, thus reducing stigma and other residents' negative perception of them;

slowly nurture the creation of an inclusive and tolerant environment in the community.

A range of activities were created during 2009. These ranged from both non-formal group-based sessions as well as informal outdoor and adventure activities. Activities were planned in a participatory manner, involving young members to discuss common interests and access to social and cultural events from which they felt excluded. Information about national events aimed at youth at both local and national levels. Planning meetings enabled group member to engage in idea generation, to discuss issues of common concern and interest, to develop communication and bargaining skills and to become sensitive to the needs of other members. Youth work activities included the following:

- development of helping skills (one-to-one and group sessions);
- group-building
- sports such as football and basket ball
- outdoor activities such as hikes, BBQs, snorkling, boat trips, Rikotta Fest
- participation in active citizenship opportunities: INK-LINK project of the Foundation
- participation in National events such as Youth Week 2009
- participation in EU funded projects and schemes such as the ETC's Job Experience Scheme (JES) and the Youth Employment Programme .

Table 7: Work undertaken by Youth Worker in Hal Kirkop



Note: Outreach work: 10 hours a month; Outdoor activities: 2 hours a week; Group-based sessions: 2 hours a week.

Some of the outcomes of the youth work component of the community work project included the following:

- identified community issues, needs and problems, especially with respect to the community-based programmes and resources;
- Development of new community-based programmes and resources;
- Enhanced co-operation of government bodies, community organizations and sponsors;
- Enhanced public awareness on issues relevant to the community;
- Projects Development
- Leadership and co-ordination of programmes and projects;
- Preparation of reports and recommendations about development of participatory initiatives;
- Networking and building contacts;
- Mediating and negotiating with opposing parties
- Enhanced motivation amongst community member to participate in any sort of activity (Active Citizenship)

The INK-LINK youth initiative: nurturing basic entrepreneurship and active citizenship

An innovative youth work initiative was developed and implemented during 2009 with funding support from APS Bank through the Kummissjoni Djoċeżana Żgħażaġh scheme that funded projects in support of young people. Entitled INK-LINK (Inclusion-Link), this Foundation initiative was approved for funding support. It involved youths being supported by the Foundation's wider community work project. Through INK-LINK, youths were exposed to basic entrepreneurship. Through this initiative, the youths managed to reverse residents' image of them as vandals and rowdy youths.

The group of youths, led by the Foundation's youth worker, went around their locality identifying spaces that needed a face-lift. They then made drawings of these spaces and made an estimate of the materials and equipment that they would require to refurbish the identified spaces. Following an official meeting with the Mayor, arrangements were made for materials and equipment to be supplied by the Local

Council. Planning with the Youth Worker resulted in the completion of a number of embellishment works by 12 youths working in small teams. Work included the whitewashing of the Social Centre and its surrounding wall and painting of benches in open spaces. The 12 youths were remunerated for their work and the money used for both personal needs as well as for group needs. Collective decisions were taken regarding the use of the common fund. This fund was in fact used to pay for cultural and other social activities such as diving and spending a day at a fun park.

The youths met regularly on Friday evenings and during weekends. They also participated in activities during national youth week. Two of the youths were employed for a number of months by the Foundation on a house conservation project so as to gain job related experience and develop a sense of what it means to hold a job, be punctual, sign in for work, be supervised for quality of output and working with others.

The group will continue to be supported during the 2010.



APPENDIX 1: Service Development Milestones - 2006-2009

Core Service	SERVICE element	Started	Concluded	Active
Antide drop-in Centre	Opening drop-in Centre, Tarxien	January 2007		√
	Start of Volunteer Recruitment	January 2007		√
	monthly e-magazine	August 2007		√
Social Work & Counselling Service	Social Work Service	October 2006		√
	Counselling	October 2008		√
	Therapy	9 February 2009		√
	Nurse home-visiting	September 2008		√
	Self-Esteem Groups	July 2008		√
	Wens Group	6 November 2009	February 2010	
	EFT (Emotional Freedom Techniques)	October 2009		√
	Befriending Women in Prison Group	August 2007	June 2009	
Hal Kirkop Community Work Project	Community Work	February 2008	January 2010	
	Youth Work with socially excluded youths	June 2008		√
	Mother & Baby Group 1	14 March 2008	16 June 2008	
	Mother & Baby Group 2	January 2009	February 2009	
	Crafts Group 1	July 2009	September 2009	
	Crafts Group 2	September 2009	January 2010	
	Weight Loss Course	June 2008	August 2008	
	Social Work	February 2008	December 2009	
	Summer Family Educational Club	July 2008	August 2008	
	Drama for Children	February 2008	May 2008	
	CV writing support	February 2009	December 2009	
Learning Support Programme	Bridge Programme (basic skills for youths with dual diagnosis)	February 2008		√
	Bridge Intake 1	February 2008	July 2008	
	Bridge Intake 2	September 2008	26-Apr-09	
	Bridge Intake 3	September 2009	June 2010	
	Homework Support Service	October 2006		√
	Mentoring service	March 2008		√
	Basic ICT Courses for Service Users	October 2008	February 2009	
	Grupp Holoq - Crafts for mental well-being	January 2009	June 2009	
Caring for Family Care-givers Programme	NannaKola Club Tarxien	February 2008	Apr-08	
	NannaKola Club Paola	13 January 2009	30 March 2009	
	NannaKola Club M'Scala 1	12 November 2008	11 February 2009	
	NannaKola Club Żabbar	November 2009	February 2010	
	NannaKola Club B'Kara	20 October 2009	11 February 2010	
	NannaKola Club M'Scala 2	7 October 2009	3 February 2009	
	Monthly Grandparent Education Forum	Apr-09		√
	Disability Carers' Support Group	29 January 2008	3 June 2008	
	Counselling for Carers	Apr-08		√
	Young Carers Project	Planning Oct. 2009		
VINCI Project	Planning of the community work project in Żabbar	September 2009		√

APPENDIX 2: Organisations with whom the Foundation regularly collaborates

Parishes

- Agostinian Friars, Tarxien
- B’Kara Parish
- Fgura Parish and its Diaconia Commission
- M’Scala Parish and its Diaconia Commission
- Paola Parish and its Diaconia Commission
- Santa Luċija Parish
- Tarxien Parish and its Diaconia Commission
- Tarxien Youth Centre
- Żabbar Parish and its Diaconia Commission

State entities

- Aġenzija Appoġġ
- Aġenzija Support
- COMMCARE
- Department Elderly and Community Care
- Department Social Security
- Department Student Services, Directorate Student Services, Ministry of Education
- ETC: Supported Employment Section; Employment Services Division; Training Services Division
- Housing Authority
- Institute of Tourism Studies (ITS)
- Kummissjoni Nazzjonali Persuni b’Dizabilità (KNPD)
- Mater Dei Hospital: Social Work team; Psychiatric Out Patients (PoP)
- Speech and Language Pathologists, Health Division
- Ministry for Social Policy
- MCAST Basic Skills Unit
- Mt Carmel psychiatric hospital & its Mental Health Community Services
- University of Malta: Social Work & Social Policy Department; Department of Psychology
- WasteServ
- Żammit Clapp Hospital

NGOs

- CARITAS Malta agency
- Kummissjoni Djoċezana Żgħażaġh (KDZ)
- Malta Autism Parents Association (MAPA)
- Mental Health Association, Malta
- Merħba Bik, Good Shepherd Sisters
- Osanna Pia, Salesian Fathers
- Richmond Foundation and its Villa Chelsea
- SAS Azzjoni Kattolika
- YMCA, Valletta
- YWCA, Msida

Other

- Malta Community Chest Fund (MCCF)

APPENDIX 3: Staff development and training events - 2009

Date	Event	Theme	Organiser/s	SJAF workers taking part	Duration
6 Feb	Course	The Christian Response to Irregular Immigration	Balzan Parish Diaconia Commission/ JRS	3	8 hrs (4 evening sessions)
7 Feb	National Seminar	Iż-Żwieġ – Qua Vadis?	Proġett Impenn: Kummissjoni Djoċezana Familja/ Cana Movement/ Caritas Malta	2	One day
7 Feb	Seminar	Hidma f'Hal Kirkop	Kunsill Lokali Hal Kirkop	5	One day
14 Feb	Meeting for NGOs	Sehem is-Socjeta' Civili fil-Proċess ta' Konsultazzjoni	- Parliamentary Secretary for Public Consultation and Information/ Malta EU Steering and Action Committee (MEUSAC)/ MCESD	1	9.00 to 1.00pm
20 Feb	Seminar	Family Living: Fun and Friction	Malta Adlerian Psychology Association	2	
3 Mar	Dialogue	Approaches to working with mentally ill persons and their relatives in the community	St Jeanne Antide Foundation (SJAF)	12	3.00 to 5.00pm
11 Mar	Seminar	Youth Mentoring	Maltese Mentoring Society & ETC	1	8.30 to 1.00pm
27 Mar	Conference	Mental Illness in the Family – Our Hidden Secret	Mental Health Association Malta	9	8.30am to 4.00pm
27-28 Mar	Seminar	Seminar for Diaconia Commissions	Caritas Malta	1	45 mins
18 April	Seminar	Annual Seminar for Parish Pastoral Councils	Diocesan Curia	1	3 hrs (9.00 to 12.00am)
26 May	Seminar	Schizophrenia	Richmond Foundation	2	1 half day: 8.30 to 1.00pm
29 Aug	Conference	Support, Training, Networking for a better Voluntary Sector	Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector	1	1 half day
9 July	Briefing meeting	Employment & Training Initiatives of the ETC	ETC	1	2 hrs: 8.30 - 10.30am
20-21 Sept	Two-Day Workshop	Introduction to Focusing – Level 1	John L. Threadgold MA, BA (Hons), Member of Focusing Institute, British Focusing Teachers Association, British Association for Counselling & Psychotherapy	2	2 days (12 hours)
6-7 Oct	The Doha Colloquium	Strengthening Marriage and Supporting Families	Doha International Institute for Family Studies and Development (FSD)/ Cana	1	2 full days

			Movement		
9 Oct	Seminar	Is-Saħħa Mentali: Sfida Ewropea: Sfida lokali	The Richmond Foundation	1	1 full day
24 Oct	National Conference	Y Standup against poverty	Kummissjoni Djoċesana Żgħażaġh	2	Half day
26 – 27 Oct	Conference	Elderly Mental Health	Maltese Association of Psychiatric Nurses	2	2 full days
16-21 Nov	Training Week	The 6 th National Training Week: Keeping the Family in Perspective: Thinking Child, Thinking Family	Malta Association for the Counselling Profession	1	5 evenings + Saturday Conference (Total: 22.5hrs)

Note: Items in bold denote events at which a presentation was made by a Foundation worker

