In 2018 New Social Initiative sparked a new way of communities dialog in Kosovo – the informal dialog – which grew to become a platform for activists to join a conversation and share information and insights in a welcoming and open way. After hosting five informal dialogs across the year, participants, who included representatives of civil society, media, independent researchers and activist, from both Albanian and Serb community, disclosed high interests in ascertaining the informal dialog into lasting practice. With the support of European Endowment for Democracy (EED) NSI was able to do just that, and continue with the informal dialog in 2019. For the first gathering it sparked a conversation on coming parliamentary elections and the stakes it brings. As a result of it two op-eds and one brief followed.

Make It or Break It: Kosovo Elections and Pristina-Belgrade Dialogue reflects on correlation of the coming elections and the Dialogue. It provides insights in participants perceptions on political parties, their likely results and potential future directions of the Dialog.

First brief is followed with two op-eds: Emergence of Vigilantes on The Kosovo Political Scene written by Milica Andrić and Elections Are Not the Solution – Civic Engagement Is written by Rron Gjinovci.

The second debate is scheduled for after the announcement of the final results of the election, in order to follow up with the post-election developments.

Capacity Building Starts From Within

New Social Initiative takes pride in its work on building the capacity of local communities and mechanisms, but does not shy away from the need on building its own as well. Being guided with the idea that excellence is not a matter of act, but of habit, NSI puts a lot of effort in fostering the habits of our staff. Currently, NSI has three capacity building programs, including language courses, on-the-job training and policy research.

NSI, with the support of EED is offering language courses of Albanian and English language. NSI staff is excited to have the opportunity to learn the language of the environment and be able to engage with the citizens across Kosovo and beyond. Dijana says for BBC she was interested in learning the language primary for work, but also to be able to communicate with people daily: “Communication will be more natural among people. The sense of diversity will decrease, along with the barriers that may exist. We will become closer to one another.”
Training for Village Council Members

New Social Initiative strongly believes that strong communities come within, which is why our work from the beginning largely focused on enabling citizens and their representatives to be the loudest advocates for local progress and democracy. With that in mind NSI partner with Civic Initiative Skenderaj (CIS) from Skenderaj/Srbica for the project Building Capacity for Better Community. In past months we worked with Village Councils representatives on enhancing their competences, by hosting individual and joint meetings, developing educational materials and providing counsel.

In October, NSI and CIS hosted a two-day training “Village Councils as a Mechanism for Active Citizen Participation in Decision-Making Processes”, where members had a chance to learn more on legal framework, strategical thinking and planning, partnering and lobbying, good practices, but also to work hands-on on developing their own ideas and plan of execution.

Meet Our Interns

Putting our own values in action, NSI opened a call for interns in September, hoping to educate and train students and recent graduates who are interested in civic engagement, administration and general work of the non-for-profit sector in Kosovo. NSI is proud to announce that three candidates were chosen for the six months internship program, who will, apart from the opportunity to learn and grow, also receive a compensation for their contributions.

Sanja Stojković, graduated from the Faculty of Economics in Mitrovica and is pursuing master’s degree in Business Economy. Sanja participated in trainings and summer schools organized by regional organizations related to leadership, human rights and public appearance. Some of that are for National Democratic Institute “Young Leadership Academy”, “Women’s Leadership Academy” and “Week of Women 2019”, and for OSCE “Dialogue Academy for Young Women”.

Elvis Beriša, student at the Faculty of Law in Mitrovica. Elvis had an internship in Municipality of Zvecan, with the Return and Equality Officer. He participated in lectures and workshops on the EU School Program, as well as lectures and workshops in the field of Rule of Law, funded by KFOS, EPuS. Elvis also participated in several minority and human rights workshops and trainings.

Luka Zejak, student at the Faculty of Law in Mitrovica. Luka is currently at his third year of studies.