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Dear New Member,

We are delighted that you have taken the opportunity to join the Migrant Worker Support Network (M.W.S.N.). It is hoped that the sharing of information and resources will bring about a more efficient and convenient provision of service.

If you have any suggestions about the type and format of information sharing which should be carried out across the network, please forward suggestions to keelin@stepni.org. The Network will only be a success if the information shared between members remains contemporary, factual and relevant – this will all depend on the input of members. M.W.S.N.'s main function is to become a central source for this information and present the information in an accessible way to all members.

We look forward to hearing from you and would like to wish you and your organization every success in the future.

Kindest regards,

Bernadette McAliskey
S.T.E.P. Co-ordinator & Founder of M.W.S.N.

What is the Migrant Worker Support Network (MWSN)?

Background

Reliance on an internationally mobile labour force has been a feature of the global economy for some time. Previously this impacted on our own society in two ways: outward migration of local labour; outward migration of industry, particularly manufacturing. Since 2000, inward migration of labour has become a significant factor in sustaining the local economy. It reflects poorly on the ethics of the private sector, that little or no cognisance was taken of the human impact on either the migrant worker population or the local community of profit-based economic decisions. The most minimal preparations, and often not even these, were made to address the needs and rights of the new populations, or to assist in developing the local resources to meet them.

Leadership in arguing for and developing this infrastructure essentially fell by default to S.T.E.P., a local rural community organisation in Dungannon. Other community organisations followed this example at local level, Ballymena Ethnic Forum were first to approach us, then Craigavon, Cookstown, and with our support, and that of each new link in the chain, new support groups have developed across N. Ireland with increasing pace.

In 2008 the landscape is changing, however there is still significant need to develop Migrant Worker Rights; basic human rights in the areas of employment, healthcare access, education, access to benefit entitlements and general awareness-raising in these areas. As members of the Migrant Worker Support Network, you are all working hard to ensure that these areas are addressed and continue to be addressed on behalf of the new communities. Although statutory agencies are beginning to slowly respond to changes in local demography, the community and voluntary sector continue their hard work and are continuing to readily assume responsibility for Migrant Worker issues.

The Idea

With organizations across Northern Ireland dealing on a regular basis with the issues of Migrant Workers, there is an increasing need for shared information on practices and issues. As deliverers of one of the pioneering Migrant Support projects, S.T.E.P. has acquired a wealth of knowledge and experience in this area. We are asked by organizations across Northern Ireland for advice on how to deal with Migrant Worker issues.

Through the M.W.S.N., it is hoped that there will be a sharing of information, best practice activity and resources so that all organizations proactively dealing with Migrant Worker issues have support to continue their good work. The Network will not be based on meetings of members as organizations working in the sector are already subject to countless internal and external meetings, instead MSWN will provide an opportunity for information transfer and knowledge sharing at limited inconvenience.

The Aims & Objectives

Aim

"Shared Knowledge for a Shared vision" - to establish an information and knowledge network which will contribute to building an equitable and rights-based society which respects difference and celebrates diversity.

Objectives

1. To ensure access to current, reliable, consistent and relevant information.
2. To share good practice, innovation, research, policy development and problem solving.
3. To contribute to the development of appropriate regional strategy and policy.
4. To address the problems created by lack of knowledge, isolation, prejudice.
5. To contribute to the collective challenge to racism, inequality and human rights violation.

The Process

Stage 1: Secure membership

Stage 2: Input of information from organizations

Stage 3: Development of first quarterly e-zine/newsletter

Stage 4: Evaluation (by members) of e-zine/newsletter

Stage 5: Development of website (based on input by members)

Stage 6: Evaluation (by members) of website

Stage 7: Regular input onto website & quarterly e-zine/newsletters

Stage 8: Review by members after first twelve months of Network

The M.W.S.N. has successfully reached stage eight in its development. Membership and interest in the network aims and activities have increased significantly and the website www.mwsn.org was launched on 2nd October 2007. This will ensure that all members will have immediate access to news, events, updated information, sign-post/referral organisations in addition to an online discussion forum to provide working and live networking opportunities.

The Members

Members of the network consist of community and voluntary organisations across Northern Ireland who undertake work specific to migrant workers or for whom migrant workers make up part of their target audience/client group. Individual membership will be open to statutory employees working in this field. Members should be willing to contribute information on a regular basis as well as use the network to find out information, best practice methods and availability of resources.

The Benefits

- Members will enjoy the opportunity of sharing ideas with other organisations working on similar issues.
- Members will be kept up-to-date with new developments in the issues surrounding migrant workers by the pooling of information and input of information from all members
- Members will be able to network with other organisations so that opportunities to share resources can be identified reducing duplication of work
- Members will have support in problem-solving and conflict resolution
- It will also contribute to the development of base-line information

Feedback from network members on membership and previous events

On MWSN Membership.....

"Sharing information regularly and in a way that's accessible"

"I find the e-bulletins most informative and they keep me up to date with relevant events, seminars, conferences and legislation which I really appreciate"

"I really appreciate the e-mail alerts in particular. I find these very useful and informative. They are a convenient and easy way of keeping up to date with issues and events etc going on throughout the Province. I also appreciate being able to advertise anything that I need to through these e-alerts, knowing that they are far-reaching. Thank you very much!"

"Just a big thank you for all your hard work!! Really appreciate what you do through the MWSN. Keep up the great work!!"

"Lots of good ideas from MWSN!"

On MWSN events.....

An Introduction to the Housing Rights and Entitlements of Migrant Workers, Sept 08

"Very informative presentations"

"Valuable information"

STEP, MWSN, ECAS conference, October 08

"Excellent high quality content and presentation"

"Overall I found the conference extremely useful. As someone who has not done a lot of work with Migrant Workers so far, it was certainly an education to me. Congratulations I thoroughly enjoyed the two days"

Migrants and the Border Seminar, Jan 09

"Very interesting topic well delivered"

"Made some useful contacts and will be following up"

"Excellent input – very educational. Thank you!"

Values, Ethics and Purpose Discussion Event, Sept 09

"I was able to learn from the different people represented."

"A very useful discussion; it's always good to talk with like-minded people!"

What next?

Please complete the membership form and return this to S.T.E.P. by email/post/fax. It is important to fill in as many details as possible on the form to assist with administration and to propose items for consideration.



To become a member, please complete the details below and send the appropriate member subscription rate.
We look forward to future communication, interaction and shared information.

Name of Organisation: _____

Type of Organisation: Local Community Group Sub regional/regional N.G.O.

Network Partnership project Individual working within a Statutory agency

(Where relevant) Charity reg. no:

Unique N.I. Community ref. no:

Company reg. no:

Address of organisation: _____

Telephone no: _____

Fax no: _____

Website: _____

Please choose a suitable username and password for your organisation to access the MWSN website.

Username _____

Password _____

Name & position of contact:

E-mail of contact:

Description of organisation/project (max 50 words)

Why do you want to join the Network? (what can you bring to MWSN & what do you need from it?)

What particular issues/subjects/areas would you like Network to address?

Additional comments



Subscription form

Name: _____

Job Title: _____

Organisation: _____

Tel. Number: _____

Email address: _____

I enclose a cheque for _____

I have requested a BACS transfer for _____ to Account Name: STEP
Resources Group Account Number: 44764918 Sort Code: 93-82-89.
Please send remittance advice to Pamela Watt.

Please choose a suitable username and password for your organisation to access the MWSN website.

Username _____

Password _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____ Thank you for your interest. You will receive further details and gain access to the Website in due course. We wish you and your organisation every success and support.

Please return your completed form and subscription fee information to: Keelin Mc Gartland, STEP, Unit T7, Dungannon Business Park, 2 Coalisland Road, Dungannon BT71 6JT

Subscription Fees for MWSN

Member services for paid subscribers

- Weekly e-alert
- Quarterly newsletter
- Monthly Policy and Research newsletter
- Four seminar events per year (others at a reduced fee)
- Unlimited access to the Migrant Worker Support Network website
- www.mwsn.org
- FREE information events throughout the year.
- Best practice advice from STEP
- Policy and Research Input Opportunities
- Opportunities to participate in joint projects at regional /national /international level

Member Subscription Amounts

Community/Voluntary Sector	U.K.	Ireland
Annual Income less than £100,000	£50.00	75 euro
Annual Income between £100,000-£250,000	£75.00	110euro
Annual Income more than £250,000	£100.00	150euro
Statutory	£100.00	150 euro
Private Sector		
Less than 10 employees	£50.00	75 euro
10-50 employees	£75.00	110 euro
More than 50 employees	£100.00	150 euro

Individual membership and rates are available on request.