

## How

**mine** conducts Grassroots Women's International Academies (GWIA), peer learning exchanges, partner dialogues and networking and capacity building activities for Mother Center initiatives around the globe, focussing on:

- Start up support for Mother Centers
- Trainings, peer exchanges, study tours and apprenticeships
- Grassroots advocacy on family and community issues

This involves step by step consultation, fostering a 'buddy system' between Mother Centers in the region and between continents, fundraising activities and the production of training materials.

### Mother Centers offer...

- Improvement of quality of family socialization
- Promotion of tolerance and democracy in the everyday life of communities
- Integration of socially disadvantaged families
- Strong, inclusive and lively neighborhoods
- Innovation of institutional structures
- Rich informal learning environments
- Social integration of youth
- Increased involvement of fathers in family and household
- Reconciliation of work and family
- Promotion of children's and family health
- Creation of alternatives to institutional eldercare
- Improvement of the quality of urban living spaces
- Making the knowledge of everyday life experts operational for development
- Promotion of peace and international understanding



Women from Mother Centers from Kenya, Germany, Czech Republic, Bosnia, and Canada participate at the GWIA 2001 on the UN premises in New York.

*"The Mother Centers run on the basis that everyone is good at at least one thing, which they can contribute to the Mother Center and thereby to the community. Alone we face many challenges, together we can create solutions."*

## Contact

e-mail: [info@mine.cc](mailto:info@mine.cc)  
website: [www.mine.cc](http://www.mine.cc)

mine bank account:  
Kreissparkasse Esslingen-Nürtingen

BLZ 611 500 20 K to 744 31 27  
IBAN: DE33 6115 0020 0007 4431 27  
BIC: ESSL DE 66

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# mine

Mother Centers International Network for Empowerment

*"Mother Centers seem to answer a historic need. They are spreading around the world like a 'virus'. They represent another kind of globalisation, a globalisation from the ground. This has produced the need for a global network."*

## what is mine

**mine** is an award winning network representing the international Mother Centers movement. Originated in Germany they have spread across the world in the past decade and are now found in the Netherlands, Austria, Liechtenstein, Switzerland, Italy, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Bulgaria, and Bosnia as well as in the USA, Canada, Kenya, Rwanda, and the Philippines, currently representing a network of 750 centers worldwide.

## mine's mission

**mine** stands for a world that values and supports the work of mothers.

**mine** stands for a world that places social cohesion and community at the base of social and economic development.

**mine** stands for a world in which the culture of care is reintegrated into public life.

## Mother Centers



## where



Mother Centers bring women and families into center stage and support them in building their confidence and ability to help themselves and each other. Despite high tech and globalisation, the human condition remains unchanged: at the grassroots level, children, the elderly, the sick and handicapped need sustained nurturance and stable relationships. Caregivers need support in performing this daunting task, which in contemporary society is often not anymore naturally available through family structures. In a world where violence is increasing among youth and children, who fail to feel a meaningful connection to society, and in societies where old age is decreasingly embedded in traditional care systems, new ways of fostering community are needed.

Mother Centers are self managed neighborhood based meeting places offering an 'open ear' along with a cup of tea or coffee. Participants are not 'target groups' for social services. Instead, they claim public space to identify and exchange their own talents and resources to contribute to the improvement of their own lives, their communities and human settlements.

Mother Centers re-integrate the culture of care into public life. Activities cover a wide range: child care, health and eldercare, biological food coop, computer courses, nursing groups, peer counselling groups, hot meals, janitor and pick up services, small businesses like hair dressing, second hand shop, laundry services or gardening.

Mother Centers have impact on many levels. They influence the quality of parenting and family relations as well as of neighborhoods. They contribute to social cohesion and integration in communities as well as bringing a grassroots voice to local governance.

- **WESTERN EUROPE:** in Germany and Switzerland the Mother Centers challenge the marginalisation of motherhood by adapting the 'it takes a village to raise a child' concept to industrialised societies.

- **POST SOCIALIST SOCIETIES:** in countries like the Czech Republic or Bulgaria the Mother Centers are focal points for development of democracy and a civil society from the bottom up.

- **BALKAN REGION:** in post conflict areas like Bosnia the Mother Centers have created opportunities to reweave the war torn social fabric. They offer families from different ethnic backgrounds a place to regroup and support each other in dealing with the everyday issues of reconstruction and reconciliation.

- **NORTH AMERICA:** among the First Nation population in Canada the Mother Center Cooperatives support financial empowerment by creating collective income generation projects. In the USA, Mother Centers in Afro American communities offer single mothers on welfare a place to share survival skills and reorient their lives towards self-sufficiency.

- **AFRICA:** in the slums of Mathare, Nairobi, Mother Centers offer mothers and (street) children a safe place, warm meals and medical services.

- **ASIA** In the Philippines the Mother Centers provide a 'home away from home' for female migrant workers coming from rural areas to find jobs in the industrial zones.

## awards



**mine** has been accredited by the UN as Best Practice. **mine** also won the Dubai International Award for Best Practices to Improve the Living Environment for 'strengthening the capacity of civil society to revitalise local neighborhoods and revive community life'.