



## USAID Youth Ethnic Integration Project MONTHLY REPORT - *June 2020*



### Interconnected activities

#### Project collaboration activities

- ✓ Youth Ethnic Integration project in partnership with UNICEF is supporting education institutions to develop a Concept for distance learning in primary and secondary education with an annex action plan. The working group established by the Minister of Education and Science, consisted of representatives from key education institutions, NGO sector and other relevant practitioners and stakeholders, is committed to developing the document. Sub-groups were established for development of three (3) key areas of the Concept: 1) Education policies, 2) IT/technical support and 3) Pedagogy. As a result, online activities were organized. Members of the sub-groups drafted the content for each area and the activities in the action plan, which were shared with the wider working group for comments and feedback. Furthermore, online discussions were held, focusing on expectations from the document, the guidance for developing and finalizing the content and the available timeframe. Following the development of the final draft, the document will be placed on Ministry of Education and Science [webpage](#) for review and feedback by the wider education community. As soon as the received feedback is incorporated, the document will be submitted for adoption.
- ✓ In the period between December of 2019 and first quarter of 2020, the project in partnership with UNICEF supported education institutions to develop secondary legislation/rulebooks deriving from the Law for teachers and student support staff in primary and secondary schools. Following the finalization of the documents, the Ministry of Education and Science and key education institution are continuously implementing activities for adoption of rulebooks. Eleven (out of 15) rulebooks that regulate teacher and student support staff professional competences and standards, personal plan for professional development, novice-teachers support for mastering the core professional competences and education staff career development were adopted by responsible education institutions. The latest adopted document is the [Rulebook on the manner of mentoring support of novice-teacher](#), published in the Official Gazette of Republic of North Macedonia and web page of Ministry of Education and Science on June 6, 2020.

#### Public outreach

- ✓ The Guidelines Manual for Maintenance of School Buildings – Part Two was published. This publication was adopted by the Minister of Education and Science and is available on [MCEC](#) and [MoES webpage](#). It contains a number of useful guidelines and recommendations for educational institutions, municipalities and schools, regarding school cleaning procedures, operational procedures for planning, preparation and management of disasters (emergencies), and maintenance of solar power systems.
- ✓ Two animated videos (2), aimed at providing assistance for maintenance of school buildings were published on MCEC and MoES websites. One ([MK](#), [ALB](#)) contains steps and guidance for cleaning and disinfecting the school buildings while the other ([MK](#), [ALB](#)) offers an insight into the measures schools should take to protect the students and staff.
- ✓ To help students become aware of procedures to follow and what to do in emergency situations such as an earthquake, flood or fire, an [interactive animated video](#) for crisis management in schools was published on MCEC website and MoES website.
- ✓ The project website and social media platforms were regularly updated with information and news about the course of project activities.
- ✓ The project's excellent cooperation with media outlets resulted in media articles about the project activities in schools as well as in local communities. [Media newsletter](#) was developed and shared with all media outlets.

#### Monitoring & Evaluation

- ✓ The report on perceptions, opinions and experiences with joint curricular classes is finalized. It analyses the gathered quantitative and qualitative feedback from students and is accompanied by qualitative feedback from the teachers-implementers. The findings are split in two parts: 1) the overall experience with activities within joint curricular classes during the school year 2019/20 and 2) the experiences with the online joint curricular classes during the COVID-19 crisis. Once again, even during challenging times such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the joint curricular classes were rated as quite interesting and the vast majority of students reported feelings of joy and excitement for future involvement in such activities.
- ✓ On June 22, 2020 an online discussion took place with the teachers-implementers and SIT coordinators from six secondary schools that implemented joint curricular classes. During the discussion, the gathered data from the e-survey and the findings from the two (2) online discussions with students were shared and discussed. Additionally, teachers shared their experience with the implementation of joint curricular classes and online activities. Finally, they shared the challenges they came across, as well as, their needs. The project will take the findings into account and focus on further improvement of future activity implementation within the joint curricular classes.
- ✓ The report on students' and teachers' feedback on CivEd curricula revisions for grades 8 and 9 is in the process of finalization. The extensive amount of gathered data indicates very positive experiences of students with the CivEd curricula with an average score of over 8, on a scale of 1-10. Besides including students' and teachers' experiences with the curricula, the report includes data on: applied teaching methods, planning and implementation of CivEd Open Days, students' and teachers' involvement in the organization of CivEd Open Days, etc.



### Strengthening interethnic cohesion activities

#### Project support to the Ministry of Education and Science Commission for Interethnic Integration in Education (MoES CIIE)

- ✓ In coordination with the MoES CIIE, the revised questionnaire related to the MoES's updated PMP was incorporated in the Survey Monkey tool and shared with all schools. In this period, so far 196 schools have responded, which apparently demonstrates the effects of the pandemic situation. Therefore, the project team in coordination with the MoES CIIE and

YEI M&E Coordinator, will work on encouraging other schools to fill in the questionnaire and submit it in the following period. The data that are being collected are for the school year 2018/2019. In addition, in late June, in partnership with the Pestalozzi Project the first meeting of the working group for development of the ICE standards in the education system under the lead of the MoES CIIE was organized and held.

#### Municipal interethnic integration policies

- ✓ Collaboration and coordination with municipalities that are selected and are developing their strategies and policies for IIE and youth engagement continued. In coordination with project team, assigned mentors actively continued in providing guidance and support to municipal education officials in leading the process. In June, in municipalities of Centar and Aerodrom the municipal strategies developed by the Commissions for IIE and youth engagement were endorsed at the Council's meetings and signed by Mayors. In the municipalities of Cair, Bosilovo and Negotino, the established Commissions (include schools' directors) are actively engaged in developing the strategic documents. The municipality of Saraj is facing challenges in the process due to the pandemic situation. Hence, intensified support by the project team and assigned mentor will be provided, in order to overcome any possible delay. In the municipalities of Ohrid and Resen, assigned mentor organized several online coordination meetings and the members of the Commission are engaged in the process as planned. The municipality of Kocani in this period is in the process of appointing the new municipal education official, with whom the project team and assigned mentor will continue the process once selected. Municipal education officials together with members of the Commissions in the municipalities of Staro Nagoricane and Berovo are in the process of analyzing documents and drafting the concepts for the Municipal Strategies for IIE and youth engagement, and mainly they are working from home. The same situation applies in the municipalities of Bogovinje, Gorce Petrov and Tearce, where assigned mentor and the project team provide continuous support to the municipal education officials and members of the Commissions.

#### Engaging youth to lead by example

- ✓ In coordination with Youth Educational Forum (YEF) the project team continued with the process and the activities with students that will lead to the final step of organizing Youth Actions in two (2) selected municipalities (Struga and Veles). Youth Actions as final activities will be implemented once schools are reopened after the pandemic period in the country. Thus, in this period, online youth activities continued with students from the first phases from schools in Struga. Activities with students also started with three schools from Veles, i.e. SS "Kole Nedelkovski", SS "Koco Racin" and SS "Dimitrija Cupovski". In these activities, students discussed issues and changes they would like to see happen in their community, prioritizing and outlining as possible Youth Actions during this year. Students from schools in Struga outlined interesting ideas for youth actions such as sport terrains; humanitarian actions for providing meals to social endangered children/citizens as a community engagement; open air cinema that could be an opportunity for youngsters and citizens to attend it during summer; including some other ecological ideas such as bike trails, and similar. In addition, an online questionnaire was disseminated to the youth from schools from Struga and Veles, in order to define and finalize the ideas for youth actions as the final activities, aimed at increasing community service and enabling youth engagement.

#### Curricular activities in schools

- ✓ In partnership with City of Skopje, the online working meetings with directors and SIT coordinators from secondary schools continued. Teachers from different subjects in all six (6) schools implemented joint classes. Teachers-implementers through online communication jointly actively engaged in preparing the plan of curricular classes, share the guidelines and presentations with students using Viber groups and held the classes through ZOOM. In June, in partnership with City of Skopje and in collaboration with OSCE, the project team organized an online working meeting, to discuss the process, outcomes and challenges with COVID-19 outbreak, and how to improve this process further on. At this working meeting, the findings from the e-survey related to the student's experience in joint curricular classes during the school year 2019/2020 were presented. If with the start of the school year 2020/2021 online teaching and work from home is still required, the project team will provide further support to teachers-implementers and students to build their capacities for use of various digital tools.

#### Long-term extracurricular activities in school subject clubs

- ✓ The schools with approved applications by the project, continued with the implementation of some activities online. In SS "Orde Chopela" from Prilep, students from the nutrition school club explored the cooking traditions and practices in Macedonian, Albanian and Turkish cuisine and created a leaflet with traditional recipes. Application for implementation of long term extracurricular activities with students in subject clubs was received from PS "Goce Delcev", Municipality of Sveti Nikole. The project team reviewed the proposed activities and feedback was provided to the school. The proposed changes were incorporated and the application was finalized and approved by the project.

#### Long-term extracurricular activities in partnership

- ✓ The project team provided support and guidance to schools which didn't complete the applications, to design the activities and finalize their applications. As a result, primary school "Tode Hadzi Tefov" from Kavadarci prepared and submitted its application to the project team. The application was reviewed by the project team and guidelines for necessary changes were given. It is expected the application to be finalized in the upcoming period.



## **Strengthening democratic culture & civic behaviors activities**

### Working Group for Secondary School CivEd

- ✓ Members of the working group revised the first three (3) sets of workshops developed so far, according to the feedback provided from their colleagues, the project staff and the BDE. About half of the workshops were fully finalized. The members of the working group have also submitted the first version of the fourth (and final) set of contents for the Teachers Manual for Year 1 CivEd, as well as provided feedback for their colleagues' documents. The project team is planning an (online) reflection meeting during the first half of July, where the work so far will be discussed and the next steps will be defined.

### Online discussion on using digital tools during the distance education period

- ✓ During June, the project team worked on preparing the online discussion: inviting CivEd teachers via e-mail and Facebook groups, as well as BDE advisors responsible for civic ethos activities; holding a coordinative meeting with the event speakers where their input was defined; preparing relevant materials for the event (guidelines for the speakers,

presentation, certificates). The online discussion was held on 23 June (6-8 pm) and was attended by more than 70 participants. The agenda included four (4) speakers: BDE representative, school director, CivEd teacher and YEI representative. The event participants discussed many challenges they have faced during the distance education period, as well as recommendations for the development of effective distance education policies. After the discussion, a document outlining the participants' input was shared with them, encouraging them to provide additional ideas and comments. This document was shared with the MoES and BDE in order to inform the future distance education policies.

#### Encouraging civic ethos in schools

- ✓ All BDE advisors organized (online) meetings with phase 2 school representatives (inviting meeting attendees, scheduling the calls, preparing for the planned presentations, etc.). During the meetings, the BDE advisors acquainted the attendees with the CivEd Concept, the phases of successful student initiatives and the integration of these activities in their School Annual Programs for 2020/2021. The project team attended all online meetings and provided technical and organizational support. The project team is also planning an (online) reflection and evaluation meeting during the first half of July, in order to discuss the advisors' experience during the meetings and plan next steps.

#### Engaging International Consultant for Civic Ethos

- ✓ The selected consultants were contacted and invited to a first online meeting. During it, the project staff acquainted the consultants with the overall project and the component objectives. The deliverables outlined in the ToR were discussed and a timeframe for each expected outcome was defined. The project team also prepared and shared with the consultants a set of documents necessary for understanding the country CivEd context and the ongoing processes.

#### Booklet with good practices of student initiatives

- ✓ This booklet will serve as a guideline for schools on the process of conducting effective student initiatives. Following the development of the version in Macedonian language, the document was translated into Albanian and English. The graphic design of the publication is in progress.

#### Civic Education Concept

- ✓ Following the official adoption of the Civic Education Concept, which relies on two main principles (1) engaging students to be active participants in the school and community life as a prerequisite for future meaningful democratic participation, and (2) implementing a whole-school approach to acquiring civic competences, the document is translated into Albanian and English and the project started process of graphic design.

#### Research on CivEd in secondary schools

- ✓ The graphic design of the publication of the research on the experiences of students and teachers with the old CivEd curriculum and the revised modular curriculum which was prepared during 2019 was finalized. The document was also translated into Albanian and the design of this version is in progress. Both documents will be published in July.

#### Survey for participatory feedback process on experiences with CivEd subject

- ✓ The data collected from 127 teachers from 116 primary schools, 1030 students from grade 8 from 79 schools and 1022 students from grade 9 from 80 schools is being processed and analyzed.



## **Incentives to schools - Renovations**

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#### School renovations

- ✓ The graphic design of the second part of Guideline manual for maintenance of school buildings on Macedonian, Albanian, and English was completed. The Guidelines Manual, the animated video for school cleaning and disinfection, the animated video for disaster (emergency) risk management in schools, and the interactive video for disaster (emergency) risk management in schools were uploaded on MCEC and the Ministry of Education and Science websites.
- ✓ Selection of 12 new schools for renovation was finished. Members of the component working group evaluated 186 applications which were submitted on the public call announce in 2019, and a list of 12 schools was defined. All 12 schools are located in 12 different municipalities, 11 out of 12 schools are primary and one (1) is secondary school. The list of the schools that are included in renovation activities for 2020 was published on the official [MCEC website](#).
- ✓ On June 19, 2020 on-line communication for sharing procedures and criteria for establishing the School Renovation Team, determining the needs and priorities for school renovation was realized with each school individually. The component team shared all needed documents with schools and gave deadlines in which schools need to implement further steps.
- ✓ Two meetings in all 12 schools were organized. On the first meeting, School Renovation Teams in 12 schools were established and on the second meeting, lists with priority projects for renovation were determined. Meeting reports, lists of SRT members, and lists with priority projects for the renovation were delivered to the Project.
- ✓ In this period, the project team worked on registering/collecting the necessary documentation for cost share contribution of schools and municipalities in the renovation process (financial or in-kind) for the schools. The documentation for the cost share of the schools and the municipalities in the renovation projects was completed for 11 schools, and it accounts for 51.56 % of the total investment.