

USAID Youth Ethnic Integration Project MONTHLY REPORT - *June 2019*



Interconnected activities

Project collaboration activities

- ✓ MCEC is part of working groups and processes for drafting a *National strategy for development of the concept for a common (one) society and interculturalism in the Republic of North Macedonia*. Following the dissemination of the draft version to the public, the project team also prepared and forwarded recommendations and comments to advance the document, based on previous and current projects good practices. In addition, team members participated in the final public debate on the draft strategy organized on June 25, 2019 and shared their views and input related to the document.
- ✓ Final comments and recommendations were also prepared on the draft *Law for primary education* by MCEC team and forwarded to the working group for consideration. They reflect the requirements from the implementation of MCEC projects. The draft Law for primary education is available for review and comments on the Unique National Electronic Registry of Regulations of the Republic North Macedonia, accessible [here](#).
- ✓ Members of the project team contributed to the USAID Youth Assessment Strategy and provided input on cross-sectoral assessment of the youth needs.

Public outreach

- ✓ A public presentation aimed to celebrate the achievements from the implemented joint student initiatives and youth initiatives and promote the importance of the project objectives, was organized. The event enabled more than 300 students, teachers, school directors and municipal representatives to share good practices among each other.
- ✓ In order to ensure that all relevant stakeholders are regularly updated with information about the course of project activities and accomplishments, a new project factsheet was developed and shared on all of the project's online outreach platforms, available [here](#).
- ✓ To share information about the successfully organized public presentation of joint student activities and youth actions, a [promotional video](#) was developed and shared on the project website and all social media platforms.
- ✓ Media newsletter was developed and shared with all media outlets, and is accessible [here](#).
- ✓ In order to inform the public about project activities and raise awareness about the importance of interethnic integration and civic ethos in schools, a [TV appearance](#) was organized on TV 21. A teacher and a student from the secondary school "Cvetan Dimov" in Skopje had an opportunity to share information about the recent activities in their school, supported by the project.
- ✓ The project website and social media platforms were regularly updated with information, news, photo galleries, videos, resources and materials.

Monitoring & Evaluation

- ✓ The process of collecting the data from the online questionnaires for students, part of joint curricular classes in four (4) selected secondary schools in City of Skopje, was finalized. 155 students from different languages of instruction answered the questionnaire. Following, a report from the results of the online questionnaire was developed and shared within the project team, providing relevant insights on the students' experiences from the implementation of joint curricular classes.
- ✓ Following, eight (8) focus group discussions were organized with students that followed joint curricular classes and 76 students from Macedonian and Albanian language of instruction took part. Hence, a report on the qualitative data was developed. The findings show that students' experiences from the joint curricular classes are quite positive and that almost all students express satisfaction and are very aware of the benefits from the participation in the joint curricular classes. The fact that the students are openly expressing their willingness to continue to participate in these classes in the future, they even recommend having more frequent joint curricular classes and would commend such classes to their peers is very encouraging. These findings will be shared with the teachers and school representatives at the workshop planned in July.
- ✓ Online questionnaires for evaluating the implementation of the schools' partnership and the schools' subject clubs activities were sent to the implementing schools. The questionnaires will be used to evaluate the process of organization and implementation of these school activities. Following, reports will be developed and shared with the schools.



Strengthening interethnic cohesion activities

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

- ✓ YEI team in partnership with MoES Council for Interethnic Integration in Education provided support to the State Education Inspectorate working group which started the process of reviewing and upgrading the instruments and School Performance Quality Indicators. Five (5) inspectors of this working group held a three day working meeting and continued with the review of the remaining areas in the manual for integral evaluation, which assesses the quality of education and interethnic integration activities in schools, including the increase of youth civic engagement in their communities.

Municipal Ethnic Integration Policies

- ✓ Continuous mentorship and support was provided to 15 municipalities which started the process of conceptualizing the municipal strategies for support interethnic integration and youth civic engagement in schools. Mentoring visits and online discussions with municipal officials were organized and guidelines in the process of finalizing the first draft were provided. The first drafts are being finalized and municipal representatives will present them at the working meeting which will take place mid-July, 2019.

Curricular activities in schools

- ✓ Representatives from City of Skopje continued to support directors and School Integration Teams (SITs) from four (4) secondary schools in Skopje to discuss the challenges and ways to further improve this process. In addition, coordinative meetings with additional secondary schools Cvetan Dimov, Dimitar Vlahov and Marie Curie-Sklodowska were organized, which are anticipated to be included in this process as of September 2019.

Creative workshops in schools

- ✓ Students and teachers from eight (8) selected secondary schools that implemented creative workshops and forum theatre were engaged in finalizing their final products and organize final events for their schoolmates, teachers, parents, municipal representatives and community members. In June, two (2) final events with youth actions were held in Stip and Lipkovo, marking the joint efforts of about 60 students to enhance interethnic collaboration and interaction. In Stip, students from Kole Nehtenin secondary school initiated a youth action to support students from the state secondary school for rehabilitation and special education needs "Iskra", Stip. From the sold tickets of their theatre performance at the Cultural House, and additionally from sold beverages and food prepared by teachers and students from Kole Nehtenin, the funds were gathered and donated to Iskra school in Stip. In Lipkovo, students from the secondary school Ismet Jashari performed the theatre piece tackling youth issues related to better education. Also, with the support of local private companies from Kumanovo, [students refurbished and colored the school arena in their school yard](#), which demonstrated joint efforts to take a youth action and make their school a better place.

Long-term extracurricular activities in schools subject clubs

- ✓ This period coincident with the end of the school year 2018/2019, hence the following schools implemented activities within school clubs, with students from different language of instruction:
 - In PS "Zhivko Brajkovski" from Butel, twenty four (24) students from Macedonian and Albanian language of instruction, members of the English language subject club, organized a presentation of the theatre play "*Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*" on the celebration of the school day. The event brought together other students, teachers, parents and municipality representatives. For several months, these students together with their teachers worked with great motivation and enthusiasm to create the "*Snow White and the Seven Dwarf*". They had weekly rehearsals, created the scenography for the play and costumes for the actors. This type of activities enabled the students to cooperate, to socialize and to create their own product using drama skills.
 - On June 07, 2019, twenty (20) students from Macedonian and Albanian language of instruction, members of art school subject club in PS "Kiril and Metodij v. Stajkovci, Gazi Baba, organized a final event during which they painted and beautified the school yard. This event was an opportunity for these students to present the products of their work to other students, teachers and parents. These activities enabled students to make new friends, to learn about art and to develop their imagination.

Long-term extracurricular activities in partnership

- ✓ On June 03, 2019, students from PS "Blazhe Koneski", Veles together with their friends from PS "Rajko Zhinzifov" from v. Dolno Orizari, Veles organized a final event, during which they presented the products of the implemented activities to other students, teachers and parents. Furthermore, the poetry collection "Jointly we grow and create" in Macedonian and Bosnian language was promoted by reading verses and poems written by students in both schools literature clubs.



Strengthening democratic culture & civic behaviors activities

Developing modules for Civic Education teachers

- ✓ Modules for grade 9 Civic Education curriculum were completed, including: Power Point presentations accompanied with guidelines for trainers, handouts and sample lesson scenarios. All materials were translated in the local languages of instruction. In preparation, the training facilitators had a one-day preparation meeting aimed at developing a common understanding of the training process and aligning the messages which participants should acquire from the training.

Trainings on the grade 9 Civic Education curriculum

- ✓ From June 18 to June 28, 2019 over 350 Civic Education teachers from all primary schools across the country attended training on the new Civic Education curriculum for grade 9. Trainings were organized in each of the eight (8) statistical regions of the country in order to make it easier for teachers to participate. The one-day trainings were intensive, with a focus on the aspects detected as challenging during the assessment of experiences from implementation of grade 8 Civic Education curriculum. Hence, they included a variety of teaching and learning methods and techniques (analysis of case studies, role play, debate, developing mind maps, reflection questions etc.). In addition, the method of guiding students in the process of developing student initiatives for positive change in the community was presented in a step-by-step manner and teachers received forms for conducting this type of activities. As a support in the process of lesson planning, teachers received samples of lesson plans, in the form of workshop scenarios, which can be easily implemented in the classroom. Trainings were assessed by participants as in-depth, effective and inspirational.

Participatory feedback from implementation of grade 8 Civic Education curriculum

- ✓ The process of collecting participatory feedback from students, teachers and parents on their experiences with grade 8 Civic Education curriculum is in its final phase. Five (5) focus groups were conducted with teachers which taught Civic Education in grade 8 during the 2018/2019 academic year. They provided feedback with regards to the practical implementation of the curriculum goals, the usefulness of the provided teaching materials, but also identified the challenging contents and learning results. Data collection through electronic questionnaires resulted in approximately 100 responses from teachers and over 400 responses from students. In addition, 30 parents completed a qualitative questionnaire reflecting on the experience of their child with the Civic Education subject in grade 8. During the following month, all data will be processed and analysed in order to compile an analysis on the first year of implementation of the new Civic Education concept. The analysis will serve as a guideline for developing teaching and learning aids to support the implementation of the curriculum and the overall civic education concept.

Baseline research on Civic Education in secondary schools

- ✓ Focus groups with Civic Education teachers from secondary schools were conducted, with a focus on the differences in experiences of teachers implementing the new modular Civic Education curriculum for secondary schools and teachers implementing the old curriculum. The process of qualitative data processing is ongoing. Analysed data will be translated into a report with findings and recommendations on the implementation of the subject in secondary schools.



Incentives to schools - Renovations

School renovations

- ✓ The required amount of cost share for schools and municipalities from the first year of the project was 10 %. Upon documentation of the cost share for these schools and municipalities in the renovation projects was completed for eleven (11) schools, it accounts for 33.88% of the total investment. The documentation of the cost share for the last and final twelfth (12) school will be completed next month.
- ✓ The project team work on preparation of engineering reports for schools selected for renovation in second project year.
- ✓ Component team in collaboration with consultants', experts in the relevant fields, started with the preparation of the second edition of Guidelines Manual for Maintenance of School Buildings with three new chapters: Maintenance of school hygiene, Maintenance of systems which using solar energy and Disaster risk management in the schools.