

Monthly report USAID Youth Ethnic Integration Project February 2019

Interconnected activities

Project collaboration activities

- ✓ On February 8, 2019 YEI representatives attended a Peace Corps' Partnership Fair organized as part of the annual training event for Peace Corps Volunteers and their counterparts from the organizations and schools where they serve. The overall goals of the fair were to connect Peace Corps Volunteers with local partners and inform them with the implementing programs and resources, and to encourage further collaboration at the local level. YEI representatives shared useful materials/brochures/handouts with the volunteers and counterparts and presented the ongoing activities and initiatives at the project level.

Online outreach tools

- ✓ In order to increase the visibility of project activities, increase public awareness about the project's goals and increase community engagement, the project uses the following online outreach tools:
 - website (www.mcgo.org.mk)
 - Facebook Page (www.facebook.com/mcgo.mcec.mk)
 - Instagram (https://www.instagram.com/mcgo_mcec_mk/)
 - mobile application EduMobMK (Android - <https://goo.gl/9wPRjq>; iOS - <https://goo.gl/t6KC2B>)
 - YouTube Channel ([Macedonian Civic Education Center - MCEC](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...))
- ✓ All online outreach platforms are regularly updated with information, news, photo galleries, videos, resources and materials about the course of project activities.
- ✓ A video which portrays the renovation process of PS "Aco Sopov" was developed and shared on the project website and social media platforms. The video showcases the learning and working environment in the school before and after the renovation. In addition, the video depicts the importance of leveraging local resources to ensure self-reliance of project activities. To view the video, please visit the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zJVvkOjCZYM>.
- ✓ To inform the public about the course of project activities and accomplishments, a project representative was a guest on the morning program on MTV1. During the TV appearance, information about the project activities focusing on interethnic integration between youth from different backgrounds was shared. In addition, the public was informed about the project activities aimed at developing democratic values and behaviors among students.

Organizing the student discussion with the Mayor of City of Skopje

- ✓ As a follow-up activity of the #YEIforPeaceDay event, a student discussion with the Mayor of City of Skopje was organized. In order to communicate their ideas for improving the Skopje City Park, young people from all primary schools from the Municipality of Butel met with the Mayor and handed him a letter with specific recommendations. The Mayor of the Municipality of Butel was also present at the event, highlighting the commitment of the Municipality of Butel to also support the students' initiative in the upcoming period.

Monitoring & Evaluation

- ✓ Reports on the students' experiences and perceptions before the start of joint curricular activities in the secondary schools: Brakja Miladinovci, Arseni Jovkov and Zdravko Cvetkovski were prepared. Reports were tailored for each school separately, reflecting the specific experiences and needs of students from the school and encompassing recommendations for every school, i.e. instructing on the process of structuring the joint classes, dealing with resistance from students to take part in the joint classes, etc.
- ✓ Based on the findings from the initial assessment (focus groups) of students-participants in school subject clubs, main findings and guidelines for the subject clubs were compiled and sent to project mentors, to inform teachers on how to adapt the activities to meet the students' needs. The guidelines encompass the topics of: types of activities preferred by students, structure (time and methods of implementation), proposed initiatives for positive change and potential challenges.
- ✓ Eight (8) monitoring visits were conducted to school subject clubs and one visit to a joint partnership activity. The monitoring reports indicate differences in the quality of implemented activities, with certain schools incorporating all required criteria for a successful YEI activity throughout the process (e.g. Arseni Jovkov-Skopje), while others – missing many of the key elements of a successful activity. Using the good practices of successful schools, guidance to other schools will be provided to raise the quality of implemented activities.
- ✓ Data collection on the experiences of grade eight (8) students with the civic education curriculum was completed and the processing and analysis of data is ongoing. The data will be incorporated in a joint report, combined with findings from the survey with teachers that will be used to provide recommendations for improving the realization of curriculum.
- ✓ The report from the survey on municipal representatives' perceptions about the need for implementation of activities addressing interethnic integration and civic initiatives, including the need municipalities to provide support for such activities was finalized. In addition, the recommendations on the potential entry points for the future activities with the municipalities were developed. These will support the project to better define and target activities with municipalities.

Upcoming Activities

- ➔ Maintaining the cooperation and coordination with key education institutions, donors and other projects.
- ➔ Regularly updating all project online platforms with information, news, photo galleries, videos, resources and materials.
- ➔ Developing a media newsletter and sharing it with all media outlets.
- ➔ Finalizing the report on experiences with the revised Civic Education curriculum, through incorporating results of the survey with students.
- ➔ Developing instrument for receiving participatory feedback on the Civic Education curriculum from parents of eight (8) grade students and selecting a group of parents for the research.
- ➔ Conducting 12 focus groups with students which will participate in the joint partnership activities.

Strengthened interethnic cohesion activities

Follow-up meetings in support of the City of Skopje's initiative for joint curricular classes in secondary schools

- ✓ YEI team in partnership with the City of Skopje, Ministry of Education and Science Council for Interethnic Integration in Education and OSCE conducted three follow-up meetings with the designated schools for implementation of joint curricular classes. In the three secondary schools Zdravko Cvetkovski, Arseni Jovkov and Braka Miladinovci, the team mainly focused on the timespan of joint curricular classes and the needed support to teachers that will be provided through mentoring. Having the School Integration Team members present at these meetings, their essential role in supporting these teachers and students, and providing all the necessary conditions and know-how for achieving best results was emphasized once more.
- ✓ The team also presented the results from the pre-assessment conducted in each of the secondary schools, which will serve as basis for tracking and measuring further results and the impact in advancing interethnic integration. After the completion of these meetings, schools will be mentored and supported by project team and partners in the process of organizing and implementation of joint curricular classes in this period.

Partnership with Municipalities - Engaging Youth to Lead by Example

- ✓ In order to provide additional in-depth support to municipalities to advance skills and knowledge on how to acknowledge and support students' ideas and transform them in concrete youth actions, project team selected five (5) municipalities: Gostivar, Kumanovo, Butel, Strumica and City of Skopje. The selection was made based on the regional geographic representation, multilingual character of municipalities, the legacy of partnership with the project and the good collaboration with schools in their territory.
- ✓ To achieve this, the project team started to organize *informative meetings for start-up planning*. The first meetings with municipal officials took place in municipality of Butel and Strumica. Three more meetings will be organized at the beginning of March 2019. At these meetings, the tailor made program for activities with students, the process of development of guidelines on municipality cooperation with SITs, municipal support to youth initiatives and the ways of approaching the local private sector and mobilize the domestic resources is discussed. In March, the project team will facilitate a capacity building program for municipal officials and SIT members that will strengthen their skills and boost their joint cooperation and with the local private sector.

Public Presentation from the Creative Workshops

- ✓ On February 25, 2019 youth from secondary school Zef Lush Marku, Skopje in the premises of Cultural Informative Center presented a performance drama "It's Enough!" as a result of long-term process of working and collaborating through the creative workshops. Together with their teachers, to parents and friends they demonstrated and expressed how youth can voice their interests and needs, and are able to make a positive change in their communities, regardless of ethnic or any other belonging.

Activities in partnership with school subject clubs

- ✓ With the beginning of the second semester of the academic year 2018/2019, the schools continue to implement activities with students within school subject clubs. Following are the schools that implemented activities during this month: SS "Gostivar", Gostivar, PS "Goce Delchev", Aerodrom, PS "Zhivko Brajkovski", Butel, SS "Ibrahim Temo", Struga, PS "Kiril i Metodij" v.Stajkovci, Gazi Baba, SS "Arseni Jovkov", City of Skopje, PS "Junus Emre" v.Lisichani, Plasnica, PS "Vasil Glavinov", Veles, PS "Pere Toshev" v.Dupjachani, Dolneni and PS "Josip Broz Tito", Valandovo. In order to provide support to schools during the process of implementation of the activities, the project team conducted field visit to schools.
- ✓ In PS "Zhivko Brajkovski" from Butel, 24 students from Macedonian and Albanian language of instruction, members of the English language subject club, conducted a joint meeting during which they worked in several groups. One group of students together with their teachers rehearsed the text for the play "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" in English, while the second group of students worked on creating the scenography for the play. Having a role of costume designers, the third group of students proposed ideas for creating the look for the play actors.
- ✓ Furthermore, in SS "Gostivar" from Gostivar, ethnically mixed group of students from drama school club, explored about the greatest Macedonian, Albanian and Turkish play writers.
- ✓ Students from photo-journalism school club in SS "Arseni Jovkov", City of Skopje, participated on a workshop organized with ethnically mixed group of students, facilitated by teachers from both languages of instruction (Macedonian and Albanian). The students shared examples and discussed on the topic of social injustice. They were very successful in identifying examples of social injustice in their environment. As a next assignment for the group, they are expected to depict social injustice through photography, followed by a research through interviews with persons in their vicinity to make a distinction between social justice and injustice.

- ✓ Students from Macedonian and Turkish language of instruction, members of history subject club in PS “Junuz Emre” v.Lisichani, Municipality of Plasnica, visited the “National Museum for Liberation War” in Kichevo and prepared a presentation regarding the conducted visit.
- ✓ The students from PS “Josip Broz Tito”, Municipality of Valandovo participated in activity within technical education subject club. At the beginning, they had an opportunity to take part in a warm-up game, in which they discussed favorite sports players. Afterwards, they used different tool kits (solar panels, robotic machines), to build improvised robotics.
- ✓ In PS “Vasil Glavinov” from Veles, students from art school club designed and painted cards with motives celebrating the International Women Day.

Activities in partnership

- ✓ Following the orientation meeting, during which the schools selected to implement activities in partnership become familiarized with the administrative regulation of payment procedures, and methodology for successful implementation of the activities, they commenced with preparation for implementation of the approved activities. The schools were mostly focused on procurement of the necessary materials for implementation of the activities. In order to support schools in the process of preparation and implementation of the activities, the project team conducted continuous communication with the schools via email and telephone.
- ✓ Partnership activities with students from different languages of instruction were implemented between partnering schools PS “Dimitar Makedonski” from Aerodrom and PS “Rametula Ameti” from Zhelino. Twenty students from both partner schools participated on a workshop during which the students had an opportunity to get to know each other better. Additionally, student’s from Macedonian language of instruction from PS “Aco Shopov”, Municipality of Butel worked jointly with students from Albanian language of instruction from PS “Liman Kaba”, Municipality of Butel on developing a brochure about the background of the schools, the type of activities implemented and structure of the schools using the application Publisher.

Upcoming Activities

- ➔ Implementation of the creative workshops with students in eight (8) selected secondary schools from project year 2.
- ➔ Regular meetings and coordination with the MoES Working Group for Interethnic Integration in Education.
- ➔ Follow up meetings with teachers, School Integration Team members and directors from selected secondary schools for joint curricular classes.
- ➔ Providing support to selected school for implementation of long-term extracurricular activities in school subject clubs and organizing field visits to back the implementation.
- ➔ Providing support to selected schools for implementation of extracurricular activities in partnership and organizing field visits to back the implementation.

Strengthened democratic culture & civic behaviours activities

Revision of implementation of Civic Education subject

- ✓ The component is in the process of developing the strategy and next steps regarding the civic education reform. The project team worked on the plans for proper implementation of the Civic Education curricula in primary and secondary schools. As a starting point, the National Civic Education Concept will be developed. The rationale behind it is that on a country level, the document will give answers to:
 - Why there is a need for reform in the field of Civic Education;
 - What are the benefits from the Civic Education subject in a contemporary manner;
 - What kind of civic competences, students should poses after completing the formal education;
 - Civic education in curricula and cross-curricular activities;
 - Civic ethos as a school environment for encouraging student initiatives.
- ✓ The project team conducted an initial meeting with representatives from Bureau for Development of Education (BDE) and civic education practitioners where the plan of activities for 2019 was shared and concept and timeframe for development of the National Civic Education Concept was agreed.

Students' Guidebook for CivEd in grade eight (8)

- ✓ The project team worked on the final adjustments for the students' Guidebook for Civic Education for grade eight (8). The publication was finalized and will be printed in Macedonian, Albanian, Turkish and Serbian language and distributed to all primary schools. BDE will inform all schools and post the Guidebook on their web-site for public use for teachers, students and parents.

Civic Education Teachers' Certification Event

- ✓ The Event for Certification of Civic Education Teachers will be organized to mark the process of advancing the skill of Civic Education teachers based on the revised curricula for grade eight (8). In the reporting period, the project team initiated the preparations for the event that will gather approximately 350 primary school Civic Education teachers as well as representatives from the educational institutions, schools and civil society organizations. During the event, BDE will award certificates to all primary school teachers who participated in the trainings for implementation of the new Civic Education curricula for grade eight (8).

Upcoming Activities

- ➔ Organizing meetings with the expert team for advancing Civic Education subject in primary and secondary education.
- ➔ Developing the National Civic Education Concept for primary education.
- ➔ Initiating the process of developing a concept for implementation of youth initiatives on the school and community level.
- ➔ Finalizing the preparatory process for printing the Guidebook for Civic Education for grade eight (8) students.
- ➔ Organizing the public event to award the Civic Education teachers with certificates for successful completion of the trainings for implementation of the new Civic Education curricula for grade eight (8).
- ➔ Conducting surveys and interviews for the *Baseline research for Civic Education in secondary school*.

Incentives to schools / Renovations

School renovations

- ✓ The renovation activities were completed in two schools from the first year of implementation and the technical acceptances of the completed activities were organized in the following schools: PS "Marshal Tito", Municipality of Strumica, and PS "Goce Delchev", Municipality of Bitola.
ü On 8 February, 2019, Request for Offers for Renovation of primary school "Nikola Karev," Municipality of Radovish= selected in the first year of implementation was announced in two daily newspapers ("Nova Makedonija" and "Koha")= and on the following web page: www.mcgo.org.mk.
- ✓ On February 22, 2019, the evaluation committee organized a public opening of the received bids for selection of a construction company for renovation of primary school "Nikola Karev", Municipality of Radovish. Interviews were conducted with representatives from each of the three (3) lowest price bidders and the project team prepared the necessary documentation for approval of selected construction company. The documentation was sent to the Contracting and Agreement Officer in the USAID Regional Contracting Office in Kosovo, who officially approved the selected construction company.
- ✓ On February 25, 2019 requests for quotations was sent to the three (3) highest ranking companies for supervision of the renovation project in PS "Nikola Karev", Municipality of Radovis. The deadline for submission of bids is March 4, 2019.
- ✓ The documentation for cost-share contribution of schools and municipalities in the renovation process (financial or in-kind) was prepared for the following schools: PS "Andrea Savevski Kjikjish", Municipality of Tetovo, SS "Kuzman Shapkarev", Municipality of Bitola and SS "Jane Sandanski", Municipality of Strumica.
- ✓ Field visit to PS "Edinstvo Bashkimi Birlik", Municipality of Gostivar was conducted, during which the project team= jointly with the School Renovation Team (SRT) representatives defined the renovation items/positions for= reconstruction of the sport hall.
- ✓ The project team organized technical acceptance of the completed activities for renovation in primary school "Marshal= Tito", Municipality of Strumica and PS Goce Delcev, Municipality of Bitola.
- ✓ On February 13, 2019 a public call for selection of 12 schools for second project year was announced and all 450= primary and secondary schools from 81 municipalities were invited to apply. The open call was posted on the MCEC's= web site in all four (4) languages of instruction. For more information please visit the following site:= <http://www.mcgo.org.mk/uncategorized/call-for-application-in-the-component-3-incentives-to-schools-renovations-for-2019/>. The deadline for submission of application by school was February 27, 2019. The process of administration of= application is on-going.
- ✓ The project team commenced with the preparation for the upcoming capacity building workshop for school staff from= renovated schools, on developing disaster risk management skills. For this purpose, the draft module for the workshop= was prepared. The aim of this workshop is to train school staff and students to develop plans, procedures, methods and= activities in case of disaster risk.
- ✓ The project team worked on researching the standards and costs needed for maintaining the schools' hygiene. The= results of the research will be presented at the upcoming capacity building workshop for school staff from renovated= schools.

Upcoming Activities

- ➔ Organizing technical acceptance with representatives of selected construction company, supervising company and representatives of the school renovation team from the primary school "Braka Miladinovci", Municipality of Struga.
- ➔ Organizing preconstruction meeting with representatives of selected construction company, supervising company and representatives of school renovation team from the primary school "Nikola Karev", Municipality of Radovis.
- ➔ Signing of "Memorandum of Understanding" for the renovation project in PS "Edinstvo-Bashkimi", Municipality of Gostivar.
- ➔ Organizing workshop for school maintenance for school renovation team representatives (school technical staff, school director and school secretaries).
- ➔ Evaluation of school applications for the second project year by the Component working group according to the already established criteria for school selection.
- ➔ Selection of 12 schools for renovation for second project year.
- ➔ Purchasing of toolboxes for 12 renovated schools during the first project year.