

Monthly report USAID Youth Ethnic Integration Project January 2019

Interconnected activities

Project collaboration activities

- ✓ USAID Macedonia approach is pivoting. The goal is to change the strategy of project implementation without changing the vision. Hence, to draw a parallel and identify areas that meet the new requirements that lead to self-reliance, the project team reviewed the project activities through the lens of incentivizing country's commitment and capacity, leveraging partnerships in implementation and private sector engagement and completed the USAID questionnaire - Journey to Self-Reliance.
- ✓ The new donor strategy needs to be addressed and planned in all project activities. Therefore, following the USAID Senior Education Specialist's presentation of areas that need to be tackled, the project team worked on defining the plan of activities for 2019.
- ✓ The project team participated at the coordination meeting for designing the *National strategy for development of the concept for a common (one) society and interculturalism in the Republic of Macedonia*. Organized by the Government of the Republic of Macedonia, the cluster for education discussed about the challenges, but also about the steps that civil society and institutions have undertaken so far. Additionally, three (3) priorities were emphasized that are the main pillars of the education strategy, i.e. 1) increasing and strengthening the communication between students on the school level; 2) advancing the curriculum for teaching and learning languages (Macedonian and Albanian language); and 3) revision of textbooks through introducing elements that strengthen intercultural learning in all subjects.

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.
- ✓ The production of a video portraying the renovation process in PS "Aco Sopov" in Butel is ongoing. The video will depict the learning and working conditions in the school before and after the renovation. In addition, it will be used to showcase the importance of domestic resource mobilization in the school and municipality to ensure self-reliance.
- ✓ A short brochure on how to organize and implement joint classes with students from different ethnic backgrounds was produced. The brochure will be shared with teachers from the selected four secondary vocational schools from Skopje in which joint curricular activities will be implemented until the end of this school year.

Organizing the student discussion with the Mayor of City of Skopje

- ✓ The preparations for the upcoming student discussion with the Mayor of City of Skopje are ongoing. The event will be organized at the beginning of February 2019, aiming to give an opportunity to the students from all primary schools from the municipality of Butel to share their ideas for beautifying the Skopje City Park with the Mayor.

Monitoring & Evaluation

- ✓ The data collection process on the experiences of civic education teachers with the new civic education curriculum was completed. Total number of 161 teachers responded to the electronic questionnaire. Their responses were processed and a report with the findings was written. The findings indicate that the vast majority of teachers have positive experiences with the new curriculum and the students' Brochure; they consider the outlined learning goals to be realistic and the proposed teaching and learning methods to be appropriate for achieving the goals. However, they need additional support with the teaching methods and with methodologies for supporting students to initiate activities for positive changes in the community.
- ✓ In addition, a questionnaire that will gather the students' experiences with the revised Civic Education curriculum was developed by the project team. The link to the electronic questionnaire translated in students' languages of instruction was sent to civic education teachers, instructing them to sample one eight grade class in which they teach. The data collection process is ongoing and is expected to be finalized by mid-February. The findings will be used to inform policy makers about eventual need for further revision of curriculum, teaching and learning materials and resources.
- ✓ The pre-test questionnaires from the selected four secondary schools from the City of Skopje, given to students to assess their experiences from the joint student activities and perceptions of the 'other' before beginning with the joint curricular activities, were collected. The total number of questionnaires is 292. Data were entered into a database and are being analyzed for each school separately, in order to inform each school on the findings and provide recommendations on the most appropriate structure and methods for conducting the joint lessons. In January, the school report and feedback for ASUS Boro Petrushevski was prepared and shared with the school.

- ✓ The 12 focus group transcripts from the pre-assessment with students-participants in the school subject clubs were received and are being used to inform teachers on the students' preferences with regards to the structure and organization of the clubs. This will contribute in the process of adapting the activities in the school subject clubs to meet the students' needs.
- ✓ Data from the survey with municipalities was processed and a final report was prepared. The report will inform the project about to the progress of each municipality with regards to interethnic integration in education and developing youth civic competences. According to these findings, the project will develop a plan for cooperating 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.
- ➔ Organizing a student discussion with the Mayor of City of Skopje to present ideas for beautifying the Skopje City Park.
- ➔ Organizing a TV appearance to present youth activities in project areas.
- ➔ Conducting preparations for developing a series of animated videos for supporting the implementation of Civic Education in schools and communities.
- ➔ Making preparations for trainings for media literacy for teachers and students from the first year of implementation.
- ➔ Making preparations for a "Youth Action" event that will engage youth in community actions.
- ➔ Preparing reports on the students' experiences and perceptions before beginning with joint curricular activities in the secondary schools: Brakja Miladinovci, Arseni Jovkov and GUC Zdravko Cvetkovski.
- ➔ Finalizing the report from the survey with municipalities and develop a plan for cooperation with them.
- ➔ Finalizing the process of data collection on the experiences of students with the civic education curriculum, processing and analyzing the data.

Strengthened interethnic cohesion activities

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

- ✓ To further support the process of implementation of joint curricular classes, YEI team in partnership with City of Skopje and OSCE proceeded with organizing follow-up meetings in all selected schools respectively. On January 29, 2019, the first follow-up meeting was organized in SS "Boro Petrushevski". The meeting included a discussion and sharing of experiences regarding: teachers' engagement on the training for strengthening the capacities for successful implementation of joint classes, the role and support of the School Integration Team in supporting the process of implementation of joint classes, presentation of results from the pre-assessment conducted in the secondary schools from City of Skopje and a discussion about the process of mentoring and support for teachers that implement joint classes with students. Three additional follow-up meetings will be held at the beginning of February, as per the dynamics of implementation of the joint curricular classes in the selected schools.

Long-term extracurricular activities in schools

- ✓ Following the selection of 22 schools with one language of instruction which will be supported to implement activities in partnership, the project team organized an orientation meeting with representatives from these schools on January 25, 2019. This meeting was divided in four (4) sessions, covering the following topics: program and administrative guidance; monitoring and evaluation of the activities; media coverage and social media and group work. During this meeting, the facilitators shared with the participants the necessary information regarding the administrative regulation of the payment procedure, as well as information regarding the process of monitoring and evaluation of the implemented activities. Furthermore, project web site, Facebook profile and mobile application "EduMobMK" were presented. Moreover, during the final session that included group work, the schools were provided with support and guidance to further develop the proposed activities in the application that will lead to successful implementation of the approved activities and presentation of achievements in front of their communities. Following this meeting, the schools will commence with implementation of activities with students from different languages of instruction.

Upcoming Activities

- ➔ Regular meetings and coordination with the MoES Working Group for Interethnic Integration in Education.
- ➔ Mentoring and support of teachers, School Integration Team members and directors from selected secondary schools for joint curricular classes..
- ➔ Providing support to selected schools 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.
- ➔ Support and implementation of the creative workshops and forum theatre with students in selected secondary schools.

Strengthened democratic culture & civic behaviours activities

- ✓ With the start of January, the project team organized few meetings with the representatives from BDE regarding future activities for strengthening democratic culture & civic behaviors among youth. The activities that follow will round up the process for improvement of Civic Education for grade eight (8) and will continue with the activities that advance the Civic Education subject for grade nine (9). As a result, activities were coordinated with BDE and an initial plan was developed.
- ✓ In order to meet current students' and teachers' needs in the implementation of Civic Education subject, the next or the fourth (4) theme *Religion, media and art in civil society* was published and disseminated among all primary schools through BDE web site http://bro.gov.mk/docs/osnovno-obrazovanje/Broshura_za_gragjansko_obrazovani_e-Tema_4_alb.pdf. While at the same time, the process of preparation the Brochure for Civic Education for printing is ongoing. The project team is writing the introduction for the publication and preparing the specifications and adjustments for the elements before printing. The Ministry of Education and Science will take over the publication of future textbooks for Civic Education, thus ensuring self-reliance.
- ✓ Meeting with the BDE Sector for Research in Education was conducted for developing an action plan regarding the Baseline study for Civic Education for secondary schools. At the meeting, feedback about the previously developed questioner was shared and timeframe of the activities was agreed. Furthermore, the implementation of other research tools, such as interviews and focus groups was discussed. Representatives from BDE discussed about their responsibilities in the process of collecting data and publishing the report while developing the timeframe of activities.

Upcoming Activities

- ➔ Organizing meetings with expert team for advancing Civic Education subject in primary and secondary 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 Brochure for Civic Education for students.
- ➔ Initiating the process of issuing certificated to primary school teachers that participated in the Civic Education trainings.
- ➔ Conducting survey and interviews for the Baseline research for Civic Education in secondary school.

Incentives to schools / Renovations

School renovations

- ✓ The renovation activities that were an obligation of the Youth Ethnic Integration Project were completed in five schools. The technical acceptances of the completed activities were organized in the following schools: SS "Jane Sandanski", Municipality of Strumica, PS "Kiril i Metodij" in v.Romanovce, Municipality of Kumanovo, PS "Aco Shopov", Municipality of Butel, SS "Kuzman Shapkarev", Municipality of Bitola and PS "Vera Ciriviri Trena" in v.Debreshte, Municipality of Dolneni. In these schools, the works that are an obligation of the schools and the municipalities will be completed during the upcoming period.
- ✓ The project team conducted visits to two schools where the activities for reconstruction are ongoing. As a result, installation of a plate floor (slab) on the second floor of the school building in PS "Marsal Tito", Municipality of Strumica and reconstruction of toilets, floors and doors in the school building in PS "Goce Delcev" in Municipality of Bitola will be conducted.
- ✓ Donation agreements were signed between the MCEC and school directors from SS "Jane Sandanski", Municipality of Strumica, PS "Kiril i Metodij" v.Romanovce, Municipality Kumanovo, SS "Kuzman Shapkarev", Municipality of Bitola, PS "Vera Ciriviri Trena" v.Debreshte, Municipality of Dolneni and PS "Aco Shopov", Municipality of Butel. The purpose of donation agreement is to hand over the renovated property from Project to the schools.
- ✓ Coordination meeting with representatives from Municipality of Gostivar and PS "Edinstvo Bashkimi Birkil" was organized by the project team. During the meeting the priorities for renovation of this school and the participation of the school and the municipality in the renovation were defined.
- ✓ The renovation project "Adaptation of an open space into a classroom in the school" for PS "Nikola Karev", Municipality of Radovis was approved.
- ✓ Memorandum of Understanding for renovation of SS "Nikola Karev," Municipality of Radovish prepared by the Project was signed by the MCEC Executive director, Project Chief of Party, mayor of Municipality of Radovish and the school director.

Upcoming Activities

- ➔ Organizing technical acceptances with representatives of selected construction companies, supervising companies and representatives of school renovation teams from the following schools: PS "Marshal Tito", Municipality of Strumica, PS "Brakja Miladinovci", Municipality of Struga and PS "Goce Delchev", Municipality of Bitola.
- ➔ Signing of Memorandum of Understanding with the director of selected primary school "Edinstvo Bashkimi Birlik" from Gositvar and Mayor of Municipality of Gostivar.
- ➔ Preparation of Requests for Offers for Renovation of PS "Nikola Karev", Municipality of Radovish and PS "Edinstvo Bashkimi Birlik" from Municipality of Gostivar, announcing the request for offers for selection of construction companies in two newspapers and MCEC webpage and selection of construction companies.
- ➔ Selection of consulting companies for supervision of renovation in Nikola Karev", Municipality of Radovish and PS "Edinstvo Bashkimi Birlik" from Municipality of Gostivar.
- ➔ Preparing the training materials for maintenance of renovated schools and school disaster management.
- ➔ Announcing the request for quotation for procurement of tool box for school maintenance.