

Monthly report USAID Youth Ethnic Integration Project (YEI) May 2018

Interconnected activities

Youth initiatives and joint student activities program

- ✓ A total of 16 schools implemented activities with students, supported within the youth initiatives and joint student activities program. The project team aims to provide maximum support to the schools in planning and implementation of activities and has therefore ensured presence and visits to the schools both in the process of planning of the activities as well as during the implementation of the activities. Thus, support visits were conducted in the following schools: PS "Aco Shopov" from Butel, PS "Zhivko Brajkovski" from Butel and SS "Kiril Pejchinovikj" from Tetovo.
- ✓ As a result, around 200 students were engaged in various types of extracurricular activities such as: excursions, discussions on different themes, creative workshops and similar, which enable them to cooperate and communicate together, while creating products.

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/9wPRjg>; 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.
- ✓ Furthermore, following the selection of three winners in each category of the online photo contest for promoting interethnic integration in education and civic and democratic values among youth, the prizes were given to all six winning teachers.

Coordination and collaboration activities

- ✓ A series of activities and meetings were organized for the purpose of defining activities to be implemented in the upcoming period and be part of the second project year Annual Work Plan.
- ✓ To coordinate the implementation of the project plan and outline future project activities, Macedonian Civic Education Center and the partner organization Youth Educational Forum organized planning and coordination meetings.
- ✓ Recommendations for specific amendments to the Draft Law for Primary Education developed by Macedonian Civic Education Center team were forwarded to the Ministry of Education and Science within this period. Members of project teams within the organization recommended amendments to address requirements rising from implementation of past and current activities and projects.

The voice of YEI

- ✓ *Youth Talks* events during the month of May were held in the four (4) remaining municipalities – Struga, Butel, Bitola and Radovis with schools involved in the first project year.
- ✓ In Struga and Butel, youth from primary and secondary schools had the opportunity to be actively involved and discuss issues related to interethnic integration and civic responsibility activities with their Mayors.
- ✓ In Bitola and Radovis, presentations of activities that were implemented in schools through YEI support which include advancement of interethnic cohesions and youth civic initiatives were made. These presentations enabled peer-to-peer learning, discussions about different activities, including sharing of new ideas for future initiatives at the school level.

Monitoring & Evaluation

- ✓ In order to get acquainted with the overall project activities, the M&E team visited different project events: SITs meetings in Skopje, ribbon-cutting event in Kavadarci, Youth Talks and school presentation events in Struga, Butel, Radovish, Bitola, Kumanovo and Dolneni.
- ✓ Moreover, evaluation data from 26 students-participants at the *Youth Talks* events in Bitola and Radovish were collected.
- ✓ In addition, the data from the e-survey and focus group discussions was analyzed and integrated into a draft version of the baseline report for the first year of project implementation.

Upcoming Activities

- ➔ Providing support to schools in implementation of activities supported by youth initiatives and joint student activities program.
- ➔ Completing the baseline report after incorporating the feedback from the YEI team.
- ➔ Developing Kobo M&E tools for creative workshops and forum theatre final presentation activities.
- ➔ Completing insertion of data in the school database.
- ➔ Regularly updating all project online platforms with information, news, photo galleries, videos, resources and materials.

Strengthened interethnic cohesion activities

Working meetings with School Integration Teams from all school

- ✓ In May, working meetings with the School Integration Teams (SIT) from schools all over the country continued to be implemented. Hence, eight (8) meetings were held that included about ten (10) primary and secondary schools per meeting. As in the previous working meetings held during March and April with other schools, the role of School Integration Teams in schools and changes in their role at different levels were discussed. Some schools actively continued to foster partnerships with other schools, with the support of the municipalities, whereas there are schools that could not continue organizing activities due to the lack of funds and less support by the municipality. On the other hand, representatives of SITs in one voice acknowledged that their role is vital in providing support to teachers and students for interethnic integration in education process. Furthermore, they stated that activities should be more creative and encourage students to be involved in the design of the activities when annual plans are prepared, involve more parents in activities, have more support from the municipalities, etc.
- ✓ Also, the representatives of School Integration Teams at these meetings shared their ideas and plans related to curricular and extracurricular activities for joint student activities that are planned for this and the next school year in their schools. The working meetings are organized in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science and key education institutions, whose representatives are involved in facilitating such meetings.

Mentoring of curricular and extracurricular joint student activities by YEI mentors

- ✓ The implementations of different curricular and extracurricular joint student activities, supported by Youth Ethnic Integration (YEI) Project, were visited by the YEI staff.
- ✓ In primary school "Zivko Brajkovski" students jointly identified the problems they face on a daily basis, and they developed portfolios of identified problems. Each portfolio described a different challenge that young people face, and offered potential solutions. Based on their proposals, youth prepared posters, educational messages and cardboard human-shaped figures, and presented the results of their work in the exhibition in a public space before the Butel municipality building. The Mayor and the representatives of the municipality attended the public presentation and closely followed the presentations of young people. In this school, youth and teachers together, also organized an environmental activity. Additionally, students created a solar system which is installed in the hall of the school.
- ✓ In the primary school "Aco Sopov" in Butel, students worked together and designed murals in schools. Whereas in secondary school "Kiril Pejcinovik" in Tetovo, students together organized a sport activity- handball competition.

Coordination meeting with MoES Working Group for Interethnic Integration in Education

- ✓ A representative of YEI team and the President of the Working Group for Interethnic Integration in Education held a meeting with the Mayor of Skopje, Mr. Petre Silegov. The aim of the meeting was to discuss the role of the Working Group, increase the active involvement of the secondary schools in Skopje and undertake steps that will facilitate the process of interethnic integration in schools. At the meeting, the City of Skopje together with the Ministry of Education and Science and YEI project team decided to initiate joint classes in one selected pilot secondary school. Starting from September, this will continue to be discussed and initiated jointly with the City of Skopje.
- ✓ A coordination meeting with the representatives of the Working Group was held. At this meeting the ongoing activities, such as working meetings with SITs, implementation of curricular and extracurricular activities of school through the YEI support and grant giving program of the MoES were shared.

Creative workshops in schools

- ✓ Mid May a final public event was organized resulting from the creative workshops that took place for several months in eight (8) secondary schools throughout Macedonia within the USAID Youth Ethnic Integration Project. The first public event took place in "Rilindja" secondary schools in the village of Zitose, Dolneni. The group of students participating in the creative workshops performed a theatre play. The play presented the problem of underage marriages and was viewed by more than 100 guests, including the Mayor of the Municipality of Dolneni.
- ✓ The purpose of the creative workshops involving the young people is to offer creative tools and innovative approaches that will contribute to strengthening their participation in the interethnic dialogue in both the school and the wider community and raising their civic awareness and democratic behavior.

Upcoming Activities

- ➔ Organizing a working meeting with the MoES Working Group for Interethnic Integration in Education in Struga.
- ➔ Holding preparation and coordination meetings with Municipal Officials and organizing capacity building for Municipal Officials.
- ➔ Making preparations to provide additional support to the new established SITs in the schools across Macedonia.

Strengthened democratic culture & civic behaviours activities

Revision of teaching plan and programs for Civic Education subject

- ✓ The Bureau for Development of Education selected external experts as members of the working group responsible for revision of grade eight (8) Civic Education subject curricula. These members were selected from the pool of experts, which applied to the announced public call by the BDE. Following, the group's efforts were directed to improving the Civic Education content, through working meetings and individual work. Thus, the Civic Education curricula for grade eight (8) was developed.
- ✓ The working group used the *Document for students' civic competences* as basis for developing the Civic Education curricula for grade eight (8). Accordingly, objectives, contents, terms, methods and activities, and learning outcomes are described for each of six (6) defined themes.
- ✓ Following, the draft Civic Education curricula for grade eight (8) was forwarded to the members of the expert team responsible for improvement of the Civic Education for primary and secondary school for feedback. Upon reviewing the document, the members of the expert team will share their comments and suggestions for improvement. The Civic Education curricula for grade eight (8) will be finalized, after incorporating the received feedback.

Draft version of the Document for student's civic competences finalized

- ✓ The draft version of the *Document for student's civic competences* was finalized and disseminated among educational experts, with the aim of soliciting feedback. Key stakeholders in education will review the document and sent comments, after which the document will be complete and prepare for adoption.

Upcoming Activities

- ➔ Finalizing the Civic Education curricula for grade eight (8).
- ➔ Starting the process for development of Civic Education curricula for grade nine (9).
- ➔ Finalizing the working version of the *Document for student's civic competences*.
- ➔ Outlining the process for creation of a Manual for students for Civic Education subject.
- ➔ Initiating the process of conducting the Baseline Research for the Civic Education Content in Secondary Schools.

Incentives to schools / Renovations

School renovations

- ✓ A field visit to the primary music school "Lazo Micev Rale" in Kavadarci was organized by the team, in order to record materials for the success story video that highlights the successful school renovation activities.
- ✓ Ribbon-cutting ceremony inaugurating a new concert hall and marking the completion of renovation activities in the Music School "Lazo Micev Rale" was held. The event was attended by USAID Deputy Assistant Administrator for Europe and Eurasia Gretchen Birkle joined U.S. Defense Attaché Lieutenant Colonel Eric Rice, Mayor of Kavadarci Mitko Jancev, representative of Ministry of Education and Science and representatives of USAID's Youth Ethnic Integration Project. The concert hall and school renovation activities were financed jointly by USAID and the U.S. European Command in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science, the Municipality of Kavadarci, and the local business community.
- ✓ In addition, the component team provided support to schools in implementation of *The voice of YEI* activities.

Upcoming Activities

- ➔ Organizing field visits in schools selected for renovation.
- ➔ Establishing the School Renovation Teams in schools selected for renovation.
- ➔ Making the preparations for the training of School Renovation Teams.
- ➔ Providing support to schools in implementation of activities supported by youth initiatives and joint student activities program.