

USAID Youth Ethnic Integration Project MONTHLY REPORT - *July 2020*



Interconnected activities

Project collaboration activities

- ✓ The Concept for distance learning in primary and secondary education was adopted by the Minister of Education and Science on July 21, 2020. The document is available on [MoES webpage](#), it presents a framework for organizing distance education and a basis for establishing a national platform for distance learning, including its application on the national level. Youth Ethnic Integration project in partnership with UNICEF supported 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 to develop the Concept comprised of three (3) key areas: 1) Education policies, 2) IT/technical support and 3) Pedagogy. The document endured a public debate and following the process of incorporating the received feedback from the wider education community, the document before submitting for adoption.
- ✓ Macedonian Civic Education Center also contributed to the development of a *Plan and protocols for reopening of schools for the academic year 2020/2021*. Namely, representatives of project teams provided feedback to the draft document developed by a working group coordinated by the Bureau for Development of Education. The document aims to provide models of instruction and guidelines for reopening the schools in September 2020.

Public outreach

- ✓ The design of three (3) publications, including Civic Education research for secondary schools, e-booklet with good practices and the Conceptual Framework of Civic Education in primary education, was finalized and will be published in the upcoming period.
- ✓ 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.

Monitoring & Evaluation

- ✓ The report about teachers' and students' perceptions on CivEd curricula revisions was finalized. The data gathered through an e-survey assessed: the experience of teachers and grade eight (8) and nine (9) students with the curriculum contents; the potential for achieving the required competences; the variety of teaching and learning methods; conceptualization, planning and implementation of the CivEd Open Days, etc. Based on the findings, the experiences of students and teachers are quite positive, and the CivEd materials and contents are rated as very useful.
- ✓ A document with recommendations for future activities of school subject clubs is being prepared. The document will consist of students' expectations regarding future activities within the school subject clubs and it is based on the findings from the survey conducted with students towards the end of the school year 2019/20. The document will be shared with all schools, in order to ensure that the future activities are compatible with students' needs.
- ✓ In order to assess teachers-implementers' needs with regards to implementation of activities within joint curricular classes, a questionnaire is being prepared. The questionnaire will be used for collecting information and analyze the potential need of additional support by the project, in order to ensure more successful implementation of activities in the school year 2020/21.
- ✓ The project provided support to Ministry of Education and Science Commission for Interethnic Integration in Education in collecting data from schools, regarding the implemented IIE activities in the academic year 2018/2019. At the end of the process, the questionnaire was successfully completed by a total of 330 schools, of which 262 primary schools and 68 secondary schools.



Strengthening interethnic cohesion activities

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

- ✓ The project in coordination with the MoES CIIE analyzed the gathered data from the questionnaire shared with all primary and secondary schools related to the implemented IIE activities in school year 2018/2019. After developing a report based on the findings, the project team supported the MoES CIIE

to organize an online working meeting held on 24 July, 2020 using ZOOM platform. The aim of the meeting was to share and discuss the findings assembled from schools, using the questionnaire aimed at gathering data for MoES CIIE PMP. Based on these findings, the project team will provide support for preparation of next steps that will focus on discussion and coordination of the members of the MoES CIIE in developing and adjusting activities in their Annual Work Plan for 2020/2021, anticipated to take place after mid-August. In addition, the project team together with two members of the MoES CIIE attended two coordination meetings with the working group for development of ICE standards in the education system, a process led in partnership the MCEC's Pestalozzi Project for Strengthening Multi-ethnic Cooperation in Municipalities.

Municipal interethnic integration policies

- ✓ On July 6, 2020 the project team organized an online working meeting and gathered all mentors that are included in the process of developing municipal strategies and policies. The aim of this meeting was to discuss the progress of developing the policies at the municipal level, exchange good practices of collaboration and discuss how to address challenges, which are different in each municipality. Also, mentors agreed on activities that may inspire and motivate municipal education officials or presidents' of the Commissions to dedicate more to this process, especially during the pandemic outbreak. In the forthcoming period, the project team together with YEI mentors will organize informal online meetings with representatives of the selected fifteen (15) municipalities. Additionally, a questionnaire which will provide feedback on the needed support in carrying out this process will be disseminated to designated municipal officials. Moreover, YEI mentors supported by the project continuously provided mentorship to designated municipal officials.

Engaging youth to lead by example

- ✓ In coordination with Youth Educational Forum (YEF) the project team completed the process of implementation of activities with students that will lead to the final step of organizing Youth Actions in two (2) selected municipalities (Struga and Veles). The Youth Actions are planned once schools are reopened and the project team in partnership with the municipalities will discuss the form of implementation, based on the conditions in the country. In the course of July, the project team together with YEF team started this process in two new municipalities: Gevgelija and Prilep. The process included coordination with municipalities (municipal education officials), selection of schools, coordination with directors and teachers, and similar. On July 23, 2020 a coordination meeting with school management representatives and teachers from selected schools from Gevgelija was held. The aim was to discuss the flow and the concept of workshops that will be organized with students from selected schools in Gevgelija. In addition, the same preparatory process started in the municipality of Prilep.

Curricular activities in schools

- ✓ After the working meeting held in June with teachers of six (6) secondary schools that organize joint curricular classes, in which was discussed the process, the outcomes and the challenges during COVID-19 outbreak, and how to improve this process - the project team in partnership with the City of Skopje started preparations for a capacity building workshop for teachers implementers. This capacity building activity is meant to support teachers in improving their skills and knowledge on the use of digital tools, if the start of the school year 2020/2021 still requires online teaching and work from home. This activity is anticipated to be held in the last week of August 2020.

Long-term extracurricular activities in school subject clubs

- ✓ The project team communicated with representatives from schools with approved applications and explored possibilities schools to continue organizing activities with their students in subject clubs during the summer holiday. This is due to the fact that students will be most of the time at home and will have the opportunities to work and be engaged in the project activities.



Strengthening democratic culture & civic behaviors activities

Encouraging civic ethos in schools

- ✓ At the beginning of July 2020 an online meeting with all 23 BDE advisors was held in order to summarize the experiences from the meetings with phase 2 schools and determine the next steps. They include continuing the workshops with phase 1 schools, which were terminated in March as a result of the lockdown, through blended learning models. A Google Drive folder was shared with the BDE advisors in order to collect suggestions for adaptation of the workshop materials (presentations and worksheets). Throughout the month, BDE advisors provided suggestions which were summarized and integrated by the project team. The team is currently finalizing the revision of the workshop modules which will be shared with the advisors in August. The workshops are planned to be conducted online during the second half of August 2020 and the first half of September 2020.

Working group for secondary school CivEd

- ✓ Meeting with the working group members was held on July 8, 2020 to review the accomplishments so far and determine the next steps for finalizing the Teachers Manual. A timeframe was set for the activities during July and August 2020, leading towards finalizing all workshops covering the curricula contents and designing activities for assessment for each module. All workshops for the Teachers Manual were submitted and currently, there are 61 fully developed lessons referring to 30 curriculum contents, as well as 3-5 activities for assessment per each of the five modules. Eight (8) of the workshops are in the process of revision by the BDE. During July, the project team worked on editing the pre-final versions of the workshops and leading them towards finalization. Currently, 26 workshops are in this stage.

Booklet with good practices of student initiatives

- ✓ During July, the graphic design of the publication was revised according to suggestions provided by the project team. Photos for the Booklet were selected and integrated in specific parts of the publication. Final suggestions were provided with regards to the content and design of the publication, and the pre-final version was approved by the project team. The booklet will be published in August, together with an Albanian version.

Engaging International Consultants for Civic Ethos

- ✓ Tasks and deliverables were prepared and shared with the selected consultants from Finland. The consultants and the project team communicated regularly about details regarding the assignments. This includes developing schools civic ethos assessment methodology and developing and delivering training for a key group of stakeholders that will carry the process on.

Civic Education Concept

- ✓ The graphic design of the Macedonian version of the document was finalized and approved by the project team. The document will be published in August, together with an Albanian version.



Incentives to schools - Renovations

School renovations

- ✓ The component coordinator organized individual on-line meetings with School Renovation Team (SRT) representatives from each of the 12 schools. At the meetings, the priority projects for renovation of the schools from the technical aspect were discussed in details, as well as specification of the materials and the possibility for the schools to provide the necessary documentation. After the meetings five schools submitted a basic renovation project, five schools submitted a bill of quantity for the required renovation, and two schools do not have technical documentation for renovation and asked for help/consultation for its preparation.
- ✓ The project team organized field visits in three (3) schools: satellite school Namik Kemal in v. Calakli - Municipality of Valandovo, satellite school Sv.Kiril and Metodij in v. Radovo - Municipality of Bosilovo, and central primary school Nikola Vapcarov in Strumica. The priority projects for renovation of schools from the technical aspect were discussed in details with SRT representatives, as well as specification of the materials and bill of quantity.
- ✓ Memorandums of Understanding were prepared and sent to Municipality Mayors and School Directors, for the following schools selected for renovation in the third project year: central primary school Josip Broz Tito - Municipality of Valandovo, central primary school Elpida Karamandi – Bitola Municipality, central primary school Nikola Vapcarov – Strumica Municipality, and central primary school Sv.Kiril and Metodij – Kocani Municipality.