

## USAID Youth Ethnic Integration Project MONTHLY REPORT - *May 2019*



### Interconnected activities

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#### Project collaboration activities

- ✓ The process of revision of the *Law for primary education* and the *Law for teachers in primary and secondary education* was intensified within this period and as a result the initial drafts were developed. Members of Macedonian Civic Education Center (MCEC) are part of the working group and contribute in the process of updating the education laws. Soon after incorporating final amendments, the laws will be available for review and comments on the Unique National Electronic Registry of Regulations of the Republic North Macedonia, accessible [here](#).
- ✓ The process of revision of education laws was instigated by the Government of North Macedonia following the *OECD Review of Evaluation and Assessment in Education in North Macedonia*, available [here](#). Thus, MCEC team members took part on a public debate on the topic - *A clear vision of quality education*, during which Government officials confirmed their commitment to implement education reforms to ensure quality life of young people and economic growth.
- ✓ MCEC representative took part in the NEPC (Network of Education Policy Centers) General Assembly and NEPC conference held in Zagreb, Croatia on May 6-7, 2019. During the General Assembly new board members were elected, the NEPC Strategy was reviewed and networking sessions between members organizing. Furthermore, a Policy conference titled: *Inclusive Education for All: From Ideas to Action*, was held. The conference was organized along three main topics: (1) Addressing socio-economic inequalities, (2) Valuing and building on multilingualism in the classroom and (3) Exploring synergies between non-formal education and schools for more equity and quality, and was an excellent opportunity to exchange ideas and experiences with researchers, policy makers and practitioners from over 30 countries.
- ✓ MCEC representatives participated at the promotional event to discuss the draft *National Strategy for development of the concept of one society and interculturalism in the Republic of North Macedonia*. At this event held in Skopje, opening remarks were given by the Prime Minister Mr. Zaev, the Minister for Justice Ms. Deskoska and the Executive Director of ADI, Mr. Musliu. The second part of the event included a plenary discussion about the Strategy. The series of such events are being held across the country in this period. The draft version of the National Strategy is being shared and next steps for finalizing the document will be defined.

#### Public outreach

- ✓ To celebrate the successful completion of renovation works in secondary school "Pero Nakov" in Kumanovo, a ribbon-cutting event/ school visit was organized. Acting Country Representative to the USAID Office in North Macedonia, Gretchen Birkle, U.S. Defense Attaché LTC Eric Rice and MAJ Patrick E. Enriquez, Office of Defense Cooperation, U.S. Embassy attended the event, during which they had an opportunity to interact with students, teachers, parents and municipal officials. After seeing the new energy efficient windows and renovated classrooms, they joined students during the youth action organized in the park under Component 1 activities. The event had media coverage, contributing to further promotion of project accomplishments.
- ✓ In order to mark the renovations of primary school "Marsal Tito" and secondary school "Jane Sandanski" in Strumica, a ribbon-cutting/ field visit was organized. The Charge d'Affaires, Micaela Schweitzer-Bluhm and Chief Master Sergeant (CMSgt) from the DAO (Defense Attaché Office) of the US Embassy Skopje representing EUCOM visited both schools and discussed the recent accomplishments in the field of youth ethnic integration with Kosta Janevski, Mayor of the Municipality of Strumica as well as teachers, students and parents. Following the walkthroughs in both schools during which the guests had an opportunity to see the renovated classrooms, floors and school façade, they proceeded to joint students at the youth action organized under Component 1 activities. The event was covered by media outlets, thus further increasing the project's public outreach.
- ✓ In order to inform the public about the Civic Education curricula reforms conducted by the Project in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Science and Bureau for Development of Education, a video was developed and shared on the project website and all social media platforms.
- ✓ Aiming to raise awareness about project activities, a TV appearance was organized on TV Alsat. A project representative and two teachers from the secondary school "Arseni Jovkov" had an opportunity to share the joint accomplishments in the field of enhancing interethnic cohesion in the educational system.
- ✓ The project website and social media platforms were regularly updated with information, news, photo galleries, videos, resources and materials.
- ✓ With the support of the project, schools and municipalities continuously promoted project activities through traditional and social media, especially during the final presentation from the creative workshops organized under Component 1 activities.

#### Monitoring & Evaluation

- ✓ Focus groups questions were created, which will be organized with the students from the four secondary schools form the City of Skopje that are implementing joint curricular activities using Macedonian and Albanian language of instruction. To be able to best express themselves, the focus groups will be held before the end of this semester by two separate facilitators organized in two groups with students of Macedonian and Albanian language of instruction.
- ✓ An online questionnaire was created in Survey Monkey platform for all the students that were part of the joint

curricular activities. The questionnaire is available in Macedonian language and in Albanian language and is sent to the implementing schools to be filled out by students.

- ✓ The online reporting forms for the schools' section clubs and partnership activities were finalized on Survey Monkey and they will be sent to the corresponding schools after they finish the implementation of planned activities.
- ✓ Field visits to school implementing activities in partnerships, school subject clubs activities and community youth actions were visited and monitored by M&E component.



## **Strengthening interethnic cohesion activities**

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

- ✓ YEI team supported the MoES Council for Interethnic Integration in Education to organize the second orientation meeting with the group of schools that were awarded MoES grant to implement joint student activities that advance interethnic collaboration and enhance cohesion in the country. 45 primary and secondary schools across the country were invited to discuss practices and challenges during the process of implementation. In addition, schools' administrative and financial duties and responsibilities; the relevance of monitoring and reporting system; as well as improving the communication of MoES Council for Interethnic Integration in Education with municipalities so that schools, as final recipients, receive increased support were discussed.

### Project support to the State Education Inspectorate

- ✓ In partnership with MoES Council for Interethnic Integration in Education, the working group of State Education Inspectorate started the process of reviewing and upgrading the instruments and School Performance Quality Indicators. Two (2) working meetings were held and appointed State Education Inspectors started the review of seven (7) 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.

### Engaging Youth to Lead by Example

- ✓ In partnership with municipalities and schools, in three (3) out of five (5) selected municipalities (Gostivar, Kumanovo, Skopje, Strumica and Butel) YEI team conducted several activities with students from schools to discuss, identify and initiate youth actions. In total 450 students implemented five (5) youth actions in municipalities of Gostivar, Kumanovo and Strumica.
- ✓ Through an inclusive and interactive process, students in three phases discussed, recognized priorities and defined actions that they would like to take to improve their respective communities. The ideas were presented to the Mayors of Gostivar, Kumanovo and municipal representatives of Strumica, who welcomed and acknowledged the fact that these activities help youngsters to become more responsible, active and engaged in their communities.
- ✓ On May 9, 2019 youth from Gostivar organized their first youth action supported by project and municipality. At the city quay, students together marked a bike-trail and footpath, improved conditions of the benches and provided bike-parking at the quay.
- ✓ Students in Kumanovo through the same process organized two youth actions arranging one of the parks in the city. The youth cleaned up the trash in the park and placed garbage bins, planted flowers, replaced the damaged boards on the benches, painted the concrete and metal structures, whereas the municipality invested in cutting the grass in the park, installed new lighting fixtures and provided playground for children.
- ✓ In Strumica, also two youth actions took place. Students from Jane Sandanski and Nikola Karev secondary schools initiated a youth action, to make the Jane Sandanski schoolyard functional and usable, including beautifying the space in which they spend much of their time. The entire process and youth actions were supported by the USAID Youth Ethnic Integration Project, in cooperation with the Municipality of Strumica and the Youth Educational Forum.

### Municipal Ethnic Integration Policies

- ✓ In partnership with MoES Council for Interethnic Integration in Education, YEI continued to support 15 municipalities which started the process of conceptualizing the municipal strategies for support interethnic integration and youth civic engagement in schools. This process is mentored by education institutional representatives who support municipal officials in this process of drafting the municipal strategies. Up to now, visits and online discussions with municipal officials were organized and guidelines and suggestion in the process of drafting were shared. The first drafts are expected to be finalized by the end of June 2019, whereas the finalization and endorsement of municipal strategies in all 15 municipalities is anticipated to be concluded by end of September 2019.

### Mentoring visits and support to curricular and extra-curricular activities in schools

- ✓ The partnership with MoES and all key educational institutions continued in the process of organizing mentoring visits and providing support to curricular and extracurricular activities in schools in North Macedonia. 26 visits were organized by Bureau for Development of Education (BDE) and Vocational Education and Training (VET Center) advisors to different joint student activities that implemented long-term extracurricular activities in subject clubs and partnership, as well as four (4) secondary vocational schools in Skopje that implement joint curricular classes in different subjects (i.e. vocational subjects, sport, English and German language, practical lessons and other curricular activities).

### Curricular activities in schools

- ✓ The four (4) secondary schools in Skopje (Boro Petrusevski, Zdravko Cvetkovski, Arseni Jovkov and Braka Miladinovci) continued to implement joint curricular classes in their respective schools, which marks 103 joint classes in May. Representatives from the City of Skopje actively followed up the implementation of this process along with BDE and VET Center advisors. Representatives from City of Skopje were engaged in supporting

directors and School Integration Teams (SITs) to discuss the challenges and ways to further improve this process. Whereas, advisors were engaged in supporting and mentoring teachers in the process of organizing joint curricular classes and advancing interethnic integration.

- ✓ As of September 2019, City of Skopje anticipates enclosure of two (2) additional secondary schools in this process that will expand the good practices and emphasize the relevance of interethnic integration in schools.
- ✓ YEI team in partnership with City of Skopje and OSCE at the end of June 2019 will gather the teacher implementers to jointly appraise the process, to share the best practices, challenges and review way to impact other schools to faster engage in this process.

#### Long-term extracurricular activities in schools (school subject clubs)

- ✓ Thirteen (13) schools implemented nineteen (19) activities within school subject clubs. Activities with about 300 students from different language of instruction within school subject clubs continued in: SS "Gostivar" from Gostivar, PS "Goce Delchev" from Aerodrom, PS "Kiril and Metodij" v. Stajkovci, Gazi Baba, PS "Goce Delchev" from Bitola, PS "Zhivko Brajkovski" from Butel, PS "Vera Ciriviri Trena" v. Debreshte, Dolneni, SS "Boro Petrushevski", City of Skopje, PS "Bratstvo Edinstvo" from Ohrid, PS "Petar Zdravkovski Penko" from Butel, PS "Strasho Pindzur" v. Josifovo, Valandovo, PS "Josip Broz Tito" from Valandovo and PS "Pere Toshev" v. Dupjachani, Dolneni. Furthermore, field visits were conducted to provide support to schools, i.e.:
  - In PS "Goce Delchev", Municipality of Aerodrom, twenty six (26) students from Macedonian and Albanian language of instruction, members of art school club organized an art exhibition, on the occasion of school day celebration. This final event brought together students, teachers, parents and municipality representatives. The students used the event as an opportunity to present the products created over the past few months in their school subject club.
  - For several months, fifteen (15) students from Albanian and Turkish language of instruction from SS "Cvetan Dimov" located in Chair, members of drama school club, with the support of their teacher, conducted regular meetings. The product of these meetings was the theatre play entitled "Rainbow". The play depicts every day challenges the students are facing as young people. On April 04, 2019, "Rainbow" was publicly promoted in Cultural Information Center (KIC) in Skopje. The students decided, the money raised by voluntary contributions to be used in humanitarian cause and to help the students with special needs from PS "Idrina" in Skopje. They bought clothes and other things needed for these students and donated them to the school.
  - Thirty six (36) students from Macedonian, Albanian and Turkish language of instruction from SS "Gostivar", Municipality of Gostivar, organized a public presentation of the comical theater play entitled "The little bride". The event took place in the Cultural Center "ASNOM" in Gostivar. Using comic phrases and situations, students managed to depict a particular situation where the traditional values dominate. The audience had an opportunity to see what happens when parents make decisions for their children and how the arranged marriage affects children's life. The goal of this theater performance was to raise the attention to human rights that are still being violated in different ways today. During the whole academic year these students conducted weekly meetings and had a chance to communicate, to know each other better and to jointly create products. These types of activities enabled students to acquire new knowledge, skills for artistic expression and theatrical performance.
  - In PS "Zhivko Brajkovski" from Butel, twenty four (24) students from Macedonian and Albanian language of instruction, members of the English language subject club, conducted regular meetings, during which they jointly made the final preparations for the presentation of the theatre play "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs". The play will be solemnly performed on June 05, 2019 on the occasion of school day celebration and will bring together other students, teachers and parents. Over the past few months, these students together with their teachers worked with great motivation and enthusiasm to create the play "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs". They had weekly rehearsals, developed the scenography for the play and costumes for the actors. This subject club enabled the students to cooperate, to socialize and to create their own product using drama skills.
  - On May 20, 2019 students from sports subject club in PS "Vera Ciriviri Trena" v. Debreshte, Municipality of Dolneni, organized a final event. For several months, this ethnically mixed group of students had an opportunity to conduct regular meeting during which they learned sports techniques, learned to build and develop their sport spirit and jointly participated in different sports competitions.
  - In PS "Bratstvo Edinstvo" from Ohrid, students from art subject club organized a final event during which they presented the products they created over the past few months.
  - Thirty (30) students from Macedonian, Albanian and Turkish language of instruction from PS "Petar Zdravkovski Penko", Municipality of Butel implemented activities within sports school club.
  - On May 29, 2019 students from PS "Strasho Pindzur" v. Josifovo and PS "Josip Broz Tito" both from Valandovo, organized a joint final presentation of the products from technical education subject clubs. The "young technicians", as the students in these clubs call themselves, conducted regular meetings for a several months during which they developed models that operate on different sources of energy, such as wind power, electric drive power and solar energy. These types of activities enabled these students to work together as a team, to develop their skills for technical education by creating different models, to developing their competitive spirit, to strengthen the interaction and friendships with the other students. The created models within these clubs will serve as resources and materials for the future group of students.
  - In PS "Goce Delchev" from Bitola, students from Macedonian and Albanian language of instruction implemented activity within chemistry subject club. They learned more about the benefits of recycling process and how this process helps to protect the environment.
  - Students from SS "Boro Petrushevski", City of Skopje, members of traffic school club conducted a visit to State Center for Education and Rehabilitation "Partenija Zografski" settled in Municipality of Gazi Baba. This visit was an opportunity for these students to find out more about the challenges students with hearing impairment face in traffic. They learned how these students feel when they are involved in traffic, learned if they recognizing the traffic signs and what do they think about the traffic safety in our country. The collected data will be presented in a brochure and shared with the students and teachers in their school.

### Activities in partnership

- ✓ Activities in partnership continued to be implemented in the selected schools involving about 50 students from different language of instruction, namely:
  - PS "Blazhe Koneski" from Veles implemented an activity in partnership with PS "Rajko Zhinzifov" from v.Dolno Orizari, Veles. Divided into mixed groups twenty (20) students from both schools, from Macedonian and Bosnian language of instruction took part in a creative workshop during which they created various handicrafts. The first group of students designed geometrical shapes developed with a laser pointer that latter were colored. The second group crafted shapes from a colored paper and added bilingual messages on them. The third group worked on designing kites from paper, while the fourth group created cardboard windmills. This activity enabled students from different cities and various languages of instruction to work and create together, communicate and share experience and knowledge.
  - Another school that implemented activities in partnership was PS "Todor Janev" from Chashka. On May 01-03 2019, twenty four (24) students from this school together with their friends from PS "Lirija" v.Gorno Jabolchishte, Municipality of Chashka spent three days in the children's resort "Joy" in Ohrid. During this period the students were engaged on a several workshops aimed at enabling them to communicate, to interact and to know each other better. Furthermore, through these workshops, the students become familiarized with cultural and folklore traditions typical for these two communities. Sports activities were also implemented.

### Creative workshops in schools

- ✓ Students and teachers from eight (8) selected secondary schools who 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 May, three (3) final events in Bitola, Prilep and Kavadarci were held, which marked and demonstrated the joint efforts of about 100 students to enhance interethnic collaboration and interaction. In Kavadarci, students from Gorce Petrov secondary school initiated a youth action to support a young girl who needs funds for medical treatment abroad. From the sold tickets for their performance at the Cultural House funds were gathered, which will help the town girl to receive the needed treatment. Two more final events and youth actions will follow in June 2019 that students from secondary school in Lipkovo and secondary school in Stip will organize.



## **Strengthening democratic culture & civic behaviors activities**

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### Encouraging civic ethos in schools

- ✓ BDE advisors begun with initial activities for encouraging civic ethos in 120 schools, through organizing regional meetings with the schools assigned to them. They acquainted the school management and professional staff with the new civic education concept and guided them in the process of integrating Civic Education Open Day in the School Annual Program. Reports from advisors indicate that the school staff positively accepted the proposals and understood that this process must be closely coordinated with the students and the overall school community.

### Developing modules for CivEd teachers

- ✓ Modules for training of teachers for the grade 9 CivEd curriculum were finalized and a training of trainers was organized. During the training of trainers, the complete content of the teacher trainings was simulated and potential issues which might arise during the trainings were discussed and clarified. The teams of trainers are selected and the locations and dates for the upcoming teacher trainings are defined.

### Participatory feedback from implementation of grade 8 CivEd curriculum

- ✓ The process of collecting participatory feedback from students, teachers and parents on their experiences with grade 8 CivEd curriculum is ongoing. Electronic questionnaires were sent to teachers and students and they are in the process of completing them. By the end of May, over 100 responses from teachers and approximately 200 responses from students were collected. In addition, 5 focus groups with students were conducted to collect qualitative information on the implementation of the Grade 8 curriculum.

### Baseline research on CivEd in secondary schools

- ✓ Data collection for the baseline research on CivEd in secondary schools is in its final phase. Responses on the electronic survey were received from 106 teachers and 733 students and quantitative data have been processed. In addition, five focus groups with students from schools which implement the revised modular curriculum for secondary vocational schools were conducted. The process will conclude with focus groups with CivEd teachers from secondary schools and writing a report with findings and recommendations on the implementation of the subject in secondary schools.



## **Incentives to schools - Renovations**

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### School renovations

- ✓ The documentation of the cost share for the schools and municipalities in the renovation project was completed for ten (10) schools, and it accounts for 35.45% of the total investment.
- ✓ The Project team organized a field visits to the 12 schools included in the project renovation activities for 2019 in order to set priorities for renovation. The list of schools and renovation projects was prepared by the Project team and forwarded to USAID Kosovo for approval.
- ✓ A technical acceptance was organized and donation contract for "Reconstruction of the school gym" in PS "Edinstvo Baskimi Birlik" in the Municipality of Gostivar was signed.

