

## USAID Youth Ethnic Integration Project MONTHLY REPORT - *December 2021*



### Interconnected activities

#### Public outreach

- ✓ A [video](#) with professor Kushtrim Ahmeti from the State University of Tetovo regarding the new Civic Education curriculum at the University was developed and published. Civic Education is becoming a part of the higher education in the country as a separate program and future Civic Education teachers will have the opportunity to study it specifically and not just as a subject integrated in other programs.
- ✓ A [promotional video](#), containing the experiences of students, teachers, School Integration Team (SIT) coordinators, and school directors with the implementation of joint curricular classes was developed and published. It was presented during the event for promoting the *Guideline for Implementation of Joint Curricular Classes*.
- ✓ The project participates in USAID North Macedonia's social media promotional campaign highlighting the accomplishments of the projects in 2021.
- ✓ 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. [Media newsletter](#) was developed and shared with all media outlets.

#### Monitoring & Evaluation

- ✓ In order to gather quantitative and qualitative data on the experiences of YEI beneficiaries with project activities, electronic questionnaires and focus group questionnaires were developed. A total of eight (8) focus groups were conducted with students regarding their overall experiences with the school subject clubs and activities in partnership. Additionally, the questionnaire was filled out by 135 students and 33 teachers. Analysis are being conducted accordingly and the findings will be incorporated in the Annual report with perceptions, opinions, and experiences of YEI beneficiaries.
- ✓ The key research findings related to teachers' and students' experiences with joint curricular classes were shared during the promotional event for the Guideline for implementation of joint curricular classes. The presentation included quantitative and qualitative data, gathered through e-questionnaires and focus groups conducted at the end of the school year 2020/21.
- ✓ An evaluation of the workshop for strengthening the capacities of MoES CIIE members regarding data analysis and reporting, was conducted. The participants had a chance to share their experience with the workshop and acquired knowledge, as well as need for future support.

#### Idea Fusion Center (IFC)

- ✓ The IFC members were part of two online meetings throughout the month. On the December 03, 2021, the students worked jointly on creating a presentation for showcasing their developed idea. They discussed the key points and developed a draft document describing their overall achievements and their idea that will contribute for positive changes for students across the country. Additionally, on the December 22, 2021, the students were part of an online workshop for communication skills and public speaking, through practical exercises and group work.



### Strengthening interethnic cohesion activities

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

- ✓ YEI continued to support MoES Commission for Interethnic Integration in Education (MoES CIIE) in advancing the implementation of interethnic integration in education activities in schools and communities. Hence, after revising and transferring the Performance Measurement Plan (PMP) questionnaire for the academic year 2020/2021 into MS Forms application, part of the National platform for distance learning, MoES CIIE forwarded the questionnaire to all primary and secondary schools in RNM. This year, a total of 254 schools completed the questionnaire.
- ✓ Following, on December 23 - 24, 2021, the project, in cooperation with the OSCE, organized a two-day workshop for MoES CIIE members on processing data gathered through the PMP questionnaire. During the workshop, MoES CIIE capacities were built, and its members were informed on the manner of conducting a research, various research methodologies and using Excel in processing research data. Then, the members worked in groups and with the support of the facilitator practically analyzed

the obtained data from the conducted electronic survey with the schools related to implementation of IIE activities in the academic year 2020/2021 and developed a pre-final version of the PMP report.

- ✓ Moreover, on December 03, 2021, the MoES CIIE call for financial support to schools for realization of joint student activities was closed. A total of 154 primary and secondary schools applied for the grant. Thus, in the upcoming period, MoES CIIE will conduct a selection process and approve 95 schools (70 primary and 25 secondary) to receive the Ministry of Education and Science grant.

#### Intercultural Education (ICE) Standards for secondary education

- ✓ The working group for compiling ICE Standards for secondary education, worked on further developing the assigned parts of the document, which were discussed and revised at an online working meeting held on December 21, 2021. Feedback on the materials/content was provided by all working group members and a final draft of the document was prepared. Following, ICE Standards were forwarded to project and institutions partners/stakeholders for comments i.e., MoES, MoES CIIE, BDE, VET Center, SEI, the government body responsible for implementation of the National Strategy for developing a concept – One society for all and interculturalism, OSCE, Open Society Institute, Nansen dialog, etc. After incorporating the received feedback, BDE and VET Center jointly proposed and submitted the document to the MoES for adoption.

#### Guideline for implementation of joint curricular classes

- ✓ On December 17, 2021 the project team in partnership with OSCE organized an [event](#) to promote the Guideline for implementation of joint curricular classes. This Guideline contains instructions for conducting joint curricular classes with students learning in different languages of instruction and is developed based on the lessons learned from implementation. This activity is a result of a joint effort and partnership between MCEC projects, i.e. USAID's Youth Ethnic Integration Project and Pestalozzi Children's Foundation Strengthening Multiethnic Cooperation in Municipalities Project and the OSCE Mission in Skopje, in collaboration with MoES, MoES CIIE, BDE, VET Center and the City of Skopje. Representatives from these institutions as well as representatives from schools – implementers of joint curricular classes, SIT coordinators, school directors, teachers and other relevant stakeholders attended the event. The Minister of Education and Science, Mila Carovska, the Head of the OSCE Mission to Skopje, Clemens Kojca, the Mayor of City of Skopje, Danela Arsovska, and the representative of the USAID Office in North Macedonia, Enid Nunez participated at the event too and delivered remarks. During the event, a short video containing experiences of school management staff, school professional staff, SIT coordinators, teachers and students from the implementation of joint curricular classes, as well as findings from M&E activities were presented.
- ✓ In the academic year 2021/2022, the project supports eight secondary schools from City of Skopje: "Arseni Jovkov", "Zdravko Cvetkovski", "Brakja Miladinovci", "Boro Petrusevski", "Dimitar Vlahov", "Josip BrozTito", "Vlado Tasevski" and "Pance Karagjozov" in implementation of joint classes with more than 700 students and 54 teachers. These activities improve interethnic cooperation and cohesion among students and strengthen their civic and democratic values. As a result, 588 joint curricular classes in different subjects (vocational and general) were implemented until end of December or during this semester.

#### Partnership with key educational institutions

- ✓ To further increase the sustainability of implementation of joint curricular classes in school, the project is working on developing an online tool/training for teachers-implementers based on the Guideline for implementation of joint curricular classes. Hence, after developing the structure, sessions, and the layout of the online training during the previous period, the Project continued to implement activities for developing the content. During this month, draft version of the first two session i.e., 1) educational policies that support the implementation and the benefits from realization of joint curricular classes and 2) educational institutions support and school activities for implementation of joint curricular classes, were prepared by the project external consultants and submitted to the project team. Following finalization, the online tool/training will be placed in the Bureau for Development of Education (BDE) platform for online professional development of teachers.

#### Implementation of youth actions in municipalities included in the process in 2021

- ✓ The project team continued the process of organizing youth actions in the 15 new municipalities (Berovo, Staro Nagoricane, Bosilovo, Bogovinje, Vinica, Negotino, Ohrid, Kocani, Resen, Aerodrom, Saraj, Cair, Gazi Baba, Centar, and Gjorce Petrov) with developed and endorsed Local Strategies for IIE and Youth Engagement in 2020. Thus, the following was accomplished:
  - The municipalities of Berovo and Negotino implemented the interventions, or the Youth Actions proposed/initiated by students. As a result of collaboration and joint efforts between the project, the Municipality of Berovo and the Youth Education Forum (YEF), new urban equipment (i.e., benches and garbage bins) was installed along the city quay. The Youth Action in the Municipality of Negotino was implemented in coordination with the Public Communal Enterprise and the Municipal Unit for Urbanism and included installment of new urban equipment and reparations of the existing urban equipment in the City Park near the Sport Hall. Due to the current situation and guidelines, both Youth Actions were implemented without physical presence of students. However, students will contribute by sending comments, before-after photos to the project, that will be published in the #IContributed hashtag.

- The youth actions were realized in the municipalities of Ohrid and Bogovinje as well. In both municipalities, students from schools in their territory proposed establishing of Youth Clubs/Centers. For that purpose, the necessary equipment and materials were procured, and the promotion will be realized in the upcoming period.
- Online representation and advocacy meeting with students and representatives from the municipalities of Saraj was organized. Students from three (3) primary schools: "Prparimi", "Dituria" and "Bajram Shabani" attended the online advocacy meeting and presented their ideas and priorities for improving the local community in front of the Mayor of the municipality. As a result, youth actions will be implemented in the municipality of Saraj in the upcoming period. So far, the project managed to define youth priorities in all 15 municipalities and organize advocacy meetings between students and municipal representatives in 14 out of 15 municipalities (Kocani, Vinica, Negotino, Staro Nagoricane, Berovo, Ohrid, Bogovinje, Resen, Cair, Gazi Baba, Aerodrom, Centar, Saraj and Gjorche Petrov).
- ✓ The project in partnership with YEF also conducted coordination activities, namely:
  - In-person coordination meetings with representatives from municipality of Aerodrom and municipality of Centar were conducted by the project team, with the aim to discuss details regarding the implementation of youth initiatives and interventions in these municipalities.
  - Furthermore, in-person coordination meetings with the newly elected mayors of the municipalities of Kocani and Gazi Baba were organized by the project team too. The mayors were familiarized with the project goals and realized activities, upcoming plans and activities, as well as next steps that will lead to implementation of the proposed youth initiatives in these municipalities.
  - Furthermore, on December 22, 2021, visit to the proposed location for Youth Club in the Municipality of Gazi Baba was organized. The project in coordination with the municipal representatives coordinated the upcoming activities, cost-share and the interventions proposed by the students. Moreover, the dynamics and the timeframe for implementation of the proposed youth initiative were jointly determined.
- ✓ The project continued to document cost-share from municipalities that implemented Youth Action. Regarding the municipalities involved in the process in 2021, this month was documented contribution from the Municipality of Vinica in the amount of 14.29% of the total investment. So far, the project documented cost-share for nine (9) out of 10 municipalities involved in the process in 2020 (in the amount of 71.72% of the total investment) and for one (1) out of 15 municipalities involved in the process in 2021 (in the amount of 14.29% of the total investment).



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

### Student initiatives in primary schools

- ✓ 90 primary schools involved in the third phase completed the activities from the student initiatives and organized a CivEd Open Day and some schools announced that they will continue with the activities until the end of the school year. The project team visited 12 CivEd Days. The activities were various and included: workshops on preventing peer violence and cyber bullying; workshops on tackling stereotypes; beautifying the school yard with trees and benches; humanitarian action for supporting socially disadvantaged families; awareness raising on traffic safety; cleaning the school premises; awareness raising on environmental protection and building empathy etc.
- ✓ The BDE advisors assigned for mentoring phase 3 schools visited the promotional activities and reported on the achievements.
- ✓ The schools which have finalized the activities are filling in the evaluation questionnaires. Currently there are 150 entries from teachers and advisors and 200 entries from students.
- ✓ It is encouraging that many phase 1 and phase 2 schools are continuing with the activities, without external monitoring and support. The BDE advisors receive information from these schools and are regularly invited to participate at the activities. In addition, some schools also complete the evaluation questionnaires, reporting on their achievements.

### Student initiatives in secondary vocational schools

- ✓ Mentors for civic initiatives in secondary vocational schools worked continuously with school teams in planning the promotional activities for the student initiatives and reporting on the progress to the project team.
- ✓ One online meeting was held with the mentors for student initiatives in secondary vocational schools where the progress of the schools was discussed and different issues were clarified referring to the process of finalizing and promoting the conducted activities within the initiatives.
- ✓ The majority of secondary schools completed and presented their activities during this month and the project team visited eight (8) CivEd Days. Some of the activities included: advocacy for new garbage cans in the school; public awareness campaign and student presentations on issues of bullying, use of alcohol and tobacco; humanitarian action for collecting funds for covid-impacted families; workshops on human rights; debate on improving the school assessment; campaigns against the use of plastic bags; making interactive pet park, etc.

- ✓ The remaining schools will organize the CivEd Days in January 2022. Schools which are completing the activities continued entering the evaluation questionnaires in the Survey Monkey tool, which currently has 102 entries from students and 40 entries from school staff/mentors.

#### Student competition on student initiatives

- ✓ The materials required for the student initiatives were distributed to the three primary schools that won in the competition. The schools “Blaze Koneski” from Prilep and “Perparimi” from Gostivar received technical equipment (laptop and LCD projector) and have started with their initiatives “Student school blog” and “Student idea laboratory”. The school “Goce Delcev” in Negotiono received evergreen trees, flowers and flowerpots and this month conducted part of the student action, which included planting evergreen trees and flowers in the newly built part of the school yard.

#### Improving CivEd teaching and learning

- ✓ Eleven (11) in-class observations were conducted during this week (in Skopje, Gostivar and Kumanovo), indicating successful realization of the new CivEd curriculum and adequate use of the materials for teaching and learning (Teachers’ Manual).
- ✓ The best assessed indicators included the establishment of good classroom climate and respect of each student’s needs, while the aspects which need improvement include the student assessment process, especially the formative assessment.

#### Policies for assuring sustainability

- ✓ The project team (both MCEC and YEF staff) provided feedback to the first draft of the *e-training encouraging civic ethos through student initiatives* and met to discuss the proposed contents of the e-training for civic ethos, which was integrated into a single version. Based on the suggestions, a pre-final version of the training was developed and consulted with BDE before being approved. The training includes three sessions: (1) School civic ethos, (2) Democratic school practices and (3) Student participation, which includes the topic of student initiatives. Each session concludes with 8-10 multiple-response questions which need to be responded with at least 70% accuracy to continue to the following session.
- ✓ The project team worked on the *Methodology for assessing school civic ethos* by developing descriptors for the indicators in the Assessment tool and assessment instruments for each stakeholder (students, teachers, parents). This activity will be finalized during the beginning of next week.



## **Incentives to schools - Renovations**

### School renovations

- ✓ On December 01, 2021, a meeting of the component 3 working group was organized. As a result of the separate discussion for each of the schools ranked from the applications submitted in call for application 2020-2021, the list of selected schools was adopted. Adopted list contains 12 schools that will be included in the work of component 3 in phase 5. Minutes of the meeting with list of 12 schools for renovation in phase 5 was approved by USAID and posted on web site: <http://mk.mcgo.org.mk/uncategorized/rezultati-2022/>. The information for the selection was submitted to the selected schools and municipalities by e-mail, and they were contacted by the component team for further activities.
- ✓ Technical acceptances for “Replacement of the internal carpentry and the entrance door” in the primary school “Brakja Miladinovci” – Municipality of Probistip and “Refurbishment of toilets” in the satellite primary school “Nikola Karev” in v.Borino, Municipality of Krusevo were organized by the project team and contracts for donation were signed by the school directors and MCEC Executive director.
- ✓ The renovation of the satellite primary school “Nikola Karev” in v.Borino, Municipality of Krusevo is regularly monitored by a representative of the project team and a project external consultant who is in charge for filming the process of school renovation and developing a video from the recorded material. The video should show the whole process of school renovation.
- ✓ In addition, the most favorable bidders started with distribution of school maintenance tools and equipment. In the next period maintenance tools will be distributed to the schools renovated in the fourth project year.
- ✓ The process of registering/collecting the necessary documentation for cost-share contribution of schools and municipalities in the renovation process (financial or in-kind) for the schools from the fourth project year in which the renovation process was completed is ongoing. In this month was documented additional cost-share from the PS “Sv. Kliment Ohridski” in Ohrid in the amount of 12.39% of the investment. By adding this contribution of the school to the contribution from the municipality documented in October, the total cost share amounts to 26.76% of the total investment. So far, the documentation of the cost-share is completed for five (5) out of 12 schools and municipalities from the fourth project year in the renovation activities and amounts to 40.36% of the total investment.