

USAID Youth Ethnic Integration Project MONTHLY REPORT - *January 2021*



Interconnected activities

Public outreach

- ✓ A [promotional event](#) to mark the official beginning of the activities of the Idea Fusion Center was organized. A [promotional video](#) was developed with students that participate in the Idea Fusion Center. They shared their expectations from their participation in the center and the video was presented during the launch event of the center as well as uploaded on social media and MCEC website.
- ✓ Series of informational and promotional posts regarding the Idea Fusion Center were published on social media (Facebook [\(1\)](#), [\(2\)](#), [\(3\)](#), [\(4\)](#)).
- ✓ The project factsheet is being updated with the most recent information. The updated version will be published at the beginning of next month.
- ✓ 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

- ✓ Last month quantitative and qualitative feedback was gathered through questionnaires sent out to teachers and students: 1) a questionnaire shared with students and teachers that were part of the school subject clubs containing questions related to their experiences with conducted activities and faced challenges in 2020 and 2) a questionnaire shared with CivEd teachers and 8 and 9 grade students containing questions about their experiences with the subject and with distance education during the first semester of the school year 2020/21. The received feedback was analyzed in detail throughout the month of January and is summarized within two reports that will be shared with the Project team.
- ✓ Evaluation of the workshops with teachers-implementers of joint curricular classes was conducted upon their completion. The workshop participants had a chance to provide their feedback by filling out electronic evaluation forms that were available in three languages (Macedonian, Albanian and Turkish). Once gathered, the feedback was analyzed and an evaluation report was developed. The feedback was extraordinary and well expected, as even during the workshops the participants expressed their satisfaction. Thus, the workshops were rated with an average score of 4.8 (on a scale of 1-5) and the participants shared that both workshops were nicely planned, well conducted and very comprehensive. This set of workshops consisted of a lot of practical examples had an aim to strengthen teachers' skills for conducting joint curricular classes, especially with the utilization of the available digital tools.
- ✓ The report on the assessment of teachers needs in the school year 2020/21 was shared with the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES). The report was developed after receiving feedback by a total of 4284 teachers from 335 schools (255 primary and 80 secondary schools). The results were presented in different categories: experiences with the *National platform for distance learning*, experiences with teaching during the COVID-19 crisis, collaboration and support from the parents, challenges and need for institutional support and positive aspects of distance education. Finally, the report included recommendations for the institution that would contribute to better quality of education, especially distance education.
- ✓ M&E instruments were developed in order to allow the project to measure: 1) the success of the collaboration between municipalities and their mentors in their journey of developing Policies for IIE and youth engagement and 2) the support given to IIE and youth engagement activities by the municipalities with already developed Policies for IIE and youth engagement (ten municipalities in which Youth actions were/will be implemented).
- ✓ For the purpose of showcasing YEI Components' milestones and successes, data was gathered from each component and graphically shown on a Timeline. The Timeline illustrates the implemented activities, conducted tasks and achieved results.

Idea Fusion Center

- ✓ The application process for internal student roles within the Idea Fusion Center (one IFC Coordinator and two assistants) was completed in the first half of the month. The application forms were available

in three languages: Macedonian, Albanian and Turkish. Once the applications were received and evaluated, due to their high quality a total of four (4) students were chosen to be part of the internal team of the Idea Fusion Center (two IFC Coordinators and two assistants). The chosen students will be in charge of creating the agenda for each meeting (based on a pre-developed program), setting time-frames for activities and communication with the other members. The IFC coordinators and assistants will collaborate and be supported by the SIT coordinators and the Project team, throughout the whole process.

- ✓ A total of three (3) IFC meetings were conducted this month: 1) a meeting with the members of the internal team for introduction of upcoming activities and tasks, 2) a meeting with all members where they discussed problems within their schools, communities and even worldwide and took part in an exercise where they had a chance to propose changes and detect the support they might need for executing such changes and 3) a meeting with the teachers/SIT coordinators for discussing upcoming activities and coordinating the Idea Fusion Center Launch event.
- ✓ The Idea Fusion Center Launch event took place on January 28, 2021. During the event, the Idea Fusion Center members had a chance to introduce the aim of this year-long activity, as well as, their upcoming tasks. Additionally, the students shared their general ideas about positive changes within their schools and communities and answered questions regarding some previous experiences with similar initiatives. During the event, the IFC members had a chance to interact with the audience (USAID representatives, MoES representatives, Project team) through a Q&A session.



Strengthening interethnic cohesion activities

Municipal interethnic integration policies

- ✓ On January 21, 2021 Municipality of Centar adopted the Strategy for IIE and youth civic engagement, on the Municipal Council's meeting. 15 (out of 16) municipalities selected in 2020, finalized the process and developed the Municipal Strategies. Municipality of Tearce due to the current situation is facing difficulties in this process and is engaged in establishing Commission/Working Group. The developed Municipal Strategies were adopted in twelve (12) municipalities, i.e. Resen, Aerodrom, Saraj, Cair, Berovo, Staro Nagorichane, Bosilovo, Bogovinje, Gazi Baba, Vinica Negotino and recently Centar. The Municipal Strategies in the remaining three (3) municipalities - Kochani, Ohrid and Gjorche Petrov are added on the Municipal Councils' agendas and are due for review, discussion and vote in the upcoming councils' meetings.

Engaging youth to lead by example

- ✓ Through joint collaboration and efforts between the project and the Municipality of Sveti Nikole, two (2) initiatives or Youth Actions were implemented in partnership. As a result, benches, garbage bins and a wooden gazebo were installed in the new City Park in Sveti Nikole. The Municipality provided human resources and workforce for preparing the area and installation of the gazebo and the equipment, while the project contributed with the procurement of the benches and garbage bins. Following the Government's instructions regarding the COVID-19 pandemic, the implementation of the Youth Actions were organized without students' presence. However, students were able to monitor the process of implementation of Youth Actions and make photographs of the achieved impact. The photographs, students' comments and videos will be shared during the online youth campaign #IContributed.
- ✓ In order to carry on the implementation of the final phases of the Youth Actions process, the project team continued the communication and coordination with representatives from Municipality of Vrapchishte and Municipality of Prilep. As a result, preparations with students from PS "Vrapchishte", PS "Sali Lisi" and SS "Negotino" for the online representation and advocacy meeting with students and representatives from Municipality of Vrapchishte were organized. The project continued the coordination with Municipality of Prilep as well, and plans to organize the advocacy meeting in the upcoming period.

Curricular activities in schools

- ✓ On January 20 and January 22, 2021, two (2) online capacity building trainings with teachers-implementers of joint curricular classes with students from different language of instruction, from the seven (7) secondary schools from City of Skopje, were organized. 39 teachers and seven (7) SIT coordinators from SS "Arseni Jovkov", SS "Brakja Miladinovci", SS "Zdravko Cvetkovski", SS "Boro Petrushevski", SS "Vlado Tasevski", SS "Josip Broz Tito" and SS "Dimitar Vlahov" attended the trainings, gained additional knowledge and improved their skills for using digital tools in the teaching process. Both trainings were structured in several sessions, i.e.:
 - During the first training, technical instructions for implementation of joint curricular classes through the *National platform for distance learning* were provided, as well as instructions for synchronous and asynchronous activities, selection of teaching materials/resources, all available tools within the *National platform for distance learning* and specific tools for reflection were presented to the participants.

→ During the second training, facilitators presented activities for establishing good communication and cooperation between students, activities for encouraging interest and maintaining motivation among students as well as activities for creating smaller mixed groups/pairs of students. The training ended with simulation of the implementation of joint curricular class through the *National platform for distance learning*.

- ✓ In the first semester of the academic year 2020/2021, 39 teachers implemented 177 joint curricular classes in different subjects, attended by 589 students. Following the winter semester holidays, selected secondary schools from City of Skopje will continue to organize joint curricular classes as per selected subjects.

Long-term extracurricular activities in school

- ✓ The project team commenced with preparations for organizing an orientation meeting with the selected schools for implementation of online long-term extracurricular activities (in subject clubs and in partnership), based on the guidelines for implementation of online extracurricular activities in schools and in subject clubs. This meeting is expected to be organized in mid February 2021 and will be attended by representatives from the selected schools. The aim is to provide instructions and support to schools for implementation of long-term extracurricular joint activities using digital tools, as well as familiarize them with the administrative procedures related to the support provided by the project.



Strengthening democratic culture & civic behaviors activities

Webinar for presenting the Guideline for online teaching methods

- ✓ In cooperation with the Eduino platform, two (2) webinars with identical content took place in the last week of January (January 25, 2021 in Macedonian language and January 26, 2021 in Albanian language). Total of 770 participants attended the Zoom webinar while over 5500 followed the event via YouTube livestream. Based on the final, approved version of the Guideline for online teaching methodology, the presentations covered: planning and preparation for online lesson, use of different technical tools for the purpose of interactive learning, characteristics of an effective online lesson and assessment methods which can be used during the distance learning. During January, two (2) preparatory meetings and a simulation session were conducted with the webinar trainers. The project team developed the questions for the Mentimeter tool and questions for the evaluation questionnaire, as well as the webinar materials (Mailchimp invitations, final agenda, final PPTs in Macedonian and Albanian). All teachers from the Eduino database were invited to the webinars. The project team will use the findings from the evaluation to plan the future needs of teachers with regards to resources and capacity building activities to support the distance teaching and learning.

Encouraging School Civic Ethos

- ✓ The project team provided the BDE advisors with the final version of the Guideline for online extracurricular activities (in Macedonian and Albanian language), as well as a presentation for the online workshops with phase 1 and phase 2 schools. The advisors begun conducting online workshops for informing schools on the different possibilities for organizing student initiatives via digital and hybrid means. Seven workshops (by five advisors) were conducted in January, while dates for additional sixteen (16) workshops are already set for the first week of February. Information from schools indicates that they are in different phases of the process of conducting initiatives, but the provided instructions offer different ideas which will enable them to organize and plan the phases more efficiently. Each member of the MCEC Component team and Youth Educational Forum project team is responsible for assisting individual advisors with regards to the technical aspect as well as the workshop content

In-class observation of CivEd lessons

- ✓ The form for in-class observation of CivEd lessons was upgraded with indicators referring to specific aspects of distance teaching and learning, in line with the Guideline for online teaching methods. The document was also set up in SurveyMonkey for more efficient data entry and analysis. The document and the link were shared with BDE advisors responsible for monitoring lessons during the second semester of the 2020/21 school year.

Guidelines for online teaching methods, online extracurricular activities, and online school clubs

- ✓ All three documents with guidelines were approved by BDE, proofread and translated in Albanian. The documents were uploaded on BDEs website (Guideline for online teaching methods ([MK](#)), ([ALB](#)); Guideline for online extracurricular activities ([MK](#)), ([ALB](#)) and [Guideline for online school clubs](#)) and shared with teacher and other school staff. The project team prepared draft version of the text which should be included in infographics on the Guidelines for online teaching methods and online extracurricular activities. The infographics are aimed to provide the teachers with a simplified explanation of the main aspects of the Guidelines and enable easier understanding of the steps of each process.

CivEd in Secondary Schools

- ✓ The design of the Teacher's Guide in Albanian language was finalized and the document was shared with BDE to be uploaded to the BDE's website. This concluded the process of developing the Teacher's Guide.

Engaging International Consultants for Civic Ethos

- ✓ Initial plan for piloting the assessment methodology developed by the international consultants was developed and shared with BDE for consultations and approval.



Incentives to schools - Renovations

School renovations

- ✓ Technical acceptances of the completed activities for reconstruction of roof in PS "Johan Hajnrih Pestaloci" in Municipality of Centar and installation of new floor in PS "Nikola Vapcarov" in Municipality of Strumica were organized by the component team in the presence of representatives of the contractor, supervisor, school principal and municipality.
- ✓ Reconstruction activities for reconstruction of gym, installation of new windows, doors and floors in PS "Hristijan Todorovski Karpos" in v.Dragomance, Municipality of Staro Nagoricane are on-going.
- ✓ Call for application for selection of 12 schools for the fourth project year was ongoing. The component team supported the municipalities and schools in preparing the application for selection of schools for renovation. The deadline for submission of applications to the YEI Project, is February 1, 2021.
- ✓ The project team continues to work on registering/collecting the necessary documentation for cost-share contribution of schools and municipalities in the renovation process (financial or in-kind) for the schools in which the renovation process was completed.