



USAID
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Quarterly Report
July through September 2014

Education Development Center



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Acronyms

ALMM	Active labor market measures
AOTR	Agreement Officer’s Technical Representative
AWP	Annual Workplan
BCM	Business Confederation of Macedonia
COP	Chief of Party
CC	Career Center
DBE	Bureau for Development of Education
DCOP	Deputy Chief of Party
DOCS	Development, Outreach and Communication Specialist
DPO	Disabled People’s Organisation
EC	Economic Council
ESA	Employment Service Agency
ESC	Local Economic and Social Council
EDC	Education Development Center Inc.
FAM	Financial and Administrative Manager
GCDF	Global Career Development Facilitator
ILO	International Labor Organization
ICP	Individual Career Plan
JC	Job Club (ESA)
HCN	Host Country National
HICD	Human and Institutional Capacity Development
LAPE	Local Action Plans for Employment
LED	Local Economic Development
LESC	Local Economic and Social Councils
MES	Ministry of Education and Science
MK	“MojaKarijera”
MLSP	Ministry of Labor and Social Policy
MOF	MladinskiObrazoven Forum
MOES	Ministry of Education and Sciences
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NESC	National Economic and Social Council
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
ORM	Employers Organization of Macedonia
IT	Information Technology
PMP	Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
PPD	Public –Private Dialogue
PPR	Project Portfolio Review
RER	Renewable Energy Resources
RC	Regional Coordinators
RFO	Regional Field Offices
SBEP	Small Business Expansion Project
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
SOIM	Skopje Office and Information Manager
SOM	Skopje Office Manager

STS	Senior Technical Specialist
ToT	Training of Trainers
VET	Vocational and Educational Training
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WBL	Work-based Learning
WRS	Work Readiness Skills
YES	Youth Employability Skills Network

To help Local Economic and Social Councils (LESCs) maximize available resources (human resources potential, knowledge and expertise, networking, funding, partners), during the reporting period, the Public-Private Dialogue (PPD) component provided an on-going support to LESCs members to develop their main strategic documents, such as the Local Action Plan for Employment for Municipality of Gostivar, The document on Strategic Planning for LESC Skopje, and the Strategy on Local Development of Municipality of Prilep.

In the upcoming quarter, Local Economic and Social Councils will focus on concrete implementation of the activities from their strategic documents. The need for this was emphasized during meetings, held from August 25th to September 3rd, between YES Network Project Director Michael Tetelman and the Federation of the Trade Unions (with the president, Zivko Mitrevski); the Employment Organization of Macedonia (with the president, Angel Dimitrov); as well as with other project partners including LESCs members, LESCs local facilitators, NGO's representatives.

These same points, relating to strategically maximizing available resources, were also raised in the LESCs capacity building regional workshops organized held in September. As an outcome of these conversations, each LESC identified key priorities to be implemented in the next period.

EDC has continued implementation of the Work Readiness Skills (WRS) program in Job Clubs. During the reporting period, EDC delivered 13 WRS workshops in seven Employment Service Agency (ESA) centers. In total, 206 unemployed youth successfully completed the WRS training and 94 found employment this quarter.

From September 25 -26, 2014 in Skopje, facilitators from 23 employment centers participated on a workshop to develop Job Club action plans. Also during this workshop, ESA facilitators delivered presentations about the results and challenges facing ESA centers as they implement the WRS program.

In order to enhance the skills and knowledge of ESA career counselors and to help them in providing better career counselling services to unemployed youth, EDC finalized, printed and distributed the Manual for ESA Career Counselors.

This quarter, the open call application process for equipping 10 new Career Centers was initiated. YES Network project formed a committee for evaluation that consists of representatives from the Ministry of Education and Sciences (MoES) the Vocational Education and Training (VET) Center, and the Youth Employability Skills (YES) Network. The final list of schools where the new Career centers will be opened will be finalized in early October.

The WRS program activities have been continuously implemented in YES partner schools, held during free classes as well as integrated within existing subjects. Approximately 50 groups of students participate in the WRS program in this 2014/15 school year.

During this quarter, 35 teachers successfully completed the Career Counseling training program. Following the completion of all modules, and in order to fully complete training, each teacher will establish individual counseling sessions with students.

EDC held meetings with directors from all partner schools from on the 1st and 2nd of July. The topic of this year's meetings was to present the YES Network's results from activities, as well as to review of the effects of YES programming, and to emphasize their sustainability. The MOES Head of Sector for Primary and Secondary Education and the Bureau for Development of Education (DBE) Director were present at this event.

During the month of September, mentorship meetings were held in all seven municipalities (two meetings in Skopje and one the other partner municipalities) with teachers from partner schools. The main goal of the meetings was to coordinate career center activities and to gather information about implementation of WRS and WBL programs, as well as to inform the school coordinators about upcoming project activities, to gather success stories and to provide advice and recommendations to teachers to address any concerns they may have in regards to implementation.

In July, 2014 a Training of Trainers (ToT) workshop was conducted with representatives from ESAs, secondary schools, VET Center and BDE on the administration of tests for professional orientation, data processing, analysis and interpretation of the results. ToT participants will disseminate this information and lessons learned to the career counselors from their respective organizations.

YES has made a remarkable progress in including youth with disabilities in workforce training. This quarter, YES published a success story featuring a young lawyer with partial visual impairment who has successfully completed the WRS training and is now employed in the country's Public Prosecutor's office.. This success story represents the impact inclusive workforce training can make on youth with disabilities, especially in helping them to find meaningful jobs and becoming contributing members of Macedonian society.

YES's Work Based Learning program was upgraded with guidelines for VET teachers and ESA facilitators to include information on working with youth with physical, sensory and intellectual disabilities. These youth will now be provided with work based learning opportunities, such as job shadowing, practical instruction and internships, alongside their non-disabled peers.

In this quarter the final version of the M&E plan, including the Performance Indicators Reference Sheets (PIRS) for each indicator were approved by the USAID AOR.

1. Program Activities and Outcomes

1.1. Facilitate Public-Private Dialogue that will improve demand-supply labor exchange at the local level

LESCs activities

Prilep:

The Economic Council (EC) of Prilep, led by a consultant engaged by USAID Small Business Expansion Project (SBEP), finalized the Local Development Strategy for the Municipality of Prilep. The strategy itself was a mutual effort and collaboration of four different stakeholders working groups that worked on four priority areas: Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) Development; Rural Tourism and Agriculture; Investments and Infrastructure; and Workforce Development. The Workforce Development working group was facilitated by YES Network Project and consisted of representatives from the Employment Center Prilep, secondary schools, Economic Faculty, representatives from the Local Economic Development (LED) and Educational Department of the Municipality, the NGO sector, as well as representatives from the EC. The Local Development Strategy has five main strategic goals, two of which involve workforce development. These goals, with their specific objectives and activities, are elaborated and explained in the Local Development Strategy of Municipality of Prilep. Below is a list of these goals and objectives:

- Strategic goal 1: Encouraging the business development and creation of new jobs
 - Specific objective 1.1: Adjustment the needs of the businesses with the educational profiles
 - Specific objective 1.2: Improving the possibilities for self-employment
 - Specific objective 1.3: Attracting new investments
 - Specific objective 1.4: Establishing business centers
 - Specific objective 1.5 : Using renewable energy resources (RER)
- Strategic goal 2: Improving the quality of education and adjusting it to meet the needs of the local labor market in the Municipality of Prilep
 - Specific objective 2.1: Improving of the quality of education in the Municipality of Prilep
 - Specific objective 2.2: Increasing employability and the competitiveness of the workforce in the Municipality of Prilep

Gostivar:

As reported in the previous quarterly report, the LESC Gostivar continued to work on finalization of the tasks regarding collecting the necessary data for the document Local Action Plan for Employment (LAPE), as one of the priorities from their strategic plan.

The preparation of LAPE was within the scope of LESC; preparation was conducted during the period from April to September 2014. The labor market survey and analysis included input from forty private and which were surveyed between April and June 2014. The survey process involved gathering of information, holding meetings with relevant institutions, surveying of employers, and analyzing responses and data. The goal of this labor market analysis is to select strategic priorities for the Municipality of Gostivar.

The Local Labor Market analysis was presented on July 16th 2014 in the hall of the Municipality of Gostivar. Members of the LESC,, representatives of the business community, the secondary schools, and journalists attended. The following three topics were covered: 1) municipal strategies and priorities for local economic development and employment; 2) current labor market trends; and 3) strategic priorities emerging from the LAPE. After the presentation, attendees provided comments and suggestions regarding how to best use collected data to develop the LAPE.



Feedback of the final analysis was very positive and all the comments and notes were included in the final document. The final document was submitted to the Municipal Council of Gostivar for further consideration of the Councilors. On the regular monthly meeting of Municipal Council held on September 25th, the Local Action Plan for Employment was adopted as an official document of the Municipality of Gostivar.

Skopje:

After two two-day workshops on strategic planning and one additional short meeting discussing strategic goals and specific objectives, the LESC Skopje members finalized their first document regarding their future activities and work. The document was submitted to the City Council of Skopje, and was adopted on September 25th, with very positive comments and compliments. In the open discussion regarding the content of the document and its importance for strengthening the social dialogue, several representatives from different political parties, stressed the significance such advisory body within the City of Skopje and emphasized the richness of the information provided and the quality of the analysis in regards to the conditions, potential and the necessity of the dialogue between the main social partners, the municipality, employers and workers.

The strategic plan submitted to the City Council of Skopje is the first official document produced the Skopje LESC; it will become the basis for development of additional local policies, measures, and concrete recommendations to the Municipality of Skopje to reduce the unemployment rate.

Stip:

LESC Stip joined the other LESC's in preparing a local labor market analysis. In Stip, a local consultant conducted an in-depth analysis of the Stip labor market and highlighted relevant information, with particular emphasis on factors relating to youth employment. The consultancy was undertaken as part of an effort to build the capacity of the Stip LESC. An additional goal of this consultancy was to enhance the dialogue between local stakeholders in regards to identifying opportunities for improving employment. The consultant worked closely with the Stip LESC to guide them through the process of developing the LAPE. The final LAPE is expected at the beginning of October.

Strumica:

LESC Strumica identified the need for more intensive communication with community members. Therefore, LESC Strumica officially requested YES Network support to identify a consultant to design the LESC's web portal.

The portal will be developed as a link/update of the existing web portal of Municipality of Strumica. It will provide the option to promote LESC activities, work done, and accomplishments achieved. In this manner, the LESC members will be closer to its citizens, including youth and the public in general, and will encourage and facilitate opportunities for stakeholders to voice their opinions and ideas, unemployment issues in the region, and to become more actively involved in addressing them.

The design of the web portal of LESC Strumica is expected to be finalized latest by the middle of November.

Tetovo:

On August 6th, LESC Tetovo held a meeting about a Corporate Social Responsibility Award for local companies, an idea they are pushing to be adopted by the Tetovo Municipality Council.

All of the members have agreed that one of the main criteria for this award should be the potential readiness of the company to offer internships or other forms of WBL opportunities for youth and to assign company people to attend the YES Network training 'Mentors in companies', who will later work and lead the youth through the working processes.

On September 1st, YES Network Project Director, Michael Tetelman had a meeting with LESC Tetovo representative. They discuss about the obstacles, challenges, plans and accomplishments LESC Tetovo has. The topic discussed the most was sustainability of the LESC Tetovo and possible ways of how to helping it, in terms of providing financial and institutional stability.

Bitola:

During the summer, LESC Bitola faced a challenge regarding organizing of the meetings on a regular basis remaining a model for other LESC in terms of being proactive and enthusiastic in implementation of planned activities. The main reason for the challenges was the absence of several key participants in the LESC Bitola work.

Namely, the LESC Bitola leadership waited the Municipal Council to appoint new LESC members from the municipality side, because after local elections members who were active in the LESC activities, lost seats on the Municipal Council and were no longer representatives in the LESC Bitola. In addition, one representative from the business sector (one of the most regular and active participants at the LESC Bitola meetings) moved to another city. Because of the internal restructure and reorganization and because of the summer holidays, the Employers Organization of Macedonia wasn't able to make a replacement and appoint a new member from the business sector. Finally, the representative from the Disable People's Organization DPOs was often absent due to illness. The end result is that there was a reduced number of meetings and events organized by LESC Bitola.

A meeting with the LESC Bitola Secretary to address the above matters is planned

LESCs capacity building workshop:

From September 26-27, The LESC from western part of Macedonia, (Tetovo, Gostivar, Bitola and Prilep) attended two-day workshop in Ohrid. The composition of the participants included representatives from municipalities, business, NGOs, DPOs, and Trade Unions.

At the beginning of the workshop, LESC reflected on past activities. Then, each LESC has presented its top 5 priorities from its action plan. In addition, indicators to measure LESC success and a short overview of the donor assistance to LESC in Croatia were presented as part of the initial workshop activities



During the workshop, the participants drafted an official request to the City Council regarding one key priority. The developed drafts were commented upon and reviewed.

The session on *Accessing the EU and other funds* highly attended. The session started with an animated clip about the European Social Fund and then continued with



presentation. There were many questions about who is eligible to apply, which partnership is more appropriate for certain funds, etc. Because of the high degree of interest, an additional training only on EU funds will be organized to focus on applications, proposal development methodology, and other details.

The final session was outlined the next steps and expected results for the upcoming 6 months. Each LESC has developed time table with actions divided by months, responsible persons, resources needed and budget. These plans contain variety of activities, panels, initiatives, recommendations, trainings, and meetings. The workshop ended with evaluation. Based on participant responses, the workshop was perceived as very useful and participant outputs will be able to positively effect further implementation of LECs action plan activities.

Results 1.1

- Workshop on LESC's capacity building organized for LESC's from Gostivar, Tetovo, Prilep and Bitola
- The key priorities ready to be implemented identified by LESC's Prilep, Bitola, Tetovo and Gostivar
- Public presentation of the findings from the analysis on local labor market in Municipality of Gostivar organized
- Local Action Plan for Employment for Municipality of Gostivar finalized and adopted by the Municipal Council members
- Document on strategic planning for the LESC of the City of Skopje, finalized and adopted by the City Council members
- Local Development Strategy for the Municipality of Prilep finalized

1.2. Strengthen the capacities of NGOs and DPOs for development of employability skills in youth

Following the successful implementation of the Work Readiness Skills (WRS) curriculum for unemployed youth with and without disabilities from the city of Skopje, YES issued a Call for Applications for WRS training delivery grants. The Call was shared with two Bitola and one Prilep-based eligible DPO, which participated in a Training of Trainers for implementation of this curriculum in inclusive groups. Participants were encouraged to establish partnerships and submit joint application with seasoned NGOs from their municipalities, with demonstrable experience in implementation of the WRS curriculum for unemployed youth.

Two DPO-NGO partnerships, one from each municipality, applied for the WRS-Inclusive training delivery grants. Based on clearly defined evaluation criteria (used to evaluate applicants in the previous quarter), YES reviewed the two applications and determined that both applicants were eligible for WRS inclusive training delivery in their respective municipalities.

The Bitola-based 'Association of Blind People' is partnering with another Bitola DPO, the 'Association of Deaf and Partially Deaf', as well as with the NGO 'Youth Cultural Center', experienced in delivering WRS workshops to Bitola unemployed youth. The Prilep-based 'Association of Parents of Children with Cerebral Paralysis' is going to implement the grant in partnership with 'Youth Council Prilep', an NGO with a solid volunteer base and experience in delivering WRS and other trainings for youth from this municipality. The partnering DPOs and NGOs from each municipality had signed Memoranda of Understanding before applying for the WRS-Inclusive training delivery grants. The WRS trainings will be delivered during November and December.

YES published a success story featuring Ivica Simjanovski, a young lawyer with partial visual impairment who participated in a WRS workshop in Skopje. He was recently employed in Macedonia's Public Prosecutor's Office, where he applies the skills he acquired during the WRS training. The success story (see appendix: "Success Story: Inclusion of Youth with Disabilities"), was also shared on the USAID Facebook page and twitter channel.

Results 1.2

- Two DPO-NGO partnerships established in Bitola and Prilep;
- A success story featuring a recently employed young lawyer with visual impairment, who took part in WRS training, published on YES Network web-site.

1.3. Strengthen the capacity of the Employment Services Agency to provide better services to registered unemployed youth, including YWDs, such as training in work-readiness skills, access to structured work-based learning opportunities, and up-to-date information on job openings and career development opportunities

Job Club Activities

During this reporting period, ESAs Job Clubs from four employment centers organized networking meetings in Bitola, Prilep, Tetovo and Stip. ESA job clubs, supported by the YES Network, have made efforts to connect more effectively with all main local partners such as secondary schools, local NGOs, and municipality representatives. All partners have expressed their appreciation for a more integrated network for improving the youth employability, stating that regular bimonthly meetings of the partners a great benefit in to organizing and implementing career related activities. One of the purposes of the networking meetings is to develop an Action Plan to promote local collaboration between the employment center, secondary Schools and local youth serving NGOs.

Some of the proposed actions at the networking meetings are:

- Presentation of ESA services to the secondary schools students
- Presentation of the Active Labor Market Measures (ALMM) to students
- Job fair – to be organized by ESA. Municipality and schools to be actively involved in the activities; activities to be covered by media;
- Sharing experiences from entrepreneurs / success stories from self-employment measure of ALMM in front of the students in secondary schools (according occupations in the schools to choose the appropriate company)
- Sharing experiences / success stories from ALMM, to secondary school students
- Employment Centre to mediate between the business sector and schools in internships
- Presentation to the secondary schools students about opportunities for volunteering. Will be done by NGO's members

The ESA Center in Tetovo has created a working group consisted of members of the ESA Center, YES Network project, local businesses, NGO's, regarding a new active labor market measure that is being financed through EU Twinning project. The activity will include people with physical disabilities, who will attend the Work Readiness Skills training in the ESA Job Club in Tetovo. Afterwards participants will attend a training on IT skills, and then they will attend an on the job training for deficient professions in the Tetovo region.

From September 25 -26, 2014 in Skopje, facilitators from 23 employment centers participated on a workshop that was focused on:

- Presentation of the achieved results and challenges they are facing with during the implementation of the WRS workshops
- Development of Job clubs Action plans.

By working in teams, ESA facilitators have develop Action Plan for each Job Club. These plans include on: Implementation of WRS and WBL programs; Implementation of the Career Counseling program; Networking and collaboration with main local partners; and monitoring and evaluation activities.

YES has conducted a Baseline Disability Awareness Survey of ESA facilitators and school teachers who took part in the "Training on assistive technology use and disability inclusion awareness for career centers and job clubs" workshops, held during February and March, 2014. Respondants to the survey include eleven ESA facilitators; they filled out a tailored questionnaire on their attitudes towards inclusion of youth with disabilities in workforce training. Seven of the eleven respondents had prior experience in working with unemployed persons with disabilities on daily basis (registering, keeping their employment record and providing employment support services).

One of the key findings of this Report is that both ESA facilitators who had worked with persons with disabilities (7 in total) and the ones with no such experience (4 in total) are uncertain about of their own inclusion capacities. Almost all of the respondents would like additional professional development activities to preparing them to work with youth with disabilities. Respondents also expressed uncertainty in the capacity of their organizations to provide them opportunities for such training. Only four ESA facilitators had some training in working with youth with disabilities; these four stated they feel ready to work with YwD even in the present conditions. Further findings of this survey were summarized in a comprehensive Baseline Report, which was compiled and finalized during this quarter.

Work Readiness Skills Program (WRS)

Implementation of the Work Readiness Skills program has continued in each Job Club. During the reporting period, 13 WRS workshops were delivered in 7 ESAs Centers (3 in Strumica, 1 in Tetovo, 2 in Bitola, 1 in Gostivar, 2 in Skopje, 3 in Shtip and 1 in Prilep); in total, 206 registered unemployed youth successfully completed the WRS training (35 Skopje, 23 Tetovo, 27 Strumica, 36 Bitola, 16 Gostivar, 59 Stip and 10 Prilep).



Since the last reporting period, 94 unemployed youth found employment after successfully completing WRS training. During the same, facilitators from 16 newly included ESA centers trained 181 unemployed youth. Eighteen of these youth already found employment. Most of the youth expressed satisfaction with interactive approach and the methods used in training.

A significant milestone for YES Network’s commitment to inclusion of youth with disabilities in workforce training is the implementation of the Work Readiness Skills (WRS) curriculum in an inclusive group in the Prilep ESA Center. One success story emerging from this training is below:

Saso Binisoski is a 25-year-old unemployed garment technician with a physical who successfully completed the WRS training alongside twelve other youth without disabilities. He travelled to the job club each training day, using his own transportation, from a village 20 kilometers away from Prilep. According to a report from a qualified observer, experienced in delivering WRS training as NGO facilitator, Binisoski was fully included in the group. None of the other invited YwD aged 18-27 (four YwD were invited in total), took part in the training. The



The boy with the white hat is Saso Binisoski

Prilep ESA Center will continue to reach out to other YwD and promote the training. YES Network will work closely with other ESA centers to ensure that registered unemployed YwD from the other partner municipalities are also included in WRS training.

Work Based Learning Program (WBL)

The Work Based Learning program has been integrated into the Work Readiness Skills program. During the WBL trainings, unemployed young people are given an opportunity to learn about the benefits of an internship and how internships or on-the-job training can help them make a better career choices. This reporting period, the Work Based Learning program was upgraded with guidelines on including youth with different disabilities in WBL opportunities. In the next quarter, YES will organize a training of trainers specifically tailored to ESA facilitators on successful preparation and internship placement of YwD, within the WBL program.

During the reporting period, 206 unemployed youth participated on 13 WBL workshops in 7 employment centers.

Career Counseling Program

In order to enhance their skills and knowledge for the career services they are providing to their clients, the Manual for ESA career counselors was finalized and printed.

The manual provides relevant content, instructions and guidelines for ESA career counselors to help them in individual and group counseling, career informing and planning, defining of career goals and development of individual career plan.

Results 1.3

- 4 networking meetings in Prilep, Bitola, Tetovo and Stip organized.
- 23 Centers for employment developed Job Clubs Action Plans for period October 2014-September 2015.
- 13 WRS workshops delivered in 7 ESAs Centers
- 206 registered unemployed youth in 7 employment centers have successfully completed the WRS and WBL trainings
- 94 youth who have successfully completed the WRS workshop were employed
- 16 ESA centers for employment trained 181 registered unemployed youth and employed 18 youth.
- 206 registered unemployed youth in 7 centers for employment successfully completed the WBL training

- A manual for ESAs Career Counselors developed
- Disability Awareness Survey findings for ESA facilitators summarized in a Baseline Report;
- YwD included in WRS training in ESA Prilep;
- WBL program upgraded with guidelines on working with YwD.

1.4. Provide continuing professional development opportunities for teachers in secondary schools.

Career Centers Activities

The application process for equipping 10 new Career Centers was initiated this quarter through an open call. A committee, consisting of representatives from MoES, VET Center, and YES Network, evaluated applicants. The final list of schools where the new Career centers will be opened will be finalized at the beginning of October.



A further questionnaire, targeting awareness of youth with disabilities in Career Centers and Job Clubs, was disseminated to teachers who participated in the “Training on assistive technology use and disability

inclusion awareness for career centers and job clubs” workshops. A total of 144 secondary school teachers responded to the questionnaires, providing more information on inclusion of students with disabilities in regular/mainstream education and in workforce training. More than half of the surveyed teachers, or 56%, worked with students with disabilities. Few of them (16 percent), have worked with students with intellectual disabilities.

These findings also confirm that only four of the 37 YES-supported schools participating in the YwD inclusion activities have employed special educators. Most teachers (78 out of 144), feel ready to work with students with disabilities in inclusive classroom settings. However, only 17 teachers, report feeling prepared to do this without additional professional training or preparation. The other 61 teachers responded that they need additional professional development training, expressing uncertainty of their inclusion capacities in the present conditions.

The WRS, WBL and Career Counseling trainings organized as part of the activities supporting inclusion of YwD in mainstream education, will prepare teachers to adapt these curricula to their students with disabilities and, in turn, will provide another excellent professional development opportunity aimed to enhance their inclusion capacity within the general education system. In other words, these trainings will make teachers feel more prepared to

work with YwD not only in free classes/electives when implementing the YES curricula, but also in their respective mandatory general education subjects.

Work Readiness Skills Program

The Work Readiness Skills program activities have been continuously implemented in YES partner schools in free classes and integrated within the subjects that the teachers teach. During the mentoring sessions, the teachers reported that they expect over 50 groups of students to be formed to follow the program in the free-classes in the 2014/15 school year.

Work Based Learning Program

During this reporting period, the content of the Work Based Learning (WBL) program was upgraded with comprehensive guidelines for including secondary school students and unemployed youth with physical, sensory and intellectual disabilities in WBL opportunities (company visits, job shadowing, internships etc.). A team of two local consultants, both special educators who worked on upgrading the WRS curriculum, devised a set of guidelines for adapting each session and activity contained in the four WBL standard modules for youth with different disabilities and access needs. This adapted Work Based Learning program will be implemented in inclusive (heterogeneous) groups, made up of youth with and without disabilities, in secondary schools and ESA centers.

The newly added guidelines contain tips and ground rules for creating an inclusive classroom environment with involved teachers, school management, parents and peers. An entire chapter is dedicated to ensuring full participation of students and youth with disabilities through encouraging peer support. This introductory chapter is essential for the implementation of the WBL curriculum in the Macedonian context, where inclusion is nascent and where support to students with disabilities within and outside the classroom is mostly provided by parents, caretakers and teachers. This chapter also contains guidelines on finding the most accessible classroom/venue within a generally inaccessible school/employment center, effective use of assistive technology and on meeting other access needs specific to youth with different disabilities. These introductory guidelines provide solid grounds for implementation of the curriculum with the existing resources, with no need for significant additional funding or other financial commitments.

The guidelines in the second and the third module ('Preparation and Planning' and 'Implementation of Work Based Learning Activities' provide a detailed overview of the steps for successful preparation and implementation of all WBL activities (company visits/workplace tours, job shadowing, practical instruction/work experience, summer practice/work, internship and Student Entrepreneurship). They contain tailor-made trainer tools and checklists for teachers, students and parents/guardians.

The guidelines in the fourth module, 'Monitoring, Record-Keeping and Evaluating the Work Based Learning Experience', elaborate on the most efficient learning styles for students and youth with different disabilities. The team of consultants has also developed an alternative standard for evaluating the WBL experience by the mentor-teacher and the mentor-employer, with detailed performance descriptions for each mark/grade. These standards are applicable and can be used for evaluating the WBL experience of students and youth with and without disabilities.

The upgraded WBL program was reviewed and improved by two VET Center Advisors who participated in the development of the original WBL curriculum. They contributed to improving the curriculum by giving constructive and detailed feedback and finalizing the guidelines for working with students and youth with disabilities. Trainings for teachers and ESA facilitators, who completed the initial WBL Training of Trainers, will take place during the next quarter. In this schools year over 35 groups of students are expected to participate in Work Based Learning Program.

Mentors in Companies

Training for Mentors in Companies was delivered by the Chamber of Crafts of the Republic of Macedonia and the Vocational Education and Training Center for 16 mentors from companies based in Kumanovo. This training was based on the program developed through YES Network, but financed by other organizations. The program is accepted and viewed as suitable for the Chambers to use it independently of YES Network, which is a good indicator for the sustainability of this program.

Externship program for teachers

After the finalization of the externship orientation program, necessary tools were shared with the teachers. This summer, one teacher from Tetovo who had already participated in an externship with a local company, was trained a mentor. He reports to have gained relevant and useful experience and knowledge, which will help him make the needed changes and adaptations within his teaching practice. In Bitola, two teachers finished their externship experience.

A success story for the externship program for teachers comes from Strumica, where one of the teachers of Dimitar Vlahov, after following an externship program in a local mill company, decided to start teaching another subject on processing technology of grain and sugar. She will complete the externship in October, and has already entered into an agreement with the mill so her students visit the mill for job shadowing and during practical training lessons. The remaining teachers have externship experience planned for the upcoming fall and/or the winter holidays.

Career Counselors Program

During this quarter, 33 teachers from the Skopje and 2 teachers from Gostivar successfully completed the Career Counseling training program. All teachers, upon completing the modules, will also have to hold individual counseling sessions with students before completing the training.

Through the upcoming semester, the teachers will implement knowledge gained from the training, which will be followed by another practical half-day session. This follow-up training will enrich the services that Career Centers services will be able to offer to secondary school students. Centers will be able to provide professional career counseling services and be able to research up to date information in regards to the current labor market trends and requests for professional labor force development to help inform student decisions.

Results 1.4

- 33 teachers from Skopje schools and 2 teachers from Gostivar finished the Career Counseling training
- 7 teacher from the first cohort of municipalities have already realized their externship in a local company
- Disability Awareness Survey findings for secondary school teachers summarized in a Baseline Report;
- Work Based Learning program upgraded with guidelines for VET school teachers on including YwD in WBL opportunities
- Collaboration with USAID projects on success video story featuring YES YwD Inclusion Program Coordinator

1.5. Creative innovative mechanisms to make secondary schools and the VET Center more responsive and relevant

On July 1st and 2nd, a meeting with the directors from all partner schools was organized. The topic of this year's rendezvous with the directors was to present updated results of the YES Network's activities, give a review of the effects, and emphasize the sustainability of the programs. Lessons learned, and results from monitoring and evaluation showed were shared with directors, as well as information regarding the YES inclusiveness programs, which needs to be supported by the schools' management. The Head of Sector for Primary and Secondary Education from the Ministry of Education



and Science was present at this event, as well as the BDE Director. As most of the Skopje schools directors were not present at this event, additional meeting was held for them with the Head of Sector for Education from the City of Skopje.

The YES YwD Inclusion Program Coordinator gave a short informative presentation on the activities supporting inclusion of youth with disabilities. School directors, deputy directors and teachers attending the event discussed ideas to support successful inclusion of students with disabilities in YES programs.

During the month of September, mentorship meetings were held in all seven municipalities (two meetings in Skopje and one in every other municipality) with teachers from all 38 partner schools. The main goal of the meetings is to coordinate career center activities, to gather information about free classes, to inform school coordinators about upcoming project activities, and to gather success stories and provide advice for issues teachers may face during implementation of the activities. These meetings received a lot of interest and were well attended especially in Skopje.



A very interesting development in terms of innovation is that in several schools (e.g., the medical school in Gostivar and the textile school in Tetovo) free classes are delivered by a team of teachers, not just one. Teachers are able to support one another during the delivery as well as help one another prepare for classes. The mentoring sessions were delivered by YES VET STS, VET Assistant and the local coordinators.

On 1st of August, a networking meeting was organized in Tetovo, with the partners of the YES Network Project, including secondary schools, ESA Center and local NGOs. The point of contact from all 5 high schools in Tetovo were present at the meeting, in which networking activities between the partners were discussed and planned. It was decided that the ESA employees, in



coordination with the contact persons from the schools will agree on the dates when visits will be made to the schools from the ESA Center employees, where they will present the ESA Center and the services that they are offering. These network activities will enable teachers will be able to help their students find more relevant and updated information on the local labor market needs and trends, as well to introduce the possibility of using the ESA Job Club's services

upon their graduation from high school.

In addition, two networking meetings were held in Bitola and Prilep. Representatives from all secondary schools in Bitola and Prilep were present at the meetings. The purpose of these meetings was to develop an Action Plan which would intensify cooperation between the partner institutions of the YES Network project from Bitola region and also for Prilep region (secondary schools, NGOs, ESA and Municipality). The activities are scheduled to begin in September 2014 and extend through June 2015. The main goal of this activity will be to enhance networking services by partner organizations to benefit young unemployed job seekers or high school students involved in YES Network programs.

Finally, the Career Counseling Program was finalized with minor adaptations added after the first year of implementation. The Manual for Teachers for this program was translated into Albanian.

Results 1.5

- Networking activities agreed upon between the schools and the ESA Center
- Meeting with school directors delivered;
- 8 mentoring sessions attended by 107 teachers were organized;
- 3 Networking meetings held in Bitola, Prilep, and Tetovo.

1.6. Integrate productive connections with current and planned USAID and other donor workforce related activities

The YES YwD Inclusion Program Coordinator was featured in a success video story, as part of the USAID Video Editing Workshop. The video was shot by a team of professionals employed in two USAID projects (the Persons with Disabilities Internship and Employment Project and the Macedonia Anti-Corruption Program). It describes a day in the life of the YES YwD Coordinator, as a successful professional with total visual impairment. The video will be published and shared during the next quarter.

STS Labor Market Specialist held a meeting with Mrs Valli Corbanese, representative from International Labor Organization (ILO). ILO is working on impact evaluation report of ESAs ALMM and was interested about YES Network WRS, WBL and Career Counseling programs. The ILO representative found that the programs are very valuable for unemployed youth and will recommend it to the Government of Macedonia.

1.7. Monitoring and Evaluation

Performance indicators reference sheets (PIRS)

In this quarter the final version of the M&E plan, including the Performance Indicators Reference Sheets (PIRS) for each indicator were approved by the USAID AOR.

Data gathering activities for the FY14 Evaluation

During this quarter the following data gathering activities took place:

- School reports on the implementation of the WRS, WBL and CP programs during the school year 2013/14 were collected from all 38 partner secondary schools. Each school submitted their report after the end of the school year, between June and July 2014. In a small number of cases the quality of the data was compromised by incompleteness and incorrect data disaggregation. After the data issues were addressed by contacting the schools and confirming with them the corrections, the school reports were analyzed and the data compiled in a summary table showing the number of students participating in both WRS and WBL programs through implementation during “free classes” or through integration of curriculum content within the regular classes.
- Observation of one WRS workshop with youth implemented by the Employment Center in Prilep. Report on the findings was completed.

Data processing and analysis

During this quarter, data processing activities were focused around the entry of acquired data from youth and teachers for the FY2014 annual evaluation and preparation of focus groups reports.

Twelve (12) focus groups reports were completed, encompassing student, youth and teacher views on the implementation of the WRS and WBL programs, disaggregated by municipalities as they entered the project.

The administration of the questionnaires was done using both paper versions and on-line versions of the instruments. By September 30th with the collective effort of the regional coordinators and the YES Network assistants over 1700 questionnaires were administered and entered into spreadsheets. The numbers of entered questionnaires for each program and target group are: 896 WRS questionnaires for students, 145 WRS questionnaires for teachers, 351 WBL questionnaires for students, 52 WBL questionnaires for teachers, 300 WRS questionnaires for ESA Youth.

	WRS	WBL
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Teachers	145	52
Students	896	351
Youth trained through ESA	300	177 ¹

Baseline study for the inclusion of youth with disabilities

During the last quarter a baseline survey on the inclusion of youth with disabilities in the secondary schools and ESA Centers was implemented. Teachers and ESA facilitators responded to a questionnaire designed to provide a baseline data on existing attitudes and awareness on the inclusion of YWDs into their practices. A total of 155 participants (144 teachers and 11 ESA facilitators) responded to the questionnaires. The respondents are evenly distributed among 7 municipalities, 65% of them are women while 35% are men. The conclusions from the data analysis can be summarized in the following points:

- Most of the teachers and facilitators have already worked with youth with disabilities in the past, and the ones who haven't are the ones who are least likely to start working with youth with disabilities this year.
- Only four of the forty schools have a special educator employed, and none of the six ESA Centers has such an employee.
- Teachers and ESA facilitators express positive opinion regarding inclusion when asked directly about this, but they think that it takes a lot of effort and finances to create a functioning inclusive environment.
- Both groups show willingness to include youth with disabilities into their practices, and agree that there is an awareness issue regarding their inclusion. Although the teachers/facilitators support inclusion of youth with disabilities into the classrooms/workshops their skepticism of their own capacities to do so is very present in their answers.
- Almost all of the respondents think that they need more professional development activities for preparing them to work with youth with disabilities, but they are also most skeptical regarding the capacity of their organizations to provide the opportunities for such training. Only a small part of the teachers/facilitators have ever had training in working with youth with disabilities and these are the ones that feel most ready to work with youth with disabilities even in the present conditions.

Presentation of the evaluation findings on the Career planning program

In July 2014 the first draft of report has been shared with MOES, BDE, VET Center and USAID. In August, YES Network organized a presentation of the findings and the recommendations regarding the implementation of the Career planning program in the schools. Representatives

¹ A set of questions, part of the WRS questionnaire

from all above mentioned institutions participated and actively commented and discussed some of the findings and recommendations. The final version of the report was shared with all of them.

WRN! Testing

During this quarter, in accordance with the EDC main office, the YES Network planned the use of the WRN! exam as the instrument of choice for the annual evaluation of the WRS. The curriculum evaluation will be conducted by obtaining a pre-test and a post-test measure of their employability skills. The pre-test measure will be obtained by administering the WRN! exam to a sample of 200 students before they start the implementation of the WRS curriculum (September 2014, which is the start of the school year). Afterwards, in May 2015, when the students have completed the curriculum, a larger sample will be tested using the WRN! exam, providing the post-test measure of employability skills. This larger sample will also include the control sample for comparison purposes.

The pre-test administration of the WRN! exam was planned with seven schools from seven different cities: OSEU Gostivar – (Gostivar), Mosha Pijade – (Tetovo), Nikola Karev – (Strumica), Gjorce Petrov – (Prilep), Taki Daskalo (Bitola), Kole Nehtenin – (Stip) and Boro Petrushevski – (Skopje). The actual administration used an electronic version of the WRN exam on the SurveyMonkey platform. By September 30th 101 students from 5 schools took the exam and the administration went without any problems.

Development of Professional orientation tests

In July, 2014 a ToT workshop was conducted with representatives from ESA, secondary schools, VET Center and BDE on the administration of the tests for professional orientation, data processing, analysis and interpretation of the results. The participants will disseminate this training to the career counselors in their organizations.

During this quarter the Project started working with the MOES on creation of an electronic version of the tests which will make its administration and data processing more accessible, user friendly and less time consuming. The analysis and the interpretation, however, will be done by the career counselor and will be shared with the student in person.

2. Activities proposed for the coming quarter :October through December

2.1. Facilitate Public-Private Dialogue that will improve demand-supply labor exchange at the local level

- Public presentation of the LAPE Stip
- Promotion of the document on strategic planning for the LESC of the City of Skopje
- Promotion of the web portal of the LESC Strumica
- Adoption of Local Development Strategy of the Municipality of Prilep by the Municipal Council members
- Appointment of the new president of the LESC Tetovo
- Printing the Manual “ How to establish successful social dialogue in Macedonia”
- Printing the guide “Tips and hints for the LESC in Macedonia”
- Organizing a conference on social dialogue

2.2. Strengthen the capacities of NGOs and DPOs for development of employability skills in youth

- Work Readiness Skills workshops for unemployed youth with and without disabilities in Bitola and Prilep;
- Work Readiness Skills training of trainers for NGOs and DPOs working with youth with disabilities

2.3. Strengthen the capacity of the Employment Services Agency to provide better services to registered unemployed youth, including YWDs, such as training in work-readiness skills, access to structured work-based learning opportunities, and up-to-date information on job openings and career development opportunities

- Training of trainers for ESA facilitators for implementation of the Work Based Learning curriculum in inclusive groups.
- 5 days workshop on Career Counseling for ESA representatives from 16 centers for employment.
- Networking meetings in Gostivar, Skopje and Strumica
- Support ESA in organizing Job Fair in Skopje .
- 2 days workshop on implementation of career counseling tools
- Assist ESA staff in implementation of WRS and WBL to registered unemployed

- Implementation of Career Counseling program in 7 centers for employment

2.4. Provide continuing professional development opportunities for teachers in Vocational Educational Training (VET) schools.

- Final selection of schools and equipment with career centers
- Deliver five Mentors in Companies trainings
- Deliver four orientation meetings with teachers about externship program
- Deliver two half-day practical sessions for the career counselors from Skopje
- Work Readiness Skills workshops for unemployed youth with and without disabilities in Bitola and Prilep;
- Work Readiness Skills training of trainers for NGOs and DPOs working with youth with disabilities (My Career, 'Poraka Nasa');
- Support schools which included students with disabilities in the WRS program;
- Deliver ToT for implementation of the Work Based Learning curriculum in inclusive classroom settings to VET school teachers from 7 partner municipalities;
- Deliver training on implementation of the WRS curriculum for special VET school teachers.

2.5. Creative innovative mechanisms to make VET schools and the VET Center more responsive and relevant

- Participate at Days of Crafts and present Crafts with Mentors in Companies certificates
- Event for promotion of Career Counseling
- Event for promotion of Mentors in Companies
- Review and finalize Mentors in Companies program
- Meetings with stakeholders to make further transfer of the Mentors in Companies training program

2.6. Monitoring and Evaluation

- Evaluation interviews with LESC
- Three focus groups for the inclusive WRS workshops with youth through ESA Skopje and NGO/DPO and reporting on them
- Quantitative data processing and analysis
- Qualitative data processing and analysis
- Preparation of the FY 2014 Evaluation report

- Reporting to USAID for the Portfolio review

3. Administration and Finance

3.1 Administration activities and outcomes

The activities completed during this quarter include:

- Staff Retreat was held in July 2014
- Three packages for VAT reimbursement documents for the period January- March 2014, April-May 2014 and June-July 2014 have been submitted to USAID
- Vendor selection process for Web Site Maintenance Company was performed in August 2014
- Finalized selection procedure for the Interim Finance and Admin Manager; placed interviews with the best candidates for the position and final selection in July 2014
- Performed training and transition for the selected Interim Finance and Admin Manager during August 2014
- Selected candidate for the Interim Finance and Admin Manager started full time job as of September 1, 2014
- Selection procedure for the Finance and Admin Assistant; placed interviews with the best candidates for the position and final selection in August 2014
- Performed training and transition for the selected Interim Finance and Admin Assistant during August and September 2014
- Selected candidate for the Interim Finance and Admin Assistant started full time job as of September 15, 2014
- Performed annual physical inventory check of all assets (including field offices in Bitola and Tetovo)

3.2 Administration activities proposed for the next quarter

- Closing of fiscal year 2014, beginning of October
- Leverage calculations for Year IV to be prepared and send to USAID in October
- Two sub-grants to be awarded in October 2014 for NGOs from Bitola and Prilep
- Submit document for reimbursement of VAT for August-October 2014 to USAID
- Annual vendor selection process for transportation and office supplies will be performed in October 2014
- Renovation, equipment and furniture for 10 new Career Centers in schools in Macedonia
- Disposition of equipment and furniture to ESA and schools to be finalized, i.e. Transfer Agreements to be signed and each item to be physically checked

Appendix I. Summary of YES Network activities supporting inclusion of YwD

YES has made a remarkable progress in including youth with disabilities in workforce training. In this quarter, a success story of a young lawyer with partial visual impairment employed in the country's Public Prosecutor's office was published. This is excellent proof of the impact inclusive workforce training is making on youth with disabilities who are getting meaningful jobs and becoming contributing members of Macedonian society.

YES's Work Based Learning program was upgraded with guidelines for VET school teachers and ESA facilitators on working with youth with physical, sensory and intellectual disabilities. These youth will now be provided with work based learning opportunities, such as job shadowing, practical instruction and internships, along with their non-disabled peers.

DPOs and NGOs from Prilep and Bitola Form Partnerships, Apply for YES Training Delivery Grants

Following the successful implementation of the Work Readiness Skills (WRS) curriculum with unemployed youth with and without disabilities from the city of Skopje, YES has issued a Call for Applications for WRS training delivery grants. The Call was shared with two Bitola and one Prilep-based eligible DPO, which took part in the Training of Trainers for implementation of this curriculum in inclusive groups. They were encouraged to establish partnership and submit a joint application with seasoned NGOs from their municipality, with demonstrable



experience in implementation of the WRS curriculum with out-of-school, unemployed youth. Two DPO-NGO partnerships, one from each municipality, applied for the WRS-Inclusive training delivery grants. No selection process was conducted as YES received one grant application from each municipality. However, based on clearly defined evaluation criteria (used to evaluate applicants in the previous quarter), YES reviewed the two applications and determined that both applicants were eligible for WRS inclusive training delivery in their respective municipalities.

The Bitola-based 'Association of Blind People' is partnering with another Bitola DPO, the 'Association of Deaf and Partially Deaf', as well as with the NGO 'Youth Cultural Center', experienced in delivering WRS workshops to Bitola unemployed youth. The Prilep-based 'Association of Parents of Children with Cerebral Paralysis' is going to implement the grant in partnership with 'Youth Council Prilep', an NGO with a solid volunteer base experienced in delivering WRS and other trainings for youth from this municipality. The partnering DPOs and NGOs from each municipality signed Memoranda of Understanding, as proof of partnership,

before applying for the WRS-Inclusive training delivery grants. The WRS trainings will be delivered during November and December.

Youth with Disabilities Acquire Work Readiness Skills, Apply them on the Job

A significant stepping stone for YES Network's commitment to inclusion of youth with disabilities in workforce training is the implementation of the Work Readiness Skills (WRS) curriculum in an inclusive group in the Prilep ESA Center. The 25-year-old unemployed garment technician with a physical disability Saso Binisoski has successfully completed the WRS training along with twelve other youth without disabilities. He travelled to the job club each training day, with his own transportation, from a village 20 kilometers away from Prilep. According to a report from a qualified observer, experienced in delivering WRS training as NGO facilitator, Binisoski was fully included in the group. The Prilep ESA Center will continue to reach out to other YwD and promote the training.

One young person with a disability, who participated in YES Work Readiness Skills Training, has already been provided with an opportunity to apply the skills on a real and demanding job. Ivica Simjanovski, a young lawyer with partial visual impairment, has recently been employed in Macedonia's Public Prosecutor's Office. YES published a success story where Simjanovski shares the challenges he faced during the job seeking process and his future plans:

"The training made me think differently about things I know. I got a complete picture of the skills I now apply, which will help me endure work pressure and survive on the job," says Simjanovski.

As a lawyer and a human rights activist, Simjanovski hopes he will still be able to inform and educate persons with disabilities in his community about their rights and duties.

"I was fulfilled as I also contributed to the training - I familiarized the other participants with their rights and duties on the job. I pointed out things they should pay attention on and advised them to advocate for their rights and speak confidently with their employers."

His disability does not discourage Simjanovski to go after his goals. On the contrary, it makes him continue to strive toward them.

"My disability makes me strive for success. Thanks to the challenges I am facing in life, I became persistent, determined and hardworking. These qualities helped me find a job, and the skills I got from the training are already helping me to distinguish myself as a successful professional."

Teachers and Facilitators Ready to Include Youth with Disabilities in Workforce Training, Disability Awareness Survey Shows

YES has conducted a Baseline Disability Awareness Survey of ESA facilitators and school teachers who took part in the "Training on assistive technology use and disability inclusion awareness for career centers and job clubs" workshops, taking place this February and March in all 7 partner municipalities. The findings of this Survey were summarized in a comprehensive Baseline Report, which was compiled and finalized during this quarter.

A total of 144 teachers and 11 ESA facilitators took part in the survey, by filling out a tailored questionnaire on their attitudes towards inclusion of youth with disabilities in workforce training.

One of the key findings of this Report is that most teachers and ESA facilitators feel ready to work with students and youth with disabilities in inclusive settings. Most of them, however, responded that they need additional professional development opportunities and training, thereby expressing some skepticism of their present inclusion capacities.

The Work Readiness Skills, Work Based Learning and Career Planning trainings organized as part of the activities supporting inclusion of YwD, will prepare teachers and facilitators to adapt these curricula to students and youth with disabilities. They will serve as excellent professional development opportunities aimed to enhance their inclusion capacity within the general education and employment support system.

Work Based Learning Curriculum Upgraded with YwD Inclusion Guidelines

The content of the Work Based Learning (WBL) program was upgraded with comprehensive guidelines for including secondary school students and unemployed youth with physical, sensory and intellectual disabilities in WBL opportunities (company visits, job shadowing, internships etc.). A team of two local consultants, both special educators who worked on upgrading the WRS curriculum, devised a set of guidelines for adapting each session and activity contained in the four WBL standard modules for youth with different disabilities and access needs. This adapted Work Based Learning program will be implemented in inclusive (heterogeneous) groups, made up of youth with and without disabilities, in secondary schools and ESA centers.



The newly added guidelines contain tips and ground rules for creating an inclusive classroom environment with involved teachers, school management, parents and peers. An entire chapter is dedicated to ensuring full participation of students and youth with disabilities through encouraging peer support. This introductory chapter is essential for the implementation of the WBL curriculum in the Macedonian context, where inclusion is nascent and where support to students with disabilities within and outside the classroom is mostly provided by parents, caretakers and teachers. This chapter also contains guidelines on finding the most accessible classroom/venue within a generally inaccessible school/employment center, effective use of assistive technology and on meeting other access needs specific to youth with different disabilities. These introductory guidelines provide solid grounds for implementation of the curriculum with the existing resources, with no need for significant additional funding or other financial commitments.

The guidelines in the second and the third module ('Preparation and Planning' and 'Implementation of Work Based Learning Activities' provide a detailed overview of the steps for successful preparation and implementation of all WBL activities (company visits/workplace tours, job shadowing, practical instruction/work experience, summer practice/work, internship and Student Entrepreneurship). They contain tailor-made trainer tools and checklists for teachers, students and parents/guardians.

The guidelines in the fourth module, 'Monitoring, Record-Keeping and Evaluating the Work Based Learning Experience', elaborate on the most efficient learning styles for students and youth with different disabilities. The team of consultants has also developed an alternative standard for evaluating the WBL experience by the mentor-teacher and the mentor-employer, with detailed performance descriptions for each mark/grade. These standards are applicable and can be used for evaluating the WBL experience of students and youth with and without disabilities.

The upgraded WBL program was reviewed and improved by two VET Center Advisors who designed the original curriculum. They contributed to improving the curriculum by giving constructive and detailed feedback and finalizing the guidelines for working with students and youth with disabilities. Trainings for teachers and ESA facilitators, who completed the initial WBL Training of Trainers, will take place during the next quarter.

USAID Projects Work Together to Celebrate Success

The YES YwD Inclusion Program Coordinator was featured in a success video story, as part of the USAID Video Editing Workshop. The video was shot by a team of professionals employed in two USAID projects (the Persons with Disabilities Internship and Employment Project and the Macedonia Anti-Corruption Program). It describes a day in the life of the YES YwD Coordinator, as a successful professional with total visual impairment. The video will be published and shared during the next quarter.

Appendix II Success Story

"My Disability Makes me Strive for Success" – Ivica Simjanovski



The young lawyer with partial visual impairment, Ivica Simjanovski, came to the Work Readiness Skills training expecting another certificate he can put in his professional CV. He could not even imagine that he soon would be provided with an opportunity to implement the skills gained during the training on a real and demanding job.

"The training made me think differently about things I know. I got a complete picture of the skills I now apply, which will help me endure work pressure and survive on the job," says Simjanovski, who was recently employed in the Public Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Macedonia.

The Work Readiness Skills training Simjanovski participated in was part of the USAID Youth Employability Skills (YES) Network project. Through their representative organizations, this USAID project ensures the inclusion and full participation of youth with disabilities in workforce training.

“All of us had to take part and contribute. No excuses were accepted, because part of the trainers were also youth with disabilities.”

Daniela Stojanovska – Djingovska, President of the Association of Students and Youth with Disabilities which organized the training with the USAID YES Network project, agrees.

“All trainers from our association are persons with disabilities. Thanks to their experience in the inclusion field, they did well and made the group work as a whole.”

As a lawyer and a human rights activist, Simjanovski hopes he will still be able to inform and educate persons with disabilities in his community about their rights and duties.

“I was fulfilled as I also contributed to the training - I familiarized the other participants with their rights and duties on the job. I pointed out things they should pay attention on and advised them to advocate for their rights and speak confidently with their employers.”

His disability does not discourage Simjanovski to go after his goals. On the contrary, it makes him continue to strive toward them.

“My disability makes me strive for success. Thanks to the challenges I am facing in life, I became persistent, determined and hardworking. These qualities helped me find a job, and the skills I got from the training are already helping me to distinguish myself as a successful professional.”

Appendix III LEVERAGE REPORT

1. ESA employees’ salary costs for delivering of WRS training to registered youth (from October 1st, 2013 to September 30th, 2014);

Based on the information received from ESA, the average monthly gross salary per employee is MKD28, 000. Two ESA employees are facilitating each group 4 days training. Four days training represents 20% of the working days per month. Therefore the USD rate per group is USD230.31

Exchange Rate: 1US\$=48,63² MKD

Average Monthly Gross Salary in MKD for 2 employees	Rate per group in MKD (20% of Average Monthly Gross Salary)	Rate per group in US\$
56,000.00	11,200.00	\$230.31

² Middle exchange rate according to the National Bank of the Republic of Macedonia

YEAR II-III			
Program - WRS	# of groups	Rate per group (in US \$)	Total (in US\$)
Period - October 1st, 2013 to September 30th, 2014	43	230.31	9,903.33
Total			

2. VET Schools teachers' salary costs for delivering free classes for WRS, WBL and CCC Programs (from October 1st, 2013 to September 30th, 2014)

According to the regulations related to payment of teachers, and based on a correspondence from the Ministry of Education and Science, rate per class is calculated as follows:

- the average monthly gross salary of a teacher is 33,469.00 MKD, namely, 401,628.00 MKD annually;
- this average gross salary refers to a “full fund of classes”, which implies that the teacher needs to have at least 20 in-schools classes per week;
- the programs we have developed are implemented through two classes per week. The length of WRS vs WBL in the schools differs (72 vs 66 classes annually respectively) because they belong to a different year in the syllabus (third vs fourth respectively), which in case of payment of the teacher does not imply a difference;
- as 2 classes is 10% of 20, we calculate the annual amount that would refer to pay for implementation of a program being realized through two classes a week with one group of students. Therefore, we get the sum of 40.162,80 MKD per group per program annually. In USD, that amount is \$ 825.89;

			10% rate	
average monthly gross salary MKD		33.469,00		
average annual gross salary MKD		401.628,00	40.162,80	
		rate for 1 USD	48,63	
		USD rate per group	\$ 825,89	
Period - October 1st, 2013 to September 30th, 2014				
# og groups	WRS = 71	WBL = 38	CCCP = 32	Total Year 4
3. USD Amounts	\$58.637,85	31.383,64	26.428,33	\$116.449,82

3. SUMMARY (from October 1st, 2013 to September 30th, 2014)

ESA	<i>USD 9,903.33</i>
VET SCHOOLS	<i>USD 116,449.82</i>
TOTAL	<i>USD 126,353.15</i>