



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

# Youth Employability Skills Network

Associate Cooperative Agreement  
Award 165-A-00-10-00106-00

**Quarterly Report**  
**January through March 2012**

**Education Development Center**

**EDC**

## Table of Contents

Executive Summary .....	5
1. Program Activities and Outcomes .....	6
1.1. Facilitate Public-Private Dialogue that will improve demand-supply labor exchange at the local level 6	
Results 1.1 .....	7
1.2. Develop venues for meeting immediate skill/training needs of the labor market and career development opportunities.....	7
Work Readiness Skills training by youth serving NGOs.....	7
Career Centers .....	8
Job Club Activities .....	8
Internship Law.....	9
Results 1.2 .....	9
1.3. Strengthen the job services capacity of ESA and private job matching companies to ensure trained youth have access to up-to-date information on job openings and career development opportunities.....	10
Work Readiness Skills training at ESA Centers .....	10
Work Based Learning Program (WBL).....	10
Results 1.3 .....	11
1.4. Provide continuing professional development opportunities for teachers in Vocational Educational Training (VET) schools.....	11
Work Readiness Skills training for VET teachers .....	11
Work Based Learning Program.....	11
Results 1.4 .....	12
1.5. Creative innovative mechanisms to make VET schools and the VET Center more responsive and relevant .....	12
Results 1.5 .....	13
1.6. Integrate productive connections with current and planned USAID and other donor workforce related activities .....	13
Results 1.6 .....	13
1.7. Monitoring and Evaluation .....	14
Monitoring of work readiness curriculum workshops .....	14
Evaluation questionnaire administration to youth .....	15
Contribution to the yesnetwork.mk website .....	15
Focus group with youth participating at NGO WRC workshop .....	15
Maintaining and updating the project database.....	16
Tracking system of youth .....	16

Professional orientation tests .....	16
Filming best practices workshops .....	17
2 . Activities proposed for the coming quarter : April through June .....	19
2.1 Facilitate Public-Private Dialogue that will improve demand-supply labor exchange at the local level	19
2.2 Develop venues for meeting immediate skill/training needs of the labor market and career development opportunities.....	19
2.3 Strengthen the job services capacity of ESA and private job matching companies to ensure trained youth have access to up-to-date information on job openings and career development opportunities .....	20
2.4 Provide continuing professional development opportunities for teachers in Vocational Educational Training (VET) schools.....	20
Work Readiness Skills Training.....	20
Work Based Learning Program.....	20
2.5 Creative innovative mechanisms to make VET schools and the VET Center more responsive and relevant .....	20
2.6 Integrate productive connections with current and planned USAID and other donor workforce related projects .....	21
2.7 Monitoring and Evaluation .....	21
3 Administration and Finance .....	21
3.1 Administration activities and outcomes .....	21
3.2 Administration activities proposed for the next quarter .....	21
4 Appendices.....	22
Appendix I .....	22

## Acronyms

---

<b>ALMM</b>	Active labor market measures
<b>AOTR</b>	Agreement Officer’s Technical Representative
<b>AWP</b>	Annual Workplan
<b>BCM</b>	Business Confederation of Macedonia
<b>COP</b>	Chief of Party
<b>CC</b>	Career Center (VET)
<b>DCOP</b>	Deputy Chief of Party
<b>ESA</b>	Employment Service Agency
<b>EDC</b>	Education Development Center Inc.
<b>FAM</b>	Financial and Administrative Manager
<b>GCDF</b>	Global Career Development Facilitator
<b>ILO</b>	International Labor Organization
<b>ICP</b>	Individual Career Plan
<b>JC</b>	Job Club (ESA)
<b>HCN</b>	Host Country National
<b>HICD</b>	Human and Institutional Capacity Development
<b>LESC</b>	Local Economic and Social Council
<b>MK</b>	“Moja Kariera”
<b>MLSP</b>	Ministry of Labor and Social Policy
<b>MOF</b>	Mladinski Obrazoven Forum
<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>NESC</b>	National Economic and Social Council
<b>NGO</b>	Non-governmental Organization
<b>ORM</b>	Employers Organization of Macedonia
<b>IT</b>	Information Technology
<b>PMP</b>	Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
<b>PPD</b>	Public –Private Dialogue
<b>PPR</b>	Project Portfolio Review
<b>RC</b>	Regional Coordinators
<b>RFO</b>	Regional Field Offices
<b>STS</b>	Senior Technical Specialist
<b>VET</b>	Vocational and Educational Training
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development
<b>WBL</b>	Work-based Learning
<b>WRS</b>	Work Readiness Skills
<b>WRC</b>	Work Readiness Curriculum
<b>YES</b>	Youth Employability Skills Network

---

## Executive Summary

The YES Network Project continued to productively work with all its partners in all activity areas to make significant progress towards the project's end goal.

Two sessions of Local Economic and Social Council for Strumica held at which the Rules of Procedure were defined and adopted. Meanwhile in Bitola the formal basis for establishment of Local Economic and Social Council for Bitola was defined and agreed upon. Although the Tetovo Municipality formally decided to inaugurate the local Social and Economic Council the formal decision to place this item on the Council meeting agenda was postponed.

The YES Network project began implementing activities with three additional municipalities these being Stip, Gostivar and Prilep. All 13 schools secondary schools from Prilep, Stip and Gostivar have submitted application forms for enrolling in collaborative activities with YES Network project. Interventions with the ESA Centers in these areas were also started as were initiatives with local youth serving NGOs. Assessments of the needs for three Job Clubs were made in the three new partner ESA Centers.

Around 80 young out-of school unemployed persons that are not registered with the ESA completed the work readiness skills training provided by youth focused NGOs. In Strumica, Bitola and Tetovo ESA staff and NGO trainers worked with youth in the implementation of six WRC workshops conducted at the ESA Job Clubs. A second series of the WRS workshops was completed during the quarter and 100 additional teachers were trained to provide students with knowledge about soft skills useful to individuals who will soon be entering the labor market.

A Career Center opening ceremony was conducted in the "Mosa Pijade" secondary school in Tetovo and career center activities and services promoted among students, parents, municipality representatives and the business community. Career Center activities including workshops; presentations; competitions and such like and were by students and school staff. Job Clubs in Bitola and Tetovo ESA Centers were officially reopened during the quarter while collaborative relations were established with the three new ESA centers in Stip, Prilep and Gostivar.

A MoU prepared USAID/EDC YES was submitted to MoLSP. This document outlines the activities and resources to support these needed for the creation of a final draft of the Internship Law. In an MOU areas of cooperation between YES and MoES, activities proposed and resources needed for establishing a Career Advisors training, certification and professional development program were defined. The document has been provided to the MoES for review and comment.

A four module work based learning program was created and adapted to satisfy existing VET curricula requirements. A work based learning program specially tailored for ESA staff needs and areas of intervention consisting of four modules developed was also developed. The first work based learning workshop for teachers from Strumica and Bitola was conducted with 20 teachers participating.

YES and Habitat for Humanity – Macedonia established regular monthly meetings at which to discuss and plan collaborative work around work based learning issues particularly internships based on green jobs which. Collaboration potential established with the American Chamber of Commerce – Macedonia particularly focusing on intern mentors. Potential collaboration and areas for cooperation established with the EU funded - "Further modernization of ESA" project implemented by an Italian consortium.

## 1. Program Activities and Outcomes

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

#### **Establishment of local ESCs**

Bitola: STS for PPD attended a session of the Commission of the Bitola City Council to discuss formalities regarding the establishment of the LESC. The Commission approved the draft decision for establishment of the LESC Bitola, resulting in the formal adoption of this decision by the Bitola City Council during its February 16<sup>th</sup> session. The Bitola LESC will consist of 12 members representing the Municipality, employers and workers. Additional members will represent the Employment Service Agency, the secondary education constituency, youth and business associations. This composition will include all relevant local stakeholders who have an interest in dialogue around effectively tackling youth unemployment. LESC members were nominated by the Municipality and the social partners, thus preparing the way for a formal signing of the Agreement to mark the inauguration of the LESC.

On March 27<sup>th</sup> a community meeting was held in Bitola to discuss what had been achieved to date by the YES Network project and local partners to enhance employability skills levels among young job seekers and what local social and economic development has provided in terms of employment opportunities. Participants included municipal representatives, secondary school representatives, employers, the Director of the Employment Center Bitola, youth and NGOs. Participants concluded that much has been achieved in Bitola with support from the YES Network Project, but many more issues required attention to enhance youth employability skills and reduce the unemployment level of young Macedonians. Ms. Christine Tefft, Democracy and Governance Specialist from the USAID Office of the Coordinator of Assistance to Europe and Eurasia, State Department, Ms. LeAnna Marr, USAID Program Office Director and Mr. Joseph Lessard USAID Economic Growth Office Director were present at this meeting.

Tetovo: The Municipality of Tetovo made the formal decision to establish an LESC in the Tetovo Municipality during December 2011. During this reporting period, the Municipal administration began the process of nominating its representatives and sending invitations to the external partners seeking their participation in the LESC and the nomination of LESC representatives. The Head of the Municipal Council was supportive and cooperative during this process. Voting-in members from the municipality will take place at the upcoming session of the Council, held towards the end of April.

Strumica: Strumica is the municipality which has established and has a functioning LESC. During this reporting period, the Strumica LESC held two sessions. The first, on February 06<sup>th</sup> 2012, was dedicated to developing the internal Rules of Procedure for the LESC. These rules will define the basis for its functioning and the roles and responsibilities of the chairperson and secretary of the LESC, as well as of the other members. In addition, a working group was established to develop the Strumica LESC Strategy Action Plan the development of which will be supported by the YES Network Project. To assist the working group in composing the Strategy and Action Plan, the YES Network Project hired a consultant who will deliver a two-day workshop for strategic planning to Strumica LESC members and will be working jointly with them to develop the document. The STS for PPD together with the consultant for strategic planning attended the second session of the Strumica LESC, held on March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2012. The LESC adopted the Rules of Procedure at this session and members of the LESC received information about the

upcoming workshop for strategic planning which will take place in the beginning of April. In addition, LESC members agreed to organize a Town Hall meeting in April dedicated to the discussing the challenges that young people face in the local labor market. The Town Hall meeting will involve a wider local audience including employers, municipality representatives, education representatives and youth.

### **Results 1.1**

---

- Two sessions of Local Economic and Social Council for Strumica held.
- Rules of procedure for Strumica LESC adopted.
- Formal basis for establishment of Local Economic and Social Council for Bitola provided.

## **1.2. Develop venues for meeting immediate skill/training needs of the labor market and career development opportunities**

### **Work Readiness Skills training by youth serving NGOs**

---

Selected NGOs from the three municipalities received a sub-award from the YES Network Project to implement the WRC program in their municipalities with unemployed, out-of-school, unregistered young people, enabling them to learn and practice work search and job entry skills. During this quarter Trainers from selected youth serving NGOs completed Work Readiness Curriculum (WRC) trainings for unemployed, unregistered out-of-school youth. This activity also built the capacity of local youth-serving NGOs to provide trainings for youth. All NGOs contributed in-kind leverage for this activity by providing the venues for the training and conducting promotion activities for the training. Appendix II.

The Strumica based NGO Planetum held the first work readiness skills training in early January. Twenty (20) youth completed the four day training, covering all eight modules in the curriculum. In Tetovo, the Youth Educational Forum (MOF) held training for 20 youth on the WRC. The Center for Education and Development (CED), another YES sub-grantee, held a training for youth from Tearce. The Youth Cultural Center (MKC) implemented WRC training in Bitola. All NGOs used the WRC developed by EDC and customized for use in this sector by YES in cooperation with local NGOs. Of a total of 80 youth participants, the great majority indicated their satisfaction with the training through evaluations administered by the NGOs. See Appendix I for results of various WRC trainings conducted during the quarter.

Following the WRC training, young people will have the opportunity engage in a work-based learning experience, such as an internship, allowing youth to develop professionally and personally. In order to provide these work-based learning opportunities, the YES Network Project will contract My Career, a for-profit NGO established with USAID Macedonia, to facilitate the connection between employers and youth.



## Career Centers

---

The YES Network project continued to support secondary schools in implementing employability skills related activities and in the use and promotion of Career Centers among students, parents and the business community.

Teachers and students organized a variety of work skills development activities such as:

- Surveys about students' interests in specific careers and professions
- Presentations by ESA representatives on the specifics of local labor markets
- Workshops for students on job searching, CV writing, preparation for job interviews;
- Presentations by university representatives about programs and study opportunities;
- Students business competitions in collaboration with the Business Start-up Center (BSC).

The Career Center at the Vocational Secondary School "Masa Pijade" in Tetovo officially opened in late January. USAID Program Office Director, Ms. LeAnna Marr and the Deputy Minister of Education and Science, Mr. Safet Neziri both attended the ribbon-cutting ceremony and officially opened the Career Center.

Students from this school, also involved in the "Work Readiness Program", presented the Career Center's resources and services and the activities that they have implemented.

The YES Network provided the Career Center with relevant career related materials such as books, DVDs and posters obtained from the U.S. These materials will be available to all students and teachers in the school for use in career related activities.



## Job Club Activities

---

YES has successfully renovated Job Clubs (JCs) in three initial (3) partner Municipalities: Tetovo, Bitola and Strumica to create modern and functional youth venues where young people can obtain information on local labor markets and employers' needs. All three JCs are open and functioning. The YES Network project, in collaboration with the ESAs of Bitola and Tetovo, held ribbon cutting ceremonies for the JCs on January 20 and 27, respectively. Local authorities, staff from the local ESA Employment Centers and the State Employment Agency, representatives from the Municipalities, businesses, USAID and the YES Network participated in these JC openings.

ESA began providing WRS training to unemployed youth using a customized curriculum and training program composed of eight (8) modules. ESA staff, in collaboration with staff from local youth-serving NGOs, co-facilitate the training. YES is giving careful consideration to how it can assist ESA staff to develop training capabilities in order to eventually deliver training using only its own staff. If NGO staff become long term providers of WRS training, then ESA Center then must budget for those activities.

YES also began project activities in three (3) new additional Municipalities: Prilep, Stip and Gostivar. YES established official contacts with the three (3) local ESA centers and began assessments of physical as

well as staff needs, establishing how YES can build staff capacity to deliver quality client services including work readiness training, work based learning opportunities and career counseling.

Initial assistance activities in the three new municipalities will focus on renovation and reequipping the existing JCs. To this end, an assessment of needs and an accompanying draft budget for the renovation and equipping of the three (3) JCs was made. YES expects to be the prime funder for this activity while the ESAs will provide in-kind materials and labor cost share.

## **Internship Law**

---

In order to support the legal basis for internships in Macedonia, YES and USAID continued collaboration with the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy (MoLSP) on the preparation of the Internship Law. YES and USAID have prepared a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) detailing each party's responsibilities during the process of preparation of the Law and the draft has been submitted to the MoLSP for review, revision, approval and eventual signing.

YES will facilitate the process of drafting the Internship Law by organizing meetings for the working groups engaged in drafting the law and for public debates required to obtain broad input regarding the content of the draft. These debates will lead to the creation of the final draft of the Law.

## **Results 1.2**

---

- 80 out of school, unemployed, unregistered youth completed the Work Readiness Skills Curriculum Training;
- NGOs for implementation of WRS training selected;
- Official Career Center (CC) opening ceremony organized in secondary school "Mosa Pijade" Tetovo and CC activities/services promoted among students, parents, municipality representatives and the business community;
- Career Center activities including workshops; presentations; competitions and such like, were organized in schools by students and school staff;
- Job Clubs in Bitola and Tetovo officially reopened;
- Established collaboration with the three additional (3) local ESA centers;
- USAID/EDC YES prepared and submitted to MoLSP an MoU for activities needed for the drafting of an Internship Law;
- Needs of an additional three (3) JCs assessed in the three (3) new partner Municipalities.

### **1.3. Strengthen the job services capacity of ESA and private job matching companies to ensure trained youth have access to up-to-date information on job openings and career development opportunities**

#### **Work Readiness Skills training at ESA Centers**

---

During this quarter, YES started providing Work Readiness Skills (WRS) training specifically designed and adapted to address the needs of ESA and the unemployed youth with which it works. The ESA-adapted WRS Curriculum is a twenty-five hour course created through collaboration between ESA staff and YES.

Training efforts in the original three municipalities began this quarter. ESAs, with YES support, organized six WRS (6) workshops. Each training lasted five (5) working days. ESA Center staff organized the recruitment of training participants and formed groups of, at most, twenty-five (25) young people committed to participating in the training.

The Strumica ESA organized training cycles at its JC, holding one in the end of December and the second in late January and the third in late February. In Bitola, the ESA conducted two WRS trainings, in late January and late March. In Tetovo, ESA staff delivered training in late January and late February. In all cases, trainings were conducted jointly by ESA employees and NGO staff trained by YES as facilitators for WRS interventions. (See Appendix I for details of evaluations of these trainings).

YES plans to conduct the WRS training for the three (3) new partner Municipalities: Prilep, Stip and Gostivar in May-June 2012 with support of YES, the STS for Labor Market, ESA employees and the already trained facilitators from the primary partner Municipalities.

The Director of the ESA Center in Bitola appeared on Deutsche Wella and Radio Nova radio programs to speak about the WRS training and its usefulness for the young unemployed seeking work. Promotion of this kind and a more visible public profile will generate more interest among the public, leading to a greater demand for training and allowing the ESA to fulfill its mandate of getting people into work and a productive role in the economy.

#### **Work Based Learning Program (WBL)**

---

In collaboration, the YES STS for Labor Markets, a local consultant and the ESA Coordinator/Liaison designed a Work Based Learning (WBL) program suitable for the ESA need and environment and applicable to Macedonian labor market conditions. The WBL training is designed to encourage and facilitate the development of internship programs and the opening of actual internship positions at local businesses. The successful implementation of WBL requires the development of quality internship programs, including mentor training, to ensure that interns are offered the best possible opportunity to maximize their work based learning experience.

During the next quarter, representatives from ESA centers will define how the adapted WBL program can be implemented in all 6 YES partner municipalities. Further steps for implementation will be planned and schedules defined.

## Results 1.3

---

- Organized six (6) WRS workshops in the JCs in Strumica, Bitola and Tetovo;
- Prepared WBL program specially tailored for ESA staff needs and areas of intervention.

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

### Work Readiness Skills training for VET teachers

---



During the quarter, YES delivered a second series of Work Readiness Skills (WRS) workshops for a second group of teachers from Bitola, Tetovo and.

Modules covered in these training sessions were:

- Team Work and Leadership;
- Job searching;
- Safety, rights and responsibilities at the work place;
- Financials skills.

YES also organized and held three regional workshops for the first group of teachers to discuss implementation of WRS activities in schools and to share best practices.

VET Center Advisors, engaged as local consultants by YES, will collect and review best teaching practices for the WRS training. By the end of the current school year, YES, in collaboration with VET Center Advisors and teachers, will develop and print a Best Practices Manual to distribute to all teachers that are a part of the YES Network and to all Career Centers in YES partner schools. (See Appendix I for results of various WRC trainings conducted during the quarter.)

### Work Based Learning Program

---

VET Center Advisors and the YES STS for VET developed a WBL program to match and complement the VET school curriculum. This WBL program consists of four modules:

**1. Introductory module** – This module covers: objectives and content of all WBL program modules, the benefit of all partners involved in implementation of WBL program (students, parents, companies, schools) and the methodology of the implementation of this program

**2. Planning and preparation for WBL program** – This module covers all organizational and planning activities required in order to organize WBL program for VET students, including: promotion and dissemination of the WBL program among students and local businesses, recruitment and selection of potential host companies; making a list of potential host companies; informational meetings with employers about WBL program; all forms, letters, agreements needed to be signed between main partners and such like program aspects.

### **3. Implementation of WBL activities in the**

**companies** – This module covers all types of WBL activities students can do in the company, such as: company visits; work observation; job shadowing, summer work; internship etc. In this module a session about entrepreneurship is included. For all these activities three main phases are covered: preparation, implementation and reflection



### **4. Monitoring, assessment and record keeping**

–This module is focused on monitoring and evaluation of students' performance in the implementation of WBL activities. Evaluation forms for mentors from the company and teacher-mentors are part of this module. Also, a record keeping system with log books for VET students for all WBL activities and adopted to the existing VET curriculum is introduced. Training materials for WBL workshops were also designed and developed.

At the end of March, YES organized the first WBL workshop for teachers. Two VET Center Advisors and one local consultant representative of the business sector delivered the workshop. Twenty teachers from VET schools from Bitola and Strumica participated.

As a part of the workshop, the VET Center Advisors presented several ways the program could be implemented as a part of the regular VET curriculum.

## **Results 1.4**

- The second series of the WRS workshops completed;
- 100 teachers trained in WRS;
- WBL program consisting of four modules developed;
- First WBL workshop for teachers from Strumica and Bitola delivered;
- 20 teachers trained in WBL activities.

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

In collaboration with the VET Center, YES developed the WBL Program and readied it to pilot in schools. The program will be introduced into the existing VET school curriculum and will be piloted in all VET schools in Bitola, Strumica and Tetovo during the coming quarter.

The VET center advisors began collecting best teaching practices identified by teachers implementing activities related to the Work Readiness Program. A manual informing all teachers of these practices will be developed.

Also, the teachers from the first three municipalities who had demonstrated a high level of commitment and expertise in implementation of WRC activities with their students will be included as trainers for the upcoming workshops with teachers from Prilep, Stip and Tetovo. The VET center advisors will be helping them to develop appropriate facilitation skills as well as in their preparation of training materials.

The STS for VET organized regional meetings with School Directors from the three new municipalities. During the meetings, the procedures for enrolling as a YES partner were explained as well as clear statements were made the benefits and responsibilities related with the implementation of project activities. All 13 secondary schools in the areas applied for enrollment in activities with the YES Network project. The project is currently processing these applications.

## **Results 1.5**

---

- Four module WBL program created and adapted to satisfy existing VET curricula requirements.
- All 13 secondary schools from Prilep, Stip and Gostivar applied for enrollment in YES activities
- VET teachers, from the first tier of schools, will be included as trainers for the WRC workshops with teachers from the three new municipalities

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

EDC, the YES Network project and USAID have developed and submitted a draft MoU to the MoES detailing the responsibilities of each partner in the creation of a cadre of professional Career Counselors for the Macedonia education system. The official MoU signing ceremony of the MoU will take place during the coming quarter.

YES and Habitat for Humanity Macedonia (USAID grantee) have explored possible areas of collaboration and have set a monthly meeting in order to plan and implement an internship program as a part of Habitat's activities.

This quarter, the YES STS for Labor Markets attended an American Chamber of Commerce workshop on mentorship, delivered by companies with experience in mentoring interns. This organization also presents potential for collaboration with YES on the pursuit of WBL activities.

YES STS for Labor Market and Chief of Party established contact with the EU funded and managed "Further modernization of ESA" project team. YES will continue to communicate with this project to avoid duplication and to maximize benefit of all activities for the institution.

## **Results 1.6**

---

- Areas of cooperation between YES and MoES on Career Advisors certification program defined and MoU drafted.
- Regular collaboration meetings with Habitat for Humanity – Macedonia scheduled.
- Contact with American Chamber of Commerce – Macedonia established.
- Contact with EU funded - "Further modernization of ESA" project established.

## 1.7. Monitoring and Evaluation

During the quarter the following activities were implemented:

### Monitoring of work readiness curriculum workshops

The M&E Specialist observed a sample of WRS workshops with youth implemented by NGOs and ESA staff. Based on the observed level of participation, interactivity and the feedback received from the youth, both verbally and through evaluation forms, a common finding was that the work readiness curriculum is readily accepted by participants. The content is relevant to their perceived needs while the interactive approach makes the sessions attractive and inspiring, providing an environment conducive to learning.

As a result of the observations the following aspects were noted and recommended for improvement:

- Participants at the NGO workshops were to be: young people aged up to 27, unemployed, unregistered at ESA and out-of-school. All participants fulfilled the first three criteria, but most of the participants were college students. Upon discussion, YES found that the last criterion was not explicitly conveyed to youth applying for the workshop. The out-of-school requirement was not included in the locally distributed informational and recruiting posters and flyers. NGOs have been asked to include the “out-of-school” criterion in the advertising materials and in the application forms. Furthermore, recruiters discovered that the out-of-school target group was more difficult to reach than originally thought. To tackle this issue, the M&E specialist facilitated a group process of on-line brainstorming on how to best to reach out to this group. Useful ideas were generated, such as:
  - asking ESA to share information about young people who are not longer on their books because of their failure to regularly re-register;
  - promoting and presenting the workshop to the college students in their final year or involved in post-graduate studies;
  - creating a Facebook event;
  - advertising the workshops on the job-mediation websites;
  - advertising the workshop in the local media and on the local NGOs’ websites.

The outcome of these interventions was encouraging: all participants registered for participation in the upcoming workshops have all the attributes of the defined target group.

- ESA staff support for the WRS workshops should be redesigned: most of the facilitation and training is done by the NGO facilitator, and there is no plan for handing over more responsibilities to the ESA staff. This arrangement will result in a continuing lack of ESA capacity to conduct WRS training for the registered unemployed unless ESAs develop an fee for service approach involving NGOs and NGO trainers. This possibility is highly unlikely given current ESA planning and funding priorities. YES has strongly recommended that a plan for re-balancing training levels of effort and responsibilities be developed and implemented. For example, during the first workshop the NGO facilitator could cover 75% of the modules while ESA staff would be responsible for the remaining 25% . During the second workshop each would cover 50% and by the third, 75% would be the responsibility of ESA facilitators and 25% by NGO trainers. In addition, after each workshop, all facilitators (ESA and NGO) should engage in a debriefing session for revising the workshop, giving feedback on the conduct of the just completed

intervention and for planning the following one. YES, working with its ESA and NGO partners, will work towards increasing the probability that ESA WRS training becomes a sustainable activity with ESA taking the lead in its implementation.

See Appendix I for results of various WRS trainings conducted during the quarter.

## **Evaluation questionnaire administration to youth**

---

Youth participants at the WRS workshops delivered by ESA and NGOs were asked to fill in a questionnaire at the end of each workshop. Data was regularly transferred into Excel sheets and has served as a basis for evaluating the outcomes of the workshops. The data will be completely and fully analyzed after all planned joint ESA/NGO workshops have been completed.

## **Contribution to the [yesnetwork.mk](http://yesnetwork.mk) website**

---

The website ([yesnetwork.mk](http://yesnetwork.mk)) was regularly updated with information about upcoming events as well as details about events completed, for example:

- 06 March 2012 [YES Network presentation in Gostivar](#)
- 16 February 2012 [Prilep, Stip and Gostivar – three new municipalities included in the YES Network Project; YES Network presentation inspires exciting discussion and findings](#)
- 27 January 2012 [Career Center and Job Club openings in Tetovo](#)
- 20 January 2012 [Re-opening of the Job Club in ESA Bitola](#)
- 10 January 2012 [Training on Work readiness skills for young unemployed and unregistered in Strumica](#)

**Success stories** were also uploaded to the website showing the positive changes and benefits to the people impacted by the project (YES reaches the young people; YES raises the awareness for safe working conditions in Dimitar Vlahov – Strumica).

As a summary of all the events, achievements and successes of the YES Network project's first year of operation, in January 2012 a **newsletter** was developed, both in electronic and printed versions. For the first edition 790 copies were printed: 170 in English, 370 in Macedonian and 250 in Albanian. About 250 copies were distributed during the project presentations in the new municipalities Prilep, Stip and Gostivar, as well as on other events such as trainings and round tables organized by YES during the reporting quarter. The electronic newsletter was published on the YES website ([yesnetwork.mk](http://yesnetwork.mk)) where it can be downloaded. The newsletter will be issued quarterly hereafter.

## **Focus group with youth participating at NGO WRC workshop**

---

The YES M&E Specialist conducted a focus group discussion with youth participating in the WRC workshop in Tetovo conducted by NGO staff. The discussion aimed to learn about the reasons for youth not registering with the ESA.

About half of these young people were college students and the remainder were out-of-school unemployed and unregistered with the ESA. Regardless their education status, they all explained that

they are not, and do not plan, to register in ESA because they do not expect that ESA will help them find a job. This conviction is based on the experience of their friends and acquaintances. Some also expressed distrust in governmental institutions because of their personal political affiliations and the dominating influence they see coming from the political parties currently controlling the government at all levels. They generally do not see any positive option regarding their future employment because they are convinced that a job can only be secured through connections. Therefore, they mostly see themselves as moving toward self-employment. Youth also cited that employment offered through the ESA process will mostly likely be an unattractive position. Youth stated that the only reason for registering with ESA was to gain access to health insurance.

The young people visibly changed their views on the ESA after receiving information about the Active Labor Market Measures (ALMM) implemented through ESA. They stated that this information paints another picture that might motivate them to register at ESA. This focus group again confirms that ESA visibility among young people is very low, resulting in fewer registered individuals and a lack of use of the opportunities for employment that the ESAs offer. At various meetings, the ESA Central Office in Skopje has signaled its understanding the general public has of ESA services is meager at best and frequently misinformed. Although ESA has a position for “Outreach and PR”, the position is vacant and there are no plans to fill it.

### **Maintaining and updating the project database**

---

YES works to regularly update the project database and database reports. The latest reports are presented in Appendix I

### **Tracking system of youth**

---

YES has identified the need to create a tracking system focused on youth who complete YES Network programs and find a job or continue on to tertiary (university level) education. Currently, the YES project cannot make objective nor qualitative statements regarding the impact of its assistance measures and interventions without collecting this information.

At present:

- secondary schools do not have a tracking system;
- ESA only collects information on those registered that have found a job. It does not collect information on individuals who allowed their registration to lapse, nor on those who changed jobs or became jobless but did not re-register.

The existing tracking system requires telephone calls or e-mail communication, that is, direct communication with each individual. YES will discuss with ESA what resources – financial, material and human – can be applied to the creation and application of a system that can yield accurate data at an affordable level.

### **Professional orientation tests**

---

YES continued to explore opportunities for standardization of professional orientation tests for use in Macedonia. EDC Home Office has made overtures to Pearson Inc., a publisher of such tests in the U.S., though no agreement has been made yet. The M&E and VET Specialists held two meetings with

representatives from the Macedonian Association of Career Counselors to learn about this Association's resources in respect of career planning tools.

### Filming best practices workshops

---

During March 2012, YES delivered workshops for filming best practices WRS in Bitola, Strumica and Tetovo. Teachers from secondary schools, ESA employees and NGO facilitators participated in these trainings.

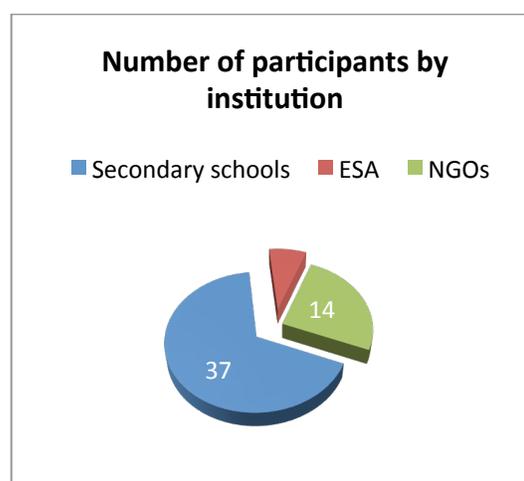
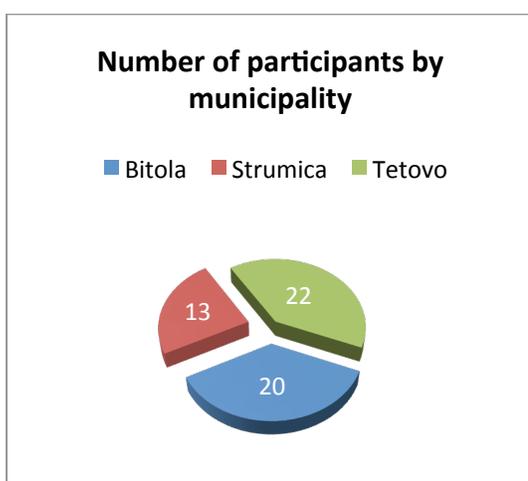
The goals of this activity are:

- to create a pool of videos that present good practices in the implementation of the work readiness skills curriculum with different youth groups;
- to create a cloud based virtual reference library of training sessions and lessons accessible to all who wish to refresh their knowledge of particular work readiness skills topics;
- to provide opportunities for sustainable professional development through peer-collaboration among trainers and facilitators;
- to offer opportunities for strengthening the links between the relevant institutions and employers;

Once the videos are prepared, they will have many applications:

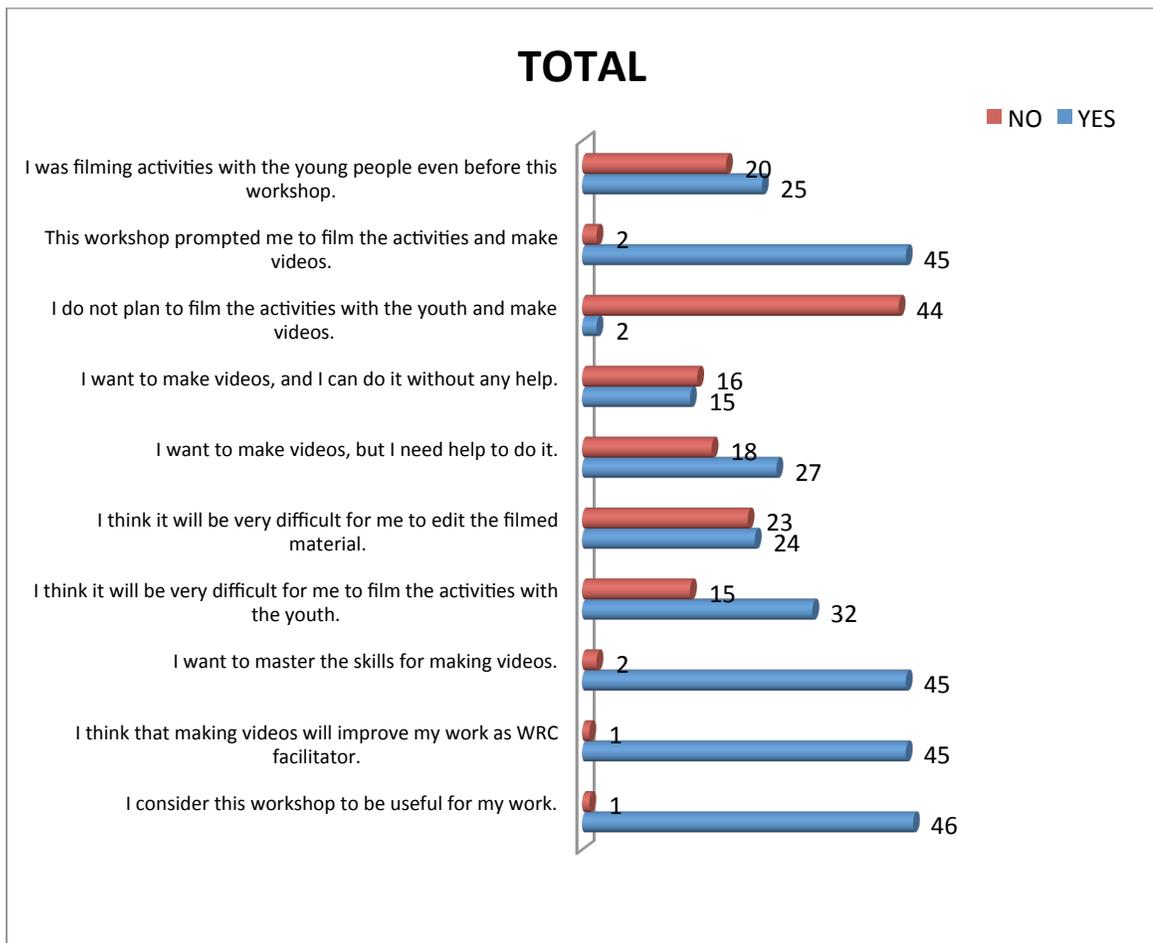
- learning and refreshing of "soft skills" knowledge by youth;
- on-going professional development for trainers, facilitators and Career Counselors;
- dissemination of the curriculum among youth;
- dissemination of the curriculum among employers;

A total of 55 people participated in the three workshops conducted during March. Most of the participants (67%) were teachers from 13 YES partner-secondary schools. Representatives of 14 NGOs and 2 ESA centers (Bitola and Tetovo) took part in the workshops also. The gender distribution was in favor of the female participants (54.5%). There were 40 Macedonian and 15 Albanian participants from all three municipalities.



The evaluation form contained 10 multiple choice and 3 open-ended questions which that explored new skills gained and participants' perception of the importance and the benefits of filming best practices in regards to their professional development and in the improvement of the WRS workshops delivery.

- The responses from all three municipalities illustrated very similar participant opinions.
- Almost all of the participants (98%) considered the workshop to be useful for their work as well as for improving their facilitation of the WRC workshops. Regarding the difficulty of implementing the newly learned activity, the participants thought that it will be a bit more challenging to film the activities with the young people, rather than to edit the filmed material.
- Around 95% stated they were willing to work further on improving their skills and making videos, while 60% of these stated that they will need help to do it.
- Although more than half of the participants (55.5%) have already been filming activities with young people, almost all of them (96%) stated that this workshop prompted them to be more engaged in filming and making videos. Less than 5% plan not to be involved further in this activity.



- Most of the participants stressed that their newly acquired skills for editing video material and making movies will improve as a result of this workshop. Many of them consider that the soft

skills workshops/classes they deliver will improve through increased participant interactivity and motivation; and through new and creative ways of active information transfer and teaching. Strumica participants indicated that the criteria presented for making quality movies and the filming advice given will help them significantly to improve their work. Some of the Bitola participants from the NGOs and the ESA Center stated that they will use these new skills for presenting their activities and for promotion of this service. In Tetovo, the method of self-evaluation through seeing the filmed material was stated as most important in improving the facilitators work as well as developing participants' skills.

- Participants from all three municipalities agreed that the biggest benefit from making and sharing videos is actually the act of sharing experiences and of improving the variety of teaching and information transfer activities. In Strumica, participants highlighted increased creativity through participating in the training, which would make classes more interesting for young people. The participants from Bitola and Tetovo also mentioned increased motivation and engagement of students as the biggest potential benefit to training. In Tetovo, participants emphasized filming young people, as well as facilitators, for more effective self-evaluation.
- Many participants stressed that the workshop was very useful for them and increased their motivation to carry out WRS activities. According to the majority of participants, the workshop was well organized and interesting. However, some stated that they would like more practice and less theory. Their comments also mentioned the dedication and cordial attitude of trainers towards participants.

## **2 . Activities proposed for the coming quarter : April through June**

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

- Facilitate the third meeting of the Strumica LESC;
- Meet with the new municipalities (Stip, Prilep and Gostivar) to identify potential LESC members;
- Hold strategic planning session and development of Strategic and Action Plan for Strumica LESC;
- Support Strumica LESC to organize a town hall meeting.
- Workshop for capacity building of Strumica LESC members to develop skills for engagement in effective dialogue

### **2.2 Develop venues for meeting immediate skill/training needs of the labor market and career development opportunities**

- Train NGO representatives from the three new municipalities in content and delivery techniques mechanisms of WRS curriculum;
- Hold training implemented by NGO "MOF" on WRS for second group of unemployed out-of-school youth in Tetovo;
- Providing, through "Moja Kariera", internship opportunities of three months duration, for young out-of-school unemployed youth who are not registered in the ESA;

- STS for VET will visit all 13 secondary schools in Prilep, Stip and Gostivar and identify potential facilities where Career Centers (CC) in these schools will be located; the STS for VET will make a preliminary list of furniture and IT equipment for purchase for these facilities.
- CC activities will continue to be implemented in all schools. This includes: promotion of CC services among students and local community; providing career related services to students (e.g. job search trainings; possibility for WBL activities; possibilities for further education; recruitment of primary school students).
- As a part of the annually organized educational fair “Educational Rendezvous 2012” which will be held in Strumica April 20-21, YES, in collaboration with Macedonian Youth Association of Vocational High Schools (MASSUM), will organize a student competition on “Best on-line Career Portfolio”. VET students, ESA registered unemployed youth and NGO supported unregistered out-of-school youth will participate in this competition.
- The renovation of three (3) additional JCs will start in May and will be completed by the end of the coming quarter.

### **2.3 Strengthen the job services capacity of ESA and private job matching companies to ensure trained youth have access to up-to-date information on job openings and career development opportunities**

- WRS workshop will be delivered to ESA staff from the recently added new partner 3 municipalities in May and June 2012;
- In early April, YES will implement a WBL workshop for ESA staff from six (6) Municipalities;
- YES will design and implement a competition for registered unemployed youth in ESA for best career on-line portfolio as part of the Educational Rendezvous Annual Fair.

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

#### **Work Readiness Skills Training**

- YES will deliver the first series of WRS workshops for 13 secondary schools in Stip, Prilep and Gostivar. Approximately 70 teachers will participate;
- YES will continue the sharing best teaching practices of WRS activities in school.

#### **Work Based Learning Program**

- YES will deliver the first series of WBL workshops for VET teachers from Tetovo; YES will assist each VET teacher participant at the WBL training to pilot at least one WBL activity with students by the end of this school year.

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

- The VET Center and YES will develop the WBL curriculum for “free school activities”.
- The best teachers from the first three pilot municipalities will be included as trainers for the upcoming WR workshops.

## **2.6 Integrate productive connections with current and planned USAID and other donor workforce related projects**

- The YES Network Project and the MoES will officially sign an MoU on the creation of Career Advisors Training and Accreditation. YES will organize an official signing ceremony.

## **2.7 Monitoring and Evaluation**

- Gather field data for the evaluation of the WRC implementation in the first three municipalities (Bitola, Tetovo, Strumica);
- Gather baseline study field data in three new municipalities (Prilep, Gostivar, Stip);
- Input and process data ;
- Implement the second round of “Filming Best Practices” workshops;
- Maintain and update the YES database;
- Contribute to and oversee the expansion of website content.

# **3 Administration and Finance**

## **3.1 Administration activities and outcomes**

The activities completed during the quarter include:

- Offered logistical support for the JC and CC openings;
- Organized and offered logistical support to ESC Tetovo and Bitola signing ceremonies;
- Prepared and obtained signatures for sub grant contracts for 3 selected grantees;
- Received and reviewed reports (and supporting documents) from grantees;
- Organized and offered logistical support for the project presentations in 3 new municipalities;
- Submitted VAT reimbursement application for period June-September 2011 to USAID;
- Prepared and submitted budget review and realignment to USAID at the request of AOTR..

## **3.2 Administration activities proposed for the next quarter**

Activities planned for the coming quarter:

- Submit Disposition Plan for Furniture/Equipment purchase to USAID for concurrence;
- Finalize budget realignment in collaboration with USAID;
- Finalize Moja Kariera contract for work based learning (internships);
- Issue contracts for MASSUM and YES participation in the Educational Rendezvous;
- Draft and finalize contracts with local consultants from ESA and the VET Center for further work on the WRS and WBL trainings;
- Secure the services of a local hire DCOP – position announcement (EDC internal only upon request from USAID), interviewing applicants by YES and EDC staff, make offer; hire acceptable candidate.
- Train DCOP to take up COP position before the end of the calendar year;
- Recruit three (3) field office staff as requested in budget realignment;
- Recruit four (4) individuals who complete their internships at the end of May;
- Assess bids and award contracts for service provision – IT services, transportation, JC and CC renovation, website maintenance and updating, office supply provision

## 4 Appendices

### Appendix I

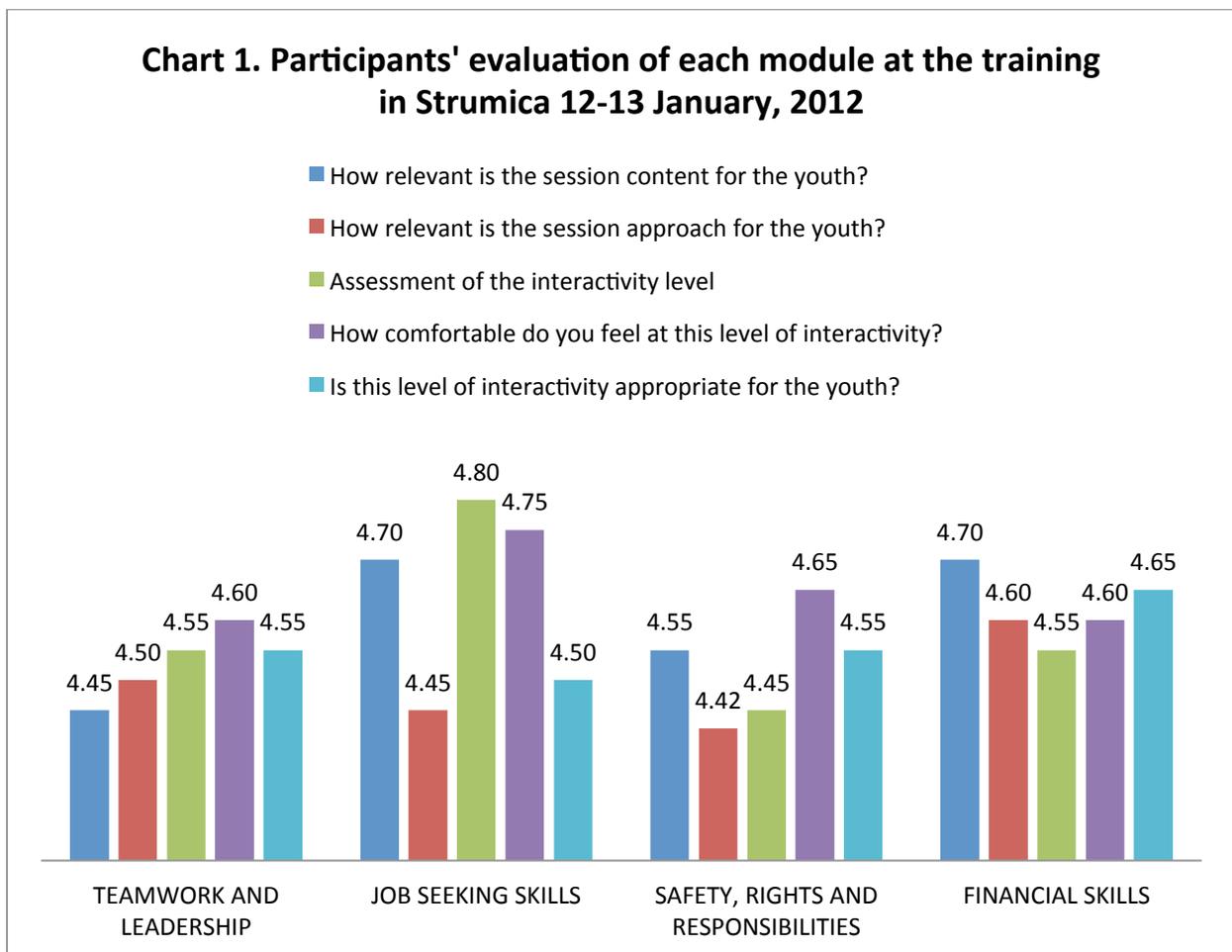
#### WORK READINESS TRAININGS

January – March 2012

#### EVALUATION CHARTS

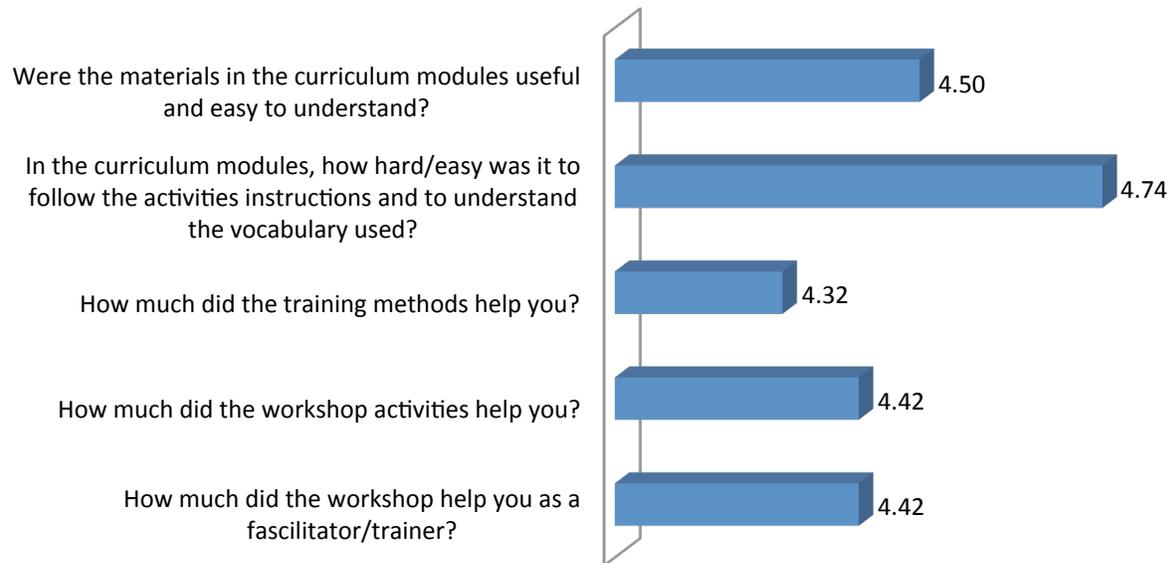
##### 1. WRC Training in Strumica 12-13 January 2012

Participants: Second group of teachers (23) from the secondary schools in Strumica.



The scale is 1 through 5 indicating, respectively lowest to highest valuation.

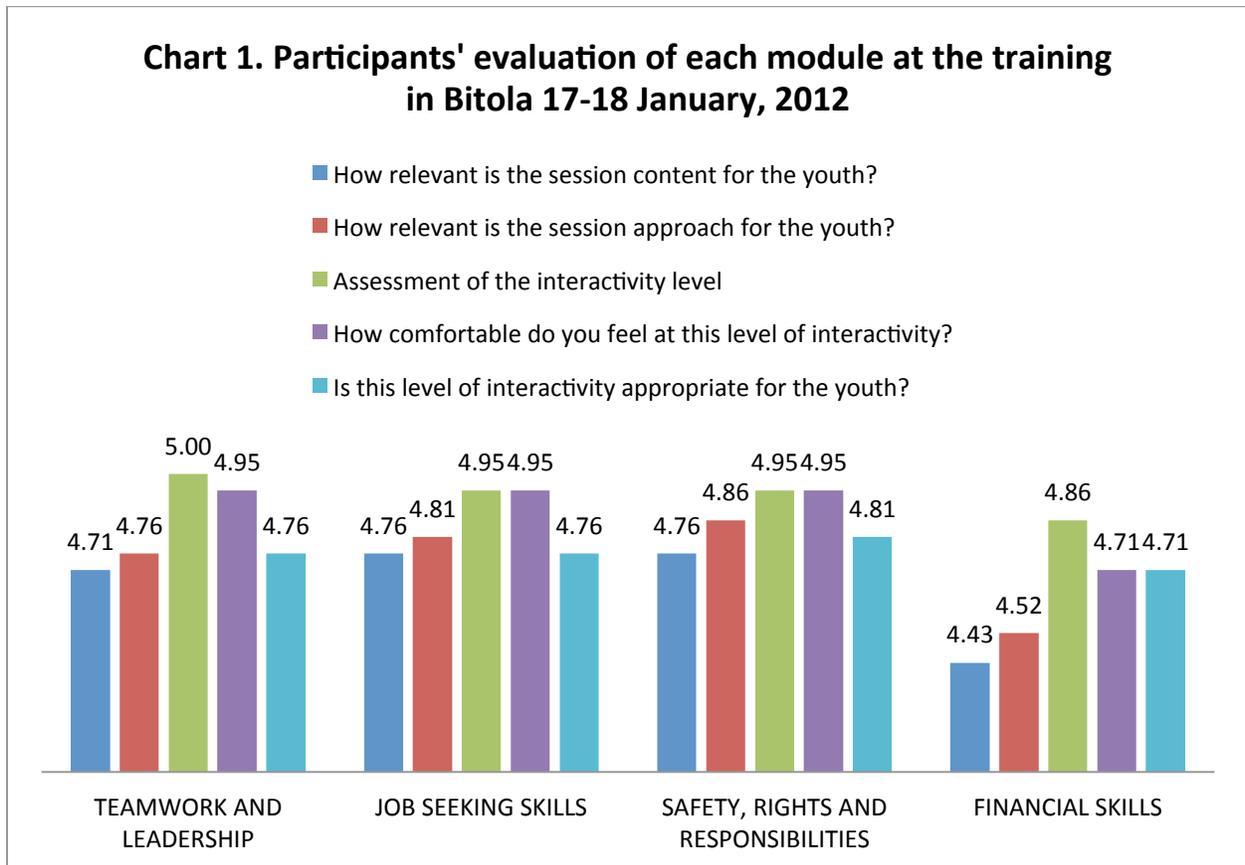
**Chart 2. Participants' evaluation of the entire training -  
Strumica 25-26 November, 2011**



The scale is 1 through 5 indicating, respectively lowest to highest valuation.

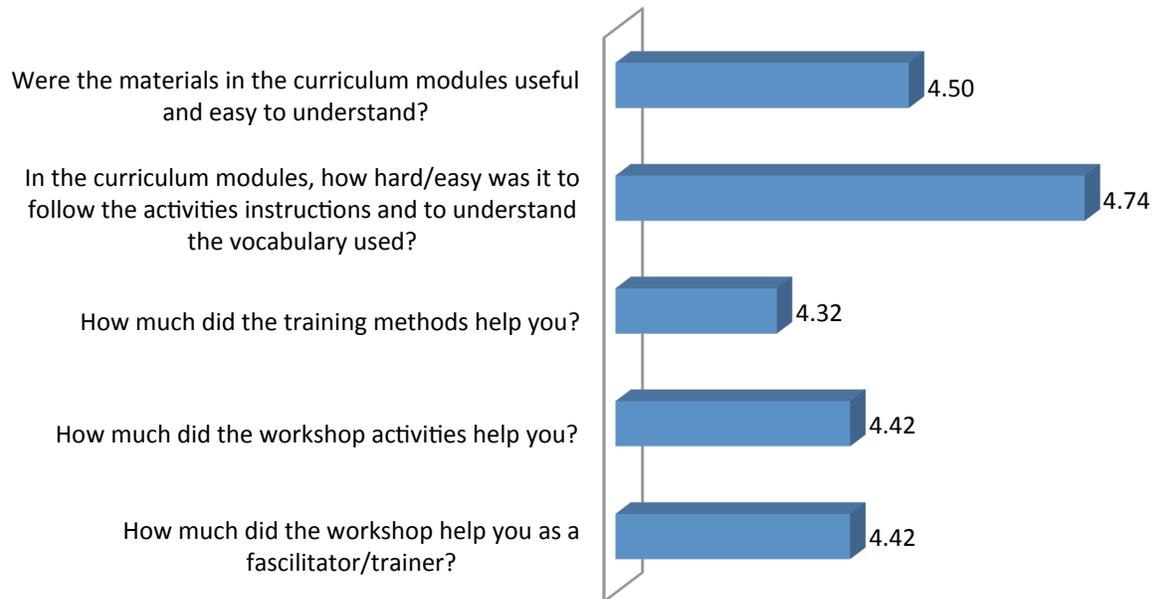
## 2. WRC Training in Bitola 17-18 January 2012

Participants: Second group of teachers (28) from the secondary schools in Bitola.



The scale is 1 through 5 indicating, respectively lowest to highest valuation.

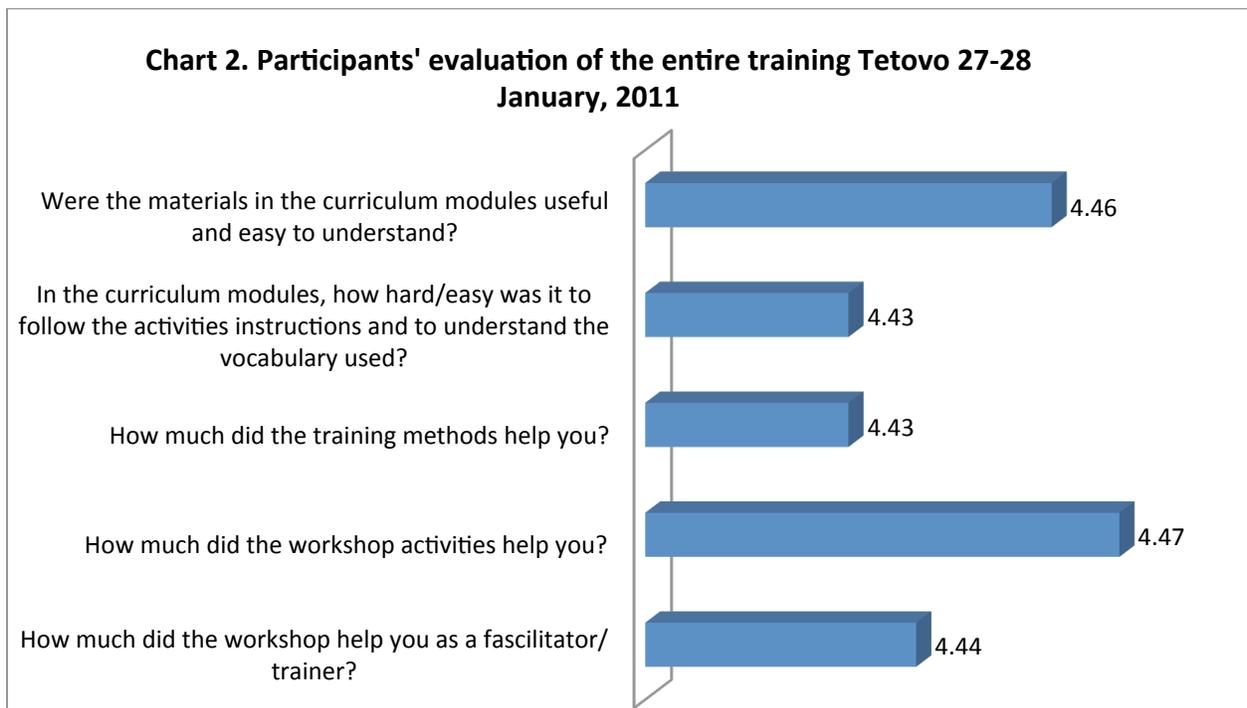
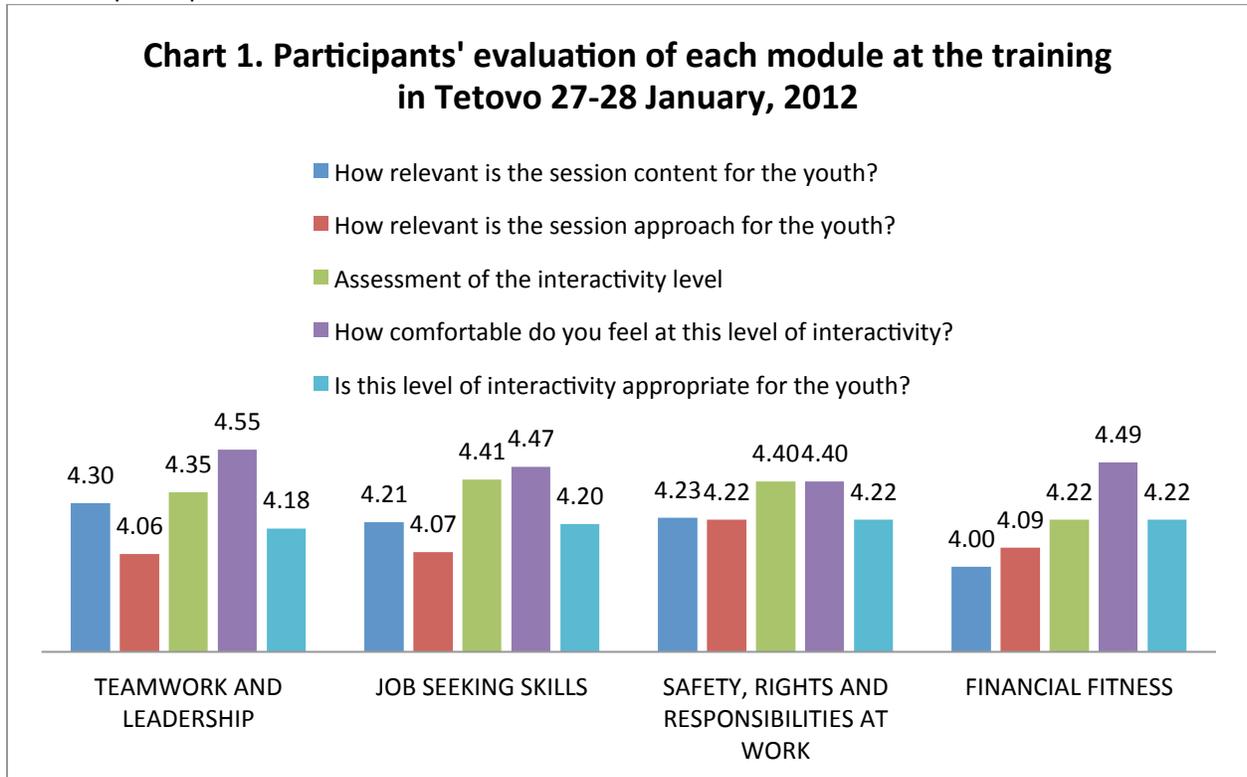
**Chart 2. Participants' evaluation of the entire training Bitola  
17-18 January, 2011**



The scale is 1 through 5 indicating, respectively lowest to highest valuation.

### 3. WRC Training in Tetovo 17-18 January 2012

Participants: Second group of teachers from the secondary schools in Tetovo; 27 Macedonian and 30 Albanian participants.



## Appendix II

COST SHARE ASSESSMENT REPORT				IN KIND CONTRIBUTION		Price in MKD
#	Name of Institution (location of the CC or JC)	Description of Product/Service	Location	Vendor	Donor	
				Vendor Name, Location	Donated by:	
1	High School Kiril Pejcinovik	Paint	Tetovo	Zibing, Tetovo	n/a	6,300.00
2	High School Kiril Pejcinovik	Gypsum boards	Tetovo	Zibing, Tetovo	n/a	3,000.00
3	High School Kiril Pejcinovik	Painting of walls	Tetovo	n/a	School maintenance personnel	5,000.00
4	High School 8 Septemvri	Paint and painting of walls	Tetovo	NB-Kompani, Tetovo	n/a	10,000.00
5	High School 8 Septemvri	Carpet	Tetovo	NB-Kompani, Tetovo	n/a	2,200.00
6	High school Mosha Pijade	Paint and painting of walls	Tetovo	Dara kom, Tetovo	n/a	4,500.00
7	High school Mosha Pijade	Lightning, including assembly	Tetovo	Valdrini elektrik, Tetovo	n/a	5,400.00
8	High school Mosha Pijade	Ventilation	Tetovo	Valdrini elektrik, Tetovo	n/a	2,700.00
9	High school Mosha Pijade	Tables	Tetovo	Hit mobil, Tetovo	n/a	12,000.00
10	ESA Tetovo	Paint, painting of walls, radiators	Tetovo	Dara kom, Tetovo	n/a	3,500.00
11	ESA Tetovo	Neon lights, plastic covers	Tetovo	Tehno val, Tetovo	n/a	1,500.00

12	Workers University, tetovo	Space for the Regional office in Tetovo Monthly Rent of office space (30 m <sup>2</sup> ) MKD8,118 starting April 2011 through April 2012 -13 months	Tetovo	n/a	Rabotnicki Univerzitet, Tetovo	105,534.00
13	High School Gjoce Stojceski	Replacing old windows with new plastic windows, including assembly and transportation	Tetovo	Trodalt, Tetovo	n/a	88,000.00
14	High School Gjoce Stojceski	Materials, repairing and painting walls, painting radiators	Tetovo	Trodalt, Tetovo	n/a	49,414.00
15	High School Gjoce Stojceski	Flooring, including assembly	Tetovo	Trodalt, Tetovo	n/a	19,201.00
16	High School Gjoce Stojceski	Lightning, including assembly	Tetovo	Trodalt, Tetovo	n/a	10,800.00
17	High School Gjoce Stojceski	Replacing old door will new, including assembly	Tetovo	Trodalt, Tetovo	n/a	18,400.00
18	High school Nikola Shtejn	Door	Tetovo	Info not provided	n/a	4,700.00
19	High school Nikola Shtejn	6 Tables	Tetovo	Info not provided	n/a	7,000.00
20	High school Nikola Shtejn	10 Chairs	Tetovo	Info not provided	n/a	6,500.00
21	High School Taki Daskalo, Bitola	Painting of the walls, windows, door	Bitola	Sabina	n/a	4,120.00
22	High School Taki Daskalo, Bitola	Lighting (neon)	Bitola	Sabina	n/a	2,000.00
23	High School Kuzman Shapkarev, Bitola	Painting of the walls, windows, door	Bitola	Company	n/a	30,000.00
24	ESA Bitola	Painting of the walls	Bitola	Company	n/a	6,770.00

25	ESA Bitola	Book shelf	Bitola	n/a	Drvodezen Trejd ( Company)	1,500.00
26	ESA Bitola	Binding of posters for Job Club in ESA Bitola	Bitola	n/a	Fustelarko Borec (Company)	1,000.00
27	ESA Bitola	Frames for posters for Job Club in ESA Bitola	Bitola	n/a	Private company	1,500.00
28	ESA Bitola	Swich for internet	Bitola	Company	n/a	2,000.00
29	ESA Bitola	UTP cable	Bitola	Alfa Elektronik	n/a	600.00
30	High School Gjorgji Naumov, Bitola	Replacement of new plasterboards KNAUF on walls and ceiling, painting of the walls	Bitola	Company	n/a	90,700.00
31	High School Gjorgji Naumov, Bitola	Coat-hanger for Career Centre	Bitola	Company	n/a	3,500.00
32	High School Gjorgji Naumov, Bitola	Frames and glass for posters for Job Club in Career Centre	Bitola	Company	n/a	6,000.00
33	High School Gjorgji Naumov, Bitola	Venetian blinds for windows in Career Centre	Bitola	Aluklip Bitola	n/a	11,000.00
34	Business start up center, Bitola	Space for the Regional office in Bitola Monthly rent is MKD6,150 , starting April 2011 through April 2012- 13 months	Bitola	n/a	Business Start Up Center	79,950.00
35	High School Jane Sandanski, Strumica	Painting	Strumica	Info not provided	n/a	1,500.00
36	High School Jane Sandanski, Strumica	Floor renovation	Strumica	Info not provided	n/a	3,000.00
37	High School Jane Sandanski, Strumica	Window with aluminium frame	Strumica	Info not provided	n/a	6,000.00
38	ESA Strumica	Renovation of the Job Club	Strumica	Info not provided	n/a	6,500.00

39	ESA Strumica	Painting of the Job Club	Strumica	n/a	Strumica Municipal Prison	5,000.00
40	High School Nikola Karev, Strumica	Replacement of windows with new with aluminium frame (2 x 28,000)	Strumica	Info not provided	n/a	56,000.00
41	High School Nikola Karev, Strumica	Aluminium front door	Strumica	Info not provided	n/a	18,500.00
42	High School Nikola Karev, Strumica	New floor (48m2 x 540)	Strumica	Info not provided	n/a	25,920.00
43	High School Nikola Karev, Strumica	Tables ( 10 x 2,400)	Strumica	Info not provided	n/a	24,000.00
44	Strumica Inkubator, Strumica	Space for Regional Office in Strumica Monthly rent is MKD9,225 starting April 2011 through April 2012 - 13 months	Strumica	n/a	Strumica Inkubator	119,925.00
45	Youth Educational Forum, Skopje	Cost share for sub grant agreement for WRC training in Tetovo	Tetovo	n/a	Youth Educational Forum	28,600.00
46	Youth Educational Forum, Skopje	Cost share for sub grant agreement for WRC training in Tetovo	Tetovo	n/a	Youth Educational Forum	8,000.00
47	ED Planetum	Cost share for sub grant agreement for WRC training in Strumica	Strumica	n/a	ED Planetum	58,600.50
48	Center for Education and Development	Cost share for sub grant agreement for WRC training in Tearce	Tearce	n/a	Center for Education and Development	6,000.00
49	Youth Cultural Center	Cost share for sub grant agreement for WRC training in Bitola	Bitola	n/a	Youth Cultural Center	42,480.00
		TOTAL AS OF APRIL 2012				1,016,314.50
						\$ 22,093.79