



YOUTH EMPLOYABILITY
SKILLS NETWORK

EVALUATION REPORT FY 2012

**EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT CENTER
YOUTH EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS NETWORK**

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ALMM	Active Labor Market Measures
BDE	Bureau for Development of Education
CC	Career Centers
COP	Chief of party
EDC	Education Development Center Inc.
ESA	Employment Service Agency
ESC	Economic-Social Council
JC	Job Clubs
LESC	Local Economic and Social Council
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PEP	Primary Education Project
PMP	Performance Measurement Plan
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VET	Vocational Education and Training
WRS	Work readiness skills
WBL	Work-based learning
YES	Youth Employability Skills
YLC	Youth Leadership Council

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE YES NETWORK PROJECT CONTEXT

The latest findings on the labor market in Macedonia confirm that many young people in Macedonia are long-term unemployed while those entering the labor market struggle unsuccessfully to obtain entry-level jobs. It has been widely and consistently reported that youth attempting to enter the world of work lack skills and attitudes that employers seek. Additionally, it has also widely been reported that the individuals and agencies mandated to prepare youth for obtaining employment are inadequately prepared and insufficiently motivated and committed to providing youth with labor market, work readiness and soft-skills information and training. The Youth Employability Skills (YES) Network, implemented by the US based Education Development Center (EDC), and funded by the US Agency for International Development (USAID), is a five-year project aiming to enhance the employability skills of youth in Macedonia. The project targets students in their final year in Macedonia's secondary schools, both vocational education and training (VET) schools and gymnasiums; unemployed registrants with the Employment Service Agency (ESA); and out-of-school, unregistered and unemployed youth, aged 15-27. Also, YES is introducing the idea of establishing Local Economic and Social Councils (LESC) as the body of the Municipality where the private-public dialogue (PPD) will take place.

YES Network's objectives are:

1. Facilitate Public-Private Dialogue that will improve demand-supply labor exchange at the local level
2. Develop venues for meeting immediate skill/training needs of the labor market and career development opportunities
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.
4. Provide continuing professional development opportunities for teachers in secondary schools.
5. Create innovative mechanisms to make VET schools and the VET Center more responsive and relevant.
6. Integrate productive connections with current and planned USAID and other donor workforce related activities.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

METHODS, INSTRUMENTS AND SAMPLE

Field data gathering activities were performed in six municipalities. Three from the first cohort: Tetovo, Bitola and Strumica, and three from the second cohort: Gostivar, Prilep and Shtip. Data from all six municipalities was gathered in order to evaluate the effects of the WRS workshops on secondary school students, youth registered as unemployed with the ESA and youth that are not in an education process, employment nor training. The WBL program was only implemented in the first cohort of municipalities,

therefore data regarding the WBL implementation was gathered only from the first cohort of municipalities. Also, the renovated and upgraded Career Centers in the schools and Job clubs in the local ESA centers were assessed.

A combination of quantitative and qualitative survey methods was employed - quantitative data was acquired through questionnaires, interviews and observation check lists, while through focus groups and interviews were provided additional qualitative data which allowed for a more in-depth understanding of the effects.

The following methods were employed:

- Questionnaires administration to teachers, students, ESA and NGO youth (Appendices 3,4,5,6)
- Focus groups with teachers, students, ESA and NGO youth (Appendices 7,8,9)
- Group interviews with NGO facilitators (Appendix 10)
- Group interviews with ESA facilitators (Appendix 11)
- Class observation (Appendix 12)
- School reports (Appendix 13)

The evaluation is performed with the whole population. The number of respondents and the methods used are presented in the table below:

[Table 1. Number of respondents/groups and methods](#)

	Questionnaires	Focus groups (FGs)	Group interviews (GIs)	Individual interviews
Teachers	113 VET teachers who participated in the WRS workshops	3 FGs with teachers who integrate WRS in their classes		12 teachers who implement the WRS in the Free classes
ESA facilitators			3 GIs (one in each municipality)	
NGO facilitators			3 GIs (one in each municipality)	
Students	400 students from Tetovo and Bitola ¹	4 FGs (2 in Tetovo and Bitola)		
ESA youth	122 ESA youth	3 FGs (one in each municipality)		
NGO youth	93 NGO youth	3 FGs (one in each municipality)		

Additionally, 13 out of 14 schools submitted reports on the WRS implementation in their school as well as about the use of the Career Center.

¹ In this report the secondary school students from Strumica are not part of the sample because at the time of the survey the one group of students in Strumica was not functioning anymore and the others finished the implementation of the program, so the students were not available.

All assessment approaches relied on individual face-to-face communication with the respondents and anonymity was insured.

KEY FINDINGS

In the following table the key findings from the Monitoring and Evaluation activities for Fiscal Year 2012 are presented. They are structured according to the performance indicators under each objective depicting both targets and actuals.

Table 2. Presentation of the key evaluation findings related to the performance indicators

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	TARGETS FY12	ACTUALS FY12
YES NETWORK GOAL: To enhance the employability skills of youth in Macedonia		
OBJECTIVE 1: Facilitate Public-Private Partnerships that will improve demand-supply labor exchange at the local level		
1.1. Local Economic and Social Councils (LESC) established and functioning.	-3 LESCS established and functioning -establishing 3 new ESC	-LESC in Strumica established and functioning -LESC in Tetovo established -Decision for establishment of LESCS in Stip and Bitola reached
1.2. Number of youth representatives in LESCS	-3 YLC established and functioning -establishing 3 new YLC	-1 youth representative in Strumica and 2 in Tetovo
1.3. Percentage of employers opening internships and other forms of work-based opportunities for youth. * The relevance of this indicator depends on the passage of the Internship law. That is the reason for not planning targets for the following years.	40% of the contacted companies opened internship or other work-based opportunities	YES Network did not work with employers due to the absence of Internship law
1.4. Percentage of youth completing the internships and other forms of work-based opportunities	30% of the youth that have undergone the WRS complete the internship/work-based program	<u>Actual:</u> - 11% interns (38 out of 341) - 2% volunteers (7 out of 341) - 55% of the surveyed students participated in a practical instruction ²
OBJECTIVE 2: Develop venues for meeting immediate skill/training needs of the labor market and career development opportunities		
2.1. Career centers (CC) upgraded and functioning	- 10 existing CC functioning - 10 new CC upgraded	-11 CCs upgraded and functioning -13 CCs upgraded

² Practical instruction is a form of work-based learning that is part of the regular VET curricula. It is done either in a company or in the school workshops.

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	TARGETS FY12	ACTUALS FY12
2.2. Job clubs (JC) upgraded and functioning	- 3 existing JC functioning - 3 new JC upgraded and functioning	-3 Job clubs upgraded and functioning -3 new Job clubs upgraded
2.3. Percentage of youth showing desired level of employability skills	-40% of the youth involved in the YES Network activities	-In average 84% of youth (students, ESA, NGO) report (based on self-assessment) to have improved employability skills after the WRS workshop
2.4. Local youth NGOs provide career related services to number of unemployed, unregistered and out of school youth	-60 unemployed and unregistered youth use the services of NGOs	-111 unemployed and unregistered youth participated at NGO delivered WRS WSs
OBJECTIVE 3: Strengthen the job services capacity of public and/or private labor market mediation organizations to ensure trained youth have access to up-to-date information on job openings and career development opportunities.		
3.1. ESA staff delivers number of career related workshops to unemployed youth	-9 WRS workshops (3 per ESA center)	-12 WRS workshops delivered (4 per municipality)
3.2. Number of Job Clubs that have their services enhanced	-6 Job Clubs that have their services enhanced	-Staff from 3 JC (from the first 3 municipalities) deliver WRS WSs to youth - Staff from 3 JC (second 3 municipalities) trained to deliver WRS WSs with youth - staff from all 6 municipalities trained for WBL
3.3. Number of unemployed youth using JC services	-180 unemployed registered youth	-230 unemployed registered youth use JCs services in the first 3 municipalities
OBJECTIVE 4: Provide continuing professional development opportunities for teachers in secondary schools.		
4.1. Percentage of trained secondary school teachers implementing career related activities both through the free classes and integrated in the existing subjects	-20% of the trained teachers Only WRS	-Out of 178 trained teachers 46% implement WRS with students (7% deliver WRS in the free classes; 31% integrate parts of WRS in the existing classes; 8% use both approaches).
4.2. Percent of VET trained teachers completing a practical experience program in a company	10% of the teachers involved in YES Network activities complete internship programs	This program will be developed in FY 2013
4.3. Number of students using CC services	650 students using the CC services	771 students use it for the WRS WSs during the free classes
OBJECTIVE 5: Create innovative mechanisms to make VET schools and VET Centers more responsive and relevant		
5.1. Review and enhance the national curriculum for secondary education for work readiness skills	National curriculum enhanced with WRS content and implemented in 10 schools	WRS activities implemented in 13 schools
5.2. Review and enhance the Work Based Learning activities in the national vocational education curricula	National curricula and practices enhanced with WBL content	WBL officially approved and adopted by the VET center

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

OBJECTIVE 1: FACILITATE PUBLIC-PRIVATE DIALOGUE THAT WILL IMPROVE DEMAND-SUPPLY LABOR EXCHANGE AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

Conclusion

Based on the evaluation findings, it can be concluded that in two out of six municipalities, the basis for starting the public-private dialogue is established (i.e. a LESC). The progress at the remaining three municipalities is developing at a slower pace, while the sixth municipality already has established Economic Council which YES Network will build upon. At least one youth representative is member of each LESC.

There is no possibility for direct engagement of the Project in communication with employers since there is no legal framework for supporting work-based opportunities for out-of-school unemployed young people.

It is important to underline that the Project had success in placing unemployed youth, both registered and unregistered at ESA, as interns and employees.

Recommendations

- To identify more efficient approaches to expedite the process of establishment of LESCs as the formal mechanism for public-private dialogue;
- In the absence of LESCs in selected municipalities, to explore and initiate other approaches for creating functioning links between the key institutions and employers for improving the demand-supply exchange at the local level;
- As an interim solution to continue the collaboration with ESA and other institutions or NGOs that have acknowledged mechanisms for interns' placement in companies.

OBJECTIVE 2: DEVELOP VENUES FOR MEETING IMMEDIATE SKILL/TRAINING NEEDS OF THE LABOR MARKET AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Conclusion

The Project has provided appropriate venues for implementing various career related activities in all secondary schools and ESA Centers in all six municipalities. Those venues are the Career Centers (CCs) in the secondary schools and Job Clubs (JCs) in the ESA Centers, which were renovated and upgraded with IT equipment and printed materials. These venues are mainly used for WRS workshops implementation and predominantly by the workshop participants.

NGOs also provided high quality WRS workshops for the unemployed, unregistered and out of school youth in their own or other premises, such as CCs, municipal facilities etc. However, NGO activities are not considered to be sustainable after the completion of the Project because they do not have sustainable funding.

Recommendations

- Work towards building the capacities of Career Counselors that will offer guidance to the young people in their exploration of educational and career choices;

- Translate the existing books in the CCs and JCs into the local languages or to develop additional printed and electronic resources for career guidance of the youth in local languages;
- Identify effective ways to promote the CC and JC services to a wider number of students and registered young people so that more youth benefit from their services. Also, those responsible for CC and JC responsible persons need to keep a record of their use;
- Prompt the teachers to involve the students in creating strategies for making the CC visible in the school and for inviting and encouraging all students in the school to use its services;
- Provide additional support/trainings to teachers and students-volunteers in Career Center in order better promotion and organization of CC services;
- Advise the teachers on methods of transparent selection of students to participate in the WRS workshops so as to offer equal opportunities for participation of all eligible students;
- Explore opportunities for technical skills training venues for vocations needed at the local labor market. Such venues could be identified in the VET schools and workers' universities.
- Explore opportunities for funding NGOs' WFD programs (such as WRS curriculum) with funds accessible through the municipalities and facilitate the establishment of the collaboration between the NGOs and municipalities.

OBJECTIVE 3: STRENGTHEN THE JOB SERVICES CAPACITY OF PUBLIC AND/OR PRIVATE LABOR MARKET MEDIATION ORGANIZATIONS TO ENSURE TRAINED YOUTH HAVE ACCESS TO UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION ON JOB OPENINGS AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that the job service capacities of the three local ESA Centers have been strengthened by providing them with a structured curriculum for WRS and WBL and training of facilitators for its implementation with the registered unemployed youth. Their learning process was supported by NGO facilitators who implemented WRS content with the youth. In addition, the renovated and upgraded JCs serve as appropriate venues for the implementation of the interactive WRS curriculum.

Recommendations

- Continue to support ESA facilitators in the new municipalities after the training by engaging the NGO facilitator more as a mentor and less as a co-facilitator.
- Secure the future implementation of the WRS and WBL curricula in the ESA Centers by including them in the ESA Operational plan.
- To increase the visibility and usage of the JCs, through ESA initiatives with support from LESC.

OBJECTIVE 4: PROVIDE CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR TEACHERS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

Conclusions

YES Network offered various opportunities for teachers' professional development in the area of workforce development. Trained teachers had opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills for implementing the WRS and WBL curricula with the students. Fewer than half of the trained teachers found ways to implement the WRS curriculum with selected students.

Yet, from this year's experience it can be concluded that there are difficulties in the schools for implementation of the activities, most important being the following:

- Limited possibilities for the implementation of the curricula within the 'free classes' due to the exhaustive curricular activities of the students and the many classes throughout the day, in addition to the students' transportation-schedule limits.
- WRS integration in the existing subjects faces challenges mainly related to the lack of coordination among the colleagues in the school.

Recommendations

- Discuss with the school directors to put an additional effort in order to find ways for the teachers to form groups of students for the 'free classes' that are homogenous in terms of availability during the week and other relevant factors.
- Initiate and, if necessary, facilitate coordination meetings in each school at the beginning of the school year, in order to coordinate the division of modules and activities among the teachers who teach different subjects, so as to avoid duplicating the activities with the same classes of students.
- Continuously support the teachers in the implementation of the curriculum by observing their facilitation and providing them with constructive feedback for improvement.
- Work on providing opportunities for teachers' professional development through practical experience in companies.

OBJECTIVE 5: CREATE INNOVATIVE MECHANISMS TO MAKE VET SCHOOLS AND VET CENTERS MORE RESPONSIVE AND RELEVANT

Conclusion

Both WRS and WBL curricula were adapted for use in the VET schools by the VET Center, responsible for the curricula in the VET schools. YES Network is in a process of discussion with the Bureau for Development of Education (BDE) for the need of the WRS approval for its use in the gymnasiums.

Recommendations

- Continue an effective discussion with the BDE for approval of the curricula to be implemented in the gymnasiums;
- Work on development of a program for Career Counselors in the schools.

THE YES NETWORK PROJECT CONTEXT

The latest findings on the labor market in Macedonia, confirm that many young people in Macedonia are long-term unemployed while those entering the labor market struggle unsuccessfully to obtain entry-level jobs. It has been widely and consistently reported - as an actual fact rather than employer based musing and conjecture - that youth attempting to enter the world of work lack skills and attitudes which employers are seeking. Additionally, it has also widely been reported that the individuals and agencies mandated to prepare youth for obtaining employment are inadequately prepared and insufficiently motivated and committed to providing youth with labor market and work readiness as well as with soft-skills information and training. The Youth Employability Skills (YES) Network, implemented by the US based Education Development Center (EDC), and funded by the US Agency for International Development (USAID), is a five-year project aiming to enhance the employability skills of youth in Macedonia. The project targets students in their final year in Macedonia's secondary schools, both vocational education and training (VET) schools and gymnasiums; unemployed registrants with the Employment Service Agency (ESA); and out-of-school, unregistered and unemployed youth, aged 15-27. The project works directly with secondary school teachers, staff from the local ESA centers and NGOs that work with unemployed young people. Selected staff from these institutions is trained to be facilitators for the YES Work Readiness Skills (WRS) and Work-Based Learning (WBL) curricula. Furthermore, the Project is working on development of Career Counselors Certification Program (CCCP) for schools and ESA to be able to provide career guidance and advice to the young people so they will be able to make informed and adequate career choices.

The main project partners are the municipal governments, which are the key to the tackling the issues related to youth unemployment. YES is introducing the idea of establishing Local Economic and Social Councils (LESC) as body of the Municipality where the private-public dialogue (PPD) will take place. This is a tri-partite body that brings together the employers, the employees and the state representatives to discuss jointly relevant issues for the local community. YES is making efforts to secure participation of youth in the Councils so their perspective on the issue will be considered and will be able to make an influence on the initiatives that LESG will propose to the Municipality.

YES Network's objectives are:

1. Facilitate Public-Private Dialogue that will improve demand-supply labor exchange at the local level
2. Develop venues for meeting immediate skill/training needs of the labor market and career development opportunities
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.
4. Provide continuing professional development opportunities for teachers in secondary schools.
5. Create innovative mechanisms to make VET schools and the VET Center more responsive and relevant.
6. Integrate productive connections with current and planned USAID and other donor workforce related activities.

These are the program activities implemented throughout the FY 2012 directed towards meeting the objectives:

PPD

- Conference on Public-private dialogue titled “Local Economic and Social Dialogue and Youth Employability Skills” carried out.
- LESC established in Strumica and Tetovo and formal basis for establishment of LESC in Bitola, Stip and Gostivar created. Prilep already has an Economic Council established and functioning.
- A workshop for Strategic Planning for LESC Strumica implemented.
- The YES Network Project signed MoUs with the municipalities of Tetovo, Strumica, Gostivar, Stip. It is planned that the MoU with the Municipality of Prilep will be signed at the beginning of the coming quarter
- On August 23rd the Tetovo LESC was inaugurated and the Agreement for Establishment of LESC Tetovo was signed by the Mayor, and Presidents of the Employers Association and Trade Unions who are the social partners-members of this tripartite body.

NGOs

- Three NGOs from the first three municipalities (Bitola, Tetovo and Strumica) were selected to deliver WRS workshops to unemployed, out-of-school and unregistered youth after an open call for proposals.
- Facilitators from selected youth serving NGOs completed Work Readiness Skills (WRS) workshop for unemployed, unregistered and out-of-school youth.
- In order to provide work-based learning opportunities for youth, the YES Network Project contracted My Career, a non-profit NGO established as a result of USAID’s assistance in Macedonia, to facilitate the connection between employers and youth.
- YES Network supported the partner NGO Mladinski Obrazoven Forum (MOF) from Tetovo to implement a second WRS training with the unemployed, out of school and unregistered youth.
- In order to build the capacities of the youth serving NGOs from the three new municipalities of Stip, Gostivar and Prilep to work on developing the “soft skills” of the unemployed, unregistered and out of school youth, YES Network Project organized a Training of Trainers (ToT) workshop on methods and mechanisms employed in the proper delivery of the WRS.
- YES Network project trained around 25 representatives of NGOs to be WRS facilitators from the three new municipalities of Stip, Gostivar and Prilep to meet the work readiness skills needs of the unemployed, unregistered and out of school youth.

ESA

- YES conducted ToTs for WRS curriculum for the facilitators from state ESA
- YES customized the WRS for use in the ESA Centers, and an accompanying handbook for participants was created and published in hard and electronic copy on CD.
- To date, three ESA Centers (Bitola, Tetovo and Strumica, with YES’s support, organized twelve WRS (12) workshops for unemployed registered youth.
- YES developed a WBL program specifically designed for use at ESA, based on a generic WBL tool developed by international and host-country consultants.
- YES organized a workshop with aim to present the WBL program to the ESA staff working in the six partner municipalities.

- YES provided support in the six municipalities through the renovation and upgrading of six Job Clubs within State ESA Centers in Bitola, Strumica, Tetovo, Gostivar, Stip and Prilep.
- YES and USAID have prepared a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) detailing each party's responsibilities during the process of preparation of the Law on internship and the draft has been submitted to the MoLSP for review, revision, approval and eventual signing.
- JCs in Employment Centers in Prilep, Shtip and Gostivar fully refurbished and re-equipped.
- The "Competition for Employment of the Best Young Tourist Guide in the Region of Strumica" was organized on 30th August. In a collaborative effort between YES, ESA Strumica and the owner of the "Panorama" tourist agency competitor entries were judged. The 3 best tour programs were presented at an event in Mokrino. Of these finalists the best presenter will be offered long term employment with the "Panorama" tourist agency.

VET

- Regional workshops for all teachers who participated in the work readiness training program were organized in Bitola, Strumica and Tetovo to formulate the implementation of Work Readiness Skills (WRS) modules in the schools, and to develop action plans for Career Center activities in the schools.
- YES delivered a second series of Work Readiness Skills (WRS) workshops for a second group of teachers from Bitola, Strumica and Tetovo.
- YES, in collaboration with VET Center Advisors and teachers, developed a Best Practices Manual. The Best Practices Manual will be translated into Albanian, printed in two languages and distributed to teachers that are a part of the YES Network and to all Career Centers in YES partner schools.
- The YES Network Project organized and conducted WRS workshops for secondary school teachers from second tier of municipalities (Gostivar, Prilep, and Stip).
- 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.
- YES organized WBL workshops and WBL Best Practices Workshop for teachers from Tetovo, Bitola and Strumica.
- To date, 25 Career Centers in the secondary schools are opened and equipped with furniture, IT equipment and career related materials.
- A workshop on "Development of an Individual Career Plan" was designed and delivered to teachers from secondary schools in Bitola, Strumica and Tetovo.
- Within the Educational Rendezvous 2012, organized by MASSUM - Youth Association for Vocational Schools in Macedonia - with support of YES, a contest for creating the best online career portfolio was organized for secondary school students.
- A workshop for coordination and implementation of YES Network Project activities was held for School Directors, representatives from Educational Sectors from the six pilot municipalities and VET Center Advisors.
- MoU for development of CCCP was signed with MoES.

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

- Meeting with Kultur Kontakt Austria resulted in permission to translate their internship materials to review them for possible use by YES in its WBL program.

- YES and Habitat for Humanity Macedonia (USAID grantee) have explored possible areas of collaboration and have set regular meetings in order to plan and implement an internship program as a part of Habitat’s activities.
- After establishing a preliminary contact with the EU funded project “Further Modernization of ESA” the YES project team continued collaboration meetings to avoid duplication and overlapping of activities for developing a complementary implementation plan. The WRS curriculum materials developed by YES were shared with the EU project since it is also planning to work on human capacity development training for ESA staff.
- YES Network supported the MoES in development of the “Stop Brain Drain Strategy of the Republic of Macedonia 2013-2020”.
- Coordinative meeting with State Advisor of MLSP regarding Internship Law.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION BACKGROUND

YES Network Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) activities seek to provide evidence about the project progress towards the project goal and objectives, according to a set of key indicators stated in the Performance Measurement Plan (PMP) (see Appendix 1). These activities are implemented through a **collaborative process** involving all YES Network Project staff and stakeholders. The process is **formative**, identifying successes and challenges at all stages of the project implementation so the YES team will be able to take appropriate actions to improve project performance and provide timely and constructive feedback to partners. A **summative** evaluation will measure progress against baseline statements and allow for comparisons between different municipalities or different implementing approaches. The M&E process is **participatory**, engaging all stakeholders. YES created and is maintaining a comprehensive database containing project output data.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

METHODS, INSTRUMENTS AND SAMPLE

Field data gathering activities were performed in the first three municipalities – Tetovo, Bitola and Strumica. The data was gathered in order to evaluate the effects of the WRS workshops on secondary school students, youth registered as unemployed with the ESA and youth that are not in school and are not employed. Also, the renovated and upgraded Career Centers in the schools and Job clubs in the local ESA centers were assessed.

A combination of quantitative and qualitative survey methods was employed - quantitative data was acquired through questionnaires, interviews and observation check lists, while through focus groups and interviews were provided additional qualitative data which allowed for a more in-depth understanding of the effects.

The following methods were employed:

- Questionnaires administration to teachers, students, ESA and NGO youth (Appendices 3,4,5,6)

- Focus groups with teachers, students, ESA and NGO youth (Appendices 7,8,9)
- Group interviews with NGO facilitators (Appendix 10)
- Group interviews with ESA facilitators (Appendix 11)
- Class observation (Appendix 12)
- School reports(Appendix 13)

The evaluation is performed with the population. The number of respondents and the methods used are presented in the table below:

Table 3. Number of respondents/groups and methods

	Questionnaires	Focus groups (FGs)	Group interviews (GIs)	Individual interviews
Teachers	113 VET teachers who participated in the WRS workshops	3 FGs with teachers who integrate WRS in their classes		12 teachers who implement the WRS in the Free classes
ESA facilitators			3 GIs (one in each municipality)	
NGO facilitators			3 GIs (one in each municipality)	
Students	400 students from Tetovo and Bitola ³	4 FGs (2 in Tetovo and Bitola)		
ESA youth	122 ESA youth	3 FGs (one in each municipality)		
NGO youth	93 NGO youth	3 FGs (one in each municipality)		

Additionally, 13 out of 14 schools submitted reports on the WRS implementation in their school as well as about the use of the Career Center.

All assessment approaches relied on individual face-to-face communication with the respondents. Everyone was assured that the information will be processed on a group level ensuring anonymity. The only exception to this is the data on ESA Job Club services on a municipal level, because there is only one ESA Center per municipality.

STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

The report contains the following sections: Executive Summary; The YES Network Project Context; Background of the Project Monitoring and Evaluation; Methodology; Results and Findings; Conclusions and Recommendations; and Appendices.

³ In this report the secondary school students from Strumica are not part of the sample because at the time of the survey the one group of students in Strumica was not functioning anymore and the others finished the implementation of the program, so the students were not available.

The reporting is organized in a way to provide information on the achievements under each of the five objectives. The section Results and findings is organized around the performance indicators, presenting the information starting with the more general level of concluding (Findings) and then presenting the basis for the findings (Results) coming from different sources, such as: Teachers' questionnaires; Teachers' focus groups; ESA interviews among others. The Conclusions and Recommendations are created based on the findings summarized in the previous sections and are actually answers to the question *How far are we with the realization of the objective?*

Note: All Indicators presented in this report, are to be found in the YES Project's PMP (see Appendix 1).

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

OBJECTIVE 1: FACILITATE PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS THAT WILL IMPROVE DEMAND-SUPPLY LABOR EXCHANGE AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

KEY FINDINGS

These findings are based on the information given under the indicators 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 shown below in the text. It is found that LESC are established in two (Strumica and Tetovo), out of six partnering municipalities, and formal requirements for establishing LESC in municipalities of Bitola and Stip are met. In the municipality of Prilep there is already an Economic Council established.

During this year the LESC in Strumica held three sessions, one town hall meeting, and developed their Strategic Plan for 2012-2015. The first year of the LESC existence is dedicated to its capacity building and the first recommendations to the Municipality are expected to be given in the second year and onwards.

The youth are represented in the Councils by one in Strumica and two young persons in Tetovo. The representative of the youth in Strumica comes from the Youth Council which is part of the Municipality. The original idea to create Youth Leadership body in each municipality to represent the youth perspective in the LESC has changed over time towards working with the existing youth councils where they exist and with NGO representatives where such bodies do not exist. It was decided not to create new bodies but to strengthen the existing one.

Regarding the new internship positions, the Project did not work directly with employers to provide work-based learning opportunities for young people because there is no law on internships for youth that is out of the education process, as an essential basis for prompting the employers to open internship positions. The absence of this law dissuades employers from bringing on interns, as they can be subject to fines and other penalties from the MOLSP by bringing on said interns.

INDICATOR 1.1: LOCAL ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCILS (LESC) ESTABLISHED AND FUNCTIONING.

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

PROJECT REPORTS

Local Economic and Social Councils are planned to be established in each partner municipality. During FY2012 this target was accomplished only in the municipalities of Strumica and Tetovo. In the municipalities of Stip and Bitola, the municipal council reached a decision to establish this body. In the municipality of Prilep, a Local Economic Council already existed when YES partnered with this municipality.

LESC in Strumica was the first one established and functioning. All members from the Council participated at a Strategic planning workshop for enhancing their capacities. As a result of the workshop they created their Strategic plan 2012 - 2015. During the year they held 3 sessions and hosted one town-hall meeting.

The outcomes of the sessions are:

- President and Secretary of the Council elected
- Internal Rules of Procedure of LESC Strumica drafted and adopted
- Strategic Plan and plan of activities of LESC Strumica 2012-2015 developed

The town hall meeting was the first attempt of the LESC Strumica to bring together all relevant local stakeholders - employers, education institutions, NGOs, youth and employment service providers - to discuss the challenges of the youth when preparing to enter and when entering the labor market.

The town hall meeting inspired discussion which produced quality exchange of information and facts which are of great importance in improving the productive link between unemployed youth, employers and provide support from the community and other stakeholders.

The most important issues emphasized during the town hall meeting were that the employers are not familiar enough with the active labor market measures (ALMM), implemented by ESA. Youth also do not know enough about the ALMM, as there is not a wide participation in the measure. In addition, one of the strongest message was that students, during their formal education, are not sufficiently exposed to practical training, a situation that needs to change in order to have a better prepared workforce. On the other hand, employers signalled that students should be more prepared before they start with their practical training. Others stated that companies should be encouraged to open their doors to youth without experience (internship and practical trainings) in order to give them the opportunity to build valuable work experience. This comments was specifically in reference to the implementation of the tax incentives to companies that provide practical training for VET students.

The town hall meeting was attended by a Counselor from the VET Center, who acknowledged all these and stated that the government is working on finding solutions how to improve that.

LESC Tetovo was inaugurated by formal Signing of the Agreement for Establishment of LESC between the Municipality of Tetovo, Employers Organization and Trade Unions, on August 23rd 2012.

The biggest challenge related to the establishment of the LESC the Project is facing in Bitola. It is mainly due to the unavailability and inaccessibility of the Mayor. The Project has been persistent in the efforts to communicate and resolve this issue. Despite every effort, there have been no results on this front.

YES Network project will support the LESC Gostivar and Stip to become fully functional and work on building their capacities to be able to engage in a meaningful dialogue. They will receive technical support to develop their capacities to be able to draft their own internal documents and strategic plans, and to develop their skills in PPD mechanisms. The project will continue to seek ways for establishing and functioning of the LESC Bitola.

INDICATOR 1.2: NUMBER OF YOUTH REPRESENTATIVES IN LESC

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

PROJECT REPORTS

YES Network is making efforts to assure the participation of youth in LESC. This is an unusual initiative since LESC is a tripartite body for public-private dialogue (PPD) consisting of representatives of the state,

employers and employees. Since YES Network aims to increase the employability skills of the youth in the municipality it is important to make a room for their perspective. It is decided that YES will advocate for at least one youth representative on the Council and where possible even more. Also, where youth councils exist, they will be included in the membership of LESC.

So far, youth are represented in the LESC Strumica, by one member of the Municipal Youth Council, and in Tetovo LESC, by two representatives of local youth serving NGOs.

Project thinking on the youth participation in LESC changed over time. In the original project design it was planned to establish Youth Leadership Council in every municipality as substantial representative of the youth perspective on the issues of youth unemployment. Later, it was decided not to create such bodies and instead to work with the youth councils where they are already established within the municipalities or with the existing NGOs. At present, the plan is to have at least one youth representative in LESC.

INDICATOR 1.3: PERCENTAGE OF EMPLOYERS OPENING INTERNSHIPS AND OTHER FORMS OF WORK-BASED OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH.

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

PROJECT REPORTS

YES Network did not make any direct contacts with the employers regarding opening internships and other work-based opportunities for youth because there is still no legal framework for such actions.

YES Network is part of the working group for the Internship law as a support to the MoLSP. In the second part of the year, MLSP informed USAID Projects that work on this law would be discontinued for the present time. There was no specific explanation for this decision and it is unknown whether this initiative will be raised again.

However, there are mechanisms supported by the GOM for providing internships for youth. One of them is the Active Labor Market Measure for internships, implemented through ESA. The other is through the local NGO My Career, which is an association for support of the career development, internship and job placement. All internships for the young people who completed the WRS workshop in the ESA Centers and NGOs were provided through these mechanisms (please see data on this in the next section of the report).

INDICATOR 1.4: PERCENTAGE OF YOUTH COMPLETING THE INTERNSHIPS AND OTHER FORMS OF WORK-BASED OPPORTUNITIES

KEY FINDINGS

After the participation at the WRS workshops organized by ESA Centers and NGOs (separately), out of total 341 trained young people, 38 (11%) got internships, 53 (16%) employment and 7 (2%) volunteering opportunities.

YES Network this year succeeded to develop the Work-based Learning (WBL) curriculum for implementation in the VET schools and ESA Centers and to train the teachers and ESA staff to implement it. The

implementation with youth will start next year⁴. This is the context in which the results under this indicator need to be understood. All internships, volunteering and employments have been provided through ESA ALMM and My Career. However, it is possible that these youth obtained these opportunities because they were more attractive to employers due to WRS developed as a result of YES training. It is also likely that these young people found and used these opportunities as a result of their increased employability skills and self-confidence.

The situation regarding the work-based experiences before the participation at the WRS workshops is as follows: the results show that 55% of the surveyed secondary school students had practical instruction in a company. They also had practical instruction, summer and season internships. The school is the major mediator for providing these opportunities for the students. Majority of the surveyed students (81%) expressed interest in having internship in a company. Of the unemployed and ESA-registered youth, 31% reported to have had internship in a company in the past (not exclusively after receiving the WRS training), and 50% would like to have such experience. Of the youth served by NGOs, 29% have had an internship and 86% would like to have an internship in a company in the following year.

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRES

The results from the students' questionnaires show that more than half or 55% of the students that have answered the questionnaire (400) have a practical instruction in a company. There are three forms of work based learning that students can benefit from during their secondary education, and the students' experience regarding each of them is depicted below:

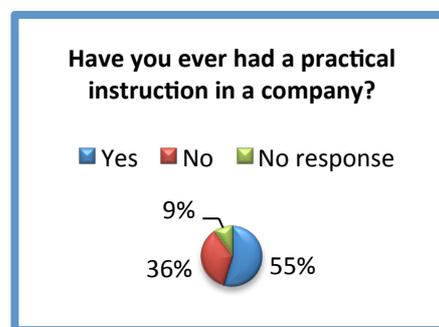


Chart 1: Students' questionnaires– Question 16/1

⁴Due to the fact that the first series of the WBL workshops with teachers were completed at the end of March 2012, the period for implementation of WBL activities with students was very limited. Some pilot WBL activities were implemented in few VET schools. The implementation of the WBL activities with students in all VET schools involved in YES project begun in September 2012 and the results will be assessed in FY 2013 evaluation.

Practical instruction during the year

Description: The student works at a company and completes working tasks suitable for his/hers age and according to the curricula. The goal of this activity is for the student to gain suitable experience in a certain area and development of the skills needed for increasing their employability skills. The activity is conducted throughout the school year in accordance with the curricula.

In total 295 or 74% students claimed to have had practical instructions during the school year. 54% of students participated in practical instructions in their third year of schooling, while 19% did so in their second year. Up to 70% of the students reported that the school initiated the practical instruction. Students most frequently (44%) had practical instruction “once a week during the whole school year”. Regarding the perceived usefulness of practical instructions, 41% of the students answered “I learned a lot of useful things”, 25% answered “This experience has prepared me a lot for my future job”, and 8% answered “I learned only a few new and useful things” (See Appendix 20).

Summer internship

Description: Work experience that broadens the knowledge gained with the regular practical instructions. It is usually conducted after finishing second or third year during the summer holiday in a period of a couple of weeks and in accordance with the curricula. The students must have certain skills and theoretical knowledge in order to be able to successfully complete the given tasks at the workplace.

60%, or 242, students reported having a summer internship, out of which 26% in their third school year and 34% in their second year. Regarding the duration of the internship “Up to 1 month” was the most frequent answer with 41% of all student responses, followed by “one week” with 16%. Up to 47% of the students indicated that the school initiated the internship. Students perceived summer internship opportunities as follows: 29% responded “I learned a lot of useful things”, 24% of the students responded “This experience has prepared me a lot for my future job”, and 7% “I learned only a few new and useful things”. (See Appendix 20).

Seasonal internships

Description:

Only 26% or 112 students reported having a seasonal internship. The seasonal internship duration most frequently is “Up to one month” (12%), then “One week” (9%), and “Up to two months” (4%). This type of internship occurred equally in the second and third year (both choices got 13% responses), while only 2% responded with “Other”. The main initiator of seasonal internships for the students is the school (18% of the students that reported on this type of work-based learning), while students themselves initiated 5%, the company initiated 3% and others initiated 1% of internships. Regarding the usefulness of the seasonal internships, 13% of youth responded that “I learned a lot of useful things”, 9% responded that “This experience has prepared me a lot for my future job”, and 5% stated that “I learned only a few new and useful things” .(See Appendix 20).

Asked about the future internship opportunities, 81% of students responded that they would like to have an internship in a company during the school year or the summer after it.

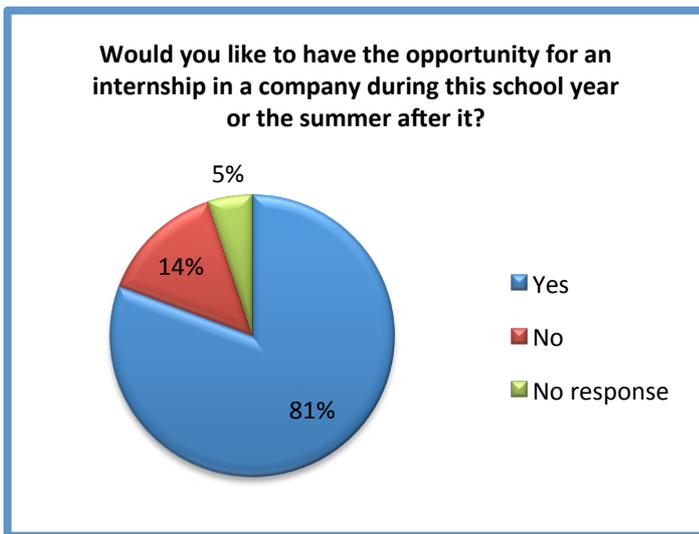


Chart 2: Students’ questionnaires– Question 16/4

ESA YOUTH QUESTIONNAIRES

For youth receiving training at ESA centers, YES surveyed them using a questionnaire including a section that explored prior work-based learning experiences. Out of 212 respondents, 31% reported to have had an internship, while 22% reported that they had no such experience. However, 50% of all youth are interested in having an internship in a company. Students responded that they would like such an opportunity in order “To improve my knowledge; to progress; to improve; to learn something new and useful which I will need for work.”(See Appendix 21).

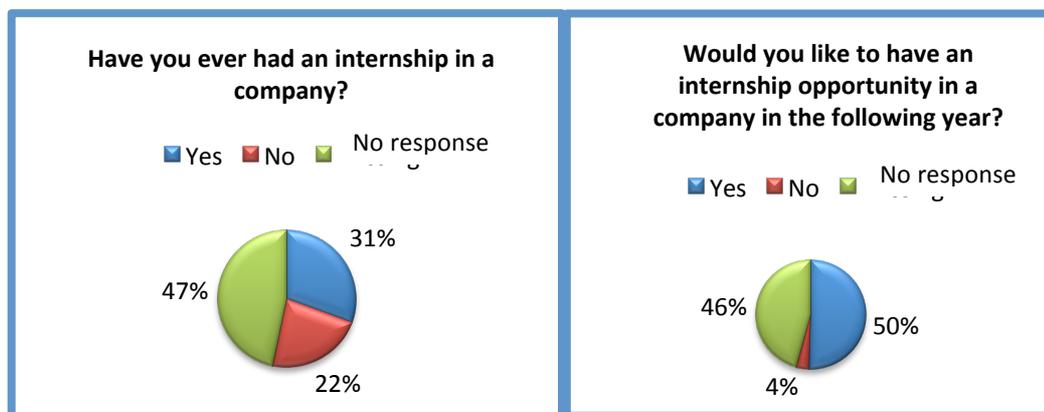


Chart 3: ESA youth questionnaires – Question 14/1

Chart 4: ESA youth questionnaires – Question 14/4

NGO YOUTH QUESTIONNAIRES

The youth served by NGOs were also given a questionnaire with a section focusing on their prior internship experiences. Only 29% said that they have had an internship, while 62% never had such experience. 86% out of all respondents would like to have an internship in a company, and 5% were not interested in having such opportunity.

The explanations that the respondents give as to why they would like an internship mostly refer to the possibility of improvement in their skills and knowledge, and of their labor market value. For example: *“Yes, because through internship I gain experience and have bigger opportunity for employment.”* (See Appendix 22).

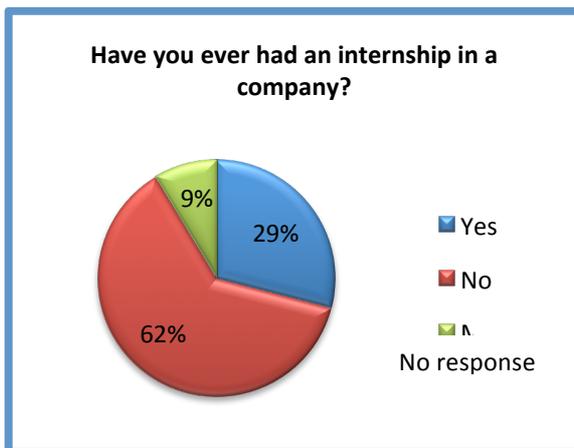


Chart 5: NGO youth questionnaires – Question 14/1

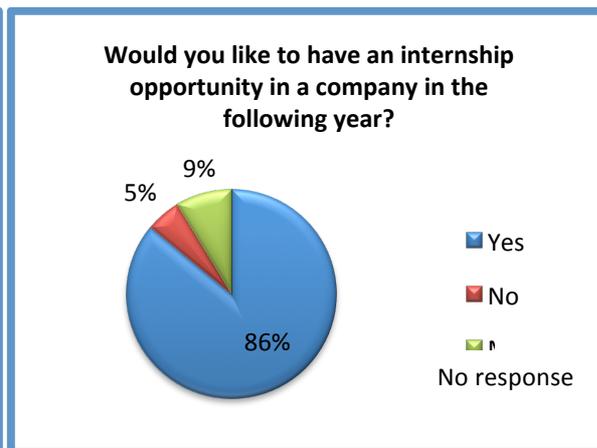


Chart 6: NGO youth questionnaires – Question 14/4

YOUTH FOCUS GROUPS

Three groups of youth that participated in YES WRS training composed the separate focus groups: secondary school students; unemployed and registered at ESA youth; and unemployed, unregistered and out of school youth, trained by NGOs. The discussion related to the work-based experiences developed around their previous experiences and interest in future ones. The students reported that all practical opportunities were provided by the school. One group of students showed interest in work based opportunities by suggesting a module for internships to be included in the WRS curriculum. Although no students reported to have had an internship on their own initiative, many of them expressed that they now feel more confident to actively and directly search internships and employments. Youth were confident, enthusiastic, and some have even applied for volunteer positions.

The discussion with the groups of youth trained by NGOs revealed different attitudes by municipality. The group from Tetovo showed highest motivation and activity in the area of work-based learning opportunities. Almost all youth participants have applied for an internship on more than one occasion. The other two groups share only a few intentions to search for an internship opportunity even though they feel better prepared in work readiness skills.

Most of the young people that participated at ESA WRS workshops agreed that they would like to have an internship opportunity following their training. The ESA youth from Bitola are well aware of the open calls that the ESA announces for internships. Two of them applied for the intern positions and following their

training they were offered a job. The participants also see themselves as better prepared, and some of them feel confident enough to visit a specific company in which they would like to work. There is also a participant who was an intern at the ESA Center in Bitola. (For Youth Focus Group results see Appendices 14, 15, 16).

ESA CENTERS AND NGO REPORTS

Following trainings, local ESA centers were asked to provide information regarding participants who got an internship, employment or volunteer work to better track the progress of young people receiving WRS training through the ESAs. This information is drawn from the ESA database in which they keep records of the employment status of all young people registered. The information on the internships for youth that received WRS training NGOs comes from My Career, which organizes internships for this group of youth. Table 4 shows that 11% of all ESA and NGO youth had an internship following the WRS workshops (13% out of all ESA youth and 6% out of all NGO youth), and 2% have been engaged in volunteer work (3% from all ESA youth and none of the NGO youth). Almost 16% of these young people are now employed. There are 38 employments (16%) from the trained ESA youth, and 15 employments (13%) from the NGO youth.

Table 4. Number of internships, employments and volunteers from ESA and NGO youth

	Total # participants	Internships	Employments	Volunteering
ESA Youth	230	31 (13%)	38 (17%)	7 (3%)
NGO Youth	111	7 (6%)	15 (14%)	0
Total	341	38 (11%)	53 (16%)	7 (2%)

Table 5 represents the work-based experiences and employments by municipality and by target group. The largest number of employments (22) is from Tetovo, from the group of the NGO trained youth. All employments in Bitola (12) and in Strumica (19) are among youth trained in ESA centers. The largest number of internships (19) is in Bitola, provided through the ESA ALMM for internships.

Table 5. Number of internships, employments and volunteers from ESA and NGO youth by municipality

	Bitola			Tetovo			Strumica		
	Internships	Employments	Volunteering	Internships	Employments	Volunteering	Internships	Employments	Volunteering
ESA	18	12	0	0	7	0	13	19	7
NGO	1	0	0	6	15	0	0	0	0
Total	19	12	0	6	22	0	13	19	7

OBJECTIVE 2: DEVELOP VENUES FOR MEETING IMMEDIATE SKILL/TRAINING NEEDS OF THE LABOR MARKET AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

INDICATOR 2.1: CAREER CENTERS (CC) UPGRADED AND FUNCTIONING

KEY FINDINGS

YES Network has renovated 24 Career Centers in six municipalities and upgraded them with IT equipment and printed and electronic career-related materials. In the three initial municipalities (Tetovo, Bitola and Strumica) there are 13 CC in total, 11 of which are fully functional. The other two were renovated later, so they started to function in the FY2013, along with the 11 CC from the second set of municipalities (Gostivar, Prilep and Stip).

All students and teachers involved in the WRS workshops were using the CC as a venue for implementing the workshops and for additional activities related to school presentations, competitions and other activities. Several schools invited relevant guests to meet with, such as employers, ESA staff, parents, media etc. Also, through the CC they collaborated with other schools and universities.

The evaluation results show that at least one responsible teacher and a group of students-volunteers usually operate the CCs. Apart from the groups of students that use the CC for the WRS workshops, the CCs in the school are used by fairly small number of students, most often the volunteers. The reason for this, as seen by the teachers and the volunteers at the CCs is the lack of interest among the other students. However, this is a subjective perception of the teachers and students-volunteers and not a fact based on exploration of the students' motivation to use the CC services. It will be useful to explore the reasons for this and to find effective ways for motivating more students to use the CCs. Also, relevant information is that the students would not ask for a career advice from a peer, but expect to have a professional Career Counselor in the CC.

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

SECONDARY SCHOOLS' REPORTS

By September 30th2012 24 Career Centers were renovated and upgraded. Eleven of them are already functioning, while 13 are upgraded and in the process of starting to function. The Career Center in Bitola (in the gymnasium Josip Broz Tito) was upgraded with the help of a different USAID funded project (PEP) but the YES Network Project continued to support this CC.

Table 6. Career Center status by municipality

No.	Bitola	Tetovo	Strumica	Prilep	Gostivar	Stip
1	Dr. Jovan Kalauzi	Nikola Shtejn	Nikola Karev	GjorchePetrov	SEOU Gostivar	Iskra
2	GjorgjiNaumov	8 Septemvri	Jane Sandanski	MircheAcev	SOU Gostivar	SlavchoStojmenski
3	KuzmanShapkarev	MoshaPijade	DimitarVlahov	K. JosifovskiPitu	OSTU Gostivar	DimitarMiraschiev
4	TakiDaskalo	GjoceStojcheski		OrdeChopela		Jane Sandanski

5	Josip Broz Tito	KirilPejchinovikj		Legend: Upgraded and functioning - green Upgraded – blue
6	Jane Sandanski			

Table 7 summarizes the reported activities in the functioning Career Centers in the three initial municipalities. It can be noted that CCs were used for a variety of purposes, but mostly for workshops, presentations, competitions and for preparation of promotional materials for the school. Also, some schools used the CCs as venues for meetings with other schools, ESA, employers, parents, media etc.

It is important to note that the schools on a municipal level differ regarding the number and variety of activities they have implemented. Most activities in a municipality were implemented mainly in one school. (See Appendix 24).

Table 7. Career Center activities by municipalities

BITOLA
Presentation of the CC and its services to: teacher councils, parents councils, education departments, students, local self government
Training on preparation of CV and motivation letter
Establishing contact with: primary schools, business community, universities, ESA centers, NGOs
Requalification training for adult workforce in cooperation with ESA Center and local NGOs
Regional competition in skills, knowledge and abilities.
Preparations for educational rendezvous 2012 - competition: "Best on-line career portfolio"
A competition organized and implemeted by the Business Start-up Center – Bitola
School project "Safety, Rights and Responsibilities at the Workplace" in collaboration with two other secondary schools.
Announcing a call for volunteers in the Career Center, interviews and candidate selection.
Preparing promotional flyers, videos, CC logos, posters, PP presentations, web page of the CC
Training for students-volunteers in job interview
Conducting a survey about professional interests
Lectures by professionals on their careers and job specifications
Presentation of Faculties and how to apply
Presentation of the Career Center and the services it provides to another school about to establish a CC
"Safety, rights and responsibilities at the workplace" training
Conducting a survey about professional interests
School competition for a best CV
Presentation of the ESA by an ESA employee
STRUMICA
Organization of a competition

Organizing visits by companies

Cooperation with media and parents

Debates

Writing a CV and simulating a job interview

"Free" classes for WRS curriculum

TETOVO

Creating a web page and video for the school

Creating electronic career portfolio

Acquiring additional materials (tests, books, presentations)

Promotion of the secondary school to students completing primary education

"Free" classes for WRS curriculum

Preparation for a technology fair

Preparation for the opening ceremony

Filming best practices workshop

Presentation of the Career Center and its services to teacher councils, parents councils, education departments, students, local self government

WRS implementation during "free" classes

Establishing contact with primary schools, business community, universities, ESA centers, NGOs.

Preparing promotional flyers, videos, CC logos, posters, PP presentations, web page of the CC

Presentation of the ESA by an ESA employee

STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRES

93% of all 400 student respondents reported that their school has a Career Center, and 44% of the surveyed students are volunteers there.

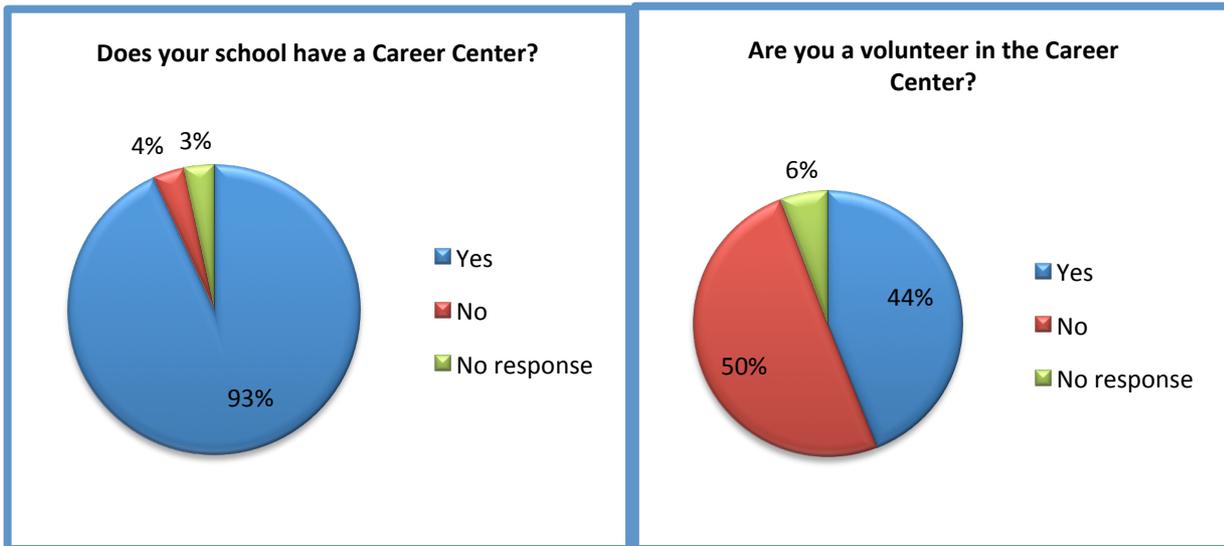
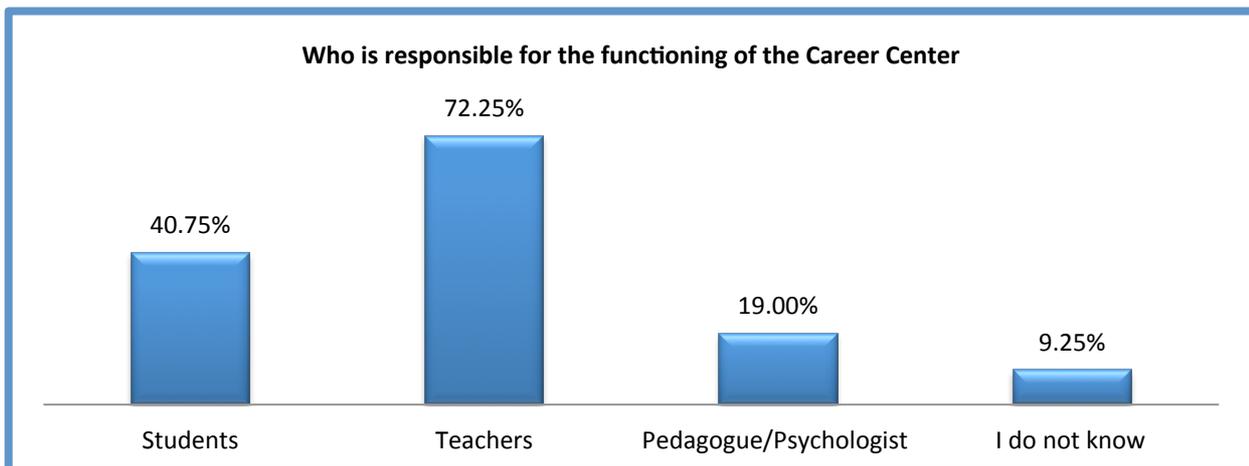


Chart 7: Students' questionnaires – Question 17/1

Chart 8: Students' questionnaires – Question 17/7

According to their answers depicted in Graph 1 below, 72% of students view teachers as responsible for the CC, while 41% responded that students were responsible for CC functioning.



Graph1: Students' questionnaires – Question 17/2 * For this question the students could choose more than one answer

STUDENTS' FOCUS GROUPS

The CCs most often are open between shifts a couple of days, however different schools have different working hours and working days. The students in some of the focus groups claim that the number of students using the CC is small due to the lack of interest among their peers, and they elaborate that their peers are reluctant to turn to the CC because they are not interested in taking advice from their peers, though they are CC volunteers. One group mentioned that students conducted a number of awareness raising activities, but these did not result in increasing interest in CC activities. Students noted that the books in the CC should be translated from English into the local languages in order to be more often used.

TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRES

Regarding the Career Centers the teacher’s questionnaires reveal very high percentage of teachers whose schools have a career center. 94% of the teachers answered that their school has a CC, and 90% said that it is functional.

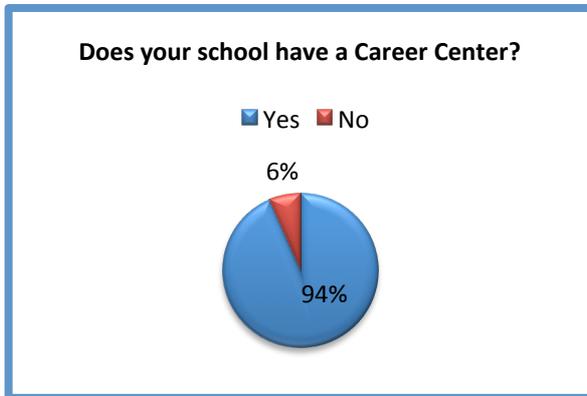


Chart 9: Teachers’ questionnaires – Question 9

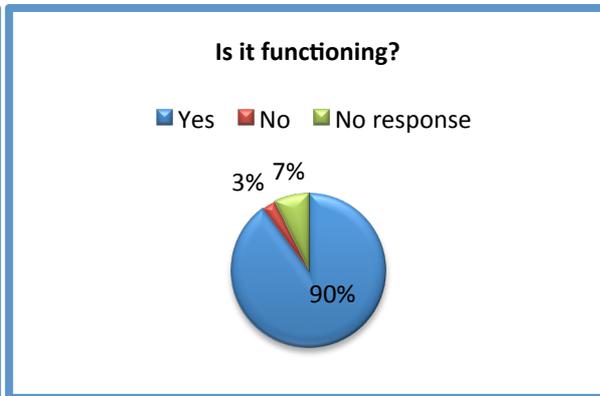


Chart 10: Teachers’ questionnaires – Question 11

TEACHERS’ FOCUS GROUPS

Most of the teachers agree that the CC is very much used, even for activities beyond the program. Many of them have students that have volunteered to take care of the CC and to be there in case other students need to use it. Also some of the teachers reported that they are collecting data of how much and in what manner the CC is used. All groups report to have prepared an Annual Plan of activity, but commented that it was seen as additional obligation rather than an activity they enjoyed. Most of the teachers report to have realized part of the plan, but as activities started later in the year, they could not complete all of the tasks. Groups consistently mentioned the language in which materials are written as an issue, and suggested translation into local languages. The technical equipment is used in all CCs.

Most of the teachers assess the use of the CC as medium and think that it mostly depends on the students’ interest. In order to increase the CC’s usage, teachers suggest better promotion of the services it provides in the school. However, they mention that students and teachers are overwhelmed with their curriculum and related activities, and thus additional activities would be difficult to take on. Teachers suggest issuing certificates to students who completed the WRS in the CC as stimulation for other students to use the CC services. (See Appendix 17).

INDICATOR 2.2: JOB CLUBS (JC) UPGRADED AND FUNCTIONING

KEY FINDINGS

All three Job Clubs in the three initial municipalities are upgraded and functioning. All three Job Clubs from the additional three municipalities are upgraded and ready to start functioning with the start of the FY 2013.

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

PROJECT REPORTS

A total of 6 Job clubs are renovated and upgraded with IT equipment and printed materials. There is one in each municipality (Bitola, Tetovo, Strumica, Prilep, Stip and Gostivar). During FY2012 only the JCs in Bitola, Tetovo and Strumica were used as venues for the WRS workshops with the youth, while the JCs in the other three municipalities were just renovated and equipped with printed and electronic resources and IT equipment and are ready to welcome the new groups of youth in FY2013.

INDICATOR 2.3: PERCENTAGE OF YOUTH SHOWING DESIRED LEVEL OF EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

KEY FINDINGS

The results regarding the level of employability skills show that the majority of all three groups of youth assess themselves with better skills after the participation in the WRS workshops.

The highest percentage of youth (91%) reported to have improved their teamwork and leadership skills. The least number of students (63%) reported on improvement of the practicing of the financial skills.

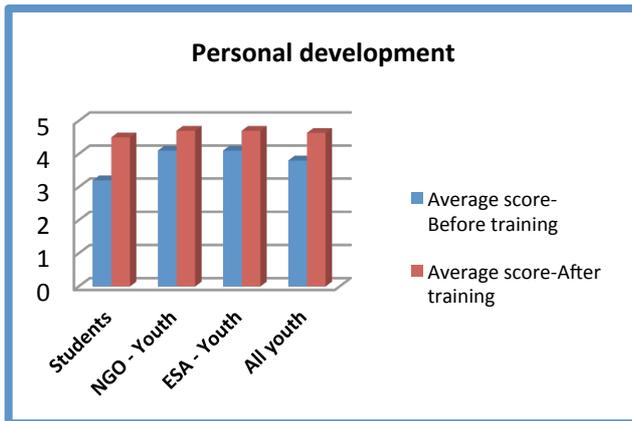
In the focus groups, all youth groups identified different areas of improvement, however they all agree that the job seeking skills, such as writing a CV and motivational letter, are very useful. They also agree that they would recommend the training to their friends.

Although all these findings are based on self-assessment and are not an objective measure, they are valuable because they represent the self-perception of the youth. Since they consider that their skills are increased, it can be assumed that this self-awareness will contribute to their self-confidence, which is one of the key factors when presenting themselves to the employers and throughout the job experience.

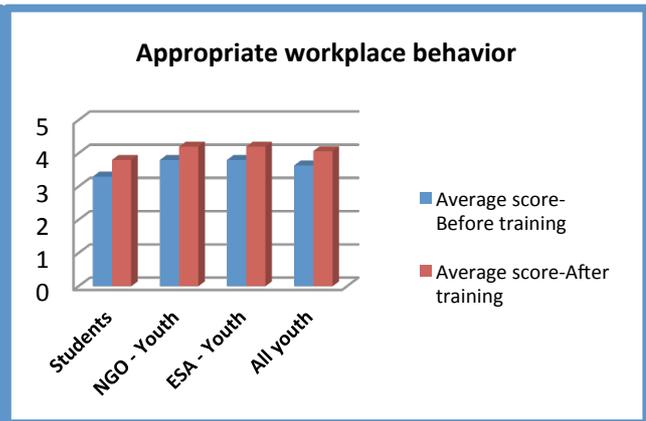
PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

YOUTH QUESTIONNAIRES

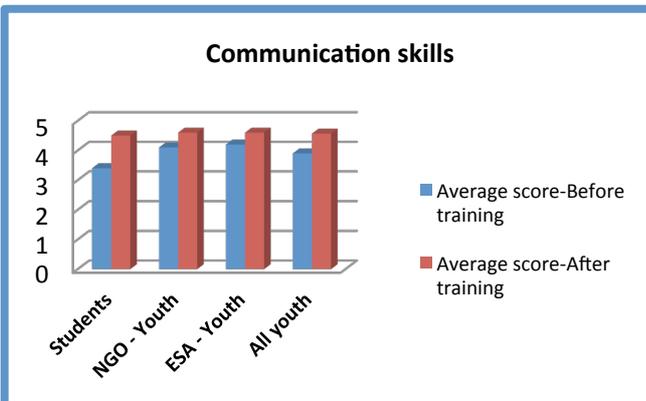
Youth's employability skills were measured using a questionnaire that incorporates sections for each module of the WRS curriculum. The measurement was based on self-assessment, and on six modules (graphically presented below) the respondents were asked to provide a measure (*indicator of how much they agree with the given statement; how well the statement describes them or their behavior; or how often they do activities mentioned in the statement*) depicting their experiences before and after the WRS training. The statements are carefully designed to assess various points of the module and a higher score shows higher (positive) effect of the training in the area of these six modules* (Personal development; Appropriate workplace behavior; Communication skills; Teamwork and leadership; Job seeking skills; Financial skills). Based on the responses all youth groups are showing improvement in the areas in question.



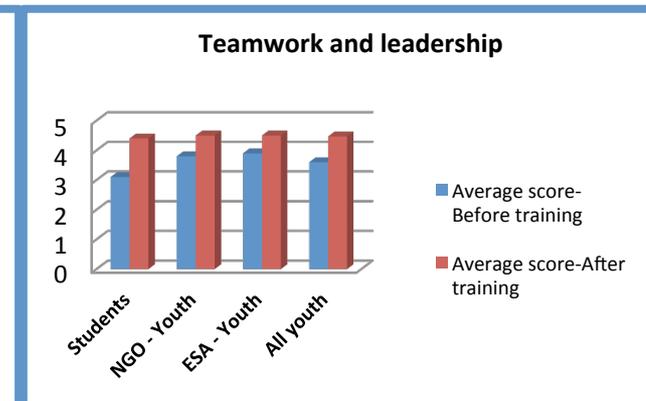
Graph 2: Youth questionnaires – Personal development



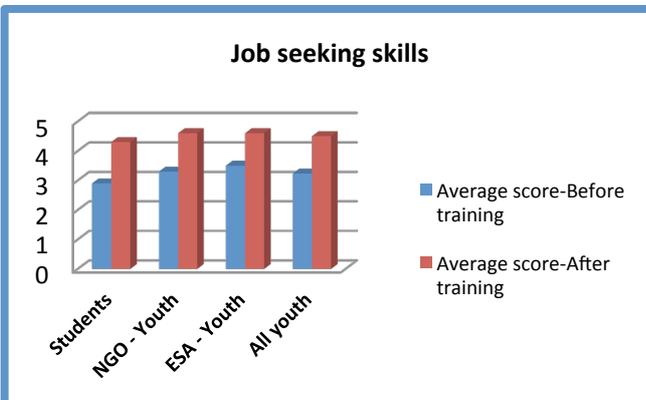
Graph 3: Youth questionnaires – Appropriate workplace behavior



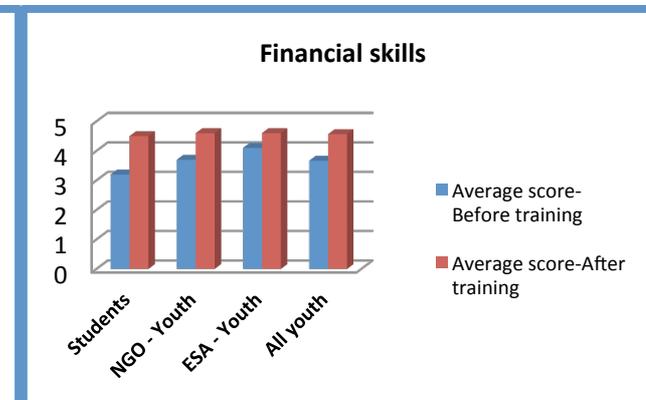
Graph 4: Youth questionnaires – Communication skills



Graph 5: Youth questionnaires – Teamwork and leadership



Graph 6: Youth questionnaires – Job seeking skills



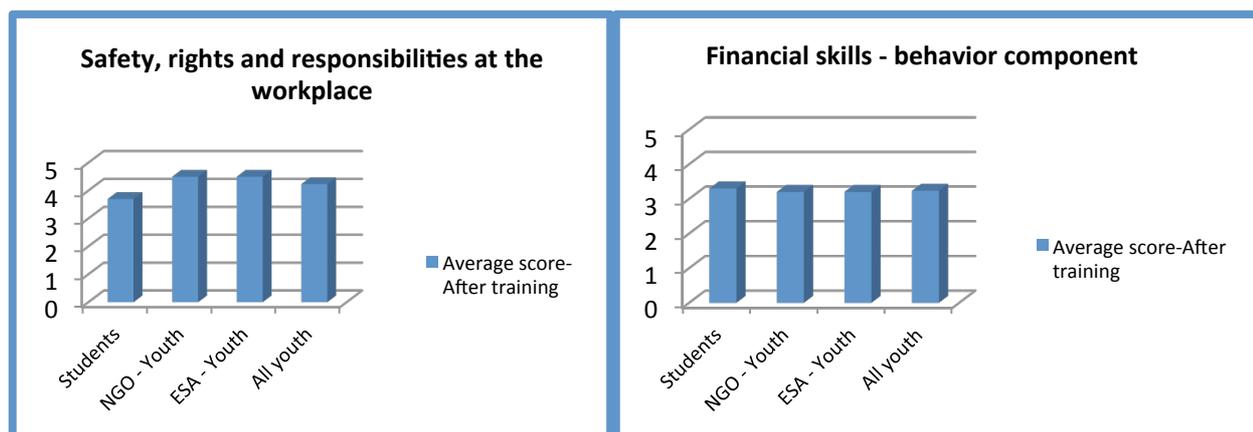
Graph 7: Youth questionnaires – Financial skills

The majority of the respondents (ranging from 63% to 91%) had higher scores after the training than before the training. Having in mind the results, additional statistics (T-tests) were provided to assess the statistical significance of the results. The results of the T-tests showed that the improvement in all youth groups for all six modules is significant on a significance level of 0.05. This means that there is 95% probability that the results reflect a pattern rather than chance. (See appendix 17).

Table 8. Percentage of youth showing increased level of employability skills after WRS workshops

	Personal development	Appropriate workplace behavior	Communication skills	Teamwork and leadership	Job seeking skills	Safety, rights and responsibilities at the workplace	Financial skills - knowledge and attitudes	Financial skills - behavior
Students	90%	79%	89%	91%	91%	76%	85%	65%
NGO - Youth	87%	57%	86%	92%	88%	100%	77%	52%
ESA - Youth	85%	55%	74%	90%	89%	98%	67%	67%
All youth	89%	71%	86%	91%	90%	83%	80%	63%

The module “Safety, rights and responsibilities at the workplace” was assessed measuring only current situation without comparing it to the situation before the workshop. The same measuring method is used for measuring the behavior component of the financial skills module, which measures frequency of actions associated with the level of acquired financial skills. The statements were designed so that a score of 3 or higher on a statement shows desired level of knowledge regarding the aspect it explores. Based on the responses for the “Safety, rights and responsibilities” questions, 83% of all youth had an average score that was 3,1 or higher, signifying that that 83% demonstrate a desirable level of knowledge on this topic/module. Regarding the behavior component of the financial skills questions, the results show that 63% of all youth scored 3,1 or higher. All youth groups’ averages are concentrated around the mid-point of the measurement scale; the overall average is 3,2.



Graph 8: Youth questionnaires – Safety, rights and responsibilities Graph 9: Youth questionnaires –Financial skills – behavior component

YOUTH FOCUS GROUPS

In total, 10 focus group discussions were conducted with youth. During the discussions, the participants in all focus groups described the program approach as interactive, and were pleased by its application.

“We were working in a relaxed enviroment and I think that it provides better results, as opposed to just sitting and listening. It was a kind of debate, anyone could get involved, share their knowledge, and jointly work towards the conclusion.”

Regarding the effects of the WRC training, all youth groups came to the same two conclusions: the job seeking skills, such as writing a CV, a motivational letter etc., were seen as very useful; and the participants agree that they would recommend the training to their friends. However, the three different types of groups singled out different specific benefits from the training. The ESA youth singled out the *Safety, rights and responsibilities at the workplace* module, as a module from which they learned many new things. Other effects that they pointed out are improvement of their financial skills and applying for internships more

frequently. The NGO youth mentioned the benefit of speaking in front of a group, applying for an internship, more ambitious job search and improving CV writing skills. The students pointed out that the *Personal development* module increased their self confidence and helped them identify their strengths and weaknesses.

NGO FACILITATORS GROUP INTERVIEWS

The NGO facilitators are indicated that the *Safety, rights and responsibilities at the workplace* module as most interesting and new to the unemployed unregistered youth participating in the trainings. Most of them agree that the time for the trainings was short and the program was compacted into smaller periods. (See appendix 18).

INDICATOR 2.4: LOCAL YOUTH NGOS PROVIDE CAREER RELATED SERVICES TO NUMBER OF UNEMPLOYED, UNREGISTERED AND OUT OF SCHOOL YOUTH

KEY FINDINGS

During FY 2012 the YES Network Project partnered with four NGOs, one from each of the first three municipalities and one more from an additional municipality in the Polog region, to hold work readiness skills workshops with unemployed youth that were not in school and not registered with ESA. In total, five workshops with youth were held, encompassing 111 unregistered unemployed youth.

Youth from all municipalities expressed high level of satisfaction with the workshops, especially with the interactive approach. They find it very motivating, and the content very appropriate for their future job. It was common in all groups that the modules *Rights and responsibilities at the work place* and *Financial skills* were the least familiar to them.

NGOs found that the most effective way of reaching the youth as potential participants at WRS workshops was social networks, both on and off line: NGOs used Facebook pages as well as friends and relatives to advertise and recruit for trainings.

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

NGO FACILITATORS INTERVIEWS

NGO facilitators in each municipality were interviewed to explore their experience during the workshops with the youth, to search for possible improvements, to discuss the recruitment and selection process for participants and possible ways for sustainability of the WRS workshops with youth.

NGOs used a number of methods to recruit youth participants for training. They used Facebook announcements, ads on the local TV stations, and billboard ads to advertise the trainings. They also spread the information through friends and acquaintances. When criteria for application were discussed, most of the facilitators were only sure of two requirements for the possible participants: age (15-27) and status as unregistered at ESA. Misunderstandings appeared regarding the education status of the participants. Many of the NGO facilitators were not aware that the participants should be out of the educational process. Because of the small number of applicants for participation in the training, selection was rarely conducted

and all applicants were invited to participate in the training. The facilitators agreed that there is interest in such trainings among the target group, but the information has to be better spread. As a suggestion one participant mentioned using a database from the universities as a possible source of unemployed unregistered youth out of educational process. Also it was suggested by one participant that groups should be formed for youth of the Roma population in Macedonia, and youth with physical disability.

The focus group moderator also discussed further sustainability of the NGO implementation of the WRS trainings. The participants suggested many possible sources of funding, such as: the local government, embassies supporting marginalized groups and employers that practice social responsibility. Regarding possible cooperation with the secondary schools and the use of their facilities, the facilitators were skeptical and pessimistic. However, the idea to explore possible collaboration with the municipality for accessibility to the IPA funds (Instruments for Pre-accession Assistance) was assessed as a potentially applicable idea that can be realized with facilitation from YES.

In Strumica, one of the facilitators, suggested WRS to be implemented with groups of marginalized youth, such as youth with physical disabilities or drug addicts who completed a rehabilitation process, who have even more difficulties than majority of the young unemployed people to find a job.

NGO YOUTH FOCUS GROUPS

When asked about the source of the information regarding the WRS trainings the ESA youth participants in the focus group mentioned the Facebook pages of NGOs, their websites and friends and relatives that informed them about the training opportunity. What motivated them to apply is the possibility of learning something new and useful in the job searching process as well as having a new experience and meeting new people. They were pleased and satisfied by the training describing it as interesting and useful.

“Being unemployed is most often what makes us participate in such training, because every training is a plus, and on every training you can learn something new, something to discover, and that is very beneficial for us”

The participants seemed pleased by the interactive approach in the trainings, since as they say it gives better results and makes them feel engaged. The most familiar topic for them was *Communication skills* and *Teamwork and leadership*. They were less familiar with the modules *Rights and responsibilities of the worker* and *Financial skills*. These youth recommended meetings and lectures by guest employers and extending the time planned for the workshop sessions as possible improvements for the training.

PROJECT DATABASE REPORTS

During FY 2012, the YES Network Project partnered with four NGOs for delivering the WRS workshops with youth. However, facilitators (36 in total) from more NGOs completed the WRS TOT training. Youth Educational Forum from Tetovo held two trainings; Youth Cultural Center from Bitola, ED Planetum from Strumica and CED from Tearce held one training each. In the five trainings conducted by the NGOs a total of 111 unregistered unemployed youth were participants: 71 participants were female and 40 male.

Table 9. Number of NGO facilitators and youth trained in WRS

	F	M	Total
NGO facilitators	22	14	36
NGO youth	71	40	111

OBJECTIVE 3: STRENGTHEN THE JOB SERVICES CAPACITY OF PUBLIC AND/OR PRIVATE LABOR MARKET MEDIATION ORGANIZATIONS TO ENSURE TRAINED YOUTH HAVE ACCESS TO UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION ON JOB OPENINGS AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES.

INDICATOR 3.1: ESA STAFF DELIVERS NUMBER OF CAREER RELATED WORKSHOPS TO UNEMPLOYED YOUTH

KEY FINDINGS

During FY2012, 12 WRS workshops were implemented, four in each of the three municipalities, encompassing 230 young unemployed persons registered at ESA.

Youth in all three municipalities surveyed expressed great level of satisfaction with the WRS workshops, accentuating the interactive approach.

ESA staff did not have an application process for the selection of the participants, but the most common way of recruitment of the participants was through a direct contact with the registrants at the ESA offices or by sending invitations by regular mail.

ESA staff capacities for delivering of such curriculum were continuously built by observing the work of the NGO facilitator most of the time, and by implementing a smaller number of modules themselves. However, the effectiveness of the capacity building of ESA could be increased if their facilitators take over bigger portions of the curriculum to facilitate and receive constructive feedback from the NGO facilitators for improvement.

The facilitators from the ESA Centers in Strumica and Bitola invited an employer to the youth WRS workshops. This proved to be an example of a good practice because the young people had an opportunity to learn first-hand about the needs, perceptions and expectations of the employers related to the youth employment. These ESA Centers have adopted this as a regular practice. ESA Center Tetovo has not developed such a practice yet.

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

ESA JOB CLUBS STAFF INTERVIEWS

ESA facilitators from all three centers feel prepared for implementing WRS workshops with youth on their own, after having support from the NGO facilitator. During the past year YES supported ESA staff in delivering WRS workshops with youth by providing one NGO facilitator to implement most of the modules, allowing the ESA facilitators to learn by observing.

ESA facilitators stated that they would not change anything in the content and in the interactive approach, because the whole curriculum proved to be appropriate for the youth. However, they highlighted that they would give more time for the Job presentation skills, such as CV, motivation letter and Job interview.

Regarding the selection process of the participants, ESA staff was mostly inviting them when they were reregistering or by regular mail.

ESA YOUTH FOCUS GROUPS

Most of the registered unemployed youth got information on the WRS training from the ESA employees during a visit to the local ESA center. Other sources by frequency are friends and relatives, the web page of the ESA, flyers around the municipality and phone calls from ESA employees. Regarding the training the participants were pleased and satisfied by the interactive implementation approach. They highlighted *Communication skills* and *Teamwork* as topics with which they are most familiar, and *Rights and responsibilities of the worker* as the newest and least known to them.

PROJECT DATABASE REPORTS

In total, 26 ESA staff participated in YES Network workshops, of which 19 were female and 7 were male participants. Viewed by workshop type the number of trained ESA staff is as follows:

Table 10. Number of ESA staff trained in WRS and WBL

	Work Readiness Skills			Work-Based Learning		
	F	M	Total	F	M	Total
ESA staff	7	5	12	15	5	20

12 WRS workshops have been conducted in three ESA Centers (four by each ESA Center in Bitola, Strumica and Tetovo) during FY 2012. Job Club facilitators from Strumica and Bitola were especially successful in connecting the youth with employers. On their own initiative they invited employers to participate in the WRS trainings. Participation by the employers was focused around advising young people about the changing labor market, explaining their expectations of future employees and simulation of job interviews. The ESA center Strumica is the most active around this initiative, inviting different employers for each workshop. They have invited four guest speakers from different companies, while the Tetovo center has not invited them so far.

Table 11. Employers - guest speakers visiting ESA centers

ESA Center Bitola	ESA Center Strumica
Owner of the hotel "De Niro" - Bitola	Manager at RiverSoft - Strumica
	Turist agency - "Panorama"
	A.D "Edinstvo" - Strumica
	Agro Komerc - Strumica

In Strumica this went even further – two employers challenged the youth at the workshop to participate in a competition and open a chance for getting an internship or employment.

INDICATOR 3.2: Number of Job Clubs that have their services enhanced

KEY FINDINGS

All six Job Clubs in the local ESA Centers have their services for the youth enhanced. The results presented under the previous indicator support this finding.

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

PROJECT DOCUMENTS

All six ESA Centers that have partnered with YES have JCs with enhanced services. By enhanced services the following is understood: having new structured and interactive WRS training to offer to registered unemployed youth; four WRS workshops implemented with youth, with co-facilitators to assist the acquisition of facilitation skills by ESA staff; having structured curricula for WBL and training for ESA use, and having IT equipment and printed materials.

INDICATOR 3.3: **NUMBER OF UNEMPLOYED YOUTH USING JC SERVICES**

KEY FINDINGS

In the ESA workshops 230 unemployed registrants participated. Besides them, also other unemployed registered people were using the JC for other trainings.

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

PROJECT DATABASE REPORTS

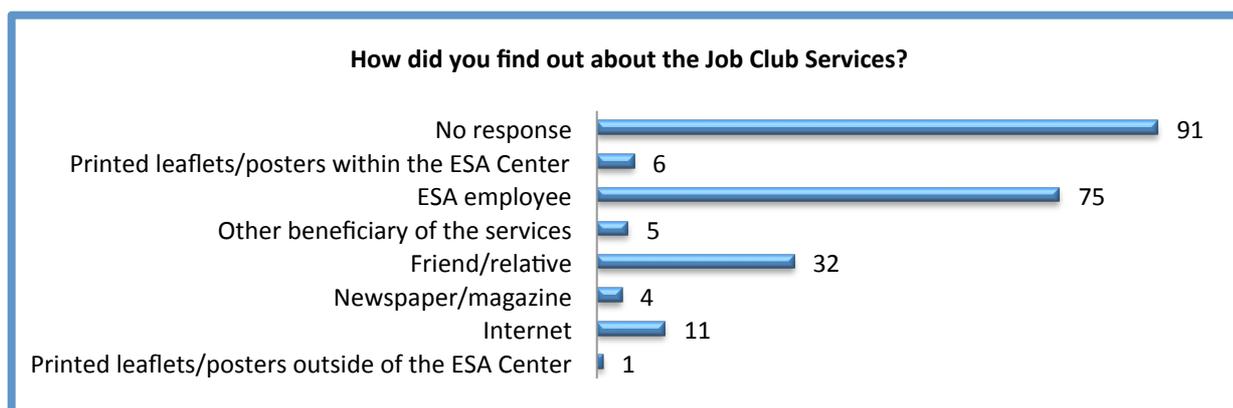
According to the project reports 230 young unemployed registrants participated in the WRC workshops implemented by the local ESA Centers. 142 of the participants are female, and 88 are male.

Table 12. Number of ESA youth trained in WRS

	F	M	Total
ESA youth	142	88	230

ESA YOUTH QUESTIONNAIRES

Asked how they learned about the WRS workshops at the ESA Center, most of the unemployed registrants said that the ESA employees informed and invited them to the workshop when they were reregistering. The next most frequently mentioned source is friends and relatives that informed the registrants about the JC and the WRS trainings.



Graph10: ESA youth questionnaires – Question 15/1

ESA YOUTH FOCUS GROUPS

The possibility of learning new things that can help the registrants get a job is the most frequent motive in their decision to engage in the WRS training. Registrants were also interested in having new experiences and meeting new people. Almost all of the participants were very satisfied with the training. They all said that they got what they were expecting out of the training and much more.

“I honestly expected some strict lectures, theory, and actually the exercises were very much interesting...the whole training... I am very satisfied”

Most of the participants were not aware that the Job Club was open until they started the training. The technical equipment is used productively. The materials, on the other hand, are not used as much. The participants have not visited the Job Club outside of the workshops even though half of them are aware they can use it.

OBJECTIVE 4: PROVIDE CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR TEACHERS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

INDICATOR 4.1: PERCENTAGE OF TRAINED SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IMPLEMENTING CAREER RELATED ACTIVITIES BOTH THROUGH THE FREE CLASSES AND INTEGRATED IN THE EXISTING SUBJECTS

KEY FINDINGS

Schools reported that 46% of the total number of trained teachers for WRS (178), from the first three municipalities implement the curriculum with their students. Based on the school reports, the most common form of WRS implementation is the integration of select activities in teachers' subjects (68% of the teachers use this approach out of the 81 who implement WRS). WRS implementation during “free” classes accounts for 16% of teachers' WRS offerings, while 16% of teachers use both implementation approaches. The late start of the training for the second group (from the end of November 2011 till the end of January 2012) was the main reason for a lower percentage of teachers from the second group to implement WRS (28%) as opposed to the 77% of teachers from the first group.

The main reason for choosing integration over “free” class implementation is the fact that “free” classes are allocated only to a part of the trained teachers who do not have a full schedule with the subjects they teach. As the majority of the teachers do not have the opportunity to implement “free” classes due to their full schedule, they focus implementation through existing subjects.

The only concern about the integration approach expressed in the focus groups was that there were cases where the same activity was implemented by two or more teachers with the same group of students. In order to overcome this, teachers suggest having coordination meetings, so the implementation of modules and the activities will be distributed among all teachers teaching different subjects in the same classes of students. In this way, greater number of students will have benefit from the WRS curriculum.

Time is also an issue with teachers implementing the “free” classes. These teachers struggle with the time and space and are often compelled to compress the modules in order to complete the program. They suggest relieving of some duties to the teachers that implement this program, and dividing the program between two school years as possible solutions. In the meantime, some of them consider selection of content for the benefit of accomplishing as many objectives as possible, instead of implementing each activity from the modules.

More than half of all integration of WRS modules occurs in the fourth school year. It appears that the integration is concentrated around the *Communication skills* and *Job seeking skills* modules which the teachers seem to prefer or find most useful for the students, while the other modules are integrated less frequently. However, this is not the case with the teachers who implement the program in the “free” classes. They begin from the first module, and manage to cover almost all the curriculum (about 90%).

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

SCHOOL REPORTS

From the total number of trained teachers (178), 81 or 46% actually implement the WRS curriculum, either in the free classes as a full 72-hour program or integrated in their existing subjects.

Table 13. Number of trained teachers and teachers implementing WRS program

Total number of trained teachers	Number of teachers implementing WRS	Difference
178	81	96
100%	46 %	53%

The table below shows the percentage of teachers that implement WRS with students in various ways: integrating it in the existing subjects (68%), implementing it during the “free” classes (16%) and using both approaches (16%).

Table 14. Number of teachers implementing WRS program by way of implementation

	Teachers ("free" classes)	Teachers (integrating in subjects)	Teachers (both approaches)	Total
Bitola	3	20	4	27
Tetovo	8	21	7	36
Strumica	2	14	3	19
Total	13	55	13	81
%	16%	68%	16%	
% from the total number of trained teachers (178)	7%	31%	7%	

Additional relevant information to the one presented in the table above is that there were two groups of teachers trained for WRS - 65 teachers in the first group were trained before the start of the school year, while additional 113 teachers were trained in the second group which had a late start of the training (November 2011 – November 2012). The percentage of teachers implementing WRS with the students differs between the two groups - 77% of teachers from the first and 28% of the teachers from the second group.

Table 15 presents the data on the students' participation in the WRS workshops - 771 students from 13 schools from the first three municipalities (Bitola, Strumica, Tetovo) participated in the "free" classes and additional 6,544 students from the same schools participated in selected activities from the WRS curriculum integrated in the existing subjects.

Table 15. Number of students participating in WRS workshops

	F	M	Total
Students – "Free" classes	410	361	771
Students – Subject integration	3300	3244	6544

The secondary school teachers that incorporate WRS modules into their subjects mostly do so with fourth year students - 51% of all integration is done within the curriculum for fourth year students, as reported by the school. It is important noting that the students in their second year receive the least amount of WRS instruction in class. WRS is mostly integrated into Macedonian language and literature subjectclasses (20%), Business and Entrepreneurship (17%) and Practical instruction (12%). The rest of the subjects add up to 51% and can be categorized into: Social sciences, Vocational subjects, Economy subjects, Natural sciences, Languages, Homeroom class, Practical instruction, Art.

The module most often integrated within subjects in all four school years is *Communication skills* (20%), followed by *Job seeking skills* (17%).

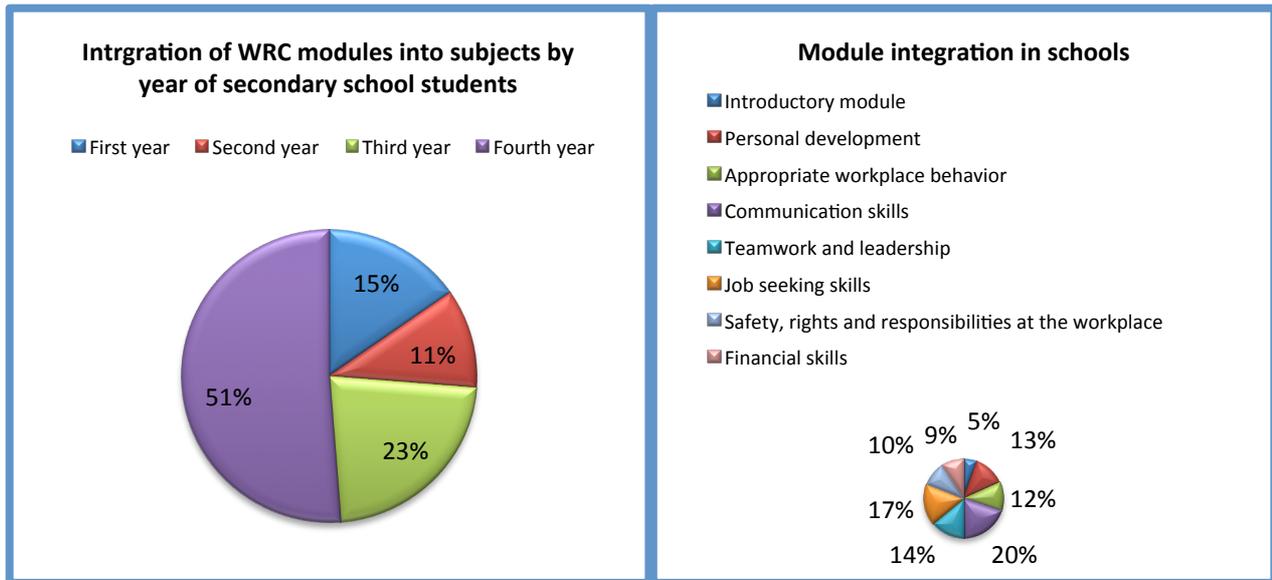


Chart 11: School reports data – Module integration into subjects by year Chart 12: School reports – Module integration percentage

Table 16. Number of classes implemented with modules’ integration by school year

Module	First year	Second year	Third year	Fourth year	Total
Introductory module	6	3	12	13	34
Personal development	10	7	21	40	78
Appropriate workplace behavior	9	6	15	43	73
Communication skills	11	20	27	63	121
Teamwork and leadership	13	13	19	42	87
Job seeking skills	19	8	20	56	103
Safety, rights and responsibilities at the workplace	10	10	13	28	61
Financial skills	16	0	11	29	56

When the data is viewed by groups several notes are important to be made. The teachers that teach various vocational subjects most often integrate *Communication skills* and *Teamwork and leadership*. The languages are among the subjects with the highest integration, and they focus on *Job seeking skills* and *Communication skills*. The economically related subjects have highest integration of the *Financial skills* module, and the social sciences (psychology, philosophy, sociology) have highest integration of *Communication skills*. The social sciences however, have low integration of the *Personal development* module. The Homeroom class and the Art class generally integrate the *Introductory module* and the *Personal development* module.

Table 17. Number of classes implemented with modules' integration by groups of subjects

Subject groups	Number of teachers	Introductory module	Personal development	Appropriate workplace behavior	Communication skills	Teamwork and leadership	Job seeking skills	Safety, rights and responsibilities at the workplace	Financial skills
Vocational subjects	15	6	8	6	18	19	6	9	2
Languages	25	16	40	34	54	39	62	19	18
Economy subjects	24	4	18	16	19	14	19	10	29
Social sciences	4	0	2	6	11	7	2	6	0
Practical instruction	11	0	3	8	9	6	3	7	0
Homeroom class	4	5	6	0	1	0	0	0	1
Natural sciences	5	1	1	3	8	2	11	10	6
Art	1	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0

TEACHERS' INTERVIEWS – FREE CLASSES

Teachers implementing WRS curriculum in the free classes reported on their experience with the program. Interviews were carried out with twelve from the 27 teachers that use this approach. The modules are implemented as planned, starting from the introductory module and onwards. Roughly 90% of the planned curriculum was carried out. Exactly half of the interviewed teachers did not implement the eighth module Financial skills, and two of the teachers made it only to the fifth module.

Table 18. Module implementation in “free” classes by school by Municipality

Municipality	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
TETOVO									
8 Septemvri – year IV	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		
8 Septemvri - year III	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Mosha Pijade –teacher 1	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		
Mosha Pijade - teacher 2	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		
Nikola Shtejn	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		
Gjocce Stojceski	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
STRUMICA									
Dimitar Vlahov	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	All were implemented in 66 school hours, approved by the VET Center
Nikola Karev	x	x	x	x	x				

BITOLA								
Jovan Kalauzi - teacher 1	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Jovan Kalauzi - teacher 2	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Kuzman Sapkarev	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Taki Daskalo	x	x	x	x	x			

The teachers were then asked a series of questions regarding their thoughts and opinions on the matter:

Would you change something in the content of the WRS curriculum?

It is most evident from the answers that the teachers are pleased with the curriculum content. The issues they highlight for implementation focus around the lack of time to conduct “free” classes. As a result, teachers are often forced to cut down the program. As a solution, they suggest dividing the program into two school years so that the students can have some of the modules in their third year and a follow up of the next modules in their fourth year. Other suggestions are made regarding more practical experience for the students and visiting companies.

“No changes are needed. However, there is not enough time for realization of the program. Suggestion: to continue with the same students in the fourth year at least for the last 3 modules.”

Would you change something in the approach of the WRS curriculum?

When the approach is discussed the teachers are unanimous that the approach is excellent and productive.

“No, I am satisfied with the approach. There are positive effects in the students. They are asking for such an approach from the other teachers so they won’t be so rigid.”

Did some of the activities/content of the WRS curriculum motivated the students or you to undertake some initiative towards youth work readiness?

A variety of changes and initiatives are mentioned both by the teachers and the students. Students are making school and CC websites, promotional videos for the CC services and are actively engaged in competitions. The students according to the teachers are becoming more interested and involved in the CC activities, more aware of the employment situation and are more interested in collaboration with peers from different ethnic groups and different schools. Few teachers are actively engaged in obtaining equipment through education funds, providing work-based learning opportunities for the students and establishing contacts with relevant stakeholders such as NGOs and companies.

“The manner of thinking and expressing themselves is changing in the students. For the last three classes the students have been asking for organized activities together with students from all three teaching languages.”
Says a teacher from a mixed languages school

Do you plan to implement the WRS curriculum in the upcoming year?

Most of the teachers would like to continue with the curriculum in the following year since they perceive it as useful for the students. However some of them are reluctant to do so because of the issue with the lack of time.

"I will definitely conduct it in the regular curriculum, but regarding the "free" classes, only if they are assigned to me, and I would like that."

What could be done at the school level to motivate the other teachers to implement the WRS curriculum?

The suggestions that the teachers give are mostly concentrated around providing more time (splitting the modules between teachers; releasing the teachers from other classes and obligations etc.) and more space for implementation by more teachers. As a way to get more teachers involved, several respondents suggest a training done on a school level conducted by the teachers who have already undergone WRS training.

"I would invite colleagues to my class instead of going to a seminar. For example, a coworker of mine, responsible for the "free" classes, 90 percent of the time was present in my classes and was filming them."

TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRES

In the questionnaire, the teachers were asked for the possible reasons for not implementing WRS-related topics with their students. Out of 110 teachers who were surveyed 28% of the teachers listed several reasons focused around the lack of time and the late start of the WRC training for the second group of teachers. Here are some of them:

Table 19. Examples of reasons for not implementing WRS program by the teachers

Because I'm from the second group and I integrate it in the subjects where I can, depending on the module which I work and the time frame

Extensive curriculum, not enough classes

For certain subjects there is no possibility for implementation

I didn't have time as I was included in the second workshop; I didn't finish the last two (modules)

I don't have free classes

I participated in the workshop very recently and I didn't have an opportunity to teach it

I was in the second group and I teach to first year students

Lack of practical lessons

Lack of time for integration into the subjects I teach

We try according to the conditions we have

TEACHERS' FOCUS GROUPS

Focus groups were conveyed only with teachers who integrate parts of the WRS curriculum during the regular classes. The teachers are unanimous in defining the implementation approach they used as interactive and the feedback from the students was also on a high level. They said that they are very familiar with that approach and they always use it in their subjects. As a problem that they faced they mention the repetition of same modules to the same class but by another teacher. This is the case because several teachers in the school integrate some WRS activities without coordinating beforehand with the other colleagues who integrate it. As a solution, they suggest better coordination and organization among teachers.

The teachers were also asked why they chose to integrate the program rather than implementing it during "free" classes. Their responses focused around the following issues: some teachers already have a full

schedule of classes, and cannot have “free” classes to implement in; due to the late start of the program all free classes were already planned.

INDICATOR 4.2 PERCENT OF VET TRAINED TEACHERS COMPLETING A PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE PROGRAM IN A COMPANY

In coordination with Macedonian VET center, the implementation of this program has been postponed for FY 2013, because the EU Twinning Project for Modernization of VET curriculum implemented by the Slovenian VET center, also works on this issue. It is agreed with the Macedonian VET center, that as a part of the EU twinning project, the externship methodology will be developed and several workshops will be organized with VET teachers. Based on the developed methodology and training materials, YES Network project in collaboration with the VET center, will develop standards and training program for externship, as well as provide orientation workshops for teachers who will attend this type of professional development.

INDICATOR 4.3 NUMBER OF STUDENTS USING CC SERVICES

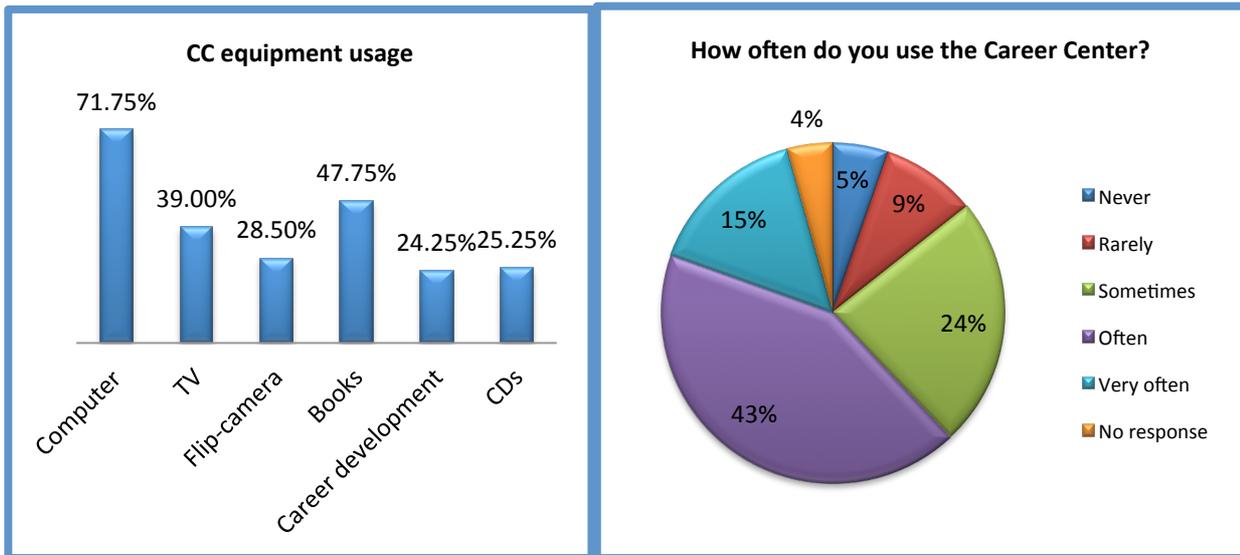
KEY FINDINGS

Majority of the surveyed students (82%) reported that they are the one who are using the CC mostly, compared to the teachers using it, reported by 43% and by the school administration, reported by 17% of the students. Most of the students reported to use it often (43%) and sometimes (24%). The computer is the most used equipment, as reported 72% of students that used the CC reported using it. 48% of students using the CC reported utilizing the career guidance books and materials. This finding is different from the one in the focus groups, where most of the students said that the books are not used because they were in English. Most probably, the situation is that while the students are using the books in English they would prefer them to be in the local languages.

Teachers confirm that both they and the students who participate in the WRS workshops are the most frequent users of the CC, while very few from the other students and teachers in the school use it. The reasons for this is seen mainly in their low interest, but also in the overburdening with regular classes and other school-related activities.

STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRES

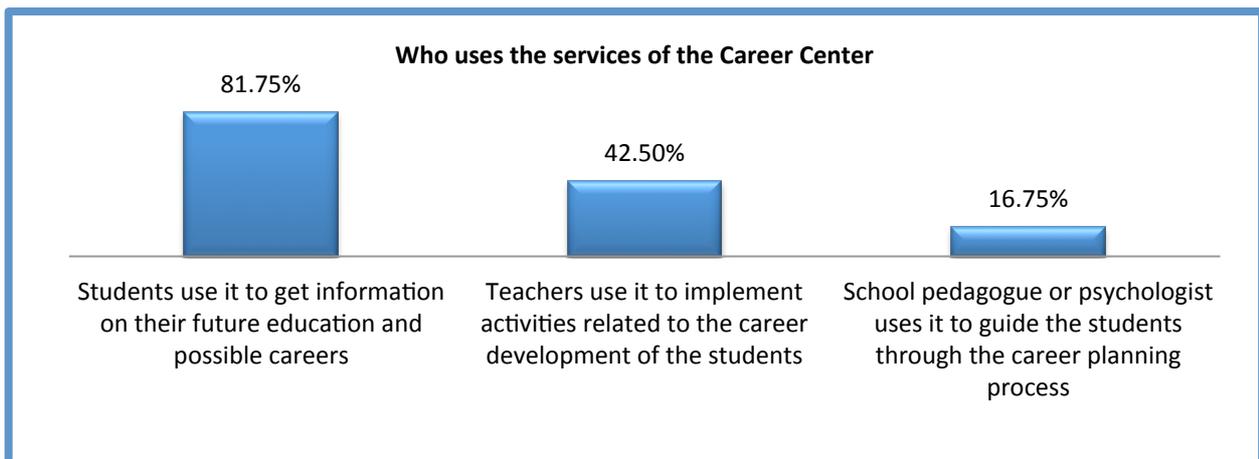
Questions related to Career Centers are included in student questionnaires. Of the entire student sample of 400 respondents, 43% of students use the CC “often”, 24% use it “sometimes” and 15% use it “very often”. From the graph below it is evident that students mostly use the computer - 72% students reported using it. 48% of students reported using the books in the CC.



Graph13: Students' questionnaires– Question 17/6

Chart 14: Students' questionnaires– Question 17/4

On the question “Who uses the services of the CC?”, 82% of students answered “The students use it to get information on their future education and possible careers.”. Other users as noted in the graph are the teachers with 43% and school pedagogue/psychologist with 17%.



Graph11: Students' questionnaires– Question 17/3

STUDENTS FOCUS GROUPS

In focus group discussions it was evident that students are excited to be volunteers in the CC and to participate in the WRS workshops. However, most students indicated that the CC is used by a small number of students, possibly due to lack of interest among their peers and the absence of a career counselor.

Regarding the use of the equipment and resources in the CC the students said that the technical equipment is used far more than the written materials. They also mentioned difficulty of using materials written in English for most students. As a recommendation, the students suggested translating these materials into Macedonian.

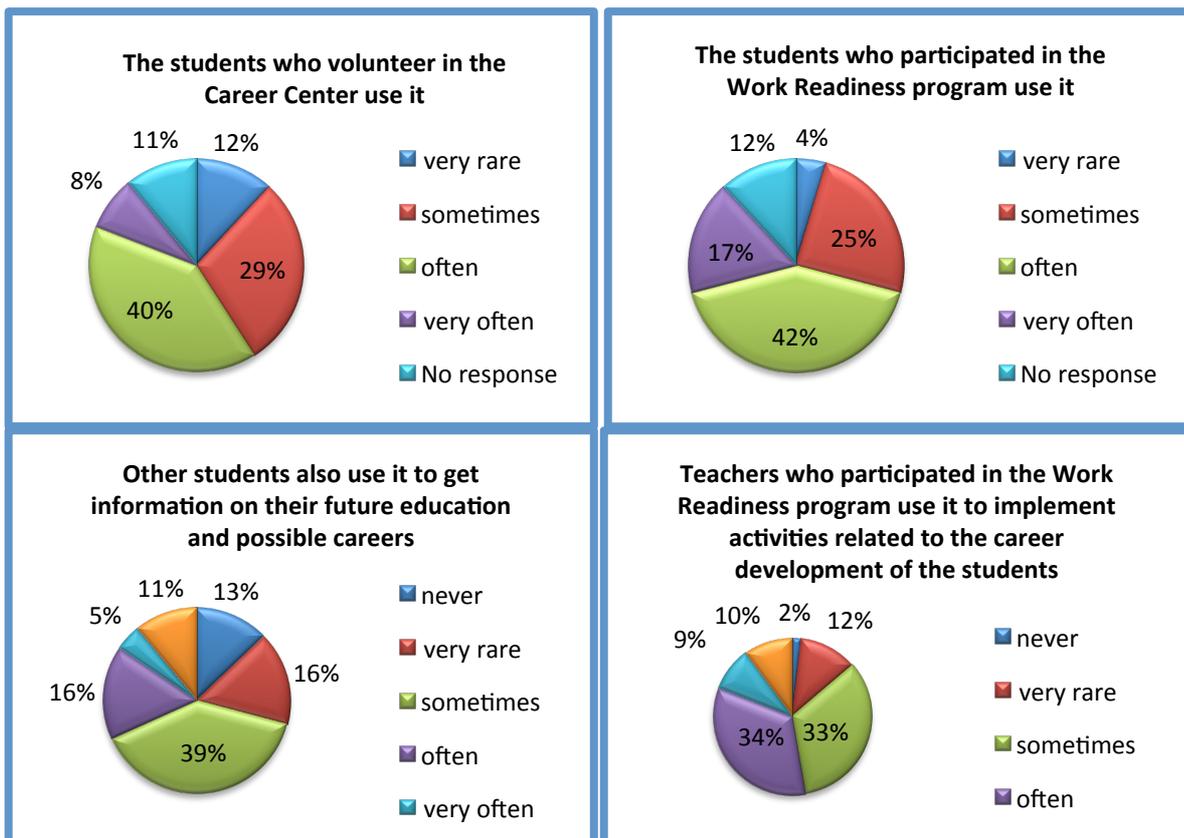
In order to invite more students in the school to use the CC, the participants from one group reported to have conducted a number of promotional activities for the CC, but the number of users did not increase.

The students shared that university faculties often implement promotional activities to the CC for recruitment purposes.

The students are pleased by the opening of a Career Center, and they would prefer having the WRS workshops in the CC, since some of the students in the groups shared that they are currently conducting the workshops in their classrooms. Some students also suggested that these workshops should be included in the regular curriculum as opposed to conducting them during the “free” classes. However, in order to include this course, extra time would be required in the school day. Students admitted that a workshop before or after classes would significantly reduce enthusiasm among students.

TEACHERS’ QUESTIONNAIRES

According to teacher questionnaire results, the students who volunteer in the Career Center and the students who participated in the Work Readiness program use these Centers more often than other students, though other students also sometimes use it to get information on their future education and possible careers. The teachers seem to have a similar pattern. Those directly involved in the Work Readiness program often use it to implement activities related to the career development of the students, while the school pedagogue or psychologist and other teachers use the CC less when it comes to guiding the students through the career planning process or implementing activities related to their career development.



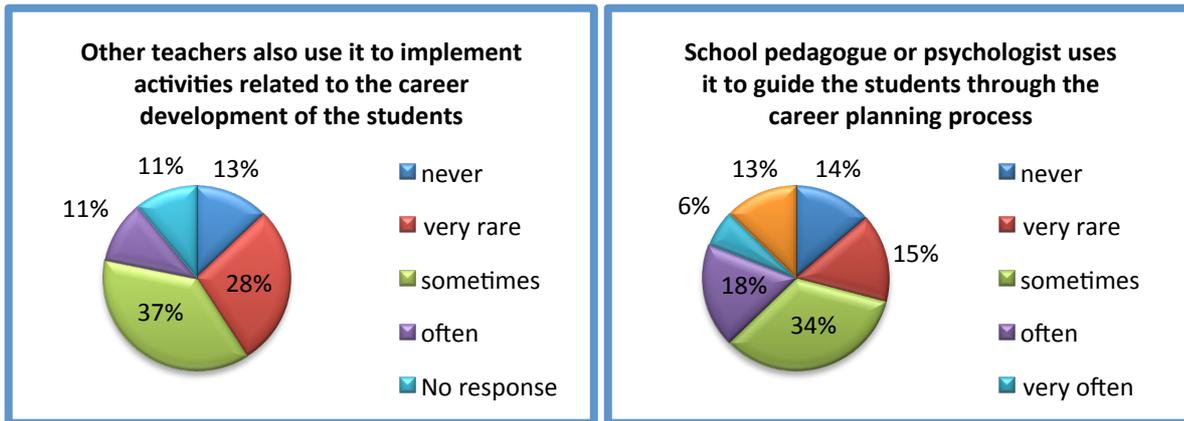


Chart 15: Teachers' questionnaires– Question 12

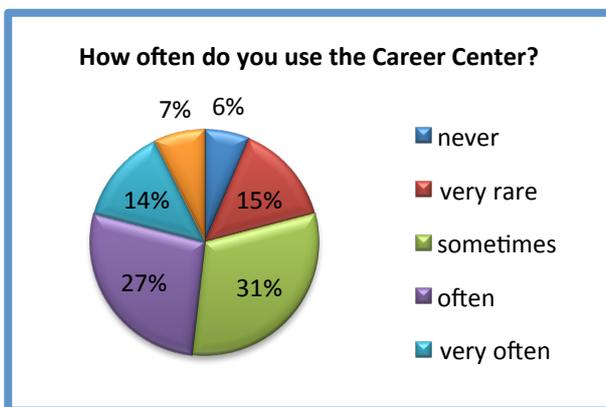


Chart 16: Teachers' questionnaires– Question 13

The participants' own experience concerning the CC usage shows answers mostly concentrated around "sometimes" – 31%, and "often" – 27%. The question regarding other uses revealed only two answers, both significant enough to mention:

- "For communication and presentation of other people from whom real information and experiences about career progress could be obtained"
- "From the students association in our school"

When the equipment usage is explored, the questionnaires results show that the technical equipment is used more than the books and DVDs. 71% of respondents considered the computer to be used "enough". 59% thought the TV is used "enough" and 66% thought the same of the printer/copier/scanner. With the books and DVDs the situation is different. 47% of teachers think the books are not used enough, and 15% think that books are not used at all. Still, 27% of teachers think the books are used enough. 33% of teachers think that the DVDs are not viewed enough while 12% think they are not used at all. Only 43% think the DVDs are used enough.

Language seems to be the greatest possible explanation for the low usage of books and DVDs. Other explanations include possibilities such as the large amount of up-to-date information available on the internet. (See Appendix 23).

TEACHERS' FOCUS GROUP

Most of the participants in teacher focus groups agreed that the CC is used enough, but recognized the issue of language of the materials provided as a problem. For increasing CC usage, teachers suggested promotional activities. However, teachers point out that the class load of students is large and thus a barrier to a wider and more productive use of the CC.

OBJECTIVE 5: CREATE INNOVATIVE MECHANISMS TO MAKE VET SCHOOLS AND VET CENTERS MORE RESPONSIVE AND RELEVANT**INDICATOR 5.1: REVIEW AND ENHANCE THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM FOR SECONDARY EDUCATION FOR WORK READINESS SKILLS**

The Work Readiness Skills curriculum was developed and approved by the VET Center for use in the VET secondary schools during FY2011.

The institutionalization of WRS for the Gymnasiums is still in process. The Ministry of Education and Science has adopted a program called “Entrepreneurship and Innovations” as a program for project activities in the gymnasiums, which is currently being piloted. This program covers some of the WRS content. If the contents do not cover the goals envisaged with the WRS program, it has already been discussed with the BDE that YES Network would support development of a WRS project activity program, or amend existing project activity “Entrepreneurship and Innovations”, to add the necessary content, should that be considered a more appropriate approach.

At present, YES is working in three gymnasiums (out of 27 secondary schools in total), in which the WRS curriculum is implemented through integration in existing subjects.

INDICATOR 5.2: REVIEW AND ENHANCE THE WORK BASED LEARNING ACTIVITIES IN THE NATIONAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION CURRICULA

The Work-based Learning (WBL) curricula was developed and approved by the VET Center for use in the VET secondary schools during FY2012.

INDICATOR 5.3: CAREER COUNSELORS CERTIFICATION PROGRAM (CCCP) DEVELOPED

This program will be developed in the next year in collaboration with the MOES.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

OBJECTIVE 1: FACILITATE PUBLIC-PRIVATE DIALOGUE THAT WILL IMPROVE DEMAND-SUPPLY LABOR EXCHANGE AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

Conclusion

Based on the evaluation findings, it can be concluded that in two out of six municipalities, the basis for starting the public-private dialogue has been established. The progress at the remaining three municipalities is developing at a slower pace, while the sixth municipality already has established Economic Council on which YES Network will build. LESC is a municipal body and as such they must be initiated by the municipality and supported by the mayor. Even though there is expressed will on the part of the Mayors for their establishment, the process of establishment takes time to finalize. The actual public-private dialogue is expected to start the following year, after the capacity building activities with each LESC are implemented. PPD is crucial for establishing and strengthening productive links among the institutions and employers to improve the local level demand-supply exchange.

Regarding the participation of the youth in the PPD, the original plan of creating youth Leadership bodies to represent the youth perspective in the LESC is transformed into another approach – to include youth councils where they already exist and to include NGO representatives where these bodies are not established. This was decided in order to concentrate on strengthening the capacities of the existing entities instead of putting efforts and resources in creating additional ones.

In regards to connecting youth with employers, the lack of a legal framework in which to make these connections prevents YES from supporting work-based learning opportunities for out-of-school unemployed young people. It is important to underline that the Project had success in placing unemployed youth, both registered and unregistered through ESA, as interns and employees, through the already established and legally functioning Active Labor Market Measures for providing internship positions for youth. An additional number of youth were placed as interns through the network of My Career.

Recommendations

- To identify more efficient approaches to expedite the process of establishment of LESC as the formal mechanism for public-private dialogue;
- In the absence of LESC in selected municipalities, to explore and initiate other approaches for creating functioning links between the key institutions and employers for improving the demand-supply exchange at the local level;
- To continue the collaboration with ESA and other institutions or NGOs that have acknowledged mechanisms for interns' placement in companies as a possible solution until the Internship law is adopted and implemented. This is important because internship is a step towards the creation of new employments.

OBJECTIVE 2: DEVELOP VENUES FOR MEETING IMMEDIATE SKILL/TRAINING NEEDS OF THE LABOR MARKET AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Conclusion

The Project has provided appropriate venues for implementing various career related activities in all secondary schools and ESA Centers in all six municipalities. Those venues are the Career Centers (CCs) in the secondary schools and Job Clubs (JCs) in the ESA Centers, which were renovated and upgraded with IT equipment and printed materials. During the past year, in the initial three municipalities, they operated mainly as venues for delivery of WRS workshops with youth. The CCs also served as a place for other extracurricular student activities, while the JCs were used for other trainings that ESA Centers offer to the unemployed and unregistered youth. It can be concluded that the CCs and JCs are used as venues for training soft skills needed at the local labor market. However, these are not venues for training youth in technical skills that are also necessary at local labor market.

Regarding the use of the resources of the CCs and JCs, it can be concluded that the technical equipment has been used for training and presentation purposes; however the books have rarely been used by the youth and by the staff because they are in English.

NGOs were also providing high quality WRS workshops for the unemployed, unregistered and out of school youth in their own or other premises, such as CCs, municipal facilities etc. However, NGO activities are not considered to be sustainable providers of WRS training after the completion of the Project because they do not have sustainable funding.

Recommendations

- To work towards building the capacities of Career Counselors that will offer guidance to young people in their exploration of educational and career choices;
- To translate the existing books in the CCs and JCs into the local languages or to develop additional printed and electronic resource for career guidance of youth in the local languages;
- To identify effective ways for promoting the CCs and JCs services to a wider number of students and registered young people at ESA so that more youth will benefit from their services. Also CC and JC responsible persons need to keep a record of their use.
- Prompt the teachers to involve the students in creating strategies for making the CC visible in the school and for inviting and encouraging all students in the school to use its services;
- Provide additional support/trainings to teachers and students-volunteers in Career Center in order better promotion and organization of CC services
- Advise the teachers on methods of transparent selection of students to participate in the WRS workshops so as to offer equal opportunities for participation of all eligible students;
- To explore opportunities for technical skills training venues for vocations needed at the local labor market. Such venues could be identified in the VET schools and workers' universities.
- To explore opportunities for funding NGOs' WFD programs (such as WRS curriculum) with funds accessible through the municipalities and facilitate the establishment of the collaboration between the NGOs and municipalities.

OBJECTIVE 3: STRENGTHEN THE JOB SERVICES CAPACITY OF PUBLIC AND/OR PRIVATE LABOR MARKET MEDIATION ORGANIZATIONS TO ENSURE TRAINED YOUTH HAVE ACCESS TO UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION ON JOB OPENINGS AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that the job service capacities of the three local ESA Centers in Bitola, Strumica and Tetovo have been strengthened by providing them with a structured curriculum for WRS and WBL and training of facilitators for its implementation with registered unemployed youth. In addition, the renovated and upgraded JCs serve as appropriate venues for the implementation of the interactive WRS curriculum.

The process of capacity building started with the training and was further strengthened by the co-facilitation of ESA facilitators with one NGO facilitator and at times a Regional Coordinator. This proved to be a valuable approach for encouraging the ESA staff to implement the workshops on their own. ESA facilitators were implementing smaller portions of the workshop; however, they continued delivering it on their own after the support ended.

Recommendations

- To continue to support ESA facilitators in the new municipalities after the training by engaging the NGO facilitator more as a mentor and less as a co-facilitator. One possible approach is to systematically phase in the ESA facilitator, and phase out the NGO facilitator: in the first workshop session, the NGO facilitator will implement 75% of the curriculum, in the second 50%, and in the third 25%. The rest of the time will be devoted to supervision of the ESA facilitation, which means observation of their work and providing constructive feedback afterwards.
- To secure the future implementation of the WRS and WBL curricula in the ESA Centers by including them in the ESA operational plan.
- To increase the visibility and usage of the JCs, through ESA initiatives with support from LESC.

OBJECTIVE 4: PROVIDE CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR TEACHERS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

Conclusions

YES Network offered various opportunities for teachers' professional development in the area of workforce development. Trained teachers had opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills for implementing the WRS and WBL curricula with the students. Fewer than half of the trained teachers found ways to implement the WRS curriculum with selected students. The late training for the second group of teachers is one of the factors for fewer teachers from this group implementing WRS with students. The WRS curriculum and workshops are highly assessed by both teachers and students, mostly because of its interactive approach and relevant content. Also, students find the curriculum especially useful for their career planning.

Yet, from this year's experience it can be concluded that there are difficulties in the schools for implementation of the activities, most important being the following:

- The implementation of the curricula within the 'free classes' is only possible for the teachers that do not have a full teaching schedule, which is subject to change with every new school year. Even for those who have this opportunity, it is hard to implement it in continuation and completely, because of the exhaustive curricular activities of the students and the many classes throughout the day, in addition to the students' transportation-schedule limits.

- The other possibility for partial implementation of selected WRS modules, integrated in the existing subjects, also faces challenges, mainly related to the lack of coordination among the colleagues in the school.

Recommendations

- Discuss with the school directors to put an additional effort in order to find ways for the teachers to form groups of students for the 'free classes' that are homogenous in terms of availability during the week and other relevant factors;
- Initiate and, if necessary, facilitate coordination meetings in each school at the beginning of the school year, in order to coordinate the division of modules and activities among the teachers who teach different subjects, so as to avoid duplicating the activities with the same classes of students.
- Continuously support the teachers in the implementation of the curriculum by observing their facilitation and providing them with constructive feedback for improvement;
- Work on providing opportunities for teachers' professional development through practical experience in companies.

OBJECTIVE 5: CREATE INNOVATIVE MECHANISMS TO MAKE VET SCHOOLS AND VET CENTERS MORE RESPONSIVE AND RELEVANT

Conclusion

Both WRS and WBL curricula were adapted for use in the VET schools by the VET Center, responsible for the curricula in the VET schools. YES Network is in a process of discussion with the BDE for the need of the WRS approval for its use in the gymnasiums.

Recommendations

- Continue an effective discussion with the BDE for approval of the curricula to be implemented in the gymnasiums;
- Work on development of a program for Career Counselors in the schools.

LIST OF APPENDICIES

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Appendix 2	List of project stakeholders
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Appendix 4	Post Employability skills survey (ESA Youth) - Questionnaire
Appendix 5	Post Employability skills survey (NGO Youth) - Questionnaire
Appendix 6	Post Questionnaire (Teachers)
Appendix 7	Focus group guide (Students)
Appendix 8	Focus group guide (ESA Youth)
Appendix 9	Focus group guide (NGO Youth)
Appendix 10	Group interview questions NGO
Appendix 11	Interview questions ESA
Appendix 12	Observation form – Teachers
Appendix 13	School reports
Appendix 14	FGD Report - ESA Youth (Bitola, Strumica, Tetovo)
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Appendix 16	FGD Report - Students (Bitola, Tetovo)
Appendix 17	FGD Report - Teachers (Bitola, Strumica, Tetovo)
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Appendix 19	T-tests table (All Youth)
Appendix 20	Students questionnaires – Results
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Appendix 25	Events, Job Club and Career Center photos