



**Teacher Professional and  
Career Development Project**



**MACEDONIAN  
CIVIC  
EDUCATION  
CENTER**

## **QUARTERLY PROGRAM PERFORMANCE REPORT**

**October 1, 2014 – December 31, 2014**

**Agreement No. RFA-165-A-13-00001**

**Submitted by:**

**Macedonian Civic Education Centre (MCEC)**

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. BACKGROUND .....	4
2. PROGRESS TOWARDS OBJECTIVES .....	5
3. Project UPDATE .....	7
3.1 Key Project Personnel Positions .....	7
3.2 Other Project Staff .....	7
4. PROJECT ACTIVITIES .....	7
4.1 Crosscutting Activities .....	7
4.2 COMPONENT 1: COMPREHENSIVE LEGAL SYSTEM.....	9
4.3 COMPONENT 2: ENHANCE FINANCIAL SCHEMES .....	9
4.4 COMPONENT 3: STANDARDS FOR TEACHER COMPETENCIES .....	10
5. LESSONS LEARNT .....	13
6. Activities for the next reporting period .....	13
7. Inclusiveness of education .....	14
LIST OF ANNEXES .....	15

- Annex 1 Steering Committee Meeting Minutes on Approval of Teacher and Student Support Services Competencies and Standards
- Annex 2 Paper on Core Teacher Professional Competencies presented on the First International Conference organized by OSCE and MCEC
- Annex 3 Letter to Ministry Ademi – comments on the new Law on Teachers
- Annex 4 Summary report of TPCD activities in 2014

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS (IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER)**

BDE	Bureau for Development of Education
EU	European Union
MCEC	Macedonian Civic Education Center
MoES	Ministry of Education and Science
MoF	Ministry of Finance
NEC	National Examination Center
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
SbS	Foundation for Educational and Cultural Initiatives Step by Step Macedonia
SEI	State Education Inspectorate
TCD	Teacher Career Development
TPD	Teacher Professional Development
TPCD	Teacher Professional and Career Development
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children Education Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VET Center	Vocational Education Training Center
WB	World Bank
YES Network	Youth Employability Skills Network
ZELS	Association of the Units of Local-Self Government of the Republic of Macedonia

## MACEDONIAN CIVIC EDUCATION CENTER (MCEC)

### USAID TEACHER PROFESSIONAL AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROJECT (TPCD)

#### QUARTERLY PROGRAM PERFORMANCE REPORT #5

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<b>Cooperative Agreement No:</b>	<b>RFA-165-A-13-00001</b>
<b>Progress Report No:</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Reporting Period:</b>	<b>October 1, 2014 – December 31, 2014</b>

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## 1. BACKGROUND

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On December 7, 2012 the Macedonian Civic Education Center (MCEC) signed the Cooperative Agreement with USAID to implement USAID Teacher Professional and Career Development Project (TPCD). The Project is a 30-month initiative which contributes to the design, development and establishment of a teacher professional and career development system in the Republic of Macedonia by identifying necessary interventions that support existing national policies and practices.

The TPCD project aims to create a comprehensive, transparent, feasible and cost-effective system that will improve student achievement and strengthen teacher performance and credibility. MCEC, in partnership with relevant institutions, will achieve a set group of goals through an integrated approach and activities that focus on lessons learned from past projects for teachers' professional development, current initiatives and regional/international best practices.

The TPCD project goal is to accomplish the following three, mutually dependent and inter-related results<sup>1</sup>:

- *Result 1: Comprehensive Legal System Improved*

Review of legislation related to professional and career development of educators in pre-school, primary and secondary education to determine capacities of institutions to effectively perform assigned roles and responsibilities, and thereby strengthen the TPCD system.

- *Result 2: Enhanced Financial Schemes*

Review different schemes to finance the professional and career development of teachers and proposing funding scenarios that are realistic and viable in the Macedonian context.

- *Result 3: Standards for Teacher Competencies Developed*

Develop standards for teacher competencies and professional development opportunities, along with tools for evaluating performance and advancement in the teaching profession.

During Year 1, the Project focused on establishing project structures, defining collaboration with relevant stakeholders, conducting a comprehensive review of TPCD in the country and a

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<sup>1</sup> In the text below all activities that are related to fulfillment of the three project expected results are grouped under the following three components: Component1 - Comprehensive Legal System, Component 2 - Enhanced Financial Schemes, Component 3 – Standards for Teacher Competencies.

comparative analysis of countries with well-established TPCD systems. In addition, the Project worked on identifying and cataloguing teacher core competences and commenced the process of developing teacher standards. During Year 2, the Project will finalize the teacher standards, and will start development of Catalogue of Core Professional Competencies and Standards for student support services. The established working groups will work on improving the mentoring process of novice teachers in schools, establishing an internal school performance assessment of teachers, drafting the procedures and developing instruments for teacher career advancement. Along this, the Project will work on legal regulation of the developed products in the adequate laws.

The TPCD system will be based on clear standards of quality teaching, multiple measures, accurate teacher evaluation<sup>2</sup>, targeted professional development and continued support to teachers. To achieve this, the project will use a participatory approach, which will enable strong coordination with, and contribution from, the Bureau for Development of Education (BDE) and other educational institutions.

## **2. PROGRESS TOWARDS OBJECTIVES**

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During the reporting period the following was accomplished:

### Crosscutting Activities:

- Teacher and Students Support Services Competences and Standards approved by the Steering Committee members;
- Comments and suggestions from the on-line public debate incorporated in the draft competencies and standards for students support services;
- Teacher Core Professional Competencies and Standards presented at the First International Conference, Practicum of Future Pedagogues, Teachers and Kindergarten Teachers in Multicultural Environments- experiences and challenges;
- The USAID post-award survey for the TPCD project conducted;
- TPCD capacity building workshop with the International Consultant, Mr. Frank Crawford organized;
- TPCD activities and achievements presented to USAID Senior Advisor for International Education, Ms. Christie Vilsack;
- Meetings held with Members of Parliament, Ms. Vesna Adamchevska Ilievska and Ms. Nora Aliti to lobby for changes to the draft laws;

### Component One, Comprehensive Legal System:

- TPCD project actively involved in reviewing and providing comments to the draft versions of the Law on Teachers, Law on Teachers' Academy and the Law on Teacher Training Faculties;
- Letter addressed from the USAID Macedonia Mission Director regarding the inconsistencies identified in the Law on Teachers officially submitted to the Minister of Education and Science;

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<sup>2</sup> Teacher evaluation refers to all forms of evaluation such as: School Self-evaluation, Integral Evaluation, teacher rewarding based on the External Student Assessment.

Component Two, Enhance Financial Schemes:

- Two simulations of financial scenarios for teacher professional development prepared;
- Draft scenarios for career advancement of teachers on municipality and national level developed.

Component Three, Standards for Teacher Competencies:

- Expert group for developing Professional Competencies for School Directors established and first draft of the document developed;
- Expert group for supporting the piloting of TPCD solutions in the selected schools established and members trained;
- Recommendations and concerns raised by the international consultant Mr. Frank Crawford embedded in the draft processes, procedures and instruments for career advancement;
- Guideline for professional development for teachers and students support services staff finalized and translated into Albanian language;
- Preparations for the piloting of the designed professional development and career advancement processes in schools finalized.

### **3. PROJECT UPDATE**

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#### **3.1 Key Project Personnel Positions**

There are no changes in the key project personnel positions.

#### **3.2 Other Project Staff**

There are no changes in the other project staff.

### **4. PROJECT ACTIVITIES**

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#### **4.1 Crosscutting Activities**

##### **Cooperation with BDE and other relevant institutions**

During this reporting period, as part of the reform of initial teacher education the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) drafted and submitted to Parliament for adoption the three new laws: 1) Law on Teachers, 2) Law on Teachers' Academy and 3) Law on Teacher Training Faculties. TPCD project representatives participated in drafting the Law on Teachers. This process was chaired by BDE and resulted in embedding in the law the solutions designed by TPCD.

The Project maintained good cooperation with BDE. Regular meetings were held with BDE management and BDE advisors, members of the working group, regularly participated in all meetings of the different working groups. In close cooperation with BDE, the Project selected the schools in which the professional and career development system will be piloted. BDE informed the schools and organized the introductory meeting with the schools from the City of Skopje.

The cooperation with the VET Center continued during this period by involving the advisors in the working groups and piloting the TPCD process in the selected VET schools. Regarding the piloting process, the project drafted Memorandums of understating describing the roles and responsibilities of the TPCD project, municipalities and schools which were signed by all parties involved.

After many unsuccessful attempts to establish cooperation with the National Examination Center (NEC) regarding development of competencies for school directors, finally the NEC director accepted the project support, and a working group was established. The first meeting of the working group was organized in December 2014.

##### **Steering Committee Activities**

On December 15, 2014 the members of the Steering Committee gathered and approved the professional documents developed by the TPCD project that include the Teacher Core Professional Competencies and Standards for Teacher-Mentor and Teacher-Advisor; Core Professional Competencies for Student Support Services and Standards for Student Support Services Staff-Mentor and Student Support Services Staff-Advisor (**see Annex 1**).

Having in mind that the teacher competencies and standards were stipulated in the new Law on Teachers, BDE will need to develop adequate by-laws to further regulate the application of competencies and standards in the professional development and career advancement of teachers.

### **Meetings, debates and roundtable discussions**

During this reporting period, the project organized meetings with MoES, BDE and NEC to present recommendations related to developing the three new laws on education and the Law on licensing school directors. Furthermore, the project met with the Members of Parliament, Ms. Vesna Adamchevska Ilievska on December 24, 2014 and Ms. Nora Aliti on December 30, 2014 to lobby for changes to the draft laws, in order to align those with TPCD solutions.

### **Public relations**

TPCD project continued keeping all relevant stakeholders informed about the latest project developments and achievements. Moreover, on December 28, 2014 the Project staff presented the paper on “Core Teacher Professional Competencies and other initiatives to improve the teacher professional and career development system in the Republic of Macedonia” on the First International Conference, Practicum of Future Pedagogues, Teachers and Kindergarten Teachers in Multicultural Environments- experiences and challenges (**see Annex 2**) organized by OSCE and MCEC. There were over 100 participants present at the conference from different countries in the region and Europe. Frank Crawford was one of the key note speakers at the conference and in his speech talked about the new trends in education. Furthermore, the abstracts were printed in the Book of Abstracts and papers were published on the OSCE webpage. This conference was organized by OSCE in partnership with MCEC on November 27-29, 2014.

### **Other**

The USAID post-award survey for the TPCD project was conducted on November 10 and 11, 2014. During this process, MCEC documents and internal procedures were checked by two representatives from the USAID Regional Financial Management Center. After completion of the survey, MCEC office received a report that praises the quality of work and documentation provided by the project, with only few recommendations for improvement.

During this reporting period, the project worked on the initial planning of the no-cost extension. Due to the extensive number of project activities and the limited implementation timeframe, the project reviewed and prioritized the activities that will be implemented by June 2015, and adapted the budget accordingly. Furthermore, the project reviewed the sub-grant agreement with Step by Step and is considering the possibility of altering the contract into a consultancy based agreement.

On November 24-26, 2014, TPCD project organized a capacity building workshop with the International Consultant, Mr. Frank Crawford. Additionally, the International Consultant supported the team in developing a thorough plan of activities and gave the team instructions about certain issues and setbacks that could occur in the process of piloting the TPCD solutions. Moreover, TPCD team presented the solutions for establishing a functional professional and career development system and discussed with Mr. Crawford possible ways of improvement.

## **4.2 COMPONENT 1: COMPREHENSIVE LEGAL SYSTEM**

### **Activity 4.2.1: Draft amendments in the laws to regulate the teacher competencies and standards**

During this reporting period the TPCD project was actively involved in reviewing and providing comments to the draft versions of the Law on Teachers, Law on Teachers' Academy and the Law on Teacher Training Faculties. As reported in the last quarter, the TPCD staff participated in drafting the Law on Teachers together with BDE, and managed to regulate in the Law solutions for professional development and career advancement of teachers designed by the project. However, after handing over the first draft of the Law to the working group in MoES, they made changes in the Law which influenced the overall design of the TPCD system. The articles which regulate the advancing in career were changed with putting too much emphasis on the role of the external assessment of students as criteria for progressing in career. Furthermore, they changed the process for advancing of teachers to teacher-mentor, from a process administered on a municipality level to a process administered on a national level. These and other inconsistencies identified by the Project and USAID AOR were put in written and officially submitted to the Minister of Education and Science in a letter addressed from the USAID Macedonia Mission Director (see **Annex 3**). In addition, the project team and USAID AOR held two meetings with Members of the Parliament, who are part of the Parliamentary Committee for Education, Culture and Sports to lobby for changes.

The project offered support to MoES in organizing public debate on the three laws before they reach Parliament. Despite the readiness of the Project to support this activity, the Minister of Education and Science decided to meet with few faculties and to gather only their opinion instead of opening a public debate. The feedback received from TT Faculties on the Law on Teachers' Academy and the Law on Teacher Training Faculties was not positive. In addition, the proposed amendments to the Law on Higher Education that envisage all students taking a "state exam" before they complete their studies caused great dissatisfaction among students and teachers. As a result, the university students and professors established Students' Plenum and Professors' Plenum and held protest marches.

## **4.3 COMPONENT 2: ENHANCE FINANCIAL SCHEMES**

### **Activity 4.3.1: Developing financial scenario for teacher professional development**

Based on the gathered and processed data, different financial scenarios were developed, that take into consideration the professional development needs and the available funds on national, local government level, schools and teachers. Two simulations in excel, a comprehensive and a simplified version of financial scenarios were developed. The project met with the representatives of BDE to present the financial simulations and the budget implication related to different types of professional development opportunities on December 2, 2014.

### **Activity 4.3.2: Developing financial scenario for teacher career advancement**

Draft scenarios for career advancement of teachers on municipality and national level were developed.

- *Model 1:* TPCD working group for career advancement proposed a process for promoting teachers into teacher-mentor to be conducted on a municipality level, whereas for teacher-advisors to be on a national level. This scenario identified the financial burden on municipalities (regardless of the size of the school), taking into account the number of teachers and the average number of students per teacher. The percentage of teachers to advance in career per municipality each year will be set by MoES, taking into account the above parameters. However, due to the uneven student/teacher ratio nationally, the project proposed a formula to overcome this imbalanced number of teachers to advance

per municipality. This formula correlates the number of students, with number of schools and with the number of teachers on a municipality level, in which greatest impact have the students as end users. The project developed a financial simulation which presents the financial implications on the state budget for advancement into teacher-mentor and teacher advisor in the period of five (5) years.

- *Model 2:* The above mentioned financial simulation was presented to the representatives of MoES Department of Finances. During this meeting, the issue of distribution of teacher-mentor's and teacher-advisor's salary increase was discussed, because it is in conflict with the current formula for allocation of funds based on the set added value by a coefficient calculated on the actual number of students used to determine the teacher salary. Thus, MoES requested to develop a simulation based only on the total number of students per school. This model identified number of teachers who need to be promoted into teacher-mentor with financial burden for a period of five (5) years.

#### **4.4 COMPONENT 3: STANDARDS FOR TEACHER COMPETENCIES**

##### **Activity 4.4.1: Expert Group**

During this quarter, the project team established two new expert groups for: 1) developing Professional Competencies for School Directors, and 2) supporting the piloting of TPCD solutions in the selected schools. Upon organizing the initial meetings, the groups commenced the implementation of planned activities. In addition, the existing TPCD project working groups under Component 3 had regular meetings and managed to achieve the planned targets for this quarter.

##### **Activity 4.4.2: Develop Teacher Standards**

The Catalogue for Core Teacher Professional Competencies and the standards for teacher-mentor and teacher-advisor were approved by the Steering Committee members during the meeting held on December 15, 2014. These documents were stipulated in the new education laws, hence, corresponding by-laws to regulate the process and purpose of competencies and standards will need to be developed.

##### **Activity 4.4.3: Develop Competencies and Standards for Student Support Services**

Upon closing the public debate that was open from beginning of August to the end of September 2014, the project team prepared a report summarizing the received feedback. As a result, a working session with the expert group was organized on October 27, 2014 to review the feedback and incorporate valid recommendations in the document. Several comments in the public debate related to the issue that the Catalogue is a very extensive document and contains far too many examples of activities to be achieved in one year. Thus, changes were made to the *Introduction* section of the document stating that the Catalogue is a general document that contains examples of activities that do not serve as a job description for Student Support Services staff but as source of evidence for achieving competences for a certain period of time.

The Catalogue of Core Competencies for Student Support Services and standards for Student Support Services-mentor and Student Support Services-advisor were adopted by the Steering Committee, on the meeting held on December 15. The next step is to regulate them in the Law for Primary and the Law on Secondary Education and to develop adequate by-laws.

##### **Activity 4.4.4: Develop procedures, tools and instruments for teacher career advancement**

Since the piloting of the proposed process, procedures and instruments for career advancement is planned to commence during the second quarter of 2015, the expert group organized several meetings within this reporting period with the aim of finalizing the documents. On October 18, 2014 the expert group discussed the recommendations and concerns raised by the international consultant Mr. Frank Crawford. He suggested that the teacher portfolio contains limited number of evidence and that each document contains a written explanation describing the achievement of a particular competence. Furthermore, the expert group worked on setting up a system for scoring certificates that teachers have attained from participating in different forms of professional development. Due to the complexity of the task, the group continued with this assignment during the meeting organized on November 4, 2014.

The issue of limiting the number of evidence for teachers applying for a higher career position was revisited during the meeting held on December 11, 2014. Other than in depth discussion about the documentation that the candidates for advancing into career will need to submit, the expert group considered different ways of organizing the work of committee members in the process of assessing the documentation. Furthermore, the group recognized the necessity of training the committee members to successfully conduct the assessment process. For this purpose, the project will use the portfolios of teachers in the pilot schools. In order to check the reliability of the instruments, questionnaire was developed, through which the opinion of school staff will be gathered about the teachers who fulfil the criteria for advancing into career. This questionnaire will be administered at the beginning of the piloting process and these results will be cross checked with the results from the assessment conducted by the committee. If the perception of the school staff is distinctly different from of the scoring made by the committee, the process and the instruments will need to be revised.

In preparation for piloting the career advancement of teachers, TPCD team visited the Primary School Braka Miladinovci during integral evaluation conducted by SEI on December 30, 2014. The purpose of the visit was to get acquainted with the content of the teachers' portfolios and to better understand how the documents in the portfolio could be used as evidence in assessing the achievement of teacher competencies.

#### **Activity 4.4.5: Draft guidelines for assessing the achievement of teacher competencies and standards**

During this period the Guideline for professional development for teachers and students support services staff was finalized. The Guideline includes the good practices that exist in Macedonian schools and new contemporary ways of planning the professional development that other high performing systems practice. It emphasizes that a good system for professional development includes monitoring the work of teachers and engaging in professional dialogue through which a common understanding about the competencies necessary for ensuring quality teaching and learning is built, as well as planning activities for deploying the competencies, and finally assessing the effects of professional development. The Guidelines for Professional Development, describes in detail how the professional competencies and standards will be used to ensure the continuing professional growth of teachers. To be most effective, teachers' professional learning should be based upon an assessment of their specific learning needs and feedback about their teaching (European Commission 2013). Therefore, the monitoring of teachers work will be conducted based on the competencies that that teachers need to deploy, and the standards of quality set by the school and the state. Among other novelties, the Guideline includes the development of teachers' individual plans for professional development which is closely linked to the competencies that teachers have to acquire. More specifically, teachers are required to conduct self-evaluation using the defined competencies in the Catalogue of Teacher Core Professional Competencies. In this regard, the individual plan for professional development will help the teacher to: 1) systematically develop the needed competencies; 2) improve his/her performance; and 3) reach the standards, and advance in career (to become teacher-mentor or teacher-advisor).

Furthermore, the Guideline gives instruction how the individual plans will be used to develop the school plan for professional development.

The project team translated the document into Albanian language. During the first quarter of 2015, the project team will organize the piloting of the developed guideline, including the procedures and instruments that are part of the document and qualitatively improve the document based on the received feedback.

#### **Activity 4.4.6: Draft guidelines for mentoring program and the process of conducting mentorship**

This activity is concluded within last reporting period.

### **Other**

#### **1. Develop Professional Competencies for School Directors**

The projects attempts to commence the development of Professional Competencies for School Directors yielded results, during this period. The project team organized a meeting with the National Examination Centre on October 20, 2014. Three representatives from NEC were nominated to work with the project. The discussion revolved around several issues related to the process of commencing the development of Professional Competencies for School Directors as prescribed in the new Law for licensing of school directors, as well as the use and purpose of this document. On the following meeting held on November 5, 2014 NEC representatives presented their suggestions about the structure of the working group and its members, and agreed to work according to the already established project practice of developing education staff professional documents.

On November 17, 2014 the project team organized the initial meeting of the working group consisted of representatives from NEC, university professors and practitioners. In the course of the meeting, the expert group established the structure, areas and certain general principles for developing the document. Distinct areas were assigned to the members and they worked individually and in pairs to draft the competencies for the areas that was assigned to them. On the following meeting held on December 10, 2014, the working group commenced the review of competencies per area and aligning the formulations across the document, including other relevant existing documents in the system of education in the country. It is worth noting that during this meeting, the group had the pleasure of hosting the USAID Senior Advisor for International Education, Ms. Christie Vilsack. During her visit the team presented the project activities and achievement and had open discus about the opportunities and challenges.

#### **Piloting the TPCD**

During this reporting period, the project team worked on planning the piloting of the designed professional development and career advancement processes in schools. The project team in consultation with BDE, selected a total of ten primary schools from the municipalities of Strumica, Gostivar, and Krivogashtani, and four secondary schools from the City of Skopje. The schools were selected taking into consideration the following criteria: rural/urban area, schools with one/more languages of instruction, big/small schools/municipalities, geographical location, etc. Upon contacting the schools and municipalities and receiving their consent to be part of the pilot phase, the project team in cooperation with the assigned BDE and VET Centre Advisors organized the initial meetings with the pilot schools in the period between November 3 and 13, 2014.

On December 24, 2014, TPCD project organized an informative meeting with BDE and VET Centre Advisors, delegated by their respective institutions, to commence the piloting of the Guideline for professional development of education staff in schools and the procedures and instruments therein. Thus, the BDE and VET Centre advisors were instructed about the type

of support they are going to provide for the pilot schools, the process and the use of instruments, including the expected feedback.

## **5. LESSONS LEARNT**

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### **Law on Teachers**

Albeit the project was not able to effect decision makers to rethink the overuse of external testing as a criteria for career advancement and alter the selection process of teacher-mentors to municipal level, TPCD project exceeded the expected project outcomes and in cooperation with BDE managed to regulate in the laws all the remaining solutions and developed documents as: Teacher Core Professional Competencies and standards for teacher-mentor and teacher-advisor; Core Professional Competencies for Student Support Services and standards for Student Support Services staff-mentor and Student Support Services staff-advisor; professional development process, procedures and instruments; the introduction of self-evaluation of education staff based on competencies and the introduction of the process of developing a Personal Development Plan.

The project will continue the cooperation with MoES, BDE and other relevant institutions and will work towards embedding the solutions that will emerge from piloting the proposed TPCD system.

## **6. ACTIVITIES FOR THE NEXT REPORTING PERIOD**

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### **6.1 Crosscutting Activities**

- Present the project activities and outcomes by participating in the EDUCONFERENCE organized by the Association “Friends of Education”;
- Sign memorandums of understanding with pilot schools and municipalities;
- Write newsletter articles and design the second TPCD Newsletter;

### **6.2 Component One: Comprehensive Legal System**

- Draft a book of rule for core professional competencies of teachers
- Draft book of Rules on the manner of attaining professional standards for teacher-mentor or teacher-advisor
- Draft a book of rule for the form and content of the individual/personal development plan;
- Draft book of rules related to assessment procedures, submission of applications and documentation of teachers interested to apply and attain teacher-mentor or teacher-advisor position, including scoring, ranking and working of the assessment committee;
- Draft amendments in the Law on Primary Education and the Law on Secondary Education to regulate the professional development and career advancement of student support services;

### **6.3 Component Two: Enhanced Financial Schemes**

- Share and discuss the developed scenarios for TPD and TCD with MoES and BDE;

### **6.4 Component Three: Standards for Teacher Competencies**

- Finalize the development of procedures, tools and instruments for teacher career advancement;
- Train BDE advisors to support the schools in testing the career advancement process;
- Meet with the pilot schools to introduce teachers and student support services staff to the Guidelines for school professional development;
- Solicit feedback from the teachers who have tested the Guideline for professional development;
- Continue the work on developing the professional competencies for school director.

## **7. INCLUSIVENESS OF EDUCATION**

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In this reporting period, the Teacher Professional and Career Development Project continued to be involved in providing input in the process of drafting several key education laws related to the reform of teacher education. Our input was not always incorporated though.

Namely, one of the project's recommendations was to change Article 14 in the newly drafted Law on Teacher Training Institutions that train teaching staff for pre-school, primary and secondary education. Article 14 stipulated that as part of the enrolment and entrance examinations, all candidates must pass a test for physical fitness. This article is discriminatory to candidates with physical disabilities and is against the principles of equal opportunities for all citizens. This article also collides with Articles 9 and 32 of the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia which stipulate that "All citizens are equal before the Constitution and the laws" and that "All citizens have the right to employment, free choice of employment, safety and protection at work, and financial support when unemployed" respectively. Furthermore, Macedonia was among the first countries in the world that has adopted the UN Convention of Rights of People with Disabilities (CRPD) in 2007 and it was ratified by Parliament in December 2011 which recognizes "that discrimination against any person on the basis of disability is a violation of the inherent dignity and worth of the human person" and expects signatories to "prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability with regard to all matters concerning all forms of employment, including conditions of recruitment, hiring and employment, continuance of employment, career advancement and safe and healthy working conditions".

The project helped to draft written comments to numerous Articles of the new laws, including this article, and all comments were officially submitted to the Minister of Education and Science in a letter from the USAID Macedonia Mission Director. In addition, the project team and USAID AOR held two meetings with Members of the Parliament who participate in the Parliament's Committee for Education, Culture and Sports, yet this article remained in the version of the Law that was adopted in January 2015.

The project will continue to work on improvements of the legislation that was hastily drafted and adopted at the objection of many stakeholders. We hope to be able to draft and propose amendments that will ensure the legislation is fair, non-contradictory, and aligned with the Constitution and CRPD.

## **LIST OF ANNEXES**

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- Annex 2 Paper on Core Teacher Professional Competencies presented on the First International Conference organized by OSCE and MCEC
- Annex 3 Letter to Ministry Ademi – comments on the new Law on Teachers
- Annex 4 Summary report of TPCD activities in 2014

**Annex 1** Steering Committee Meeting Minutes on Approval of Teacher and Student Support Services Competencies and Standards



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Проект за професионален и  
кариерен развој на



БИРО ЗА РАЗВОЈ НА ОБРАЗОВАНИЕ  
МИНИСТЕРСТВО ЗА ОБРАЗОВАНИЕ И НАУКА  
РЕПУБЛИКА МАКЕДОНИЈА



МАКЕДОНСКИ  
ЦЕНТАР ЗА  
ГРАЃАНСКО  
ОБРАЗОВАНИЕ

## ЗАПИСНИК

### од 3 состанокот на Советодавното тело на Проектот на УСАИД за професионален и кариерен развој на наставниците

**Присутни:** Весна Хорватовиќ (директор на БРО)  
Анастасија Трајковска (државен советник во МОН)  
Елена Ивановска (Раководител на сектор, МОН)  
Надица Николоска (директор на ДПИ)  
Мируше Амети (директор на ДИЦ)  
Зеќир Зеќири (директор на ЦСОО)  
Јаким Неделковски (претседател на СОНК)  
Наташа Булевска (УСАИД)  
Лорета Георгиева (извршен директор на МЦГО)  
Вера Кондиќ Митковска (раководител на проектот во МЦГО)  
Горица Мицковска (специјалист за образование во МЦГО)  
Александар Стамболиев (Координатор за програмски активности и комуникации во МЦГО)  
Беса Речи (Административен и финансиски асистент)

**Датум:** 15 декември 2014 година  
**Време:** 11:00 часот  
**Локација:** Македонски центар за граѓанско образование (МЦГО)

### ДНЕВЕН РЕД

- ⇒ Усвојување на записник од 2-та седница на Советодавното тело
1. Нацрт Каталог на основните професионални компетенции на наставниците
  2. Нацрт професионални стандарди за наставник – ментор
  3. Нацрт професионални стандарди за наставник – советник
  4. Нацрт каталог на основните професионални компетенции на стручни соработници во основните и средните училишта
  5. Нацрт професионални компетенции на стручен соработник - ментор
  6. Нацрт професионални компетенции на стручен соработник – советник
  7. Разно

Третиот состанок на Советодавното тело за Проектот на УСАИД за професионален и кариерен развој го отвори и водеше директорката на БРО, г-ѓа Хорватовиќ.

**Вовед и цели на состанокот:**

Вовед во врска со записникот од 2-та седница на Советодавното тело поднесе г-ѓа Весна Хорватовиќ. Присутните едногласно го усвоија записникот.

Г-ѓа Хорватовиќ во својство на претседавач на Советодавното тело ги поздрави присутните и се осврна на значењето на професионалниот и кариерниот развој за подобрување на квалитетот на воспитно-образовниот процес и неговото влијание на постигањата на учениците. Во продолжение ја покани г-ѓа Мицковска да даде осврт на изготвените професионални компетенции и стандарди за наставниците и за стручните соработници. Г-ѓа Мицковска го објасни процесот на изработка на документите, вклучените актери во процесот на нивна изработка, одржаните јавни расправи и тркалезни маси и накратко даде осврт на содржината на документите.

По завршување на презентацијата, г-ѓа Хорватовиќ ги повика присутните на дискусија.

Г-ѓа Ивановска го поздрави процесот на подготовка на стручните документи, но истакна дека периодот на пилотирање е премногу краток. Дополнително побара освен предлог пилот општините, бројот на училишта да се зголеми и во уште неколку општини во чија непосредна близина нема факултети за наставници.

Г. Неделковски истакна дека со овој значаен проект и со изготвените компетенции и стандарди се поттикнува континуираното стручно усовршување и се регулира напредувањето во звања. Понатаму, г. Неделковски замоли јавната расправа да продолжи со цел да се обезбедат поголем број на предлози од стручната јавност, на што г-ѓа Митковска истакна дека изминативе месеци Нацрт-документите биле испратени до сите училишта и дека тие што не ги споделиле своето мислење неколку пати биле контактирани од страна на проектот. Во продолжение, г-ѓа Митковска истакна дека Нацрт-документите се отворени за јавна расправа се додека не ги донесе Министерот за образование и наука. На оваа дискусија се надоврза и г-ѓа Булеска која информираше дека стручната јавност беше информирана за процесот и преку трудот објавен во Просветен работник во првата половина на 2014 година.

Г-ѓа Хорватовиќ информираше дека овој значаен проект ќе поттикне реформи и во делот на обезбедување на обуките бидејќи на наставниците ќе треба да им се обезбеди стручно усовршување за сите компетенции и стандарди. На овој начин ќе им се овозможи задоволување на индивидуалните потреби согласно планот за професионален развој.

Поради стручните термини, г. Зеќири побара материјалите да бидат достапни и на албански јазик што ќе им ја олесни работата на наставниците кои држат настава на албански наставен јазик. Г-ѓа Митковска појасни дека поради долгиот и сеопфатен процес на јавна расправа по нацрт-документите, беше одлучено да се дискутира само по верзијата на македонски јазик, но дека усвоените компетенции и стандарди за наставниците и за стручните соработници ќе бидат достапни на останатите јазици на кои се изведува настава.

По дискусијата, Советодавното тело едногласно ги усвои следниве:

1. Нацрт Каталог на основните професионални компетенции на наставниците
2. Нацрт професионални стандарди за наставник – ментор
3. Нацрт професионални стандарди за наставник – советник
4. Нацрт каталог на основните професионални компетенции на стручни соработници во основните и средните училишта
5. Нацрт професионални компетенции на стручен соработник - ментор
6. Нацрт професионални компетенции на стручен соработник – советник

Се задолжува СОНК доколку успее да поттикне понатамошна јавна расправа меѓу своето членство, да се произнесе по истите до крајот на годината 2014. Доколку има клучни забелешки по документите ќе се свика уште една седница на Советодавното тело.

Нацрт-документите ќе бидат доставени до Министерот за образование и наука за нивно соодветно правно регулирање.

Под точката Разно се дискутираше за пакетот реформи за подобрување на образовниот систем и активностите кои беа превземени во рамките на проектот.

На крајот од состанокот г-ѓа Хорватовиќ им се заблагодари на присутните за нивното учество, придонес и поддршка.

По исцрпување на дневниот ред, состанокот заврши во 12:30 часот.

Подготвил:



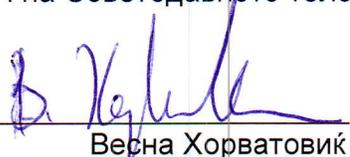
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Александар Стамболиев

**Координатор за програмски активности и комуникации**

Македонски центар за граѓанско образование

Претседавач на Советодавното тело:



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Весна Хорватовиќ

**Директор**

Биро за развој на образованието

**Annex 2** Paper on Core Teacher Professional Competencies presented on the First International Conference organized by OSCE and MCEC

**Vera Kondik Mitkovska**<sup>1</sup>

**Core teacher professional competencies and other initiatives to improve the teacher professional and career development system in the Republic of Macedonia**

The demands on schools and teachers are becoming more complex. Society now expects schools to deal effectively with different languages and student backgrounds, to be sensitive to culture and gender issues, to promote tolerance and social cohesion, to respond effectively to disadvantaged students and students with learning or behavioral problems, to use new technologies, and to keep pace with rapidly developing fields of knowledge and approaches to student assessment (OECD, 2005). Setting competencies that teachers are expected to possess is one of the ways to ensure that teachers are better prepared for the new “enriched” but also more demanding profession of teaching. In addition, teacher competencies will provide a framework to guide initial teacher education, teachers’ ongoing professional development and career advancement, and to assess the extent to which these different elements are being effective. This was the starting point for developing a Catalogue of Core Teacher Professional Competencies within the USAID Teacher Professional and Career Development Project. The overall goal of the project, implemented by the Macedonian Civic Education Center, is to upgrade and improve the system for professional and career development of teachers, and thus, contribute to a better quality of teacher performance and higher students’ achievement in the Republic of Macedonia. This paper outlines the comprehensive approach towards developing the teacher competencies and standards, and how they are aligned with the other project initiatives to improve the system for teacher professional and career development in the Republic of Macedonia.

**Key words:** teachers, competencies, standards, professional and career development

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## Background

The Catalogue of Teacher Core Professional Competencies and Professional Standards in the Republic of Macedonia was developed as part of the Teacher Professional and Career Development (TPCD) project funded by the United State Agency for International Development (USAID). The project was designed on the initiative of the Bureau for Development of Education<sup>2</sup> (BDE) and is being implemented by the Macedonian Civic Education Center (MCEC) since December 2012. It is a 30-month initiative which contributes to the design and establishment of a teacher professional and career development system by identifying necessary interventions that support existing national policies and improve the current practices in Macedonia. The project aims to create a comprehensive, transparent, feasible and cost-effective system, contributing in turn to higher quality instruction and higher student achievement.

The necessity for developing a Catalogue of Teacher Core Professional Competencies and Professional Standards resulted from the fact that the teaching profession in Macedonia needs to be regulated more systematically and the skill levels of teaching staff need to be improved. As noted in the European Commission's communication 'Rethinking Education' (2012), the reform of education and training systems is essential to achieving higher productivity and the supply of highly skilled workers. In this context, it invited Member States to: *"revise and strengthen the professional profile of all teaching professions [by] reviewing the effectiveness as well as the academic and pedagogical quality of Initial Teacher Education, introducing coherent and adequately resourced systems for recruitment, selection, induction and professional development of teaching staff based on clearly defined competences needed at each stage of a teaching career, and increasing teacher digital competence"*. (European Commission 2012a).

### 1. The Process of Defining the Teacher Competencies and Professional Standards

The first draft of the Catalogue of Teacher Core Professional Competencies was developed by a working group consisted of education experts, teachers, BDE advisors, National Examination Center<sup>3</sup> (NEC) and Vocational Education and Training Center<sup>4</sup> (VET Center) advisors, university professors and TPCD project staff. In the process of drafting the competencies the group had in mind the Common European Principles for teacher competencies and qualifications, the teacher competencies in other countries, as well as the principles of the Macedonian education system. The first draft of the competencies was used to start the discussion and to motivate stakeholders to get involved in an iterative process of development. A

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<sup>2</sup> Bureau for Development of Education is a body within the Ministry of Education and Science responsible for curricula development, professional development of teachers and research in education.

<sup>3</sup> National Examination Center is an independent public education institution responsible for national and international assessments, external testing and training and certification of school directors.

<sup>4</sup> Vocational Education and Training Center is an independent education institution responsible for curricula development, teacher professional development for VET schools, and developing social and strategic partnership.

round table discussion was organized with representatives from all teacher training faculties. Following the input by the university professors, the project organized an on-line public debate on which teachers, student support services and school directors from all 455 primary and secondary schools were invited to participate. Their contribution in the final version of the document was evident. The final version of the document was shared with the directors of BDE, NEC, VET Center, State Education Inspectorate and the president of the Teacher Union to accept the document before the Minister of Education and Science granted official approval.

Following the completion of the Catalogue for Teacher Core Professional Competencies, the same group commenced the process of developing Professional Standards for Teacher-Mentor and Teacher-Advisor. The development process for the professional standards was the similar to the process for developing the Catalogue for Teacher Core Professional Competencies and also included a structured approach in gathering the opinion of all relevant stakeholders.

## **2. The Structure of the Catalogue and the Professional Standards**

The teacher professional competencies relate to core (the most important) knowledge, skills and abilities which the teachers should possess for quality performance. The competencies are linked to professional values, so the teacher is expected to deploy them during the initial teacher education, induction period and throughout their educational practice. Thus, the Catalogue of Teacher Core Professional Competencies is organized in three mutually connected parts:

- I. professional values that teachers have to possess and respect;
- II. professional knowledge and skills that teachers have to acquire during the initial teacher education and during the first years of their professional practice;
- III. examples of activities from the professional practice of teachers which represent a standard for assessing teachers work and that could be used for self-evaluation or external evaluation of teaching practice.

Although Ministers have not adopted a complete list of the competences teachers require, they have agreed that, as a minimum, teachers should have a specialist knowledge of the subject(s) they teach, plus the necessary pedagogical skills to teach them, including teaching to heterogeneous classes, making effective use of ICT, and helping pupils to acquire cross-cutting competences. The working group has clustered the professional knowledge and skills, and the examples of activities in the following six areas:

1. Subject knowledge and knowledge of the education system
  - Subject knowledge
  - Knowledge of the education system

2. Teaching and Learning
  - Planning and preparing the teaching
  - Teaching process
  - Students' assessment
  - Meeting students' expectations and needs
3. Stimulating, real-world learning environment
  - Creating safe and stimulating, real-world learning environment
  - School ethos
4. Social and educational inclusion
5. Communication and collaboration with families and community
6. Professional development and professional collaboration
  - Professional development
  - Professional collaboration

In most countries that have developed competencies, inclusion is embedded in other areas of teachers work. In this Catalogue, the working group agreed that this aspect is underdeveloped in our country, and thus the identified competencies were placed in a separate area, under 'Social and educational inclusion'. This will ensure that teachers have a better understanding of the competencies they have to develop to ensure inclusive practices in schools.

Not every aspect of teaching can be fully described or defined; aspects such as the teacher's professional values, dispositions and attitudes are very important too. They are the basis for development of the competencies, and the Macedonian teachers are expected to work in accordance with the following professional values: *Every student can learn and develop; Lifelong learning; Professional integrity and devotion to the teaching profession; Cooperation; and Equity, inclusion and social justice.*

The **Professional Standards** describe the competencies that teachers will need to acquire to advance in career. The Law for Primary Education and the Law for Secondary Education provide teachers the opportunity to be able to advance in the career levels of Teacher-Mentor and Teacher-Advisor. However, due to the lack of clearly described processes, procedures, instruments and standards, the teachers were not able to benefit from this opportunity until now.

The professional standards for teacher-mentors include advanced competencies of teachers who, throughout their work as teachers, have acquired the core professional competencies and are recognized by their high quality teaching, continuing professional development and introducing innovation into professional practice. Teacher-mentors possess knowledge, skills and abilities to support the professional development of their colleagues and effectively contribute toward increasing the overall performance of

the school. In addition, the teacher mentors will be responsible for the practicum of future teachers, and these competencies will be recognized and valued in the process of career development.

The professional standards for teacher-advisors include competencies which teacher-mentors need to acquire to be able to advance into the career level of teacher-advisor. These teachers are leaders in the school in terms of the quality of their work in the school, but also in the region and contribute towards developing the overall quality of education. Teacher-advisors are dedicated to continuing professional development and support the professional development of colleagues in their school and other schools in the region. They are reflective practitioners who examine their professional practice constantly striving to upgrade and improve their performance and introduce novelties in education on school, regional and national level. Teacher advisors are recognized by their contribution to improve the education process and affirm the teaching profession.

The professional standards for teacher-mentor and teacher advisor are structured in the same areas as the Catalogue for Teacher Core Professional Competencies. In addition to the values described in the catalogue, teacher-mentor is expected to be: *Devoted to improvements on a school level*, and for the teacher-advisor to be: *Devoted to developing the teaching process on a national level*.

### **3. Professional Competencies and Standards in the Context of the Teacher Professional and Career Development System in Macedonia**

There are many factors that may encourage governments (or others) to define the competencies that they expect teachers to possess at different stages of their career. The factor that encouraged the development of teacher professional competencies and standards in Macedonia was connected to the process of improving the quality of teachers by upgrading the teacher professional development process and establishing a system for career advancement. Continuing professional development is considered a professional duty for Macedonian teachers and is a prerequisite for career advancement and salary increases.

A good system for professional development includes monitoring the work of teachers and engaging in professional dialogue through which a common understanding about the competencies necessary for ensuring quality teaching and learning is built, as well as planning activities for deploying these competencies, and finally assessing the effects of professional development. Enabling all teachers to develop their competencies means stimulating teacher's engagement in career long learning, assessing the development of teachers' competencies, and providing appropriate and relevant learning opportunities for all teachers (European Commission 2013)

The Guidelines for Professional Development, prepared with the support of the TPCD project, describe in detail how the professional competencies and standards will be used to ensure the continuing professional growth of teachers. To be most effective, teachers' professional learning should be based upon an assessment of their specific learning needs and feedback about their teaching (European Commission 2013). Therefore, the monitoring of teachers work will be conducted based on the competencies that teachers need to deploy, and the standards of quality set by the school and the state. The development of teachers' individual plans for professional development is closely linked to the competencies that teachers have to acquire. More specifically, teachers are required to conduct self-evaluation using the defined competencies in the Catalogue for Teacher Core Professional Competencies. In this regard, the individual plan for professional development will help the teacher to:

- systematically develop the needed competencies;
- improve his/her performance; and
- reach the standards, and advance in career (to become teacher-mentor or teacher-advisor).

The individual plans are used to develop the school plan for professional development. The school director takes into consideration the competencies that teachers need to acquire and has to ensure resources for organizing training, mentoring, dissemination, seminars and other forms of professional development activities that teachers could attend to acquire the relevant competencies. In this regard, the Bureau for Development of Education plays a crucial role in ensuring there are accredited training programs available to teachers. There is an established procedure for accrediting training providers and programs, through which BDE publishes a catalogue of training programs and providers every two years. In the future, the accreditation of training programs needs to be closely linked to the competencies that teachers need to acquire, in other words, teachers have to have the possibility to choose a training program relevant to those competencies they ought to develop as part of their personal professional development.

When it comes to teachers' career development, the core professional competencies play a major role in selecting the best teachers to advance in their career. According to the established procedure, the teachers who want to advance in their career need to gather evidence to prove that they have acquired the core professional competencies and met the standards for teacher-mentor or teacher-advisor. Bearing in mind that the Catalogue includes a broad range of competencies, it is not realistic to expect that teachers will possess all of the prescribed competencies, and thus, a minimum percentage of the achieved competencies will be set once this system is piloted in a number of primary and secondary schools. Furthermore, the competencies will be used by the school and external committee for assessing teachers' preparedness for career advancement. Instruments have been developed to enable committees to evaluate teachers based on the competencies and standards and to select the best teachers to advance in teacher-mentor or teacher-advisor positions.

In July 2014, the Minister of Education and Science announced a reform in teacher initial education. As a result, the Ministry of Education and Science started activities to define the legislative framework for the implementation of the reform. In this regard, three new laws were drafted, a Law on higher education institution, a Law for Academia for Teachers and a Law on Teachers. Since, professional learning is a continuum starting in initial teacher education, carrying on through the induction phase and continuing throughout the rest of a teacher's career; in this context it is important that the core professional competencies are also considered in the study programs of the teacher initial education and in the program for training teaches at the Academia. This will ensure alignment of the phases of teacher development, starting from the initial education, and running through induction, continuing professional development and career advancement.

### **Conclusion**

Effective systems for the education of new teachers and the professional development of serving teachers rely on a shared understanding of the competencies that teachers need to deploy at different levels of schooling, or at different stages in their career. Such a profile or framework of competencies can also be used to improve the effectiveness of the recruitment and selection of candidates for teaching posts and assist teachers in planning their own professional development (European Commission 13). This statement is what initiated the process of development of teacher competencies in Macedonia. Most importantly, the competencies were developed in a highly participatory manner in which the main key stakeholders were engaged. This, in turn, contributed to ownership and commitment to the competencies framework. In addition, the competencies are entrenched in the processes and procedures for professional and career development and will be used for self-evaluation, monitoring and assessing teacher performance. Finally, the competencies were embedded in the new legislation, which to some extent guarantees their implementation and contribution to increasing teachers' skills and raising student outcomes.

## Literature

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**Annex 3** Paper on Core Teacher Professional Competencies presented on the First International Conference organized by OSCE and MCEC



# USAID | MACEDONIA

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

December 19, 2014

Dear Minister Ademi,

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has reviewed the draft laws concerning educational reform. Bearing in mind that the USAID Teacher Professional and Career Development Project is working on developing solutions related to improving the professional development and establishing a system for career advancement of teachers, we would like to give our contribution to the public debate on these laws.

First of all, we would like to express our satisfaction that many of the solutions developed so far by the project in close cooperation with all key education institutions have been embedded in the laws. In order to ensure consistency of these laws and take into consideration project solutions for professional and career advancement of teachers developed to date, we would like to make the following recommendations.

#### General Recommendations:

The career ladder for teachers is incorporated in almost all laws; however, it is not clear when the process of promoting teachers into teacher-mentors will begin. We would like to suggest that this process starts in the 2015/2016 school year so the first cohort of teachers-mentors is promoted in 2016. In this manner, students from pre-service teacher-training faculties as well as those from the Teachers' Academy can be mentored during their practical training in schools by teachers who have adequate knowledge and experience and are formally appointed teacher-mentors.

The Law on Teachers defines transitional measures until a sufficient number of teacher-mentors are appointed; however, great significance is placed on external testing results. Until now, there has been no evidence that a teacher with the smallest discrepancy in assessment is a high quality teacher. Therefore, we recommend that instead of considering external testing results, mentors are selected from among teachers who meet the professional teacher-mentor standards by the Bureau for Development of Education and the Vocational Education and Training Center.

## **Draft Law on Teachers in Primary and Secondary Schools**

### Article 9

- As the selection of new teachers will be conducted through an open call, we recommend that paragraph 4 is taken out.
- The law should clarify whether students enrolled at the Teachers' Academy are eligible for employment, considering they are full-time students and do not possess a teaching license yet.
- Open calls for teacher employment should be announced also on the Teachers' Academy's website to ensure licensed teachers are informed about available employment opportunities.
- In paragraph 7, in addition to the existing criteria, we recommend adding that teachers with more experience and teachers who have teacher-mentor and teacher-counselor titles are given preference to ensure the mobility and employment of higher-quality staff.

### Articles 21 and 36

The hours of duration of mandatory teacher professional development do not correspond in these two articles. In Article 21, the total number of hours is 40 whereas Article 36 specifies 60 hours. We suggest that the transitional solution of Article 36 should become the main solution included in Article 21 so as to ensure adequate time for professional development of teachers.

### Article 26

In paragraph 4, only the number of teachers promoted into teacher-mentors should be determined per municipality, whereas the number of teacher-advisors should be determined at the central level. The standards required from teacher-advisors relate to their engagement in improving teaching at the regional and national level, and should therefore not be allocated per municipality.

### Articles 27, 28 and 30

We suggest that the Articles and Items relating to external testing should be omitted since there is no evidence that these results are correlated with poor teacher performance [Article 27, Items 3 and 4; Article 28, Items 3 and 4; and Article 30, paragraph (2), Item 3], because:

A) there is no research yet in the country on how external evaluation correlates with the overall quality of teachers and whether teachers are consistently ranking in the same percentile; i.e. we are not sure if teachers with the smallest discrepancies in assessment one year are found in the category of teachers with the biggest discrepancies in another year; and

B) according to the experience in external evaluation from the past two years, the majority of teachers whose objectivity in assessment is evaluated through portfolio reviews have been found to have the smallest discrepancies in assessment, which means that these teachers would have an advantage over the other teachers when it comes to being promoted to teacher-mentor or teacher-advisor.

Instead, we propose that the mark/grade that the teacher received during the individual evaluation of teachers conducted as part of the integral school evaluation by the State Education Inspectorate is one of the criteria for promotion.

#### Article 29

We suggest that the Selection Committee for teacher-mentors is established at the municipal level, ensuring an equitable distribution of teacher-mentors for each municipality and not burdening the Selection Committee at the national level with the assessment of competencies for too many candidates (we estimate that approximately 3,000 candidates would be applying for promotion in the first few years).

### **Draft Law on Teachers' Academy**

#### Article 36

In paragraph 3, the core professional competencies of teachers should be explicitly included to ensure alignment with the Law on Teachers.

#### Article 45

We recommend that theoretical and practical training at the Academy should take place intermittently; i.e., the completion of a theoretical module should be followed by practical lessons from the same module.

#### Article 51

In paragraph 7, in addition to the case study, action research should be added. The candidate should not be given a topic for the case study and action research at random, but should rather be able to propose it him/herself (with assistance from the mentor) so it stems from his/her own teaching practice, and he/she is able to do research on the topic during his/her practical training and be better prepared to defend it during the course of the exam. This will ensure the authenticity of the candidates' papers and will allow them to learn through practice and become able to promote their own work. For example, a teacher who has been conducting his/her practical work in a school with only one language of instruction, or in a class that has no students with disabilities will not be able to prepare a case study on topics related to inclusion or

integration in education for the simple reason that there will be no adequate opportunities for such activities during his/her practical training.

**Draft Law on Training and Exam for Primary School Directors, Secondary School Directors, Dormitory Directors, and Directors of Open Civic University for Lifelong Learning.**

Article 2

We recommend that the manner of adoption of the Professional Competencies for Directors is stipulated in a similar fashion as Professional Competencies for Teachers are in the Law on Teachers.

Article 5

In the criteria for eligibility to enroll in the school director certification training, we recommend adding that the candidate should have a teacher-mentor or teacher-advisor title. This will ensure candidates for school directors are recognized good teachers, have proven their involvement in school improvement, have professional credibility, and are successful instructors; i.e., they are able to monitor the quality of the teaching process in the school, can provide sound guidance for improvement to teachers, and are recognized as leaders among teachers.

Articles 22 and 29

Article 22 specifies that "For the purpose of upgrading their knowledge, school directors shall undergo training for continuous professional development of at least four seminar days, with a total duration of at least 32 hours in one year. The training as in paragraph 1 of this Article shall be organized by the State Examination Centre." We agree it is important for school directors to devote 32 hours per year for their professional development. However, in terms of the costs, Article 29 states that "The costs of initial certification training, advanced [continuous professional development] training, and taking the certification exam shall be borne by the applicant." We do not recommend that the full cost for the continuous professional development of school directors are borne by the school directors primarily for the purpose of equality and fairness: provided that funds for part of the teachers' continuous professional development will be provided from the budget of the Ministry of Education and Science, it is logical that school directors should also have the right for a portion of the required hours of continuous professional development to be covered and provided through the MoES budget, and another portion to be co-funded by themselves.

**Draft Law on Higher Education Institutions for Pre-service Training of Teachers in Pre-school, Primary, and Secondary Education**

Article 14

Paragraph 4 states that the entry exam shall consist of subjects and activities, including assessment of physical abilities. We believe that this requirement would give persons with physical disabilities a disadvantage and we propose that it be removed.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you and the Working Group involved in drafting the laws in order to explain in more detail the proposed improvements and suggestions for amendments of the pertinent sections of these new laws as they relate to teacher professional and career development.

Sincerely,



James Stein  
Mission Director

The Honorable Abdilaqim Ademi  
Minister of Education and Science  
Ministry of Education and Science  
St.Kiril and Metodij no. 54  
1000 Skopje

**Annex 3**      Summary report of TPCD activities in 2014

## Annex 1: Summary report of TPCD activities in 2014

### 1. Crosscutting Activities

#### Cooperation with the BDE and other relevant institutions

- **Cooperation with key education stakeholders:** In 2014, TPCD project maintained the established mode of cooperation with all key stakeholders in education. This contributed towards successful implementation of the project Annual Work Plan and achieving the set targets. Thus, periodical meetings with BDE management staff were held, in order to ensure timely planning and implementation of project activities. Furthermore, meetings with the director and representatives of the National Examinations Center (NEC) were organized, regarding the need for developing Professional Competencies for School Directors. Hence, a working group was established and commenced the development of the document in December 2014.

During this period, TPCD project had very positive cooperation with the representatives of the Teacher Union. The President, Mr. Jakim Nedelkov actively participated in the Steering Committee meetings and assisted the process of distribution of teacher and student support services competencies and standards to all members of the Teacher Union. Additionally, the project team upon the initiative of the USAID AOR, Natasha Buleska held several meetings with the Prime Minister's Education Advisor, Mr. Novakovski. The primary focus at these meetings was sharing of information on the project progress and achievements, and discussing the Government priorities in the field of education that directly influence project activities.

- **Capacity building activities:**
  - For the purpose of developing the *Annual Work Plan* for 2014, the project organized a three-day working meeting with representatives from USAID, MoES, BDE, SEI, NEC, VET Center and MCEC at the end of January 2014. This working meeting presented an excellent opportunity to identify possible solutions about different aspects of TPCD and plan the stakeholders support in implementing future project activities. Furthermore, the team had the opportunity to present world trends and challenges that different countries face in their efforts to improve the capacities of teachers and focused on teacher competencies and standards.
  - The capacity building training "*Challenges and possible solutions to the system for teacher professional and career development*", facilitated by the senior education consultant from Scotland, Mr. Frank Crawford was organized in February 2014. Thus, representatives from all relevant stakeholders MoES, BDE, SEI, NEC, VET Center, the Teacher Union and practitioners from the working groups were invited to participate.
  - Having in mind the complexity of the TPCD system, the project team identified the need for continuous support during project implementation and capacity building of the team members. Hence, upon publishing an open call and hiring the senior education consultant Mr. Frank Crawford, the project team organized two *in-house capacity building trainings* and a number of on-line support sessions with the aim of identifying and overcoming possible setbacks in project implementation.
- **Elections:** The Presidential Elections held on April 13 and 27, 2014 and the Early Parliamentary Elections organized on April 27, 2014, resulted in changes in the top management position of MoES. Mr. Abdilqim Ademi was appointed Minister of Education and Science and Mr. Spiro Ristovski a Deputy Minister for Education and Science. Due to the fact that all representatives from national education institutions are public servants and by default are appointed members in the election commissions, they were unable to contribute to the work on the project and stalled the project implementation. In addition, the external testing of students organized every end of May or beginning of June, prevented the school practitioners (teachers and student support services) to actively participate in the expert group meetings that caused additional delays in implementing project activities.
- **The package of reforms for improving the education system:** The Prime Minister and the Minister of Education and Science announced the reforms on the initial teacher education and the establishment of the Teacher's Academy. Thus, the project gathered all the relevant data related

to these reforms, outlining the announced changes and possible implications on the project activities and presented them to USAID. At the beginning of September, the project team was invited to participate in two meetings organized by MoES, during which the concept of the reform of initial teacher education was introduced. At these meetings, the project team presented the proposed design of the TPCD system and highlighted the importance of taking into consideration the already developed solutions by the project in the process of reforming the initial teacher education. On the initiative of BDE, the project staff participated in drafting the new Law on Teachers and ensured that most of the solutions developed under the project are embedded in the new legislation. The project was also very proactive in providing comments and suggestions to other draft laws developed by MoES, but unfortunately not all of them were accepted. Therefore, the Project with support from USAID tried to influence the Members of the Parliament to lobby for the proposed changes during the Parliamentary hearings, however, these attempts did not yield success.

- **Organized strike of all teachers in the primary and secondary education:** In September 2014 teachers went on strike due to the following reasons: low teacher salaries, using the external testing results of students as a measure to punish teachers and the vast administrative requirements that present a burden for teachers. However, due to amendments in the Law on Primary Education and Law on Secondary Education, which obligates the school directors to temporarily replace the teachers who are on strike with unemployed teachers, using the pretext that the education process cannot be stopped, waived the attempt to strike. The media reported that by undertaking such a step the Government is in direct violation of the ratified conventions on freedom of association and protection of rights to organize strikes.

### **Steering Committee Activities**

Due to the Elections, followed by reconstruction of some key positions in the Government, including the education sector, the project team had to postpone the planned Steering Committee meeting and the adoption of the draft teacher competencies and standards. At the beginning of September, the project sent the following documents to all Steering Committee members: 1) the draft guideline for induction of novice teachers; 2) the draft guideline for planning the professional development of teachers; and 3) the mapped processes for induction, professional development and career advancement of teachers. The initial plan was to gather the Steering Committee members to adopt the TPCD design and the developed guidelines before they are handed over to the Minister of Education and Science for adoption. However, due to the busy agenda of MoES and BDE with the reform of the initial teacher education, and Teacher Union with the organization of strike, this meeting was postponed once more. In December 2014, the project team managed to organize a Steering Committee meeting, during which the teacher and student support services professional competences and standards were approved.

In addition, due to the change in the NEC management, the Steering Committee list of members was amended accordingly. Ms. Mirushe Ameti was appointed a new director of NEC, and hence, she was invited to present the NEC point of view on the Steering Committee meeting.

### **Meetings, debates and roundtable discussions**

- **Online public debates with all primary and secondary schools in the country:**
  - *Draft standards for teacher-mentors and teacher-advisors* were sent to all primary and secondary schools to give their input and recommendations for improvement of the documents. Although schools were contacted twice and reminded to send their comments, less than 10% of schools sent feedback.
  - *Draft competencies and standards for student support services staff* were also opened for a public debate and were sent to all schools via email. It is worth noting that the schools were reminded to send comments and suggestions twice by e-mail and once by phone. Albeit all the efforts made by the project team, the office received only 41 response from associations/individuals.

- **Round table discussions related to the core professional competencies of student support services staff:**
  - During this past year, the project team organized a roundtable discussion with all *Faculties that educate Students Support Service staff*. Prior to the roundtable discussion, the representatives from different faculties received the competencies and standards and discussed them with their respective departments at Universities. During the joint roundtable discussion the comments from each University and/or faculty were discussed, furthermore, all their suggestions and recommendations were embedded in the documents.
  - In order to receive a greater feedback on the developed documents, the project team organized six regional meetings with the *Associations of Students Support Service* (Skopje-2, Bitola, Shtip, Kumanovo and Tetovo). On these meetings participated a total of 126 individuals from 92 schools, during which some very valid points related to the payment and workload of students support services in the schools were raised and recommendations for selection of school directors were given.
- **MCEC project team and partner organization Step by Step planning meetings:** Due to elections and other setbacks as external testing of students and similar, the project team and the partner organization Step by Step organized few meeting in order to reflect on the implementation of the annual work plan and create a new implementation timeframe for the project activities. In the process, the project team planned the activities beyond 2014 by assessing the situation, the number of activities to be implemented by the end of the project and the timeframe for implementation.
- **Working group meetings:** in line with the project plan, the team conducted regular meetings with the working groups for developing the 1) guideline for mentoring novice teachers, 2) guideline for planning the professional development, 3) guideline for internal assessment and professional development, 4) procedures and instruments for career advancement of teachers, 5) competencies and standards for student support services staff and 6) competencies and standards for school directors.

## Public relations

In order to keep all relevant stakeholders informed about the latest project developments, the TPCD team regularly updated the MCEC sub-webpage with the most recent TPCD documents. Furthermore, during the public debate, the teacher and student support services competencies and standards with instructions and templates for providing feedback were posted on the MCEC webpage.

With the aim of achieving better visibility and awareness of the project activities and outcomes, an article "*Policy and Practice Analysis of the Teacher Professional and Career Development in the Republic of Macedonia*", was published in the scientific journal *Prosvetno Delo* in February 2014. Furthermore, the article "Defining of draft solution for regulating the TPCD system" was published on the [BDE website](#) related to the workshop with stakeholders in January 2014.

The first issue of the TPCD project Newsletter was developed in three languages and published in April 2014. This issue of the Newsletter included articles which aimed to introduce the wider professional community to the overall goal and objectives of the project. In addition, share with them the findings from the Analysis, the information on the teacher competencies and standards, and the international consultant's capacity building workshop. Furthermore, the newsletter included the TPCD system setup diagram, with the aim of presenting the complexity of the system, and the roles and responsibilities of all involved institutions. The TPCD project Newsletter was distributed electronically to all primary and secondary schools, teacher training faculties, educational institutions, teachers and parents. Furthermore, the Newsletter was posted on the MCEC, USAID, BDE and MoES webpages.

## Collaboration of TPCD with international agencies and USAID projects

- **Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE):**

- On the request of OSCE representatives, the *Draft-Catalogue of core teacher professional competencies and standards for teacher-mentor and teacher-advisor* were forwarded to their office in Skopje. Suggestions for additional competencies for teachers that mentor students from Teacher Training Faculties while conducting the practical training in schools were provided by OSCE. These competences were reviewed by the working group and with minor modification were accepted as an integral part of the draft documents.
  - TPCD staff was invited by OSCE to present the project proposed solutions on the *Workshop on Students' Practicum* (June 28). During the session dedicated to the TPCD project, the participants were introduced to the new system for professional and career development. Moreover, during this workshop the experience and practices of pedagogical faculties in implementing the guideline for conducting practical training of students were discussed, including future steps for institutionalization of the students' mentorship program. The participants suggested TPCD project discussing with BDE the possibility of including an additional training module for mentoring of novice teachers when accrediting programs. However, this is a temporary solution until the system of career advancement starts functioning and sufficient number of teachers are been appointed as teacher-mentors.
  - OSCE in cooperation with MCEC organized an international conference called *Practicum of Future Pedagogues, Teachers and Kindergarten Teachers in Multicultural Environments - Experiences and Challenges* ", held at the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Skopje from 27-29 November 2014. Teacher competencies were presented at the conference including the outline of the proposed system for professional development and career advancement.
- **USAID Youth and Employability Skills Network (YES Network) Project:**
    - During this year, the project in cooperation with VET Center advisors managed to integrate in the Teacher Core Professional Competencies and the standards for teacher-mentor and teacher-advisor specific competencies for VET school teachers organizing practical training in companies. Furthermore, the project in collaboration with YES Network and the VET Center were able to incorporate additional competencies in these documents that relate to career counselors' standard.

### **Project Annual Work Plan for 2014**

The TPCD Annual Work Plan for 2014 was approved by USAID on February 2014. Following the approval, an evaluation on the support provided by the Foundation for Education and Cultural Initiatives Step by Step (SbS) was conducted, focusing on all aspects of cooperation including 1) the quality of realization of the project work plan, and 2) fulfillment of administrative and financial requests as outlined in the subcontract. The average mark received by the partner organization based on the results from the self-evaluation and the evaluation conducted by the project is 3.75, with 5 being the highest mark. The contract with the partner organization SbS for implementing activities under Component 3 of the TPCD project for the period from January 1 until December 31, 2014 was renewed on February 14, 2014.

### **Financial Audits**

As per USAID requirements and in compliance with the contract agreement, the auditing house Grant & Thornton was selected to conduct two separate audits in 2014 for the following periods:

- December 7 to 31, 2012. For the purpose of conducting the audit for this period, the project filled out all the necessary forms and made available the entire documentation to the auditors. The audit report proved that the project did not have any financial transactions since the first transfer of funds was made in January 2013. The auditing house submitted the final report to USAID beginning of March 2014.
- January to December 2013. In addition, the Teacher Professional and Career Development project was audited once again for all financial transactions made during 2013. Based on the

auditing house's final report, the project is working in accordance with the Macedonian Laws and in compliance with the USAID requirements.

- USAID post-award survey. In November 2014, representatives from the USAID office in Sarajevo conducted a post-award survey for the TPCD project. During this process, MCEC documents and internal procedures were checked. Upon the USAID team completing the survey, MCEC office received a final report that praises the quality of work and documentation provided by the project, with minor recommendations for improvement.

### **Inclusion of people with disabilities in project activities**

Inclusiveness is one of the key principles in the core professional competencies and standards for teachers and student support services staff developed by the project. *Equity, inclusion and social justice* is one of the five values that teachers and student support services staff have to possess. The inclusiveness is also reflected in the description of other values such as: *believe that each student can learn and develop*, and that *nothing else is more important than the students*.

In addition, the working group worked on developing competencies for Special Educator as one of the five key members of the Student Support Services in the schools. In this way, the project addresses the adequate quality of support provided to students with disabilities attending regular/mainstream schools.

Furthermore, the project recommended to MoES changing the Article 14 in the newly drafted Law on Teacher Training Institutions that train future teaching staff for pre-school, primary and secondary education. Article 14 stipulates that as part of the enrollment and entrance examinations, all candidates must pass a physical fitness test. This article is discriminatory towards candidates with physical disabilities and is against the principles of providing equal opportunities to all citizens. This article also collides with Articles 9 and 32 of the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia, which stipulate that "All citizens are equal before the Constitution and the laws" and that "All citizens have the right to employment, free choice of employment, safety and protection at work, and financial support when unemployed".

## **2. COMPONENT 1: COMPREHENSIVE LEGAL SYSTEM**

### **Activity 1: Draft amendments in the laws to regulate the teacher competencies and standards**

Draft Law on State Exam for Novice Teachers. This law was developed by MoES, and was one of the legal documents that have direct impact on the design of the TPCD system. Thus, the project staff and the USAID AOR met with MoES Head of Sector for primary and secondary education, Ms. Elena Ivanovska, to discuss the possibility of regulating the Catalogue of Teacher Core Professional Competencies in the law. In addition, the Project pointed out that the main emphasis in the law is placed only on the process of organizing the state exam without mentioning the induction process i.e. mentoring of novice teachers. TPCD analysis revealed that the induction process is one of the weakest links in the system and that it needs to be improved. Therefore, the project suggested extending the law with additional articles that relate to the induction process as a preparatory phase for teachers to pass the state exam. This suggestion was regarded positively by Ms. Ivanovska, and an agreement was reached to schedule a separate meeting with representatives from MoES, BDE and the project staff. On the following meeting, a letter outlining the parts which need to be revised in the Draft Law before its adoption were drafted. Furthermore, the team mapped the current and new process which concerns the novice teachers. Hence, due to elections and changes in the leading positions of MoES, the letter was sent to both, the cabinet of the new Minister and the cabinet of the Deputy Minister (June 25), former Minister of Education. Unfortunately, due to package of reforms aimed at improving the initial teacher education, this law was discarded and parts of the content were integrated in the Law for Academia for Teachers. The project intends to follow up on this issue once the Teachers' Academy is established.

Draft Law on Training and Examination of Primary and Secondary School Directors. Having in mind that this law impacts the quality of TPCD system, the Project team and the USAID AOR organized a meeting with NEC Director, Ms. Mirushe Ameti in April 2014. The purpose of this meeting was to offer support to NEC in developing professional competencies for school directors and at the same time ensure that they are in line with the already developed competencies for teachers and student

supports services. The draft law itself calls upon competencies for school directors, but such a document was not developed at that point. After the initial meeting, it took the Project almost seven months to schedule a second meeting with the NEC Director, in order to obtain a response on the offered support regarding the development of competencies. Finally, the NEC Director approved this activity and upon establishing the working group, the initial draft of competences was developed in December 2014.

*Reform of the education system.* As part of this reform, the Minister of Education and Science requested three new laws to be developed: 1) Law for Teacher Training Faculties; 2) Law on Teachers' Academy, and 3) Law for Teachers. The initial versions of the first two laws were developed by the Sector for Higher Education and the Legal Sector at MoES, whereas BDE was assigned to develop the Law on Teachers. On the request of BDE, the Project team was invited to take part in drafting this law. This served as an excellent opportunity to regulate in the new Law for Teachers the solutions for professional development and career advancement as: Teacher Core Professional Competencies and Standards, the number of hours for compulsory professional development, the procedures for advancing in career, the process for professional development, etc.

In order to secure alignment of the three laws, the team prepared a graphical presentation of the regulated processes in the laws which brought to the surface inconsistencies in the laws and discrepancies between them. Following, the project met with the Advisor of the Prime Minister, Mr. Viktor Novakovski on the initiative of the USAID AOR representative, Natasha Buleska. During this meeting the project presented the new laws and raised concerns related to the exceptionally tight timeframe given to the expert groups working on the reform of the Teacher Training Faculties by the Minister of Education and Science. The project requested from Mr. Novakovski to lobby at the Government level for more time related to reforming the initial teacher education. Hence, it was suggested that it is best in the process to consult and take into consideration the opinion of all relevant stakeholders.

The process of drafting the laws endured from September until December 2014. During this time the project team attended several meetings with MoES and BDE representatives to discuss the interventions and the content of the proposed laws. In addition, the project provided written comments to BDE related to the three pieces of legislation that were further considered by the working group in MoES responsible for finalizing the laws. The comments mainly related to changing the advancement criteria i.e. decreasing the influence of the external assessment marks in the selection process because it narrows the possibility for good candidates to progress in career. The other issue had to do with the administration of the selection process for teacher-mentors on a national instead of a municipality level, as initially suggested by the Project. These and other comments made by the Project and USAID AOR were put in written and officially submitted to the Minister of Education and Science in a letter addressed from the USAID Macedonia Mission Director. In addition, the project team and USAID AOR held two meetings with Members of the Parliament part of the Parliamentary Committee for Education, Culture and Sports to lobby for changes, yet these articles remained in the Law and were adopted in January 2015.

### **3. COMPONENT 2: ENHANCE FINANCIAL SCHEMES**

#### **Activity 1: Developing financial scenario for teacher professional development**

In order to analyze the existing teacher professional development system, the project team gathered data from various sources with the aim of identifying professional development activities undertaken so far, existing capacities of different stakeholders related to enabling continuing professional development and career advancement and the available official statistical data related to education.

In order to identify the financial capacities and the role of municipalities in ensuring quality of education on a local level, TPCD project team conducted a survey focusing on the activities undertaken and funds provided for teacher professional development. The survey report is a compilation of the factual data received through the questionnaires, which had a response rate of 49%, where it was evident that 15% of all schools and 19% of municipalities provided funds for teacher professional development. The total amount of funds provided by these municipalities is almost identical with the amount of funds provided by the state via BDE. This is a good indicator that could be used for diversifying funding sources for professional development.

Furthermore, the project team gathered data from projects and institutions which have provided teacher trainings in the past such as MCEC, BDE, USAID Secondary Education Activity Project, USAID Primary Education Project and the Education Modernization Project. The purpose of the review was to identify the type, title, and average training days/hours on school and municipality level.

Hence, different financial scenarios were developed, taking into consideration the professional development needs and the available funds on national, local government level, from schools and teachers.

Two types of excel simulations, a comprehensive and a simplified version of financial scenarios, were developed:

- National (MoES/BDE) and local-government (municipalities) budget implications were considered when developing a financial simulation where five (5) hours of professional development per annum is provided to teachers, through BDE and municipalities.
- National (MoES/BDE) budget implications were calculated, in order to provide 60 hours of professional development over three (3) years for all teachers and student support staff on a national level.

Most of the data was collected from the State Statistical Office web page and municipalities' web pages. The collected data was organized per municipality in the following categories: 1) trend in the number of teachers and students in primary and secondary schools (2000 to 2013); 2) the ratio of students per teacher (2000 to 2013); 3) the size of the schools (number of students, number of teachers, number of student support service); 4) location (urban/rural); 5) demographic and territorial distribution of schools; 6) public spending in education; 7) student achievements on international tests TIMMS (2011, 2003 and 1999) and PIRLS (2006 and 2001); and 8) the average value of GDP compared to the national average on a regional level (2000 to 2011).

The collected data was used to develop a comprehensive database which provides an overview of different attributes of primary and secondary schools, which were used in drafting the financial scenarios described in Activity 2 below.

## **Activity 2: Developing financial scenario for teacher career advancement**

The development of the initial financial scenarios was supported by the International Senior Education Consultant, Mr. Francis Crawford during his visit in February 2014. He presented a model of teacher career advancement, providing forecasts on the number of teachers and budget implications for the following 15 years. Throughout the year, several different financial models were devised, in order to create fair and unbiased system of teacher career advancement.

From the survey conducted by the USAID Interethnic Integration in Education Project (IIEP), TPCD project collected accurate data regarding the number of teachers, classes and students, as well as languages of instruction. However, this survey was limited to schools participating in IIEP activities in 2014. Thus, the project was unable to gather information for all school. Therefore, the project agreed with MoES to share the requested missing data, including data about teachers' employed based on a definite or indefinite contracts. This data was used in the process of developing a career advancement model which is fair, cost-effective and realistic.

In the discussion with all relevant education stakeholders, it was estimated that about 15% of teachers will meet the required level of competences and standards and could be promoted in the position of teacher-mentor by receiving a salary increase of 10% to 20%. In addition, 5% of teachers could be promoted in the position of teacher-advisor with salary increase of 20% to 40% above the current salary.

During this reporting period, the following financial scenarios for career advancement were developed:

- *Model 1.* This model was developed taking into consideration the career advancement process as regulated in the Law for Primary Education and the Law on Secondary Education. The schools were fragmented by size (up to and over 50 teachers per school), in order to check how this model will affect teachers depending on the school size. This scenario revealed that it will take large schools 15 year to be able to reach the estimated number of teacher-mentors and teacher-advisors. On the other hand, it became obvious that the education staff in small schools will reach

the maximum number of teacher-mentors and teacher-advisors not later than two to three years after the TPCD system becomes fully functional. This tackles the principle of fairness, motivation and opportunities offered to teachers in large schools. In addition, it brought to surface the issue of limited possibility for mobility of teacher between schools.

- *Model 2.* TPCD expert group for career advancement proposed the process for promoting teachers into teacher-mentor to be conducted on a municipality level, whereas the promotion of teacher-advisors to be on a national level. According to this model, MoES each year will set the percentage of teachers to advance in career and based on it the total number of teachers per municipality will be calculated. However, due to the uneven student/teacher/school ratio, the project proposed a formula which correlates the number of students, number of schools and the number of teachers on a municipality level. Moreover, TPCD project developed a financial simulation, by presenting the state budget implications in the period of five (5) years, resulting from the process of career advancement of education staff into teacher-mentor and teacher-advisor positions.
- *Model 3.* Due to the fact that the existing formula for funding of schools is based on the block dotation, which is primarily calculated based on the total number of students, MoES requested that the project develops a simulation based only on the total number of students per school. Thus, the project developed another model, based on MoES request, which calculates the financial burden for a period of five (5) years.

#### **4. COMPONENT 3: STANDARDS FOR TEACHER COMPETENCIES**

##### **Activity 1: Establishing Expert Groups**

In accordance with the Annual Work Plan, the project team established working groups for developing the: 1) guideline for organizing the induction and mentoring process for novice teachers, 2) guideline for professional development of teachers and student support services staff, 3) procedures and instruments for career advancement of teachers, 4) competencies and standards for student support services staff, and 5) competencies and standards for school directors. For each working group, local experts were identified and a request was submitted to USAID for approval. The working groups included representatives of all relevant institutions and school practitioners. In order to ensure alignment of the solutions developed under the different working groups, the project invited members to join and to contribute to the work of other groups.

##### **Activity 2: Develop Teacher Standards**

Standards for teacher-mentor and teacher-advisor present the foundation of the system for career advancement of teachers. In January 2014, TPCD project organized an on-line public debate on the developed teacher standards. However, despite all the efforts, only 42 schools (37 primary and 5 secondary schools), which present 9% of the total number of schools sent their comments and suggestions. The working group thoroughly reviewed the received feedback from the on-line public debate, and accepted and incorporated all valid comments. In addition, VET Centre advisors and representatives from USAID Project YES Network included competencies for career counselors in the Catalogue of Core Teacher Professional Competencies. OSCE suggestions for additional competencies related to teachers who mentor faculty students during practical lessons in schools were accepted as an integral part of the draft documents. The final version of the document was approved by the Steering Committee members on December 15, 2015.

##### **Activity 3: Develop Competencies and Standards for Student Support Services**

The development of Catalogue of Core Professional Competencies for Student Support Services (pedagogue, psychologist, sociologist, social worker, and special educator) began end of 2013. During the process of drafting the competencies, the working group agreed to identify and describe specific competencies and the common competencies for all student support services positions. As a result, the first draft of the document was very lengthy. This issue remained open the entire time and the working group constantly made efforts to create a more concise document. However, it was

decided that the document should cover general competencies for all members of the Student Support Services team and specific competencies that relate only to certain profiles/professions.

The draft version of the student support services core professional competencies was initially forwarded to the Teacher Training Faculties that train pedagogues, psychologists, sociologists, social workers and special educators for review. At the round table discussion with representatives from all faculties, comments and concerns were presented on behalf of faculty departments. In addition, the university professors worked together with project staff and the members of the working group to incorporate their views in the document. The contribution of the faculty professors was very useful and resulted in greatly improving the quality and relevance of the competencies. In order to obtain feedback from school practitioners, regional round table discussions were organized with Associations of Student Support Services. The participants at these meetings confirmed the importance and the need for such documents that will assist schools in clarifying roles and responsibilities of each professional who works on a Student Support Service team.

Following the incorporation of the feedback received on the Student Support Services competencies and standards, and upon translating the draft document into Albanian language, the documents were posted on the website, for all primary and secondary schools in the country to be able to take part in the on-line public debate. In order to receive greater feedback, the project sent two e-mails and placed a telephone call to each school reminding them to send their opinion and comments. The working group for developing Student Support Services competencies and standards reviewed the received feedback and incorporated all relevant comments into the final version of the document, which was approved by the Steering Committee members on December 2015.

#### **Activity 4: Develop procedures, tools and instruments for teacher career advancement**

Developing procedures and instruments which will enable efficient implementation of the teacher career advancement system is one of the most challenging assignments. This is mainly due to the fact that the education system in Macedonia has currently made many different, not well connected, but legally prescribed elements, which MoES requires to be considered during the development of the career advancement system. Furthermore, there is very limited experience and expertise in the country related to teacher career advancement. Senior Education Consultant Mr. Frank Crawford was hired to strengthen the capacities of the working group members and to assist the team through an on-line support during the process of developing these documents. At the first capacity building seminar, Mr. Crawford shared materials from Scotland and Australia and organized a session dedicated to the instruments which could be modified and developed for the purpose of career advancement. Relevant materials, instruments and examples were periodically shared by the international consultant to be used by the working group. At the initial meeting of the working group, the process and criteria for career advancement were established. Before commencing the process of developing instruments for career advancement, TPCD Project team met with the management staff of BDE to present the model and to receive feedback. They were in agreement with the model, and the members of the working group continued to work on developing the instruments for career advancement. During this reporting period the group developed a draft system for assessing the participation of teachers in different forms of professional development, trainings, conferences, activities for improving educational policies and practices etc. The group also developed draft instruments for assessing the core professional competencies and standards for advancing in career. The draft documents, processes and procedures were discussed with Mr. Crawford during his second visit to Macedonia in the period between November 23-27, 2015, and his recommendations were embedded in the instruments.

#### **Activity 5: Draft guidelines for professional development of teachers and student support services staff**

Prior to commencing the development of the guideline for professional development, Mr. Crawford identified and shared with the team number of selected documents to support the work of the expert group. In addition, he advised the project that in order to ensure an ongoing process of professional development, the teachers should be able to select a limited number of competencies based on which they will develop an individual professional development plan to guide their professional development activities (trainings, seminars, projects, action research).

The main purpose of developing a guideline with clearly described processes, roles and responsibilities of all involved, was to standardize the process of professional development on the national level, and to support the work of the school management and the State Education Inspectorate in monitoring and evaluating teacher professional development.

In the period between April and December 2014, the working group developed the first draft of the guideline. The guideline will be piloted in a total of 14 primary and secondary school from four municipalities in the first quarter of 2015.

By undertaking different working approaches like team, individual work and on-line cooperation, the working group agreed on the layout and the content of the document. In addition, the group decided that this guideline will describe the professional development process for both, teachers and student support services staff.

The Guideline for professional development describes in detail how the professional competencies and standards will be used to ensure the continuing professional growth of teachers. To be most effective, teachers' professional learning should be built upon an assessment based of their specific learning needs and the received feedback about their teaching. Therefore, the working group decided that the monitoring of teachers work will be conducted based on the competencies that that teachers need to deploy, and the standards of quality set by the school and the state. The development of teachers' individual plans for professional development is closely linked to the competencies that teachers have to acquire. More specifically, teachers are required to conduct self-evaluation using the defined competencies in the Catalogue of Teacher Core Professional Competencies.

#### **Activity 6: Draft guidelines for mentoring program and the process of conducting mentorship**

The Policy and Practice Analysis of the Teacher Professional and Career Development highlighted the need for strengthening the mentoring process of the novice teachers. At present, the mentoring process of novice teachers in the schools is not consistent, in many schools it is only on paper, and result with novice teachers not receiving the appropriate support. This has direct impact on the quality of the novice teachers in schools, and subsequently reflects negatively on the students achievements.

The purpose of the guideline was to standardize the induction process and improve the mentoring of novice teachers in the schools through provision of clearly defined processes, procedures, examples and templates. This will enable schools to provide appropriate support to novice teachers, who in turn can acquire the core professional competencies. The document is organized in the following three areas: 1) roles and responsibilities of each individual and institution involved in the induction process; 2) description of processes and procedures related to mentoring novice teachers; and 3) templates of tools and instruments to be used during the mentoring process.

However, due to the ongoing reform of teacher pre-service education, the induction process is going to be organized by the Teachers' Academy. The new Law on Teachers' Academy requires that students who have graduated from Teacher Training Faculties should receive additional 8 months of training at the Academy in order to obtain a license to teach. Whereas, students who have graduated from a different non-teacher training faculties and would like to teach, will need to undertake additional 12 months of training to receive a teaching license. While in the Teachers' Academy, the future teachers will receive theoretical and practical training. The practical training will be organized in schools under the mentorship of teacher-mentors. But since the project has worked on improving this process of mentoring and in order to ensure sustainability of the proposed solutions, the Project staff will closely work with MoES, BDE and representatives from the Academy (as soon as it is established) to take forward the developed materials.