



**Teacher Professional and
Career Development Project**



**MACEDONIAN
CIVIC
EDUCATION
CENTER**

QUARTERLY PROGRAM PERFORMANCE REPORT

January 1, 2015 – March 31, 2015

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

Submitted by:

Macedonian Civic Education Centre (MCEC)

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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

Cooperative Agreement No:	RFA-165-A-13-00001
Progress Report No:	9
Reporting Period:	January 1, 2015 – March 31, 2015

1. BACKGROUND

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 results¹:

- *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 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

¹ 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.

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 evaluation², 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

During the reporting period the following was accomplished:

Crosscutting Activities:

- Introductory meetings held in all 14 pilot schools to test the professional development process;
- Second edition of the TPCD Newsletter prepared in three languages (Macedonian, Albanian and English) and shared with schools, relevant stakeholders and posted on MoES, BDE and MCEC website;
- TPCD activities and achievements presented to US Deputy Chief of Mission, Mr. Barton Putney;
- TPCD system presented to Mr. Tim Philips, Head of Teacher Development at British Council in UK;
- TPCD performance monitoring plan reviewed and updated.

Component One, Comprehensive Legal System:

- Book of Rules for Teacher Core Professional Competencies drafted and submitted to BDE;
- Book of Rules on the manner of attaining professional standards for teacher-mentor or teacher-advisor drafted and submitted to BDE;
- *Book of Rules for the form and content of the individual/personal development plan* drafted and submitted to BDE;
- Book of Rules for the form and content of the teacher professional portfolio drafted and submitted to BDE.

Component Two, Enhance Financial Schemes:

- No activities for this quarter

Component Three, Standards for Teacher Competencies:

- First draft of Professional Competencies for School Directors developed;
- 14 focus group discussions held in all schools and reports from the group discussions produced. 178 participants gave feedback and suggestions for upgrading the Guideline for professional development;

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

- Piloting of procedures, tools and instruments for teacher career advancement in 21 primary and secondary school commenced;
- Revision of the SEI Guideline for Individual Assessment of teachers and student support staff drafted;
- Guideline for Individual Assessment of Teachers tested during the integral evaluation conducted in the secondary technical school Kole Nehnetin in Stip.

3. PROJECT UPDATE

3.1 Key Project Personnel Position

In line with the TPCD Annual Work Plan, changes were made in the partner organization key staff positions, SbS Executive Director and the M&E Coordinator. Due to the fact that the work on the teacher and student support services staff competencies and standards was completed, it was decided to terminate the position of the SbS Executive Director. The position of the M&E Coordinator remained, but the number of days was decreased to 12 working days per month.

3.2 Other Project Staff

The position of the TPCD Program Assistant, employed by SbS was also terminated. The role of the Program Assistant was to assist the SbS Executive Director with the activities related to the competencies and standards. As described above, these activities were completed in the past period, and as a result the contract for this position was not renewed.

4. PROJECT ACTIVITIES

4.1 Crosscutting Activities

Cooperation with BDE and other relevant institutions

During this reporting period the project continued to maintain good cooperation with BDE and other relevant institutions. Frequent meetings were held with BDE management staff to agree on the piloting of processes, procedures and instruments outlined in the Guideline for planning the professional development of teachers and student support services staff. After the end of the winter holidays, teachers in Macedonia went on strike due to the punishment measures for teachers with highest discrepancies on the external testing. This situation caused delays in the piloting of the Guideline, and the Project in cooperation with BDE had to revise the timeline of activities.

The cooperation with the four municipalities with which the Project signed Memorandums of understanding for piloting the teacher professional and career development process could not be realized. The Law on Teachers enacted on January 22, 2015 decommissioned the project suggestion the advancing process of teachers into teacher-mentor position to be organized on a municipality level. The Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) justification for centralizing the selection process, as explained by them, it was the distrust in the capacities of the municipalities to conduct fair and objective selection process.

The activities related to piloting the Guideline for professional development in pilot schools were postponed from January to the second week of February. This delay was due to strike of teachers in most of the primary and secondary schools that started immediately after the end of the winter holiday. The strike was organized by Teacher Union after the unsuccessful negotiations with MoES and the Government to raise the teachers' salaries, and to abolish the punishment measures for teachers resulting from the external testing of students. After three weeks of strike in schools, the Teacher Union and MoES reached an agreement to cancel the

fine teachers with highest discrepancies on external testing have to pay and to further continue discussions on other pending issues.

After the establishment of the working group for development of competencies for school directors in December 2014, the cooperation with the National Examination Center successfully continued during this reporting period. The working group with support from the Project managed to develop the first draft of the competencies ready for consultation with a broader group of directors and education stakeholders.

During this reporting period, the cooperation was established with the State Education Inspectorate for reviewing and improving the Guideline for individual assessment of teachers and student support services staff, as part of the school Integral Evaluation.

Steering Committee Activities

In this reporting period there were no activities which required attention by the Steering Committee members.

Meetings, debates and roundtable discussions

Meetings were held with the working groups assigned to work on different project activities. During this period the working group for revising the Guideline for individual assessment of teachers was established and conducted number of working meetings. The working group for developing the competencies for school directors held frequent meetings and managed to develop the first draft of the document. In the primary and secondary schools selected to pilot the professional development guideline introductory, meetings were held by the responsible BDE advisors. During the piloting process the team paid visits to the schools and met with the teachers who volunteered to pilot the professional development Guideline. In March, in all schools that piloted the professional development process focus group discussions were held and the received feedback will be used to improve the Guideline.

After the enactment of the Law on teachers in January, the team in cooperation with BDE worked on developing four books of rules to further regulate the professional and career development of teachers. For this purpose working meetings were held with BDE advisors and the Head of the Legal Department from MoES.

Public relations

The second education of the TPCD Newsletter was prepared in three languages (Macedonian, Albanian and English) and shared with schools, relevant stakeholders and posted on the MoES, BDE and MCEC website (**see Annex 1**). On February 2, the TPCD team met with US Deputy Chief of Mission, Barton Putney. During this meeting the TPCD team presented the project and discussed with the DCM the challenges faced by the project and who to ensure sustainability of achieved results. Furthermore, the team met with representatives from the Delegation of EU in Macedonia, Sophie Beaumont and Marlene Bartes and introduced them to project goals and achievements. On March 23, meeting has held with Tim Philips, Head of Teacher Development at British Council in UK interested to learn about the novelties in the system for teacher professional development in order to better plan the British Council support to Macedonia.

Other

In January 2015, TPCD team with support from USAID, Natasha Buleska, AOR, and the Ivica Vasev, M&E Specialist, reviewed and updated the TPCD Performance Monitoring Plan.

4.2 COMPONENT 1: COMPREHENSIVE LEGAL SYSTEM

Activity 4.2.1: Draft amendments in relevant laws and develop by-laws for regulating career advancement of teachers and student support services staff

Despite all efforts made by USAID AOR and the project team to convince the Minister of Education and Science and Members of the Parliament to change articles in the Law on Teachers which relate to external testing being one of the criteria for teacher advancement, the Law was adopted without changes on January 22, 2015. At the same time, the Law on Teachers' Academy and the Law on Teacher Training Faculties including amendments to the Law on Higher Education were adopted in the Parliament. This caused great dissatisfaction among university professors and students. The students' plenum organized protests, whereby the faculty premises were taken over by students, and no lectures were allowed to be organized. The protests ended after the students' plenum succeed in their request to void the the amendments in the Law on Higher Education. In addition they managed to agree with MoES to develop new laws with participation of students and professors in the working groups.

The Law on Teachers was criticized in the media related to the same articles that USAID and the project tried to persuade the Minister to change before its adoption. The Law remained in power and the project commenced the piloting of the career advancement in this reporting period. The results from testing the proposed solutions will be used as argument for changes in the Law. The project together with BDE worked on developing bi-laws to further regulate the teacher professional competencies and standards, which proved to be necessary for establishing the TPCD system. Thus, *Book of Rules for Teacher Core Professional Competencies* and *Book of Rules on the Manner of Attaining Professional Standards for Teacher-Mentor or Teacher-Advisor* were drafted and submitted to MoES. Furthermore, the Book of Rules for 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 will need to be developed in the upcoming quarter.

Activity 4.2.2: Draft amendments in relevant laws and develop by-laws for regulating the professional development for teachers and school support staff

The professional development process was regulated in the Law on Teachers. There were no major reactions on behalf of teachers for the novelties in the professional development process regulated in the Law. The piloting of the Guideline for professional development of education staff commenced with one month delay due to teacher strike in January 2015. The Guideline was piloted in 14 primary and secondary schools (for more details please refer to Activity 4.4.4). The results from the piloting were used in the process of drafting two new bi-laws for regulating of the professional development of teachers: *Book of Rules for the form and content of the individual/personal development plan* and *Book of Rules for the form and content of the teacher professional portfolio*. These books of rules were jointly developed with representatives from MoES and BDE.

4.3 COMPONENT 2: ENHANCE FINANCIAL SCHEMES

Activity 4.3.1: Developing financial scenario for teacher professional development

No activities during this reporting period

Activity 4.3.2: Developing financial scenario for teacher career advancement

No activities during this reporting period

4.4 COMPONENT 3: STANDARDS FOR TEACHER COMPETENCIES

Activity 4.4.1: Expert Group

Within this reporting period, TPCD project established the working group for revising the Guideline for Individual Assessment of Teachers and Student Support Services Staff as part of the Integral Evaluation. Furthermore, the existing project working groups for 1) developing Professional Competencies for School Directors, and 2) supporting the piloting of TPCD solutions in the selected schools continued with the implementation of activities and achieving the planned targets for this quarter.

Activity 4.4.2: Develop Professional Competencies for School Directors

The first draft of the Professional Competencies for School Directors was developed during this quarter. The working group held regular meetings and managed to develop competencies for all areas in the document. Professional Competencies for School Directors are organized in the following areas: 1) Leadership; 2) Human Resource Management; 3) School Pedagogical Management; 4) Financial Management and 5) School Legal and Administrative Operation.

TPCD project team effectively managed the process of developing the professional document and the work of the expert group. In order to accelerate the finalization of the competencies and to use the available timeframe effectively, after developing the first draft by the working group, the project team revised the document in a smaller group. The document was adjusted with the School Performance Quality Indicators (SPQI) and the Teacher Core Professional Competencies and Core Competencies for Student Support Services. In addition, some areas of the documents were renamed to better reflect the competencies within.

During the work on the document, the project team attempted to provide each listed statement of knowledge with a corresponding skill and examples of activities, but this was not always possible. It is worth noting that Professional Competencies for School Directors contain a list of possible documents to be used as evidence of achievement of a certain competence at the end of each area, which is a new approach and specific only for this professional document.

The project team forwarded the revised document to the expert group and final changes were introduced to the Catalogue during the meeting held on March 9, 2015. On this meeting, the project team agreed about the approach of getting feedback from the wider professional community. Based on the experience gained during the development of other professional documents, the working group developed a plan for the focus group discussion school directors and other stakeholders, the implementation of the public debate with all schools, as well as the administration of the received feedback. Hence, it was agreed that next activities will be implemented during the upcoming quarter.

Activity 4.4.3: Develop procedures, tools and instruments for teacher career advancement

Upon completing the process of professional development, the pilot schools commenced testing the process of career advancement. Based on the suggestion of project USAID AOR, the number of schools to pilot the career advancement was extended with additional secondary schools in Strumica (three), Prilep (two) and Gostivar (two), and primary schools in Skopje (two). The working group developed a Guideline for piloting the procedures, tools and instruments for career advancement with instructions for schools and instructions for BDE and VET Centre Advisors. Hence, on March 11, 2015 a working meeting with BDE, VET Centre and SEI Advisors was held to present the developed documents and provide them with instructions about the support they will need to provide to schools and teachers. The appointed advisors organized initial meetings with the pilot schools to introduce the Guideline and the expected outcome.

During this reporting period, the project team worked on drafting a concept for assessing the achievement of student support services competencies and standards. The working group decided to develop an instrument in which for each competence a particular number of points will be awarded. It was suggested that for the purpose of career advancement, the Core Competencies for Student Support Services to be divided in three categories: eliminatory competencies; level one core competencies, and level two competencies. Whereas for assessing the achievement of Standards for Student Support Services Mentor, the level three competencies were identified.

Activity 4.4.4: Piloting the Guideline for the Professional Development of Education Staff

In January 2015, TPCD project commenced the process of piloting the professional development in schools. Thus, the BDE and VET Centre Advisors, after participating in the instructive meeting organized by MCEC, they held initial meetings with the pilot schools to introduce them to the Guideline for Professional Development of Education Staff. The management and education staff in schools was informed about their roles and responsibilities, instruments and process, and the expected outcome and feedback. The process of piloting the Guideline for Professional Development, and the instruments and procedures were finalized during the second half of March 2015. Furthermore, 14 focus group discussions were held in all schools and reports from the group discussions were produced. In addition, 178 participants completed the e-questionnaire and gave their feedback and suggestions for upgrading the system.

During the upcoming quarter, the working group for developing the process and instruments for professional development will review the received feedback and suggestions, in order to upgrade and qualitatively improve the Guideline and the processes for implementation of professional development in schools.

Activity 4.4.5: Improvement of guideline for individual assessment of education staff as part of the school integral evaluation

On January 28, 2015, SEI director requested a meeting with the project team to discuss the possibility of getting support in revising the Guideline for individual assessment of education staff. Bearing in mind that the individual assessment marks are one of criteria for career advancement, the project agreed to establish a working group and contribute towards updating the Guideline for Individual Assessment of Education Staff (part of the school integral evaluation) and harmonizing it with other professional documents developed by the project. The working group consisted of regional SEI Advisors and the project team, managed to update the Guideline for Individual Assessment of Teachers in the primary and secondary schools and commenced working on the Guideline for Individual Assessment of Student Support Services in schools.

Furthermore, upon developing the draft Guideline for Individual Assessment of Teachers, the project team and the SEI inspector tested the guideline during the integral evaluation conducted in the secondary technical school Kole Nehnetin in Stip on March 26, 2015. SEI inspectors suggested that the document will need to be tested in few more schools throughout the country and based on the findings, the working group will finalize the document.

5. LESSONS LEARNT

In the process of piloting the Guideline for professional development it was difficult to motivate teachers to take part in testing the Guideline. Teachers explained that they are overburdened with administrative tasks and cannot dedicate their time to this activity. This was also verified during the focus group discussions and from the responses on the on-line questionnaire completed by teachers who volunteered to pilot the Guideline. The report of the National Audit Office in Scotland states: "If administration is not handled efficiently and effectively, teachers are diverted unnecessarily from tasks which are central to teaching and to raising attainment." The more bureaucracy is piled on teachers, the less efficient they will become. Teachers will have to do things in a hurry or with little care and attention, which will result in low efficiency. The more teachers are asked to do, the less effective they become because bureaucracy distracts teachers from the core business of learning and teaching. That means that teachers are forced into incompetence (rather than curing incompetence), and thus, they are not heading for excellence. For these reasons, TPCD project would like to propose to MoES support in analyzing teachers' administrative duties. In the next quarter, the project will initiate discussions with MoES representatives to sense their readiness to undertake this activity, which the Project considers to be necessary for successful engagement, execution and embedding of the novelties regarding the professional development of education staff in schools.

6. ACTIVITIES FOR THE NEXT REPORTING PERIOD

6.1 Crosscutting Activities

- Open an on-line public debate with all 455 primary and secondary schools in the country on the professional competencies of school directors;
- Coordination meetings with key education institutions.

6.2 Component One: Comprehensive Legal System

- Initiate the development of the Book of rules for regulating the time teachers spend on different tasks apart from teaching hours;
- Initiate the development of the 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

- Discuss possible solutions for funding the career advancement of teachers.

6.4 Component Three: Standards for Teacher Competencies

- Provide on-going support to the school piloting the Guideline for career advancement of teachers;
- Incorporate feedback from the piloting phase and finalize the Guideline for professional development of education staff;
- Revise the Guideline for individual assessment of student support services staff in schools with SEI;

- Develop competencies and standards for school librarian as part of the student support services competencies and standards;
- Incorporate feedback from the roundtable discussion with directors and other education stakeholders in the draft professional competencies for school directors.

7. INCLUSIVENESS OF EDUCATION

The Republic of Macedonia is one of the first countries that signed the UN Convention of the Rights of the Persons, and by ratifying the Convention in Parliament in December 2012, our country committed itself to ensuring that ‘persons with disabilities can access an inclusive, quality and free primary education and secondary education on an equal basis with others in the communities in which they live’ (Article 24). Furthermore, the Convention highlights the importance to equip the education staff at all levels of education with knowledge and skills to use appropriate modes, means and formats of communication, educational techniques and materials to support persons with disabilities.

Having this in mind, in the catalogues of professional competencies for teachers, and for Student Support Services staff (which includes the school pedagogue, psychologist, sociologist, social worker and special educator), USAID’s TPCD has included competencies to be acquired by education staff that will enable them to maximize the academic and social development of students with disabilities, which is consistent with the goal of full inclusion. The draft catalogues were developed by a working group comprised of representatives of all the relevant education authorities, including the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES), the Bureau for Development of Education (BDE) which is responsible for in-service training of teachers, the Vocational Education and Training Center (VET Center) which is responsible for in-service training of teachers of vocational subjects, representatives of teachers and of the Student Support Services staff from schools, teacher training faculties, the Teachers’ Union, etc. It was shared with all schools for the purpose of public debate, several roundtables were organized for soliciting input and feedback on the drafts, and they will be formally submitted for adoption by MoES in the fall of 2015.

Recognizing the importance of good school management and leadership, USAID’s TPCD Project in cooperation with the National Examination Center (NEC), which provides the initial certification training and advanced professional development training programs for school directors, has also developed a catalogue of professional competencies for school directors. This document highlights the importance of the following competencies that each school director should possess and which are connected with inclusion of students with disabilities: to establish a system in which all students feel safe and accepted in the school, including students with disabilities; to develop policies for enrolling students from vulnerable groups and students with disabilities; and to ensure appropriate support to teachers in developing individual education plans for students with disabilities. This catalogue was also developed in a collaborative and participatory process by a working group comprised of representatives of all the relevant education institutions such as MoES, NEC, teacher training faculties, and school directors which have been recognized as exemplary. On April 15, 2015 the project organized a roundtable with selected school directors and representatives of the education institutions to review the draft, and the document will be sent to all schools nationwide for commenting between May 11 and 26 before it is submitted for formal adoption to MoES in the fall of 2015.

TPCD will continue to include topics of inclusion in all policy documents develop by the project in order to support MoES in their efforts to ensure an inclusive education system at all levels.

LIST OF ANNEXES

Annex 1 TPCD Newsletter, second edition

Annex 1 TPCD Newsletter, second edition



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



MACEDONIAN
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TEACHER PROFESSIONAL AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

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NEWSLETTER number 2
February 2015

The USAID Teacher Professional and Career Development Project is funded by the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented by the Macedonian Civic Education Center (MCEC), in cooperation with the Step by Step Foundation for Educational and Cultural Initiatives, which is involved in the activities related to the preparation of teacher standards and competencies.

The aim of the project 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 student achievements in the Republic of Macedonia.

The project implementation started in December 2012 and will last until June 2015.

 The Teacher Professional and Career Development Project is implemented with the support of the Bureau for Development of Education.

INTRODUCTION

Dear readers,

In the first issue of the Bulletin, you had the opportunity to read about the Policies and Practices Analysis of the Teacher Professional and Career Development in the Republic of Macedonia, which identifies the needs and provides recommendations for improvement of the professional development and introduction of a functional system of promotion into teacher titles of the educational staff.

Over the past period, we worked on implementing part of the recommendations arising out of the analysis. The working groups, composed of representatives of the key educational institutions, representatives of the teacher training faculties and student support services and practitioners from the schools, with the support of the Macedonian Civic Education Center and in cooperation with the Educational and Cultural Initiatives Foundation 'Step by Step', developed the following documents for professional development of the educational staff in the schools:

- Draft teacher core professional competencies
- Draft standards for teacher-mentor



- Draft standards for teacher-advisor
- Draft professional competencies for student support services
- Draft standards for student support services - mentor
- Draft standards for student support services - advisor

The competencies and standards, which set the foundation for further development of the capacities of the educational staff and contribute to the improvement of the overall educational system at a national level, were approved by the members of the Project Steering Committee¹ and were afterwards incorporated into the appropriate legal regulations. The draft documents are available at: <http://mk.mcgo.org.mk/usaaid-teacher-professional-and-career-development-project/>, in the Standards folder.

We also developed the Guideline for Monitoring the Work and Planning the Professional Development of Teachers and Student Support Services Staff in the Primary and Secondary Schools. Furthermore, the draft version of this document is being piloted in 14 primary and secondary schools by

¹ The Steering Committee of the TPCD Project consists of representatives of the Modes, directors of BDE, SEI, SEC, VET Center, and the president of the Independent Trade Union of Education, Science and Culture.

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approximately 150 teachers and student support services staff, in order to obtain ideas and suggestions for improving its quality. The Guideline contains a description of the procedures and roles of the various school bodies that are involved in the organization and implementation of the professional development, as well as instruments and techniques for monitoring the work of the educational staff. It promotes a new approach to the professional development, according to which each individual undertakes responsibility for further development of their personal competencies, with an increased role also assigned to subject teacher expert bodies, as the best form of collegial learning one from another.

Our main objective is to promote and reward the best practitioners. The group working on the development of procedures and instruments for promotion of the educational staff into titles is to set up a system, processes and procedures acceptable for all stakeholders in the system. Our vision of the system of career development of the educational staff is that such a system will identify the best practitioners in the schools. In order to be functional, the system needs to be complemented by precise estimates about the total burden on the budget resulting



from its implementation. This is why the project is developing financial simulations of the system of professional and career development in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science, with the aim of providing a transparent, just and sustainable system of promotion into teacher and student support services staff titles. In the process of establishing functional and sustainable professional and career development system which contributes to higher students' achievement, the entire staff in the schools will be responsible, but the role of the school directors will be of particular significance. To that aim, and in cooperation with the National Examination Center, the project supported the development of *The Core Professional Competencies of Primary and Secondary Schools Directors*, which will contribute towards continuing professional development of the school management staff.

This is only a brief description of the numerous interesting and important activities taking place under the project and included in this Bulletin; we therefore invite you to read them.

Sincerely,

Vera Kondic Mitkovska,
Project Chief of Party

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES STAFF COMPETENCIES AND STANDARDS WHY? HOW? WHAT HAS BEEN DONE?

While the public debate on the teacher competencies was underway, proposals started flowing in suggesting that descriptions of the competencies required for student support services staff (pedagogues, psychologists, sociologists, social workers and special educators) need to be developed as well. The suggestions also came from teachers and student support services staff. The justifications referred to the need of clearly defining the obligations of the student support services staff. “If there were competencies for us as well, everyone would be able to see what we are supposed to do, instead of looking upon us as administrative staff” (*a student support services staff’s statement*).

Challenges in the process of development the competencies and standards. While developing the student support services staff’ competencies and standards, we agreed that the documents should be of a structure similar to the one for teachers: professional views and values to guide them, description of the competencies by area of work, and examples of activities. The public debates that we had with the student support services staff and the academia were aimed at the following issues:

- (1) whether special descriptions of the competencies should be made for each profile of a student support services staff, and
- (2) to what extent the competencies should exceed the competencies acquired in the course of the studies, since most of the profiles are not trained specifically for work in schools.

The professional community accepted the competencies and standards. The documents discussed at the public debates - regarding which consultations were held with the universities and the regional associations of student support services staff – underlined that the student support services staff should be guided by the following values in their work: the student is of highest importance; the student support services staff should have professional integrity and should be trustworthy, seek to ensure equality, inclusion and social justice, and be initiative and work towards continuous development of the school. The competencies for all student support services staff refer to: work with students, teachers, and parents, cooperation with the community, professional development and cooperation, analytical and research work, and improvement of the school structure, organization and climate. Most of the competencies are common for all profiles, but we



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also included a description of the specificities in the work of each profile, as well as some competencies very specific to each of the student support services staff. As pointed out in the discussion of a student support services staff, "We work as a team and it is just as well that the competencies will contribute to the establishment of a profile of a student support services staff that primarily focusses on the needs of students and other stakeholders we are working with, but restrains from engaging in issues in which he has no competence."

In addition to being used in the promotion into titles, the student support services staff-mentor and expert-associate competencies and standards will also be used in the planning and monitoring of their professional development.

Once the suggestions put forward during the public debate were incorporated into the student support services staff draft competencies and draft standards, they were also considered and accepted by the Project Steering Committee. To provide legal bases for their application, the Bureau for Development of Education will propose to the Minister of Education and Science that the latter issues the draft competencies and draft standards for student support services staff.

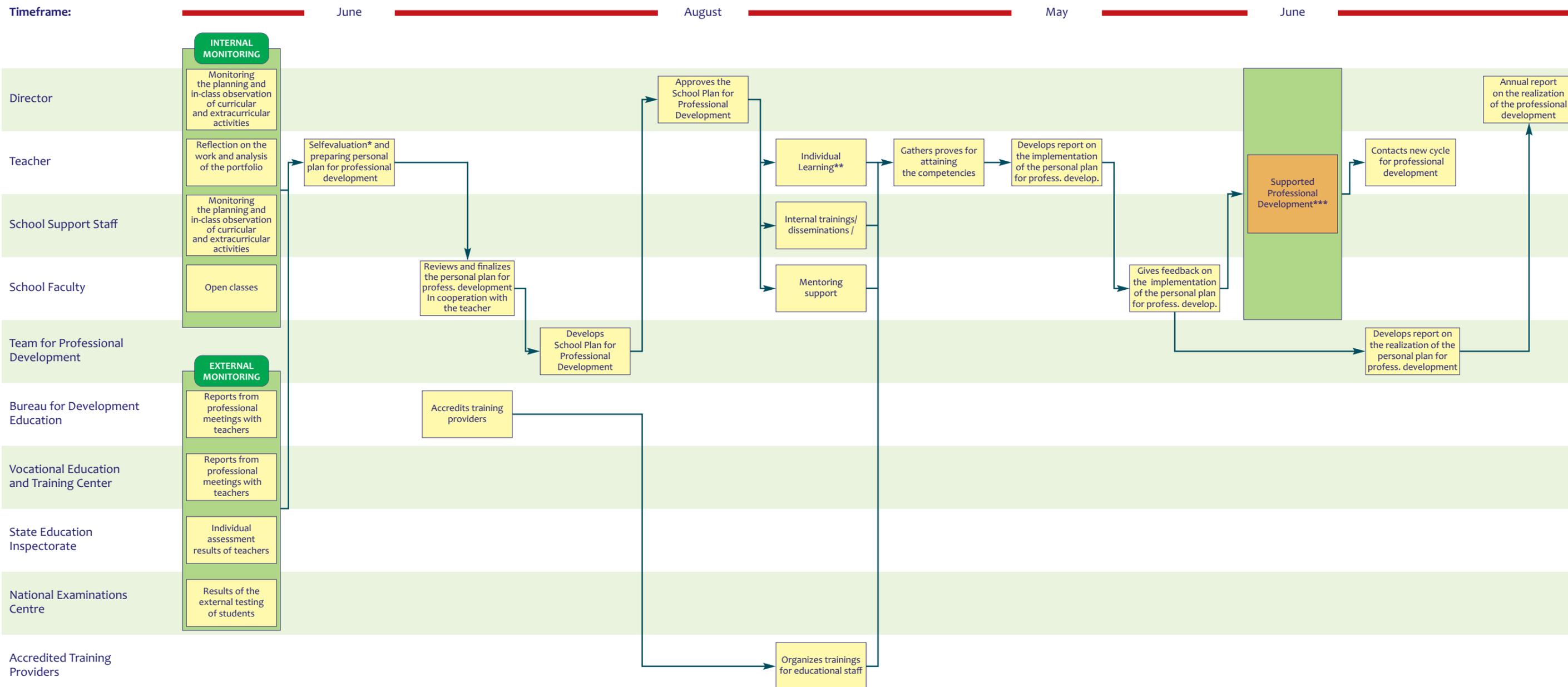
A draft of the core professional competencies and the draft standards for student support services staff-mentors and students support services-advisors are available at: <http://mk.mcgo.org.mk/usaid-teacher-professional-and-career-development-project/>, in the Standard folder.



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DRAFT PROCESS FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ON A SCHOOL LEVEL

The process is drafted by the working group as part of the USAID Teacher Professional and Career Development Project



Notes:

- * In June, teachers conduct evaluation based on the Teacher Core Professional Competencies and select limited number of competencies in which they would like to develop professionally. In the selfevaluation process the teachers take into account the information/reports from external and internal monitoring of their work.
- ** Refers to individual learning through action research, participation in webinars, on-line trainings, using professional literature.
- *** Supported professional development will be given to a teacher who has not implemented the personal plan for professional development. On the recommendation of the school, this decision is made by the school director in consultation with school support staff. Teachers who have supported professional development, the current and the next year will not be able to advance in career таа и наредната година нема да може да конкурираат за напредување во повисоко звање.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHERS AND STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES STAFF

The entire body of research confirms the influence of the quality of the teacher on the students' achievement. The conclusion that schools are only as good as the educational staff working in them becomes more and more obvious. This is why the teachers and student support services staff are expected to constantly upgrade their professional competencies via continuous skills perfection and dedication to life-long learning. In this context, the schools need to systematically monitor the work of the teachers and the student support services staff and to provide support for their continuing professional development.

Features of a School System Suitable for Professional Development

A school system suitable for professional development allows for all employees to receive support adequate to their individual needs and in line with the needs of their students. The responsibility for professional development and effects is a personal **responsibility of each individual**.

Planning of the professional development is primarily based on self-evaluation through which each individual identifies their own weak and strong points, as well as the areas of improvement. Thus, the schools need to encourage practices of **objective and sincere self-evaluation** of the teachers and the student support services staff.

Thoughtful progress in the work only rarely occurs accidentally. This is why it is a prerequisite that **the professional development is planned**, with the fundamental objective of the planning being to identify effective ways of overcoming the gap between the desired and factual level of quality of the educational staff.

The professional development is a **continuous process** of improving the quality of work of the staff. In the course of the process, the role of the principal is essential, primarily in the form of adequate evaluation of the work and just distribution of the funds and opportunities for professional development.

Guidelines for Planning Professional Development of the Educational Staff

To assist the schools in improving their professional development, the USAID Professional and Career Development Project developed *Guideline*



for Monitoring the Work and Planning the Professional Development of the Teachers and Student support services staff.

The Guideline was developed by a team of experts consisted of teachers, student support services staff and school directors, advisers from the Bureau for Development of Education, advisers from the Vocational Education and Training Center, and inspectors from the State Education Inspectorate.

They contain guiding principles on:

- Monitoring the work of the educational staff;
- Identification of the individual needs of professional development and professional development planning;
- Planning the professional development at school level;
- Monitoring the effects of professional development.

In developing the Guideline, we sought to preserve the good school practices and attempted to introduce new, modern professional development practices that exist in the highly developed educational systems. Bearing in mind the features of a good school system stated above, the self-evaluation of professional competencies as the basis for planning the professional development is a novelty in the process. Based on the results of such self-evaluation, the teacher/ student support services staff develops a personal professional development plan, which creates the foundation for development of a plan at school level. Another novelty is the identification of a **supported professional development** for teachers and student support services staff who will fail to implement their personal professional development plan. This includes the assignment of a mentor, who will assist the student support services staff the next year in the planning and realization of the plan.

Piloting the Professional Development Process

To bring the proposed procedures and forms in the Guideline in line with the needs and abilities of the educational staff and the conditions existing in the schools, 14 schools in Macedonia will pilot the Guideline before it is applied at a national level.

If you are interested to pilot the professional development process and learn in more detail the novelties described in the **Guideline for Monitoring the Work and Planning the Professional Development of the Teachers and Student Support Services Staff in Primary and Secondary Schools** as well, please write to us at our e-mail prasalnik@mcgo.org.mk and at mcgo.tpcd@gmail.com, and we will forward the materials needed.



DEVELOPED FINANCIAL SCENARIOS FOR THE TEACHER PROFESSIONAL AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

One of the components of USAID's Teacher Professional and Career Development Project focuses on the development of scenarios for the financial assets that need to be provided to ensure unimpeded **professional and career development of teachers**.

Under this component, various sources of financing the **professional development of teachers** are to be identified. The analysis² of professional development financing found that 19% of the municipalities analyzed and 15% of the schools in those municipalities did provide funds for professional development of the teachers in 2013. This amount was almost equal to the one set aside by the state via the Bureau for Development of Education (BDE) for the same purpose the same year, but intended for all the schools in the entire country. This is an indication of the awareness of the need of continuing professional development of the teachers with funds provided from various sources of finances.

To predict the financial burden imposed on the budget of the Republic of Macedonia by the proposed solutions for professional development of all teachers, we developed financial scenarios.

In order to ensure that the required budget funds are planned timely and realistically and to provide various approaches in financing the professional development of the teachers, we developed **two financial scenarios**:

1) Defined financial obligations of Ministry of Education and Science/BDE and the municipalities for the provision of five (5) hours of professional development of the teachers at municipality level. It is assumed that this model will also monitor the disse-

nation of the knowledge acquired at school and municipality level, i.e. that the number of trained teachers will be multiplied. In this way, the costs of training per teacher – and thus those of the central and local budget as well - will be significantly reduced.

2) Defined financial obligations of Ministry of Education and Science /BDE and the municipalities

Article 21

- 1) Teachers shall devote not less than 60 hours to continuous professional development in the course of three school years.
- 2) The 60 hours of professional development include the trainings attended by teachers in and outside the schools, of which at least 40 hours shall be in the form of participation in accredited training programs, for which funds shall be allocated in the budget of the Bureau of Educational Development.
- 3) The accreditation of the training programs of paragraph 2) of this Article shall be carried out by the Bureau for Development of Education, in accordance with the Law on Bureau for Development of Education.
- 4) Each teacher shall in a period of three years devote 10 hours of training on priority programs identified by the Minister, for which funds shall be allocated in the budget of the Bureau for Development of Education.
- 5) Each teacher shall in a period of three years devote 10 hours of training on personal professional development. The costs for personal development training shall be born by the teacher.

Source: Law on Teachers in Elementary and Secondary Schools ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" no. 10/15)

² A report on the poll of opinion of municipalities on their role in the professional development of teachers (MCEC, 2014).

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for the provision of sixty (60) hours of professional development for all teachers and student support services staff in the Republic of Macedonia for a period of three (3) years. This model was accepted by Ministry of Education and Science/BDE and incorporated into the legal regulations.

The two scenarios were discussed with representatives of MoES and BDE before being submitted to BDE for further use and planning future activities related to the professional development of teachers and student support services staff.

In addition, we also worked out financial simulations of the cost of various solutions to allow for **promotion into teacher titles**. Based on the past research conducted under the project in cooperation with BDE, the assumption is that 15-20% of the teachers will meet the conditions for the title of a teacher-mentor and 5-7% of them will meet the conditions for the one of a teacher-adviser once the system of promotion into teacher titles will be applied in full (minimum 5 years).

The project developed several models of promotion into the title of a teacher-mentor, which have the following advantages and disadvantages:

1) Promotion into teacher-mentors according to the identified number of teachers at school level: This is a model existing in the legal regulations and limiting the number of teacher that may advance in their career at annual le-

vel: two teachers in each small school (up to 50 teachers) and three teachers in each large school (more than 50 teachers), while the number of teachers to be promoted into teacher-mentor title and the size of the financial burden per school is identified by an additional division of the schools (up to 10, 20... 150 teachers). According to this model, staff in the small schools will achieve the maximum number of teacher-mentors and teacher-advisers much earlier than their colleagues in the large ones. In all schools, 15 years are required for promotion into a title. This model opened the issue of equality, motivation and opportunities offered to the teachers meeting the career advancement standards. This is why we went on developing the model described below.

2) Promotion of teacher-mentors according to the number identified at municipal level: The number of teachers to be promoted into the title of a teacher-mentor at national level and the size of the financial burdens per municipality (regardless of the size of the school) for a period of five (5) years, taking into account the number of teachers and the average number of students per teacher. In identifying the number of teachers that may acquire the title of a "mentor", it is proposed that the municipalities take the following into account: the number of schools and the number of students and of teachers, with the number of students as end users of the effect of the work of the teacher-mentors having the high-

est influence. The number of teacher-mentors by municipalities should be defined by Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) every year, taking into account the above parameters.

3) Promotion of teachers and student support services staff into the titles of mentors and advisers according to the number identified at national level: the number of student support services staff to advance to titles and the size of the financial burdens (regardless of the size of the school) for a period of five (5) years. This model was the most acceptable one for MoES and was incorporated into the new legal regulations.

In the course of our work on the financial scenarios, we used data from the Internet page of the State Statistical Office and data obtained from MoES. At the same time, we processed the data collected per municipality, taking into account several parameters, such as for instance: demographic data about the teachers, public expenditure on education, achievements of the students at the international tests TIMSS (2011, 2003, and 1999) and PIRLS (2006 and 2001); in addition, the average value of the domestic gross product relative to the national average for the 2009-2011 period was identified, in order to establish the connection between the quality of the education and the economic development. This database may be an excellent source of data in the creation of educational and development policies at national and municipal level.

