

**CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES/MACEDONIA
“CIVIC EDUCATION: PATH TO A CIVIL SOCIETY” PROJECT
QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT**

Award Number: 165-0016-G-SS-8102-00
Progress Report No: 5
Reporting Period: September 21, 1999 – December 21, 1999

PROGRESS TOWARDS OBJECTIVES

Activities during the period 21, September 1999 – 21, December 1999 centered on development of Civic Education materials. Textbooks were produced for the 120 First Grade teachers trained in the August Teacher Training, as well as the 60 Kindergarten and 60 Grade Five teachers to be trained in the planned January 2000 Teacher Training. Planning for the proposed Teacher Training, January 2000 was a major focus of project activities.

To ensure success of these two major project components co-ordination and communication between Ministry of Education (MOE) / Pedagogical Institute (PI), the Center for Civic Education (CCE) and CRS / Macedonia has been essential.

A. CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES

1.1 Sustainability of Activities.

CRS/Europe has developed a long-term strategy that combines programmatic transfer and sustainability. By combining current program goals and activities with those made possible through CRS funding, CRS/Macedonia has developed a comprehensive five-year exit strategy that will leave the national education system more able to train its future citizens in the development of a civil society and in increased citizen participation in democratic decision-making processes. This will largely depend on the next generation of citizens and their education and awareness of democratic processes at an early age. The Education department of CRS / Macedonia has already begun the process of developing these activities through the Civic Education, Parent School Partnership and Fostering School Involvement programs.

Through the Civic Education program US based Civic Education experts have worked with teachers and educationalists to widen the capacity of local trainers. These individuals are skilled in Civic Education subject matter and just as important, participatory methodologies. To ensure continuity through both USAID and CRS private funds, all grades within Kindergarten and Primary school will have Civic Education curriculum and all 10,830 primary (1st to 8th grade) schoolteachers will be trained in these methodologies. CRS/Macedonia, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, will provide pre-service training for all student teachers within the university, at three faculties of Pedagogy in Skopje, Stip, and Bitola. Through both in-service and pre-service teacher training, all teachers will have opportunity to be involved in the continuity of Civic Education in the future generations of Macedonia. CRS will add an additional component to this activity and train primary education teachers in the benefits and ways of involving parents and community members in the classroom.

1.2 Staffing

CRS/Macedonia Civic Education team has expanded during the reporting period 21, September – 21, December 1999. A new International Project Manager has been employed. (See Annex 1 and 2 for detailed Job Description and Curriculum Vitae.) A new National Project Administrator has also been employed to support the expanding Civic Education activities, which are mainly curricula related. The National Project Assistant left her post in late December, and therefore the position will be advertised and filled during the next quarterly reporting period.

1.3 Reporting

As stated, USAID funding, under the Project “Civic Education: Path To A Civil Society” is allocated towards activities related to Kindergarten through Grade Four teachers and students. CRS funding is also ensuring that teachers and students in Grade Five through Eight benefit from similar Civic Education related activities. To reflect these differences in activities related to specific funding, this and future USAID reporting will directly relate to Kindergarten through Grade Four activities. To ensure continuity and sustainability in reporting of Civic Education activities, Grade Five through Eight activities will be reported in “Other Activities” in future USAID reports.

B. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

1. International Technical Assistance

1.1 CCE

Along with CRS/Macedonia staff, the CCE Project Coordinator for Macedonia during this reporting period was engaged in planning and organizing the January 2000 teacher training. Her primary role was to identify US trainers to work in Macedonia in January, as well as to provide guidance, based on her experience, of conducting and organizing Civic Education teacher training with CCE. The Project Coordinator also gave support and guidance to CRS/Macedonia in the development of a CCE / CRS funded study tour. The tour included a visit to CCE in California, educational institutions in Washington D.C., and to the finals of the Californian Students Civic Education Competitions in Sacramento, California. The Project Coordinator has worked closely with both CRS and CCE in the development of the itinerary of the study tour, ensuring the provision of a high quality visit for Macedonian Civic Education implementers. (See Annex 3 for the itinerary of the six member Macedonian delegation to the USA at the end of January 2000.)

2. Local Technical Assistance

2.1 PI/MOE Civic Education Working Group

The PI Civic Education Working Group has been actively working with CRS/Macedonia in coordinating teacher training activities and curricula development. Teacher training planning has involved participating in strategizing sessions with CRS to:

- Develop the training agenda, set the goal of the training, provide logistical management of the training seminars
- Select schools and teachers to be involved in the introduction of Civic Education
- Select the teachers and Pedagogical Advisers to be invited for training as Macedonian teacher trainers.

Curriculum development has involved:

- Proofreading the translations of CCE text materials for introduction into the National Curriculum in January 2000;
- Coordinating with CRS to establishing mechanisms to ensure the development of Macedonian Civic Education in schools
- Coordinating with CRS to establish mechanisms to ensure the ongoing evolution and development of further Macedonian texts.

The PI Working Group has shown considerable support for the project, and has taken an extended level of responsibility in working in coordination with CRS and CCE. Even so, there is need for the Working Group to accept further guidance on how to manage the organization of the various activities and utilize international expertise input whilst providing support for the development of Macedonia expertise.

2.2 Local Professional Services

During the reporting period local technical services support have ensured the development of twelve different adaptations of the CCE text materials. Through the utilization of three language proof readers and editors it has been possible to prepare text materials in the three main languages in Macedonia: Macedonian, Albanian and Turkish. Text materials for teachers and students at Grades One and Kindergarten, in the three languages are in the process of being adapted and going to a local printing house for reproduction. To date, textbooks for teachers of Kindergarten have been completed and distributed. The printing house has proven high quality, and efficient workmanship.

C. MINISTRY OF EDUCATION / PEDAGOGICAL INSTITUTE OF MACEDONIA

During the reporting period, CRS staff have been able to maintain a good working relationship with both MOE and PI personnel. The Director of the Pedagogical Institute has actively expressed her support for and commitment to the introduction of Civic Education in the Macedonian National Curriculum. The Ministry of Education has supported educational reform by encouraging the introduction of a variety of new American and European textbook materials into Macedonian schools. Previously teachers were told which of the Macedonian text materials had to be used in each lesson. This change in policy indicates a move towards the democratization of the education process through a greater choice of teaching materials. The PI Civic Education Working Group has continued to support and take an active role in the implementation of Civic Education in primary education, having established a Civic Education curricular advisory committee and having shown a commitment to future Civic Education teacher training programs.

Even so, the second year of project implementation coincides with a period of political changes in the Republic of Macedonia and in response the working educational environment has altered. During December 1999 major structural changes at the Ministry of Education (MOE) occurred. Ministry of Education staffing changed and the Under Secretary of Higher Education, a member of the PI Civic Education Working Group has been transferred to activities under the Ministry of Science rather than the Ministry of Education. It is still unclear of the effect that this will have on existing working relationships between CRS and MOE/PI, and as to whether the structural changes will affect not only the MOE, but also the PI as a whole, and therefore the PI Civic Education Working Group.

D. NATIONAL PARENTS ASSOCIATION OF MACEDONIA

During the period September, 21, 1999 – December, 21, 1999, the NPA activities involved close cooperation with CRS. The NPA was actively engaged in the implementation of the Fostering Parental Involvement (FPI) in Primary Schools Project, funded by the Netherlands Embassy.

During the reporting period five board meetings were held. These meetings incorporated training sessions on capacity building, with a focus on institutional strengthening and fund raising.

During September, October and November NPA staff had the opportunity to join the CRS education team on an extensive study visit throughout Macedonia, incorporating school visits, meetings with Parent Councils and School Directors. These meetings gave NPA and CRS staff the opportunity to work with Parents Councils on the subjects of “Mapping of our School Community” and “Need/Problem Identification and Prioritization”. Two regional seminars were also held during September for representative of Parents Councils. Participants were invited from all primary schools in the Skopje region. These seminars were organized and carried out by NPA Board Members.

During the month of December a regional seminar for school directors, pedagogues and presidents of Parent Councils was organized in Krusevo. The participants were from ten primary schools from Southwest Macedonia. The topic of the seminar was “Fostering cooperation between schools and parents”. The trainer for the seminar was an Independent Adviser of the Pedagogical Institute from Bitola, and one of the guests of the seminar was a representative from the Ministry of Education. During the seminar, the inclusion of Civic Education into the National Curriculum was introduced to participants. Methodologies and concepts of parental involvement in education were presented. This raised a great amount of interest by the participants, and it was proposed that it be followed by further regional seminars throughout Macedonia, for a similar group of participants but to also include seminars specifically for Parent Council members. The proposed follow-up regional seminars will establish a strong basis to raise awareness of Civic Education both within the school curriculum and also within the wider community. (See Annex 4, Fostering Parental Involvement six-month report narrative and annual plan, January 2000).

E. PROJECT RELATED ACTIVITIES

During the period September 21, – December 21, 1999, two major areas of project cooperation continued between CRS and implementing partners CCE and the PI Civic Education Working Group. The frequency of communication and coordination between CRS and implementing partners varied between weekly and daily and this has ensured a positive working relationship.

Key areas that have been addressed during the reporting period include:

- i) Teacher training: to ensure ongoing quality in the planning, design, implementation and logistical operations of future expected activities. Activities during this period have focused upon preparation for the January 2000 training for Kindergarten teachers. CCE has taken responsibility for training curricular

development and provision of trainers. As already stated, the PI Working Group has worked closely with CRS to ensure the success of the logistical management of the training and teacher selection. With planned training activities during the Macedonian winter break during which the Orthodox Christmas and the Muslim holiday of Bajram will fall, training provision will respect the needs of all religious groups in Macedonia; by offering sessions on multiple dates. The teachers selected by the PI are representative of the ethnic mix in the country, and the training schedule and agenda will respond to the religious requirements of each of the groups. Standardized procedures for the logistical arrangements for this form of teacher training are now being fully established and will be used as the basis of future regional training activities by CRS and the PI Civic Education Working Group.

ii) **Curricula development:** to ensure provision of high quality text adaptations and printing of CCE materials that are culturally and linguistically appropriate. During the reporting period September – December 1999, activities focused upon the provision of text materials to support the 120 First Grade teachers and 60 Kindergarten teachers who will start teaching Civic Education during the second semester of the academic year 1999 – 2000, in January 2000. Agreement was reached for the inclusion of Civic Education curricular for the Grade One and Kindergarten to be included across all subjects.

Under the USAID funded Civic Education project, CRS will support the reproduction and printing of translated CCE text materials. The PI, through the financial support of the MOE will provide modified Civic Education text materials, developed by a local author. CCE text revisions were made ensuring development of appropriate terminology and specifically to address provision for use of terms that previously were not used in the Macedonian language. Representation of names from all ethnic groups in Macedonia were included in all versions of the text, each of the texts were developed in versions for both students and teachers and for each of the major ethnic groups represented in Macedonia. Each text went through a rigorous process of proofreading and editing to ensure high quality. Illustrations within the text were revised to include these changes. Through a tender process a small but highly efficient local printing house was selected to produce the textbooks. Text materials produced to date include Kindergarten teachers' text in Macedonian, which have been distributed. The further eleven texts will be printed and circulated during January and February 2000, and it is envisaged that distribution will be complete by the third week of the school term. It is expected that further textbooks, funded through the MOE, will also be available for teachers at a later stage of the second semester.

F. OTHER ACTIVITIES

1.1 CRS Civic Education Activities.

To ensure continuity of activities, CRS funding has allowed development of Grade Five curricula and preparation for January 2000 training for Grade Five to parallel USAID funded Civic Education Activities. Agreement was reached with the PI Working Group that for the Civic Education Grade Five curricula, lessons would be taught as a homeroom subject once every two weeks. All Grade Five teachers not only teach a homeroom group but also a number of classes that are subject specific. Therefore, there is the possibility that the new methodologies will not only be taught and stay in the homeroom, but will support subject teaching through out the entire Grade Five curriculum.

To support the implementation of Civic Education curricular in second semester of the academic year 1999 – 2000, six different adaptations of the Grade Five CCE text materials have been produced. Text materials have been translated for the three main languages in Macedonia: Macedonian, Albanian and Turkish. Text materials for teachers and students, are in the process of being adapted and going to a local printing house. To date, textbooks for Macedonian teachers of Grade Five have been completed and distributed and the work of the printing house has proven to be high in quality. It is expected that the other five texts will be available by the third week of the new school year.

1.2 Media / Public Awareness Activities

During the reporting period a great deal of media interest was generated by project activities. The Albanian and Macedonian language newspapers, “Flaka e vëllazërimit and Nova Makedonija” interviewed project staff in December. Both newspaper reports were enthusiastically received and CRS can provide copies of the articles upon request. Also during December CRS Civic Education staff were interviewed by the Albanian television channel TV ERA, for a current affairs program on education. To further support awareness of project activities, the Civic Education team presented the Annual Report and Work Program to both USAID staff and CRS/Europe staff in November 1999. The presentation addressed previous as well as future activities, including video footage of the August teacher training.

Proposals to support on-going public awareness, specifically in Macedonian schools have been discussed by the PI Civic Education Working Group and CRS staff. Civic Education newsletters, brochures and short films for television are all possible opportunities to be explored. Opportunities to address regional as well as local networking and information exchange have been discussed and these would be achieved through the establishment of a Civic Education Internet site.

1.3 Training and Conferences

During the reporting period a number of activities supported the implementation and enriching of Civic Education activities.

During October 1999 CRS staff attended training sessions on “Participatory Learning in Action”. The training was organized by CRS and facilitated by a trainer from the USA.

In early November 1999 a Civic Education Project staff member attended an International Conference in Washington to present Civic Education activities in Macedonia. The conference was organized by CCE and provided the opportunity to promote activities and methodologies used in implementation with implementers of Civic Education in Macedonia.

In late November 1999 another member of the Civic Education project staff attended an International conference on Parental Involvement in Schools in the Netherlands. Presentations were given on CRS activities in education and parental involvement in Macedonia and the entire Balkans region. Staff also had the opportunity to network with European organizations active in parental and community involvement in education.

Both conferences gave opportunity for project staff to network with other implementers of Civic Education and to learn about other methods of good practice throughout the world. Through the linkages that have been developed by involvement in these two conferences, the first of three project proposals for training and study trips has been submitted to the World Learning Center in Macedonia. The conference focus is on the involvement and presentation of pedagogical approaches required to support the future society of Macedonia. The international conference in Gdansk, Poland will take place in early March 2000.

G. FUTURE ACTIVITIES

In order to build on the strong basis of the introduction of Civic Education in all primary schools in Macedonia, the following sequence of steps is being pursued during the next quarterly reporting period of the project:

1. Adaptation, printing and distribution of translated CCE textbooks in Macedonian, Albanian and Turkish for teachers of Grade One and Kindergarten that have been involved in training for the introduction of Civic Education
2. Distribution of textbooks to all Kindergarten and Grade One students that will have lessons in Civic Education during Semester Two
3. Training of 60 Kindergarten teachers, and 10 PI Advisers in Civic Education;
4. Establishment of regional support and networking mechanisms for teachers involved in the implementation of Civic Education in their classrooms
5. Development of an in-school evaluation procedure by CRS, the PI and CCE
6. Hiring a full time staff member to be involved in the presentation of Civic Education in regional seminars to Directors, School Administrators, Pedagogues and Parent Council members
7. Development of a Civic Education promotional campaign by CRS and the PI, through the publication of a Civic Education newsletter and brochure to be available in schools through out the country.

Other Related Activities

1. Delegation study visit to the USA for six Macedonian individuals actively involved in the implementation of Civic Education in the curriculum
2. Adaptation, printing and distribution of translated CCE textbooks in Macedonian, Albanian and Turkish for teachers of Grade Five that have been involved in training for the introduction of Civic Education
3. Distribution of textbooks to all Grade Five students that will have lessons in Civic Education during Semester Two
4. Training of 60 Grade Five teachers, and 10 PI Advisers in Civic Education.

H. FINANCIAL ACTIVITY

CRS/Macedonia financial management systems have been in a process of transfer from FA Systems to SUN Systems during December 1999, and it is expected to be completed by January 2000. This will affect the ability for the financial department to generate the monthly financial reports to programs departments. It is expected that reports will be delayed by approximately six weeks, and the financial report for 21, September 1999 to 21, December 1999 will be submitted to USAID as soon as available.