



MACEDONIA JUDICIAL REFORM IMPLEMENTATION PROJECT

Budget and Finance Study

TRIP REPORT

**Submitted by:
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The authors views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United State Government.

Introduction

In the Spring of 2008 Dr. Deborah Botch, DPK Consultant Expert, conducted a study to evaluate budgeting and fiscal management processes within the Republic of Macedonia (RM) Judiciary and made recommendations for improvements to ensure that stable, sufficient and well managed resources are provided to the courts and judicial branch programs to meet the needs of the citizens for timely and fair justice services. The study was undertaken as a component of the USAID Judicial Reform Implementation Project (JRIP).

Dr. Botch's study found positive developments and areas in need of improvement in the budget and fiscal management functions of the Judiciary. To address problems identified, the study made 29 recommendations to overcome the challenges facing the Macedonia Judiciary in efforts to obtain sufficient financing to ensure effective court operations. Recommendations were organized into five key areas: (1) Budget Request Preparation, Analysis and Adoption, (2) Budget Execution and Financial Management, (3) Communications and Relationships with External Government Institutions, (4) Adopting and Implementing Strategic Planning and (5) Education, Training and Professional Development.

From October 4 through October 11, 2008, Dr. Deborah Botch was in Macedonia to present Judiciary budget and fiscal management process study findings and recommendations to a Conference of Republic of Macedonia Judiciary and Government Officials, members of the Financing and Budgeting Committee of Parliament, and members of the Bar and other organizations interested in the effective administration of justice. Dr. Botch also conducted a two-day action planning workshop, with a select group of court system professional staff, to set priorities and propose next steps for each study recommendation for future consideration and approval by the Macedonia Judiciary's Court Budget Council. The conference and workshop were undertaken as part of the USAID Judicial Reform Implementation Project (JRIP).

Prior to arrival in Skopje, Macedonia, Dr. Botch prepared two Power Point Presentations for translation and presentation to the conference and workshop participants and prepared remarks for delivery with the presentation. She also wrote an Executive Summary for inclusion in the report and reviewed and approved a modified version of the complete Macedonia Judiciary Budget and Finance Study report. The modified version, which omitted findings but contained all other parts of the report, was distributed to conference participants.

During the first two days of the October, 2008 field visit to Macedonia, Dr. Botch met with JRIP Chief of Party, Sam Juncker and members the JRIP staff to finalize power point presentations delivered at the conference and workshop. Meetings also were held to review a memo containing the opinion and comments on the budget and finance study prepared by Dr. Zanina Kirovska, State Advisor for the Court Budget in October 2008. This review resulted in minor revisions to the formal presentation of the budget and finance study expert.

October 8, 2008 Conference on Budgeting and Financial Management in the Macedonia Judiciary

29 Recommendations to Improve Budget Planning and Execution



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The primary purpose of the consultancy trip to Macedonia was to review the study findings and 29 recommendations to improve budget planning and execution in the Macedonia Judiciary. A presentation was made to a gathering of Republic of Macedonia government officials, members of parliament, judges, court staff, and representatives of the bar and organizations working on justice reform projects. The goal of the conference was to foster greater cooperation among all Judiciary Budget stakeholders and improve Macedonia Judiciary budget process outcomes.

The conference included remarks by the Judge Jove Vangelovski President of the Court Budget Council, USAID Macedonia Mission Director, Michael Fritz, and JRP Chief of Party Sam Juncker. Dr. Botch, DPK study consultant made a presentation to conference participants explaining the 29 recommendations to improve Macedonia Judiciary Budget and Financial Management process, which were separated into five categories as follows:

- Budget request preparation, analysis and adoption: 10 recommendations
- Budget execution and financial management: 6 recommendations
- Improving communications and relationships with government institutions: 5 recommendations
- Adopting and implementing strategic planning within the Judiciary: 5 recommendations

Education, training and professional development of budget and fiscal staff: 3 recommendations.

October 9-10, 2008 Action Planning Workshop on Budgeting and Financial

Management in the Macedonia Judiciary

October 2008 Two-day Workshop
Establishing Priorities and
Developing Action Plans on 29
Recommendations to improve
Judiciary Budget planning and
Execution



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A two-day action planning workshop was conducted by Dr. Botch with 25 selected court system staff members who are involved in court system administration and Judiciary budget and financial management. These representatives of the Macedonia Court system included staff of the Administrative Office of the Court Budget Council, court secretaries and regional and court accountants and staff of the Office of Internal Controls.

The purpose of the two-day workshop was to:

- Review recommendations for improving Macedonia Judiciary budgeting and financial management.
- Set recommendation priorities and develop action plans for improving Macedonia Judiciary Budget and Financial Management Processes.
- Prepare a proposed Action Plan for priority recommendations for review and approval by Court Budget Council.

These objectives were accomplished by the workshop participants and their action plans will be incorporated by Dr. Botch into a report that will be provided to the JRIP Chief of Party and staff for discussion with follow-up by the Director of the Administrative Office to the President of the Court Budget Council.

**Summary of in-country activities of Dr. Deborah Botch–Macedonia Judiciary
Budget and Finance Study Consultant-October 2008**

Date	Activity
October 6/7, 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings with Macedonia JRIP Chief of Party and Staff to prepare and finalize conference and workshop materials and presentations.
October 8, 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation to 110 conference participants on Budgeting and Financial Management in the Macedonia Judiciary on the 29 recommendations of Budget and Finance Study conducted in May and June 2008
October 9, 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducted Workshop Session One on Action Planning Workshop on Recommendations of the 2008 Macedonia Budget and Finance study with 25 professional court and administrative office staff. • Reviewed results of work of 25 participants first day of action planning workshop and summarized results of priority ratings for each of the 29 recommendations.
October 10, 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducted Workshop Session Two on Action Planning Workshop and reviewed final action plan proposals for 29 recommendations prepared by workshop participants.



Dr. Deborah Botch
Presenting Action Plan
Priorities for 29
Recommendations