



USAID | MACEDONIA

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EDUCATION FOR A MODERN SOCIETY

2009



The USAID Secondary Education Activity prepares students for the workforce by helping them to establish and manage school-based businesses.

USAID Selected Results 1993-2008 Education

- Established the South East European University (SEEU) in Tetovo
- Equipped all secondary and central primary schools with computer labs
- Made Macedonia the 1st wireless country in the world
- Created an educational web portal for primary and secondary schools
- Helped over 2,200 Roma students to improve school performance
- Established career centers in 71 vocational secondary schools
- Established real school-based businesses in 44 and virtual companies in 7 vocational schools
- Organized the biggest humanitarian concert in Macedonian history
- Developed assessment standards and Code of Ethics

SUMMARY

Several international studies show that Macedonia lags behind other transition countries in education performance. Improving the quality of education is a key priority for the Government of Macedonia and USAID to ensure that youth are equipped with knowledge and skills that will help foster economic growth and improve Macedonia's prospects for European Union membership. Since 2002, USAID has been implementing programs to address all levels of the education system – primary, secondary and university.

PROGRAMS

PRIMARY EDUCATION PROJECT (PEP)

PEP improves the quality of primary education in Macedonia by introducing teaching methods that stimulate the development of critical thinking and problem solving skills in students, renovating schools to provide better learning environments, and expanding access and use to computer and internet technologies. The project works with the Ministry of Education and Science and the Bureau for the Development of Education to develop quality digital learning materials and revitalize math and science curricula. To stimulate and reinforce quality learning, the majority of teachers in the upper primary grades will be trained in effective assessment methods, as well as inquiry-based learning techniques. As part of its school renovation component, the project will modernize over 100 schools across the country during its five years of implementation.

CREATIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING PROJECT

Since 2002, the Creative Teaching and Learning Project has worked with 19 general secondary schools (gymnasia) and 45 primary schools to introduce interactive teaching methods, establish media labs with new computers and internet connectivity, and introduce best practices in school management. In 2005, the project focus shifted from in-service to pre-service teacher training: it is working with eight Teacher Training Institutions to ensure that future teachers start their jobs prepared with student-centered teaching methods and strong information technology skills. The project provides training in interactive teaching methodology and the principles of the European Credit Transfer System, and updates the curriculum to integrate Education for Social Justice and Information Technology. The project also provides facility renovations and establishes model classrooms and media labs.

ROMA EDUCATION PROJECT

The Roma Education Project provides comprehensive education support for increasing school retention and academic achievement of Roma youth. Through its five Roma Education Centers in 5 communities in Skopje, Kumanovo and Prilep, the project assists preschool students in preparation for regular school, delivers after-school tutoring for primary school students, and provides scholarships and mentoring to secondary and higher education students. The project also works with parents to



Primary school students in Neraste celebrate a new central heating system, installed by USAID

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raise their awareness about the importance of education, and provides training to the teachers in intercultural education and education for social justice, school improvement and dealing with diversity.

HUMAN & INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Through this program, USAID has been enhancing capacities of the State Education Inspectorate (SEI) and the Bureau for Development of Education (BDE) as key institutions in the education system whose functions and roles have been modernized and altered significantly since 2006. USAID support resulted in SEI providing professional education quality assurance by conducting over 80 school integral inspections in academic 2007/08. In addition, the program helped BDE improve its IT infrastructure and automate its job processes.

RECENTLY COMPLETED PROJECTS

SECONDARY EDUCATION ACTIVITY (SEA) - completed September 2008

The Secondary Education Activity focused on improving the quality of education in all vocational schools across Macedonia and preparing their students for the workforce. It had three major components: teacher professional and career development; student career preparation; and strengthening school management and governance. Principles, standards, and competencies for teacher professional development, as well for teachers' Career Development grades were developed. The project has established 71 computer-equipped career centers, 59 vocational school-based companies, and virtual firms in 7 economics high schools to provide linkages with businesses and give students hands-on professional experience. Through its director certification program, the project trained over 360 primary and secondary school directors and developed a performance-based school management system, while School Board members were trained in executing their newly defined functions in a decentralized education system.

E-SCHOOLS PROJECT – completed March 2008

The e-Schools project has improved the quality of teaching and enabled the use of Information Communication Technology (ICT) by teachers and students. In collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Science, the project installed 6,000 computers donated by the Chinese Government, trained over 10,000 teachers in the use of ICT in Macedonian schools, and created an education portal that linked the school communities and all teachers in a virtual working environment (www.schools.edu.mk). Servers were installed in all 460 schools to provide for central monitoring, troubleshooting and other maintenance support.

MACEDONIA CONNECTS – completed December 2007

MK Connects, one of USAID's main legacy projects, has made Macedonia the first wireless country of its size in the world. Recognizing the importance of sustainable internet access for the country's development, USAID supported the nationwide expansion of affordable and accessible broadband internet in 2005. As a result, about 550 primary and secondary schools, university departments, and educational-support organizations across Macedonia have enjoyed access to high-speed internet through December 31, 2007. The project helped to reduce internet prices in Macedonia by 75 percent and encouraged healthy competition in the sector.