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USAID Civic Engagement Project in Macedonia (CEP)

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 CEPMACEDONIA

e-Newsletter

WELCOME TO THE FOURTH EDITION OF USAID’S CIVIC ENGAGEMENT PROJECT (CEP) NEWSLETTER. THIS EDITION COVERS THE MOST SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES COMPLETED IN THE PAST SIX MONTHS, MARKING THE SECOND CALENDAR YEAR OF CEP’S IMPLEMENTATION. THE RESULTS WE CHOSE TO SHARE WITH YOU ARE JUST A FEW FROM THE MANY ACTIVITIES ACCOMPLISHED DURING THIS PERIOD. WE HOPE THAT YOU WILL FIND THESE STORIES INSPIRING AND WILL SHARE THEM WITH YOUR FAMILIES AND FRIENDS.

A Note

We bid farewell to Ana Drakic, who has been CEP’s Chief of Party for over two years. She greatly contributed to CEP’s objectives by providing valuable guidance to programs that improve the capacity of civil society organizations in order to help them achieve tangible changes in society. She has helped the Project and those implementing it excel in every way. We want to wish her

the best of luck in her future endeavors. CEP is pleased to announce that Jeton Krasniqi will become CEP’s Chief of Party as of January 2019. He will continue working on CEP’s progress and its meaningful results in relevant ongoing development processes on a local and central level. He has done an amazing job as CEP’s Deputy Chief of Party and Capacity Development

Manager, so we are excited to see his contribution in the new position. In November of this year, CEP welcomed Dejan Dokuzovski as the new Deputy Chief of Party. With his skills and experience, he will contribute to CEP’s objectives and the further implementation of activities aimed at bettering the community overall. We are happy to have him aboard!



Ana Drakic, Chief of Party
(August 2016-December 2018)



Jeton Krasniqi, Deputy Chief of Party and
Capacity Development Manager
(December 2016-December 2018)



Dejan Dokuzovski
Deputy Chief of Party
(November 2018-present)

Editor’s Note

If you wish to subscribe to receive the Bi-Annual newsletter from the USAID Civic Engagement Project, please click [here](#). Or if you would like to unsubscribe from this e-mail service, please write us a short note [unsubscribe](#). We invite you to visit www.cep.mk and <https://www.facebook.com/CEPMacedonia/> and be among the first to find out about our latest activities and opportunities.

PROGRAM NEWS

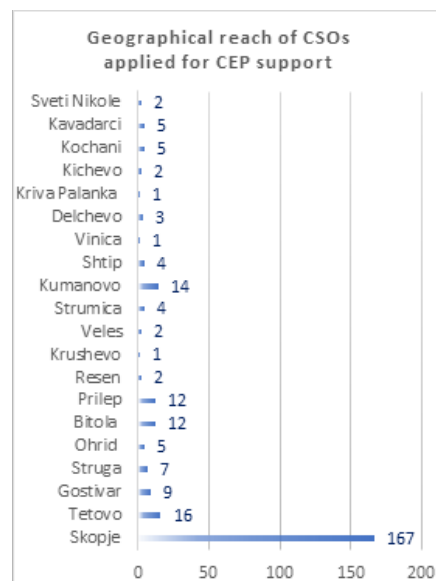
Grants under CEP

CEP completed its second year that focused on strengthening dialogue between citizens, civil society organizations (CSOs), and government on important social issues. By the end of December we reached 278 CSOs throughout the country and made them aware of the opportunities available for them to engage in dialogue with citizens, civil society organizations and the government to advance important social issues.

In the last six months, CEP awarded three Rapid Response Grants (RRGs) focused on voter education related to the Referendum. The following CSOs were grant recipients: Association for Promotion and Development of an Inclusive Society INKLUZIVA; the Union "National Council for Gender Equality" and the Association of Citizens "Media Plus". They carried out voter education activities for persons with disabilities, marginalized groups

and for women and girls in rural areas. Persons with disabilities also monitored the referendum and were certified as observers. To support the Government of Macedonia's efforts to decrease the number of young people that are not in education, employment, or training (NEET) through their enrollment in the Youth Guarantee Program, CEP worked with the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy and awarded Youth Engagement Support (YES) Grants to the Association of Citizens "Youth Can" and Center for Youth Activism KRIK.

In September, CEP launched the Call for Applications for the 3rd Linking, Engagement, Advocacy, and Development Program in Macedonia (LEAD MK). In early fall, CEP issued its 3rd Request for Applications for the Partnership Grants and the Strategic Support Grants, as well as the 5th Request for Applications for the Youth Engagement Support Grants.



Tackling Local Issues on a Bus

In September 2018, during CEP's second CSO Bus Tour, citizens from the villages of Karbinci (Municipality of Karbinci) and Podaresh (Municipality of Radovish) were connected with civil society organizations working in the region. In Karbinci, the attendees including the Mayor of Karbinci talked about local problems such as education and opportunities for youth, agricultural development and waste management. They agreed to work together and

develop a list of local priorities, which will serve as a guide and help them direct their work towards real concerns of people in the area.

In Podaresh citizens shared their opinions about issues they have to deal with day-to-day such as inadequate public services, youth migration, unemployment, and road safety. CSO representatives who attended the event offered viable solutions and ways to tackle the issues raised at the meeting.



Jordan Nasev, Mayor of Karbinci (left) discusses local challenges with a Skopje-based CSO representative

What Will the NATO Accession Process Bring to Macedonia and its Citizens

On September 14 in Bitola, CEP organized a Policy Forum titled "NATO Integration Perspectives – What Will the Accession Process Bring to Macedonia and Its Citizens". The event gathered around 100 participants from civil society organizations, central and local institutions, businesses, media, academia, and other relevant stakeholders. Edward Gonzalez, Director of the General Development Office at USAID Macedonia, delivered opening remarks at the beginning of the event. The Policy Forum was an opportunity to



Policy Forum on NATO Integration Perspectives

give the public an overview of what can be expected from the NATO accession process and how it will impact the lives

of Macedonian citizens. The panel was comprised of prominent speakers including (from left on the picture): Danijela Barisic, Ambassador of the Republic of Croatia in the Republic of Macedonia, Stevo Pendarovski, National Coordinator for NATO Accession, Ismet Ramadani, President of the Euro - Atlantic Council of Macedonia, Goran Ilikj, Dean of the Faculty of Law "St. Kliment Ohridski" at the University of Bitola, and Nastasija Stojanovikj, a student and USAID's Civic Engagement Project LEAD Fellow.

Learning How to Successfully Speak on Social Media for Fundraising

Stories are the basic building blocks for reaching our goals. As fundraisers, you're responsible for arousing sympathetic emotions and inspiring action. The most powerful way to do that is to tell a great story. But what makes your story great? What do you need to include? Branko Dokuzovski from HORUS tried to answer these questions at the training on building communication and social marketing skills for effective fundraising

organized by CEP in November 2018. Social marketing plays a big role in our everyday lives which is why, CSOs need to enhance their skills in this area and learn how to convey their message to a wider audience in a compelling manner. The participants learned some useful tips and storytelling guidance how to engage and increase audience on social media pages and profiles.



Branko Dokuzovski presenting the basics of social marketing to the audience

Volunteering Knows No Age Limit

To mark International Volunteer Day, on December 5 the newly established Council for Volunteering in Bitola Municipality organized the "Local Volunteer Award 2018" event. Awards for volunteers were presented for the first time to recognize citizens engagement in improving the life of the local community. Among the winners of the award was the volunteering club "Tereza Ferdinandi Litovska" from the secondary school "Taki



Group photo - Local Volunteer Award 2018

Daskalo" from Bitola, which was recognized for its humanitarian and environmental actions. Verica Butlevska received the Award for her contribution to the activities of the Women's Organization – Bitola. Brewery Skopje was given the Corporate Volunteering Award for their educational school project, and Olga Ristevska, age 72, received a special recognition for her long-term volunteering engagement.

What Was Achieved Through Youth Civic Engagement Award

Through the Youth Civic Engagement Award (YCEA) in 2018, CEP awarded three small grants to two individuals and one youth organization that have shown a significant commitment and dedication to benefitting their communities and society in general. The winners in the individual category were Senada Sali and Marija Pavleska. The Scouts Association of Macedonia won in the youth CSO category. Thanks to the award, Senada Sali, an experienced lawyer in the field of Roma rights protection, used her platform as the winner of the Youth Civic Engagement Award to raise awareness about human rights and protection from discrimination among Romani youth. The YCEA winner in the youth CSO category, the Scouts Association of Macedonia, was able to replace the old Scout uniforms with new unified uniforms for all Scouts in Macedonia. In this way, the Scouts Association of Macedonia has successfully

enhanced the visual identity of all Scouts and increased the sense of belonging and team spirit among Scout peers. The Scout Association of Macedonia equipped 300 Scouts with brand new uniforms, as they continued with their mission of guiding



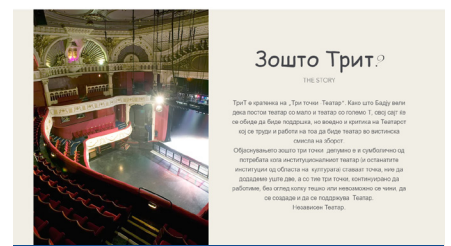
Senada Sali working with Romani youth at her workshop in Skopje, September 15, 2018



Scouts Association of Macedonia in their new uniforms September 2018

young people and helping them achieve their full potential as responsible citizens in their communities.

Marija Pavleska devoted her award towards raising awareness about independent theater and promoting female empowerment among theater workers. She launched an on-line platform titled "Trit.mk" and has so far published reviews on theater plays, podcasts with actors, actresses, and directors, information about theater festivals in Macedonia and even research on theater work by women.



Marija Pavleska's platform Trit.mk, launched on November 28, 2018

Linking, Engagement, Advocacy, Development Macedonia (LEAD MK) is Back Again

CEP's LEAD MK Program is back with its third generation of Fellows. A lot of highly motivated and change-driven young people from all parts of Macedonia applied during CEP's open call, launched in September 2018. It was a tough selection to make, but we were happy to choose 20 Fellows that will develop and implement their small-scale community projects during the next year. At the beginning of November, CEP's

LEAD MK Fellows were part of the LEAD MK Academy focused on topics like leadership, advocacy, development, community engagement, project cycle management and budget planning. With the help of their trainers, our Fellows had a chance to further develop their skills in these fields, broaden their views, and become inspired to craft and develop their unique projects. We are looking forward to seeing what they come up with!



Third generation of LEAD MK Fellows

Marking the International Anti-Corruption Day

On December 12, in order to mark International Anti-Corruption Day, CEP's grantee, the Platform of Civil Society Organizations in the Fight Against Corruption, organized the annual conference titled "Urgent Priority Reforms: Strengthening the Institutional Framework in the Fight Against Corruption: Was Progress Made?" The event gathered together representatives from the government, public institutions, media and civil society to discuss a coordinated effort to fight corruption in Macedonia. The topics of the panel discussions were connected



U.S. Ambassador Jess Baily at the Panel Discussion on Defining the Role of CSOs in Safeguarding the Existing Legal, Financial and Political Systems

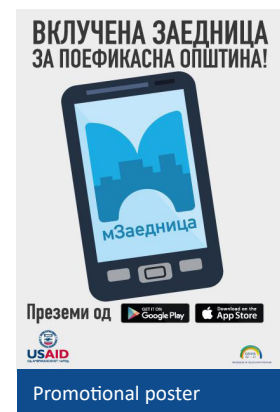
to the challenges in strengthening institutional frameworks, the selection and appointment processes of judges, public prosecutors, members of regulatory and oversight bodies, and the role of CSOs in the fight against corruption.

U.S. Ambassador Jess Baily joined the final panel discussion at the conference. In his remarks, he affirmed the United States' commitment to helping Macedonia build transparent, accountable institutions and strengthen criminal justice systems to hold the corrupt accountable.

Civic Engagement in the Digital Age

The increasing use of Information and communication technologies (ICT) in people's everyday lives has created new ways to communicate, new spaces to share experiences and new methods to make their voices heard. Through the YES Grants, CEP has supported a local CSO, Blink 42-21, with the implementation of a project to create a mobile application that enables young people to constructively engage with their community and interact with

their local government. As of December 2018, Karposh (Skopje) became the first municipality in Macedonia to communicate with its citizens through a mobile application. Through мЗаяедница (mCommunity), Karposh municipality will get a chance to develop an interactive relationship with citizens and civil society organizations, enabling them to propose ideas and initiatives through this mobile application in order to improve their municipality.



Promotional poster

Upcoming Activities

- In January, CEP will organize a number of capacity development activities for its grantees, such as: Quarterly Grantees Meeting, In-Country Exchange visit on Local Citizen Participation and Learning Circle on Volunteering;
- In February, CEP will launch 20 LEAD MK small-scale projects;
- In March, CEP will issue its third call for Youth Civic Engagement Award; and
- In June, CEP will recognize the outstanding work of individual youth, youth CSOs and/or informal youth groups for the activities implemented during 2018.

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