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“PRIMARY EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT PROJECT  
(PEIP)”  
REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA  
STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN



September 2020

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## Abbreviations

NEC	National Examination Centre
BDE	Bureau for Development of Education
MOES	Ministry of Education and Science
ESCP	Environmental and Social Commitment Plan
ESF	Environmental and Social Framework
ESS	Environmental and Social Standard
GRM	Grievance and Redress Mechanism
HR	Human Recourses
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
SEI	State Educational Inspectorate
SONK	Trade Union for Education, Science and Culture
MPST	Multi-Professional Support Teams
INSET	In-service teacher professional development
MOF	Ministry of Finance
PRiset	Pre-service training
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
OH&S	Occupational Health and safety
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SIP	School improvement plan
PMU	Project Management Unit
PPSD	Project Procurement Strategy for Development
RM	Republic of Macedonia
RNM	Republic of North Macedonia
SEP	Stakeholder Engagement Plan
NAP	National assessment program
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WB	World Bank
WDR	World Development Report

## 1 INTRODUCTION AND PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### 1.1 Introduction

The Primary Education Improvement Project will be implemented by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of North Macedonia. The project will be implemented country-wide, in urban, peri-urban and rural locations across the county.

The project will contribute in expanding skills and opportunities for the most vulnerable, and Improve the quality and relevance of education, supporting new investments in basic education, by i) increasing instruction quality in primary schools, ii) piloting new methodologies to monitor student achievement, providing adequate learning support to vulnerable and ethnic minority students, and addressing shortcomings in the curriculum; and, iii) improving teacher performance and career development – all of which are addressed in this new Project.

Stakeholders are defined as persons or groups who are directly or indirectly affected by a project as well as those who may have interest in a project and/or the ability to influence its outcome, either positively or negatively.

The project will affect a broad group of stakeholders such as teachers, students, parents, local -self-government officials, vulnerable groups etc

The respective Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) is designed to establish an effective platform for productive interaction with the potentially affected parties and others with interest in the implementation and outcomes of the Primary Education Improvement Project in the Republic North Macedonia (PEIP). Meaningful stakeholder engagement throughout the project cycle is an essential aspect of good project management and provides opportunities for the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of North Macedonia (MoES) to incorporate feedback into the project design, assess the risks as well as mitigation measures, and clarify the project scope and impacts to manage expectations.

**The objective and purpose of the present SEP is to inform how stakeholders will be involved throughout the course of the project, which were the previous engagements within the PEIP project, and outline the responsibilities of the relevant institutions and contractors in the implementation of upcoming engagement activities etc.**

This SEP identifies the major stakeholders affected by the project either directly or indirectly (including vulnerable groups) as well as those with other interests that can influence decisions about the project. It outlines the engagement approach undertaken and planned, and articulates a range of strategies for timely, relevant and accessible stakeholder engagement throughout the project life cycle. The SEP is prepared in compliance and with the application of the World Bank Performance Environment and Social Standard 10: Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure.

## 1.2 Project Description

The Government of North Macedonia intends to receive a loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) for the implementation of the Primary Education Improvement Project. The Project will be implemented by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of North Macedonia and will improve conditions for learning in primary education.

North Macedonia has recently undertaken important reforms of the preschool education and care system. To capitalize further on this important investment, the country now needs to invest more, and more effectively, in the quality of teaching and learning in primary education. The PEIP project will be organized around three main elements that need to be aligned in order to be complementary to each other. Two are system-level reforms regarding the development of a comprehensive national assessment program and enhancing competences of teachers, multi professional support teams and school leaders that would create the necessary enabling conditions, so the school teams are empowered with data on learning and up-to-date training. The third focuses on school-level interventions. Additionally, the PEIP project would strengthen sector management, project management and Monitoring & Evaluation.

The Project will consist of the following components:

### **COMPONENT 1. IMPROVING LEARNING AT THE SCHOOL LEVEL**

This component will focus on factors that improve learning at the school level through: i) the revision and use of school improvement plans focusing on improving student learning, supported by school grants to build on schools' preexisting level of decision-making autonomy; ii) the upgrading of the physical learning environment supported through centrally procured investments and iii) the sharing of information to promote accountability..

#### ***Subcomponent 1.1: School Improvement Plans (SIP) and grants***

The project would finance activities aimed at improving the capacity of schools to conduct self-evaluation and develop a School Improvement Plan (SIP). The SIP will be a key instrument in determining ways to improve the physical learning environment in schools and, most importantly, in identifying areas in which the school team (principal, teachers, support team, community) will work together to improve learning.

Schools would self-assess while the Inspectorate would continue to externally assess schools. School teams would develop SIPs that convincingly demonstrate ways to improve student learning outcomes entitling schools entitled to then receive grants to implement their ideas. The aim is to prioritize and support weak schools (those schools that have students with learning difficulties, schools with higher number of Roma population students, schools with students with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups and/or implementation of the accelerated learning programs for children who didn't had support in

learning or access to distance learning opportunities during the COVID-19 closure of the schools and are more prompted to drop education).

The school self-assessments and SIPs that result from the process will be developed with the participation and engagement of local communities, namely parents and students as beneficiaries of primary education, as well as teachers, associates (MPST), and local authorities (founders) as representatives of the school. Together, representatives of these groups comprise the school board for each school. While the school is responsible for preparing the SIP, the school board will be consulted and engaged in that SIP preparation process. School boards can suggest areas for improvement based on their meetings with other parents and students and request that the school adapt or improve the SIP. This participatory process will ensure that key stakeholders' voices are heard and that they are aware of actions taken based on their feedback, thereby closing the feedback loop. Grants would only be provided in cases where SIPs were developed with the active participation and engagement of local communities via their school board and where such engagement has been credibly documented as part of the school self-assessment and planning process. A regular survey of school board members would be conducted to capture feedback and report on board members' satisfaction with their engagement during the SIP preparation process and with the actions taken as a result of their feedback.

### **Subcomponent 1.2: Improving the Learning Environment**

This sub-component will finance upgrading to improve the learning environment in primary education through:

#### **(i) Upgrading of the physical learning environment**

Upgrades in basic infrastructure: where needed, minor rehabilitation will be provided to upgrade electricity, lighting, and connectivity, ensure adequacy of toilet facilities, community spaces for teachers and learners.

Enhancements to learning environments that is multifunctional, internet-connected, and conducive to learning. The project will finance multifunctional ICT rooms, science laboratories, as well as libraries, with age-appropriate furniture and the most appropriate equipment. Training will be provided to teachers and administrators on online safety and security. All classrooms with internet connectivity will be equipped with appropriate child safe technology.

#### **(ii) Updating of learning resources**

Classrooms will also be provided with teaching and learning materials: resources such as age- and level- appropriate books, learning manipulative (objects, toys, and games), posters, etc. will be provided in all North Macedonian official languages.

### **Subcomponent 1.3: Promoting accountability through information sharing**

To complement these two sub-components, an activity would be included to promote school-level accountability. This would be by sharing information about schools with stakeholders, as this has been shown to be a simple yet effective way to hold concerned actors (schools) more accountable to stakeholders (parents, students, the local community, local self-government, the Ministry, NGO's, teacher union). The information presented can range from simple descriptive statistics (number of students, number of teachers in a school etc.) to more sensitive data, such as student learning outcomes.

## **COMPONENT 2. REFORM OF THE MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF NATIONAL PROGRESS IN LEARNING**

The aim of National Assessment Program (NAP) is to provide an accurate snapshot of standards achieved by learners in the primary phase of education and to establish a reliable baseline against which future progress may be monitored.

Developing a NAP for primary grades will require developing age-appropriate semi-formal sample-based assessments for, initially, grade 3 and grade 5.

### **Sub-component 2.1 Development of a National Assessment Program ( NAP)**

This sub-component aims at providing technical assistance to the MOES and the National Examination Center (NEC) to develop the NAP concept as stipulated in the Law for Primary Education as well as to strengthen the relevant capacity of the NEC in terms of human, technical and financial resources. The project would support the development and administration of at least two cycles of literacy and mathematics in grade 3 and 5 initially. These will focus on the key enabling skills of basic mathematics (numeracy) and language (i.e. mother tongue/language of instruction).

### **Subcomponent 2.2 Maximizing use of NAP results at the Ministerial and School Level**

Once developed, results from the NAP will be used to inform policy reform at the ministerial level and through action at the school level. This would entail providing technical assistance and training at these two levels in data analysis, report writing, evidence-based decision making, as the case may be.

Concerned ministerial stakeholders (MoES, NEC, Bureau for Development of Education-BDE, State Education Inspectorate-SEI) would be provided with training to learn how to interpret and analyze NAP data in the interest of using it for policy reform. In addition, the inspectors will be trained to write school evaluation reports that are clear, specific and actionable. Such reports would be of immense importance to the schools in developing their plans.

For those schools covered in the sample, training would be provided to the school principals on how to interpret and act on NAP results at the school level while training for teachers will focus on how to help them interpret and act on NAP results at the student level. Additionally, the customized reports will be made available to other interested parties as local authorities, parents and academia.

### **COMPONENT 3. ENHANCING TEACHER, MULTI-PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT TEAMS, AND SCHOOL LEADERS COMPETANCES**

Due to the weak student learning outcomes in North Macedonia, according to the international assessments, the frontline actors - teachers, multi-professional support teams and school leaders - need to be in a strong position to respond to this learning crisis, with support coming from effective In-service Teacher Professional Development (often called INSET).

The objectives of this component are:

- (i) Operationalize competences;
- (ii) Improve in-service professional development (INSET);
- (iii) Begin to reform pre-service teacher professional development (PRESET).

#### **Subcomponent 3.1 Implementing Teacher, Multi-Professional Support Teams, and School Leader standards**

North Macedonia has developed these standards but now needs to implement them judiciously. Career paths for these professions also need to be developed to incentivize the professionals working in these fields.

The objective of this sub component is to operationalize the standards through development of career paths of teachers, strengthening capacity of all relevant stakeholders (Ministry, BDE, and Inspectorate) and putting into practice the new positions of Mentor-Teacher, Adviser-teacher.

#### **Subcomponent 3.2 Modernizing In-service Professional Development (PD)**

The project is in a strong position to build upon the ongoing reforms in In-service Teacher Professional Development that have been started in North Macedonia. It can make in-service training more pertinent by a) revising PD content; b) adjusting delivery – how PD is provided; c) improving support to teachers MPST and school leaders through learning resources (including e-resources), learning groups like Teacher Actives, and resource persons, d) designing compulsory and elective courses and allocating appropriate funds to make them available for teachers and school leadership; and, e) providing incentives and strengthening accountability for PD.

In terms of developing new PD content, the following steps would be required: an analysis of needs; the design and development of modules; and the implementation and evaluation of these modules.

#### **Subcomponent 3.3 Introducing changes to Pre-service and new Teacher Selection**

Since new teachers entering the profession are weak, measures should be taken to improve pre-service education, selection into the teaching profession, and ongoing initial training of

novice teachers in the first years of service. If PRESET cannot be significantly revised, one way to improve pre-service training is to improve the transition from pre-service training into teaching by improving i) the coaching and mentoring of student teachers during in-school practicum's (in pre-service training) and ii) the coaching and mentoring of new trainee teachers as they go through induction and then become novice teachers in their first years of service. The new positions of mentor-teacher or adviser-teacher defined in the new law could ensure this role.

#### **Component 4 Sector Management, Project Management and Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E)**

This component will support the Ministry to improve sector management by developing studies to reflect on ways to improve fiscal efficiency in the sector, and project management and M&E.

##### **Subcomponent 4.1 Improving evidence-based sector management efficiency**

Fiscal inefficiencies in the sector deserve study so that government is better informed and better placed to take the necessary steps to improve efficiency. Concerning sector efficiency, further analysis of two issues, school optimization and funding formulas are needed. The project will support the Ministry in development of an action plan for school optimization and piloting of some of options with interested municipalities. It will be based on findings and recommendations based on the studies that the Ministry will be expected to make appropriate changes.

##### **Sub-component 4.2 Project management, monitoring and evaluation**

This subcomponent will also support the day-to-day management of project implementation and the M&E of its objectives and outcomes. This component will finance the activities that would ensure effective administration and implementation of the project.

### **1.3 Project location and context**

A landlocked country with an estimated population of 2.022.547<sup>1</sup>, the Republic of North Macedonia has achieved relatively stable growth over the last 15 years elevated its status from lower-middle in 2000 to upper-middle income economy. The education system of the Republic of North Macedonia comprises a mix of pre-school, primary (6-14 years), secondary (15-17/18 years) and higher education.

Primary education lasts for nine years and is compulsory and free for all pupils (6-14 old years). There are 347 primary schools in the country (around 1,100 including satellite schools). Literacy levels are high, 98.8% for male and 96.8% for female (2015)<sup>2</sup>. Gross enrolment rates 63%, and net enrolment rate is 91%. However, a number of children

<sup>1</sup> According to the last census from 2002.

<sup>2</sup> Source: "Adult literacy rate, population 15+ years (both sexes, female, male)". UIS Data Centre. UNESCO. August 2015

(mainly Roma) are not reflected in this statistics as they are not registered in any official system (have no ID), thus, the actual enrolment rate for the appropriate age cohort is less.

In 2016/17 there were 194 classes within 45 special primary schools, with total of 809 pupils (including 289 females) and 61 classes within 4 special secondary schools, with 229 pupils special educational needs (66 females)<sup>3</sup>. According to MoES, there are 725 pupils with special educational needs included in regular classes in primary education and 230 in regular classes in secondary education.

Education system is organized around four languages of instruction in primary schools (Macedonian, Albanian, Turkish and Serbian<sup>4</sup>) and three languages of instruction in secondary education (Macedonian, Albanian, and Turkish). Around 29% of primary schools and 34% of secondary schools are two/three language schools<sup>5</sup>.

The number of students in primary education is 192.448 (females 93.118 and males 99.330)<sup>6</sup>. The number of teachers in primary education is 18.291 (females 12.732 and males 5.559)<sup>7</sup>

The project aims to transform the sector by focusing on the key elements needed at this juncture in North Macedonia's education sector reform effort. Following evidence found in the literature and principles laid out in the World Development Report 2018, this includes: a) introducing evaluation mechanisms that allow key stakeholders to assess learning and act on that evidence at the classroom and sectoral level; b) empowering schools to be greater agents of change in direct response to the learning needs of their students; and c) aligning all actors by strengthening an evidence-based approach to learning, both in the classroom (used by teachers) and in the Ministry. Developing systems within schools and the Ministry that are centrally and critically focused on improving student learning outcomes will ensure sustainability. Finally, the project's full alignment with North Macedonia's *Comprehensive Strategy for Education for 2018-2025* ensures ownership and sustainability of project interventions. The Education Strategy of the Republic of North Macedonia for 2018-2025 is the basis of the activities of the institutions in the Republic of North Macedonia in the field of education for the period till 2025. The strategy is based on clear identification of the main challenges of Education sector, thus ensuring its relevance through careful definition of the priority areas to be addressed within the period till 2025. The document firstly covers six main pillars of education system – Pre-school Education; Primary Education; Secondary Education; Vocational Education and Training; Higher Education and Research; and Adult Learning and Education. These are followed by a seventh pillar, covering general issues in the education system.

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<sup>3</sup> Administrative data from the Primary and Secondary Education Department at the MoES.

<sup>4</sup> Experimental classes in Bosnian language have been introduced since 2010 in the schools that provide conditions for implementation

<sup>5</sup> Source: USAID Project on Interethnic Integration in Education.

<sup>6</sup> primary, lower secondary and upper secondary schools at the beginning of the school year 2017/2018-State Statistical Office

<sup>7</sup> primary, lower secondary and upper secondary schools at the beginning of the school year 2017/2018-State Statistical Office

## 1.4 Project Benefits

The PEIP proposed PDO is to improve conditions for learning in primary education.

The key results of the Project are:

1. Proportion of classrooms with improved learning environment at the primary level resulting from project interventions;
2. Proportion of (implemented) School Improvement Plans that use performance data and monitoring tools for improving student learning;
3. Proportion of classrooms with improved quality of teaching practices as measured by in-class teacher observation tool (TEACH).

**The project aims to strengthen North Macedonia's recent efforts in preschool and primary education by increasing access to high quality in primary education nationwide.**

Direct beneficiaries of the project will include primary education students, but focus support will be given those who are vulnerable (Roma, girls, students disproportionately affected by the closure of schools due to the Covid 19 pandemic). They are expected to benefit from improved learning and physical environment in their schools as well as from better-trained teachers. Primary education teachers, school principals and multi-professional support teams will benefit from more efficient professional development and career advancement, teaching aids, and grant program to implement their SIP.

## 1.5 Objectives and Scope of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan

Stakeholder engagement is an inclusive process conducted throughout the project life cycle. Where properly designed and implemented, it supports the development of strong, constructive and responsive relationships that are important for successful management of environmental and social risks identified in a project. Communicating early, often, and clearly with stakeholders helps manage expectations and avoid risks, potential conflict, and project delays. In addition, the plan assists in managing stakeholder expectations, which will have a bearing throughout the lifespan of the project. Hence, this SEP provides a plan to interact effectively with stakeholders to support project interests.

In order to provide clear and smooth communication between all interested and affected parties, Ministry of education and science has developed this Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP), which is carrying out stakeholder engagement in line with the laws of North Macedonia, as well as the requirements of World Bank (ESS standards).

The Key Objectives of the SEP can be summarised as follows:

- Understand the stakeholder engagement requirements of North Macedonia legislation;
- Provide guidance for stakeholder engagement such that it meets the standards of WB;
- Identify key stakeholders that are affected, and/or able to influence the Project and its activities;

- Identify the most effective methods, timing and structures through which to share project information, and to ensure regular, accessible, transparent and appropriate consultation;
- Develops a stakeholder's engagement process that provides stakeholders with an opportunity to influence project planning and design;
- Establish formal grievance/resolution mechanisms;
- Define roles and responsibilities for the implementation of the SEP;
- Define reporting and monitoring measures to ensure the effectiveness of the SEP and periodical reviews of the SEP based on findings.

**This SEP is a living document and will be continuously updated as sub projects are implemented.**

## 1.6 Regulatory requirements of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan

### 1.6.1 Legal framework and relevant documents

Although North Macedonia has begun to put into place the elements of a more up-to-date education system, there are nevertheless several reform areas that require urgent attention. The Government has a *Comprehensive Strategy for Education for 2018-25*,<sup>8</sup> launched in 2018, which includes several actions relevant to improving education quality and assessment, such as:

- (i) Strengthening the competence of teaching staff at all educational levels;
- (ii) Strengthening management and leadership capacity at central and local government levels, and within schools, and ensuring harmonised and transparent policies;
- (iii) Developing a national assessment by 2020 and a new concept for the state matura, in particular for VET students.

Two laws – on *Primary Education* and on *Teachers* – have been ratified (as of July 2019) by the Government of North Macedonia. The latter introduces four categories of the teacher (trainee, teacher, mentor, and advisor), distinguishes the professional competences associated with each of these categories in terms of knowledge, skills, and values, as well as presents the new professional development model that is to be put in place. Aspects of these laws have started to be enacted; so, for instance, the new teacher categories are currently being rolled out (mentors in 2020 and advisors in 2022).

### 1.6.2 National Legislation Requirements

- Constitution of Republic of North Macedonia (Number 08-4642-17.11.1991) - Article 16 of the Constitution of Macedonia guarantees "access to information and the freedom of reception and transmission of information";

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<sup>8</sup> Source: (MoES, 2018), *Comprehensive Education Strategy for 2018-25*, Ministry of Education and Science, Skopje.

- The Law on Free Access to Information of Public Character (Official Gazette of RNM” No. 101/19);
- The Law on primary education (Official Gazette Republic of North Macedonia, 161/2019);
- Law on Bureau for Development of education (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia” No. 37/2006; 142/2008; 148/2009, 69/2013,120/2013, 148/2013, 41/2014, 30/2016, 64/2018 );
- Law on State Examination Center (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia” No. 142/2008, 148/2009 ,41/2014, 55/2016, 142/2016 и 64/2018 );
- Law on teachers and professional support team members in primary and secondary schools (“Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia” No.161/2019);
- Law on education inspections (“Official Gazette of Republic of Macedonia” No. 52/2005, 81/2008, 148/2009, 57/2010, 51/2011, 24/2013, 137/2013, 164/2013, 41/2014, 33/2015, 145/2015, 30/2016 and 64/2018);
- Law on Training and Exam for Principal of Primary School, Secondary School, Student Home and Open Civic University for Lifelong Learning (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia” No. 10/14, 145/15, 192/15, 30/16, 120/18 and 140/18);
- Law on Budgets (Official Gazette of Republic of Macedonia No. 64/05, 4/08, 103/08, 156/09, 95/10, 180/11, 171/12, 192/15 and 167/16);
- Law on higher education institutions for education of teachers in pre-school education, primary and secondary education ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" 10/2015, 20/2015, 98/2015, 145/2015, 55/2016 и 127/2016);
- Rulebook on the manner of mentoring support of the trainee (“Official Gazette Republic of North Macedonia”, 161/2019-number 18-5437/1);
- Rulebook on the form and content of the personal plan for professional development of teachers and professional associates in primary and secondary schools (“Official Gazette Republic of North Macedonia”, 161/2019-number 18-4879/1);
- Rulebook on the basic professional competencies of the teachers in the primary and secondary schools by areas (“Official Gazette Republic of North Macedonia”, 161/2019);
- Rulebook on professional standards for the titles teacher-mentor and teacher-advisor and the manner of acquisition (“Official Gazette Republic of North Macedonia”,161/2019);
- Rulebook for the manner and the procedure for performing inspection by the education inspection (“Official Gazette Republic of Macedonia”, 52/2005 number 18-4283/1).

### 1.6.3 World Bank Requirements

WB has set out a comprehensive set of specific Environmental and Social Standards (ESS) that projects are expected to meet. Stakeholder engagement in line with the World Bank

requirements is associated with ESS 10 Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure.

The ESS 10 recognizes “the importance of open and transparent engagement between the Borrower and project stakeholders as an essential element of good international practice”<sup>9</sup>. Specifically, the requirements set out by ESS10 are the following:

- Borrowers will engage with stakeholders throughout the project life cycle, commencing such engagement as early as possible in the project development process and in a timeframe that enables meaningful consultations with stakeholders on project design. The nature, scope and frequency of stakeholder engagement will be proportionate to the nature and scale of the project and its potential risks and impacts;
- Borrowers will engage in meaningful consultations with all stakeholders. Borrowers will provide stakeholders with timely, relevant, understandable and accessible information, and consult with them in a culturally appropriate manner, which is free of manipulation, interference, coercion, discrimination and intimidation;
- The process of stakeholder engagement will involve the following, as set out in further detail in this ESS: (i) stakeholder identification and analysis; (ii) planning how the engagement with stakeholders will take place; (iii) disclosure of information; (iv) consultation with stakeholders; (v) addressing and responding to grievances; and (vi) reporting to stakeholders;
- The Borrower will maintain and disclose as part of the environmental and social assessment, a documented record of stakeholder engagement, including a description of the stakeholders consulted, a summary of the feedback received and a brief explanation of how the feedback was taken into account, or the reasons why it was not.” (World Bank, 2017: 98).

A Stakeholder Engagement Plan proportionate to the nature and scale of the project and its potential risks and impacts needs to be developed by the Borrower. It has to be disclosed as early as possible, and the Borrower needs to seek the views of stakeholders on the SEP, including on the identification of stakeholders and the proposals for future engagement. If significant changes are made to the SEP, the Borrower has to disclose the updated SEP. According to ESS10, the Borrower should also propose and implement a grievance mechanism to receive and facilitate the resolution of concerns and grievances of project-affected parties related to the environmental and social performance of the project in a timely manner.

Identification of stakeholders will ensure wide participation in project acceptability and the project design. To ensure that there is citizen participation in the project life span, a SEP has been drafted clearly stipulating the process of consultation and disclosure of key project information which will be made public relevant stakeholders during the preparation and implementation of the project.

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<sup>9</sup> Guidance Note for borrowers-Environmental & Social Framework for IPF Operations

## 2. PREVIOUS STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

The Ministry for Education and Science has assembled a working group for preparation of the PEIP project. The working group members are representatives from relevant stakeholders as the Ministry of education and science (state secretary, legal issues department, primary education department, and strategic planning department), State examination Center and Bureau for Development of Education (BDE).

The first meeting of the working group was held on October 30, 2019 in the World Bank office, where the National Assessment concept was discussed in the context of the international trends and OECD recommendations.

The local consultants who have been analyzing the available data from the international large-scale assessments have delivered their analyses. The MoES with support from the USAID has completed and adopted the legal framework for teacher professional development and career advancement. Besides, the working group supported by the Bank has completed the Position Paper and the Concept for National Assessment Program (NAP). The working group has worked out the details regarding NAP and has been expressed in the NAP Concept document. The draft NAP Concept has been reviewed by the Bank team and given its high quality.

After the initial project concept was shared with the Ministry in the early months of 2020, the Bank's Project Concept Note Review meeting was held at the World Bank on March 23, 2020. At that time, management approved the concept and gave the green light to continue project preparation.

On May 27, 2020 the Bank team and ministerial working group, working virtually, reviewed and discussed a PowerPoint presentation that outlined: i) the Project Development Objective; ii) the Results Chain; iii) the Proposed Components and Sub-Components, and iv) suggested Indicators.

In the next few months, the Ministry's working group and the Bank will work on finalization of the Project Appraisal Document and accompanying documents needed for the Appraisal phase in the project preparation timeline.

In order to familiarize the public with the content of the documents prepared for the PEIP Project and involvement of the public in the realization of the project activities on time, all prepared documents (Stakeholder Engagement Plan, Environmental and Social Commitment plan (ESCP), ESMP Checklist) will be published on Ministry of Education and science web site (<http://www.mon.gov.mk/>) before the project appraisal.

## 3. STAKEHOLDERS IDENTIFICATIONS AND ANALYSIS

The WB ESS 10 recognizes following categories of stakeholders:

- Project Affected Parties;
- Other Interested parties;
- Disadvantaged / vulnerable individuals or groups.

A project-affected party includes those likely to be affected by the project because of actual impacts or potential risks to their physical environment, health, security, cultural practices, well-being, or livelihoods. These stakeholders may include individuals or groups, including local communities. They are the individuals or households most likely to observe/feel changes from environmental and social impacts of the project.

The term “Other interested parties” (OIPs) refers to: individuals, groups, or organizations with an interest in the project, which may be because of the project location, its characteristics, its impacts, or matters related to public interest. For example, these parties may include regulators, government officials, the private sector, the scientific community, academics, unions, women’s organizations, other civil society organizations, and cultural groups.

It is particularly important to understand project impacts and whether they may disproportionately fall on disadvantaged or vulnerable individuals or groups, who often do not have a voice to express their concerns or understand the impacts of a project.

Vulnerable individuals or groups for PEIP - (children with disabilities, Roma children, children from low income households and others).

### **3.1 Stakeholder Mapping**

Stakeholder is defined as an individual/ institution (agency)/organization that can impact upon or get impacted by the PEIP project.

In order to define a communication process with the stakeholders, several groups that may be interested and/or affected by the project implementation have been identified and they are presented on Table 1.

The reason being that there are various issues that are likely to concern different stakeholders and so different types of stakeholder have been grouped based on their influences to the project.

Early understanding of the influences or connections of a stakeholder group to the project assists in the identification of the key objectives in engagement. In this regard a stakeholder mapping exercise was undertaken to identify the importance of each stakeholder, assesses the influence that stakeholders have over a project and/or the way project activities will potentially affect stakeholders. As the project evolves, other stakeholder groups may be identified and engaged.

Stakeholders have their responsibilities according to which they are divided into separate groups; different responsibilities are described for each group in the same table 1.

Table 1

## Relevant stakeholders for PEIP Project

Category	Stakeholders	Sub group/ Department Sector	Responsibilities
Affected party	Local and regional authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Municipalities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support the MoES and PMU for efficient implementation of the PEIP;</li> <li>- Modeling of local school networks;</li> <li>- Strengthen of impact of per student allocation formula on budgets of municipalities ;</li> <li>- Engage in carrier development process of the teachers and MPST and school leaders</li> <li>- Public communication support to better cooperate with municipalities and to inform the public.</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Primary schools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promote accountability of schools through information sharing;</li> <li>- Create (or revise the composition of) school improvement committees;</li> <li>- Organization of Focus groups with parents;</li> <li>- Organizing Open day at schools for parents of vulnerable group of students (Roma, low income households, special needs students) in order to raise questions for potential discrimination, bullying etc.;</li> <li>- Organize Online presentations/info-sessions related to relevant project activities in order to include and incorporate the needs of vulnerable groups.</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ School boards</li> <li>▪ School improvement committees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Engage in preparation of innovative SIP;</li> <li>- Engage in self-evaluation process.</li> </ul>

Category	Stakeholders	Sub group/ Department Sector	Responsibilities
Affected party	Financial institutions and private companies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ World Bank;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Providing financial support for realization of the project;</li> <li>- Following the implementation of the OH&amp;S and environmental standards in all project phases.</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Suppliers of equipment;</li> <li>▪ Contractors/Providers of consultancy services;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Public participation according to the WB ESS 10 and national legislation.</li> </ul>
Affected party	School staff and local community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Teachers;</li> <li>▪ Students;</li> <li>▪ Parents;</li> <li>▪ School boards;</li> <li>▪ MPST;</li> <li>▪ School leaders.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Participation in preparation of SIP;</li> <li>- Participation in preparation of school self evaluation reports;</li> <li>- Organizing and participation in focus groups.</li> </ul>

Category	Stakeholders	Sub group/ Department Sector	Responsibilities
Other Interested parties	Governments and regulatory bodies and public companies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ministry of education and science,               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Primary education Department;</li> <li>- Legal issues Department</li> <li>- Department for strategic planning</li> <li>- Finance department</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensuring proper and effective implementation of the PEIP project regarding national legislation and WB requirements;</li> <li>- Provide legal basis for the implementation of the NAP;</li> <li>- Amendments of the relevant legal framework;</li> <li>- Promote accountability by sharing information about schools with stakeholders;</li> <li>- Provide grants to implement SIPs for schools with innovative SIPs and vulnerable groups of students;</li> <li>- Provide technical assistance and financing in upgrades in schools basic infrastructure;</li> <li>- Provide technical assistance and financing the procurement of multifunctional ICT and science laboratories as well as libraries, adding age-appropriate furniture and equipment;</li> <li>- Provide learning resources such as age- and level- appropriate books, learning manipulative (objects, toys, and games), posters, etc.;</li> <li>- Conduct an analysis of school optimization and funding formula;</li> <li>- Provide necessary guidebooks and instructions for municipalities;</li> <li>- Review of the functioning of buffers and of other elements of allocation formulas, with special emphasis on equity and efficiency;</li> <li>- Design of action plan to reform allocation of block grant for primary education, including a strategy to remove the buffers.;</li> <li>- Operationalize of the standards (for primary education teachers)</li> <li>- Development of carrier paths for teachers, MPST and school leaders</li> <li>- revising the mandate of the Ministry and concerned agencies, such as the Bureau for Development of Education (BDE) and the State Education Inspectorate (SEI), regarding the teachers standards and assessment and strengthening their capacity in terms of human, technical, and financial resources.</li> </ul>

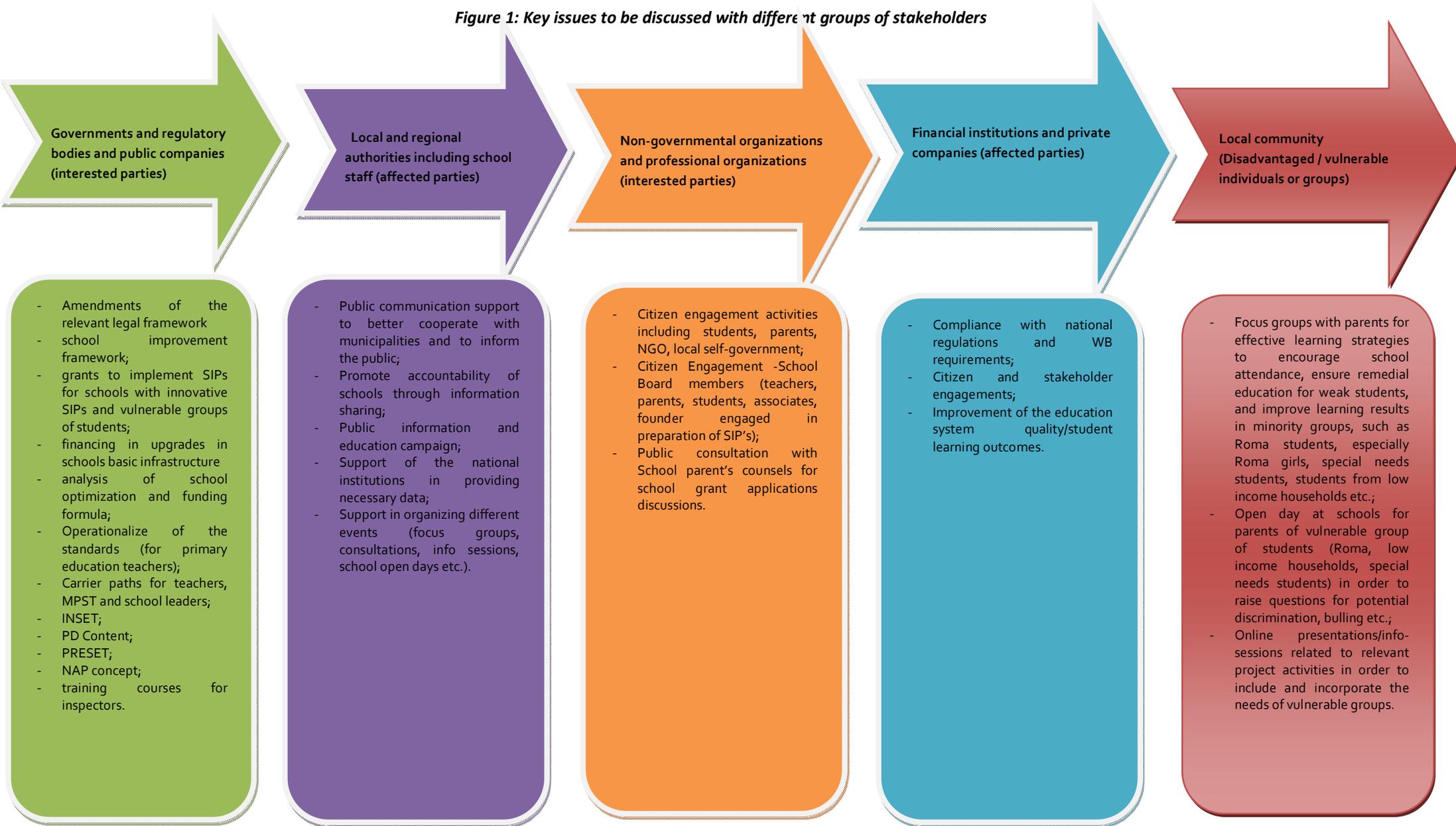
Category	Stakeholders	Sub group/ Department Sector	Responsibilities
Other Interested parties	Governments and regulatory bodies and public companies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Bureau for Development of Education (BDE)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support the MoES and PMU for efficient implementation of the PEIP;</li> <li>- Reforming of INSET;</li> <li>- Improving support to teachers (through learning resources and resource persons);</li> <li>- Revising PD content;</li> <li>- Providing incentives and strengthening accountability for PD;</li> <li>- Needs assessment analysis of teachers knowledge and competence;</li> <li>- Improving ways to evaluate teacher knowledge and competences;</li> <li>- Develop a school improvement framework for all schools that focuses on improving student learning outcomes in line with recommendations from the OECD report of 2019;</li> <li>- Implement the modules and monitor its effectiveness in improving teacher knowledge;</li> <li>- Improving the PRESET training by strengthening the transition from pre-service training into teaching;</li> <li>- Train school leaders/school committees to use the framework to self-assess, which would help identify the needs of their school in prioritizing the learning of their students;</li> <li>- Engage in carrier development process of the teachers and MPST and school leaders.</li> </ul>
Other Interested parties	Governments and regulatory bodies and public companies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ National Examination Center (NEC)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support the MoES and PMU for efficient implementation of the PEIP;</li> <li>- Develop the NAP concept with the MoES;</li> <li>- Development and administration of at least two cycles of literacy and mathematics in grade 3 and 5;</li> <li>- Providing training to the school principals on how to interpret and act on NAP results at the school level.</li> </ul>
Other Interested parties	Governments and regulatory bodies and public companies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ State Education Inspectorate (SEI)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support the MoES and PMU for efficient implementation of the PEIP;</li> <li>- Support to the design and implementation of a set of training courses for inspectors;</li> <li>- Engage in carrier development process of the teachers and MPST and school leaders.</li> </ul>

Category	Stakeholders	Sub group/ Department Sector	Responsibilities
Other Interested parties	Governments and regulatory bodies and public companies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ministry of Finance, - Budget and financing Sector</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Budget allocation</li> </ul>
Other Interested parties	Non-governmental organizations and professional organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ local -self-government officials;</li> <li>▪ NGO ZMAI (Association of young analysts and researchers);</li> <li>▪ SONK (Trade Union for Education Science and Culture);</li> <li>▪ The Association of the Units of Local Self-Government of RM – ZELS;</li> <li>▪ Media;</li> <li>▪ General public.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Engage the communities, primarily parents and students in self-evaluation and preparation of the SIP;</li> <li>- Engage in carrier development process of the teachers and MPST and school leaders.</li> </ul>
Disadvantaged / vulnerable individuals or groups.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Roma students;</li> <li>▪ Parents;</li> <li>▪ Students and parents from low income households;</li> <li>▪ Students with disabilities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Participation in focus groups;</li> <li>- Participation in preparation of SIP;</li> <li>- Participation in preparation of schools self evaluation report;</li> <li>- Participation in schools open days.</li> </ul>

List of stakeholders during the project implementation will be continuously updated and they will be incorporated in the SEP document.

The PMU will discuss different issues with each group of stakeholders depending on their role, responsibility and importance as stakeholder. The following table contains the main issues that will be discussed with different stakeholders.

**Figure 1: Key issues to be discussed with different groups of stakeholders**



**Governments and regulatory bodies and public companies (interested parties)**

- Amendments of the relevant legal framework school improvement framework;
- grants to implement SIPs for schools with innovative SIPs and vulnerable groups of students;
- financing in upgrades in schools basic infrastructure
- analysis of school optimization and funding formula;
- Operationalize of the standards (for primary education teachers);
- Carrier paths for teachers, MPST and school leaders;
- INSET;
- PD Content;
- PRESET;
- NAP concept;
- training courses for inspectors.

**Local and regional authorities including school staff (affected parties)**

- Public communication support to better cooperate with municipalities and to inform the public;
- Promote accountability of schools through information sharing;
- Public information and education campaign;
- Support of the national institutions in providing necessary data;
- Support in organizing different events (focus groups, consultations, info sessions, school open days etc.).

**Non-governmental organizations and professional organizations (interested parties)**

- Citizen engagement activities including students, parents, NGO, local self-government;
- Citizen Engagement -School Board members (teachers, parents, students, associates, founder engaged in preparation of SIP's);
- Public consultation with School parent's counsels for school grant applications discussions.

**Financial institutions and private companies (affected parties)**

- Compliance with national regulations and WB requirements;
- Citizen and stakeholder engagements;
- Improvement of the education system quality/student learning outcomes.

**Local community (Disadvantaged / vulnerable individuals or groups)**

- Focus groups with parents for effective learning strategies to encourage school attendance, ensure remedial education for weak students, and improve learning results in minority groups, such as Roma students, especially Roma girls, special needs students, students from low income households etc.;
- Open day at schools for parents of vulnerable group of students (Roma, low income households, special needs students) in order to raise questions for potential discrimination, bullying etc.;
- Online presentations/info-sessions related to relevant project activities in order to include and incorporate the needs of vulnerable groups.

A variety of communication methods will be used as appropriate for each set of stakeholders. In general, these include: a) Public and individual meetings, b) Announcements in media and portals, c) Provision of general information on notice-boards at public locations, d) Regular mail and email correspondence and Publication of relevant project information on the website of the Ministry of Education and Science (<http://www.mon.gov.mk>) and other relevant institutions.

There is a variety of engagement techniques used to build relationships with stakeholders, gather information from stakeholders, consult with stakeholders, and disseminate project information to stakeholders.

When selecting an appropriate consultation technique, appropriate consultation methods, and the purpose for engaging with a stakeholder group should be considered. The techniques mostly used are presented in the following table.

Table 2

## SEP Techniques

Engagement Technique	Relevant Stakeholders	Appropriate application of the technique
Correspondences (phone, emails, text, instant messaging)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ministry of Education and science,               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Primary education Department;</li> <li>- Legal issues Department;</li> <li>- Department for strategic planning;</li> <li>- Finance department;</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ BDE Bureau for Development of education;</li> <li>▪ NEC National Examination Center;</li> <li>▪ SEI State Education Inspectorate;</li> <li>▪ Ministry of Finance;</li> <li>▪ Primary schools;</li> <li>▪ NGOs;</li> <li>▪ Municipalities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Distribute information to Government officials, NGOs, Local Government, and organisations/agencies/schools/ associations;</li> <li>▪ Invite stakeholders to meetings and follow-up.</li> </ul>
One-on-one meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ministry of Education and science;               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Primary education Department;</li> <li>- Legal issues Department;</li> <li>- Department for strategic planning;</li> <li>- Finance department;</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ BDE Bureau for Development of education;</li> <li>▪ NEC National Examination Centre;</li> <li>▪ SEI State Education Inspectorate;</li> <li>▪ Ministry of Finance;</li> <li>▪ Primary schools;</li> <li>▪ NGOs;</li> <li>▪ Municipalities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Seeking views and opinions;</li> <li>▪ Enable stakeholder to speak freely about sensitive issues;</li> <li>▪ Build personal relationships;</li> <li>▪ Record meetings.</li> </ul>
Formal meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ministry of Education and science;               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Primary education Department;</li> <li>- Legal issues Department;</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Present the Project information to a group of stakeholders;</li> <li>▪ Allow group to comment –</li> </ul>

Engagement Technique	Relevant Stakeholders	Appropriate application of the technique
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Department for strategic planning;</li> <li>- Finance department;</li> <li>▪ BDE Bureau for Development of education;</li> <li>▪ NEC National Examination Centre;</li> <li>▪ SEI State Education Inspectorate;</li> <li>▪ Ministry of Finance;</li> <li>▪ Primary schools.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>opinions and views;</li> <li>▪ Build impersonal relation with high level stakeholders;</li> <li>▪ Disseminate technical information</li> <li>▪ Record discussions.</li> </ul>
Online meetings/ online surveys/social media correspondence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ministry of Education and science;</li> <li>▪ BDE Bureau for Development of education;</li> <li>▪ NEC National Examination Centre;</li> <li>▪ SEI State Education Inspectorate;</li> <li>▪ Ministry of Finance;</li> <li>▪ Primary schools;</li> <li>▪ Parents;</li> <li>▪ Students;</li> <li>▪ Municipalities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Present the Project information to a group of stakeholders;</li> <li>▪ Engage the stakeholders in discussions;</li> <li>▪ Conduct surveys on different topics;</li> <li>▪ Receive and provide feedback;</li> <li>▪ Dissemination of information;</li> <li>▪ Allow the group to provide their views and opinions.</li> </ul>
Public/Online meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ministry of Education and science; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Primary education Department;</li> <li>- Legal issues Department;</li> <li>- Department for strategic planning;</li> <li>- Finance department;</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ BDE Bureau for Development of education;</li> <li>▪ NEC National Examination Center;</li> <li>▪ SEI State Education Inspectorate;</li> <li>▪ Ministry of Finance;</li> <li>▪ Primary schools.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Present Project information and amendments of the legislation to a large group of stakeholders (MOES, BDE, NEC,SEI etc.);</li> <li>▪ Allow the group to provide their views and opinions;</li> <li>▪ Build relationship with the stakeholders, especially those impacted;</li> <li>▪ Distribute non-technical information;</li> <li>▪ Facilitate meetings with presentations, posters etc.;</li> <li>▪ Record discussions, comments, questions.</li> </ul>
Focus group meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Students;</li> <li>▪ Parents;</li> <li>▪ Parents of vulnerable group of students (Roma, low income households, special needs students)</li> <li>▪ School boards;</li> <li>▪ School committees;</li> <li>▪ NGOs;</li> <li>▪ Municipalities;</li> <li>▪ SONK.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Present Project information to a group of stakeholders;</li> <li>▪ Allow stakeholders to provide their views on targeted baseline information, especially for (vulnerable people, disabled people, etc.) to provide their views and opinions;</li> <li>▪ Build relationships with communities;</li> <li>▪ Record responses.</li> </ul>
Project on websites/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ministry of Education and Science;</li> <li>▪ BDE Bureau for Development of</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Present project information and progress updates ;</li> </ul>

Engagement Technique	Relevant Stakeholders	Appropriate application of the technique
Information Centre	education; ▪ NEC National Examination Center; ▪ SEI State Education Inspectorate; ▪ Ministry of Finance; ▪ Primary schools.	▪ Disclose SEP and other relevant project documentation.
Radio/TV emissions/portals	▪ Ministry of Education and Science, ▪ BDE Bureau for Development of education; ▪ NEC National Examination Centre.	▪ Arrange for broadcast Radio/TV emissions to bring the project to large public awareness and allow question/answer session.
Project leaflet	▪ Ministry of Education and Science.	▪ Brief project information to provide regular update; ▪ Site specific project information.

## 4 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

### 4.1 Introduction

During the preparation of the SEP, different communication and information channels have been designed for all identified stakeholders in accordance with their needs. The engagement process will be used to obtain suggestions/comments for the Project activities, which may reflect the Project design and lead to extended benefits of relevant stakeholder's groups. The MoES recognises that timely engagement of different stakeholders can enable the success of the Project.

PEIP Project stakeholders have been identified in order to address the different consultation requirements. Stakeholders include persons or groups that are:

- directly and/or indirectly affected by the Project;
- have certain interests in the Project and its activities;
- Have the ability to affect the Project itself and its final outcome.

### 4.2 Purpose and timing of Stakeholder Engagement Program

Stakeholder engagement activities will be ongoing through the whole life cycle of the Project, (Project's preparation, construction and operation).

The stakeholders will be engaged as early as possible and will continue the engagement throughout the planning, implementation until the project is finished.

The nature and frequency of follow up consultations will be different depending on the implementation phase of project activities.

Before starting of the PEIP, all affected parties will be informed about the Project's scope and contact information which they can address for further information. They also will be informed about the availability of the publicly available information on the MoES website.

Key communication principles are to:

- Keep the community and key stakeholders informed in advance of project progress;
- Encourage stakeholder's participation;
- Ensure 'no surprises' to key stakeholders and the community;
- Listen to feedback, investigate suggestions and adopt them where possible;
- Transparency.

The current SDISP PMU in the Ministry of Education and Science will be responsible for overall PEIP implementation, including the implementation of this SEP. The PMU will consist of Project Director and PMU officers/managers.

The PMU Grant Coordinator and Social Specialists shall be the responsible persons for implementation of the SEP document during the entire Project cycle, and in charge of communicating with the communities.

All contractors in charge of carrying out specific Project activities will also be required to implement the relevant provisions of SEP.

#### 4.3 Proposed strategy for information disclosure

The Ministry of Education and Science intends to provide all relevant information for the PEIP to the public (social media, national and local TV and radio stations). All interested and affected parties will be able to find the following documents on the MoES website ([www.mon.gov.mk](http://www.mon.gov.mk)) website:

- ***Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) for PEIP including grievance mechanism;***
- ***Environmental and Social Management Check Lists – ESMP Check Lists);***
- ***Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP);***
- ***Project Operational Manual;***
- ***Project Procurement Strategy for Development (PPSD).***

These documents will remain in the public domain for the duration of the Project. The SEP will be periodically updated.

All information regarding PEIP project shall be available on the MoES website and social media that will serve as a media tool/channel for communications with the community. Information in relation to the Grievance Mechanism will also be included (see below). Stakeholders, including the public, will also be able to use the Grievance Mechanism.

Information prior and during project implementation will be made available through brochures or leaflets, in the schools.

Regarding the WB requirements for environmental protection for the project that are classified with **moderate risk ESMP Checklist** will be prepared.

Prepared documents regarding the environmental protection ESMP and ESMP Checklist will be publicly available on the MoES website for submitting comments within 10 days.

#### 4.4 Proposed strategy for consultation

The announcement for organization of public/online hearing event for draft version of ESCP will be published in two newspapers (Macedonian and Albanian languages).

The event will be organized during the 10-day period specified for the availability of the ESCP

The PMU from MoES will carry out public consultations' through organizing public/online hearing events. For that purpose, Project disclosure package should be prepared and should contain following documents:

##### **Disclosure package for draft versions of ESCP, SEP, ESMP Checklist:**

On project level ESCP and SEP will be disclosed and consulted whereby ESMP checklists will be disclosed for every sub-project

- Public Announcement for organization of the public/online hearing events for prepared ESCP (published in two newspapers in Macedonian and Albanian languages, on the web site of the MoES);
- Draft version of ESCP, SEP, and template Environmental and Social Management Check Lists – ESMP Check Lists);
- Agenda for public/online hearing events;
- Minutes of Meeting from the organized public/online hearing event;
- Final version of the ESCP, SEP, and template Environmental and Social Management Check Lists – ESMP Check Lists and including the Minutes of Meetings for the public/online hearing event, List of participants and public announcements.

The disclosure package will be publicly available in Macedonian and/or in Albanian language immediately upon its availability, on and the MoES ([www.mon.gov.mk](http://www.mon.gov.mk)).

For every sub-project after the 10-day period for submitting comments for the prepared document (ESMP and ESMP Checklist), the submitted comments will be included in the final version of the relevant document and they will be posted on the MoES and respective local government web site .

#### 4.5 Proposed strategy for inclusion and communication with vulnerable groups

Project vulnerable groups identify but are not limited to: Roma students, Roma girls, students with disabilities, students coming from low income households.

The MoES through the project will make a concerted effort to target all the above groups. As part of its visibility/communication strategy, the MoES through the Project will promote and highlight social benefits for disadvantaged groups and individuals in the society such as the poor, disabled and socially excluded.

PEIP will continue to consult with and engage all relevant stakeholders and interested parties in different stages of planning and implementing this project.

PEIP will organize different techniques to include vulnerable groups. Part of the techniques will include, but not limited to: focus groups with parents of vulnerable students, school open days, online presentations/info sessions/consultations etc. This risk will be addressed through a two tier approach: (i) through the Environmental and Social Assessment for each sub-project (ESMP Checklist screening protocol for schools with more children coming from the vulnerable groups) that will assess the risk and propose adequate mitigation measures, which will, consequently, be integrated in project designs and (ii) through the stakeholder engagement processes. The second tier are activities within a school, especially for schools with more children coming from the vulnerable group, the techniques mentioned above. The MoES through the project will be proactive in soliciting views from the vulnerable group parents and children's especially in the preparation of the school improvement plans. Schools with higher number of roma children or/and disabilities and/or children coming from poorest families will have more extensive, focused and directed activities and proactive approach

Target groups	Strategy
Roma students and parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engagement of local NGO's who work with vulnerable people at the community level to help disseminate information and organize consultations;</li> <li>The Schools will arrange separate consultation sessions (e.g., meetings and focus group discussion);</li> <li>The MoES will use various communication measures including women associations or organizations to reach out to female groups;</li> <li>The MoES will use various communication measures including all relevant NGO;s to reach out different vulnerable groups;</li> <li>The MoES and the schools will use various measures including counseling and support services to address gender issues in education such as workshops on gender issues, advocacy and media campaigns</li> <li>School open days will be organized for vulnerable groups;</li> <li>Having in mind COVID-19 pandemic, different online activities can be provided such as presentations and/or information for project activities, consultations, surveys, meetings etc.</li> </ul>
Roma girls	
Students with disabilities	
Students from low income households	

#### 4.6 Project cycle

Project stage	Topic of consultation	Method used	Target stakeholders	Responsibilities
Preparation	Communicate project plan including ESCP, SEP <i>ESMP Check Lists</i>	Public hearing	Schools, Parents, Local community, Municipalities, NGO's	MoES/PMU
Implementation Phase	Update and inform stakeholders of the project plan and	Workshop/Online workshop	All stakeholders participating in the project	MoES/PMU

	progress			
	effective learning strategies to encourage school attendance, ensure remedial education for weak students, and improve learning results in minority groups, such as Roma students, especially Roma girls, special needs students, students from low income households etc.	Focus groups	Parents, students	School
	Open day at schools for parents of vulnerable group of students (Roma, low income households, special needs students) in order to raise questions for potential discrimination, bullying etc.	Open days	Parents, students	Schools
	Consultation and participation in preparation of self evaluation reports	Meetings (in person or online)	school boards (Parents, teachers, students, MPST, local municipality)	Schools
	Consultation and participation in preparation of SIP	Meetings (in person or online)	school boards (Parents, teachers, students, MPST, local municipality)	Schools
	School board members satisfied with their engagement during SIP preparations	Citizen engagement surveys (baseline and follow-up)	school boards (Parents, teachers, students, MPST, local municipality)	MoES/PMU
	Evaluation of the grant program	Impact evaluation surveys (baseline and follow up)	Schools, School Boards, students, teachers, vulnerable groups	MoES/PMU
Completion Phase	Summary of work achieved, results and review/evaluation	Surveys, focus groups, students'-teacher's	All	MoES/PMU

		feedback		
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**4.7 Review of Comments**

All consultation activities held under the project will be based on the principle of inclusiveness and will strive to engage all groups of local society including students with disabilities, Roma students, students from low income households, etc. Where necessary, logistical assistance will be provided to enable persons with limited physical abilities and those with insufficient financial and/or transportation means to attend public meetings scheduled by the project. In cases where people may be reluctant or unable to participate in large scale community meetings the MoES will hold separate small group discussions with them at an easily accessible venue. The MoES will ensure that varied means of communication will be used (written, verbal, use of an advocate/translator if necessary).

**4.8 Planned Information and Communication Arrangements**

MoES has experience with already established mechanisms for communication with the public on other different projects until now. A responsible person from MoES regularly updated webpage with announces news, notifications and reports on current projects.

A grievance mechanism to resolve complaints regarding the SEP for the PEIP Project will be available on the MOES’s website (<http://mon.gov.mk/>) and through which citizens can submit any concerns relevant for the PEIP Project.

***Environmental and social assessment of the PEIP Project:***

**After the analysis of the project activities within the Primary Education Improvement Project (PEIP) it can be concluded that the implementation of PEIP will have moderate impact on the environment**

## 4. RESOURCES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR IMPLEMENTING STAKEHOLDERS ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

The PEIP Project will be implemented by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of North Macedonia as the main responsible institution in cooperation with the BDE, NEC, SEI, and Ministry of Finance (MoF).

### 5.1 Resources

Budget categories	Times/ Years	Total costs	Remarks
<b>1. Staff salaries and related expenses</b>			
<i>1a. Grant coordinator and social specialist</i>	4.5	96.200	
<i>1b. Environmental specialist</i>	4.5	96.200	
<b>2. Events</b>			
<i>2a. Public consultation events</i>	2	25.000	
<i>2b. Organization of focus groups</i>	50	25.000	
<b>3. Communication campaigns</b>			
<i>3a. Dissemination materials</i>	100.000	10.000	
<i>3b. Social media campaign</i>	1	5.000	
<i>3c. Outreach activities related with vulnerable groups</i>	10	10.000	
<b>4. Trainings</b>			
<i>4a. Training on social/environmental issues for PMU</i>	2	10.000	
<b>5. Beneficiary surveys</b>			
<i>5a. Citizen engagement surveys</i>	2	20.000	
<b>6. Grievance Mechanism</b>			
<i>6a. Training of GM committees</i>	5	5.000	
<b>TOTAL STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT BUDGET:</b>		<b>302.400</b>	<b>EUR</b>

## 5.2 Management/staff functions and responsibilities

The Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of North Macedonia is the main responsible institution for implementation of the PEIP.

The Project Implementation Unit (PMU) is established for the purpose of SDISP implementation and will continue PEIP implementation. It is located out of the premises of the MoES, staffed with experts/specialist. The PMU is responsible for the overall PEIP implementation, project planning and coordination, procurement, monitoring of the project activities and reporting.

The management, coordination and implementation of the SEP and its integral tasks will be the responsibility of the PMU Grant Coordinator and Social Specialists.

## 5. GRIEVANCE REDRESS MECHANISM

Within the Ministry of Education and Science of RNM ([www.mon.gov.mk](http://www.mon.gov.mk)), will be established a Grievance mechanism online, including grievance registry. The aim of this mechanism is to inform all relevant stakeholders for the procedures for submitting a complaint regarding the project activities and receiving a response of the submitted grievance.

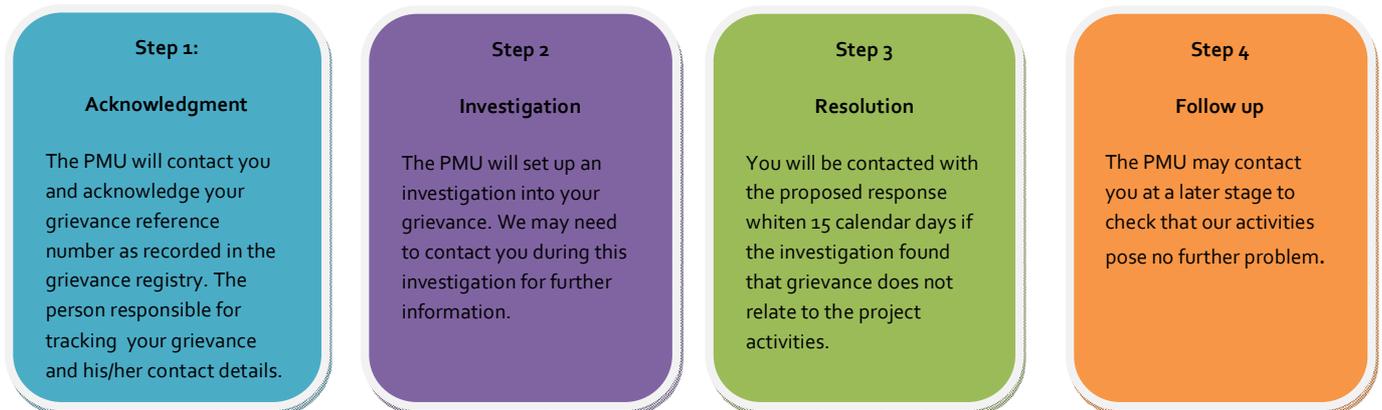
Despite the grievance submission, any comments/concerns/grievance can be submit to the MoES verbally (personally or by telephone) or in writing by filling in the Project Grievance Form (by personal delivery, post, fax or e-mail to the MoES contact person). Individuals who submit comments or grievances have the right to request that their name be kept confidential. Grievances may be submitted anonymously, although in such cases, the person will not receive any response. All comments and complaints will be responded to either verbally or in writing, in accordance with the preferred method of communication specified by the complainant, if contact details of the complainant are provided.

### 5.1 Complainant feedback on the resolution

The MoES website will include clear information on how feedback, questions, comments, concerns and grievances can be submitted by any stakeholder and will include the possibility to submit grievances electronically. It will also provide information on the way the GRM committee works, both in terms of process and deadlines.

PMU within the MoES will implement a Grievance Mechanism to ensure that it is responsive to any concerns and complaints particularly from affected stakeholders and communities. The M&E specialist will be responsible to monitor and keep records on the GRM. There will be semiannual reports to WB

The PMU will go through the following steps to deal with the grievance:



Any comments or concerns can be brought to the attention by the complainers verbally or in writing (by post or e-mail) or by filling in a grievance form.

The following timeframe will be used:

- Written acknowledgement of receipt of the grievance: within 5 days of receiving the grievance;
- Proposed resolution: within 15 days of receiving the grievance.

Specifically, nominated and trained members of staff will record grievance information in a grievance log. This will include:

- Stakeholder name and contact details;
- Details of the grievance and how and when it was submitted, acknowledged, responded to and closed out.

All complaints will be verified by the PMU in the Grievance Registry and assigned a number, and acknowledged within 15 calendar days. The Registry will have all necessary elements to disaggregate the grievance by gender of the person submitting it as well as by type of grievance. Each grievance will be verified in the registry with the following information: a) description of grievance, b) date of receipt of grievance and when acknowledgement returned to the complainant; c) description of actions taken (investigation, corrective measures, and preventive measures); d) date of resolution and closure provision of feedback to the complainant.

In cases when the grievance/complaint is indefinite or not clear enough, the PMU will assist and provide advice in formulating/redrafting the submission, in order for the grievance/complaint to become clear, for purposes of an informed decision by the PMU, in the best interests of persons affected by the Project.

If the PMU is not able to address the issues raised by immediate corrective action, a long-term corrective action will be identified. The complainant will be informed about the proposed

corrective action and follow-up of corrective action within 25 calendar days upon the acknowledgement of grievance. In situation when the PMU is not able to address the particular issue verified through the grievance mechanism or if action is not required, it will provide a detailed explanation/ justification on why the issue was not addressed. The response will also contain an explanation on how the person/ organization that raised the complaint can proceed with the grievance in case the outcome is not satisfactory. At all times, complainants may seek other legal remedies in accordance with the legal framework of Republic of North Macedonia, including formal judicial appeal.

## 5.2 World Bank Grievance Redress System

Communities and individuals who believe that they are adversely affected by a World Bank (WB) supported project may submit complaints to existing project-level grievance redress mechanisms or the WB's Grievance Redress Service (GRS). The GRS ensures that complaints received are promptly reviewed in order to address project-related concerns. Project affected communities and individuals may submit their complaint to the WB's independent Inspection Panel which determines whether harm occurred, or could occur, as a result of WB non-compliance with its policies and procedures. Complaints may be submitted at any time after concerns have been brought directly to the World Bank's attention, and Bank Management has been given an opportunity to respond. For information on how to submit complaints to the World Bank's corporate Grievance Redress Service (GRS), please visit <http://www.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/products-and-services/grievance-redress-service>. For information on how to submit complaints to the World Bank Inspection Panel, please visit [www.inspectionpanel.org](http://www.inspectionpanel.org)

**Contact information for enquiries and grievances:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Primary Education Improvement (PEIP) Project**  
**Ministry of Education and Science**  
**Str. Sv.Kiril i Metodij 54, 1000 Skopje, Republic of North Macedonia**  
**E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_**

## 7. MONITORING AND REPORTING

Monitoring and evaluation of the stakeholder process is considered vital to ensure MoES is able to respond to identified issues and alter the schedule and nature of engagement activities to make them more effective. The following characteristics will help in achieving successful engagement:

- Transparency in all activities;
- Promotion of stakeholder involvement;
- Trust in MOES and other key institutions shown by all relevant stakeholders;
- Sufficient resources to undertake the engagement;
- Inclusion of key groups of interactions with stakeholders.

Monitoring of the stakeholder engagement process allows the efficacy of the process to be evaluated. Specifically, by identifying key performance indicators that reflect the objectives of the SEP and the specific actions and timings, it is possible to both monitor and evaluate the process undertaken.

Key performance indicators

- Number of grievance files;
- Number of solved grievances.

In order to provide, results from the stakeholder engagement process (Number of grievance files, Number of solved grievances) and project implementation, MoES has an obligation to prepare Monitoring Report on an annual base.

The MoES will be responsible for monitoring of all Project related stakeholder engagement activities, ensuring the fulfilment and updating of this SEP, and reporting to the stakeholders.

## APPENDICES

## Annex A

## List of ministerial stakeholders in PEIP Project Area

Name of the organization	Web site	E-mail	Phone
Bureau for Development of education	<a href="https://www.bro.gov.mk/">https://www.bro.gov.mk/</a>	bro.macedonia@bro.gov.mk	+389 2 3064 131
State Examination Centre	<a href="http://dic.edu.mk/">http://dic.edu.mk/</a>	dic@dic.edu.mk	+389 2 3228 866 +389 76 490 310
State Education Inspectorate	<a href="http://dpi.mon.gov.mk/">http://dpi.mon.gov.mk/</a>	dpi@mon.gov.mk	+389 23140 103
Ministry of Education and Science- Department for Primary Education	<a href="http://www.mon.gov.mk/">http://www.mon.gov.mk/</a>	elena.ivanovska@mon.gov.mk	+389 2 3117 896
Ministry of Education and Science-Legal issues Department Union of Chambers	<a href="http://www.mon.gov.mk/">http://www.mon.gov.mk/</a>	milka.masnikosa@mon.gov.mk	+389 2 3117 896
Ministry of Education and Science Department for strategic planning	<a href="http://www.mon.gov.mk/">http://www.mon.gov.mk/</a>	biljana.trajkovska@mon.gov.mk	+389 2 3117 896

**Annex B**

**Grievance Form for submission of complains**

<b>Reference Number</b>	
<b>Full name (optional)</b> <input type="checkbox"/> I wish to raise my grievance anonymously. <input type="checkbox"/> I request not to disclose my identity without my consent.	
<b>Contact information</b>  Please mark how you wish to be contacted (mail, telephone, e-mail).	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>By Post: <i>Please provide mailing address:</i></b> _____ _____ _____ <input type="checkbox"/> <b>By telephone:</b> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> <b>By E-mail</b>
<b>Preferred language of communication</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Macedonian <input type="checkbox"/> Albanian <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
<b>Gender</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male
<b>Description of Incident for Grievance</b>	What happened? Where did it happen? Whom did it happen to? What is the result of the problem?
<b>Date of Incident / Grievance</b>	
	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>One-time incident/grievance (date _____)</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Happened more than once (how many times? _____)</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>On-going (currently experiencing problem)</b>
<b>What would you like to see happen?</b>	

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please return this form to:*  
 Attention: \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Primary Education Improvement Project

*Ministry of Education and Science  
Str. Kiril and Metodij 54, 1000 Skopje, North Macedonia*