

OPERATION IDENTIFICATION SHEET

Evaluation of the support in the area of equal access to quality education with recommendations for future assistance and development

1. Operating Structure

Operating Structure for Human Resources Development Component of IPA (OS), as per Article 16 of the Governmental Decree on decentralised implementation system (DIS), shall comprise of Central Financing and Contracting Department (CFCD) - Ministry of Finance and the respective structures for IPA implementation established within the Ministry of Education and Science (MES) and the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP). The OS shall be responsible for managing and implementing the Operational Programme Human Resources Development (OPHRD) 2007 – 2013 in accordance with the principle of sound financial management, as per Article 9 of the Governmental Decree on DIS, point 6 of Annex A of the Framework Agreement and Article 28 of IPA Implementing Regulation (IR).

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2. Title of the Operation

Evaluation of the support in the area of equal access to quality education with recommendations for future assistance and development

3. Measure

Measure 4.1: Support to the Implementation of OPHRD 2007 – 2013

4. Description of the Operation

4.1 Synthetic description

The concept of promotion of equal access to quality education for all children, youths and adults is reserved as global commitment in the EU and international context. This concept is aligned with the international Education for all movement and Millennium Development Goals as well.

This issue is addressed from the national perspective is focused on primary and secondary education and promotion of equal access, social cohesion and better opportunities for employment including the fostering of the relevant legislation and policies. In more concrete way, this covers conduction of contemporary education, E-accession education, equal opportunities for the children coming from all socioeconomic categories and children with special educational needs.

In the past, the inclusive education in frames of the overall education system has been promoted and supported as such. Very often, there was not clear distinction between the integrated and inclusive education. The concept or the model of integrated education was referring to provision of education system regardless of the ethnic/cultural background of the children. Despite this, the inclusive education was wider oriented, and referred to support of education system regardless of the background and the abilities. Both concepts were consequently developed as specific dimension of the education system. Unfortunately, as previously noted, these concepts nowadays are overcome and recognized in the concept of providing of equal access for quality education for all.

Systematic, multidisciplinary and multi-sectoral efforts are needed in order to overcome the obstacles and to ensure that educational institutions are inclusive and that the national education system as a whole is supporting the equal access to quality education. In addition, this will provide breaking down barriers among the ethnic communities and will lead towards reduction of the stereotypes and decrease of the level of social distance that students with disabilities are facing with.

There are numerous initiatives and projects that in the previous period have contributed towards the promotion and support of the introduction of the concept of equal access to quality education in particularly projects related to integrated and inclusive education. Some of these projects were initiated and realised by the international donors` community side, governmental side and by the side of civil

society organizations. The contributions of the international donors such as USAID, FOSIM, OSCE, and UNICEF (considered as pioneer in supporting the introductory models of the inclusive education) are highly appreciated and based on collaboration with relevant national institutions.

Since there are a variety of interventions, consistency and continuity in supporting them, and the related policies, are needed. So far, an overall analysis and assessment of the achieved results on the level of programmes and project is lacking. This operation will provide evaluation that will cover the initiatives, programmes and projects in the area of equal access to quality education with focus on projects related to integrated and the inclusive education. In addition to this, the review of the good practices will give sustainable directions and lessons as well, in order to learn from the previous experiences and to mitigate the repetitions and losing of resources.

In this context, national policy documents that are covering the issues of inclusiveness and equal access within the education system are the Country Programme Action Plan 2010-2015 and the National Strategy “Steps towards Integrated Education in the Education System”.

The Country Programme Action Plan 2010-2015 is based on thorough assessment of the barriers that prevent integration and inclusion of all ethnic communities, aiming to achieve higher educational results and promotion of multi-ethnic and multicultural society. The plan foresees interventions that address identified barriers at all levels: policy, curricula, working materials, capacity of teachers and school management.

After a process of broad consultations with Government officials, representatives of international and regional agencies, and civil society, the Government through the Ministry of Education and Science and the Secretariat for Implementation of Ohrid Framework Agreement, adopted the “Steps towards Integrated Education in the Education System”, where the national orientations towards integrated education in the education system in the country are defined.¹

Its aim is to initiate a comprehensive strategy towards an integrated education system and to bring tangible and considerable change in the general approach within the education system in accordance with the multi-ethnic reality of the country.

The policy measures are divided in five thematic strands, each one representing a complex issue in itself. The strands touch upon questions of democratic school governance in a decentralized environment, the issues of joint curricular and extracurricular activities, language acquisition, the complexity of curricula, textbooks and teacher training, all of which are complemented by a set of guiding principles aimed at avoiding separation along ethnic lines in new schools.²

So far, the activities that were implemented in frames of this national strategic document are more than evident. Nevertheless considering the new aspects and new developments in this area, there is a need to “re-think” this policy document, to provide overview of the achievements, and to propose improved measures and projects.

¹ The document was adopted on 07 October 2010.

² “Steps towards Integrated Education in the Education System”, Ministry of Education and Science, 2010, page 3

Within the OPHRD 2007 – 2013, and the Priority Axis 2: Education and training – Investing in human capital through better education and training, the second measure is defined as to enabling access to quality education for the ethnic communities. Two operations are actual for this period, or “Support the integration of ethnic communities in the educational system“(2007 – 2009, ongoing Twinning Project) and “Achieving Quality Education through Providing Intercultural Learning Environment for All Ethnic Communities”(2010 – 2011, ToR under preparation).

For the forthcoming programming process, including the preparations for the new financial perspective 2014 – 2020 and strongly supporting the Sector wide approach, it will be necessary to summarize the achieved results and impacts on the education system by introducing and practicing the concept of equal access to quality education. Not only for the programming purposes, but the added value of this operation will be towards better absorption of the available funds and for stronger donor coordination of the activities to be planned and undertaken in this area, and by all means promotion and implementation of equity, inclusiveness and better society.

Finally, the country’s EU accession path needs to be supported with promotion of equal access to quality education to all by appropriate locations of the resources, participatory and target oriented policy with mobilisation of all key actors and stakeholders on different levels and from different sectors.

Overall objective

The overall objective of this operation is to support the process of efficient programming, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Operational Programme for Human Resource Development 2007 – 2013 with focus on Priority Axis 2 Education and training – Investing in human capital through better education and training. In long-term, this operation would contribute for further improvement of the sector as a whole and its inclusive development for providing equal access to quality education for all.

Specific objectives

The specific objectives of this operation are:

- Evaluation of provided support in the area of equal access to quality education;
- Analysis of the achieved results of the national strategic document “Steps towards Integrated Education in the Education System” and its improvement;
- Creation of recommendations for the programming of the future assistance in the area of equal access to quality education and better donor coordination.

This operation will be accomplished through the following activities:

Activity 1: Conducting evaluation of the support in the area of equal access to quality education

The evaluation of the support in the area of providing of equal access to quality

education will include assessment of the previous, ongoing and planned programmes, projects, activities and other initiatives supported by EU, other international donors (bilateral and multilateral), as well as by national institutions starting from year 2007 and up to dated. This evaluation will particularly focused on so far undertaken initiatives and conducted projects that previously also referred to integrated and inclusive education.

For the purposes of the evaluation, initially mapping and summarising of the provided support in this area will be conducted. This will include identification of the investments and their summarising (definition of mapping work plan, data collection and summarising tools to be used).

The process of evaluation will be supported with previously defined methodology and previously prepared evaluation questions as well. The evaluation will cover, in particular, the assessment of the following indicators: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability and cross-cutting issues. It will be based on several methods, such as desk research, questionnaires for different target groups, in-depth interviews and focus groups. The identification of good practices and lessons learned with conclusions and recommendations derived from the evaluation process will be also consisting parts of the final output.

Activity 2: Support the implementation and improvement of the national strategic document “Steps towards Integrated Education in the Education System”

During the past period, evident are the activities that are ongoing and implemented in frames of the national strategic document “Steps towards Integrated Education in the Education System”. By analysing the implementation of the national strategic document “Steps towards Integrated Education in the Education System”, overview with the achieved results will be provided.

The appropriate methodology will be used that will lead to prioritizing the needs, according to the currently identified situation. Real and achievable comprehensive action plan for the future improved measures and activities will be defined, as well. According to the proposed action plan, development of the adequate indicators of the national strategic document will be provided.

The upgraded and updated version of this document will be consulted with the relevant stakeholders (consultations through communication with stakeholders, public events and debate, roundtables with different targets, etc.) and accordingly distributed.

Activity 3: Provision of recommendations for the future assistance and development in the area of equal access to quality education

By this activity, best practices developed in the country so far and lessons learned in the area of equal access to quality education, based on the results from the Activity 1, will be summarized. Finally, recommendations will be delivered with an aim for better and more coherent planning and implementation of initiatives and actions in this area. The recommendations will be used as instrumental and practical tool by the relevant national stakeholders (and by the international stakeholders, depending on their fields of interests), especially for the future programming processes. This output will be of

great importance for the programming purposes for the new financial perspectives IPA 2 (2014 – 2020).

The results from the previous two activities including the recommendations for the future assistance and development in this area will be consulted and shared with the relevant stakeholders by organizing participatory workshop where all relevant stakeholders on central and local level will be invited.

In conclusion, this activity will provide better donor coordination in the area of providing equal access to quality education.

4.2 End recipient(s)

Ministry of Education and Science

4.3 Duration

The overall duration of this operation will be 6 months.

4.4 Target groups

Target groups of this operation are:

- Delegation of EU in Skopje;
- International organizations;
- Ministry of Education and Science and the Department of Primary and Secondary Education;
- Directorate for Development and Promotion of the Education on the Languages of the Ethnic Communities;
- Bureau for Education Development;
- Ministry of Labour and Social Policy;
- Secretariat for European Affairs;
- Strategic Coordinator;
- Schools in ethnically mixed communities;
- Other education and training institutions;
- Civil society organizations;
- Other relevant stakeholders.

4.5 Expected output, results and impact and indicators

Indicators	Baseline	Target	Definitions and presumptions	Sources of data
Outputs				
Number of mapping documents prepared	/	1	/	-Mapping document
Number of evaluation reports prepared and	/	1	/	-Evaluation report

approved				
Upgraded and updated version of the national strategic document on Integrated Education	/	1	/	-Draft version of the document -Project reports
Number of consultations conducted	/	min.10	/	-Project reports -Attendance lists
Number of participatory workshops organized	/	1	/	-Project reports -Attendance lists
Number of reports on recommendations prepared and approved	/	1	/	-Report on perspectives
Results				
% of funding consumption of the OPHRD 2007 – 2013, Priority Axis 2	/	85%	/	-National Fund Database

4.6 Links with other measures or IPA programmes (if any)

This operation is linked with the overall implementation of OPHRD 2007 – 2013 and in particular with the operations under the Priority Axis 2 Education and training – Investing in human capital through better education and training, measure 2.2: Enabling Access to Quality Education for Ethnic Communities:

- **Project: “Support the integration of ethnic communities in the educational system“** (2007 – 2009);
- **Project: “Achieving Quality Education through Providing Intercultural Learning Environment for All Ethnic Communities”** (2010 – 2011).

Following are the linked projects supported by other donor assistance:

- **Title: “Interethnic Integration in Education”**
Project funded by United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
Duration: 12. 2011 – 12. 2015 (Budget 5,200.000.00\$)
Description: Build awareness and provide diversity training, technical assistance, and incentives to school boards, principals, teachers, and administration officials in support of interethnic integration in education.
- **Title: “Multi Ethnic Education Project MAK 11/”**
Project funded by the Norwegian Royal Embassy
Duration: 2012 – 2013 (Budget 372,730.00€)
Description: Integration of students from ethnically pure and mixed areas; Strengthening the knowledge and skills of teachers in schools with different ethnic background; Strengthening the capacity of technical staff and other professionals in schools with different ethnic background; Active involvement

of parents and the wider community in the integrated education; Promotion of integrated education and raising awareness.

- **Title: “Enhancing inter-ethnic community dialogue and collaboration”**
Project funded by the Joint UN Programme and support of the Spanish Government through the MDG Achievement Fund
Duration: 8. 2009 - 12. 2012 (Budget 4,000.000.00\$)
Description: Enhancing the capacity of central and local bodies to facilitate inclusive problem “solving processes and consensus” building around community priorities and strengthening the commitment to an inclusive civic national identity; and enhancing capacity of national educational system for promoting ethnic and cultural diversity.
- **Title: Inclusiveness**
Project funded by the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)
Duration: 09.2009 – 12.2015
Description: The project aims to provide support to the Ministry of Education and Science in introducing changes at policy, legislative and community levels aimed at improving the inclusiveness of all children regardless of their abilities and background.
- **Title: Children Friendly School (CFS)**
Project funded by the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)
Duration: 01.2006 - 12.2015
Description: The project provides a comprehensive approach to the reform of the educational sector by using the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child as minimum standards for the delivery of quality education.
- **Title: Life-Skills Based Education (LSBE)**
Project funded by the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)
Duration: 01.2007 - 12.2015
Description: The project was launched following the development of the national Children Friendly Schools standards and the new nine-year education curricula. It aims to support the process of acquiring skills on children’s rights, multiculturalism, health education and environmental education.
- **Title: Prevention of School Violence**
Project funded by the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)
Duration: 01.2009 - 12.2015
Description: The project aims to develop capacities required to address the phenomenon of violence in the schools at national and local level.
- **Title: Campaign for Roma Education**
Project funded by the Roma Education Fund (REF)
Duration: 07.2008 - 05.2010
Description: This project had multiple objectives. It aimed at ensuring the educational inclusion of Roma children aged 5/7 during the academic years 2008/2009 and 2009/2010 by supporting their acceptance and enrolment in schools. It also monitored the progress obtained in the enrolment of Roma pupils in order to identify the appropriate future activities to be undertaken.

Finally, further activities were also implemented in the area of prevention of both discrimination and segregation.

- **Title: Alliance for Inclusion of Roma in Education**

Project funded by the Roma Education Fund (REF)

Duration: 09.2005 - 09.2009

Description: The project focused on the provision of scholarships and school-based mentoring support to Roma students of secondary and university education.

- **Title: Inclusion of Roma children in pre-school institutions, their integration and socialization**

Project funded by the Roma Education Fund (REF)

Duration: 09.2008 - 07.2009

Description: The project aimed at promoting inclusiveness of the Roma community into the educational system by supporting the coordination with the Roma Education Centres, providing grants to support Roma participation to pre-schools education and by training teachers and social workers on how to strengthen the communications with the parents of Roma pupils.

5. Implementation arrangements, risks and assumptions

5.1 Institutional framework: operation coordination unit/steering committee/regional and/or provincial authorities/technical assistance team/other

The Central Financing and Contracting Department of the Ministry of Finance shall act as a Contracting Authority and shall be responsible for tendering, contracting, payments, accounting and financial reporting. CFCD shall have overall responsibility and supervision of contract's implementation.

The Head of CFCD has delegated to the IPA structure established in the Ministry of Education and Science the following tasks: programming, technical implementation and programme/project monitoring.

The Delegation of the European Union in Skopje executes ex-ante control since this operation is programmed and it will be implemented within DIS.

5.2 Procedures for the implementation of the operation

Project Title/ Code	Contract Type	Deadline for Submitting Draft ToR to CFCF	Deadline for Completing TD/and Submission to EUD	Deadline for Publication of CN	Short List Phase	Deadline for Tender/ Call for Proposals Launch	Deadline for Tenders/ Applications Submission	Evaluation Date	Contract Approval Date	Deadline for Contract Signature	Date of Contract Start	Date of Contract End
Evaluation of the support in the area of equal access to quality education with recommendations for future assistance and development	Framework contract Global price	07/2013	07/2013	09/2013	/	/	10-11/2013	11/2013	12/2013	01/2014	01/2014	06/2014

5.3 Risks and assumptions (if any)

Risks:

- The availability of some data and information;
- Lack of institutional memory due to the staff turn-over in the administration and schools;
- Lack of interest and motivation by the targeted institutions for proactive participation during project implementation;
- Insufficient political commitment on the policy creation and enforcement;
- Potential delays in the tendering and contracting processes.

Assumptions:

- Established good cooperation among the all relevant stakeholders and target groups;
- All relevant stakeholders provide adequate information and active support and commitment to the project activities;
- Effective coordination with other similar and relevant initiatives and projects that are in place;
- Provision of innovative and up-dated recommendations that will be reflection of the real situation and real needs.