



“PRIMARY EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT PROJECT (PEIP)”

Republic of North MACEDONIA

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN



April 2025

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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
AF	Additional Financing

1 INTRODUCTION AND PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1.1 Introduction

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

The Project contributes 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 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 affects 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 Background and Additional Financing

The Government of North Macedonia seeks the approval of an Additional Financing (AF) to the Primary Education Improvement Project (PEIP, IBRD Loan No. 9182-MK), to scale up activities that have been successful under the parent project.

This funding will further increase the project's development effectiveness by focusing on further strengthening learning conditions for the most disadvantaged children in primary education and advancing the digital transformation of the primary education. These efforts align with the government's education priorities outlined in the 2024-2028 Government Work Program, particularly in the education sector. Key priorities for primary education include creating the necessary infrastructure for single-shift schooling and extended school program (whole day schooling), promoting digitalization, and investing in teachers' professional development.

Following these priorities the AF will include: (i) piloting the whole-day school (WDS) model and facilitating the transition to single-shift schooling (SSS); (ii) introducing computer-based testing (CBT) for the national Grade 5 assessment conducted by the National Examination Center (NEC); and (iii) providing targeted support for teacher professional development, focusing on critical areas identified as 'pain points'—such as low levels of reading comprehension revealed in recent national assessments—and on key priorities for building a high-quality and resilient education system, including the development of digital and green competencies.

Project Components

COMPONENT 1 IMPROVING LEARNING AT THE SCHOOL LEVEL

The AF aims to scale activities under the parent project and introduce second generation reforms that will further enhance learning environments.

Subcomponent 1.1: School Improvement Plans (SIP) and grants

The parent project focused on improving the SIP process and financing associated school enhancements. With the SIP system now established and proven effective, there is confidence in its model. The AF will build on this foundation by supporting more ambitious SIPs, contributing to the gradual operationalization of the WDS model in selected schools. The WDS extends the school day a critical reform given short school days have been identified as a key barrier to students achieving better outcomes. In order to capitalize on the extended school day and ensure more hours translate to better learning, the WDS model also supports an enhanced learning environment, fostering collaborative, interdisciplinary, and experiential learning, and integrates extracurricular and project-based activities embedded within the broader community. The government has already developed regulatory framework, including operations manual for implementation of the extracurricular activities. Through an open call, grants will be awarded to schools that demonstrate how they plan to incorporate WDS activities or various forms of extended

school stay into their SIPs. The grants will be used by schools to enhance the learning environment for WDS activities, including the purchasing of equipment, didactic materials and additional resources to support diverse learning needs. Through building on SIPs process, which was a focus of the parent project, this activity will further strengthen the role of schools as the front line of the reform process and enhance environments for learning. This initiative will serve as a pilot for scaling up the WDS approach, which is yet to be implemented, despite being outlined in the Concept for Primary Education, which includes a proposed framework and activities for its implementation. In total, an estimated number of 20 schools that have already transitioned to single-shift schooling (SSS) schedule would benefit from grant support under this subcomponent. In addition to financial support, selected schools will receive technical assistance (TA) to help them better structure the school day, design programs aligned with students' interests, and organize free-period and extracurricular activities in line with the official rulebooks in this area created by the MoES. Furthermore, they will receive guidance on structuring remedial classes to support students who need additional help. As part of the pilot, training will be provided for school directors to strengthen managerial capacities for WDS activities, while teachers will gain skills in project-based learning, formative assessment, critical and collaborative thinking, developing individualized learning plans, and tracking student progress—particularly in key areas such as literacy and numeracy.

Subcomponent 1.2: Improving the Learning Environment

The parent project supported upgrading of the basic physical learning environment, supported through centrally procured investments. The AF will continue to support the upgrading of the infrastructure of schools but will more specifically convert to single-shift schooling, thereby more directly tackling the challenge of short school days. The AF will provide support for infrastructure upgrades for 20 schools pre-selected by the MoES as meeting minimum conditions necessary for transitioning to a single-shift school schedule. In addition to upgrading learning environments, the project will integrate robust climate adaptation and mitigation measures into the construction of new classrooms. Specifically, the AF will finance schools that need new classrooms to transition to single-shift schooling. These new classroom constructions will, where feasible feature energy-efficient systems such as LED lighting, solar panels, high-performance insulation, smart thermostats, energy management systems and double-glazed windows, designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and lower energy consumption, with the goal of not only meeting but exceeding the energy efficiency requirements of North Macedonia's Law on Energy Efficiency. The targeted schools will be located in high density urban areas and serve a large proportion of vulnerable students. The transition to the single-shift school model aligns with the optimization plan for the primary school network, which has already been developed by the MoES under the parent project. Furthermore, the project will consider incorporating rainwater harvesting systems and improved drainage solutions to manage storm water effectively, thereby mitigating risks from extreme weather events such as floods and water scarcity. The design and construction processes will emphasize the use of sustainable and

locally sourced materials, while landscaping will incorporate native and drought-resistant plant species to promote local biodiversity and enhance resilience to climate fluctuations.

Subcomponent 1.3: Promoting accountability through information sharing

The objective of AF under this subcomponent will be to support the implementation of the "My School" transparency tool for enhancing transparency and accountability in the primary education, for which the design has been prepared under the parent project.

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

The parent project supported the roll-out of the first ever National Assessment in primary education. The proposed AF aims to continue strengthening reforms in the assessment of student learning, by introducing computer-based administration of the national assessment program as a second-generation reform envisaged in the Concept of National Assessment for Primary Education.

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

This sub-component provides 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 supports the development and administration of at least two cycles of literacy and mathematics in grade 3 and 5 initially, focused 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

Results from the NAP are used to inform policy reform at the ministerial level and through action at the school level. This entails 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.

Subcomponent 2.3 (new): Transition to Digital Assessment of Student Learning Achievements

While the parent project has focused on introducing a national paper-based (PB) assessment program of students in grades 3 and 5, the proposed AF under this subcomponent will go further to support the transition to digitalized testing of student learning outcomes for grade 5. This transition to digital testing aims to enhance the flexibility of scheduling and locations for testing, the utility of the data and will lead to cost savings, while also bolstering the assessment process. Introducing a CBT (digital) format for assessment can also contribute to enabling the overall digital transition of the school, in all its components (students, teachers, etc.) by equipping schools with more digital infrastructure. The AF will support the digital administration of the Grade 5 assessment by developing comprehensive test software, procuring portable computers, training NEC staff, migrating test content, and conducting a pilot study in select schools.

COMPONENT3. ENHANCING TEACHER, MULTI-PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT TEAMS, AND SCHOOL LEADERS COMPETANCES

The parent project helped establish a national system for the professional development of teachers. The AF takes a more targeted approach, addressing specific “pain points” identified through TEACH, national assessment results, and government priorities.

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 AF is well-positioned to build upon the reforms introduced under the parent project which included the introduction of a catalog of professional learning courses based on teacher standards, the accreditation of training providers, the delivery of trainings, and the monitoring of training provision. As a continuation of this, the AF will support two additional cycles of in-service trainings, amounting to 16 hours of professional development. These cycles address key educational challenges identified through national assessments and the TEACH baseline report: improving reading comprehension due to poor test performance and developing digital and green skills in line with EU Growth Plan priorities. The implementation of these programs will be conducted as programs of national interest,

which fall under the mandatory training requirements of the Law on Teachers and Professional Associates in Primary and Secondary Education. The in-service training on reading comprehension will target classroom teachers in grades 1-4, while the training on digital and green skills will target subject teachers in grades 5-9. This will be the first time that mandatory training of national interest will be conducted in the country.

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)

Under the proposed AF for Component 4, additional resources will be used for project management costs and M&E activities for the additional time for implementation of all the additional activities. The MoES will continue to be responsible for executing project activities, leveraging its existing structures with support from the established Project Management Unit (PMU). Decision-making will be conducted by the MoES in coordination with the Bureau for Development of Education (BDE), the National Examination Center (NEC), and the State Education Inspectorate (SEI).

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 have been developed. The Project has supported the Ministry in development of an action plan for school optimization and piloting of some of options with interested municipalities. It was 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 supports 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 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. 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.

1.4 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 RN 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 RN 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.

1.5 Regulatory requirements of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan

1.5.1 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*,¹ 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 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 and January 2025) by the Government of N. 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 Source: (MoES, 2018), *Comprehensive Education Strategy for 2018-25*, Ministry of Education and Science, Skopje.

1.5.2 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";
- 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, 229/20, 3/25);
- 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).

1.5.3 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”². 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.

² Guidance Note for borrowers-Environmental & Social Framework for IPF Operations

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.

2. 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 are: children with disabilities, Roma children, children from low income households and others.

2.1 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 below.

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"> ▪ Municipalities ▪ Primary schools ▪ School boards ▪ School improvement committees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support the MoES and PMU for efficient implementation of the PEIP; - Modeling of local school networks; - Strengthen of impact of per student allocation formula on budgets of municipalities ; - Engage in carrier development process of the teachers and MPST and school leaders - Public communication support to better cooperate with municipalities and to inform the public; - Promote accountability of schools through information sharing - Create (or revise the composition of) school improvement committees; - Engage in preparation of innovative SIP; - Engage in self-evaluation process; - Organization of Focus groups with parents - 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. - Organize Online presentations/info-sessions related to relevant project activities in order to include and incorporate the needs of vulnerable groups

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

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

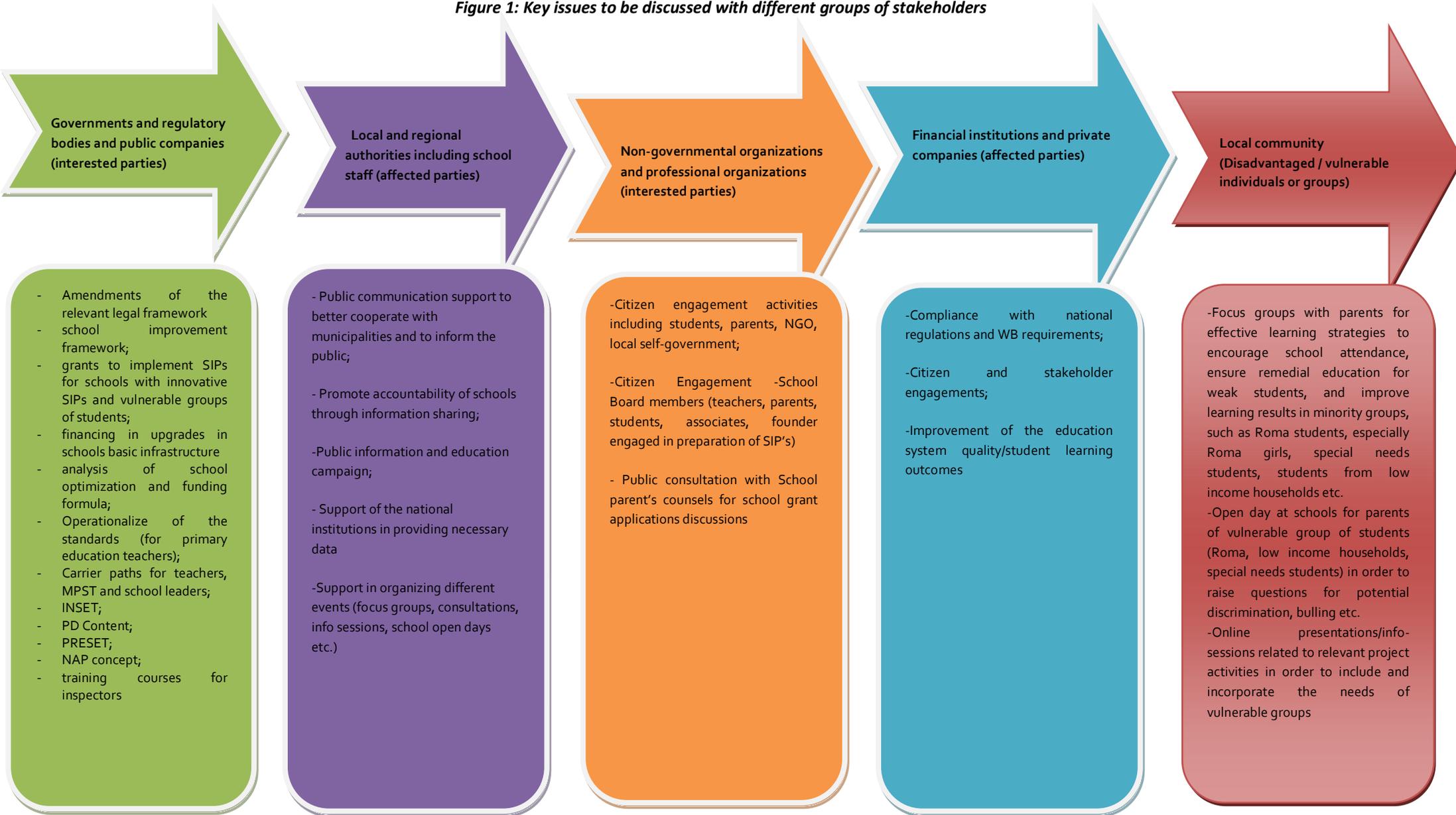
Category	Stakeholders	Sub group/ Department Sector	Responsibilities
Other Interested parties	Governments and regulatory bodies and public companies	Bureau for Development of Education (BDE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support the MoES and PMU for efficient implementation of the PEIP; - Reforming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

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

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"> ▪ Ministry of Education and science, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Primary education Department; - Legal issues Department; - Department for strategic planning; - Finance department; ▪ BDE Bureau for Development of education; ▪ NEC National Examination Center; ▪ SEI State Education Inspectorate; ▪ Ministry of Finance; ▪ Primary schools; ▪ NGOs; ▪ Municipalities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Distribute information to Government officials, NGOs, Local Government, and organisations/agencies/schools/ associations ▪ Invite stakeholders to meetings and follow-up
One-on-one meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ministry of Education and science; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Primary education Department; - Legal issues Department; - Department for strategic planning; - Finance department; ▪ BDE Bureau for Development of education; ▪ NEC National Examination Centre; ▪ SEI State Education Inspectorate; ▪ Ministry of Finance; ▪ Primary schools; ▪ NGOs; ▪ Municipalities; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Seeking views and opinions; ▪ Enable stakeholder to speak freely about sensitive issues; ▪ Build personal relationships; ▪ Record meetings
Formal meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ministry of Education and science; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Primary education Department; - Legal issues Department; - Department for strategic planning; - Finance department; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Present the Project information to a group of stakeholders ▪ Allow group to comment – opinions and views ▪ Build impersonal relation with high

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

Engagement Technique	Relevant Stakeholders	Appropriate application of the technique
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Primary schools; 	
Radio/TV emissions/portals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ministry of Education and Science 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Brief project information to provide regular update ▪ Site specific project information.

2.2 Summary of stakeholder activities for preparation of AF

Ahead of the preparation of the required documentation and procedures for the additional financing, an implementation support mission and pre-appraisal were carried out. The World Bank team, together with representatives from the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) and the Project Implementation Unit (PIU), held a series of consultations with key stakeholders—including the Bureau for Development of Education, the National Examination Center, and the State Education Inspectorate—to assess progress on project implementation across all components.

The mission also reviewed the status of major procurement packages, as well as key fiduciary, social, and environmental management aspects of the project.

2.3 Summary of previous Stakeholder Engagement activities from the parent project and lessons learned from previous engagements

The parent project features a strong CE design, which the AF will continue implementing and enhancing to engage all stakeholders throughout project design and implementation. As part of the Stakeholder Engagement activities and for efficient implementation of the PEIP, MoES and PMU have regular coordination meetings with BDE, NEC and SEI. Additionally, PIU has close collaboration with all Primary Schools, as well as the Municipalities as their founders. Prior each activity under the Project components, an official letters signed by the minister are sent to the Municipalities to introduce them with the particular activity and consult them on the next steps.

Through the activities of the parent project, the PMU has developed strong experience in collaborating with NGOs engaged in education, environmental protection, and support for vulnerable individuals and groups

Under subcomponent 1.1, the parent project supported inclusive participatory processes through School Improvement Plans (SIPs). These plans help school teams collaborate to improve learning

outcomes and promote learning recovery. SIPs were developed with active participation from local communities, including parents, students, teachers, associates (MPSTs), and local authorities, who collectively form each school's board. While schools maintain autonomy in preparing SIPs, school boards are consulted during development and can suggest improvements based on feedback from their constituencies. This participatory process ensures stakeholder voices are heard and that feedback loops are closed. Grants were provided only when SIPs demonstrate active community engagement through documented school board participation.

To support transparency and stakeholder engagement, all relevant project documents have been published on MoES website and a grievance mechanism has been established. For the purpose of larger promotion of the established Grievance Mechanism, a leaflet with the important information with regard to existence of Grievance mechanism and all the possible ways of submitting the grievance as well as the steps in dealing with the grievance was created. The leaflet was distributed by e-mail to all relevant stakeholders including the Primary schools.

➤ **Lessons Learned from Stakeholder Activities**

1. **Early and continuous engagement with stakeholders** proved essential for building trust, ensuring transparency, and fostering a shared sense of ownership over project outcomes. Regular communication helped align expectations and facilitated smoother implementation.
2. **Collaborating with schools and municipalities** provided valuable insights into local contexts and needs, especially when working with vulnerable populations. Their involvement enhanced the project's relevance and responsiveness.
3. **Feedback mechanisms and participatory approaches**—such as public consultations, surveys, questionnaires —were instrumental in identifying emerging issues and adapting project activities in a timely manner.
4. **Clear roles and responsibilities among stakeholders** helped avoid duplication of efforts and ensured efficient coordination.
5. **Stakeholder Activities enhanced accountability and sustainability**, as community members became more invested in the project's success. Their active involvement also improved the uptake and impact of project interventions.
6. **Limited school capacity** to implement Grant Program activities required additional efforts from the PMU to ensure timely execution. Drawing on lessons learned from the engagement with 31 schools and grant beneficiaries—specifically their insufficient capacity in financial and procurement management—it has been concluded that future similar activities might benefit from a centralized procurement approach.

3 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

3.1 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.

3.2 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 PMU Grant Coordinator and Social Specialists shall be the responsible persons for implementation 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.

3.3 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) website:

- ***Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) for PEIP including grievance mechanism;***
- ***Environmental and Social Management Check Lists – ESMP Check List;***

- **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 ESCP and ESMP Checklist will be publicly available on the MoES website for submitting comments within 14 days.

3.4 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 Project will make a concerted effort to target all the above groups. As part of its visibility/communication strategy, 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 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 Roma girls Students with disabilities Students from low income households	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement of local NGO’s who work with vulnerable people at the community level to help disseminate information and organize consultations • The project will arrange separate consultation sessions (e.g., meetings and focus group discussion) • The project will use various communication measures including women associations or organizations to reach out to female groups • The project will use various communication measures including all relevant NGO’s to reach out different vulnerable groups • The project 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 • School open days will be organized for vulnerable groups •

3.5 Timelines

Project stage	Topic of consultation	Method used	Target stakeholders	Responsibilities
Implementation Phase	Update and inform stakeholders of the project plan and progress	Workshop/Online workshop	All stakeholders participating in the project	MoES/PMU
	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 feedback	All	MoES/PMU

3.6 Review of Comments

All consultation activities held under the project will be based on the principle of inclusiveness and local community cooperation and will strive to engage all groups of local community including students, teachers, parents, municipal administration etc. 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 project will hold separate small group discussions with them at an easily accessible venue. The Project will ensure that they use varied means of communication (written, verbal, use of an advocate/translator if necessary). All stakeholder feedback shall be carefully reviewed and taken into consideration to the maximum extent of alignment with the project objectives. This especially includes the responses upon various needs assessments and readiness for change done under the project (readiness to transit to single shift operation of schools, readiness to include whole-day school model, equipment, teaching and learning aids, construction needs etc.

3.7 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 is 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).

4.1 Resources

Budget categories	Times/ Years	Total costs	Remarks
1. Staff salaries and related expenses			
<i>1a. Grant coordinator and social specialists</i>	7	200.000	
<i>1b. Environmental specialist</i>	7	60.000	
2. Events			
<i>2a. Public consultation events</i>	2	25.000	
<i>2b. Organization of focus groups</i>	50	25.000	
3. Communication campaigns			
<i>3a. Dissemination materials</i>	100.000	10.000	
<i>3b. Social media campaigns</i>	1	70.000	
<i>3c. Outreach activities related with vulnerable groups</i>	10	10.000	
4. Trainings			
<i>4a. Training on social/environmental issues for PMU</i>	2	10.000	
5. Beneficiary surveys			
<i>5a. Citizen engagement surveys</i>	2	20.000	
6. Grievance Mechanism			
<i>6a. Training of GM committees</i>	5	5.000	
TOTAL STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT BUDGET:		435.000	EUR

4.2 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 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), an online Grievance mechanism has been established 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.

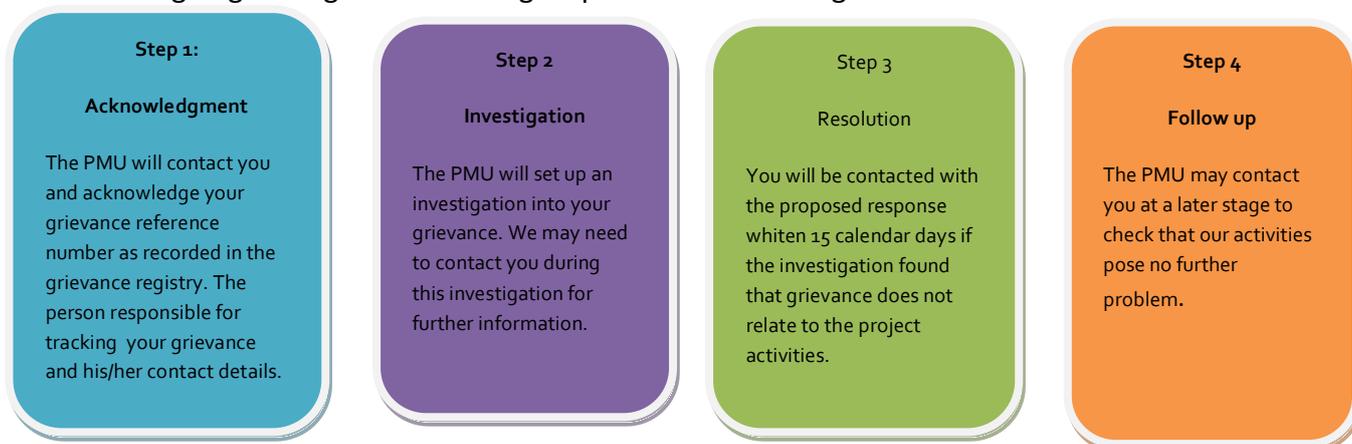
Despite the grievance submission, any comments/concerns/grievance can be submit to the MoES verbally (personally or by telephone) or in writing by filling in the Project Grievance Form (by personal delivery, post, fax or e-mail to the MoES contact person). Individuals who submit comments or grievances 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.

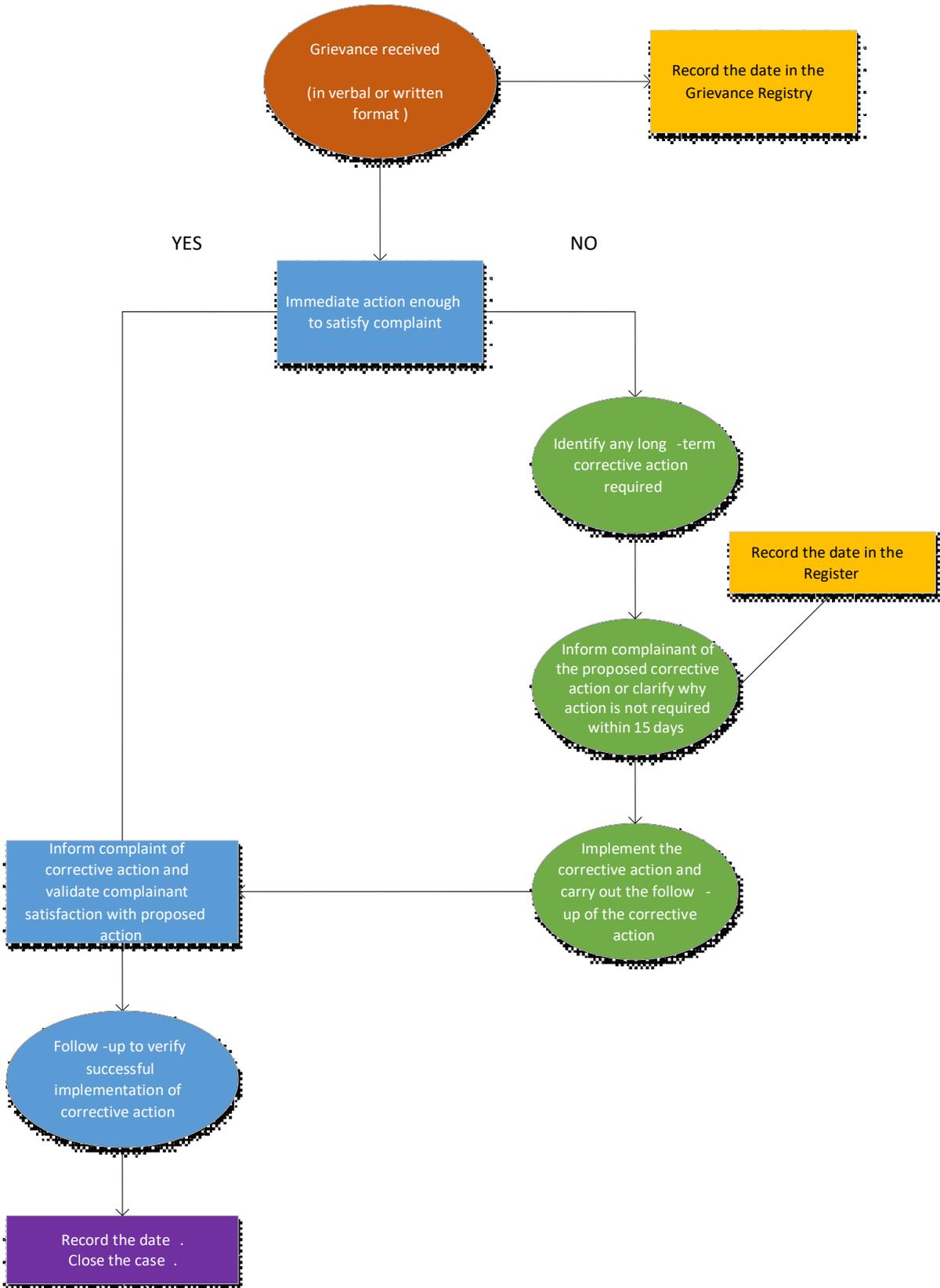
5.1 Complainant feedback on the resolution

The MoES website includes clear information on how feedback, questions, comments, concerns and grievances can be submitted by any stakeholder and includes the possibility to submit grievances electronically through this link <https://preporaki-peip.mon.gov.mk/>. It also provides information on the way the GRM committee works, both in terms of process and deadlines.

PMU within the MoES ensures that it is responsive to any concerns and complaints particularly from affected stakeholders and communities. The M&E specialist is responsible to monitor and keep records on the GRM. There are semiannual reports to WB.

The PMU is going 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 is using:

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

All grievance information have been recorded in a grievance log. This includes:

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

All complaints are verified by the PMU in the Grievance Registry and assigned a number, and acknowledged within 15 calendar days. The Registry has all necessary elements to disaggregate the grievance by gender of the person submitting it as well as by type of grievance. Each grievance is 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 is assisting 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 is identifying. 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 also contains 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

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: _____

6. 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	https://www.bro.gov.mk/	bro.macedonia@bro.gov.mk	+389 2 3064 131
State Examination Centre	http://dic.edu.mk/	dic@dic.edu.mk	+389 2 3228 866 +389 76 490 310
State Education Inspectorate	http://dpi.mon.gov.mk/	dpi@mon.gov.mk	+389 23140 103
Ministry of Education and Science- Department for Primary Education	http://www.mon.gov.mk/	elena.ivanovska@mon.gov.mk	+389 2 3117 896
Ministry of Education and Science-Legal issues Department Union of Chambers	http://www.mon.gov.mk/	milka.masnikosa@mon.gov.mk	+389 2 3117 896
Ministry of Education and Science Department for strategic planning	http://www.mon.gov.mk/	biljana.trajkovska@mon.gov.mk	+389 2 3117 896

Annex B

Grievance Form for submission of complains

Reference Number	
Full name (optional) <input type="checkbox"/> I wish to raise my grievance anonymously. <input type="checkbox"/> I request not to disclose my identity	

without my consent.	
Contact information	<input type="checkbox"/> By Post: <i>Please provide mailing address:</i> _____ _____ _____
Please mark how you wish to be contacted (mail, telephone, e-mail).	<input type="checkbox"/> By telephone: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> By E-mail
Preferred language of communication	<input type="checkbox"/> Macedonian <input type="checkbox"/> Albanian <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
Gender	<input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male
Description of Incident for Grievance	What happened? Where did it happen? Whom did it happen to? What is the result of the problem?
Date of Incident / Grievance	
	<input type="checkbox"/> One-time incident/grievance (date _____) <input type="checkbox"/> Happened more than once (how many times? _____) <input type="checkbox"/> On-going (currently experiencing problem)
What would you like to see happen?	

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, R. N. Macedonia