Dear friends and collaborators,

The team of the Foundation “Step by Step” – Macedonia has prepared for you the newest edition of the e-bulletin. In this release you can read more about the activities during the summer period and how we celebrated the International Literacy Day and the beginning of the new school year with the opening of the renovated Children’s Creative Center in Skopje!

Greetings from our team

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USAID Readers are Leaders Project

Teacher Professional and Career Development Project

Project for (Self) Empowerment of Roma Parents and Children

REGIONAL MEETINGS WITH STUDENT SUPPORT STAFF HELD DURING THE SUMMER

PROCESS AND PROCEDURES FOR ADVANCEMENT IN TITLES INITIALIZED

SUMMER ACTIVITIES IN THE ROMA CENTERS

A new picture book in our digital library
On September 10, 2014, USAID READERS ARE LEADERS PROJECT officially opened the renovated Children’s Creative Center in the Youth Cultural Center - Skopje.

At the opening event, USAID Mission Director James Stein said: “Reading and basic mathematics skills are the foundation for nearly all other skills. Studies repeatedly conclude that if we raise a generation of readers, we are much more likely to be raising a generation of responsible citizens who make well-informed decisions and actively contribute to their communities.”

The Children’s Creative Center has been given new life as the first activity center in the country that enables students to engage in reading and math activities together with their parents and teachers. It is an ever-changing space, where teachers will be encouraged to contribute with positive examples from their teaching practice.

The Children’s Creative Center will be open for visitors from Tuesday to Saturday, 9 – 12 a.m. and 4 – 8 p.m.

For more information, please contact the Youth Cultural Center: 02/3115-225 and 02/3115-508 ext. 114.

www.stepbystep.org.mk
USAID Readers are Leaders Project was using the period during the summer school break to reach out to young learners and local community members who are part of NGOs working with children and parents, or with children who are residing in institutions, such as hospitals, orphanages, social centers or family strengthening programs. On July 1, the Magic Literacy Van visited the Roma NGO Nadez in the Roma populated municipality of Shuto Orizari in Skopje. Around 120 children and 30 adults from this center, as well as from other two NGOs working with Romani children – Dendo Vas and Ambrela, took part in the event. The children enjoyed the Magic Literacy Van filled with children's books, participated in reading sessions where actors and older students were reading storybooks to the younger ones, math corner with math games and puzzles and an art corner. This event was organized as a cross-project cooperation with the Project for (Self) Empowerment of Roma Parents and Children, also implemented by the Step by Step Foundation.

On August 25th, the Magic Literacy Van visited another Roma populated area in Skopje. The activity took part in the premises of NGO MIR in Topaana. Around 20 children aged 7 – 15 actively participated in the reading and math activities. Picture books, other learning materials and frequent reading and math activities of this type are more than welcomed with children who live in disadvantaged areas of the country.

During the summer months, the Magic Literacy Van also visited the SOS Children’s Village and made available its resources to all the children who live there.
Activities with the Clinic for Children's Diseases in Skopje

In July and August, the project team visited the children residing at the clinic and held two reading sessions in the Children's Corner at the Oncology Ward. Also, the project team prepared packages with materials for writing and drawing for the children residing at the nine departments of the Clinic, and will additionally deliver more picture books. We hope that with this we will give the children a chance to educate and recreate during their stay there.

Materials for the schools involved in the project

Readers are Leaders Project has prepared packages with supplies for the schools involved in the project. These materials will be distributed to the schools in the upcoming period with the purpose to support students' classroom activities.

“We Oranges for everyone” is the new and exciting picture book, available in Macedonian and Albanian language in our digital library!

We would also like to remind you that in the library you can find other picture books and materials published over the last few months. Download and read them with the children!

For additional questions regarding the activities of the USAID Readers are Leaders Project, please contact Ana Dimovska, Information and Communication Officer, through e-mail: ana@stepbystep.org.mk or cell: 072/307-321.

www.stepbystep.org.mk
This summer, there were six regional meetings held with student support staff to discuss the Catalogue of Core Professional Competencies of Student Support Staff and the Catalogues of Professional Standards for Student Support Staff Mentor/Advisor.

This autumn continues the finalization of the competencies and standards. These documents have been sent to Student Support Services in each school and their feedback is expected not later than September 30.

In June, the task force for drafting the process for teacher (and student support staff) career advancement held its first meeting, and the work of the group continued in July.

In September, a more intensive work will be undertaken within this task force, as well as within two other work groups: Guidelines for Following the Work and Planning the Professional Development of Teachers and Student Support Services in Primary and Secondary Schools, and Guidelines for the Mentoring Support of Novice Teachers and Student Support Services in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Macedonia.

For more information regarding the “Teacher Competencies” Component, please contact Ana Stojanov, Project Coordinator, through e-mail: ane@stepbystep.org.mk or cell: 072/ 307-327.
In the July - August period, the Project for (Self) Empowerment of Roma Parents and Children continued with the usual activities with a slightly decreased intensity due to the summer holidays. The Centers focused their efforts in reviewing the acquired skills and knowledge and organized open-air games intended to improve children's motor skills, coordination and team-work. The project team was actively involved in organization and implementation of the Reading and Math are Fun activity on July 1, previously mentioned in the USAID Readers are Leader Project section.

In September, the project will proceed with the regular activities with the parents and children. Greater attention will be paid to children's and parents' safety and health within the centers and the community, as well as to capacity building activities for the educators and professionals who work in the field of early childhood development with Roma children.

For more information regarding the Project for (Self) Empowerment of Roma Parents and Children, please contact Elena Mishikj, Project Coordinator, through e-mail: elena@stepbystep.org.mk or Majda Josheska, Educational Coordinator, majda@stepbystep.org.mk.