

REPORT ON ESE'S WORK FOR THE PERIOD JUNE 2006 – JUNE 2007

The program year 2006-2007 as a beginning of the foreseen activities within the new three year program was marked with continuation of the already undertaken efforts in some of the areas that ESE works on, but also it was marked with a new beginning and has introduced progressive concepts and ideas.

ESE's efforts on all program lines were oriented towards the assessing of the factual position of women on different issues that later on served as a basis for development of the needed policies on national level. The survey on prevalence of DV and obstacles that Roma faces in the health system, followed by preparation of the policy paper on Roma health and National program against domestic violence, which are the most explicit examples of this effort. As for the past five years, ESE traditionally continued with provision of direct services for women. The Legal aid center-WHICH operation and the number of clients served clearly showed the need of the types of services provided. Furthermore the WHIC has enriched services in order to meet the women's needs.

The new concept of "Open communities" was introduced within the Women and politics program. It should present a starting point, especially taking into consideration the implementation of the decentralization in Macedonia. The "Open Communities" concept would approach the citizen's closer to the work of local communities, thus providing them with a crucial role in their own municipality. This concept will approach women, men, rural women, minority women and on this way will serve in its own essence-promoting an effective implementation of human rights which with diversity matters will be a development objective in its own right.

This year ESE has undertaken numerous efforts aiming at raising funds using different techniques and methods, as well as developing relations with prospects and donors. A hotline for fundraising, direct mailing and placement of donation boxes were used as techniques. Some of them were for the first time tested in Macedonia. A draft PR strategy was developed that will serve as a basis for building ESE strong public image, helping the public to understand the organization and its products and services. System for evaluation of the staff performance was developed.

During the reporting period, ESE has participated on **consultation for several processes related to European integration**, such as Multi Annual Indicative Planning Document (MIPD) for the period 2007-2009, Operational plan for 2007, the First and Fourth Component of IPA and preparation of the JIM (Joint Inclusion Memorandum) that the Government has initiated last year.

ESE attended the meeting with Mrs. Rosemary DeCarlo, Deputy Under - Secretary for Europe from the United States Department, organized by **USAID**, focused on legal and fiscal framework of the civil sector, long-term sustainability, as well as cooperation among the Government and NGO's.

ESE prepared a list of critical issues on several **Human rights international treaties** that the Government of Republic of Macedonia has reported last year or will report on in the next one. ESE submitted list of critical issues on the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural rights, to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The lists of critical issues were submitted on the International Covenant on Civil and Political rights, to the Human Rights Committee and on the Convention against Torture to the UN Committee against torture. Republic of Macedonia will report on both of them in the year of 2008.

This year ESE has participated into few processes **on a national level** related to gender equality and civil society sustainability, such as the National Plan of Action for Gender Equality and Law on voluntarism. Beside the consultation, ESE has been invited to give its opinion on the curriculum content of the newly established Academy for judges and public prosecutors. ESE has proposed inclusion of the DV and antidiscrimination issue as key elements that play pivotal role in the eradication of gender discrimination.

In this period 13 **project proposals** were prepared and submitted by ESE. From the total number of submitted project proposals 6 were rejected, 5 were approved and for 3 proposals we are waiting for reply.

Brief summary of the program activities implemented over the last year follows:

WOMEN HUMAN RIGHTS PROGRAM

For the past years, ESE has been undertaking serious and continuous efforts in establishing systematic actions in three different aspects: provision of legal aid and court representation to the victims of DV, (LAC); Unification of the civil and criminal justice system for DV protection and preparation of the National strategy for combating domestic violence.

Legal aid centres (LAC)

The lack of a full institutional response to the problem of domestic violence have led ESE to work to protect victims of domestic violence. Despite the establishment of the Centre for Legal Aid (CLA) as a direct service for victims of domestic violence, we also, at the end of 2003 established two additional local Legal Aid Centres, one in the eastern and another in the western part of Macedonia, in cities of Stip and Tetovo. The concept of pro-bono legal assistance is a crucial part of the operation of the Legal Aid Centres, which aim to provide free-of-charge legal and

psychosocial help, as well as court representation for victims of domestic violence. Victims of domestic violence can get legal aid, which includes legal advice, preparation and compilation of legal documents and pro bono representation in court, concerning civil and criminal procedure. Within the reporting period, 342 women victims were served, 292 have been able to escape the violent environments, in which they were living, and 29 pro bono court representations were provided to victims of domestic violence. On the other hand, the cooperation with the relevant institutions was progressed, i.e. combined formal government assistance with informal NGO assistance to victims.

Unification of the civil and criminal protection system

Despite the fact of DV phenomenon criminalization (Criminal Code) and on the other hand the introduction of the Civil restraining orders (Family Code), still their application in the practice is on a very unsatisfactory level. It lacks specified procedure for proposing, issuing and continuation of the temporary protective measures. On the other hand, although the rest of the provisions are not used as much as possible, the number of the reported cases is six to ten times bigger than prosecuted ones. Secondly, psychological and sexual violence are not prosecuted at all. Thus ESE decided to engage all relevant stakeholders into a process that comprises the following two sub-components: unification of the civil justice system, including standardization of the services offered by the service providers and unification of the criminal justice system. Concerning the unification of the civil justice system it is worth to be mentioned that we established a firm partnership with the MLSA, where the need of clear and precise description of the procedures needed for implementation of the civil restraining orders was recognized. On the other hand, the need of changes in the Family Code, concerning the DV issues was also emphasized. This enabled different groups of professionals to understand better their role when addressing the problem of domestic violence, through discussing on specific examples and exchanging of their fruitful experience. The working sessions conducted within one and half year period, have developed into prepared unified standards which will directly contribute in overcoming the existing discrepancy between the standards of operation and moreover, it will contribute in improving the quality of services, offered to the domestic violence victims. Institutional and non-institutional service providers were involved while these standards were developed. Furthermore bylaw for standards for establishment for the social protection institutions for DV victims was enacted.

The unification of the criminal justice system helped in development of common understanding for provision of evidence to support DV cases among representatives of Ministry of Interior (inspectors in charge to prosecute this type of crime), investigative judges, public prosecutors, and criminal judges as well as for the determination of needed evidence for documentation of the physical, psychological, and sexual forms of violence. The forthcoming development of the internal procedures for public prosecutors and investigative judges, as well as practical guides for criminal

justice actors, will directly benefit by having internal precise guidelines and procedures for an effective and an efficient processing DV case. Indirectly, the broader community will be sensitized for the relevance of providing an efficient criminal system for protection of the Domestic violence victims that can lead to further prevention of this phenomenon.

National Program for Combating Domestic Violence

The efforts undertaken by the governmental and from the civil society actors regarding domestic violence for the past three years were mainly focused in the field of intervention and provision of direct services. This has resulted in no strategic oriented response toward the problem. Republic of Macedonia is in process of decentralization and the establishment of strategic response which will address the negative situation regarding the problem will mean adaptation and application of the strategy on local level as well. Therefore, ESE determined the situation concerning the prevalence of domestic violence and assessed the current response of the state system to the problem. Stressing out the relevance of the survey, we can say that concerning the comparison with the first research, the psychological and physical violence are less reported, but this is not significant difference due to the fact that still every second woman in Macedonia is psychologically molested. Positive aspect within this research is that it was set up on rather extensive level (in comparison with the first research from 2000), thus comprehending several additional areas such as: community response to the problem; attitudes toward gender roles and financial autonomy of the victim. Another dimension of the phenomena of domestic violence which was assessed for the first time within this research is the state (institutional) response to the problem. Taking into consideration that domestic violence is regulated by law since 2004 and therefore recognizing the need for assessment of the work of the relevant institutions in the past period, the detailed analysis of the data from each institution within the civil and criminal system of protection is crucial and comprehensive part, incorporated within the research.

After the survey has been conducted working group for preparation of National programme was established and the structure of the national programme was determined. The preparation of the national program is incorporated in the National Programme for Adoption of Acquis Communautaire of the Government of Republic of Macedonia regarding harmonization with EU legislation. The expressed willingness and commitment by relevant ministries is a crucial step towards establishment of strategic and coordinative response to the problem. Regarding the structure, the following areas of priority are addressed within the national program: legal and sub legal framework; collecting data and analysis of the situation; research; prevention; proceedings of the professional structures and need for their education; system of protection etc.

WOMEN IN POLITICS AND DECISION- MAKING STRUCTURES

The Republic of Macedonia faces reforms in the field of delegation of authority and responsibilities from the central to the local level. The period of transformation boost additional efforts in order to meet the new concept of local government. However, analysis of Article 14 of the CEDAW shadow report shows very clearly that rural women are not in the Government. These women are to a great extend excluded from participating in decision making at the local, regional and national levels. The state undertakes no efforts to improve the position of women in rural areas, which is much more difficult than the one of women in urban areas. There are no special programmes to promote the participation of women and encourage them to become involved in applying for certain political processes. ESE's long term strategic interests are related to increasing the awareness of local communities, to familiarize them with the decentralization process, and to increase the level of cooperation between municipalities. Therefore this year ESE has within the Parliamentary elections undertook efforts to raise the visibility of women in their own communities and furthermore started with development of the open community concept in several local communities.

On the Margins of the Parliamentary Elections – July 2006

Citizens have also been empowered through this program. By voting in the elections, especially local elections, the citizens are utilizing some of their power. This is when the political direction is decided as well as who will represent the citizens in the City Councils. The major results of these activities were: 90 trained women in acquiring the skills necessary to enter into politics and decision-making structures; 600, bi-lingual Macedonian and Albanian posters and leaflets were created; improved capacities on local level; raised the visibility of women in their own communities as well as established clear relations and cooperation between ESE, the municipalities and the political parties' representatives. Also, the workshops organized by ESE have led to an increased awareness of municipal policy, and how to participate in local politics. Also as a result, women candidates were given increased visibility. ESE's activities have also led to increased cooperation and support among women candidates and women from political parties on local level. On this way, ESE has facilitated cooperation between urban women and future MP's, which also builds a basis for elected representatives to, cooperate on problem-solving for local issues in the future.

Women and decentralization

On the margins of the start up of the concept of "Open Communities", ESE has established a firm curriculum and a training plan for the purpose of decentralisation, together with the representatives from ZELS, which served for the training purpose in the local communities in Macedonia. The idea of this plan was to give a chance for pre-selected community leaders from the bigger political Macedonian and Albanian parties in the local municipalities to take part and work in collaboration with municipal employees or representatives from the political parties at the local level. This

concept was introduced by the representatives from “ZELS” as well as by the Ministry for Local–Self Government. We emphasized that the people from local municipalities, especially women, are the ones that really decide what local governments, national government and city councils are intended to do.

Participants in the local trainings in Prilep, Kocani and Gostivar gained knowledge of how to incorporate their rights and interests into policies at the local level, thus solving their problems in cooperation with their municipal representatives. Macedonians, Albanians, Turks, Roma, Vlavs, members of local councils, representatives from the gender equality unit, representatives from local NGOs, and members of political parties all participated in the training activities. For this purpose, 6 women were trained as Trainers in three municipalities in Macedonia. 72 people–representatives from the three municipalities trained as indirect beneficiaries. 600 bi-lingual Macedonian and Albanian books were prepared and printed out for the purpose of the trainings. The awareness was raised among the municipal representatives for the decentralization process, relation of gender and the local self government, ethnic diversity management, as well as for the creation policies in ethnically diverse communities.

WOMEN AND HEALTH

The process of very intensive reforms in the health system in R.M including model of partial privatization of the primary health care, and the payment of the doctors in primary health care per capita (payment according to the number of patients), stimulated the health professionals to offer high quality health services to their patients. On the other hand the number of gynecologists in the primary health care (162) versus the number of women in the reproductive period (640.000) raises the issue of the time that the gynecologist can dedicate to their patients. Parallel to this, the reform process brings changes of criteria for obtaining health insurance that influenced the health status of most at risk groups (women and Roma), poor and unemployed. In this situation Women and health program was striving to offer direct help, but also on higher level to provoke changes that will take in consideration needs of unprivileged groups. The program served the women who need health information and direct support with special emphasis and support to persons without health insurance, unemployed and social assistance users. On broader level program supported the work of policy makers providing them with recent data and identified needs as well as proposed recommendation for interventions in order to improve women reproductive health, as well as Roma health.

Women Health Information Centre (WHICH)

The results from the operation of the WHICH were 67 clients who got advice on the topics of reproductive health or used the direct services, and we have managed to provide free gynaecological check ups and PAP test for 40 women. The counselling activity had two major

impacts to the clients that visited the WHIC. First they got advice on their actual and acute health problem or need and in the same time we raised their awareness about the importance of performing regular gynaecological check ups. The operation of the WHICH in the previous two years showed that many clients that visit the centre ask for free medicines or free check ups. Therefore we introduced offering direct help to the women with social, health and financial unsatisfactory status. This component was a big success, since it had two benefits. The first one was that we helped those women who can't afford contraceptives, vitamins or blood check ups, and in the same time they got counselling on reproductive health issues.

Improvement of Roma health

The activities that were undertaken in the Information centre and with the government institutions led to raised awareness among the Roma population in Shuto Orizari about the legal norms on which the right of health insurance is based upon and in the same time we managed to raise awareness among the relevant institutions about the importance of having a multi coordinated approach in the process of easing the access to health insurance for Roma people.

The Information Centre in Shuto Orizari served 380 clients, who gained information about the legal norms for issuing health insurance and 180 clients were selected for direct financial support for obtaining documents needed for health insurance.

On national level a Policy paper regarding the process of overcoming the obstacles Roma people face in obtaining health insurance was initiated, including all relevant stakeholders (policy making institutions, NGOs, Ministry of labour and social welfare, Ministry of health; Republic institute for Health protection, Roma NGO- CDRIM).

DEVELOPMENT UNIT

Although the foreign donors are critical to most of the NGO operations, with their withdrawal from Macedonia in the coming years, we need to develop ways to tap into local sources of funding. In order to be recognized as a relevant partner of the domestic and regional organizations and institutions, with augmented capacity for societal changes, the development unit aims at expanding ESE's fundraising capacity towards acquiring new and diversified approaches in the direction of raising funds, as well to bring our the work closer to the wider public. Bearing in mind that the communication with the public is an extremely important aspect of the civil society organization, we endeavoured to build creative and consistent public relations, which will be beneficial for the life of the organization.

We used variety of methods and techniques within the fundraising activities. During the International 16 days of activism against gender based violence a **donation letter** in Macedonian and English language was sent to past and current supporters of ESE. This was the first time in

Macedonia that NGO used direct mailing as a tool for acquiring funds from individuals and companies. Starting from this year, ESE started to seize the opportunity, foreseen with ESE statute (article 32). Payment of a small annual membership fee (500 din) was introduced. For this purpose numerated membership cards with ESE's logo were prepared and together with payment slip were sent to all members of the General Assembly. An ***e-mail informative letter*** containing information of our work and successes was prepared and sent out to over 180 foreign organizations all over the world.

During the International 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence campaign, a donation hotline with the support of T-Mobile in duration of one year was set up. Individuals gave donations with sending SMS on amount of 100 denars. The most important in the direct mail campaign was our decision to target individuals who had prior awareness of our work, for instance past participants in seminars or other events. The direct mailing resulted in raising over 55,400 den. On the other hand, the cooperation with corporate donor was initiated. ESE with the support of the Skopski Pazar markets in Skopje, placed donation boxes in ten stores. The placement of the boxes was accompanied with distribution of 20,000 fliers that aimed at promotion of the donation boxes and hotline. With the boxes in ten stores in Skopje, we collected over 21.000 denars in six months. Additionally, with the support of Skopski Pazar, which donated gifts, *New Year's party* for nearly 40 children of domestic violence victims, clients of the Legal aid centers and those living in shelters was organized.

Other objective within the program was to improve public relations, i.e. to closer our work to the citizens, companies and institutions in our country, as well as regionally in a transparent and accountable way. The implementation of this year planed activities was postponed due to the initiated process of development of the PR strategy. In order to improve the strategic outreach, ESE prepared project proposal, named: "Telling our story" aiming at enhancement of our public relations including the relations with media through preparing PR strategy. It will serve as a base document for undertaking activities to ensure that ESE has a strong public image, helping the public to understand the organization and its products and services. In order to approach our work to wider public from one side, but also to raise the awareness about the problem of domestic violence and existing solutions given, within the formal and the informal system of protection, ESE produced a documentary on domestic violence in Macedonia: "*Life in a shadow*" to coincident with International Women's Day on March 8, 2007.

And finally, the system for programme and staff evaluation, based on the scope and size of work was established. The questionnaire and the proposed procedures for the implementation were elaborated to the members of the EB that approved both of them. The staff evaluation will took place at the beginning of the new program year.

CAPACITY BUILDING

This year was marked as a year of undertaking systematic and continuous steps toward assuring ESE's sustainability. In that regard, over the reporting period ESE has undertaken numerous activities that influenced three main components of the capacity building. Namely, beside the regular attention given to human resource and organizational development, this year ESE took serious efforts for building base for improving its image and outreach to the wider public.

Nevertheless, in this sense it is from great importance the impact that program components/activities have on ESE's capacities. The implementation of the foreseen program activities has either confirmed the necessity of their implementation or has indicated certain moderation.

The implemented activities within the **Women human rights program** has proved the need and importance of the provided **legal aid**, indicated need for documentation of the most severe DV cases and establishing cooperation with the Ombudsperson office. The **unification of the civil and criminal protection system** and program activities related to the **National Program for combating domestic violence** had raised ESE's professional capacities for managing and streamlining of such complex process, and at the same time raised ESE's credibility among all relevant actors as leading organization on DV issue. For the both components, the already established partnership with the Ministry of labour and social protection (MLSP) and the Ministry of interior (MOI) was confirmed.

On the **Women in politics and decision making structures**, the well-established cooperation with the municipality majors, the well-trained and capacity built clerks, representatives from different political parties from the municipal level, promotion of the concept of Open Communities, has made strongly impact on ESE as a recognized organization, which direct impact is seen on local level, as well as it made visible efforts to facilitate the process of decentralization process in Macedonia.

Women and health program activities, especially the operation of the Women Health Information Centre showed that many clients visit the centre and ask for free medicines or free check ups. It also indicated that check ups for women general health status and reproductive health in particularly are needed. The program activities related to **improvement of Roma health** resulted in established collaboration with the Ministry for labour and social protection officials working on this issue. Namely, ESE's Information centre in Shuto Orizari served as a role model in the development of protocols for operation in the field of health and health insurance, of the 8 Civic Information centres that the Government of Republic of Macedonia opened in the municipalities where Roma lives.

ESE **human resources development** this year was focused on building and strengthening its capacities on issues related to organizational and institutional development, as well as on thematic issues closely related to the program component developed by ESE. The trainings related to organizational and institutional development were mainly realized through two major training packages offered to ESE. One of them is provided by ISC and USAID, within Civil Society Strengthening Project (CSSP) and the second one is Capacity Building Training Programme, 2006- 2007 by OSCE mission in Skopje. Human capacities development of ESE beside on the above mentioned level aimed at building personnel capacities on certain thematic issues that are closely related to the current program orientation, or will be added as a program orientation for the future. As a result most of the thematic trainings were directed on the program activities of the Women's human rights program and the program Women and politics.

In regard of the **organizational set-up and structure**, the annual General Assembly meeting and two sessions of the Executive board were held. Membership fee as novelty was introduced on this year's annual GA meeting. The decision for election of the new president and vice president of ESE was announced on the general Assembly meeting. Therefore, Ms. Biljana Gerasimovska-Kitanovska, former president of ESE and Tatijana Temelkoska- Milenkovic, president of ESE, addressed the General Assembly meeting. ESE reviewed and adopted some of its internal procedures and policies. Namely, a Board policy document, financial management policy and procedures and staff performance evaluation were discussed and adopted on the EB sessions.

The public relations over the past years, as well as this year were mainly driven by some of the program activities realized, without having systematic and consistent approach in their development. Thus a need for preparation of the PR strategy arose. During the past year all programs have communicated with the public. The most **media covered events** in the last year traditionally were the campaign of the International 16 Days of VAW and the celebration of the International Women's Day. Draft public relation strategy including all the foreseen activities approved within ESE's program 2006-2009 was developed. The PR strategy will serve as a base document for undertaking activities to ensure that the organization has a strong public image, helping the public to understand the organization and its products and services.

**FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE PERIOD
JUNE 2006 – MAY 2007**



**Association for Emancipation,
solidarity and Equality
of Women
ESE**

Overview of the planned and implemented assests for the program activities in the period 2006-2009 with focus on the program year 2006-2007

Type of costs planned	Assets planned in EURO	Assets planned in MKD	Assets implemented in MKD for period 2006-2007
Women's Human Rights programme	94.489,00	5.795.104,92	1.740.246,50
Women and Health programme	155.774,00	9.553.774,80	3.791.895,00
Women in Politics and Decision-Making Processes programme	54.509,00	3.343.091,47	1.113.523,00
Development Unit activities	62.276,00	3.819.449,35	841.615,00
Administrative costs	128.652,00	7.890.355,81	2.174.047,00
Reserves	4.300,00	263.723,00	/
Total	500.000,00	30.665.500,00	9.661.326,50

Incomes	
Total income in MKD	11.553.677,00 MKD
Foreign currency income	121.650,00 €
Foreign currency sale inflow	7.460.916,00 MKD
EED share in total income for the period August 2006 - August 2007	7.460.916,00 MKD
Percentage of EED's share in total income	64,58 %
Unspent income from the previous program year	/
Income received for implementation of program activities	10.061.754,64 MKD
Costs for the implementation of the program activities for the period 2006-2007	9.661.326,50 MKD
Leftover	400.428,14 MKD

Report of the audit on the income of funds from EED and other donors and their expenditures in the period August 2006 – August 2007

1. The financial reports referring to the period August 2006 – August 2007 were subjects to audit. The funds received from EED (first transfer made for the 20060237G Project) and other donors were planned for the first year of the Work Programme (2006-2007). The insight into the documentation on the costs incurred was conducted for the purposes of rendering opinion on the financial reports arising from the said period. By applying the Macedonian legal regulation, which is in line with the International Accounting Standards, we tried to establish whether their financial reports (planned expenditures and costs) contained major mistakes and are substantiated by material evidence. The insight was conducted on the basis of a test of the evidence which substantiates the amounts in the financial reports.
2. We reckon that our insight in the documentation represents legal basis for our opinion.
3. In our opinion, the financial reports truly and accurately disclose the sources and use of funds from the hard currency account of the Association for Emancipation, Solidarity, and Equality of Women of the RM, acquired from EED and other donors for the 20060237G Project under the 2006-2009 Work Programme in compliance with the International Accounting Standards, the national legal regulation, and the objectives of the programme.
4. As per the cost statements:
 - a) The costs have been incurred for the purposes of the activities which were conducted in order to accomplish the programme objectives in an economical, cost-effective and purposeful manner.
 - b) The documentation was kept in an appropriate manner to substantiate the incurred costs;
 - c) The costs incurred and the equipment procured were substantiated by contracts and invoices.

Skopje, September 2007

Audit conducted by:
Goran Conevski