

**REPORT ON ESE's WORK**  
**FOR THE PERIOD**  
**JUNE 2008 – MAY 2009**



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## **I. WOMEN HUMAN RIGHTS PROGRAM**

### **Strengthening of the capacities of existing LACs**

Provision of free of charge legal aid and court representation

ESE's Legal Aid Centers (LAC's) in the reporting period has continued with the provision of professional services, counseling, psychosocial support court representation. In the period 30.06.2008 – 01.05.2009, the total number of clients who utilized for the services of the LAC in Skopje was 194, out of which 153 were provided with psychosocial support and 153 were provided with legal aid.

If we make a distinction on the basis of the type of the legal aid provided, the situation is this: 110 requests for initiation of divorce procedures, 110 for alimentation, 56 for property issues, 7 referring to custody, 4 for inheritance, 4 related to adoption procedure and 4 criminal procedures.

Please note that at this point ESE's expecting the annual reports from the local LACs and this data will be incorporated in the final report of ESE.

### **Visualization of the centers operation**

Four announcements in one written media (Tea Moderna) for promotion of the operation of LACs, as well as Women Health Information Centre, were realized in the reporting period.

### **Prevention and elimination of domestic violence in Macedonia**

#### **Preparation of joint protocol for dealing with cases of domestic violence**

In the period May – December 2008, several working meetings were organized in a direction of preparation of the joint protocol for dealing with cases of domestic violence. Three working meetings were organized with the members of the working group, the representatives from each of the institutions involved. The broader consultation meeting was organized in November, as well as additional individual ones with the Ministry of interior and Ministry of labor and social policy (two per ministry).

This resulted in finalization of the individual protocols on behalf of the ministries and organizations, with the exception of the Ministry of health. At this point, we're expecting

finalization of their protocol. After it's submission and incorporation, the joint protocol will be submitted to the Government for adoption.

### **Establishment of Support program for victims of domestic violence**

It's of great importance to stress that for the first time in our country, the Support program (psychological counselling) for victims of domestic violence was established. The Support program is established for all victims of domestic violence who are prepared to stop the circle of violence and decided to change their lives in this direction. In this regard, the Support program is a specialized form of professional help and support provided by professionals who lead the victims through the process by raising their autonomy when making decisions for themselves which will help them to exit the circle of violence and abort the position of "victim" in the actual one, as well as in all the next intimate relations in their lives. It represents a safe place for discussion, where in an atmosphere free from prejudices and condemnation, the victims of domestic violence have the opportunity to share their personal experiences with the violence, to gain skills and knowledge for improvement of their self esteem, self determination and safety. It represents a place where victims are strengthened; they analyze their problem and learn how to make good choices for themselves and their children.

Prior to the establishment of the Support program, there were several activities implemented and results achieved. Namely, ESE's project team has engaged external experts for preparation of the program and methodology. The result from this action is finalized program for work of the Psychological counseling, guide for professionals who are dealing with cases of domestic violence, as well as additional instruments (questionnaires) needed for assessing the risks and needs of the victims. Parallel with this process, the facility for the Support program was adapted and equipped (technically) within the Center for social welfare (institution under jurisdiction of the Ministry of labor and social policy).

The launching of the Support program was announced on the press conference organized on 22.04.2009. It's important that the media representatives were addressed by Mr. Dgelaj Bajrami, Minister of the Ministry of labor and social policy, H.E. Alois Kraut, the Ambassador of Austria in R.M., Jasminka Friscis, ESE's executive director and Maria Roeshullmer, WAVE's executive director. The importance of the establishment of this kind of services for the victims was stressed on the press conference, as well as the successful example of the exchange of experience and

positive practices between both countries and especially among project partners, ESE and WAVE.

### **Evaluation for the capacities of the Macedonian women shelters**

As a first step toward evaluation of the shelters capacities in Republic of Macedonia, on 19.11.2008 a visit of the shelters was organized. In this regard, representatives from ESE, WAVE and Akcija Zdruzenska visited one of the state shelters, one NGO shelter and temporary shelter (24-48 hours) also run by civil society organization. This activity was implemented in accordance with the project time table.

The general conclusions from this visit are:

- the funds allocated for the shelters are not sufficient for their effective operation;
- the minimum standards for operation of the shelters are not fulfilled;
- the security and safety measures within the shelters are on low level;
- there are no specialized programs for work with the victims established;
- there is no separate staff, either programs for work with the children established;
- there is no regular supervision established for the shelter employees.

With this visit, the project component “evaluation of shelter capacities” was initiated. After the initial visit ESE’s project team held a working meeting with the Austrian partner WAVE who have experience in operating women shelters. The focus on this meeting was put on the reviewing the existing questionnaire for shelters employees prepared by WAVE and the possibility for its application in the assessing process in Macedonia. Apart from this, ESE’s project team is engaged on the preparation of questionnaires for the victims accommodated in the shelters as well as for the employees in the Centers for social welfare.

The prepared questionnaires will be the basis for conduction of interviews with the employees from the shelters and Center for social welfare, as well as the victims of domestic violence accommodated within the shelters, in the forthcoming period.

### **Education of professional structures**

In the period 21-23.04.2009 in Skopje, the first training for professional structures for work with victims of domestic violence was realized. The training was attended by 20 representatives from

the Centers for social welfare, police and civil society organizations – providers of direct services for the victims.

The basis for education was the previously developed training concept for multidisciplinary education, three – day training module incorporating: general part on domestic violence and it's phenomenology, practical part regarding the supportive interview with the victims and their support within the process and institutional response toward the problem or the legal mechanisms for protection which are part of our legislation. It's important to stress that the concept incorporates both theoretical and practical sessions, implying sufficient level of interactivity among the participants and exchange of experience as well. In this regard, the trainers engaged are part of the already established pool of trainers for this training concept. Parallel with this, WAVE representatives were present as external experts presenting the Austrian experience and existing norms and standards for victims' protection on international level.

The following results were achieved with this training:

- increased knowledge among the professionals on the problem of domestic violence in general, its different forms and dynamic of the violence;
- gained practical skills for support of the victims when they report the violence;
- exchange of experience among different professional structures;
- Increased level of coordination among the institutions.

## **II. PROGRAMME: “PUBLIC POLICY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE”**

### **Open Communities**

As mentioned above, ESE carried on with implementation of the continuous process of counselling for rural women in the three participating municipalities: Kocani, Prilep and Gostivar. The major results of these activities were: more than 70 trained women in acquiring the skills for local politics and citizen’s participation; creation of local action planning, necessary for the mapping the municipal rural problems and suggestions for further enhanced cooperation among them and the local-self government structures. These counsellings (2 counsellings per municipal rural area), have led to an increased awareness of municipal policy, and how to participate in local politics. Though, while there counselling were successful examples of decentralisation and sustainable development, it was concluded that still, there is much room for improvement. More needs to be learned from these individual experiences and they need to be translated into practical actions. Namely, further analysis is necessary in order to better understand which forms and under what circumstances decentralisation can have a productive role in supporting rural women and most disadvantaged groups and how governments and stakeholders should approach these processes. In order to ensure flexibility and strategic planning, new methods of monitoring and evaluating decentralisation polices need to be developed and applied. Currently, new initiatives are expanding the role of local governments – these include Poverty Reduction Strategies, which highlight an important role for local governments in poverty alleviation, but do not define how this role should be implemented. Yet, it remains somewhat unclear, in practice, how local governments can help support business development. Capacity building, both in terms of human resources and financial support, has often been quoted as the principle obstacle in furthering decentralisation processes. There is an ongoing need for capacity building and technical assistance, as well as practical lesson sharing and, while, there has been progress in this area, more needs to be done. Finally, as has been mentioned previously, decentralisation is a challenging complex process, that requires patience and dedication on the part of all the relevant participants, but it also promises to be a mechanism for improved democratic governance and sustainable development.

### **EU Integration**

In order to strengthen the capacities of the young people in political parties, ESE in the time of reporting period organised training for 20 representatives from political parties for the EU integration processes, moreover for the pre-accession funds of EU. Namely, the following subject areas were covered: 1.Community programmes, 2.IPA funds, 3.Roadmap for gender equality and relevant directives, 3.the local governance in the EU and challenges for Macedonia and 4.development and design of policies by using policy cycle. Participants were derived from the bigger political parties from Skopje branch office, and despite the gender profile of the participants, ethnic minorities political parties were also involved in the training process. In the forthcoming period (June-July 2009), the participants should transfer their knowledge to their fellow colleagues and later on, as a final stage of this programme component, they should come up with incentives of creation a common project that aims the EU integration process, with special emphasis on young people. This will have a unique aim not only to capacity build their representatives, but to unity the different parties for questions that are of mutual interest of Republic of Macedonia. This project will be promoted for the next year's Europe Day, 9<sup>th</sup> of May 2010.

**Strengthening the capacities of the municipal representatives for the concept of human and minority rights and creation of policies in multi-ethnic communities**

For the purpose of this component, ESE in the reporting period has implemented three activities within this programme component in order to capacity build the representatives from the municipalities, Ombudsmen and NGO's for the concepts mentioned below. In this direction, following activities were undertaken: 1.Formation of observing committee, 2.Formation of training team and preparation of training curriculum and 3.Start up with implementation of the first out of three trainings. The first component was formed in order to monitor properly the implementation of the trainings; the second component was successfully managed because it produced relevant training materials on the following topics:

- √ Concept of human rights and legal standards for protection of women's human rights and non discrimination.
  
- √ Training for gender concept, gender equality within the local-self government, thus elaborating the law on equal opportunities , the national action plan for gender equality as well as the state machinery and actions that exist on local level and



- √ Ethnic diversity management, minority rights and mechanisms for creation of policies in multi-ethnic communities.

The trainers managed to compile the necessary draft training materials and adopt it according to the local context which will properly fit the relevant target groups .i.e. municipal representatives, regional Ombudsmen representatives and the local NGO's that work in the field of minority and human rights.

Finally, the trainings will be implemented in June 2009 in the participating municipalities of Kumanovo and Tetovo.

### **III. WOMEN AND HEALTH**

#### **Women Health Information Centre (WHICH)**

In the period of the report total of 91 clients visited the WHICH, from which only 2 are men. Clients addressed the Centre for advice on health issues or used the direct services offered in the WHICH. From the total number of clients, 49% addresses the WHICH in order to perform blood check ups for the levels of blood sugar, triglycerides and cholesterol. From the women that addressed WHICH for advices regarding their health, most of the women, 12% of all clients asked for advices regarding the sexually transmitted diseases; 10% for general health problems; 9% for health issues in the period of menopause; 5% for hypertension; 4% for osteoporosis; and smaller percentages of women addressed for advices regarding contraception, pregnancy, sterility, and menstrual problems. From the clients that have addressed WHICH for blood check-ups, in 29% were found high levels of blood sugar, in 48,3% were found high levels of cholesterol, and in 65,5% were found high levels of triglycerides. In these cases women were referred to their general practitioners or medical specialists in order to perform further diagnosis. All of the women clients that were in the age above 45 received the vitamin products rich with calcium and vitamin D, in order for prevention of osteoporosis. Seven women used direct financial aid for obtaining prescribed medicines.

#### **Reproductive health survey**

In order for successful implementation of the survey and for experts help in the preparation of the final study from the survey, ESE made an agreement for cooperation with the Association of doctors specialist in Social medicine, and as an external expert, ESE identified D-r Elena Kosevska PhD, President of the Association.

Separate questionnaires for men and women were prepared for the on field interviews. Representative sample was prepared in order to cover 2,500 persons, from the entire territory of R. of Macedonia, with the interviews.

Interviewers were identified from the Association of doctors' specialist in Social medicine, and training for the interviewers was conducted.

Interviewers will start conducting the interviews on a pilot sample consisted from 20 persons, male and female, per interviewer. This will be conducted in order to test the prepared questionnaires on field.

The interviewers received 20 copies of the questionnaire and are currently conducting the first phase of the interviews.

## **Activities towards improvement of Roma health**

1. ESE was working on transferring knowledge and experience for the new Roma NGOs, regarding the issues for improvement of Roma health. In order to accomplish this task we have prepared a brochure with the previous activities and experience that ESE had while implementing the “Health for all, health for Roma” projects. The brochure will be printed by the Open Society Institute – Macedonia and will be broadly available for all interested NGOs that are working or will be working on a Roma health issues. Also a two day seminar for transferring knowledge and experience for Roma NGOs was held, on which representatives from 5 Roma NGOs, which are mostly working on gender issues in Roma communities, were present.

### **2. Equal access to health protection**

The main goal of this project is to improve the immunization coverage among Roma children. ESE is working on this project as a partner organization, together with the Roma NGO – Mesecina from Gostivar.

As a part of this project ESE held the two-day training named “Health, health policy and financing in the health care” for the members from the partner organization Mesecina – Gostivar. This training was aimed for the capacity building of Mesecina members on these topics.

ESE has prepared the questionnaires and the representative sample regarding the survey among Roma population in Macedonia. The aim of the survey is to estimate the percentage of Roma children that are not covered at all, or not fully covered, with the Immunization program, and also to identify the possible causes for this situation.

ESE also took part in organization and preparation of the stakeholders meeting regarding the coverage of Roma children with the Immunization program. Meeting was attended by the representatives from the Ministry of health, National Institute for Public health, and Institute for health protection of mothers and children.

The Program coordinator of Women and health program attended two workshops on the subject of Health budget analysis and monitoring process, organized by Open Society Institute – New York, and CEGAA – South Africa. These workshops were part of the capacity building process of this project.

#### **IV. DEVELOPMENT UNIT**

##### **Relations with prospects and donors**

Philanthropy is the basis for social justice and having asked the people and companies to donate to our organization, thus the donation activities to become their imperative towards the social responsibility just forms the foundation of what fundraising is about. Our goal, as of any organization that wants to gain support from individuals or domestic companies, is to become their favourite organization of their donors. To build that loyalty, as this process is in very beginning in Macedonia, we are using most versatile and most common strategies for developing closer relationship with donors. Those are direct mail (informative leaflet – letter), payment of membership fee, organizing fundraising events and campaigns.

##### ***Informative leaflet – letter***

In January this year, fundraising letter on Macedonian language was sent to the individuals and companies. Beside general information of the problem of domestic violence, along with explanation of the activities and statistics from our Legal Aid centers (no of victims that required legal and psychosocial aid, no of women, no of unemployed and no of those that are provided with free of charge court representation) and thank – you note to those who supported us last year with the address for new donations signed by ESE's executive director, the back side of the letter is a confession of A.B, 56 year woman victim of domestic violence and client in the ESE's Legal Aid Centre in Skopje. Satisfied from the services from LAC, she embraced to write her story.

For easing the donation printed payment slip with all our necessary data (name of the organization, name of the bank and the account) was enclosed together with the letter, so the supporters had to fill in only their names and the donated amount. In total 33.000,00 MKD were donated by four companies, three individuals and one civil society organization.

##### ***Campaign***

This year fundraising efforts of ESE were planed to be realized door to door campaign, as a new concept for fundraising. Due to the high costs needed for realization f this type of a campaign ESE had to prepare a project proposal in order to secure needed funds. Detail plan for organization of this type of fundraising campaign was prepared and submitted to the Macedonian

Telecommunication. Unfortunately, the request was not approved and therefore this campaign first of its kind didn't take place.

### ***New Year's party for children of domestic violence victims***

Starting from the end of 2006, we organize New Year's party for children of domestic violence victims, clients of ESE's Legal Aid Center or and sheltered women. This year the party was organized on 29.12.2008. Nearly 40 children, accompanied with their mothers were present on the celebration. Traditionally the gifts for the children were donated from the company "Kendi" as our long term partner/donator. Two representatives from this company were present on the New Years party which allowed direct contact and communication with the receivers of their support. As a result of this direct contact and communication additional support for some of the victims was secured by this company i.e. support for 6 years old child of a victim of domestic violence and one six member family were supported.

### **Activities towards improving public relations and building partnership with strategic domestic and regional partners**

Second objective within the development Unit programme is to improve public relations, i.e. to closer ESE's work to the citizens, companies and institutions in our country, as well regionally in a transparent and accountable way.

### ***Annual report***

Annual report for ESE's work in 2008-2009 is prepared. At the moment the report is in phase of computer design and preparation for printing.

### ***Hosting and Updating of the web page and of the web page***

Regular updates on ESE's Macedonian web page [www.esem.org.mk](http://www.esem.org.mk) are carried out. Additionally during this year ESE's web page on English language was prepared and become operational.

The same refers to the thematic web site [www.semejnonasilstvo.org.mk](http://www.semejnonasilstvo.org.mk) dedicated to provision of comprehensive information on domestic violence issue. This web page addresses and serves for purposes of the public as well as all professional structures working on this issue.