



SNAPSHOT

Certification through Practice, Not Attendance

Teachers must show they can use new skills and knowledge being certified.



A USAID staff member explains teacher certification procedures to a group of primary school teachers. / Snezana Jankulovska, USAID Primary Education Project

“The best thing is that I can always get support from my colleagues when I am not sure about something.”

To ensure that teachers incorporate new skills into their practice, USAID/Macedonia developed an innovative certification process for its teacher training programs. These programs no longer provide certificates for simply attending training. Instead, through a professional portfolio, teachers must first provide evidence that they are using the newly acquired skills and knowledge in their classrooms.

USAID/Macedonia worked with government officials and other education experts to design a comprehensive school-based mentoring and evaluation system. After attending a workshop, teachers work with a Learning Support Team (LST) at their schools to practice new skills, discuss their performance with mentors, and receive feedback from peers and students.

This new system is improving the quality of education. It has sparked opportunities for teamwork and collaboration among teachers and encourages joint lesson planning, peer review of lesson plans, and classroom observations.

Research suggests that teacher training should take place in the classroom where it is most relevant to teacher practice; school systems must provide focused one-on-one coaching in the classroom; and schools must enable teachers to continue to learn from each other. All of these elements are now a part of Macedonia’s in-service teacher training program.

USAID/Macedonia has provided high-quality in-service teacher training since 2002. To date, 2,300 teachers have been certified through this process, and the number continues to grow.

“The best thing,” says Vebi Jahiu, a master trainer and a primary school teacher, “is that I can always get support from my colleagues when I am not sure about something.”

The donor community now recognizes the value of USAID’s Teacher Certification Process. UNICEF uses the model for its in-country training programs, and, most importantly, the Government of Macedonia has adopted it as a part of the National System for Professional and Career Development of Teacher.

Telling Our Story

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