READING AND WRITING FOR CRITICAL THINKING

Final Evaluation Report

April 30, 2003

Dukagjin Pupovci
Kosova Education Center
Prishtina, Kosova

Aleesha Taylor
Teachers College
Columbia University
New York, USA

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this evaluation has been to assess the Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking (RWCT) program as it has been implemented in Kosova. RWCT training equips teachers with the skills necessary to create democratic, student-centered, learning environments in their classrooms. In-service professional development with RWCT training began in Kosova in October 2000, as an initiative of the Open Society Institute (OSI) and the International Reading Association (IRA).

Since October 2000, approximately 5% of Kosova's 23,000 active teachers have completed either the school-based or non school-based version of RWCT training. This considerable progress has been facilitated by the efforts of the Kosova Education Center (KEC), among the most active educational NGOs in Kosova. In the short time in which educational professionals in Kosova have been exposed to RWCT training and its effects, there has been a growing consensus that the program is valuable and successful. Furthermore, of the two models of RWCT training that have been implemented in Kosova (school-based and non school-based), the school-based version has been assumed to be the most useful and effective.

This evaluation was carried out from January 2003 through April 2003. To effectively assess critical aspects of the Program, two evaluation questions were designed and examined. They are:

1. How does RWCT training impact the classroom environment?
2. What are possible differences in impact on classroom environment of the school-based versus non school-based RWCT training?

Both quantitative and qualitative methods were utilized to explore these questions and provide key insights that will inform program improvement. Quantitative data for the study was collected through systematic observations and questionnaires. Quantitative data was collected from 20 RWCT teachers and 20 control group teachers. The group of 20 RWCT teachers consisted of 10 teachers who had undergone school-based training and 10 teachers who had undergone non school-based training. This enabled a comparison between both trained and untrained teachers, as well as teachers who had undergone the two models of RWCT training. Qualitative data was collected through two focus groups, each consisting of a group of teachers who had undergone one of the two training models, and six individual interviews with administrators.

The findings of this evaluation illuminate the significant impact that RWCT training has had on the classroom and overall school environments across Kosova. It also highlights key areas in which the program can be improved to ensure more effective implementation and increase the sustainability of the impact. The findings indicate that the school-based version of RWCT training is the most effective and pointed to several unexpected findings that, if addressed will ensure increased successful implementation of the program.

The findings of this evaluation, which are supported by both qualitative and quantitative data, have informed numerous recommendations that point towards program improvement. The recommendations can be summarized into the following categories:

- Necessary content-specific adjustments
- Necessary organizational changes
- Groups that should be targeted for additional support
- Government collaboration
- Parental involvement
- Training for administrators

A questionnaire and an observation protocol were utilized to collect quantitative data from RWCT teachers and a control group. Qualitative data was collected through focus groups of RWCT teachers and individual interviews with administrators. While this evaluation was carefully designed and carried out, there are some inevitable limitations present. It is unlikely that these limitations, though important, had a significant impact on the quality of this evaluation or the relevance of the findings and recommendations.

2. BACKGROUND

Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking (RWCT) is an established and successful in-service teacher training program that is currently being implemented in Kosova. Kosova Education Center (KEC) and its partners have invested considerable resources in building local capacity for the provision of RWCT-based training with the goal of helping teachers develop a set of skills for effective teaching in the classroom. An extraordinary feature of RWCT is that it trains teachers to focus on the process of learning rather than on content and provides techniques applicable throughout the curriculum in an educational system with scarce resources.

RWCT is expected to both impact the classroom environment and be influential in the development of national teacher training and professional development policy in Kosova, where there is currently no official, government-approved professional development system for teachers. The purpose of this evaluation has been to determine the impact of RWCT on the classroom-learning environment. Furthermore, the evaluation has compared the utility and effectiveness of two methods of RWCT training: school-based (SB) and non school-based (NSB). Overall, this evaluation will serve to improve the provision of teacher training and professional development in Kosova.

The evaluation was undertaken between January 2003 and April 2003 as a part of a distance-learning course, *Evaluation of International Education Projects,* at Teachers College, Columbia University. The core of the evaluation team consisted of two Columbia students who are the authors of this report:

1. Dukagjin Pupovci, Director, Kosova Education Center
2. Aleesha Taylor, Ed. D. Candidate, Teachers College, Columbia University

In addition, it was necessary to set up a data collection team consisting of people who are familiar with the RWCT program and have sound understanding of the local context:

1. Vllaznim Balidemaj, BA in Education, Teacher at Hasan Prishtina Primary School in Prishtina; RWCT Trainer.
2. Zoge Gacaferri, BA in Literature, Teacher at Hajdar Dushi Grammar School in Gjakova; RWCT Trainer.
3. Melinda Mula, BA in Mathematics, Teaching Assistant at the University of Prishtina, Faculty of Sciences; RWCT Program Staff; RWCT Trainer.
4. Eda Vula, MA in Mathematics, Lecturer at the University of Prishtina, Faculty of Education in Prishtina and Gjakova; RWCT Trainer.
5. Naser Zabeli, MA in Education, Lecturer at the University of Prishtina, Faculty of Education in Prishtina; RWCT Program Staff at KEC; RWCT Trainer.

In addition to distance communication (including synchronous chats and email communication), a weeklong on-site evaluation took place from March 16, 2003 through March 23, 2003. The data collection team carried out its field activities from March 10, 2003 through March 23, 2003.

3. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking (RWCT) program is an initiative of the Open Society Institute (OSI) and the International Reading Association (IRA). RWCT is based on the premise that democratic practices in schools significantly enhance students' learning experiences and play an important role in the transition toward more open societies. Active in 28 countries in Central and Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union and Central Asia, RWCT introduces research-based, instructional methods to teachers and teacher educators. The purpose of the Program is ***to develop a set of skills for effective teaching in the classroom by providing professional development opportunities to teachers in Kosova based on RWCT strategies and techniques***.

Implementation of RWCT in Kosova began in October 2000 under the auspices of the Kosova Education Center (KEC), one of the strongest NGOs active in the field of education. With support of several donor agencies, the Program has managed to reach approximately 5% of Kosova's 23,000 practicing teachers in three years. In addition, RWCT is creating a growing capacity for teacher training and certification in Kosova.

The Program intends to empower teachers to integrate critical thinking principles into teaching practice by providing school-based and non school-based training and support to this end. RWCT training focuses on the learning process rather than educational content. It is designed to be applicable to educators at each grade level from primary school through post-secondary education, and is not limited to specific subject areas. Teachers learn strategies to help students use self-reflection to solve problems and to engage actively in the education process. Through RWCT training, teachers learn instructional strategies that will encourage students to examine implications of their ideas, expose those ideas to polite skepticism, balance ideas against opposing points of view, construct supporting belief systems to substantiate the ideas, and take a stand based on those structures.

The main outputs of the Program are:

1. *A training program adapted to local needs* – Though the training program has been developed by IRA to be applicable to all the participating countries, certain adjustments relevant to the local context and culture were deemed necessary to ensure successful implementation in Kosova. For example: a) adapting the concept of the training to national professional development standards; b) creating a library of readings to be used in the trainings, and readings for training in minority languages; c) provide shorter, subject-based trainings, etc.

2. *Enhanced national training and certification capacity* – A basic pre-condition for successful dissemination of the Program is to build national training and certification capacity. The Program needs a network of good trainers who can respond to the demand for training and a functioning certification system based on internationally recognized RWCT standards.

3. *Provision of school-based and non school-based training and support to teachers and education administrators* – This output aims at creating a critical mass of educators at the pre-tertiary level who are committed to the values of the Program and continuous professional development.

4. *Introduction of RWCT in higher education* – The idea is to provide RWCT training to the university students and teachers, and establish close cooperation with education departments. The goal is to facilitate the use of RWCT classrooms for students' practice, so that they will be trained and prepared at the beginning of their teaching careers.

5. *Publication of books, manuals and periodicals promoting RWCT initiated* – The Program tends to create publications relevant to educators who apply the RWCT strategies, but shall also encourage publication of textbooks and related teacher's books promoting application of inter-active teaching in the classroom.

The RWCT program consists of four major components which are presented along with related activities in the table below:

Component	Activities
1. School-based RWCT training	• Fundraise for school-based RWCT training • Conduct the 7 training seminars • Set up a functional school monitoring system • Supply materials for classroom practice • Organize three half-day monthly meetings • Certify participation of trainees in the Program according to the Standards
2. Non school-based RWCT training	• Select the participants based on public advertisement • Deliver the full training program • Certify participation of trainees in the Program according to the Standards for participation in the full training Program • Prepare and deliver shorter RWCT subject-based courses • Organize RWCT presentations for teachers
3. RWCT in higher education	• Prepare a special training program for higher education • Provide training for university teachers • Provide training for the students from the University of Prishtina and other countries of the Region within Kosova Summer University • Organize RWCT presentations for higher education
4. RWCT materials and publications	• Update and publish the RWCT training manuals • Publish book with model lesson plans • Publish teacher workbooks for lesson planning • Update and publish readings for the training • Publish and disseminate a booklet with procedures and standards for certification

The implementing agency, Kosova Education Centre (KEC) is a locally-driven NGO which started operation in May 2000 to actively contribute to the construction of a modern education system in Kosova. KEC enables educators to enhance their skills, facilitating the influx of relevant experience from other countries, and providing comprehensive, up-to-date and reliable information and reports on the education system, and organising a variety of initiatives and events to these ends. The organization was

initially supported by the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe. After three years it became one of the strongest education NGOs in the region.

The vision of the organization is ***the development of an inclusive learner-centered education system aimed at empowering citizens for life-long learning***.

The mission of KEC is ***to provide opportunities for professional development and disseminate relevant information to educators and the community.***

The strategic objectives of the Kosova Education Center are to:

- Provide professional development opportunities for teachers, administrators and other education professionals,
- Promote cooperation between the family, the school and the community,
- Prepare publications from the field of education, and
- Inform the public on relevant educational innovations.

KEC is administered by a local board which is supported by an International Advisory Committee. The local board consists of three main organizational units: the Pre-Tertiary Programs Unit (PTP), the Higher Education Support Program (HESP), and the Administration Unit. Most of the programs are sets of service-related activities or groups of projects intended to achieve the strategic objectives of the organization.

In-service teacher training has been one of the priorities of KEC, and several programs have been implemented throughout the country. In an attempt to create support structures for teacher training and assist teachers in enhancing the quality of their performance, KEC has facilitated the establishment of five didactic centres (teacher resource centres) throughout Kosova. The centers are located in Prizren, Ferizaj, Peja, Gjakova and Gjilan and function within the Infrastructure Program.

For a more detailed program description, please refer to Appendix A.

4. EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

RWCT is expected to both impact the classroom environment and be influential in the development of national teacher training and professional development policy in Kosova, which currently lacks an officially recognized professional development system for teachers. This evaluation has two important purposes:

1. To assess the impact of the RWCT-based training on the classroom environment, and

2. To point out possible differences in impacting the classroom environment of the school-based RWCT training versus non school-based training.

The first purpose of the evaluation was to examine the impact of RWCT training in the classroom and determine its ability to improve students' learning experiences by changing teachers' traditional attitudes and methods. Carefully designed instruments led the evaluators to important conclusions about the quality of the program and its impact on the classroom environment and provide key insights that will lead to program improvement.

The second purpose of the evaluation was expected to help KEC determine the most appropriate and effective approach for the provision of teacher-training: school-based or non school-based. Again, carefully designed instruments led to important conclusions that will be valuable for the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology, as they will assist them in reaching decisions on resource allocation for in-service professional development: through schools or training facilities.

There are two evaluation questions that serve the purposes of this evaluation:

1. How does RWCT training impact the classroom environment?

2. What are possible differences in impact on classroom environment of the school-based versus non school-based RWCT training?

The first question looks at changes in classroom environment that support students' active engagement in learning and critical thinking. For example:

- Teachers frequently interact with students and make connections to the world beyond the classroom;
- The classroom learning environment reflects lesson needs and promotes interaction;
- Instruction is designed to promote active learning and critical thinking.

The second question examines the classroom environment and experiences of teachers that received school-based and those who received non school-based training. Through

this question, we are able to compare the utility of each model and determine whether school-based or non school-based RWCT training is a more effective model.

The evaluation has been carried out within the Outcomes Based model. Specifically, an Objectives Oriented Evaluation (OOE) has been performed. The evaluation has tried to answer questions related to the achievement of the program purpose (*to develop a set of skills for effective teaching in the classroom by providing professional development opportunities to teachers in Kosova based on RWCT strategies and techniques*), as well as point out the best ways to achieve the purpose. Participants of the Program have been engaged in the evaluation process and the perspectives of as many Program stakeholders as possible have been given equal priority with regard to those of the evaluators. All key findings were discussed with the Program staff to aid in the process of understanding and analyzing the findings and further developing suggestions and recommendations. This evaluation intended to look at the impact of the RWCT program. As an outcomes based evaluation it helped reach recommendations on how to improve program delivery and services, as well as on how to expand and replicate the Program.

The evaluation findings will be presented to the stakeholders and teachers community in order to facilitate discussion on in-service training in the country and contribute to the creation of an evaluation culture in Kosova's education system. Furthermore, Kosova is currently in the phase of defining national professional development standards. It is believed that existing RWCT standards could provide valuable material for this exercise, and our evaluation will help support this process.

The sample consisted of 20 teachers who have completed the full RWCT training program and 20 non RWCT-trained teachers for the control group. In each of the two groups, half of the teachers were from the lower cycle (grades 1-4), and the rest of them from the upper cycle (grades 5-8). Also, half of the RWCT-trained teachers had undergone the school-based model, and half had undergone non school-based training.

The focus was in three out of seven regions: Prishtina, Peja and Gjakova. The RWCT teachers were randomly selected based on the following criteria:

- 4 teachers from the Elena Gjika Primary School in Prishtina who have attended the school-based training;
- 5 teachers from various primary schools in Prishtina who have attended non school-based RWCT training;
- 4 teachers from the Vaso P. Shkodrani Primary School in Peja who have attended the school-based training;
- 2 teachers from the Edmond Hoxha Primary School in the village of Junik who have attended the school-based training;
- 5 teachers from Gjakova primary schools who have attended non school-based RWCT training.

KEC identified control group teachers to match RWCT teachers in multiple ways. The goal was to identify schools that are similar geographically and demographically to the schools from which RWCT teachers are selected and then identify the teachers who teach similar classes and have similar educational backgrounds and work experience. KEC staff consulted with school administrators to ensure consent and participation. All the RWCT teachers and control group teachers were asked to fill out a questionnaire and were observed during one class session.

The classroom observation protocol, which can be found in Appendix E, was developed by American Institutes of Research (AIR) and assesses the impact of the RWCT model on the following classroom practices:

- Higher order thinking
- Deep knowledge
- Substantive conversation
- Connections to the world beyond the classroom
- Lesson plan
- Teacher interaction with pupils
- Classroom organization
- Teacher wait time

The questionnaire utilized for this evaluation, which can be found in Appendix D, was adapted from a comprehensive AIR-developed instrument used in previous RWCT evaluations. The questionnaire consists of five sections:

- Views about schooling and teaching
- Teaching activities
- Instructional practices
- Background information
- Experiences with RWCT

Focus group interviews were conducted in Prishtina and Peja with 5 teachers who have undergone non school-based RWCT training and 6 teachers who have undergone school-based RWCT training. Focus groups were homogenous. Individual interviews were conducted with six administrators selected from two schools in which teachers have undergone school-based training, two schools in which teachers have undergone non school-based training, and two schools in which teachers have undergone both school-based and non school-based training. Detailed quantitative and qualitative data can be found in Appendices B and C respectively.

5. FINDINGS

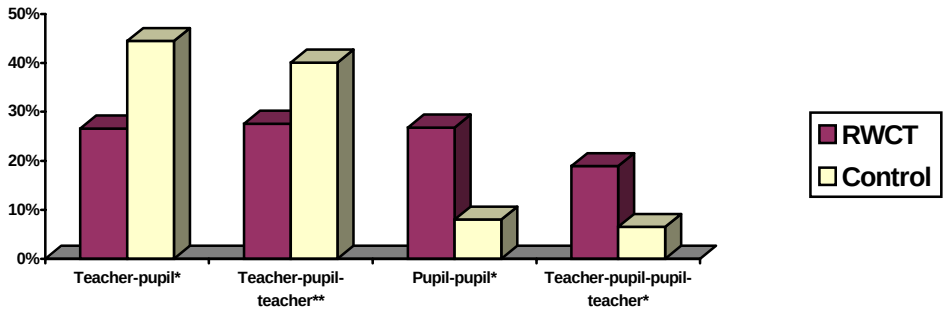
5.1. Major Findings

RWCT training makes a significant impact on the classroom learning environment. The first evaluation question for this study focused on measuring the ability of RWCT training to effectively impact the classroom environment in Kosova schools. Both quantitative and qualitative results support the effectiveness of this in-service teacher-training program in leading to educational change. The 20 RWCT teachers who were systematically observed exhibited significant differences in their teaching methodology from their control group counterparts. Observed differences between RWCT teachers and control group teachers were consistent with RWCT teaching strategies.

Sub-finding: Student-centered learning is taking place in classrooms of RWCT-trained teachers.

Chart 1 indicates that RWCT teachers spent a greater percentage of time using pupil-to-pupil and teacher-pupil-pupil-teacher communication patterns than control group teachers. The latter are inclined to spend more time lecturing and asking questions to individual pupils rather than facilitating classroom discussion and pupil interaction.

Chart 1. Difference between RWCT and control-group teachers in classroom communication patterns



* Significance at 0.01 level ** Significance at 0.05 level

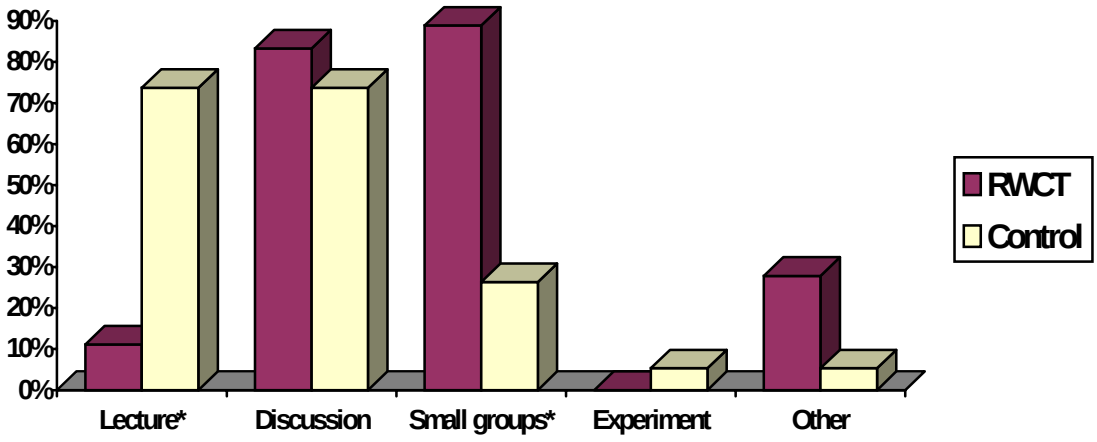
The statistical significance displayed in the chart above, reflecting differences in communication patterns used by RWCT and control group teachers, is further supported by qualitative data collected through focus group interviews with trained teachers and individual interviews with administrators. The following comment from a participant in

the non school-based (NSB) focus group exemplifies the changes in communication patterns and teaching styles that are typical of RWCT classrooms.

> *Now students pose questions and other students will answer, rather than just the teacher asking the questions.*

The conclusion for our initial finding is reinforced by the results displayed in Charts 2, 3a, and 3b, which demonstrate differences between RWCT and control-group teachers in classroom activities recorded in their classes and the percentage of time spent in certain classroom activities. Statistical significance in the difference between RWCT and control-group teachers in using traditional teaching strategies (lecturing, addressing individual pupils, etc) and RWCT strategies (small group work, facilitation of discussion between pupils, etc.) demonstrates that RWCT training makes a significant and measurable difference in classroom environment. For example, the differences between the groups in the amount or percentage of time spent lecturing and allowing the students to actively participate in their learning through group work most clearly demonstrates the abilities of trained and untrained teachers to create democratic learning environments in which students are engaged and teachers act as facilitators of their learning. In addition to RWCT teachers spending less time lecturing, Chart 2 also notes that RWCT teachers spend less time on "experiments." This measure refers to the amount of time teachers spend assisting students with individual or group experiments. In the case of RWCT classrooms, students work cooperatively on experiments with less help from teachers, as compared to control group classrooms.

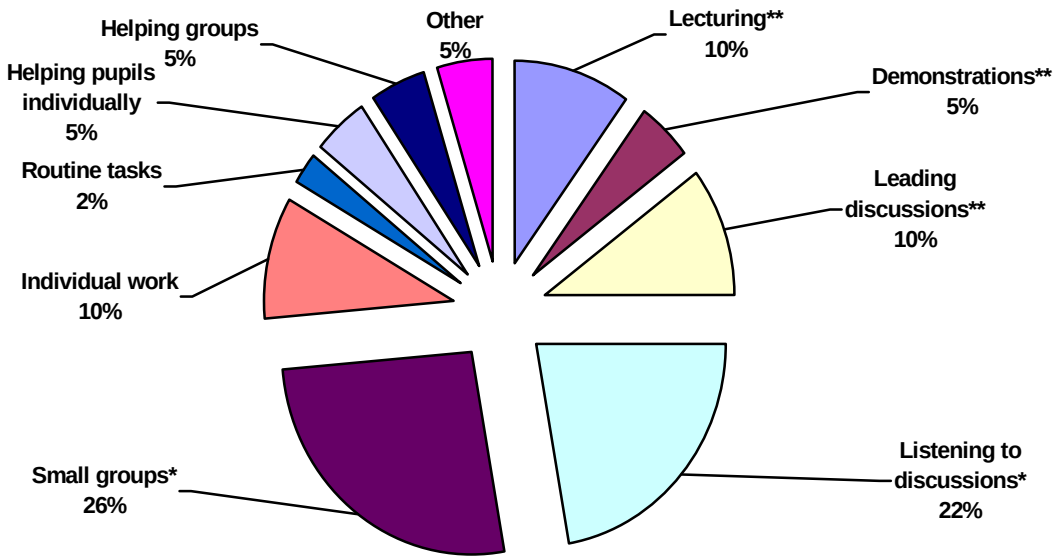
Chart 2. Difference between RWCT and control group teachers in classroom activities observed



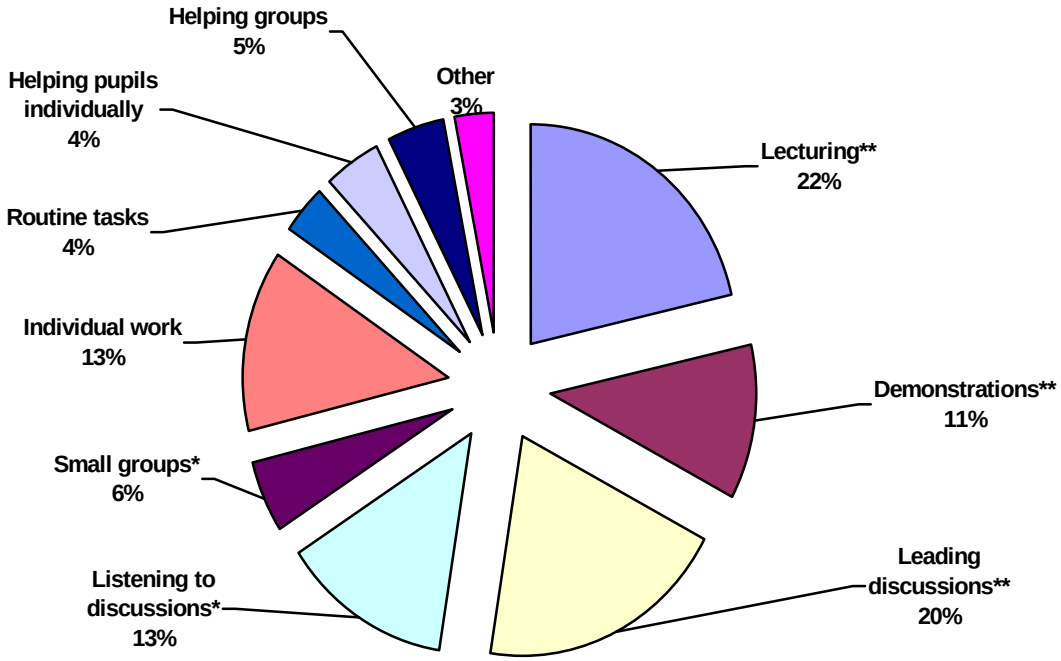
* Significance at 0.01 level

Charts 3a and 3b. Difference between RWCT and control group teachers in percent time spent on classroom activities

3a. RWCT Teachers



3b. Control Group Teachers



* Significance at 0.01 level ** Significance at 0.05 level

RWCT teachers and administrators repeatedly noted the positive change that has occurred in their classrooms, as RWCT practices have enabled the creation of a learner-centered environment where students are actively engaged.

> *Students now work in groups rather than sit in rows. Classes are no longer 100% lecture. Now teachers lecture for 30% of the class. Students pose questions for 70% of the lesson. Students are more careful and have more attention. Performance has improved from before.*
>
> NSB Focus Group Participant

Chart 4. Differences between RWCT and control-group teachers in authentic pedagogy and other classroom observation scales*

* Significance at 0.01 level

The classroom observation protocol utilized for this study was designed by the American Institutes for Research to measure specific classroom processes that should that should be present in RWCT classrooms. The first is the set of "authentic pedagogy" indicators measured on a 5-point scale, whereas the second is the set of "RWCT rubrics" measured on a 3-point scale. Chart 4 demonstrates that the difference between RWCT and control group teachers' scores is significant at the level of 0.01.

For instance the score of 4.3 in "Connections to the world beyond the classroom" indicates that **pupils in RWCT classes** study or work on a topic, problem, or issue that the teacher and pupils see as connected to their personal experiences or actual contemporary public situations. Pupils recognize the connections between classroom

knowledge and situations outside the classroom. They explore these connections in ways that create personal meaning and significance for the knowledge. However, there is no effort to use the knowledge in ways that go beyond the classroom to actually influence a larger audience.

At the same time, a score of 3.0 indicates that pupils in **non-RWCT classes** study a topic, problem, or issue that the teacher succeeds in connecting to pupils' actual experiences or to contemporary public situations. Pupils recognize some connections between classroom knowledge and situations outside the classroom, but they do not explore the implications of these connections, which remain abstract or hypothetical. There is no effort to actually influence a larger audience.

A participant in the focus group for teachers who received school-based training elaborated on the experience of authentic pedagogy:

> *Students have realized that (the) teacher is not the dominant person. He is rather a coordinator for them. Students like that their life experiences are valuable for school. For social science, it's important. Students are not just learning abstract things. They can link everyday life with school.*

Sub-finding: RWCT terminology has become a part of educational discourse in Kosova.

Interestingly, the results from teacher questionnaires did not show a significant difference between RWCT and control group teachers in their concepts of teaching and learning. This leads us to assume that all teachers in Kosova may be aware of the need for changes in the learning environment and are aware of the types of changes that should take place. The vocabulary of RWCT is becoming a regular part of educational discourse. During both the focus group and individual interviews, participants pointed out the various extents to which both trained and untrained teachers are aware of the training and the vocabulary and practices associated with RWCT. Administrators and RWCT teachers alike noted that some envy and jealousy exists from untrained teachers toward trained teachers, who are eager to undergo the program. One control group participant summed this scenario up best in saying:

> *"These teachers (those who have been trained) have tasted the honey and know it's sweet. Others haven't tasted, but they still know it's sweet."*
> NSB Focus Group Participant

However this discrepancy or inconsistency in the level of statistical significance between RWCT teachers and the control group is characterized, it illustrates the fact that teachers are aware of areas of their teaching that need to be changed, based on the similarity of responses to the questionnaires across groups. Those who have received training are

better able to effectively implement RWCT methods, based on the significant differences in classroom practices that were systematically observed.

Sub-finding: RWCT enhances student achievement**.**

In addition to the creation of a learner-centered environment where students are actively engaged, RWCT has enhanced the experiences and achievement of students, particularly those who may not have previously done well. This evaluation did not seek to objectively measure student achievement. However, focus group participants and administrators consistently referred to the increase in the interest and achievement of students in RWCT classrooms. Numerous participants made statements similar to the following examples:

> *Students who are not always the best have improved as well and participate more.*
>
> SB Focus Group Participant

Furthermore,

> *(There have been) particularly good results in math and science because those subjects are generally not very attractive to kids, if you do them in a traditional way. When kids work in groups they perform much better.*
>
> Administrator

School-based RWCT training more effectively impacts the classroom and overall school environment than non school-based training. This finding relates directly to the second evaluation question identified for this study. Support for the differences between the utility of the school-based and non school-based models emerged mainly through the qualitative methods used in this study. School-based training, through which approximately half of the teachers in a school receive training, allows for a school environment that is conducive to and supportive of change. Therefore, teachers who have undergone school-based training were found to be more likely to implement changes in their classroom practices.

> *I doubt that non school-based training is equally successful because there is a sort of collective responsibility and competitiveness if training is school-based.*
>
> SB Focus Group Participant

Furthermore, administrators of schools where school-based training has taken place spoke of changes that have taken place in general terms, while administrators of schools

where teachers were trained with the non school-based model spoke more of changes to the classrooms of trained teachers.

The qualitative data suggests that more cooperation and knowledge sharing exists amongst trained and untrained teachers in schools where school-based training took place. Issues relating to a lack of support from administration and other teachers were mentioned five times among the non school-based focus group as opposed to only two times in the school-based focus group. School-based focus group participants mentioned that there were no problems with colleagues and administration six times as opposed to this assertion being made only once in the non school-based focus group. Furthermore, non school-based control group teachers specifically mentioned a lack of support and suspicion from administration, while SB teachers never brought up this issue.

Also related to the level of cooperation and support, non school-based teachers also discussed issues of jealousy existing among their untrained colleagues toward them. This issue was discussed twice in the NSB focus group, but it was not mentioned in the SB focus group. Furthermore, two administrators of schools where teachers have been trained on the non school-based model mentioned that jealousy among trained and untrained teachers is a problem. Administrators of schools where teachers had undergone school-based training did not have similar concerns, rather, they spent far more time talking of the ways in which trained teachers share their knowledge with untrained teachers. This issue of jealousy between trained and untrained teachers may not only affect trained teachers' ability and willingness to implement changes in their classrooms, it also undermines the level of cooperation and knowledge sharing that should also take place among teachers in order to impact the whole school environment.

The participants sum this up best. In response to a question regarding the model of training they preferred for its effectiveness, the following statements were made.

Administrator of school where school-based RWCT training has taken place:

> *School-based because the level of responsibility for applying the methods is much higher. If teachers are trained individually, it would be up to them to apply methods. Teachers know that new methods are difficult and require more work. So, left up to them, they may decide not to implement. If the entire school goes for training or teachers are sent for training by the school, there is more responsibility for implementation.*

Views of an administrator of a school where a few teachers have had non school-based training:

> *It would be better if training took place in school because teachers would take it with greater responsibility. Administration would know who is and isn't attending. We would be able to support them better with materials, etc.*

Training of administrators is critical to ensuring that RWCT has an impact on the school environment. Trained teachers in schools in which the administrator has also been trained receive more support than teachers who return to schools in which there is an untrained administrator. In focus group interviews, teachers reported being met with suspicion by administrators who were unfamiliar with RWCT techniques. Also, trained administrators that are familiar with the methodology are better able to prepare other untrained teachers for the changes that RWCT encourages. For example, traditionally students in Kosova classrooms remain silent. Even those teachers who have been trained find it difficult to initially adapt to the 'working noise' that takes place in RWCT classrooms. Several of them faced opposition from their colleagues who complained to administration.

In addition to the 'working noise' that takes place, RWCT classrooms are set up differently than traditional classrooms in Kosova. Instead of students sitting in rows, they sit in small groups of four to six students. Rearranging the classroom can be noisy and causes problems for teachers who have to share their rooms with their colleagues. The process of change can be facilitated when there is a "critical mass" of trained teachers and administrators who are knowledgeable and supportive of the changes. The presence of trained administrators is particularly critical in schools where only a few teachers have received non school-based training. Individual interviews with administrators showed that even exposure to other "modern" training programs is beneficial

> *A bottom-up approach has been implemented where teachers are trained but not administrators. Administrators should be informed about techniques.*
>
> Non school-based participant

5.2. Minor Findings

The process by which non school-based training is carried out should be altered. Focus groups and individual interviews with administrators highlighted the need for minor changes to the way in which non school-based RWCT training is carried out. Currently, school-based training is announced through the newspapers. This process of advertising allows a large number of teachers and administrators throughout Kosova to be aware of and participate in the training. Teachers apply individually, allowing for the diffusion of training, as teachers who are eager to be trained and whose schools have yet to be selected for the school-based model are able to benefit.

Non school-based focus group participants as well as administrators mentioned that school administrators are often unaware when teachers participate in non school-based

training. This is due to the fact that teachers apply individually and training is held on the weekends.

> *(I) took training because (I) wanted to. Training was on the weekends, so there didn't have to be any documentation for/from the school.*
>
> NSB Focus Group Participant

Although allowing teachers to apply individually for RWCT training enables a wider range of teachers, and therefore students, to benefit from RWCT training, there are also some significant shortcomings. Not only do administrators and colleagues sometimes remain unaware of teachers that receive training, they also remain generally uninformed of RWCT methods. This lack of knowledge of RWCT practices impacts the level of support that NSB trained teachers are able to receive from colleagues and supervisors in their attempts to implement RWCT strategies in their classrooms.

A participant in the non school-based focus group sums it up best:

> *I had some problems. There was a lesson in the school during a training session on a Saturday. The director said that priority should be at the school, not at the training. Teacher had to convince the administrator that the training would be beneficial.*

There are several content-specific changes that are necessary in order to further enhance the impact of RWCT training on the learning experiences of students in Kosova classrooms. Support for this finding was present in the qualitative data collected. Firstly, several teachers and at least one administrator mentioned the need for additional training time devoted to assessment.

An administrator noted:

> *More information/examples should be given on how to make assessment more individualistic*

Her concern was further emphasized by a SB focus group participant:

> *Not enough attention is paid to student assessment with tests. Our teachers are applying tests because it is new and fashionable. They don't pay enough attention to construction tests.*

In the traditional Kosova educational context, students are assessed through subjective, oral means. Therefore, teachers are less familiar with the creation and use of objective tests. Many teachers only begin using objective assessment methods after receiving RWCT training.

Secondly, many teachers and administrators noted the difficulty faced when initially implementing RWCT strategies in the classroom. Teachers find it helpful to observe one another to get ideas about the various ways in which their classrooms can be improved. A participant in the SB Focus Group suggested that observations be included as a part of regular RWCT training. The participant felt that this was a the only aspect of training that could be improved and noted that as the number of RWCT-trained teachers in Kosova are increasing, observations of experienced teachers will become more feasible to coordinate.

Upper and lower-cycle teachers have different experiences in their attempts to implement RWCT methodology. Issues such as lack of support and collaboration among trained and untrained teachers has already been discussed. It is significant to point out that there may be a general difference between the experiences of lower cycle teachers (grades 1-4) and upper cycle subject teachers (grades 5-8) who have received training. Unlike their lower-cycle counterparts, upper cycle teachers usually change rooms after each class period. This causes several difficulties. First, upper cycle teachers are usually forced to spend more time rearranging desks at the beginning and end of each of their sessions. This issue of desk arrangement, and the noise it causes, more problems for upper cycle teachers who share classrooms with more teachers than their lower-cycle counterparts. In each focus group, there was general agreement that upper-cycle teachers face more problems in implementation of RWCT techniques. Furthermore, one administrator pointed out that better cooperation exists among trained and untrained teachers in the lower cycle.

5.3. Unanticipated Findings

Concepts of teaching and learning do not vary widely among RWCT trained teachers and untrained teachers. Based on the data collected for this evaluation, untrained teachers are aware of the necessity to create democratic, student-centered learning environments and try their best to implement changes in their classrooms. This finding is supported by both quantitative and qualitative data. Views of RWCT and control-group teachers about teaching and learning and their perception of instructional practices are not significantly different from a statistical point of view. The lack of significant difference between the two groups can be observed in Chart 5. The major difference between trained and untrained teachers is observed in the statistically significant differences found through the observation protocol utilize for this evaluation, which was illustrated and discussed above. Trained teachers acknowledge the fact that untrained teachers are aware of RWCT methods and the premises upon which they are based. They caution, as reflected in the statement below, that this knowledge alone is insufficient and must be supplemented with practical training.

> *If all the teachers are not trained, it is very difficult to implement techniques because they are very abstract. Even if they attempt to apply techniques, they do it partially and sometimes lose the effect.*
>
> NSB Focus Group Participant

Chart 5. Differences between RWCT teachers and control group in their views about schooling and teaching.

Parents are key in encouraging change, even in schools where there is no organized or active parents council. Both focus group teachers and administrators discussed the important role that parents play and the support that they provide for 'modern' teaching techniques. Administrators noted that they anticipate significant problems at the beginning of the school year when parents enroll their children in 1st grade.

> *When (we) started applying methods, (we) had a problem because parents wanted to enroll their kids in classes where RWCT methods are applied. For next year, 2 out of 3 1st grade teachers apply modern methods (including RWCT and Step by Step). He is seeking another teacher to avoid conflict with parents who will reject the teacher applying traditional methods.*

The sentiment expressed above was reiterated during interviews with several administrators. Through their power to select their children's first teacher, parents are in

a unique position to influence administrators to support the implementation of RWCT in classrooms and encourage teachers to be trained.

RWCT program is incongruent with the current status of Kosova's primary school curriculum. Teachers in both the school-based and non school-based focus groups discussed the significant challenges they face in attempting to implement RWCT strategies with the current primary school curriculum in Kosova. Both teachers and administrators described the curriculum as unrealistic and overloaded and listed it as a major challenge to the implementation of RWCT strategies in the classroom.

> *Now the classes are 40 minutes, which makes it difficult to apply techniques. Syllabus is not adequate for RWCT techniques.*
>
> NSB Focus Group Participant

Several teachers made similar comments. One noted that the class sessions at the school where they teach were limited to 30 minutes, which is even more detrimental to the successful implementation of RWCT techniques. Participants seemed aware of the importance of merging the processes of professional development and curriculum development.

> *It is important to let the Ministry of Education know about this method in order to impact curriculum development. They can design curriculum so that RWCT techniques can be applied. Then all teachers can use the methodology and there would be less problems.*
>
> NSB Focus Group Participant

RWCT has encouraged inclusion and achievement of students with special needs. Interestingly, in addition to improving student participation and achievement in general, implementation of RWCT techniques in the classroom have been particularly beneficial to students with special needs. An administrator in Prishtina noted the following:

> *RWCT has also helped with the inclusion of deaf and mentally impaired students.*

The participatory, inclusive, and democratic teaching methods of RWCT have therefore been able to address the various needs of primary school students in a way that traditional teaching methods are unable to. In addition to students with special needs, teachers have found that students who may have previously been last in their classes, have excelled under the new teaching methodology. For example, several teachers made statements similar to the following:

> *Students who are not always the best have improved as well and participate more.*

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Minor adjustments are needed to improve the content of RWCT training.

- Additional time should be spent on issues and methods of assessment. Kosova may be unique in terms of the countries in which other RWCT training has taken place, as objective testing is a relatively novel strategy. Several focus group participants and administrators noted that they remain uncomfortable with assessment strategies after they have completed training.
- Issues of discipline should be addressed in the training to assist teachers in their efforts to accommodate student participation and group work. Several teachers noted that, although they understand the necessity, they remain uncomfortable with the 'working noise' that takes place in RWCT classrooms.
- As increasing numbers of teachers across Kosova are becoming trained through the RWCT program, opportunities for observation should be built into the training program. Teachers also suggested that observing practicing RWCT teachers would have been a very helpful portion of training.
- During training, more emphasis should be given to the preparation of lesson plans in subjects such as math and science.

B. The effectiveness and sustainability of RWCT trainings should be enhanced through specific organizational changes.

- In addition to advertising opportunities for non school-based training in the newspaper, registration information should be sent directly to schools. This would allow administrators a greater opportunity to encourage teachers to be trained. It may also help to ensure that administrators are aware of the teachers in their schools who are undergoing training.
- Letters and information packets should be sent to administrators at schools from which there are teachers participating in the non school-based RWCT training. This will further serve to ensure that administrators are aware of the efforts of teacher to acquire training. Furthermore, the information packets will ensure that administrators are aware of the purposes and practices of the RWCT training program. This may help to increase the support that teachers, particularly non school-based teachers, receive in their efforts to enhance their teaching practices.
- A registration or selection procedure should be applied for school-based training. This process will serve to avoid cases in which principals select to attend training who may be unwilling to do so. Furthermore, this will avoid instances where the selection of teachers is made solely by the school principal in a bureaucratic way.

C. Additional support should be provided for upper-cycle teachers.

- The differential experiences of upper and lower cycle teachers should be acknowledged and addressed. Both teachers and administrators should be informed of the increased likelihood for problems from colleagues that upper cycle teachers face.

D. Increased collaboration is needed with the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology.

- Development of teacher training programs should go hand in hand with curriculum development, as curricular constraints and requirements have a significant impact on trained teachers' ability to successfully implement RWCT strategies.
- Continued advocacy for merit pay for teachers is needed, as it play a significant role in encouraging teachers to complete training.
- RWCT training has significantly enhanced the learning experiences of primary school students in Kosova. The same level of training and capacity to create learner-centered classrooms is needed at the secondary level, if only to maintain the improvements that are presently occurring at the primary level.

E. Parents should be utilized as a resource and means of pressure to encourage increased funding for training.

- In several schools, parents were noted as significant supporters of trained teachers, as they have significant influence in choosing their children's first teacher. The pressure that they put on administrators to have trained teachers at their schools can be expanded to higher levels through organization around this issue.

F. Administrators should be targeted for training.

- It is crucial that RWCT teachers return to a supportive environment after training. Training administrators is a critical step in providing this support, especially for non school-based teachers who lack a significant number of colleagues with training. This recommendation also coincides with concerns raised in both focus groups and several interviews.

7. LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

- Three out of the six administrators interviewed had been appointed within two weeks of the interview. One administrator in particular was unknowledgeable about RWCT and unable to speak about the program.
- Experienced RWCT trainers who were trained to use the observation protocol, as well as to help teachers with the questionnaires, carried out teacher observations. However, certain inconsistencies in applying the two instruments were observed. These inconsistencies did not directly impact the evaluation findings.
- The Director of Kosova Education Center, which is responsible for administering RWCT training in Kosova was present during both focus groups and five out of the six individual interviews. His presence may have impacted the responses of the participants.
- While RWCT teachers were randomly selected from those who had completed the training, control group teachers were selected by administrators to match the demographic characteristics of RWCT teachers. We are aware of the likelihood that administrators selected the best among the untrained teachers in their schools. Therefore the control group used for this study may not appropriately represent the general population of untrained teachers in Kosova.

8. POSTSCRIPT

We are indebted to our course adviser Prof. Cathryn Magno for her valuable input in all phases of this evaluation exercise. We are also grateful for the support of the other course instructors, Prof. Gita Steiner-Khamsi, Hugh McClean, and Natalia Shablya.

The KEC RWCT Program staff, Ms. Melinda Mula and Mr. Naser Zabeli were responsible for the logistics of the on-site evaluation and coordinated the complex task of teacher observations carried out by the two of them and experienced RWCT trainers: Mrs. Eda Vula, Ms. Zoge Gacaferri and Mr. Vllaznim Balidemaj. KEC staff also played a vital role in reviewing a draft of this report. We would like to thank them all for their commitment and a job well-done.

We are also indebted to the teachers and school administrators who agreed to be observed, complete survey forms and participate in focus groups and individual interviews.

However, the claims in this report are solely the responsibility of the authors.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Program Description

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking (RWCT) program is an initiative of the Open Society Institute (OSI) the International Reading Association (IRA). RWCT is based on the idea that democratic practices in schools play an important role in the transition toward more open societies. Active in 28 countries in Central and Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union and Central Asia, RWCT introduces research-based, instructional methods to teachers and teacher educators. The purpose of the Program is *to develop a set of skills for effective teaching in the classroom by providing professional development opportunities to teachers in Kosova based on RWCT strategies and techniques*.

Implementation of RWCT in Kosova began in October 2000 under the auspices of the Kosova Education Center (KEC), one of the strongest NGOs active in the field of education. With support of several donor agencies, the Program has managed to reach ~5% of Kosova's practicing teachers in three years. In addition, RWCT is creating a growing capacity for teacher training and certification in the Kosova.

RWCT is comprised of two major components: *school-based training* and *the non school-based training*. The focus of our evaluation is the impact of RWCT in the quality of teaching and in pointing out possible advantages that the two approaches might have versus each other.

2. CONTEXT

2.1. Background Information

Despite remarkable efforts during the past decade, particularly among teachers, to maintain a functioning education system under extremely difficult conditions, it is an inevitable fact that the quality of education in Kosova has suffered from recent sociopolitical conflict. One extraordinary feature of the Kosovar educational context is the presence and role of the international community in the country. In the post-war period, the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosova (UNMIK) has made successful efforts in stabilizing the education system, rebuilding destroyed facilities and setting the stage for reforms in education by mobilizing the international donor community to support the processes. Responsibilities in education have been formally handed over to newly appointed Government of Kosova, and there several initiatives targeting the Kosovar education system have originated in international circles. While exposure to external innovations, technical assistance, and training in the education sector is still somewhat limited, there is an openness and eagerness for educational change in Kosovar society.

In this era of rebuilding, conceptions of what constitutes a "good school" in general and "excellent teaching" in particular are being reconsidered in Kosova. In this direction, the National Teacher Training Review Board is working to establish a set of 'best practices' for teaching and learning. Teachers and educational experts are active participants in the development of these benchmarks. Furthermore, pilot initiatives are currently being carried out in several schools throughout Kosova to help establish a link between the

newly developed curriculum and new teacher training systems. One such initiative is the UNICEF-funded Child Friendly School Project, which includes 31 out of 540 primary schools in Kosova.

Undoubtedly, the present pre-service teacher training system does not serve the needs of Kosovar society. The current system promotes knowledge-based and encyclopedic learning instead of a rights-based, gender-neutral and participatory environment in the classroom. New legal provisions require that pre-service teacher training be based on Standards of Professional Practice set by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and verified through and accreditation process. To this end, the University of Prishtina is seeking to move the responsibilities for teacher training under the umbrella of a unified Faculty of Education to ensure that identified standards are efficiently met. However, under the present circumstances, no one can rule out the possibility of having other higher education institutions accredited for pre-service teacher training.

There are approximately 23,000 practicing teachers in Kosovar pre-primary, primary and secondary education institutions. These teachers are faced with the complex task of implementing new learner-centered curricula, that the existing subject-based teacher-training model has not prepared them for. Therefore, in-service teacher training has become a necessity in the Kosovar context. The best way to fulfill the growing need for in-service training is to both make use of the existing, locally developed programs that have been applied in the post-conflict period, and initiate the development of new ones that will meet the needs of the society.

The Teacher Training Review Board has addressed this issue and also highlights the need for a functioning accreditation mechanism and a very well defined teacher certification system. It is also critical to ensure the long-term commitment of the Kosova Government to fund in-service training, either through setting up a mechanism for funding the in-service programs and achieving a political consensus to address this issue with priority, or through introducing an incentive system that would reward teachers for the qualifications obtained and motivate them to bear the training cost.

UNMIK Department of Education and Science (DES) (which has since transferred power to the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology – MEST) has commissioned certain tasks to several agencies, referring to the latter as lead agencies. The lead agencies are foreign and international organizations with proven competence in certain areas of education and/or running major projects in that area. Here is a brief presentation of several lead agencies:

UNICEF Kosova is the lead agency in the field of curriculum development, early childhood education and psychosocial issues in education. UNICEF established and has supported the Curriculum Unit within the DES/MEST, and is in the process of assisting with the development of general curriculum framework for pre-tertiary education.

Universalia/University of Calgary is the lead agency in the field of teacher training. They administer the Kosova Educator Development Program (KEDP), which is financed by the Canadian Government. The aim of this program is to develop the capacity of the DES/MEST and to increase the capacity for pre- and in-service training and regional programming. This 3-year project started in February 2001 with committed funding of 8 million CAD.

Helsinki Consulting Group is the lead agency in the field of special education. The company runs a project financed by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. The project aims at improving special needs education by fostering in-service teacher training in this sector. Intended as a three years project, it started in September 2000 with the overall budget of 1.69 million Euros.

2.2. Kosova Education Center (KEC)

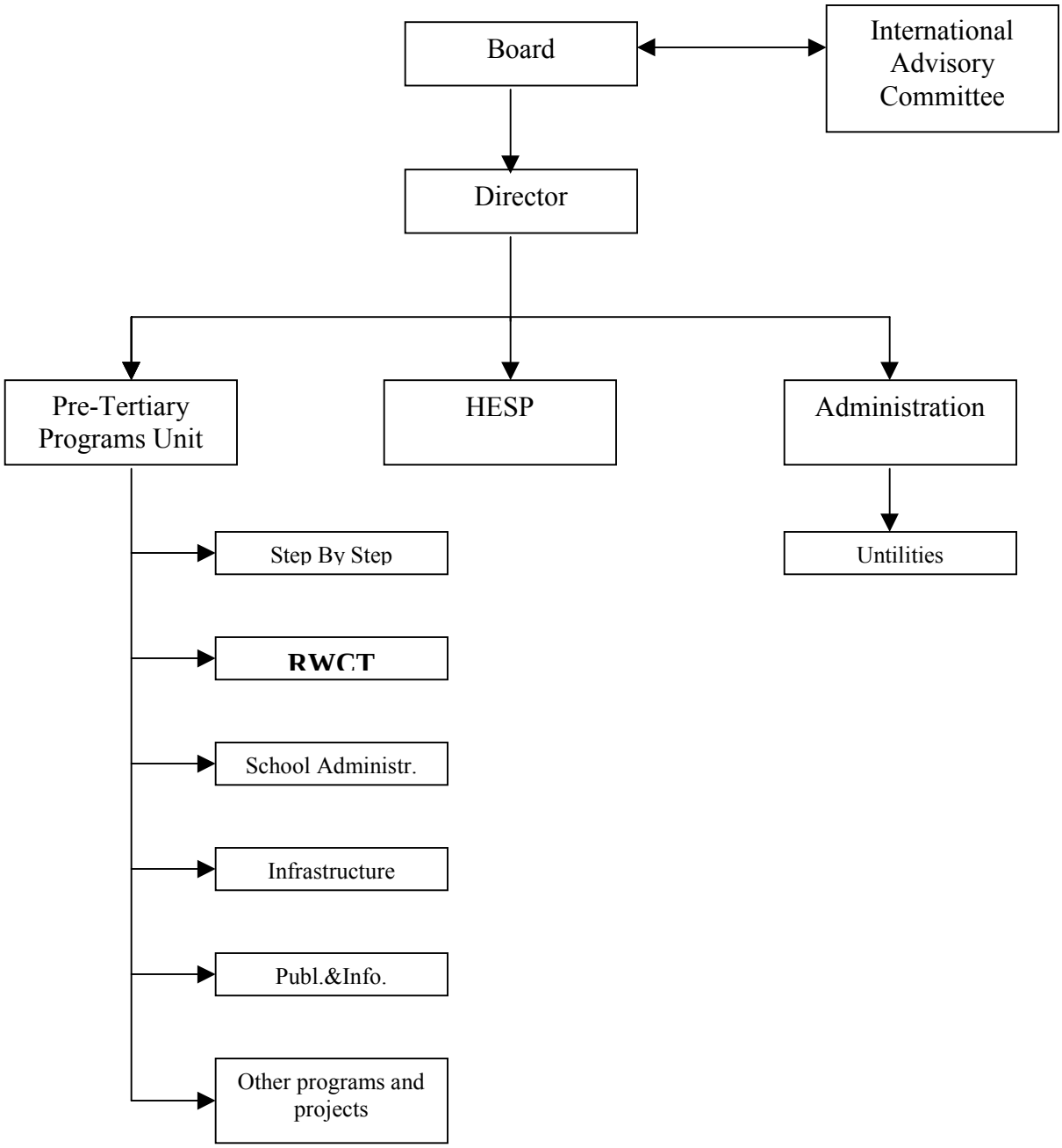
Kosova Education Centre (KEC) is a locally-driven NGO which started operation in May 2000 to contribute actively to the construction of a modern education system in Kosova by helping educators enhance their activity, facilitating the influx of relevant experience from other countries, and providing comprehensive, up-to-date and reliable information and reports on the education system, and organising a variety of initiatives and events to these ends. The organization was initially supported by the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe. After three years it became one of the strongest education NGOs in the region.

The vision of the organization is ***the development of an inclusive learner-centered education system aiming at empowering citizens for life-long learning***.
The mission of KEC is ***to provide opportunities for professional development and disseminate relevant information to educators and the community.***

The strategic objectives of the Kosova Education Center are to:

- Provide professional development opportunities for teachers, administrators and other education professionals,
- Promote cooperation between the family, the school and the community,
- Prepare publications from the field of education, and
- Inform the public on relevant educational innovations.

KEC is administered by a local board which is supported by an International Advisory Committee. The local board consists of three main organizational units: the Pre-Tertiary Programs Unit (PTP), the Higher Education Support Program (HESP), and the Administration Unit. Most of the programs are sets of service-related activities or groups of projects intended to achieve the strategic objectives of the organization.


Board
International Advisory Committee
Director
Pre-Tertiary Programs Unit
HESP
Administration
Step By Step
RWCT
School Administr.
Infrastructure
Publ.&Info.
Other programs and projects
Untilities

In-service teacher training has been one of the priorities of KEC, and several programs have been implemented throughout the country. In an attempt to create support structures for teacher training and assist teachers in enhancing the quality of their performance, KEC has facilitated the establishment of five didactic centres (teacher resource centres) throughout Kosova. The centers are located in Prizren, Ferizaj, Peja, Gjakova and Gjilan and function within the Infrastructure Program.

2.3. The Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking Program

Analyses of education in Kosova show evidently that there are several problems in all levels of the education system. Some of the problems identified are:

- Old-fashioned teaching methodologies and strategies
- Lack of an in-service teacher training system
- Old-fashioned pre-service teacher training system
- Insufficient material and technological resources for teaching

A key intervention by KEC has been to implement Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking Program (RWCT). It is an in-service teacher training program based on the "train the trainer" model and directly impacts the classroom environment by giving teachers information on new teaching methodologies and different approaches that facilitate teaching and learning processes. RWCT methods are adapted for classrooms in order to promote:

- Active Inquiry
- Critical Thinking
- Cooperative Learning
- Alternative Assessments
- Problem-Solving
- Student-Initiated Learning
- Reading And Writing Processes

The Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking program (RWCT) is an initiative of the Open Society Institute (OSI), which promotes worldwide educational, social and legal reform and the International Reading Association (IRA), which promotes literacy efforts throughout the world. RWCT is based on the idea that democratic practices in schools play an important role in the transition toward more open societies. Active in 28 countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union and Central Asia, RWCT introduces research-based, instructional methods to teachers and teacher educators. These methods are designed to help students think reflectively, take ownership of their personal learning, understand the logic of arguments, listen attentively, debate confidently. RWCT promotes democratic classroom experiences and encourages the development of independent, lifelong learners who will participate fully in society. The program can be used in all grades and subjects with existing curricula.

Implementation of RWCT in Kosova began in October 2000 in close cooperation with the International Reading Association and the Albanian Reading Association (ARA). The priority was to train the first group of future trainers. To accomplish this, volunteers from IRA and ARA conducted six training workshops.

The main priority in the second year of operation (2001/02) was to strengthen Kosovar training capacity and build certification capacity. In cooperation with the Albanian

Reading Association, the training program was adapted to local needs and the training cycle was defined. Non school-based training was supported by the Kosova Foundation for Open Society (KFOS) and was fully implemented by Kosovar trainers. On the other side, the Program managed to fundraise with UNICEF for the provision of school-based training, which was implemented in close cooperation with the Albanian Reading Association. RWCT has international certification standards which recognize 4 levels of certification: RWCT participant, RWCT teacher, RWCT trainer and RWCT certifier. At the end of the second year of operation, IRA certified the first group of RWCT trainers in Kosova and authorized KEC to carry out the process of certification for RWCT teachers.

The main characteristic of the third year of operation (2002/03) is large-scale dissemination of the Program throughout Kosova's schools. In addition, special RWCT training has been organized for teachers from the University of Prishtina, and a number of short and adapted training sessions and presentations for RWCT techniques across different subjects have been developed. Furthermore, the certification process for Kosovar participants started in the beginning of year 2003.

RWCT is being implemented in Kosova through a number of projects funded by different donor agencies, primarily: KFOS, OSI-New York, UNICEF and KEDP. The OSI-NY funding was matched with KFOS funding through the end of 2002, but was discontinued in 2003 for all the countries participating in the Program. Two permanent staff manage the Program on the national level. Most of the trainers are teachers and are mainly associated with the 5 didactic centers or the central facility in Prishtina. Local certification boards operate in the five regions covered by the didactic centers and in Prishtina. The idea is to create the National Program Committee that will be responsible for strategic planning and for overseeing the implementation of the Program. On program level the core funding has been secured from the KFOS for the period 2003-2005, but dissemination of the Program still largely depends on the ability of KEC to raise funds from donors and/or the Government.

3. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The **wider objective (goal)** of the Program is to *promote independent thinking and problem solving among pupils and equip them with critical thinking skills*.

The Program intends to contribute to the improvement of the classroom environment and enhance the learning skills of pupils. Although the existing evaluation reports indicate that the pupils whose teachers have participated in RWCT professional development activities demonstrate higher level of critical thinking skills than other pupils, there are two critical assumptions beyond the influence of the Program:

- Teachers are willing and motivated to apply the knowledge and strategies in their teaching, and
- Education authorities support teachers who want to apply their teaching skills and improve pupils' learning experiences.

Both assumptions are closely related to the position of teachers within the education system and wider society. The lack of an incentive system that values good classroom

performance and the lack of initiative from the side of education authorities to support good teaching might demotivate a number of teachers in their attempt to improve teaching performance.

In general, the achievement of the wider objective of the Program depends on a number of other initiatives within education system. Once achieved, the wider objective can be sustained only through the commitment of Kosovar education authorities to the professional development of teachers. This is another critical assumption beyond the influence of the Program.

The **specific objective (purpose)** of the Program is *to develop a set of skills for effective teaching in the classroom by providing professional development opportunities to teachers in Kosova based on RWCT strategies and techniques.*

The Program intends to empower teachers to integrate critical thinking principles into teaching practice by providing school-based or non school-based training and support to this end. The program focuses on the learning process rather than educational content. It is designed to be applicable to educators at each grade level from primary school through post-secondary education, and is not limited to specific subject areas. Teachers learn strategies to help students use self-reflection to solve problems and to engage actively in the education process. Through RWCT training, teachers learn instructional strategies that will encourage students to examine implications of their ideas, expose those ideas to polite skepticism, balance ideas against opposing points of view, construct supporting belief systems to substantiate the ideas, and take a stand based on those structures.

The main outputs of the Program are:

1. *A training program adapted to local needs* – Though the training program is developed by IRA and applies to all the participating countries, certain adjustments relevant to the local context and culture were deemed necessary, for example: a) adapting the concept of the training to national professional development standards; b) creating a library of readings to be used in the trainings, and readings for training in minority languages; c) provide shorter, subject-based trainings, etc.
2. *Enhanced national training and certification capacity* – Basic pre-condition for successful dissemination of the Program is to build national training and certification capacity. The Program needs a network of good trainers who can respond to the demand for training and a functioning certification system based on internationally recognized RWCT standards.
3. *Provision of school-based and non school-based training and support to teachers and education administrators* – This output aims at creating critical mass of educators of pre-tertiary level committed to the values of the Program and continuous professional development.

4. *RWCT introduced in higher education* – The idea is to provide RWCT training to the university students and teachers, and establish close cooperation with education departments in order to facilitate the use of RWCT classrooms for students' practice.
5. *Publication of books, manuals and periodicals promoting RWCT initiated*.– The Program tends to create publications relevant to educators who apply the RWCT strategies, but shall also encourage publication of textbooks and related teacher's books promoting application of inter-active teaching in the classroom.

4. TARGET GROUP AND PARTICIPANTS

The direct beneficiaries of the Program are educators participating in professional development events organized by the Program. Most of them are teachers form all the levels of education. In three years, 1,120 out of 23,000 Kosovar teachers have been exposed to the RWCT training:

1. The initial RWCT training was delivered during the academic year 2000/01 in a series of 6 training seminars. Thirty practicing teachers from primary, secondary and higher education were selected to participate in the Program. The aim was to create training capacity for dissemination of the Program across Kosova. Teachers were carefully selected from different regions, levels of education, subjects and gender groups. Most of them were involved in training delivery even before they formally completed their own training, alongside experienced trainers from other countries. International peers carefully monitored the group.
2. In the academic year 2001/02, the UNICEF funded Interactive Learning Project made it possible to reach 200 teachers from 10 Kosova primary schools selected by UNICEF to serve as pilot schools for innovations. Administrators of schools that expressed willingness for professional development identified approximately half of their teachers to receive training. School administrators were also included in the Project. The training for teachers was organized into a series of five training seminars (totaling 84 training hours) and took place in 6 sites. In most of the cases two schools were paired to attend the training together. After having completed the training for teachers, 2-4 graduates were selected from each school, and a group of 30 trainees was exposed to additional 24 hrs. training for trainers. These people were then equipped to serve as advisers to their colleagues, and many of them have been also involved in further dissemination of the Program.

   UNICEF decided to extend the number of pilot-schools to 31 during the 2002/03 academic year, and an additional 350 teachers have been exposed to the school-based training. During this phase, training is delivered in the form of seven 2-day seminars in 10 training sites. Some of the participating schools are quite small, and there are instances where 3 schools are grouped in one site to receive training.
3. In the academic year 2001/02 KFOS funded the dissemination of the Program through the 4 didactic centers and the central facility in Prishtina. Participants for training were selected by local teams of trainers based on public advert and the

training groups were quite heterogeneous. Apart from practicing teachers, some of the 150 participants were senior education administrators.

KFOS continued funding this type of non school-based training in the academic year 2002/03. This time the training takes place in 7 sites with 210 participants.

4. In the academic year 2002/03 KEDP also decided to support the dissemination of the Program to 150 new participants. Although KEDP was flexible with regard to the type of training, the KEC management team decided to deliver school-based training to teachers and administrators from 4 secondary schools (120 participants) and to establish one non school-based group. The selection of participants in secondary schools was carried out in similar to that of the UNICEF pilot schools. The participants of the training in the non school-based groups are predominantly Bosnian minority teachers and were selected by the representatives of Bosnian Community in the Education Directorate of the Town of Peja.
5. The Association of Quality Schools, which has 19 member schools has contracted KEC to train 30 teachers and administrators in the academic year 2002/03.

Out of 1,120 participants of RWCT trainings, 670 were exposed to school-based training, and 450 to non school-based training. In 32 out of 34 training groups the language of instruction is Albanian. In two training groups, the language of instruction is Bosnian.

Apart from the full training program, KEC has also organized shorter RWCT seminars and presentations for subject-teachers and education administrators. The subject-focused RWCT seminars were launched at the end of year 2002 in the didactic centers in Prizren and Gjakova, reaching approximately 120 math and science teachers. Seminars have been organized by regional teams of trainers and program graduates and conducted in didactic centers and interested schools.

5. COMPONENTS AND ACTIVITIES

The RWCT Program consists of four major components:

1. *School-based RWCT training* – This component includes the provision of the RWCT training on the school level. The full training is provided to a significant number of teachers and administrators from a school. A school participating in the Program receives support in the form of classroom materials, monitoring, and advising. Regular monthly meetings of trainees are organized, as well as coordination meetings of participating schools principals.
2. *Non school-based RWCT training* – This type of training is usually organized through 5 KEC didactic centers and the central facility in Prishtina. The training is advertised in local media, and the participants are selected by local teams of trainers. Gender, education level, geographic location and subject area are considered in selection. The participants receive support in the form of classroom monitoring and advising from trainers. Materials for application in the classroom are occasionally provided. The trainees attend regular monthly meetings. In

addition, non school-based training has been provided in form of shorter subject-based seminars in math and sciences with intention to extend the offer to other subjects.

3. *RWCT in higher education* – IRA prepared a special training program for higher education. Based on this program the training will be offered to university teachers and students.
4. *RWCT materials and publications* – The Program has prepared and published a set of adapted training manuals, entitled *Interactive Learning* 1-8, as well as a booklet with certification standards and procedures. The plan is to prepare books with model lessons and continue to produce readings and materials appropriate for the dissemination of the Program throughout Kosova.

The related activities for each of the components are presented in the table below:

Component	Activities
1. School-based RWCT training	• Fundraise for school-based RWCT training • Conduct the 7 training seminars • Set up a functional school monitoring system • Supply materials for classroom practice • Organize three half-day monthly meetings • Certify participation of trainees in the Program according to the Standards
2. Non school-based RWCT training	• Select the participants based on public advertisement • Deliver the full training program • Certify participation of trainees in the Program according to the Standards for participation in the full training Program • Prepare and deliver shorter RWCT subject-based courses • Organize RWCT presentations for teachers
3. RWCT in higher education	• Prepare a special training program for higher education • Provide training for university teachers • Provide training for the students from the University of Prishtina and other countries of the Region within Kosova Summer University • Organize RWCT presentations for higher education
4. RWCT materials and publications	• Update and publish the RWCT training manuals • Publish book with model lesson plans • Publish teacher workbooks for lesson planning

	• Update and publish readings for the training • Publish and disseminate a booklet with procedures and standards for certification

The components 1 and 2 were evaluated in order to:

1) Determine the impact of RWCT training on the classroom environment, and
2) Compare the impact of school-based and non school-based training on the classroom environment.

6. REFERENCES

1. American Institute for Research: *The 2000-01 Evaluation of the Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking Project*, submitted to OSI New York, September 2001.
2. KFOS: *KFOS Education Strategy 2003-2005,* Prishtina, October 2002.
3. KEC: *Interactive Learning Project*, submitted to UNICEF, March 2001.
4. KEC: *Child Friendly School Initiative 2002-2003*, submitted to UNICEF, May 2002.
5. KEC: *Child Friendly School Initiative 2003-2005*, submitted to UNICEF, July 2002.
6. KEC: *Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking 2002*, submitted to OSI New York, January 2002.
7. KEC: *Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking 2002/03*, submitted to KEDP, January 2002.
8. Naser Zabeli, Säde Urpola: *Interactive Learning 2001/02 – Case Study*, March 2002.
9. Naser Zabeli: *Interactive Learning 2001/02 – Final Report*, April 2002.

APPENDIX B

EVALUATION RESULTS

Quantitative Data

Table 1: Comparisons of RWCT and Control-Group teachers

Group	Sex			Age	Education			
	M	F	T		SE	HPS	BA	T
RWCT	6	14	20	41.2	1	15	4	20
Control Group	5	15	20	42.1	1	14	5	20
Total/Average	**11**	**29**	**40**	**41.7**	**2**	**29**	**9**	**40**

SE = Secondary School
HPS = Higher Pedagogical School
BA = University Education

Group	Teaching cycle			Yrs. with class	Classes per week	Yrs. of exper.	Yrs. at school	Previous training
	LC	UC	T					
RWCT	10	10	20	2.4	12.4	15.5	13.0	20
Control Group	10	10	20	2.6	11.7	16.9	12.5	9
Total/Average	**20**	**20**	**40**	**2.5**	**12.0**	**16.2**	**12.7**	**29**

LC = Lower Cycle (grades 1-4)
UC = Upper Cycle (grades 5-8)

Table 2: Differences between RWCT and Control-Group Teachers in views about teaching and learning

Statement	RWCT Teachers		Control Group Teachers		Difference
	Resp.	Av. (1-4)	Resp.	Av. (1-4)	
I enjoy my job as a teacher	20	3.9	20	4.0	**-0.1**
If I could begin my career again, I would **not** choose teaching	19	1.5	20	1.5	**0.0**
I decide what to teach this class	20	3.2	20	2.9	**0.3**
I select outside texts for this class	20	3.4	20	3.5	**-0.2**
I decide how to teach class curriculum	20	3.4	19	3.6	**-0.2**
I am **rarely** able to share ideas with colleagues	20	1.3	20	1.6	**-0.3**
I discuss, work, or share ideas about teacher with other teachers in my school	20	3.9	19	3.8	**0.1**
I discuss, work, or share ideas about teaching with teachers from other schools	20	3.6	20	3.3	**0.3**
Despite my best efforts, it is **impossible** for me to teach all my pupils to learn	20	2.5	20	2.3	**0.2**
I am optimistic about the future of education in my country	20	3.7	20	3.7	**0.1**
It is **bad** to change classroom practices based on student suggestions	20	1.8	20	2.5	**-0.7**

1=Strongly disagree
2=Somewhat disagree
3=Somewhat agree
4=Strongly agree

Table 3: Differences in reports of the teaching activities identified by RWCT and Control-Group Teachers

Teacher activities	RWCT Teachers		Control Group Teachers		Difference
	Resp.	Av. (1-4)	Resp.	Av. (1-4)	
Lecture to the class	20	3.1	19	3.1	**0.0**
Provide demonstrations to the class (including lab demos)	20	3.8	18	3.4	**0.3**
Lead whole class discussions, in which you do most of the talking	20	2.7	19	2.6	**0.0**
Listen to class-led discussions, in which the students do most of the talking	20	4.0	19	3.7	**0.2**
Have pupils work in small groups	20	3.9	19	3.3	**0.6****
Have pupils work individually	19	3.8	19	3.5	**0.3**
Help pupils with their individual experiments, projects, or other hands-on experience	20	3.8	19	3.4	**0.4**
Help pupils with group experiments, projects, or other hands-on experiences	20	3.9	19	3.5	**0.4****

** Significance at 0.05 level

1=Less than once a month
2=At least once a month
3=At least once a week
4=At least once a hour

Table 4: Differences in reports of the learning activities identified by RWCT and Control-Group Teachers

Pupils´ activities	RWCT Teachers		Control Group Teachers		Difference
	Resp.	Av. (1-4)	Resp.	Av. (1-4)	
Listen and take notes in whole-class settings	20	2.0	17	2.8	**-0.8**
Observe demonstrations in whole-class settings	20	3.8	16	3.6	**0.2**
Engage in discussions with peers	20	3.9	17	3.6	**0.3**
Engage in individual discussions with the teacher	20	3.8	20	3.7	**0.1**
Engage in group discussions with the teacher	20	3.8	18	3.4	**0.3**
Do lab or field work, or other experiments or hands-on work	19	3.1	17	3.1	**0.0**
Read silently	20	3.6	17	2.9	**0.7****
Read orally	18	3.3	18	2.9	**0.4**
Write essays or reports	19	2.8	17	2.4	**0.5**
Make presentations to the class	19	3.3	17	3.1	**0.3**
Work or review homework in class	19	3.1	18	3.3	**-0.2**
Generate their own projects	20	2.3	17	2.4	**-0.1**
Work on paper and pencil exercises related to a specific topic	19	3.7	18	3.3	**0.4**
Work independent, long-term (at least one week long) projects	19	1.9	16	2.0	**-0.1**
Work on problems with no singe best solution	19	3.3	18	2.9	**0.3**
Debate ideas or otherwise explain their reasoning	19	3.5	17	3.4	**0.1**
Complete tests or quizzes	20	2.4	18	2.1	**0.3**
Use hands-on models or manipulatives to solve problem	20	2.5	17	2.4	**0.1**

** Significance at 0.05 level

1=Less than once a month
2=At least once a month
3=At least once a weekSomewhat agree
4=At least once a hour

Table 5: Differences in reports of the assessment strategies identified by RWCT and Control-Group Teachers

Assessment of pupils	RWCT Teachers		Control Group Teachers		Difference
	Resp.	Av. (1-4)	Resp.	Av. (1-4)	
Objective tests (e.g., multiple choice, true/false, short answer)	20	2.8	20	3.4	**-0.6**
Performance on experiments, projects, or other hands-on experiences	19	3.6	17	3.0	**0.6**
Systematic observation of pupils	20	4.0	20	4.0	**0.0**
Oral reports	20	3.6	19	3.5	**0.1**
Written reports	20	3.6	19	3.4	**0.2**
Peer evaluation	20	3.4	20	3.3	**0.1**
Self-evaluation	18	3.6	19	3.3	**0.3**
Good classroom behavior	20	3.6	20	3.7	**-0.1**
Bad classroom behavior	20	3.1	19	3.2	**-0.1**

1=Not used
2=Minor importance
3=Moderate importance
4=Very important

Table 6: RWCT teachers' reports on effectiveness of RWCT techniques

General effectiveness of RWCT	Resp.	Average (1-4)
I have enjoyed my participation in RWCT workshops	20	4.0
RWCT techniques have helped me improve my teaching	20	4.0
RWCT techniques have improved my pupils' learning	20	4.0
I would recommend RWCT workshops to my colleagues	20	4.0
RWCT principles should be taught broadly to teachers in my country	20	4.0
Use of RWCT techniques detract from other teaching responsibilities	19	1.9
Pupils learn less course material when I use RWCT ideas	19	1.2

1=Strongly disagree
2=Somewhat disagree
3=Somewhat agree
4=Strongly agree

Table 7: RWCT teachers' reports on changes in pupils' behavior

Changes in pupils´ behavior	Resp.	Average (1-4)
Individual involvement during the lesson	20	4.7
Cooperation with other pupils	20	5.0
Access to, and retention of, the information presented	20	5.0
Their enthusiasm for expanding the acquired knowledge	20	5.0
Their relationship with me, the teacher	20	4.9

1=It has become much worse
2=It has become somewhat worse
3=No major differences observed
4=It has become somewhat better
5=It has become much better

Table 8. Difference between RWCT and control-group teachers in classroom communication patterns

Communication patterns	RWCT	Control	Difference
Teacher-pupil	26.6%	44.5%	-17.9%*
Teacher-pupil-teacher	27.6%	40.1%	-12.4%**
Pupil-pupil	26.8%	8.0%	18.9%*
Teacher-pupil-pupil-teacher	18.9%	6.5%	12.4%*

* Significance at 0.01 level ** Significance at 0.05 level

Table 9. Difference between RWCT and control-group teachers in classroom activities observed

Activities observed	RWCT	Control	Difference
Lecture	11.1%	73.7%	-62.6%*
Discussion	83.3%	73.7%	9.6%
Small groups	88.9%	26.3%	62.6%*
Experiment	0.0%	5.3%	-5.3%
Other	27.8%	5.3%	22.5%

* Significance at 0.01 level

Table 10. Difference between RWCT and control-group teachers in percent time spent on classroom activities

Classroom instruction	RWCT	Control	Difference
a. Lecturing to the class	9.9%	21.4%	-11.6%**
b. Providing demonstrations to the class (including lab demonstrations)	4.8%	11.3%	-6.5%**
c. Leading whole class discussions, in which the teacher does most of the talking	10.2%	19.7%	-9.5%**
d. Listening to class-led discussions, in which the pupils do most of the talking	22.3%	13.3%	9.0%*
e. Having pupils work in small groups	26.4%	5.5%	20.9%*
f. Having pupils work individually	9.8%	13.2%	-3.4%
g. Performing routine administrative tasks (e.g., taking attendance, making announcements, classroom management, etc.)	2.4%	3.7%	-1.3%
h. Helping pupils with their individual experiments, projects, or other hands-on experiences	4.8%	4.4%	0.4%
i. Helping pupils with group experiments, projects, or other hands-on experiences	4.8%	4.4%	0.4%
j. Other	4.6%	3.1%	1.4%

* Significance at 0.01 level ** Significance at 0.05 level

Table 11. Differences between RWCT and control-group teachers in authentic pedagogy and other classroom observation scales

Protocol	Scale	RWCT	Control	Difference
Higher order thinking	5-point	4.1	3.3	0.9
Deep knowledge	5-point	4.3	3.5	0.9
Substantive conversation	5-point	4.4	2.9	1.6
Connections to the world beyond the classroom	5-point	4.3	3.0	1.4
Teacher intearaction with pupils	3-point	2.7	1.9	0.8
Classroom organization	3-point	2.4	1.6	0.9
Teacher wait time	3-point	2.9	2.5	0.5

* Significance at 0.01 level

APPENDIX C

EVALUATION RESULTS

Qualitative Data

Sample Responses from Focus Group Participants

Question 1: What specific changes have you made in your classroom practices (i.e., lesson plans, classroom instruction, classroom setup, etc.) since you have completed RWCT training?

NSB Participant 3
Group work. Lessons are not as teacher-centered as they were before. Now they are more student-centered. Techniques have seemed difficult to implement at first, but teachers have managed to do it. Students are much more interested. They enjoy group work. Teacher has not observed a significant improvement in student achievement in his math class. He has had technical difficulties implementing techniques. He has had to adapt lessons to certain techniques because he doesn't have support from people or texts. Books are not written to fit RWCT methods. It would be good if he had more support. RWCT materials are not applicable to Math lessons. Overall, students are quite satisfied with changes.

NSB Participant 2
Our school has approximately 3000 students and 105 teachers. Only 3 (???) have had RWCT training. Classroom setup is a major problem. Students change classrooms, and teachers have to rearrange the seats. (From traditional rows to group format at the Beginning of the lesson, then back to traditional rows at the end of the lesson). All teachers should be trained at once so that all would agree on arrangement and avoid the mess at the beginning and end of classes. There is jealousy from teachers who have not been trained.

NSB Participant 1
Orientation would be toward changes in the classroom. We learned about RWCT at the right time when Kosova needs changes. Teaching for nearly 30 years. Traditional methods have been good, but it is time to accept new strategies. His work has changed since he ahs learned new methods. It was difficult in the beginning. In classroom teaching the situation is different than for subject teachers. He takes 5 minutes to rearrange classroom. Then he puts it back at the end of the day. In the beginning, he was careful to speak with his colleagues. Older teachers objected to new methods. He invited colleagues to observe him. Many observers felt they were there to help him rather than benefit themselves. They were satisfied with what they saw and began expressing Interest. 8 people have come to observe him, and the school principal is very supportive. Interest and commitment of students adds value to the program. Exchanges opinions with colleagues. RWCT is advanced compared to other programs. Difference will be obvious is observing those who have not had RWCT training. He agrees that there are more problems in the upper cycle. The project should be extended.

SB Participant 6
Our class is no longer static and teacher centered. Students are more socialized. There is a cooperative atmosphere. Teachers have freedom to choose between unites because curriculum is overloaded. Responsibility of teachers is increased. Individuality of students comes to surface. Students work in groups. They have accepted techniques. In the beginning of class, students know what will happen until the end. They are very committed. Cooperation visible among teachers. This is observed by parents who are grateful and have observed something new in the students. Students who are not always the best have improved as well and participate more.

SB Participant 1
There is a higher interest among students who were not doing well. They are more active. Absences have decreased. Students can hardly wait for the class to start. Class is active and interesting. We have overcome the monotony.

Question 2: What changes have you seen in your students since you have completed RWCT training?

NSB Participant 1
Changes are essential. Freedom and socialization at a higher level. Sense of group cooperation. When group is compact and students work together, they perform at a higher level. Having contact with colleagues helps to overcome problems. He is now more open and ready to discuss his shortcomings as a teacher with his colleagues. He discusses problems through cooperation and brainstorming with colleagues. Students have higher commitment to learning when RWCT is applied. It is natural rather than imposed learning.

NSB Participant 2
Kids understand that instead of just eyes and ears, they also have mouths. They are more creative and have freedom to make mistakes.

Question 3: Have you shared you knowledge with other teachers in your school who have not undergone any training?

SB Participant 3
When I had to replace a teacher that was sick for 2 or 3 days, I changed the atmosphere. The colleague asked what she did and she told her what she had applied. The teacher was very curious and wanted to learn more. Cooperation has always existed.

SB Participant 6
He is one of 4 teacher trainers. After Training for Trainers, they organized a meeting for all teachers, including those without training. So techniques are a part of the vocabulary regardless of whether they have been trained. We are often collaborating. Colleagues are curious and routinely come to observe. Teachers ask about techniques and then come to

observe on a particular day. They often try to implement techniques themselves, but they need more seminars.

Question 4: How do you feel about the support from your working environment (principal, colleagues, students, parents) to apply new teaching techniques?

NSB Participant 5
I had some problems. There was a lesson in the school during a training session on a Saturday. The director said that priority should be at the school, not at the training. Teacher had to convince the administrator that the training would be beneficial.

NSB Participant 4
Had problems in the beginning because teachers complained to the principal and the technical workers complained because they had to rearrange the desks. He decided to discuss it openly with colleagues and encouraged them to focus on student achievement. Parents began requesting from school director that other teachers apply the techniques. The director is now requesting that other teachers undergo training.

NSB Participant 1
Principal has changed at his school. School directors should be informed that teachers are applying new techniques. Principal was supportive but also suspicious. He didn't feel tat there were enough resources to apply modern teaching techniques. He does not feel that they are making major reform, only initial steps. He invited principals (old and new) to participate in his class to see what he is doing. Dialogue will help them overcome possible problems.

Question 5: If you could change any aspect of the training, what would it be?/How can the training be improved?

NSB Participant 4
Seminars should be more concrete. More exchange of ideas with people from other parts of Kosova.

SB Participant 1
If all the teachers are not trained, it is very difficult to implement techniques because they are very abstract. Even if we cooperate and try, there is not enough interest. Even if they attempt to apply techniques, they do it partially and sometimes lose the effect. Everyone should be trained.

SB Participant 6
Maybe we were lucky because we had good trainers and a competitive and cooperative atmosphere. Almost all participants felt it was good. One fact is that training is on weekends. Teachers have low salaries. A nice atmosphere is a motivation to come on weekends. Content of training was basis for motivation. In order to be successful, it has

to be transferred to other levels so that when students go to secondary school, they can have teachers who know the techniques. If the best student goes to secondary school with a traditional teacher, he may not be as successful. We always had contact with our trainers who continued to help us fill the gaps in our knowledge.

Question 6: What differences if any have you noticed between yourselves and your colleagues who have not undergone RWCT training? Between you and your colleagues who have undergone school-based/non school-based training?

Participant 3
Does not know people with SB training. Those without any training only assess students orally, not through tests or written work.

Participant 4
Of course there is a difference. People follow very traditional methods. Those who attended 1-2 day training didn't change methods. In the beginning there were reservations from colleagues. Some didn't know about it, others were envious. Problems were overcome in time. Students are more free to speak. They know they won't be punished for making mistakes. Some teachers are highly unmotivated and have no interest in changing their practice.

Sample Responses from Administrators

Question 1: How many teachers at your school have undergone RWCT training? School-based? Non school-based?

Administrator 1
In general teachers are not open about the non school-based training that they receive. They do not want to seem as though they are showing off. Even when the principal asks if they have gone to any training, teachers are not always open.

Question 2: Have you noticed any changes in the overall school environment since the training has taken place?

Administrator 1
Lower grade teachers are more dedicated. They have changed their way of thinking. They have found that they can support students who have different problems though RWCT techniques. Teachers have found that they can help those who they thought they couldn't. They have begun to think of each child individually. Teachers are enthusiastic because they are learning something new. Upper grade teachers tend to behave

differently and expect too much from students (before training). Teachers are often not trained for proper age group.

Administrator 3
Yes, big changes in school environment. The director has taken the training and has had a chance to implement techniques in class. There is cooperation between those who completed training and those who have not. Significant changes from applying methods. This was a UNICEF-selected pilot school. Changes are visible in all teachers and can be observed in students' work. Students' level of interest is much higher. Trained and untrained teachers cooperate and exchange visits both ways. Teachers who have not been trained should participate in similar training in near future. When all teachers have been trained, the teaching process will change significantly. We are happy that didactic center is located here. Grateful to KEC

Administrator 4
Teachers who are trained now work in groups and kids began talking and being active, expressing their opinions, even those who never spoke. Students request and ask why all teachers don't use the new methods. She teaches literature. Even though she hasn't been trained, she uses the methods (group work). Students read and then expressed themselves through drawing. Students felt free. Those who don't normally talk were active. Kids were satisfied and began asking for the application of similar methods. RWCT teachers are more active in applying modern teaching methods. RWCT trainers have displayed RWCT themes in the teachers' room so that others can be exposed. Those who've received training always assist and share. Only RWCT trained teachers receive workbooks from KEC. She feels all teachers should receive the workbooks.

Administrator 6
The changes are very big, even after only one teacher was trained. When the 1st teacher started, everyone was curious. Classroom environment is very different. Students' attitudes have also changed. Classroom is now full of students' work. Almost everyday, there is a new idea for a teaching method. For example, one teacher has formed a theater group that goes from class to class to perform. They sell tickets for performances and use the money to buy a gift for the class.

Question 3: Have you noticed increased networking/knowledge sharing among your teachers who have undergone RWCT training?

Administrator 1
Networking is one of the most important elements/aspects of the training. Teachers sit and plan together. Others who have not been trained have begun to ask bout the philosophy of RWCT. Trained teachers support untrained teachers. Students have begun to write in the first person. Children also begin to take on the role of other people/things. This does a lot for building tolerance and democracy because they are able to put themselves in the place of others. There is a dialogue among teachers. Teachers are most

satisfied with RWCT training. They also want to become RWCT teachers (2nd level of certification) Subject teachers have started to change their attitudes.
Children are more talkative after RWCT training. Teachers have to get used to having a noisy classroom. Traditionally they would have been punished for having a noisy room.
Teachers have to be encouraged to be creative in their methods (i.e., using different books/materials)

Administrator 3
The cooperation between trainees takes place in school "actives." Teachers cooperate within subject areas and share knowledge. They exchange ideas and experiences and observe each other's classes. We also observe results among students. In RWCT classrooms, student success is better. Teachers sometimes compare their students' work. Teachers save work for documentation.

Question 4: Have they (RWCT teachers) influenced other teachers who have not had any training (either directly or indirectly)?

Administrator 5
They encouraged other teachers to use all professional development opportunities available. They are an example for others. We began using group work immediately after the war, but not necessarily with these methods. It's a satisfaction for the teachers when they see their students learn well with the new methods.

Administrator 6
They were restrained because they felt everyone should attend the full training cycle. Those who haven't participated are anxious to participate and a bit envious. Trained teachers apply techniques. Classroom environment is set up for methodology and in the following class the desks are rearranged for traditional teachers. So there is an unpleasant noise. This confuses students who have classes with different approaches. The students are nervous because of that.

Question 5: How could RWCT training be improved? What do you feel is lacking? If you could change/improve anything about the program, what would it be?

Administrator 4
When teachers want to apply methods, they lack the basic materials (i.e., white paper, markers, etc.) The large number of students is another constraint in applying methodology. They began creating more classes, but were forced to bring them back together. It has been more difficult for more aged colleagues. The training has helped them to understand the role of the teacher. At first they didn't accept. Since they have been attending more training, they are more accepting of new methodologies.

Question 6: What changes have you noticed in the students of RWCT trained teachers?

Administrator 1
Teachers allow students to express their own opinions, right or wrong. This is only because of training. Students have freedom of speech. Group work. Students have more choices. There have been problems with upper grades. Students are used to the traditional ways of teaching. It is more difficult to get them to be comfortable with RWCT techniques.

Administrator 3
Changes in classrooms of trained teachers are much more visible. Students much more involved; more active. Teacher also more active. Students are doing better than before. There is working noise. Improvement in discipline because students are involved in learning process.

Administrator 5
Students are much more active and free in expressing their opinions. Those students give more extensive answers and answer questions that are not asked. Not just Yes or No. Students are more socialized and have cooperation. There is an element of sport and competition among the groups. Encourages students to express their opinions. There was once a huge gap between excellent students and bad students. In RWCT classroom, that gap has narrowed because the bad students are now active. So, we have decreased the differences between students.

Administrator 6
Students understand units better and faster. Lessons are student centered not teacher centered. Students are no longer overloaded with theoretical knowledge. 70% of ideas originate from students and 30% from the teacher. There is a significant difference in the classroom of trained and untrained teachers. Classes aren't boring anymore. Teachers run to start class rather than sit in the teachers' room because 40 minutes is not enough. If they are a bit late, they can't finish lesson. So it is a way to indirectly impose discipline on teachers.

Question 7: Would you prefer your teachers to participate in school-based or non school-based RWCT training? Why?

Administrator 6
Major concern is for all teachers to be trained. I hope to assist. The trainers we have would volunteer to train. KEC should just give guidebooks. The school would provide all other needs. Dukagjin agrees and will send guidebooks to school so that all the teachers can be trained. Principal will seek private donations for other necessities (i.e., snacks, etc.)

Question 8: Has the school supported in any way the RWCT teachers to apply new teaching techniques?

Administrator 2
The main problem is with the math teacher who must rearrange the classroom. If all teachers had participated, then technical organization would not be a problem. Organization is a constraint mostly on time rather than with other people. Desks are narrow and have to be put together for group work

Administrator 5
Conditions are very limited; restricted budgets. Teachers received a thank you letter/letter of appreciation at the end of the academic year. They use loudspeaker to announce the classrooms that apply methods, as a means of encouragement and congratulations. They also supply consumables (i.e., flip charts, and markers). Unemployment is 87% in the area. So, there is little or no support from parents. School is in the focus area of the war. 77 students lost parents. People cannot afford to help with private donations. Before the war, this was an example of a good school. But it was used as a military barrack and left in horrible conditions which are just being repaired.

APPENDIX D

EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

Teacher Survey

Section I: Views about Schooling and Teaching

1. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. (Circle one for each line.)

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
a. I enjoy my job as a teacher	1	2	3	4
b. If I could begin my career again, I would **not** choose teaching	1	2	3	4
c. I decide what to teach this class	1	2	3	4
d. I select outside texts for this class	1	2	3	4
e. I decide how to teach class curriculum	1	2	3	4
f. I am **rarely** able to share ideas with colleagues	1	2	3	4
g. I discuss, work, or share ideas about teacher with other teachers in my school	1	2	3	4
h. I discuss, work, or share ideas about teaching with teachers from other schools	1	2	3	4
i. Despite my best efforts, it is **impossible** for me to teach all my pupils to learn	1	2	3	4
j. I am optimistic about the future of education in my country	1	2	3	4
k. It is **bad** to change classroom practices based on student suggestions	1	2	3	4

Section II: Instructional Practices

2a. Indicate how often you do each of the following in your class(es):

+ Teacher activities	Less than once a month	At least once a month	At least once a week	At least once a class
a. Lecture to the class	1	2	3	4
b. Provide demonstrations to the class (including lab demos)	1	2	3	4
c. Lead whole class discussions, in which you do most of the talking	1	2	3	4
d. Listen to class-led discussions, in which the students do most of the talking	1	2	3	4
e. Have pupils work in small groups	1	2	3	4

f. Have pupils work individually	1	2	3	4
g. Help pupils with their individual experiments, projects, or other hands-on experiences	1	2	3	4
	1	2	3	4
h. Help pupils with group experiments, projects, or other hands-on experiences	1	2	3	4

2b. Please circle the letters associated with the three teacher activities listed in 4a that best describe your class(es).

3a. Indicate how often pupils do each of the following in your class(es).

	Teacher activities	Less than once a month	At least once a month	At least once a week	At least once a class
a.	Listen and take notes in whole-class settings	1	2	3	4
b.	Observe demonstrations in whole-class settings	1	2	3	4
c.	Engage in discussions with peers	1	2	3	4
d.	Engage in individual discussions with the teacher	1	2	3	4
e.	Engage in group discussions with the teacher	1	2	3	4
f.	Do lab or field work, or other experiments or hands-on work	1	2	3	4
g.	Read silently	1	2	3	4
h.	Read orally	1	2	3	4
i.	Write essays or reports	1	2	3	4
j.	Make presentations to the class	1	2	3	4
k.	Work or review homework in class	1	2	3	4
l.	Generate their own projects	1	2	3	4
m.	Work on paper and pencil exercises related to a specific topic	1	2	3	4
n.	Work independent, long-term (at least one week long) projects	1	2	3	4
o.	Work on problems with no singe best solution	1	2	3	4
p.	Debate ideas or otherwise explain their reasoning	1	2	3	4
q.	Complete tests or quizzes	1	2	3	4
r.	Use hands-on models or manipulatives to solve problem	1	2	3	4

3b. Please circle the letter associated with the three pupil activities listed in 3a that best describes your class(es).

4. How much do you use the following in evaluating pupils' achievement? (Circle one for each line.)

	Assessment Strategies	Not used	Minor importance	Moderate importance	Very important
a.	Objective tests (e.g., multiple choice, true/false, short answer)	1	2	3	4
b.	Performance on experiments, projects, or other hands-on experiences	1	2	3	4
c.	Systematic observation of pupils	1	2	3	4
d.	Oral reports	1	2	3	4
e.	Written reports	1	2	3	4
f.	Peer evaluation	1	2	3	4
g.	Self evaluation	1	2	3	4
h.	Good classroom behavior	1	2	3	4
i.	Bad classroom behavior	1	2	3	4

Section III: Background Information

5. Sex (circle): 1. Male 2. Female

6. Year of birth? _____

7. Town or village where the school is located _____

8. Teaching cycle where you work: 1. Lower cycle (grades 1-4) 2. Upper cycle (grades 5-8)

9. What class do you teach? (Please refer to the class that will be observed) _____

10. a. How many years have you taught the pupils in the class that will be observed? _____

    b. How many hours per week, on average, do you teach the pupils in the class we observed today? _____

11. What subjects do you teach? (subject teachers only) _____

12. How many years have you been a classroom teacher? _____

13. How many years have you taught at your current school? _____

14. What is the highest level of schooling that you have completed? (circle)

    1. Secondary school 2. Higher school 3. University

15. What is your first language? _____

16. In what language do you teach? _____

17. Have you participated in professional development activities sponsored by an outside agency (e.g., foundations, non-government organizations) in the last three years?

    1. Yes 2. No (If your answer is "No," please skip to question 19)

18. Please name all of the professional development programs in which you have participated:

    a. _____

    b. _____

    c. _____

    d. _____

(If one of the answers to this question is the "Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking" project, please skip to question 23).

Questions 19-22 should be answered only by thos who HAVE NOT participated in RWCT trainings

19. Are you familiar with the "Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking" (RWCT) project?
    Yes _____ No _____ (If the answer is "No," please skip to the "Closing" at the end of this survey).

20. How are you familiar with RWCT? (Please circle.)
    a) I have seen it advertised
    b) I know people who have participated
    c) I applied to participate myself _____

21. How familiar are you with RWCT practices? (Circle)
    a) Not familiar

    b) Somewhat familiar

    c) Very familiar

22. To what extent have you tried to adopt RWCT practices into your own teacher? (circle)
    a) Not at all
    b) Sometimes
    c) As often as possible
    d) Always
    (Please skip to the "Closing" at the end of this survey.)

Section IV: Experiences with RWCT

Only RWCT-trained teachers respond to the following questions.

23. What year did you begin your participation with RWCT? _____

24. How many RWCT workshops have you attended? _____

25. In what other ways do you stay involved with RWCT? (circle.)

    a) I attend ongoing meetings

    b) I communicate with RWCT coordinators

    c) I communicate with RWCT participants

    d) I work as a RWCT teacher trainer

    e) e) I write for RWCT publications

26. How did you find out about RWCT? (Circle.)

    a) I saw advertisements

    b) I knew others who had participated

    c) Someone at school informed me about it

    d) Other (please specify) _____

27. Why did you first participate in RWCT? (Circle.)

    a) I was curious

    b) I was asked by my school

    c) I was required by my school

    d) Other (please specify)_____

28. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. (Circle one for each line.)

		Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
a.	I have enjoyed my participation in RWCT workshops	1	2	3	4
b.	RWCT techniques have helped me improve my teaching	1	2	3	4
c.	RWCT techniques have improved my pupils' learning	1	2	3	4
d.	I would recommend RWCT workshops to my colleagues	1	2	3	4
e.	RWCT principles should be taught broadly to teachers in my country	1	2	3	4
f.	Use of RWCT techniques detract from other teaching responsibilities	1	2	3	4
g.	Pupils lean less course material when I use RWCT ideas.	1	2	3	4

29. Think about any changes you may have noticed in your pupils' behavior since you started applying RWCT strategies in teaching. How have your pupils' behavior changed in terms of the following?

		It has become much worse	It has become somewhat worse	There have been no major differences	It has become somewhat better	It has become much better
a.	Individual involvement during the lesson	1	2	3	4	5
b.	Cooperation with other pupils	1	2	3	4	5
c.	Access to, and retention of, the information presented	1	2	3	4	5
d.	Their enthusiasm for expanding the acquired knowledge	1	2	3	4	5
e.	Their relationship with me, the teacher	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX E

EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

Teacher Observation Protocol

Background Information

Name of Observer_____ Date_____

Name of School_____

Teacher First Name: _____ Family Name: _____

Time beginning_____ Time ending_____

Class____ Number of pupils____ (Number Male____ Number Female____)

Subject _____

Activity/Activities observed (please circle one or more):

1. Lecture 2. Discussion 3. Small group 4. Experiment 5. Other

*Please indicate the activity observed. If more than one, please provide separate answers.

Text(s) used_____

Other instructional materials_____

Communication pattern (percent time):

Teacher to pupil	_____
Teacher to pupil to teacher	_____
Pupil to pupil	_____
Teacher to pupil to pupil to teacher	_____
Total (should equal 100%)	_____

This rubric is to be used for classroom observations for the RWCT evaluation. Observers should take brief notes as unobtrusively as possible for one class period and then answer the questions as soon as possible after the actual observations. If possible, please also acquire a copy of the lesson plan for the class that you observe. The areas of interest are:

1. Higher order thinking
2. Deep knowledge
3. Substantive conversation
4. Connections to the world beyond the classroom
5. Teacher interaction with pupils
6. Classroom organization
7. Teacher wait time
8. Classroom instruction

Detailed information about the first four categories is included in the next few pages. The other categories should be self-explanatory.

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION PROTOCOL

1. Higher order thinking 5 4 3 2 1

5 = Almost all pupils, almost all of the time, are performing HOT.

4 = Pupils are engaged in at least one major activity during the lesson in which they perform HOT operations. This activity occupies a substantial portion of the lesson and many pupils are performing HOT.

3 = Pupils are primarily engaged in routine LOT operations during a good share of the lesson. There is at least one significant question or activity in which some pupils perform some HOT operations.

2 = Pupils are primarily engaged in LOT, but at some point they perform HOT as a minor diversion within the lesson.

1 = Pupils are engaged only in LOT operations. For example, they either receive or recite, or participate in routine practice, and in no activities during the lesson do pupils go beyond LOT.

2. Deep knowledge 5 4 3 2 1

5 = Knowledge is very deep because during the lesson almost all pupils do most of the following: sustain a focus on a significant topic; or demonstrate their understanding of the problematic nature or information and/or ideas; or demonstrate complex understanding by arriving at a reasoned, supported conclusion; or explain how they solved a complex problem. In general, pupils' reasoning, explanations and arguments demonstrate fullness and complexity of understanding.

4 = Knowledge is relatively deep because either the teacher or the pupils provide information, arguments or reasoning that demonstrate the complexity of an important idea. During the lesson many pupils do at least one of the following: sustain a focus on a significant topic for a period of time; or demonstrate their understanding of the problematic nature of information and/or ideas; or demonstrate understanding by arriving at a reasoned, supported conclusion; or explain how they solved a relatively complex problem.

3 = Knowledge is treated unevenly during instruction; i.e., deep understanding of something is countered by superficial understanding of other ideas. At least one significant idea

may be presented in depth and its significance grasped, but in general the focus is not sustained.

2 = Knowledge remains superficial and fragmented; while some key concepts and ideas are mentioned or covered, only a superficial acquaintance or understanding of these complex ideas is evident.

1 = Knowledge is very thin because it does not deal with significant topics or ideas; the teacher and pupils are involved in the coverage of simple information which they are to remember.

3. Substantive conversation 5 4 3 2 1

Substantive conversation has three features:

a) The talk is about subject matter in the discipline and includes higher order thinking, such as making distinctions, applying ideas, forming generalization, or raising questions; not just reporting or experiences, facts, definitions, or procedures.

b) The conversation involves sharing of ideas. Sharing is best illustrated when participants explain themselves or ask questions in complete sentences, and when they respond directly to comments of previous speakers.

c) The dialogue builds coherently on participants' ideas to promote improved collective understanding of a theme or topic (which does not necessarily require an explicit summary statement).

5 = All three features of substantive conversation occur, with at least one example of sustained conversation, and almost all pupils participate.

4 = All three features of substantive conversation occur, with at least one example of sustained conversation, and many pupils participate.

3 = Features "b" (sharing) and/or "c" (coherent promotion of collective understanding) occur and involve at least one example of sustained conversation (i.e., at least 3 consecutive interchanges).

2 = Features "b" and/or "c" occur briefly and involve at least one example of two consecutive interchanges.

1 = Virtually no features or substantive conversation occur during the lesson.

4. Connections to the world beyond the classroom 5 4 3 2 1

5 = Pupils study or work on a topic, problem, or issue that the teacher and pupils see as connected to their personal experiences or actual contemporary public situations. Pupils recognize the connections between classroom knowledge and situations outside the classroom. They explore these connections in ways that create personal meaning and significance for the knowledge. This meaning and significance is strong enough to lead pupils to become involved in an effort to influence a larger audience beyond their classroom in one of the following ways: by communicating knowledge to others (including within the school), advocating solutions to social problems, providing assistance to people, or creating performances or products with utilitarian or aesthetic value.

4 = Pupils study or work on a topic, problem, or issue that the teacher and pupils see as connected to their personal experiences or actual contemporary public situations. Pupils recognize the connections between classroom knowledge and situations outside the classroom. They explore these connections in ways that create personal meaning and significance for the knowledge. However, there is no effort to use the knowledge in ways that go beyond the classroom to actually influence a larger audience.

3 = Pupils study a topic, problem, or issue that the teacher succeeds in connecting to pupils' actual experiences or to contemporary public situations. Pupils recognize some connections between classroom knowledge and situations outside the classroom, but they do not explore the implications of these connections, which remain abstract or hypothetical. There is no effort to actually influence a larger audience.

2 = Pupils encounter a topic, problem, or issue that the teacher tries to connect to pupils' experiences or to contemporary public situations; i.e., the teacher informs pupils that there is potential value in the knowledge being studied because it relates to the world beyond the classroom. For example, pupils are told that understanding Middle East history is important for contemporary politicians trying to bring peace to the region; however, the connection is unspecified and there is no evidence that pupils make the connection.

1 = The lesson topic and activities have no clear connection to anything beyond themselves; the teacher offers no justification beyond the need to perform well in school.

5. Teacher interaction with pupils 3 2 1

3 = Teacher encourages widely different responses in classroom discussion.
2 = Teacher encourages some divergent responses in classroom discussion.
1 = Teacher requires formal recitation of response.

6. Classroom organization 3 2 1

3 = Pupils move around the classroom to work collaboratively on classroom assignments. The learning environment and wall displays reflect students' work and needs.
2 = Pupils are seated in one or more groups so that they may work collaboratively on classroom assignments.
1 = Pupils are seated at desks, facing the teacher, and work independently on classroom assignments.

7. Teacher wait time 3 2 1

3 = Teacher frequently provides wait time for pupils to answer question.
2 = Teacher sometimes provides wait time for pupils to answer questions.
1 = Teacher rarely provides wait time for pupils to answer questions.

8. Classroom instruction

Please indicate the approximate number of minutes during the period that the teacher spent on the following activities. Please also make sure that you are accounting for all minutes during the class period.

Activities	Approximate # of minutes
a. Lecturing to the class……..	_____
b. Providing demonstrations to the class (including lab demonstrations)……...	_____
c. Leading whole class discussions, in which the teacher does most of the talking…….……..	_____
d. Listening to class-led discussions, in which the pupils do most of the talking……...	_____
e. Having pupils work in small groups…….....	_____
f. Having pupils work individually…….……	_____
g. Performing routine administrative tasks (e.g., taking attendance, making announcements, classroom management, etc.)……..	_____
h. Helping pupils with their individual experiments, projects, or other hands-on experiences…...	_____
i. Helping pupils with group experiments, projects, or other hands-on experiences…...…..……	_____
j. Other: (please specify)……	_____
TOTAL	**_____**