



CONFLICT MITIGATION

USAID Supports Infrastructure in the North

"I'm pleased that these projects enabled us to work closely with the local communities involved. In this water project, you took charge, you identified your needs and priorities, and worked to find resources in cooperation with both your local government officials and the international community," said Dr. Michael Farbman, USAID/Kosovo Director, at the dedication of a water rehabilitation project in Banjska, Zvecan/Zveqan municipality.



Dr. Michael Farbman, USAID/Kosovo Director laying foundations of the annex to the Public Library in north Mitrovica.

Farbman was joined by Dragisa Milovic, Mayor of Zvecan/Zveqan municipality, in unveiling a plaque at the project site. Earlier that day, Dr. Farbman laid the first layer of concrete to the Annex of the Public Library in north Mitrovica. The total cost of the two projects is approximately \$150,000.

Both projects are a part of USAID's assistance to meet infrastructure needs of communities in the north. This assistance targets the municipalities of Leposavic/q, Zvecan/Zveqan, Zubin Potok and Mitrovica, implemented in partnership with Mercy Corps and the International Organization for Migration.

INSTITUTION STRENGTHENING

USAID Continues with a new economic initiative

USAID's Economic Management for Stability and Growth Project, a new initiative aimed at strengthening the institutions and environment necessary

to accelerate Kosovo's economic development, begins this July. The 36-month project will focus on ensuring strong implementation of policies and laws and further strengthening Kosovar capacity to effectively administer key economic institutions.

"Economic development is crucial to Kosovo's prosperity and stability. For Kosovo to succeed, it needs strong economic institutions for sound fiscal and financial sectors, it must continue to attract private investment by creating a business-friendly environment and by completing privatization, it needs a well-implemented legal framework that supports the private sector for trade and investment, and lastly, but importantly, Kosovo needs a modern and efficient energy sector," says Dr. Michael Farbman, USAID/Kosovo Mission Director. "This project," Farbman says, "builds upon previous successes and will continue USAID efforts in assisting Kosovar institutions as they work to facilitate economic growth so that Kosovo can integrate quickly and smoothly into regional and European markets."

The project will be implemented by Bearing Point, a world-wide renowned company.

YOUTH ACTIVISM

New Generation of Young Politicians Graduate

Thirty four young politicians from eighteen political parties were honored at a ceremony marking the completion of the Party Training Academy in Kosovo.

"Never has your political party been more in need of your participation than now. Party officials have to work in two directions - building Kosovo's young political institutions and representing citizens' needs. You, as the future leaders of your parties, will need to be skillful in supporting both those tracks," said Dr. Michael Farbman, USAID/Kosovo Mission Director, at the ceremony.

Organized by the National Democratic Institute (NDI), the Party Training Academy is designed to provide political parties with trained individuals who are prepared to act as party staff and/or party organizers at all levels of the political organization. This is the fourth class to graduate from the Academy.



The graduates of the Party Training Academy, class 4

The Academy started as a pilot project with two major Albanian political parties (LDK and PDK). The program has since expanded to include eight Albanian political parties (LDK, PDK, AAK, ORA, PShDK, ADK, PD and AKR) and eight political parties that represent minority communities. Trainings for minority parties were conducted in Prizren (for IRDK, KDTP, VAKAT and PREBK) and Prishtina & North Mitrovica (for SLS-Samostalna Liberalna Stranka, SNS-Srpska Narodna Stranka, DS-Demokratska Stranka, SDP-Socialna Democratska Partia).

NDI's activities in Kosovo are supported by U.S. Agency for International Development.

RULE OF LAW AND CIVIL SOCIETY

A Functioning Code of Ethics for Lawyers

Proposed amendments to the Code of Professional Ethics were approved at the Kosovo Chamber of Advocates (KCA) assembly meeting on July 7. The assembly's approval marks the completion of extensive work done by the Ethics and Discipline Committee to develop a functional disciplinary system.

The KCA worked closely with the USAID-funded ABA/Rule of Law Initiative to undertake a detailed and comprehensive examination of the existing disciplinary system. This involved the review of current and proposed rules, as well as benchmarking Kosovo's disci-

plinary systems for lawyers against those in the United States and various European countries.

A delegation from the Ethics and Discipline Committee also completed a study visit to Ireland to learn about its attorney disciplinary system. The main revisions of the newly-adopted disciplinary system include: entitlement of individuals and individual lawyers to directly file disciplinary complaints to the appropriate disciplinary bodies of the KCA, introduction of lay persons in disciplinary bodies of the KCA, and internal publication of decisions of disciplinary bodies of the KCA dealing with serious disciplinary violations.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Preparing for the Blueberry Season

Last year, Kosovo succeeded in greatly increasing the export of blueberries. Maintaining this momentum was the purpose of a meeting between buyers and sellers of blueberries.

Organized by USAID's Kosovo Cluster and Business Support Project (KCBS), the meeting gathered farmers, collectors, and businesses to discuss ways of addressing challenges to further growth in exports. Participants discussed methods of promoting sustainable collection, the potential for organic certification, and needed upgrades to practices and equipment to ensure better post-harvest handling. At the meeting, several companies offered to provide fee-based services to businesses that lack all of the equipment needed to achieve higher quality.

With support from the USAID/KCBS, 600 tons of blueberries were exported from Kosovo in 2006. This was a big jump from the 50 tons exported in 2005, and helped bring more than 1.5 million Euro to the economy. KCBS continues to help the Kosovo blueberry industry improve product quality, expand reach to rural collectors, and establish export links.

Upcoming Events

July 20 - 23 -- Youth Dialogue: Serbia - Kosovo, a three day workshop organized by Freedom House with support from USAID through its Kosovo Community Reconciliation Project.



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