



INSTITUTION BUILDING

Partnerships to Strengthen Institutional Capacity in Kosovo

Two new partnerships between US and Kosovo universities were awarded by USAID. The partnerships are designed to strengthen institutional capacities in Kosovo, part of a larger Partnership to Engage in Workforce Development, a global USAID initiative implemented through Higher Education for Development (HED).

The awarded partnership between Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) and the American University in Kosovo (AUK) will establish a Center for Energy and Natural Resource Development; and, Arizona State University (ASU) will partner with the University of Prishtina (UP) to transform accountancy training.

The Center for Energy and Natural Resource Development is the first of its kind in Kosovo and will assist Kosovo in building self-sufficiency in energy and natural resource economics and policy studies, and energy and power systems engineering.

The Center will focus on workforce development, consulting and research, and expanding and strengthening the degree programs and training facilities already established by the RIT and AUK through previous collaboration. RIT and AUK will collaborate with the Regulatory Assistance Project, the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority, and the Kosovo Ministry of Energy and Mining.

While ASU and UP - in collaboration with GateWay Community College, CARANA Corporation, and the Society of Certified Accountants and Auditors of Kosovo - will help transform accountancy training at UP. The comprehensive training and capacity-building process will entail four major phases: needs assessment, graduate training and trainers, translation and publication, and curriculum implementation and evaluation.

DEMOCRACY AND CIVIL SOCIETY

New Generation of the Party Training Academy

The third class of graduates of the Party Training Academy (PTA) was honored in a ceremony held on January 19th at the Kosovo Art Gallery. The 53 attendees of the PTA, members of different political parties representing both majority and minority communities, were issued certificates of completion by USAID and its partner, National Democratic Institute (NDI).

"The Party Training Academy is a good example of what USAID and NDI are here to do - that is, give young people interested in contributing to Kosovo's political life the skills and the knowledge to make a positive difference," said Michael Farbman, USAID Mission Director and guest speaker at the ceremony.

PTA 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. The project initially started as a pilot project with two major Albanian political parties, LDK and PDK. Fifteen political parties, including eight parties that represent minority communities, were represented at last week's event. Trainings for minority parties were conducted in Prizren (for IRDK, KDTP, VAKAT and PREBK) and North Mitrovica (for SLS-Samostalna Liberalna Stranka, SNS-Srpska Narodna Stranka, DS-Demokratska Stranka, SDP-Socialna Demokratska Partia).

The ceremony was attended by members of Kosovo Assembly, senior party officials, leaders of minority communities, the Mayor of Pristina, and representatives of several international organizations.

Journalism Competition

USAID's Partnership Against Trafficking of Human Beings (PATH), implemented in partnership with Catholic Relief Services, announces a

competition for journalists reporting on the issue of trafficking in human beings.

The competition aims to encourage journalists to report on the issues surrounding this important issue, and its relevance to Kosovo. The competition will make an important contribution to public awareness of the issue, its causes, prevention, protections, and consequences. The contest is open for all print and broadcast journalists who are addressing trafficking.

There are five categories and awards for this contest: best TV story; best radio story; best newspaper story; best investigative story; best headline and writing. All journalists are encouraged to participate by submitting a copy of their story for review by the end of April. Winners will be selected by a panel of experts in media, communications, and trafficking.

CONFLICT MITIGATION

Youth for the Future

Youth Securing the Future, a USAID funded project, has issued a call for proposals from high school students interested in participating in the project's youth empowerment activities. Interested high schools will receive training and grant support to form student youth councils, and implement projects that improve school life.

Grants will be made to schools which can clearly identify students' needs and demonstrate support from school administrators. As a peace and reconciliation project, the program is particularly interested in ideas that link schools across ethnic lines, and those that incorporate themes related to peace and tolerance.

Catholic Relief Services, the implementer of the project, is working in partnership with the Center for Civil Society Development, Galaxy Star and Mitrovica City-Wide Youth Center.

The program is open to high-schools in Zvecan/Zveqan, Zubin Potok, Leposavic/Leposaviq, Mitrovicë/Mitrovica, Vushtrri/Vucitrn, Istog/Istok and Pejë/Pec Municipalities.

Fast Facts on Kosovo

According to the recent "Fast Facts", of the UNDP's Early Warning System (EWS) Reports, the level of public satisfaction with the performance of institutions in Kosovo is decreasing. According to the survey, United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), Provisional Institutions of Self Governance (PISG) and the Kosovo Assembly rated low. While Kosovo Assembly received lower ratings than UNMIK for the first time since EWS began publishing in 2002.

The latest EWS also noted that this dissatisfaction has expanded to include the Kosovo Police Service. Satisfaction with the KPS dipped from a four-year level of 80% to a new low of 72%. Overall, the "Fast Facts" reported an increase of pessimism among citizens across social and economic issues.

The Kosovo Early Warning System Report is a measurement of socio-economical and political trends in Kosovo. EWS is supported by USAID in partnership with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP).

Upcoming Events

February 1 -- USAID's Community Enhancement Program implemented by IOM marks the finalization of the two projects in Zubin Potok, northern part of Kosovo.

February 6 -- Michael Farbman, USAID/Kosovo Mission Director will address the third generation of the Professional Development Program, a partnership of USAID, Kosovo Institutions and American University of Kosovo.



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