



## DEMOCRACY AND INSTITUTIONS

### First "one-stop shop" providing municipal services opens

The first Citizens' Service Center (CSC) officially opened in Gjilan/Gnjilane municipality on June 19. The center is the first of six centers to be supported by USAID in Kosovo municipalities. Called "one-stop shops," the centers will offer approximately 60 municipal services for citizens in one place, starting from a birth certificate issuance up to all administrative, cadastral and business certification requests.

Gjilan/Gnjilane officials anticipate that about 75% of citizens' municipal transactions will occur at the center. Citizens will either get their requests dealt with immediately or be provided a specific time when their documents will be ready. The centre will also be used to gather general complaints about city services, so it can address them comprehensively. The staff was selected from among existing employees, including minorities, who demonstrate a positive service attitude and have received both technical and service training.

"The centers are designed to help citizens carry out their requests or make utility payments without waiting in long lines or going from one building to the other for a single form or signature," said Dr. Ken Yamashita, USAID/Kosovo Mission Director at the opening ceremony. "The Center is built for the citizens of Gjilan/Gnjilane to ease their lives, and I'm sure that they'll be taking advantage of it by using it in all capacities." He emphasized that this is an important element of the municipal government's transparency plan.

The opening of the CSC in Gjilan/Gnjilane was followed by a ground-breaking ceremony of the center in Suhareke/Suvareka, on June 23. This center will include a Business Service Center, supported by the local business community, providing help not only in licensing but business advising. The other four centers will be opened in Gjakove/Djakovica, Peje/Pec, Podujeve/Podujevo, Shterpce/Sterpce during the year.

These centers are supported by USAID's Local Government Initiative, a three-year program designed to assist municipal government in improving their proficiency toward building a responsible and transparent local government.

### Law students conduct first "trial"

Wearing court gowns and performing the roles of prosecutors, attorneys and judges, a group of students from the University of Prishtina Law Faculty conducted a simulated criminal trial. Held in front of an audience, the mock trial is part of a legal clinic program that links theoretical knowledge with hands-on training for law school graduates.



At the court  
Students simulate a criminal case trial

The trial event is the culmination of joint efforts of students in the Criminal Department of and legal experts engaged in the actual preparatory phase of the mock trial. Experts worked closely with students in building the criminal case. Both experts and students (who for the first time faced an actual court case) felt the performance was a success.

The simulated trial was held in the Pristina District Court on June 15. The Legal Clinic Project is supported by USAID and implemented by the American Bar Association/Central European and Eurasian Law Initiative and the University of Prishtina Law Faculty.

### Young activists complete political training

Seventy young activists from Kosovar political parties of all ethnicities were presented certificates for completing the Political Training Academy on June 24.

The academy is one of the components of USAID's Legislative Politics activity in partnership with the National Democratic Institute (NDI). Political parties of all ethnicities showed that they understand the need to train the next generation of leaders. Through a shared selection process, political parties of all ethnicities chose their best young activists for the four-month training program.

"I'm happy to see such a diverse group of young political activists because this is a sign that political parties are thinking of the future," said Dr. Ken Yamashita USAID/Kosovo Mission Director in his opening remarks. Kole Berisha, the President of the Assembly, opened the ceremony and congratulated the young party activists.

The 'Political Training Academy' develops party activists and staff through training on all major aspects of party organization. The event was hosted by the Kosovo Assembly, an appropriate venue for more than 70 young partisan activists who will soon work on elections in Kosovo.

### Mayors exchange ideas, receive leadership training

Fostering the development of local leadership, capable of organizing municipal government to respond to its residents, was undertaken at a Policy Leadership Conference held in Mitrovica/e on June 20-21.

"As the elected officials closest to the people, you have a special responsibility to serve as a role model for all your citizens, not just those of your party or ethnicity," said Dr. Ken Yamashita, USAID/Kosovo Mission Director at the opening dinner. Darren Owens, US Kosovo Forces Commanding General, challenged the mayors to do the right thing, saying "by courage I don't mean bravery, I mean the courage to do the right thing at the right time."

The conference gathered mayors of 16 municipalities to brainstorm about issues they're faced with as well as mechanisms to address them. Mayors worked on case studies, analyzing how mayors in US had responded to challenges, and learned about "executive mayors" as a municipal management concept. The conference was supported by USAID's Local Government Initiative.

## BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

### Farmers and officials see benefits of round bales at field demonstration

The benefits of round bales of hay, using rotobalers funded under a USAID project grant, were demonstrated to farmers and Ministry of Agriculture officials at a field demonstration at Rudina farm near Prizren on June 23.

The event promoted improved technology in hay-making by demonstrating the use of rotobalers. These baling machines help farmers decrease the cost of production, increase the quality of hay, making hay more competitive as a livestock feed while also boosting farm income. Using rotobales, haying is done three or more times per season instead of the traditional two cuttings.

The rotobaling service has been provided by USAID's Kosovo Cluster and Business Support (KCBS) project to Kosovo Association of Milk Producers (KAMP) members and potential members. The event also presented achievements of the association and the quality services provided to its member farmers.

USAID's KCBS project is a four-year effort to develop small and medium businesses, focusing on livestock, construction materials and fruits and vegetables, helping link businesses from production to final marketing.

## SPECIAL INITIATIVES

### The launch of new alliance

June 22, marks the beginning of the new Kosovo Alliance for Healthy Newborns that will work toward improvement of the quality care of the mothers and newborns during pregnancy and the post-partum period.

The activity builds on the experience from a previous partnership with the Center for the Development Family Medicine, Ministry of Health and the Obstetric and Gynecological Hospital in Pristina. Sadik Idriz, Minister of the Ministry of Health and Dr. Ken Yamashita, USAID/Kosovo Director were present at the launching event.

The Dartmouth-Kosovo Alliance for Health Newborns is an 18-month activity supported by USAID structured as a Global Development Alliance partnering Dartmouth Medical School, AmeriCares, and Webber and Company.

### Upcoming Events

**July 9**, Dr. Ken Yamashita USAID/Kosovo Mission Director departs Kosovo.

**July 26**, Honoring the Kosovo American Education Fund (KAEF) finalists.



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