



CONFLICT MITIGATION

A Better School for Children in Mitrovica

Tina Kaidanow, United States Office in Pristina Chief of Mission, joined students of Sveti Sava primary school in Mitrovica in celebration of a school rehabilitation project on December 12.

"We want these children to grow up in Kosovo in a safe environment, to find jobs and create their families here," said Kaidanow to the guests gathered at the event.



Students of Sveti Sava elementary school in Mitrovica and their teacher of singing at the dedication ceremony

The event marked the finalization of two months' work. As a result of the refurbishment, 800 students attending classes in the school building have warmer classrooms, brighter walls, and cleaner restrooms. The total cost of the refurbishment was \$99,500.

The school rehabilitation project is a part of Community Development and Enhancement project, implemented through the International Organization for Migration.

DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS

Writing a Good Court Case Report

Accurate court reporting requires journalists capable of differentiating between facts and opinion, and honestly informing the public about the court proceedings.

A USAID-funding training for twenty journalists, held in Pristina on December 2nd, helped develop these capacities.

"This training was a wonderful experience ... I found the trainers to be experts on explaining what is important in order to write a good court case report," said Igor Mili, a journalist from Gradjanski Glasnik (a Serbian language magazine).

The twentytwo journalists were brought together through the joint efforts of USAID'sUSAID's Media Assistance Project and Justice System Reform Activity. USAID will provide three trainings aimed at reinforcing key skills needed to understand, analyze, and report on statements/decisions made during court proceedings.

The course builds upon previous court-reporting trainings held in April-May of this year. This training included new methodologies, including the use of witness statements and simulations of fictitious criminal cases. Participants were able to use the statements and closing arguments to produce articles about the case. The training was led by Besim Kelmendi, a public prosecutor, and Ramë Gashi, a lawyer.

From Kosovo People to American People - Thank You

"From Kosovo people to American people, thank you," were the closing remarks of Agim Ceku, the Prime Minister of Kosovo, in his address at the USAIDUSAID Participant Training Program annual Awards Ceremony.

The event, held on December 7, honored 121 Kosovars who have completed USAID-funded training programs in the United States, Europe or Kosovo during the past year as part of the Participant Training Program (PTP). Mr. Ceku was joined on stage by Tina Kaidanow, US Chief of Mission, and Michael Farbman, USAID Mission Director.

The PTP program is designed to provide targeted, short-term training and study tours that supplement USAID's strategic objectives. Kosovars honored this year had participated in study tours and workshops in a wide array of technical fields, including judicial reform, business development, budgetary policy, health, and others. To date, some 450 Kosovars have participated in the Participant Training Program.

Among guests were Minister Salihaj [Justice]; Minister Ceku [Energy and Mines], Minister Shatri, [Finance and Economy], and Deputy Minister Hajdaraj [Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development].

Another One-Stop Shop Opens in Kosovo

In an effort to bring services closer to the people, Shterpce/Sterpce municipality marked the official opening of the Citizen's Service Center (CSC), also known as a "one-stop shop" for citizens. The center offers approximately 60 municipal services for citizens, including birth certificate issuance and many administrative, cadastral and business certification requests, in one place.



Youth of Shterpce/Sterpce sharing parts of Serbian traditional folklore at the opening of the Citizens Service Center

Municipal officials anticipate that, over time, about 75% of citizen-initiated municipal transactions will occur at the CSC. Citizens will either get their requests dealt with immediately or be provided a specific time when their documents will be ready. The center 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 will help citizens carry out their requests without waiting in long lines or going from one building to the other for a single form or signature," said Dr. Michael Farbman, USAID/Kosovo Mission Director.

This is the second such center to open in Kosovo. These unique centers are supported by USAID's Local Government Initiative.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Quality Products for Future Business Development

The Kosovo food processing faces many impediments as it strives to increase sales and exports. One of the main challenges is meeting modern food safety standards required to earn consumer trust and enter new markets.

In order to help this small industry, USAID's Kosovo Cluster and Business Support project held a two day seminar on Good Manufacturing Practices, a system ensuring the consistent manufacture of goods which conform to qualitative and quantitative standards. Without such a system in place, food safety is compromised. Additionally, the industry's efforts to upgrade physical facilities and invest in modern equipment are meaningless.

This is a crucial issue for Kosovo. The output of local food processors is expected to soon exceed domestic demand, requiring businesses to export for growth. At the same time, export markets are becoming more rigorous in requiring that products meet standards. As competing enterprises world-wide embrace standards, it is imperative for Kosovo food processors to meet the challenge or face the progressive loss of all but the most meager and low-value export opportunities.

The seminar was open to representatives of the public and private sectors of the agricultural economy of Kosovo, and was attended by around 120 participants.

Upcoming Events

December 18, Kohavizion (KTV), one of the two private Kosovo wide TV stations starts with the broadcast of TV Magazina, a production of Albanian and Serbian speaking regional TV stations with support from USAID.

December 21, USAID's Local Government Initiative will organize "Breakfast with donors", a fundraising event for the single parent children in the municipality of Glakovë/Djakovica.



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