



## DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE

### New Media MOUs Establish Responsibilities, Assistance

**U**SAID/Kosovo signed Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) with RTV 21 and Kohavision, the two private Kosovo-wide TV stations, on November 8.

The MOUs institutionalize USAID's cooperation with the two TV stations, which started over six years ago and continue in order to help TV stations become financially viable businesses, offering high quality news and other local programs to the people of Kosovo.

"We are looking forward to improvement of program quality but at the same time we are pleased to see the progress made to date," said Dr. Ken Yamashita, USAID/Kosovo Mission Director said at the signing ceremony. Work with the stations is provided through USAID's Media Assistance Project, implemented by the International Research & Exchanges Board (IREX).

### Networking for New Partnerships

**T**he USAID-supported Kosovo Civil Society Project is conducting a series of meetings throughout Kosovo to inform NGO's about its partnership and networking grants. The meetings started on November 8 and will run until the end of November.

The meetings introduce prospective applicants with eligibility criteria, proposal guidelines and other requirements for grants, as well as provide necessary application materials. The meetings are open to all local NGOs that have shown a strong partnership and networking component between NGOs, and with other sectors (such as local/central government, private business).

Participating NGOs must also have addressed critical issues in any of three grant target areas: Transparency and Anti-Corruption, Community Development or Ethnic Reconciliation and Conflict Mitigation. The grants to be given will be for a period of 6-12 months and, \$ 5,000 to \$ 20,000.

The Kosovo Civil Society Program (KCSP) is three-year initiative funded by the United States Agency for Internat-



KCSP staff explaining to a civil society representative eligibility criterias for grant application (Ferizaj/Urosevac )

ional Development (USAID) and implemented by the International Research & Exchanges Board (IREX). The goal of the program is the further development of Kosovo civil society and the NGO community in becoming a vibrant and viable sector that plays a significant role in representing Kosovo's diverse citizenry and shaping public policy.

## BUSINESS AND ECONOMY

### Ministry Launches New Property Tax Incentive for Local Governments

**T**he Ministry of Economy and Finance launched the newly designed property tax incentive program to municipal officials on Friday, 11 November. Minister Haki Shatri, Ministry of Economy and Finance, described the incentive program changes as a response to lack of collection results. "This new incentive system is to support those municipalities who made better collection efforts." The ministry increased the total incentive plan from 3 million to 6 million euros in a system designed in levels, rewarding those who achieve the best results in the property tax system.

The new property tax incentive grant will classify municipalities in three categories based on their effort showed during the 2004 collection of property tax. Property tax director Ali Gashi says that 7 out of every ten property tax bills are not paid. The ministry hopes that municipalities will increase not just property tax collections, but also improve billings, valuation and rates, so that local governments are less dependent on the central budget.

USAID's Economic Development Initiative Project, assisted in the analysis of property tax collections, and the need

for an incentive program designed to encourage better overall collections.

James Wooster, one of the USAID advisors assisting in the property tax area, emphasized that "the new property tax incentive grant will improve techniques so that public sector can offer the services the community wants." Three municipalities shared their tips for better property tax collections with all officials at the half-day meeting.

### Finance Fair Links Businesses to Banks

**O**n November 9, the first Finance Fair in Kosovo attracted 200 participants in an effort to increase access to credit by improving communication between borrowers and lenders.

Supported by USAID's Kosovo Cluster and Business Support project, the Kosovo Bankers' Association (KBA), Association of Microfinance Institutions of Kosovo and the Alliance for Kosovar Businesses (AKB) worked together to organize this event. The groups wanted an open forum where financing opportunities could be presented to enterprises, helping inform them about financial products and services available on the Kosovo market. Businesses often say that access to finance is an important issue throughout Kosovo.

The Finance Fair also included workshops to help businesses to successfully secure financing. The 200-some participants, mainly businesses, received information packets on the types of information and documentation needed for loan applications. The Finance Fair offered an opportunity for all financial institutions and businesses to exchange ideas on how to overcome current financing gaps.

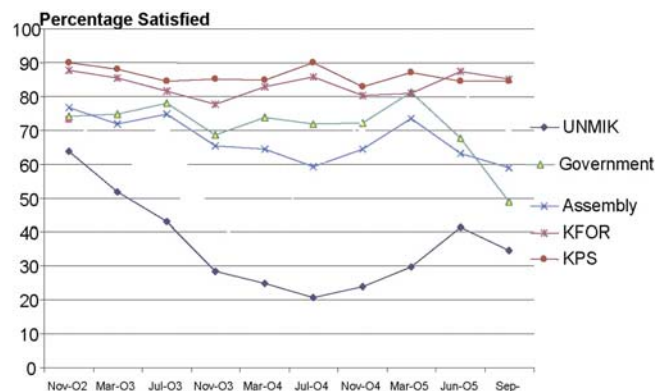
### SPECIAL INITIATIVES

#### Kosovo Early Warning Report # 11 - Fast Facts

**F**ast facts from the latest USAID-sponsored Early Warning Report (KEWR) highlight a decrease of respondents satisfied with the performance of the main Kosovo institutions.

According to these fast facts, the Serbian and Albanian Kosovars believe that interethnic relations will get worse if the status of Kosovo does not meet their expectations, at the same time both ethnic groups, 85% of Serbian Kosovar respondents and 75% of Albanian Kosovar

respondents claimed they will protest if their expectations about final status are not met. Of 19 vital problems presented to the respondents, unemployment, uncertainty about status, poverty, interethnic relations, corruption and power supply are seen as problems Kosovo is facing today.



Fast Facts graphicon showing the decrease of satisfaction with the performance of institutions (EWS # 11)

The Kosovo Early Warning Report, a quarterly report based on a poll of Kosovars, tries to identify issues facing society and serve as a warning mechanism for potential conflicts. The 'fast facts' are based on statistical analysis of an opinion poll conducted in the second half of September. The poll included in-person interviews with 1,247 respondents, 933 Albanian Kosovars, 206 Serbian Kosovars, 108 respondents from other minorities (21 Bosnian, 12 Gorani, 30 Turk, 22 Ashkali, 1 Roma and 22 Egyptian Kosovars).

The Kosovo EWR is sponsored by USAID and UNDP and implemented by Riinvest, a local think-tank.

EWR 11 will be issued early December and can be accessed at [www.kosovo.undp.org/publications/publications.asp](http://www.kosovo.undp.org/publications/publications.asp)

#### Upcoming Events

**November 15**, Dr. Ken Yamashita, USAID/Kosovo Mission Director will meet the participants of the Behavioural Surveillance Survey Workshop.

**November 15**, USAID/Kosovo will honor legal professionals, participants of two USAID-sponsored trainings.

**November 16**, USAID's Justice System Reform Activity will introduce an analysis of workflow process in Kosovo courts.

**November 17**, Dr. Ken Yamashita, USAID/Kosovo Mission Director will speak at a regional Local Economic Development Conference.



U.S. Agency for International Development  
 Arbëria (Dragodan), Ismail Qemali st., nr. 1  
 Phone: ++ 381 38 243 673  
 Fax: ++ 381 38 249 493  
 For more information visit [www.usaid.gov/missions/kosovo](http://www.usaid.gov/missions/kosovo) and [www.pristina.usmission.gov](http://www.pristina.usmission.gov) or  
 contact us at [kosovousaidinfo@usaid.gov](mailto:kosovousaidinfo@usaid.gov)