



BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

New Study Shows Kosovo Business Environment To Be "Business Friendly"

"Business Conditions Index in Kosovo 2005", a study supported by USAID, ranks Kosovo among the most business-friendly environments in Eastern Europe. The report quantifies how easy or hard it is to start a business, acquire investment and working capital, register property, hire and fire employees, and close a business in Kosovo.

Kosovo proved to have a far more business friendly environment than any other former member of the Yugoslav Federation and even outperformed some of the recent entrants to the European Union in some areas. While the report clearly shows that there is much still to be done to improve the business environment, including such challenges as developing financial capital markets, it also demonstrates that government agencies in Kosovo are far more pro-business in their approach to problems than those in other emerging market economies.

"A broad generalization we can make from the indexes is that the laws and tools for a transparent business-friendly environment are, for the most part, in place in Kosovo," says Dr. Ken Yamashita, USAID/Kosovo Mission Director. "This report will encourage much-needed foreign investment by educating the global markets as to the true nature of Kosovo's business environment. It also gives policymakers and business interest groups better intelligence as to where they should focus their efforts for future improvements."

Integra, a Pristina-based economic research firm prepared the report under the direction of the Kosovo Cluster and Business Support (KSCB) project.

The report is based on the World Bank's "Doing Business Index" methodology, and the finding will be formally presented by the World Bank, Integra and USAID/KCBS mid-November 2005.

New Video Promotes Investment in Kosovo

USAID's Kosovo Cluster and Business Support (KCBS) project supported the production of "Doing Business in Kosovo," a video promoting the current business environment in Kosovo.

The video, which presents brief interviews with businessmen in Kosovo and encourages potential investors to look at Kosovo for opportunities, was presented by the Ministry of Trade and Industry at the "Opportunities for Investment and Trade in Kosovo", a two-day conference that took place in Bari, Italy, on September 18.

The primary aim of the video that was produced by Prishtina Film, a local TV production firm is to provide the Ministry with a promotional film for use at this and similar conferences in the future.

New technologies used in plots

On September 20th, Kosova Development Center, a partner of USAID's Kosovo Cluster and Business Support project organized a field day to introduce new technologies.

The purpose of this exercise was threefold; introduction to the new technologies of growing hybrids (corn varieties), sunflower, soya and alfa-alfa; comparison of the results of new hybrids with the traditional ones used by farmers; and introduction of new formulations of fertilizer for crops.

126 participants from the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development (MAFRD), non-governmental Organizations (NGOs), input suppliers, students from the School of Agriculture in Gjakovë/Djakovica, farmers and feed producers visited a plot using new technologies. These types of field days have proven successful for the producers since there is a growing interest from farmers in using new technology to raise same

varieties of hybrids but in bigger surface areas for commercial production. The field day offers the opportunity for the farmers to see that the new technologies will increase their incomes and decrease the cost of production with higher yield per hectare.

SPECIAL INITIATIVES

Cost benefit and Budgeting

Dr. Ken Yamashita, USAID/Kosovo Mission Director presented the participants in "Cost Benefit Analysis" and "Budget and Budget Processes" training with certificates at a ceremony on September 15th. The two training programs provided insight into the processes of planning, drafting, approving and executing a capital budget.

For many participants, from the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF) and the Assembly of Kosovo, understanding a complex structure such as budget processes is crucial to their daily performance.

"As a result of these training sessions, the budget execution and rational usage of the budget in our working environment will be improved," said Safete Hadergjonaj, member of Kosovo Assembly. "This training will help us in identification of good capital projects, cost analysis, including cost/benefit analysis."

The programs were part of USAID's Participant Training Program (PTP), a project designed to assist Kosovo's institutions in increasing skills of staff members.

World Learning implements the program, and input for these sessions came from the Economic Development Initiative, managed by BearingPoint.

Every smile is not a Smile

Every smile is not a smile" is one of the messages designed to support "I don't Do it" -the Kosovo-wide awareness campaign on human trafficking, launched on September 26th.



Downtown Pristina - Men walking by the posters of "I don't do it" campaign

The aim of this campaign is to sensitize the Kosovar audience about the fact that many women and girls working in the sex industry might be unwilling victims of trafficking, and about the inhuman conditions in which they are kept; and to inform them that victims of trafficking are not only foreign women, that local women are being trafficked internally. The campaign will also inform clients and potential clients of the victims about the legal provision applied to the crime of human trafficking.

The campaign was launched and will be implemented by the Prime Minister's Office - Office of Good Governance (OGG) in cooperation with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), supported by USAID. RTK, a public broadcaster, will broadcast Public Service Announcements (PSA's) free of charge.

Upcoming Events

October 3, Dr. Ken Yamashita, USAID/Kosovo Mission Director will speak at the Alliance of Kosovo Businesses Conference

October 6, USAID will honor the participants of an HIV-Microbiologists training

October 14, USAID will sign a Memorandum of Understanding with seven Kosovo municipalities participating in the Municipal Integration and Support Initiative (MISI)



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