



DEMOCRACY AND CIVIL SOCIETY

Local organizations and their networks awarded networking grants

Seven projects, designed by Kosovar organizations to benefit the general public were awarded grants for their efforts in building business opportunities, helping solve local disputes, fighting corruption or tackling other issues at the local and Kosovo-wide level.

The grants reflect cooperation among NGOs, between NGOs and local government, and NGOs and community groups. As Dr. Ken Yamashita, USAID/Kosovo Mission Director said during a visit to Suhareka/Suvareka on January 20, "the voice of every Kosovar can be harnessed more effectively to press for better services from Kosovo's institutions through networks or coalitions of NGOs."

The current round of grants awarded a total of \$100,000 to seven NGOs and their networks to: produce a series of TV debates on current events in Kosovo, (Balkans Investigative Reporting Network); establish a commercial, multiethnic agricultural cooperative in Rahovec/Orahovac municipality Kosovo Development Center); initiate marketing and foreign investment promotion for commercial enterprises in Gjakova municipality, (Community Business Development Center); promote the role and functions of the Municipal Court in Strpce/Shterpe in order to increase use of judicial processes to resolve civil disputes, (Women's Association-VITA); establish a watchdog organization to monitor the work of eight Municipal Assemblies and their elected officials and promote increased citizen participation in municipal legislative processes, (Kosovo Democratic Institute); advocate for implementation of Laws against Discrimination and Gender Equality in the municipalities of Mitrovicë/Mitrovica (north), Leposaviq/Leposavic, Zvecan and Zubin Potok, (Youth Initiative Mitrovica); and establish a civil society anti-corruption coalition, (Organization for Democracy, Anti-Corruption and Dignity "Cohu").

The recipients will also receive customized training and consultancy support to further strengthens their



USAID/Kosovo supports advocacy efforts in Kosovo

(In the photo: Members of the high school youth council in Suhareka/Suvareka advocate to citizens for property tax collection.)

organizational capacities and long-term sustainability. The grants are awarded under the Partnership and Networking Grants, part of the USAID-supported Kosovo Civil Society Program, a three-year activity implemented by International Research & Exchanges Board in partnership with Foundation for Democratic Initiatives (FDI).

Kosovo NGO representatives meet the donor "Balkans Trust for Democracy"

Balkans Trust for Democracy, a project supported by the German Marshall Fund of the United States, was featured at the Meet the Donors meeting in Pristina, on February 2.

"Linking citizens with Government and Regional Cooperation and Collaboration are the objectives of grant-making process," said Marcel Grogan from the Balkans Trust for Democracy during his presentation. The presentation outlined the history and previous work of this organization including funding objectives, current priorities and application procedures, as well as available funds for the region.

The Balkan Trust for Democracy is a 10 year, \$27-million grant-making initiative that supports good governance in Southeastern Europe.

Meet the donors is a regular monthly event organized by the Advocacy and Training Resource Center (ATRC), a partner of the International Research & Exchanges Board (IREX) along with the Foundation for Democratic Initiatives (FDI) in implementing USAID's Kosovo Civil Society Project.

GOVERNANCE AND INSTITUTIONS

Kosovo Judge Honored in USA

On January 16, Rexhep Haxhimusa, the President of the Supreme Court of Kosovo, was given an award by the National Center for State Courts (NCSC). The award recognizes him for "distinguished service" to the Kosovo Courts, particularly for his commitment and contribution to the independence of the judiciary system in Kosovo.

This is the first time that an international judge has received this award, which has previously been presented only to US judges. The award was presented at the Conference of Chief Justices of State Courts of the United States during a session on Judicial Independence.

During his visit to the U.S., Judge Haxhimusa met with U.S. Attorney General Alberto Gonzalez, U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice, John Roberts, Chief Judge Rufus King of the D.C. Court, representatives from the US State Department, USAID, and NCSC. Judge Haxhimusa briefed them about the justice system in Kosovo.

SPECIAL INITIATIVES

Kosovo Early Warning Report # 12 - Fast Facts

Kosovo's main institutions are gradually being perceived as responsible for the economic situation in Kosovo, according to the most recent facts of the Early Warning System Report (EWSR). Since the start of EWSR in 2001/2002, it is the first time that the Provisional Institutions of Self-

Governance (PISG) are perceived as being accountable regarding the economy.

The fast facts also show a slight recovery on the levels of public satisfaction with the performance of the PISG, after a dramatic decrease during the summer and early fall. A similar trend pertains to the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG), while Kosovo's Assembly is facing the opposite, marking a continuous decrease in satisfaction with the Assembly's performance among Kosovo's population.

Uncertainty over final status, unemployment, and poverty remain the three main concerns for all ethnic groups though with slight differences between Serbian Kosovars on one hand and Albanian Kosovars and other minorities on the other. Dissatisfaction with municipal administrative services was also a major issue for 40% of the respondents, along with KEK's electricity supply scheme known as "ABC".

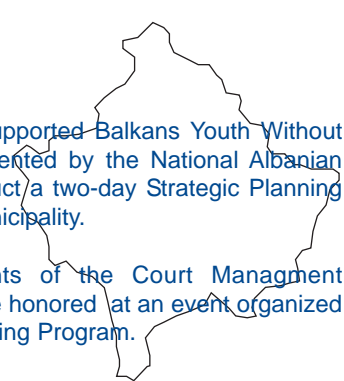
The Kosovo Early Warning Report is a quarterly report based on a survey that helps identify issues a society is faced with, at the same time serves as a warning mechanism of potential conflict. The fast fact report is based on statistical analysis of an opinion poll conducted in the second half of September, which conducted face to face interviews with 1,234 respondents, representing all ethnic groups in Kosovo.

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

Upcoming Events

February 13-14 - USAID supported Balkans Youth Without Borders, an activity implemented by the National Albanian American Council will conduct a two-day Strategic Planning with Youth of Istog/Istok municipality.

February 22 - Participants of the Court Management Development Training will be honored at an event organized by USAID's Participant Training Program.



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