

IREX
Kosovo Independent Media Program
(CA no. 167-A-01-00107-00)
Quarterly Report
January 1, 2002 – March 31, 2002

IREX submits this quarterly report in accordance with the requirement of the Kosovo Independent Media Program (CA no. 167-A-01-00107-00). IREX feels the report provides sufficient detail to allow USAID to adequately monitor the program or ask follow-up questions. IREX and DC field staff have also been in close contact throughout the quarter on program implementation. IREX welcomes USAID comments and questions on the report, directed to Tadd Eakin, Senior Program Officer (teakin@irex.org), and Ruben Doboin, Program Officer (rdoboin@irex.org).

I. SUMMARY

The Kosovo Independent Media Program (KIMP) this quarter focused on improving professional journalism and helping television stations improve their business strategies.

IREX conducted many training sessions for television, radio, and print journalists in feature writing, professional standards, and business/economic reporting. IREX also launched the first KIMP small grants competition open to individual journalists and media outlets. One small grants competition awarded five applicants with up to \$2,500 for producing special projects in women's issues in media. The other small grants competition awarded five journalists and media organizations with up to \$2,500 for special projects in investigative journalism.

IREX consultant, David Bellin, worked arduously since the beginning of February to assess and improve Koha Vision's and RTV-21's business plans. Bellin also worked alongside IREX consultant Matthias Wirzberger with KosovaLive News Agency on their business strategies. Radio stations received marketing and business consulting from IREX consultants Pamela Taylor, Rich McClear, and Suzi McClear.

IREX conducted its second Women's Issues Roundtable, which like the first one, was intended to initiate much needed discussions among media organizations about gender issues in media. Representatives from NGOs dealing with women's issues and media organizations were present. IREX hopes women's issues will be brought to the attention of the general Kosovar public through outlets' programming choices.

IREX worked closely with association development this quarter, in preparation for even more dynamic activities in the next quarter. In February, IREX helped journalists form across Kosovo convene in order to reach a decision about the Kosovar Journalists Association. The already dormant association was disbanded and a new Federation of Journalists was created. IREX also worked with AMPEK, the broadcasters association, to draft a year-budget and apply for a KIMP subgrant.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Kosovar journalists created a new association called the Federation of Journalists on January 20.
- IREX launched two small grants competitions. One is intended to produce special projects in women's issues in media, and the other in investigative reports. Five winners of the small grants competition for women's issues were selected and announced.

- IREX held its second Women's Issues in Media Roundtable in Pristina involving 10 representatives from NGOs working on women's issues, and 20 representatives from media organizations.
- Approximately 40 journalists were trained in an IREX-led Business and Economics Reporting Training.
- Thirteen print journalists benefited from a training session and workshop on feature writing.
- KTTN and IREX started research to secure additional funding sources.
- KosovaLive News Agency is evaluating whether they can adapt services for television.
- IREX assisted private television stations to secure funding and develop business strategies.
- IREX consultants researched the possibility of additional media audience surveys for television, and their usefulness to advertisers.

II. MEDIA ENVIRONMENT

Throughout the past quarter, two issues that received a large amount of coverage in the Kosovo Press were the ongoing economic struggles Kosovo has been experiencing and the International Criminal Tribunal of former-Yugoslav president Slobodon Milosevic. Koha Ditore has published stories on the extremely high unemployment levels and the problems employers have encountered in hiring when all job postings receive several hundred applications.

In January, IREX held a seminar on business and economic reporting coordinated by local media advisor Evliana Berani. The seminar was aimed at equipping Kosovar journalists with better understanding of economic issues and to foster better understanding amongst the Kosovar public of issues relating to the economy.

Corruption issues also received attention from the Kosovo press during the last quarter. British Foreign Minister for South-Eastern Europe met with Kosovo leaders during a two-day visit. During his visit, he made statements concerning Kosovo's current situation such as, "Those who want to lead Kosovo should have clean hands," noting the fact that England is very interested in seeing Kosovar leadership work towards lowering crime and building a more stable and secure society. Kosovar dailies ran reports on the growing problem of prostitution run within local bars. Police have reportedly searched the establishments in question but have not made any arrests.

The Kosovar press on the whole took a major step towards raising its own level of professionalism. Through the establishment of the new Federation of Journalists, and through the work of the Broadcasters Association (AMPEK) with IREX's assistance in responding to the proposed draft regulations of an Independent Media Commission (IMC), it is evident that media groups are organizing their efforts to affect policy. The progress of both associations is a significant step towards regulating a political environment in which responsible independent reporting is encouraged and allowed to grow.

III. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

IREX reports on its activities according to the workplan approved by USAID.

INTERMEDIATE RESULT 1: Journalists Provide Citizens with Objective, Balanced, and Fact-Based Information

1.1 Journalists Follow Accepted and Recognized Professional Standards

On February 21, IREX conducted a training session on feature writing for print journalists. Thirteen participants attended. Nehat Islami, Kosovo project manager from the Institute for War

and Peace Reporting (IWPR) and first foreign correspondent in Kosovo, led the event with the assistance of IREX media advisor Emine Berisha. The training session contained a workshop segment requesting that trainees develop some of their own stories. Journalists worked on topics in education, war trauma, the Milosevic trial, and multiethnic relations in Kosovo. Islami also assisted many foreign correspondents with feature-writing for international issues.

Over twenty-five radio and television journalists participated in two training sessions on television and radio reporting in late February and early March. The sessions were led by IREX media advisor, Evliana Berani, and IREX consultants David Bellin (television) and Pamela Taylor (radio). Reporting in areas of ethnic tension was an underlying theme at the sessions, as attendees came from nine different municipalities, many of which are still faced with ethnic conflicts. The sessions were held in English, Albanian, and Serbian.

1.2 Independent Media Provide Comprehensive News and Public Affairs Coverage

On January 19 and 20, 2002, approximately 40 participants, about 30 of whom were journalists, participated in a business and economics reporting seminar that included two training sessions. The seminar was held in Pristina and was moderated by IREX's local media advisor, Evliana Berani. The occasion gave journalists an opportunity to learn and discuss specific topics in business and economics reporting such as: the changeover to the Euro, adapting to new financial reporting, the benefits and risks for Kosovar businesses during the Euro transition, analysis of Kosovo's current economy, financial transparency, business reporting, corruption, and bank systems. Trainers, speakers, and panelists included: Roland E. Ashkin, chief of party of Kosovo Business Support (KBS); Ejup Qerimi, head of the Euro Info Correspondence Center (EICC) of the Kosovo Chamber of Commerce; Ibrahim Rexhepi, economic analyst and editor at Koha Ditore; and Isa Mustafa, professor and researcher at Riinvest. The journalists who attended the seminar appreciated bringing business and economics to the foreground in media topics, and many asked IREX to follow-up with similar seminars.

In January, IREX launched two open competitions for small grants in support of projects addressing women's issues and investigative journalism. Ten of the nearly 40 Kosovar journalists and media organizations that applied were selected as winners; 5 for projects in women's issues and 5 for investigative journalism projects. Grantees received up to \$2,500 and are required to follow training sessions and receive consulting organized by IREX. On March 7 the five winners of small grants competition for women's issues reporting were announced. The winners are: Celal Mustafa of Yeni Donem, Selatin Kacaniku of Radio Globi, Blerim Haxhiaj of Zeri weekly, Hyre Tejeci of Radio Kosova, and Migena Arllati of Radio Amadeus. The projects deal with a variety of issues including: the situation of Turkish minority women, women's participation in family and society, illiteracy amongst women, female victims of sexual abuse during the war, and women's role in politics and business. The projects in women's issues are intended to promote coverage of gender issues, which are scarce in mainstream media and in civic life as a whole in Kosovo. The investigative journalism small grants are intended to help reporters find stories, both small and large, that are not presented via press releases or news conferences. IREX hopes these small grants will foster more instances of investigative and enterprise reporting, and will place importance on the media's role as a watchdog. Awards for the investigative journalism small grants competition will be announced in the next reporting period.

On March 6 and 7 at the Grand Hotel in Pristina, IREX held the second roundtable discussions on women's issues in media. Approximately 10 representatives from NGOs working on women's issues and about 20 representatives from the media attended. Additionally, representatives from USAID, the Trafficking and Prostitution Investigative Unit of the UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) Police, and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) were present. Discussion topics included: family violence, violation of women's rights, trafficking of women, and women journalists and their place in the media. The days were broken down into discussion panels during the morning and training sessions in the afternoons. Trainings on the use of media to improve the

state of women and on how media outlets can collaborate with NGOs were conducted by IREX media advisor Evliana Berani and by IREX consultants Suzi McClear and Pamela Taylor. This roundtable was the second in a series to help increase the quality and quantity of coverage of women's issues in Kosovar media.

1.3 Facilities and Equipment for Gathering, Producing, and Distributing News and Modern and Efficient

IREX consultants Pamela Taylor conducted on-site assessments of 25 radio stations throughout Kosovo. Stations included current IREX partners as well as potential future partners. The assessments focused on stations' sustainability plans, current financial situations, and yielded specific recommendations for future IREX assistance.

Two large orders for digital editing, studio, and OB van equipment granted under the ProMedia II/Kosovo Cooperative Agreement (valued at \$200,000 each) continued to be delivered through this reporting period. Though all RTV-21 equipment has reportedly arrived at the television station, IREX and RTV-21 still need to conduct an inspection of the equipment. Koha Vision's equipment delivery is still in progress. These grants will allow RTV-21 and Koha Vision to better compete with RTK and improve the production quality of news and public affairs. Having a working OB van will allow the stations to broadcast from various locations province-wide.

Intermediate Result 1 – Results

- Thirteen print journalists are trained in feature writing.
- Second Women's Issues in Media Roundtable is held in Pristina involving 10 representatives from NGOs working on women's issues, and 20 representatives from media organizations.
- Small grants competitions in women's issues and investigative journalism is launched.
- Five projects win the small grants competition for women's issues reporting.
- Thirty journalists receive training on business and economics reporting
- Twenty-five radio stations are assessed for KIMP partnership and receive consulting.

INTERMEDIATE RESULT 2: Supporting Institutions Function in the Professional Interests of Independent Media

2.1 Broadcasters Association (AMPEK) Provides Training to and Representation for Independent Broadcasters

IREX consultant and former Resident Advisor, Dennis Israel, worked with AMPEK to draft a year-budget and consequently IREX submitted a request for subgrant approval to USAID. The approval was retained until AMPEK recruits for the position of Executive Director, and until IREX's new Chief of Party can monitor the association's start-up. Included in AMPEK's action plan is broadening and increasing membership, planning representational activities, and organizing trainings for members.

Additionally, in March, IREX/DC Senior Program Officer Tadd Eakin, new Chief of Party Keith Hayes and consultants Rich and Suzi McClear, worked with the current Executive Director of AMPEK and upper management members of KTV and RTV21 to discuss the new Independent Media Commission regulations proposed for Kosovo by the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). As AMPEK and the independent stations were not involved or consulted during the drafting of these regulations, IREX had the regulations analyzed by Covington and Burling law offices as well as various media consultants. IREX then gave AMPEK guidance in writing a letter to the SRSG (Head of Kosovo UNMIK government) to ask for due process to be initiated and give

AMPEK and other concerned parties the opportunity to comment on these regulations before they are signed and put into practice. Partly due to AMPEK's action, the regulations were not signed and certain aspects of the regulations are currently being debated in a more public and transparent fashion. Please refer to IR 3.2 below for more information.

2.2 Transmission System Effectively Managed by Non-Partisan Kosovar NGO

In an effort to assure sustainability for the NGO, the managers of the Kosovo Terrestrial Transmission Network (KTTN) met with IREX in March to discuss strategies for securing funds beyond US government donations for operational costs. KTTN has already signed leases with organizations that use the network for their telecommunications needs. The revenues from leasing tower space in addition to financial support of other donors will allow KTTN to continue its move towards self-sustainability. IREX staff in Washington, DC is also assisting KTTN with research for potential funders.

2.3 Publishers Association Represents the Interests of Independent Media Outlets

Currently no formal publishers association exists in Kosovo. Print media currently competes to offer printing services and have been engaged in competitive struggles for competent staff. In order to focus resources and as indicated in the Cooperative Agreement, IREX will readdress this activity in year two of the project. IREX thus reports no activities in the development of a publishers association this quarter.

2.4 Journalists Association Provides Journalism Training

On February 20, over 70 journalists from virtually every major media outlet in Kosovo attended an IREX-organized meeting at the Grand Hotel to elect a new President and Board for the journalists association. Milaim Zeka, filmmaker and freelance journalist, was elected president of the new Federation of Journalists. After journalists and editors of print and electronic media outlets met with IREX media advisors on February 5 to discuss the future of the Kosovar Journalists Association, it was clear that the majority of journalists wanted to create a new journalists association rather than revive the existing one. IREX received much praise from participating journalists for organizing the February 5 and 20 events, and was commended by an OSCE representative for its "successful initiative". IREX will work with the new association to develop an in-service training capacity for journalists. IREX will do this through small grants to support a manager/training coordinator and by running several of its journalism trainings in cooperation with the association. If the association proves capable of being a serious partner, IREX will increase the level of training cooperation and decrease the involvement of IREX over time. However, IREX strongly urges that a new grant not be given until the association shows signs of activity

Intermediate Result 2 – Results

- AMPEK drafts their year-budget and await subgrant approval. AMPEK uses lobbying pressure to promote transparent debate of the OSCE proposed IMC regulations.
- KTTN initiates new funding strategies.
- The new Federation of Journalists is formed on February 20 to replace the former Kosovar Journalists Association.

INTERMEDIATE RESULT 3: The Legal and Regulatory Framework Supports Free Speech and Access to Public Information

3.1 Legal Framework Protects the Right to Gather, Produce, and Disseminate News

IREX has no activities to report during this period regarding the right of access to information. IREX intends to directly and actively promote right of access to information in the third quarter of the program, namely by organizing a seminar or roundtable discussion. Topics will include the basic rights of access to information described in the European Convention on Human Rights, case law, and practice in other countries. In year two, IREX intends to develop a handbook on journalists' rights to have information. IREX will also work to assist local organizations in developing a draft law that would provide access to documents, open meetings, and equal access for independent and state/public media.

3.2 Media Licensing is Fair and Apolitical

In January, the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) released draft regulations that would establish the creation of an Independent Media Commission (IMC). IREX is thus further calling on the expert legal advise of Covington & Burling to review the draft regulations and make recommendations based on the interests of AMPEK and other Kosovar media outlets not represented by the association.

3.3 Indigenous Non-Governmental Institutions Represent Rights of Media Outlets and Journalists

IREX has also provided support to local associations during this reporting period, namely AMPEK and the nascent Federation of Journalists. (Please refer to IR 2 above for more information.)

Intermediate Result 3 – Results

- IREX continues to monitor OSCE, regulations, and plans to create an IMC.
- IREX helps AMPEK draft a year-budget.
- IREX helps revive a journalists association by facilitating meetings that dissolve the Kosovar Journalist Association and create the Federation of Journalists.

INTERMEDIATE RESULT 4: Publishers and Station Managers Manage Media Outlets as Efficient, Profit-Seeking Businesses

4.1 Independent Media Utilize Strategic Business Plans

IREX consultant David Bellin arrived in Kosovo from the United Kingdom on February 9 to work with television stations Koha Vision and RTV-21. During his first week in Pristina, Bellin worked alongside representatives from the Media Development Loan Fund (MDLF) to help the stations prepare a business plan to ensure further funding from the Open Society Institute (OSI). Bellin continued to work closely with the television stations on their business strategies throughout this reporting period and also conducted management-training sessions for station managers. Bellin will continue to work for IREX as a media business advisor through the next reporting period.

Following a new business strategy KosovaLive News Agency adopted in October 2001, IREX media advisor Evliana Berani and IREX consultants Matthias Wirzberger and Bellin worked closely with KosovaLive during this reporting period in order to help the agency expand its client base. IREX and KosovaLive are also assessing whether it would be viable for the news agency to develop a service specifically for television. Wirzberger, while in Kosovo for two weeks in

February, focused on improving the marketing tactics of KosovaLive. Joining in this effort was the local NGO Kosovo Business Support (KBS). Wirzberger also spent time developing a marketing strategy for the agency, monitoring subscription agreements with major media outlets and other organizations in Kosovo, aggressively recruiting for a new marketing and sales manager position, resolving any remaining problems the agency suffered transitioning to the Euro, and reviewing the agency's management structure.

4.2 Independent Media Utilize Market Research

IREX consultant David Bellin has investigated the need for a television audience survey to be conducted. Bellin recommends that IREX proceed with a low-cost survey that would test a small sample size in hopes of increasing frequency of surveys in the future. More research on this matter will be conducted in the next reporting period.

Building on the assessment of radio stations initiated by IREX consultant Pamela Taylor, consultants Rich and Suzi McClear worked closely with radio stations for three weeks to analyze their research results in order to identify listening patterns and ultimately better market their products. The McClears also identified and met with various advertising agencies to help radio devise strategies for advertising sales, and shared much of their findings with David Bellin for the benefit of the television stations. The McClears will return to Kosovo in the next reporting period to finalize their research and recommendations to KIMP regarding radio.

IR 4.3 Female Media Managers Achieve Parity in Professional Opportunities

IREX reports no activities this period that address female media managers achieving parity in media. IREX plans on starting this activity in the third quarter of the program. As with many sectors of Kosovo society, existing obstacles prevent the full equality of women in the media. However, given the large number of female journalists, editors, and business staff, there is reason to believe that women can achieve relative parity in media.

IR 4.4 Entertainment Programming Attracts Audience and Increases Revenue

IREX reports no activity this quarter in the area of entertainment programming as new IREX Chief of Party, Keith Hayes, coordinated the efforts of various consultants to re-assess the finances of radio and television stations before reaching conclusions on stations' programming. IREX feels that entertainment programming is important in order to keep the private television stations competitive with RTK and to enable them to attract an audience, leading them to better advertising sales and increased revenues. Also, if programmed properly, an increased audience from entertainment may yield larger audiences for news and public affairs programming. In addition to offering programming subgrants, IREX will provide consultancy to each station on developing a coherent program schedule that is attractive to advertisers and audience.

IR 4.5 Local and Regional Radio Develop Marketing and Programming Networks

IREX reports no activities towards creating a radio network this quarter. IREX intends to start marketing efforts sometime in the Summer of 2002 before establishing links between stations (via KTTN links on KTTN towers) in the Fall of 2002. These links will allow stations to share news and entertainment programming. IREX would in turn assist the network in developing marketing materials that would allow "one-stop shopping" for advertisers who wish to reach a province-wide audience. The network can guarantee ad placement on members' stations. This will allow local radio to expand its ad base beyond its local market

Intermediate Result 4 – Results

- KohaVision and RTV21 work closely with an IREX consultant throughout the quarter to improve their business capabilities through programming changes and management education.
- KosovaLive News Agency follows through with new business plan to assess possibility of developing a television service.
- IREX assesses the need and possibility to conduct small television audience surveys.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE AND OTHER ISSUES

A. Staff Issues:

- Keith Hayes joins IREX as the new Chief of Party in Pristina on March 4.
- IREX has proceeded with aggressive recruitment this reporting period for two expatriate Senior Media Advisors.
- Senior Program Officer from Washington, DC, Tadd Eakin, traveled to Kosovo twice during this quarter. Eakin's first trip in January was intended to familiarize him with the Kosovo operation. At the end of February, he returned to assist AMPEK with lobbying efforts concerning the IMC regulations. Eakin additionally went to Kosovo to help Chief of Party Keith Hayes acclimate to his new position.
- In March, IREX interviewed five Kosovar candidates for a local Media Law Advisor. At the completion of the interviews, Filloreta Bytyci was offered and accepted the position. Bytyci has a long history of with drafting media law and will be an asset to KIMP's legal activities due to resume in the next quarter when she starts her responsibilities.

B. Office Relocation: Both IREX offices in Washington, DC and Pristina have moved to new locations this reporting period. In Pristina, the new IREX contact information is:

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