



**USAID**  
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**ALBANIA**

# CASE STUDY

## Giving Voice to Women's Legal Rights

### Spreading knowledge of women's legal rights in Albania



Photo: Chemonics/Claire Ye Sheng

A municipal public administrator participates in a seminar on women's rights in Pogradec, Albania, in May 2006.

***Thanks to a wide-reaching USAID-sponsored public information campaign, the Albanian population now has a better understanding of women's legal rights and how to promote them.***

Telling Our Story  
U.S. Agency for International Development  
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<http://stories.usaid.gov>

### Challenge

In Albania, women's rights are on the political agenda but little has been done to encourage women to vote, protect victims of domestic violence, and promote women-owned businesses. Lack of awareness about women's rights guaranteed under international legal norms, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, impedes efforts to combat this type of bias. While the Albanian government ratified the convention in 1994, it has been slow to disseminate its vital messages.

### Initiative

USAID's Women's Legal Rights Initiative took up this challenge. The project and its partners conducted a thorough assessment of Albania's legal compliance with the convention. The report was widely shared with audiences in Albania, the U.S., and international organizations. In addition, USAID and its partner, Refleksione, a women's advocacy organization in Albania, designed and implemented a broad public awareness campaign to educate citizens about the convention and its implications for the country. The campaign used got is message across through media outlets such as televised public service ads, talk shows, roundtables, publications, and a targeted seminar series.

### Results

The public awareness campaign spread information about the convention in the capital city of Tirana and throughout the country. The televised messages announced: "Prohibition of gender discrimination and attainment of gender equality are fundamental conditions to building a society that is just and developed!" About two million people viewed the broadcasts. The project also conducted seminars about the convention in three major Albanian cities with more than 300 Albanian professionals. The seminars helped participants become more aware of women's rights. This campaign has now planted seeds for change in Albania. In January 2006, the first draft domestic violence law was introduced to the parliament through a public petition of more than 20,000 signatures. The Albanian parliament is expected to vote on the bill by late 2006.