



USAID | MACEDONIA
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PRESS RELEASE

Energy Efficiency: Help for Low-Income Households

The American people are investing in Macedonia to promote residential energy efficiency for low-income families, with the goal to reduce their energy costs and improve their living comfort. A regional pilot project conducted by USAID in Macedonia is designed to show that savings to household energy costs justify energy efficiency investments. Those savings will help address the need for social assistance payments to address rising energy costs.

On May 26, USAID held a Regional Workshop to present the background, rationale, and preliminary results of this project to those involved in and concerned about energy efficiency, including members of the business community, financial sector, government representatives, and other donors. In addition to lessons learned through the project, participants discussed what is needed to expand residential energy efficiency.

"Often it is hard to convince people to invest in energy efficiency upgrades in their homes," said USAID Mission Director, Robert Wuertz. "The lack of information on the opportunities and potential savings are obstacles. In this case, the benefits of the current investment will last for decades and provide an excellent example of why people should invest in energy upgrades."

"Throughout South-East Europe energy reform and investment are needed and depend upon economic pricing," said USAID Senior Energy Advisor, Robert Archer. "This pilot is a first step in the region to find ways to develop sustainable investment in residential energy efficiency including for lower income households coping with rising energy costs."

NOTE TO EDITORS:

The Residential Energy Efficiency-Social Safety Net pilot project is part of a regional USAID initiative. The International Resource Group (IRG) implemented the work, supported by the Prague-based energy efficiency center SEVEN and two local Macedonian entities - Habitat for Humanity Macedonia and Timel Proekt. Badzak Inzenering conducted the construction work, and the SMMRI survey company conducted the detailed surveys before and after the interventions.

The American people, through USAID, have invested over \$500 million in Macedonia since 1993. USAID is implementing projects that create jobs, reduce corruption, and prepare Macedonian students for the workforce. These initiatives improve the quality of life and support Macedonia's transition to a stable and prosperous democracy. USAID provides economic and humanitarian assistance in more than 100 countries. For more information please visit <http://macedonia.usaid.gov>.