



SPECIAL INITIATIVES

New Rounds of Scholarships for Public Servants and Minorities

The American University in Kosovo hosted on July 1st an orientation session for 26 new students, which represent 12 government institutions.

This is the second class of public servants to begin the USAID supported scholarship program. The first class, consisting of 21 students is halfway through its program. USAID is providing substantial scholarship funding for Kosovo public servants to work toward a Master of Science degree in Professional Studies. Students are nominated by their institutions. Criteria for acceptance to the program include an ability to work at a high academic level in English and a commitment to continue working in the public sector for at least two years after graduation. The Government of Kosovo also contributes a significant portion of the scholarship funding.

This 18-month program, which was developed by the Rochester Institute of Technology and takes place at the American University of Kosovo (AUK), focuses on the management, economics, and policy development goals of Kosovo's public sector.

At the undergraduate level, USAID is currently funding full scholarships for 8 Kosovo minority students at AUK. Recruitment is underway for an additional 4 minority scholars to begin studies in the fall. Both scholarship programs are administered by USAID's Focus on Results: Enhancing Capacities Across Sectors program, which is implemented by World Learning.

WORKING WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Enhancing Administration Services in the Municipality of Gjilan/Gnjilane

On June 23, USAID/Deputy Director, Mrs. Susan Fritz, and Mayor of Gjilan/Gnjilane, Qemajl Mustafa unveiled a plaque in the new reception area of the General Administration Department in this Municipality.

The establishment of a new and improved reception area, which includes nine new reception desks was part of the Gjilan/Gnjilane municipality efforts to improve services for its citizens. The municipality was awarded a grant of \$15,000 from the Incentive Fund component of the USAID Effective Municipalities Initiative.

The municipality contributed \$33,000 from its own budget and utilized the funds to renovate and equip the new reception area and create a space for an archive and civil chapel at the General Administration Department.

Previously the General Administration Department had only three offices that struggled to meet the needs of more than 100,000 residents. The increased number of modern open booth desks will improve the capacity of the municipal administration to respond to the needs of citizens more efficiently and effectively.

The General Administration Department is responsible for registry office services such as birth, marriage, civil status and death certificates. Locating these services in one facility will result in greater efficiency in the delivery of civil registration services by the Municipality of Gjilan/Gnjilane; will increase transparency and will reduce the wait-time and confusion of citizens in accessing these services.

USAID, through its Effective Municipalities Initiative Program, works with Kosovo municipalities to increase their ability to provide more efficient and effective services for their citizens.

New Sidewalk for Students Make Safer Commute

A new pedestrian sidewalk in the village of Bubavac, dedicated on June 23, ensures a safer commute for students and other pedestrians of this village.



Happy faces of students and teachers of the school in Bubavac

The 800m sidewalk stretches along the main road Malishevë - Kijevë, connecting the village of Bubavac [Malishevë/Malishevo] to the school located on the other side of the village.

This heavily congested road was placing the life of daily commuters -- primarily students -- at risk, therefore, sidewalks became a priority for the municipality of Malishevë/o.

"This sidewalk means a safer life for our students and we would like to thank the two institutions for that," stated Maliq Kryeziu, primary-school principal in his thanks to the Municipality and USAID for this important investment. The sidewalks were constructed as part of an Incentive Fund administered by the USAID Effective Municipalities Initiative to support municipalities on their effort to improve services to their citizens. USAID's contribution to the project was \$15,000, while the municipality of Malishevë/o contributed \$17,140.

USAID's Effective Municipalities Initiative in Kosovo works with the Government of Kosovo as well as local governments to increase their ability to provide better services to their citizens. The Initiative is implemented by RTI International.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Opportunities for Kosovo producers to compete in the US

Kosovo agricultural buyers, processors, collectors and government representatives learned about opportunities to compete in the U.S. at the Pre-Harvest Conference for Non-Wood Products (NWFP) held on July 10 in Istog/Istok.

The conference, which was supported by USAID's Kosovo Private Enterprise Program (KPEP), addressed environmentally sound and sustainable collection methods for non-wood forest products. In addition, three Kosovo-based processors presented the lessons they learned from attending the annual Fancy Food Show in New York, one of the largest international food fairs with more than 2,500 participants from all over the world. Participants reported that the U.S. market is looking for dried mushrooms, fruit jam, and pickled vegetables, all of which are produced in Kosovo.

The NWFP sector is an important sector that USAID actively supports, and the conference was part of the effort to address key challenges faced by Kosovo's agriculture sector.

USAID, through Kosovo Private Enterprise Program is working to improve the competitiveness of Kosovo businesses in domestic, regional and EU markets by addressing issues of efficiency, product quality, and commercial production standards, so that they can meet international requirements for product quality and safety.

INVESTING IN YOUTH

Review of the Youth Activity

Some 733 youth trained, 368 youth started internships/apprentices in private, public and civic sectors, and four have found jobs as a result of the USAID funded Support to the Kosovo Young Leaders activity. The results were presented at the One Year in Review conference organized on June 23 in Gjilan/Gnjilane municipality.

The conference gathered partners and participants of the program who shared their experience through different presentations. During the break out session participants of the conference spoke about the challenges, successes and future plans of the youth interns.



In between session -- Youth trainees enjoy time together during the training

Support to Kosovo Young Leaders is a three year program implemented in partnership with Mercy Corps aimed to help young Kosovo citizens from diverse ethnic groups to become active participants in the society and provide them with skills that will help them to build their future. The program is active in 14 municipalities - targeting 2,328 youth, including life skills training in negotiation, job skills, entrepreneurship and civic engagement. Follow up internship and apprenticeship placements are expected to lead to suitable employment of 785 youth.

Youth programs are critical as Kosovo half of its population is under the age of 25, thus making it the youngest population in Europe.

U.S. Agency for International Development
Arbëria (Dragodan), Ismail Qemali st., nr. 1
Phone: ++ 381 38 243 673
Fax: ++ 381 38 249 493

For more information visit www.usaid.gov/missions/kosovo and <http://pristina.usembassy.gov/> or contact us at kosovousaidinfo@usaid.gov