



IMPROVING INFRASTRUCTURE

School Construction Kicks off in Pristina

The first shovel full of concrete for a school annex in Pristina was put in place by USAID/Kosovo Mission Director Patricia Rader and Pristina Mayor Isa Mustafa on April 24.

The Iliria Primary School groundbreaking was the first of five school infrastructure projects that will be constructed in Pristina Municipality as part of the USAID Small Infrastructure for Education in Kosovo Project.

The three-year USAID activity to increase school space and improve the quality of school buildings is underway in the municipalities of Pristina, Vushtrri/Vucitrn, Glogovc/Glogovac, Gjilan/Gnjilane, Ferizaj/Urosevac and Prizren.



Patricia Rader, USAID/Kosovo Mission Director, adds concrete to the Iliria school annex foundation.

The Iliria Primary School is one of four schools in Pristina to be rehabilitated, along with Zejnel Hajdini, Nazmi Gafurri and Ismail Qemali primary schools. USAID's Small Infrastructure for Education Program will also be building a "Green School," a new concept of an environmentally positive, energy-efficient school to be introduced in Kosovo. For the Iliria school annex, USAID has committed 75,000 euro, while Pristina Municipality will contribute 62,000 euro. USAID has committed a total of 740,000 euro for school rehabilitation projects in Pristina Municipality.

The Small infrastructure for Education Project is a two-year activity working in partnership with the Ministry for Education, Science and Technology (MEST) and the

Departments of Education in Municipalities to help expand the space in existing schools and improve existing facilities, with the goal of reducing the number of school shifts from three or four down to two and to create better learning conditions for students. The activity is implemented by CHF International.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Local Travel Agencies Link with International Firms

Travel agencies in Kosovo are increasing their business, thanks to contacts made at the recent "Stay the Weekend" travel fair organized in Pristina in April by the Kosovo Tourism Association (KOTAS) in partnership with USAID's Kosovo Private Enterprise Program.

TPD Consulting, a local travel agency, signed a contract with UK-based Regent Holidays to organize a four-day tour of Kosovo in early May for a group of British tourists. In addition, TPD, in cooperation with two other Kosovo-based travel firms, will organize "city-break tours" each week in Kosovo for Regent Holidays. TPD is also preparing five tour packages around Kosovo sites, at the request of the Embassy of the Netherlands, for inclusion in their database. Another Kosovo firm, Rugova Experience Travel Agency, based in Peja/Pec, was hired to organize a one-day tour for the German KFOR to Istog/Istok to visit Trofta restaurant/hotel complex, known for its fresh fish and fish farm.

A smaller travel fair will be organized in late May, focusing on the Brezovica ski area. The event will showcase tourism products and packages of Brezovica, due to the special interest in the area of visitors at the first Travel Fair.

The USAID Kosovo Private Enterprise Program is a four-year activity designed to stimulate Kosovo's economy by increasing the competitiveness of private businesses. The project is implemented by Booz Allen Hamilton.

Promoting Kosovo Dairy Products Starts at an Early Age

An educational visit to EuroLona dairy farm and milk processor by five- and six-year-old children from Fatostat kindergarten in Pristina was a successful promotion of domestically produced dairy products.

The April visit, organized by USAID's Kosovo Private Enterprise Program, provided an opportunity for the children to see how the milk they consume is produced and

encourage them to consume more dairy products for a healthy diet. Euroлона, in addition to milking their own cows, runs their own dairy processing plant. It is hoped such visits will help overcome the negative image of locally produced dairy products, as many people in Kosovo today purchase imported milk and dairy products.

The kindergarten's visit to Euroлона was also an opportunity to promote better understanding of, and increase loyalty to, domestically produced dairy products. With USAID's assistance, Euroлона is producing a new variety of yogurt drink and yogurt, now available in Kosovo markets, as well as their first white cheese.



Children enjoy tasting local yogurt during a visit to Euroлона dairy processor.

The Kosovo Private Enterprise Program is helping to modernize Kosovo's dairy industry, increasing sales and employment. The four-year initiative aims to stimulate the competitiveness of Kosovo's private sector. The program, implemented by Booz Allen Hamilton, provides technical assistance to targeted sectors through grants and consulting, supports business enabling reform efforts, expands workforce development and training, and strengthens business services and associations.

Wood Trade Fair Attracts Public, Regional Businesses

Thirty-five local wood processors showed the Kosovo public the variety of products made in Kosovo at the annual Natyra Trade Fair 2009, held May 6-8 in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje. The annual wood products promotional event was organized by the Association of Wood Processors of Kosovo (AWPK), and supported by USAID's Kosovo Private Enterprise Program (KPEP).

Local companies, including wood processors, furniture manufacturers, and construction material manufacturers, displayed their products to the general public.

The fair also provided these companies the opportunity to meet and network with many regional businesses that are looking to cooperate with Kosovo companies.

USAID is assisting the growth of Kosovo's economy through projects that make a lasting improvement in private sector competitiveness. One way of doing this is to promote the sustainable use and development of Kosovo's forests and to showcase the potential of the wood products sector to increase revenues, create employment, and attract local and foreign investment in this country.

USAID is working with Kosovo to improve its forestry management practices through forest certification. USAID is also assisting wood processors to meet international quality standards and identify potential market activities.

STRENGTHENING CIVIL SOCIETY

Partnership Will Aid Local Grant-Makers

Following an intensive screening and assessment process, the Kosovo Civil Society Strengthening Program announced its partnership with the Advocacy Training and Resource Center (ATRC) and the Center for Civil Society Development (CCSD) for a Local Advocacy Grants program that is funded by the program.

Through this partnership, the USAID-supported Kosovo Civil Society Strengthening Program, implemented by the Institute for Sustainable Communities (ISC), has established a grant-making and leadership mechanism in the civil society sector. The grants/leadership program will support a diverse range of high-priority advocacy campaigns, and aims to elevate the professionalism and sophistication of local grant-giving organization. Projects supported through the Local Advocacy Grants will serve identified constituencies that show a high level of engagement and involvement of citizens in conducting advocacy campaigns. Working through the local partners, the activity will lay the foundation for greater citizen engagement.

The Kosovo Civil Society Strengthening Program team will provide high-quality, individualized guidance in developing tools and techniques to prepare the two organizations for supporting and offering advocacy-specific technical assistance to their grantees.

USAID, through the Kosovo Civil Society Strengthening Program, will support initiatives that address a cross-section of issues facing communities across Kosovo. It is estimated that approximately \$360,000 will support advocacy initiatives.

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