



## USAID/Kosovo Mission Director Tours Prizren Area Projects

On May 15, Patricia Rader, USAID/Kosovo Mission Director, visited various USAID projects in the Prizren region as part of the Mission's effort to meet beneficiaries across Kosovo.

Rader visited a school construction site in the town of Prizren. The school annex, now under construction, will help reduce the number of shifts from three to two thus providing more quality time for students at the school. The annex is part of the USAID-supported Small Infrastructure for Education Project implemented by CHF.



A \$10,000 planting machine donated by USAID to the Perdrini Fruit and Vegetable Association uses only six people to do work that previously required 24 people. The equipment is part of USAID's assistance to the business sector.

Two businesses were also visited, Rudina Dairy Farm, near Prizren, and Perdrini Fruit and Vegetable Association, Krushe e Madhe/Velika Krusa. USAID's Director heard about the challenges facing members of the association and how they are addressing these issues. USAID has been cooperating closely with the association's 150 members, of which 30 are women.

Last year, with USAID assistance, the association exported 400 tons of peppers to Macedonia and Albania. This year, it has an agreement in place to export 1,650 tons to the same markets, and the farmers are working hard to meet the terms of the contract.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

### Encouraging Municipal Services Improvements

Novobërdë/Novo Brdo, a small municipality southeast of Pristina, received 25 new solid waste containers in support of a new environment protection program for the municipality. Novobërdë/Novo Brdo Municipality is undertaking efforts to improve services for the

residents of the municipality, including initiating a solid waste collection and billing project.

USAID, through its Incentive Fund Program, part of the Effective Municipalities Initiative, supported this initiative following an open competition with all municipalities in Kosovo in November 2008. The municipality received an incentive fund award of \$15,000, and an additional \$11,500 was matched by the municipality.

"Some neighborhoods have not had a simple trash container and had to travel a long distance and spend money just to dispose of their garbage. Now, more families can rely on regular garbage collection," said an older resident of Novobërdë/Novo Brdo.

The initiative provided the entire municipality with new solid waste containers and introduced a new billing system that will help the municipality increase its own-source revenue collection. In the months ahead, the municipality intends to establish a local Public Utility Company to manage solid waste collection that will employ several people.

Novobërdë/Novo Brdo is a small, rural and multi-ethnic municipality. Although one of the poorest in Kosovo, the municipality believes tourism could be developed, but without proper environmental protection practices, tourism will not grow.

USAID's Effective Municipalities Initiative will continue to encourage and support the municipalities that strive to improve their performance in delivering municipal services. The initiative is implemented by RTI International.

## STRENGTHENING MEDIA

### News Gathering Capacity Increases in Serbian Language Media in Kosovo

The first phase of re-equipping a group of Serbian language TV stations has been completed, an important step in increasing the access to information from Kosovo for Serbian language speakers.

The stations were provided with news-gathering equipment, video servers and studio lights to improve the technical quality of their output under the Strengthening Independent Minority Media Project, being implemented by the International Research & Exchanges Board (IREX) with support from USAID.

These local stations compete with powerful stations from Serbia, widely distributed in Kosovo through cable and satellite. TV audiences are sensitive to technical standards and tend to avoid stations whose picture and sound quality are poor.

The new equipment enables the stations, which reach most of the Kosovo Serb population, to report local news more effectively. It will also help them source their news about Kosovo from within Kosovo, rather than using Belgrade-based wire services. The stations are supported in their use of the new equipment by the USAID project's technical experts.

"With these new cameras our picture quality is now better than [Serbia based channels] RTS and B92," says the Executive Director of TV Most, Zvonko Miladinovic. "They will also help us in our efforts to cover more local news, which is what our viewers want from us."



IREX trainers Martha Dixon (left) and Dejan Vuksanovic, work on the new equipment with cameraman Nikola Lazovic and reporter Radica Milanovic from TV Mir.

The next phase of the Strengthening Independent Minority Media Project's support for these stations will be establishment of an internet-based network for the stations. This network will allow them to exchange news items and other program material, boosting their coverage of the often-isolated Kosovo Serb communities in Kosovo. The purpose of this program is to improve the quality of information about life in Kosovo available in the Kosovo Serb communities, working with a group of four local TV stations and five local radio stations.

## SPECIAL INITIATIVES

### Kosovo High School Students Present AIDS Awareness Program in English

High school students from the Eqrem Qabej High School in Pristina organized a drug awareness presentation for their classmates, American University in Kosovo (AUK) students and others on May 8, conducting the entire presentation in English.

The presentation was a follow-up project of a previous AIDS awareness presentation, also conducted in English. Both presentations were part of a 10-month tutoring initiative supported by USAID's Focus on Results - Enhancing Capacity Across Sectors in Transition (FORECAST) Program.

The initiative paired 10 AUK undergraduates with 10 high school students for tutoring on English proficiency, writing and study skills. Training and guidance were provided to the AUK tutors by AUK's Academic Support Center. The high school students decided on their own to conduct the two presentations, which served not only to educate their peers on issues of importance to them, but also to develop their presentation skills.

USAID's FORECAST Program is a five-year activity administered by World Learning.

### Camp Bondsteel Donates Mattresses to Caritas for Needy Kosovo Institutions and Individuals

Over 2,000 mattresses are being distributed by Caritas Kosova, thanks to American soldiers at Camp Bondsteel. The mattresses were donated by the Department of Defense, with assistance from USAID/Kosovo and Washington in facilitating the "grant-in-aid" paperwork.



Major Otto Emme, MNTF(E), talks with the recipient of the first delivery of mattresses, the University of Prishtina Psychiatric Hospital, and its director Dr. Jusuf Ulaj along with Jakup Sabedini from Caritas.

"We've taken excess mattresses from Camp Bondsteel, and through Caritas, been able to move these out to many needy organizations," said Col. Phil Butch of KFOR Multi-National Task Force (EAST) Brigade in Camp Bondsteel. The mattresses have been delivered by Caritas to many individuals, organizations and institutions with need for these items, such as many departments at the Pristina Hospital, the Shtime/Stimlje Hospital, and individuals across Kosovo. Lt. Col. Jeff Antone coordinated the donation process, along with many soldiers who helped with the pick-up by Caritas.

"Caritas must thank everyone -- very much -- for the contribution," says Jakup Sabedin of Caritas. He notes that after they made the first donation, more people have come forward asking if they could receive some of the mattresses. Caritas will also be receiving wooden tables and chairs from Camp Bondsteel through USAID for distribution to previously identified needy organizations.

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