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FORECAST 
Focus on Results: Enhancing Capacity
Across Sectors in Transition

**WORLD LEARNING
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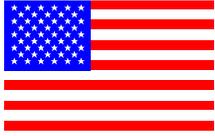
I. October 2006-March 2007 Programming Highlights

U.S. Training

World Learning trained 9 participants in three US training programs during the period. To ensure that effective training takes place, World Learning continues to encourage training providers to use a combination of training methodologies, including classroom instruction, job shadowing, internships, and site visits. Here is a description of one of these programs:

9th International Children's Congress for Children, Youth, and Families with Special Health Care Needs

Five participants representing both the Albanian government and NGOs operating in the field of Mental Health and Disability attended the 9th International Congress on Community Services for Children, Youth, and Families with Special Health Care Needs in Washington, DC, December 2–8, to better understand and help their institutions support children, youth, and families with special health care needs become better integrated into the community as active participants. The conference included general sessions, workshop sessions, and site visits to the National Rehabilitation Hospital, George Mason High School Inclusive Educational program, ENDependent Center of Northern Virginia, and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Accessible Transportation System. One of the most valuable elements of the conference was daily Developing Country Caucus sessions organized by USAID's Disability Policy Team that allowed conference participants to meet and network with each other, to share experiences, as well as learn how to work with their Missions upon return to their home countries. This gave them a vital opportunity they might otherwise have missed.



II. Washington, D.C.

A. Meetings, Conferences, and Presentations

- November 3, Dorothea Antonio and Scott Van Alstine made presentations at the conference of the American Council on International Intercultural Education in Washington, DC.
- November 9-10, Colin Davies, Dorothea Antonio and Eric Corens presented at the NAFSA (Association of International Educators) Regional Conference in Baltimore.
- February 14-16, Lisa Posner Olocco, Dorothea Antonio, and Eric Corens made panel presentations at the National Council on International Visitors (NCIV) Annual Meeting in Washington, DC.
- March 30, Dorothea Antonio made a presentation at the World Education Services "Recruiting International Students" workshop in Washington, DC.

B. Solution Provider Outreach

- The Resource Center coordinated visits to the FORECAST office from thirty-four training providers. The substantive meetings focused on training capabilities, proposal writing guidance, and issues of training program management. Visits were made by the following organizations: University of Northern Colorado; Greater Cleveland Partnership; Cleveland Council on World Affairs; University of Connecticut; Osgood Center; Colorado State University; Global Education Services; Oregon State University; East Central College; Judge George Paine; University of Minnesota; Iowa State University; Berry College; University of Pennsylvania; Indiana University Southeast; World Wide Sires; Xavier University; World Services LaCrosse; California State University, Sacramento; American University; Lift the Children; World Trade Center Institute; Illinois State University; Minnesota State University; George Washington University; Shawnee State University; State University of New York at New Paltz; Rivier College; University Central Florida; Palomar College; Shenandoah University; Western Illinois University; California State University, Chico; and Belmont University.

C. Washington, D.C. Cost Saving Measures

During this period an estimated \$10,077 in US training costs was saved as a result of the FORECAST competitive procurement process.

Total Cost Savings.....\$10,077

Field Offices

III. FORECAST/Albania

For information regarding the most recent training/HICD activities for participants from Albania please refer to the status chart in the Appendix.

Success Stories

Please see the Appendix for full details on the following Success Stories:

- Enterprise Pays Off for Albanian Students and the Community

With support from the World Learning Participant Training Program, a group of students from Albanian universities attended the Students In Free Enterprise (SIFE) World Cup and European Symposium. Facing strong competition from teams from France, the United Kingdom, Russia, Poland and the Netherlands, the Team from the University of Tirana won first prize in the European Symposium for their projects that included helping women prisoners market their handicrafts and olive oil marketing for export.

- USAID supported Micro-Finance reaches 10,000 Albanians

As a result of what they observed on two training programs in Bosnia-Herzegovina, loan officers in Albania's Partners in Micro-Credit Program introduced more flexible and client-oriented procedures. The result has been an increase in the number of clients served by each officer of 70%, an important factor in helping Albania's Partners in Micro-Credit reach its goal of serving 10,000 clients.

- Raising the Bar: The Promise of Transparency in the Albanian Legal Sector

As part of the on-going struggle against corruption in the judiciary, members of Albania's National Chamber of Advocates followed up their training program in Texas by overhauling their country's bar exam. The result is that the pass rate has reduced from 99% to a more realistic 57%. The deputy head of the chamber said, "Attorneys now realize that the bar exam is serious and demands high levels of knowledge as well as personal integrity."

Staffing

- Program Assistant Jugera Bilali returned from maternity leave full time in October.
- Administrative and Finance Officer Ilir Hasani left for a position in Kosovo in early January. Ermira Shehi replaced him in this function until a new finance/admin officer is hired.

- Elona Behari began work as the Administrative and Finance Assistant in March.

Media Coverage

- News of the Public Health Conference organized by the Fulbright Alumni Association on October 11, was broadcast on Top Channel, Vizion +, News24, TV Klan, and Albanian National Television (TVSH) and mentioned USAID as one of the sponsors.
- News of the 2006 Disabilities Report Conference in Shkoder November 1 was carried by the National Public Television (TVSH), VOA/TV Klan, the local stations TV Rozafa and TV local 1. An article was also in the newspaper Panorama and the *Albanian Daily News*.
- News and special reports of the small grant supported Livestock Regulations Roundtable in Tirana on December 8 were carried by the National Public Television (TVSH), TV Koha, 24 News, TV Naser, TVA, ETV, A1, Teuta and TV Tirana. Articles also appeared in the newspapers *Korrieri*, *Ekonomia*, *Koha Jone* and *Sot*. The event was attended by the Minister of Agriculture, Food Security and Consumer Protection as well as USAID agricultural specialist, Kristaq Jorgji. Two quality calves at the entrance of the hotel where the roundtable took place attracted the attention of media and participants alike.
- Aurela Anastasi, team member implementing the “Domestic Violence Lobbying Measures” grant, appeared on the National Public Television’s (TVSH) talk show “Not Only Coffee” on December 2 to discuss the necessity of approving the draft law “On measures against Domestic Violence”. Articles also appeared in the newspapers *Republika*, on December 2, *Metropol* on December 12, *Shqip* on December 15 and *Gazeta Shqiptare* on December 15. Parliament passed the law December 18.
- News of the Immunization Study sponsored by USAID and the workshop held March 24 to share the results of the study was broadcast on 24 News and TV Teuta. An article in the newspaper *Gazeta Shqiptare* also discussed the results of the study and the role of USAID as donor.
- March 31, lawyer Aurela Bozo presented the newly passed law on Domestic Violence during the “Not only Coffee” show on Albanian Public Television.

Third Country Training

- Thirteen Albanian specialists attended a one-week training program in Slovenia in Primary Health Care Contracting, October 21-28, organized by the Slovenian Health Insurance Institute.

In-Country Training

- A Public Health Conference was organized by the Albanian Fulbright Alumni Association with the assistance of the US Embassy on October 11. FORECAST funded specific line items.
- A half day exchange with consular staff from 10 foreign Embassies regarding anti-trafficking measures took place on November 7, 2006, facilitated by IOM.
- Assistance to provide 70 fax machines to the Central Election Commission was completed with delivery early January.
- Preparations continued to hold an Agricultural Technology Transfer Workshop.
- A year long consultancy to support the Albanian Coalition Against Corruption in the area of communications continued with special focus on the local elections.
- Technical assistance to implement a six month pilot Thalassemia screening project to identify genetic carriers of the debilitating blood disease Thalessemia in high schools of Lushnje city and district continued with analysis of the data. A final roundtable to share the results and conclusions will be held in Tirana.
- Technical assistance using local expertise completed implementation in March of a six month effort to monitor and assess immunizations in three districts with a workshop to share results.
- An intervention to address weaknesses in energy efficiency by drafting the regulations required to implement the energy efficiency law, train auditors and pilot audits began with the drafting of energy efficiency regulations.
- Preparations began to bring a technical advisor to assist the Albanian Association of Municipalities to develop a business plan to enable implementation of its four year strategy.

Small Grants and Other Follow-On Activities

- A grant to the Livestock Entrepreneurs Association of Albania to obtain input from farmers at the grassroots level regarding regulations effecting livestock completed implementation with a public event to inform specialists and the public about the new regulations and technical specifications to improve livestock breeding.

- A grant to repair a 600 meter gravel road in the village of Fushas in the Commune of Baldushk completed implementation.
- A grant to hold a round-table to gather recommendations from the business community regarding business registration in support of a large Millennium Challenge Threshold Account Project completed implementation with compilation of the recommendations gathered during the September roundtable to present to the government of Albania.
- A grant to support lobbying for a law against domestic violence and training of legal professionals to ensure proper implementation of the law completed implementation with awareness raising activities through the media.
- A grant to assist street children working the fashionable Tirana Block continued implementation. A celebration for International Women's Day at the center was well attended by the mothers of the street children being served.
- Guidance was offered to participants interested in applying for grants to prepare farmers for micro-credit, for improvements to a children's cultural center and interfaith cooperation, to prepare parents to lobby for their children with disabilities, for improvements to a children's cultural center and olive tree care and harvesting.

Noteworthy Events

- The USAID/Albania Mission approved the HICD/Training plan on November 10. The Plan foresees no Institutional Performance Assessments and 22 stand alone interventions. Funds have also been set aside for 11-15 small grants. Of the stand alone interventions, two are US programs, four are Third Country Training, one is for commodities, one is for airfare only, and the rest are in-country training or technical assistance.
- November 1, FORECAST Project Director Matty Thimm and Program Officer Ermira Shehi traveled to Shkoder for the workshop on disabilities where the 2006 report on disabilities in Albania was launched.
- November 23, Matty Thimm and Training Advisor Mirgjind Tefiku visited the office of the Albanian Partners in Micro-Credit (PSHM) in Fushe Kruje to interview and photograph Emila Cangu, participant in a successful Micro-Finance training program in Bosnia & Herzegovina.
- Matty Thimm met with members of the program office and SO teams for Economic Growth and Health to update the FY 2007 HICD Plan which was submitted March 14 to the Mission for consideration.

- Matty Thimm attended a one day workshop in Golem, Kavaja district on Saturday, March 24, organized to share the results of a six month study of immunization effectiveness in three districts. Among other things, results showed that parents are very interested in working with the primary health care system to vaccinate their children, that coverage is very good, at least for the first vaccinations, and that the current schedule of required vaccinations does not provide sufficient protection against hepatitis B, measles, and especially pertussis for all 7-8 years olds.

Cost-Saving Measures

- \$3,615 was saved by negotiating reduced administrative costs with the training provider of the Primary Health Care Contracting program in Slovenia.
- Negotiations with the office internet provider resulted in monthly savings of \$120.

Total Cost Savings.....\$3,735

IV. FORECAST/Bosnia-Herzegovina

For information regarding the most recent training/HICD activities for participants from Bosnia-Herzegovina please refer to the status chart in the Appendix.

Success Stories

Please see the Appendix for full details on the following Success Stories:

- Milk Quality Control Leads to Larger Profitability of Bosnian Farmers

Following a training program in Germany on dairy farming, one farmer has now introduced the practice of milk quality testing, and is developing his facilities according to European and international ecological standards. He is also planning to more than triple the size of his herd. “Thanks to this training program I have gained valuable knowledge which helped me improve my dairy business and indirectly the dairy business of other farmers in my municipality,” he said.

- USAID Assists in Improving Judicial Ethics in Bosnia-Herzegovina

Representatives from the High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council (HJPC) trained with their counterparts in San Francisco to learn the latest techniques in dealing with disciplinary sanctions against magistrates. One result has been a 30% reduction in the number of complaints, and an almost 90% increase in the number of resolved complaints. The chief of the Disciplinary Council said, “I personally find the reduced number of complaints the most meaningful result of this Action Plan that we have achieved.”

Media Coverage

- According to an article in *Dnevni Avaz* on December 13, more than one hundred advertisements, calling for volunteer jobs and apprentices, have been published so far in the USAID-funded career portal website, www.PrviPosao.ba. According to Ms. Nermina Ajanovic-Hajdarasic, Web Site Analyzer, recent research from a sample of a thousand web site visitors showed that 68.6 % of youth are looking for a job. “This week, we started with the online consultations on the Career Portal in order to give opportunity to youth to get detailed information on the employment,” explained Ms. Ajanovic-Hajdarasic. US Ambassador, Mr. Douglas Mc Elhaney has recently promoted the Career Portal web-site.
- Information about launching the HICD intervention Career Portal has been widely announced in the media of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In November and December 2006 twenty six different web-sites and newspapers informed their visitors/ readers that the first interactive web site for the youth employment and entrepreneurship in Bosnia and Herzegovina funded by the U.S. Government is up and running. The web-site is the follow-on activity of the youth conference “BiH Youth, Let’s Make Our Future” held in November 2005 to commemorate 10 years of Dayton Peace Agreement initiated by Mr. Douglas McElhaney, the U.S. Ambassador to Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- In article on January 26 in *Oslobodjenje*, former participant Branko Perić’s support to young judicial specialists was quoted: “We will support the work of the BiH Association of the Young Lawyers and its projects. We work on developing a procedure that will enable the larger number of young lawyers to work in the judiciary sector in BiH. In that regard, the assistance of the Association in developing this procedure and strengthening a justice reform process in BiH is very important.” Mr. Perić, President of the HJPC, made these remarks during a meeting with the President of the BiH Association of Young Lawyers. The HJPC found this Association as its main partner in addressing the needs of young lawyers effectively. They have also agreed on working toward strengthening future cooperation between the HJPC and the Association. Mr. Perić participated in training regarding judicial discipline and ethics at the California Commission on Judicial Performance (CJP) in San Francisco.
- The January 30 edition of *Avaz* featured an article about the High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council (HJPC) and the way that it guarantees independent justice. “High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council (HJPC) of Bosnia and Herzegovina is one of the main institutions working to develop a justice system that guarantees its independency,” concluded the representatives of HJPC and Associations of Judges and Prosecutors at the meeting yesterday. Among many others, included in a meeting agenda were the following topics: a need to define the role of justice in the Constitution, activities towards forming a state

strategy of justice system in BiH, and issues that relate to unbalanced financing of justice sector. The attendees of this meeting agreed that the representatives of High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council and Associations of Judges and Prosecutors are the true partners that work on accomplishing the joint goal which is the justice system that is independent, efficient and professional. Ten representatives of the HJPC participated in a training program in judicial discipline and ethics at the California Commission on Judicial Performance (CJP) in San Francisco.

- A participant in the 2005 Youth Conference, “BiH Youth, Let’s Make Our Future” helped to promote a Youth Strategy in Bosnia and Herzegovina at the level of Municipality of Ilidza at the Hollywood Hotel that was covered by an article in February’s *Oslobodjenje*. The Youth Strategy has been created by the representatives of different structures: youth, municipal councilors and officers as well as representatives of other institutions in the Municipality of Ilidza who are involved in youth-related issues. According to Ms. Amra Bojicic, expert associate for work with youth in Municipality of Ilidza, the Youth Strategy has been created for the period ending December 2009 and includes seven fields, as follows: education, employment, social policy toward youth, youth’s free time: culture and sport, health, active participation of youth in society and getting information. The strategy does not represent the final document and could be changed or supplemented according to current youth issues.
- *Dnevni avaz*, February 8 edition, featured an article about the results and successes of the new Land Registry Department of Sarajevo Basic Court that recently opened and was presented at a press conference. Thanks to promptness and digitalization of the department, eight years of work have been done in a year and three months. In comparison to earlier waiting periods needed for land registration, the waiting period is shortened to three or four months, while the land certificate could be issued in two to three days, stressed former participant Goran Salihovic, Sarajevo Basic Court President. For the first time, the expert exam for court officers was organized in order to achieve qualification needed to perform the work in this department. Also, the information desk is open in the waiting room of the department where the clients have access to the electronic database of land certificates. Mr. Goran Salihovic participated in Managing the Introduction of Case Management System (CMS) and other Reforms in BiH Courts in the Netherlands in 2006.
- An article in *Oslobodjenje* on March 30 featured a new building permit center in Novo Sarajevo that enhances services to citizens and potential investors by significantly decreasing waiting times and lowering costs. Instead of coming several times to get information or documents, which before lasted 46 days and cost 180 KM, the new model shortened required time and enabled easier access to all information and directions for project designs before submitting requests for building permits by visiting the center just once. Belma Kljuco, Head of the Department for Urban Permitting and Planning in Novo Sarajevo Municipality, participated in Urban Permitting and Planning Procedures for Heads of Urban Departments in 2006 in Czech Republic.

Third Country Training

- BiH Ministry of Justice Management Training Program for Senior Officials was held in France, October 8- 21, for key management personnel from the BiH Ministry of Justice who are tasked with carrying out the MoJ's responsibilities and competences.

The training included budget planning, human resource management, negotiation techniques, operating effectively with other ministries and government bodies, building coalitions; operating in an international arena; operating effectively with the donor community; and adapting to technological changes. The knowledge and skills learned during this program will enable the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) of Bosnia and Herzegovina to take a more proactive role in developing and carrying out its longer term strategies more efficiently and effectively, and contribute to the improvement of the capacity of the MoJ to fulfill its role in the justice sector. In addition, skills learned should help the MoJ not only in achieving its own strategic goals, but also in its relationships with other governmental institutions, the donor community, the general public and the legal community.

- Improve Private Sector Growth – Improved Regulatory Inspections took place in Ireland, October 8–15, for 14 inspectors and IT specialists from respective entity inspection administration, who are interested in the effective reform of inspection service in BiH.

The primary objective of this training was to provide participants with a thorough understanding of the system of inspection administration, procedures and practices in inspection system and the role of the different inspection services in Ireland.

- Improvement of Construction Permitting Laws and Practices in BiH was held in Denmark, November 5-18, for key management and policy-level officials whose agencies are responsible for reviewing, approving, monitoring, and authorizing construction projects.

To achieve as much as possible by visiting the country that succeeded to implement short and clear permitting process, the participants were able to learn more about spatial planning, property ownership, planning and environmental polices, division of responsibilities between different governmental levels, role and application of building standards, and utilization of resources in the administration of construction permitting, among many others things. In addition, the participants were able to observe information technology resources, tools, programs, software and hardware utilized in construction permitting. It is expected that the participants will be able to transfer the attained ideas in BiH context, especially those that can create an administrative culture that is customer friendly and implement an effective client information policy.

- Technologies and Standards for Vegetable Growing was held for fifteen BiH directors of progressive agricultural cooperatives, managers of private farming companies, marketing executives from middle market traders, food retailers, extension people and other leaders from the Fresh Fruits &Vegetables (FF&V) agribusiness community in Israel, November 25–December 5. The objectives of this training program were to increase the volume of domestic FF&V that is marketed; apply modern agricultural techniques in vegetable production following Good Agricultural Practices; improve the quality of FF&V produced; increase profits from production and market of vegetable; diversify the markets into which vegetables are sold; and improve competitiveness of the FF&V cluster in BiH.
- Regulatory Impact Analysis (RIA) training was held in Belgium, March 4-10, for 6 BiH officials who are directly involved in establishing and conducting RIA, or in positions that can be expected to promote, create or absorb RIA functions. The goal of the program was to provide BiH participants with the knowledge on how to design regulations that are optimally balanced to promote a favorable environment for business creation and investment while ensuring proper protection of public health, safety and the environment and the advancement of social policy objectives. The course developed the knowledge base of BiH officials on using relevant impact assessment techniques for the purpose of improving the quality of regulatory decisions.

HICD Activities

- The HICD project, Career Portal, has been operating since November 2006, and it is to be completed in July 2007. At this point, the outcome from this project has far exceeded its expectations. The Career Portal is the first comprehensive youth employment and entrepreneurship website servicing all of BiH. Its goal is to address the gap in resources and favorable environment for the development and promotion of youth employment and entrepreneurship in BiH on an individual and institutional level. Two web sites were developed to achieve these goals. One site (prvuposao.ba) is focused on young people obtaining their first job or entry level employment. The second web site (pokreniposao.ba) provides information and resources on how to start and maintain a successful business in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The average number of daily visits to prvuposao.ba in February 2007 was 519, and to pokreniposao.ba 336. There are 790 registered users for prvuposao.ba. Contents are updated on a daily basis for both components. The data on number of visits and number of vacancies posted is shown in Table 1 below. Number of visits indicated a single visit to the web-portal by a single user, and the number of clicks is the total number of hits, i.e. every individual click by a user during his visit is counted. These statistics show that the number of visits to both prvuposao.ba and pokreniposao.ba is constantly increasing.

Table 1 – Monitoring Indicators for Career Portal November 2006-March 2007

	November 2006	December 2006	January 2007	February 2007	March 2007 (until 5 march)
Number of visits on prviposao.ba	8804	11377	10733	14544	1542
Number of clicks on prviposao.ba	80547	91961	808192	1162616	115959
Number of visits on pokreniposao.ba	4890	5892	161649	9416	1191
Number clicks on pokreniposao.ba	91065	92000	516144	25681	15823
Number of job vacancies posted on prviposao.ba	38	54	67	33	2

Noteworthy Events

- World Learning/BiH moved in to new office premises in October. The new office address is Koturova 8, 71000 Sarajevo, BiH.
- The special launching ceremony of the HICD intervention Career Portal was held on November 21, in Sarajevo on the eleventh anniversary of peace in BiH. The ceremony was organized by World Learning/BiH to mark the completion and launching of the first youth portal in Bosnia and Herzegovina that gives young people resources needed to find a job or start a business. The Career Portal was initiated by Mr. Douglas McLahney, the U.S. Ambassador to BiH, as a follow-up of the youth event "BiH Youth, Let's Make Our Future" held over the past year to encourage BiH youth to take a lead in creating a brighter future for themselves and for BiH. The youth web portal was launched by the U.S. Ambassador who gave a speech to the audience. The ceremony was attended by approximately 70 respective guests, students, representatives of youth NGOs, government institutions from BiH and international organizations in BiH supporting youth initiatives. It had significant press coverage in all BiH print and electronic media.
- In January, Mr. Beriz Belkic, participant in Caucus Development training in Ireland in 2003, was appointed President of the House of Representatives of the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

- January 8 and 9, Aida Hadzic and Sabina Dervisefendic attended the Conference on Economic Monitoring, Foreign Trade, FDI (Foreign Direct Investments) and Enterprise Competitiveness hosted by BiH DEP – Directorate for Economic Planning. The conference was an arena for discussing possible improvements of different economic factors in BiH and the Balkan region as pre-conditions for EU accession.
- January 19, Amra Softic, Hejdi Petrovic and Sabina Dervisefendic attended the meeting of the international actors in BiH active in the field of youth. The meeting presented a compilation of Bilateral and Multilateral Donor interventions focusing on youth issues as a possible base for the definition of a youth strategy framework in BiH.
- January 26, Sabina Dervisefendic attended a lecture entitled “How to think and implement a strategy of reform” presented by Nicolas Tenzer, Senior Civil Servant of the French Government and Professor at the University. The lecture was hosted by the French Embassy in Sarajevo and the General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The lecture provided useful hands-on information on steps and factors for a successful reform strategy as a lesson learned for BiH in its reform toward EU accession.
- January 30, Sabina Dervisefendic attended the regular monthly meeting of the NGO Council, one of the NGO networks in BiH. The meeting was a useful source of information of the activities of civil society in BiH and possible ways of their cooperation with BiH government institutions.

Cost-Saving Measures

- \$3,721 was saved by applying reduced cost M&IE rates for the third country training in Improved Private Sector Growth-Improved Regulatory Inspection.
- \$5,321 was saved by applying reduced cost M&IE rates for the third country training in BiH Ministry of Justice Management Training Program for Senior Officials.
- \$6,769 was saved by applying reduced cost M&IE rates for the third country training in Improvement of Construction Permitting Laws and Practices in BiH.
- \$428 was saved by applying reduced cost M&IE rates for the third country training in Regulatory Impact Analysis.

Total Cost Savings.....\$16,239

V. FORECAST/Kosovo

For information regarding the most recent training/HICD activities for participants from Kosovo please refer to the status chart in the Appendix.

Success Stories

Please see the Appendix for full details on the following Success Stories:

- **NGO and Government Leaders Make Joint Recommendations to Kosovo Parliament on NGO Laws Following Training in Hungary on Public Funding Strategies**

Following a training program in Hungary, a group made up of government and non-governmental officials established a working group to develop legislation on registering and operating NGOs. The recommendations that they made – that include public financing mechanisms for NGOs, VAT, and a draft law on volunteerism - have been supported by the President of the Parliament, and are under further discussion.

- **Improving Road Construction In Kosovo**

10 representatives of Kosovo's asphalt production industry traveled to Berlin to learn how to improve production and quality control, which will result in better road construction. One of the returned participants convinced the management of his plant to establish a new quality control unit, and to develop an alternative heating system, resulting in 50% savings. "Now we have established the quality control unit, we can guarantee the quality of our work with confidence. With this guarantee, we cannot fail," he says.

Media Coverage

- On December 7, *Zeri* newspaper ran the following coverage of the annual awards ceremony: "Last night ... the US Agency for International Development (USAID) honoured 120 Kosovars who have completed training in US, Europe, or Kosovo. The ceremony was attended by Tina Kaidanow, Chief of US Office in Pristina, and Agim Ceku, Prime Minister of Kosovo. Kaidanow said that US government remains committed to invest in Kosovo's leadership of all sectors while Prime Minister Ceku said that the work of the participants will not end with the status settlement. "We are working for the spring and no one helped us more than US," said Ceku. Participants of this trainings included officers of public and private institutions while there were also representatives of minority communities."
- On December 7, the TV station KTV also covered the annual awards ceremony in its evening news program.

Third Country Training

- November 13-16, six representatives from the Kosovo Finance and Reporting Board and the Ministry of Finance and Economy traveled to Istanbul to participate in the 17th World Congress of Accountants. Participation at the Congress provided the trainees with the opportunity to observe international best practices in accounting oversight and international accounting standards. A Follow-up meeting for the participants was held on November 24. Participants stated that they found the conference extremely useful in building their understanding of the steps that Kosovo must take to fulfill international accountancy standards. The participants also agreed with representatives from Albania and Serbia to work together on joint translations of standards.
- November 4-11, 10 participants from the NGO community, the President's Office, the Prime Minister's Office, the Treasury Department, the Tax Administration of Kosovo, and the Budget Department participated in Public Funding Strategies for NGOs in Budapest, Hungary. The goal of the training program was to help participants gain an increased understanding of successful regional models and mechanisms for direct and indirect public financing of NGOs and to promote the development of a preliminary framework and strategies for public financing of NGOs within the Kosovo context. The training provider was the European Center for Not-For-Profit Law (ECNL). A follow-up meeting with the participants was held on November 16. The participants said that the most useful part of the program for them was the opportunity to discuss NGO development issues with colleagues from other sectors. Since their return, the participants have initiated a working group to discuss NGO/government cooperation and to review some pending draft legislation impacting NGOs in Kosovo.
- January 22- 26, four journalists from the TV stations KTV and RTV21 attended a training program at the RTL TV station in Zagreb, Croatia. The goal of this training program was to help the participants to develop their professional skills through working on productions comparable with their own and to see new techniques and approaches to problem-solving at RTL. Secondary objectives were for them to develop contacts with colleagues in the region and to strengthen cross-border understanding and cooperation. At a follow-up meeting held after their return, the participants stated that they found learning about how RTL TV is managed and specifically work flows and how assignments are given to be especially useful.
- January 29– February 1, six staff members of the Ministry of Finance and Economy attended a course on debt management, offered by the Center of Excellence in Finance in Ljubljana, Slovenia. In addition, on January 29 and February 2, participants met with their Slovenian counterparts at the Ministry of Finance in Slovenia. On February 7, a follow-up meeting for the participants was held at the World Learning-Kosovo office. Participants said that the

most useful part of the program was learning about the computer program used by the Ministry of Finance in Slovenia to track and pay debts and discussion of possibilities for Kosovo to access debt relief post-status.

- March 7-8, two participants traveled to Budapest, Hungary to attend an IMF seminar on Strengthening Public Investment and Maintaining Fiscal Risks from Public-Private Partnerships. However, the participants, the Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Finance and Economy and the Director of the Budget Department, Ministry of Finance and Economy, learned that their Serb counterparts had agreed with IMF conference organizers that they would be introduced as being from Kosovo, *Serbia*. Although USAID-Kosovo and World Learning Kosovo made several phone calls to the IMF to try to resolve the situation, conference organizers refused to make changes and the participants returned to Kosovo the next day.
- On March 8, a first meeting/PDO meeting was held for three participants who attended the Fraud and Corruption Summit in Denmark March 14-16. A follow-up meeting was held with the same group on March 22.

In-Country Training and Follow-On Activities

- September 27–October 6, political party consultant Mr. Kevin Deveaux traveled to Kosovo to continue his work with the Ora Party. During this trip, Mr. Deveaux reviewed Ora's progress in meeting its fundraising goals (including reviewing results of the *Pro Campaign*); assisted in the development of a draft plan on office administration which can be tracked by the Ora Presidency; presented party member/voter database software; and developed a draft workplan for the Ora Party's policy groups.
- October 2-6, an attorney from the law firm DLA-Piper traveled to Kosovo to work with the National Center for State Courts in developing areas of activity for use of DLA-Piper pro bono hours. The result of this trip was an agreement that DLA-Piper will devote hours to (i) facilitating the working groups on the Draft Law on Courts and the Draft Law on Prosecutors and (ii) providing support to the Chair of the Legislative Committee in the Assembly of Kosovo. This trip was supported by USAID through World Learning/FORECAST.
- November 6-17, consultant Mr. Ian Marquardt was in Kosovo to work with the AAK political party. During this visit, Mr. Marquardt assisted AAK in evaluating the party's strategic plan for improving party leadership and the functioning of party branches; worked with the Organizational Director and others in the party to make appropriate modifications; and trained AAK staff to assist in the plan's implementation.

- December 10–16, political party consultant Mr. Kevin Deveaux provided training to Ora party office staff on administrative procedures and to branch coordinators on political processes and branch elections. He also met with Ora presidency sub-committee members and provided recommendations on the development of internal regulations for the party, including internal elections regulations and administrative policies.
- November 27- December 16, political party consultant Mr. John Earl worked with the LDK party on reviewing recent internal party elections and in providing recommendations in preparation for the LDK Special Assembly (election of LDK president, adoption of party statute and election of the party general committee).
- November 30-December 15, political party consultant Mr. Roy Lakey worked with the PDK party on organization of party branch structure and development of grass-roots support in the regions.
- Through World Learning, DLA-Piper is providing technical assistance to the MoJ and other public bodies on the draft Law of Courts and the draft Law on Public Prosecution and their implementation. December 4-7, Mr. Sheldon Krantz assessed target organization needs on development and implementation of the two draft laws. Dec 7-31, Sara Andrews worked with the MoJ and UNMIK DoJ on review and development of the two draft laws. She continued to work with the MoJ and UNMIK DoJ on review and development of the two draft laws through March. She also delivered a one-day mini-course on legal drafting for the new MoJ interns.
- February 19-20, attorney Ken Starling was in Kosovo to assist the working group on the draft Law on Public Prosecution.

HICD Activities

- As part of the MoJ Mentoring Program which is being supported by USAID through World Learning/FORECAST, the MoJ offered to place 15 interns (in their final year of law study) in various departments within the MoJ. During the month of October, the MoJ advertised for the intern positions at local law faculties and in *Zeri* newspaper; 34 were applications received. The applicants went through an initial screening in October and the final selection were made November 3. The internships began in December. World Learning-Kosovo continues to support the interns who were placed within the MoJ (in the Office of the Permanent Secretary; the Department of Legal Affairs; the Department of Civil Rights; the Budget and Finance Division; and the Minister's Cabinet). The interns started their internships on December 15.

On February 20-21, the World Learning Kosovo office held meetings with the interns to elicit their feedback on the program. Overwhelmingly, the interns felt that the intern opportunity has been useful for them, providing them with the opportunity to see legal processes first hand and to gain hands-on experience in completing specific work related to their profession for the first time. For example, through their internships, several interns have been able to observe inter-ministerial working groups on various draft laws and many have been to a court hearing for the first time. Most have had the opportunity to prepare background documents for cases – something they did not have the opportunity to do during in their formal university studies.

- October 2-5, a training program in legal drafting was conducted for eleven staff members of the Department of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Justice (MoJ). Instructors were attorneys (who contributed pro bono hours to deliver the course) from the law firm of DLA-Piper. The course covered the basic principles and techniques of legal drafting, policy paper drafting and conducting legal research. It was the first in a series of training programs for MoJ staff, which is being conducted as part of the MoJ Mentoring Program.
- December 4-7, a second legal drafting course was conducted for eleven staff members of MoJ. This training program followed on the basic course in principles and techniques of legal drafting which was held in October. During the December course, participants worked in groups mentored by a DLA-Piper attorney to develop their own mock draft-law.
- January 22-26 a training program on team formation and leadership was held for staff from three divisions within the MoJ Department of Legal Affairs: the External Relations Division; the Legislation Division; and the Litigation Division. This training course was part of the MoJ Mentoring Program for Junior-Level Staff.
- February 20-24 a training program on ethics was held for staff from the Department of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Justice. As part of the program, the participants were presented with a hypothetical case testing ethical professional judgment, and then broken into the three teams: prosecution; defense; and judge to conduct a mock trial of the case. This was presented within the framework of existing ethical principals for lawyers and the Kosovo Civil Service Code of Conduct. This training course is part of the MoJ Mentoring Program for Junior-Level Staff.
- March 26-29, a training program on litigation skills was held for 11 staff from the Department of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Justice. The program covered basic principles of written advocacy and oral advocacy. Participants also had the opportunity to observe a simulated oral presentation exercise (a mock case of a lawyer presenting a motion to dismiss before a judge) and to request individual consultation on specific areas of interest in cases they are currently working on. This training course is part of the MoJ Mentoring Program for Junior-Level Staff.

- March 18-27, three constitutional law experts traveled to Kosovo to conduct a scoping mission to determine further USAID support to Kosovo in drafting a new constitution.
- March 21-23, experts from Kosovo's National Library conducted a needs assessment at the University of Pristina Law Faculty Library.
- During March, computer and English language clubs started up in the Kuvendi i Lezhes high school (Albanian) and the Higher Technical-Economic School (Serb) in Viti/na Municipality as part of the Community Service through Extracurricular Activity Program. Each school now hosts two clubs with 20 students in each club. The clubs meet once per week. The goals of this program are to organize and support extracurricular educational activities in schools; to promote student community service; and to link Albanian and minority schools in the municipality. The World Learning Kosovo office played a major role in selecting the club curricula and instructors, tendering a bid for 22 computers and an internet connection at the schools, publicizing the program and soliciting applications from interested students.

Noteworthy Events

- On December 6, the World Learning Kosovo office hosted the annual awards ceremony for 121 participants who took part in training programs in the US, Europe or Kosovo from January 2006-November 2006. Ms. Tina Kaidanow, Chief of the US Office in Kosovo and Mr. Agim Ceku, Prime Minister of Kosovo, both spoke at the event.
- During December, the USAID-Kosovo Mission approved the WL-Kosovo Annual 2007 Plan. The approved plan leaves a significant portion of allocated funds un-programmed in anticipation of the outcome of status negotiations in 2007.

Cost Saving Measures

- \$120 was saved as a result of translating program-related documents in-house for the 17th World Congress of Accountants and Public Funding Strategies for Kosovar NGOs training programs.
- During October, the WL-Kosovo office opened a US dollar bank account, which will eliminate the currency conversion fees the office had been paying when converting Euro (the national currency of Kosovo) to US dollars to pay foreign consultants.
- \$550 was saved through reducing 3 political party consultants' per diem to 75% of the full rate.

- \$150 was saved as a result of translating program-related documents in-house for the seminar on Strengthening Public Investment and Managing Fiscal Risks from Public-Private Partnerships; the Integration of Cash and Debt Management training program; and the Community Service through Extracurricular Education project.
- \$80 saved as a result of in-house translation of materials.
- \$30 was saved as a result of translating program-related documents in-house and \$90 was saved as a result of using the UN shuttle (instead of DHL) to send participant documents to Belgrade for the Large Tax-payer Unit training program.

Total Cost Savings.....\$1,020

VI. FORECAST/Serbia and Montenegro

Staffing

- Program Manager Ivana Zivkovic left on October 6. Jelena Piergiovanni was hired to replace her and she started on November 6. Snezana Mijatovic was hired as the Program Manager for FORECAST Exchange and she began on November 1. Nevena Drakulic, Program/Finance Assistant, began on November 15.

Media Coverage

- FORECAST Exchange received press coverage in November from three TV channels in Montenegro, 2 radio stations, and an article that appeared in at least one newspaper about the program. When World Learning staff traveled to Nis, there was also coverage by one TV station, one radio station, and one article that appeared in the press.
- In December, FORECAST Exchange was in the news in the form of 5 press articles, a daily advertisement on student TV, and a student closed circuit TV interview. Jon Berger from the US Embassy Public Affairs Office was on national television on Dec. 25 on a major channel, RTS, and a TV channel in Novi Sad broadcast two programs to viewers about the scholarship opportunity.
- World Learning appeared on student closed circuit TV on January 10 with two Serbian former scholarship winners and on Metropolis TV with nationwide coverage on January 15. In addition, there were articles in *Blic*, one of the most widely read Serbian dailies about

FORECAST Exchange and daily ads on the student TV until January 15 and some additional coverage in the newspaper, TV, and radio in Novi Sad.

Noteworthy Events

- In October, staff attended the Serbian Book Fair at the request of the US Embassy Public Affairs Office and made a presentation on the FORECAST Exchange program. The fair is annually attended by around 30,000 people, many of whom attend to pick up printed materials. World Learning distributed about 100 handouts at the American Booth at the fair and made contact with the staff of the American Corners and the Academic Counseling Center who conduct the TOEFL exams in Serbia.
- In November, staff met with the International Relations person and Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Education in Serbia who gave their blessing and support to the FORECAST Exchange program and posted information about the program on their website. World Learning recruited for the program in Montenegro for two days, giving several presentations and meeting the PAO staff there and developed collaboration with them. Meetings were held with the rector of Singidunum (a private university in Belgrade) where a presentation was scheduled for students in December. Successful recruitment trips were also made to Novi Sad (2), to meet with rector and students, and to Nis (2 days), for several meetings with administrators and students. Two public presentations for students were made in Belgrade. World Learning established contact and collaboration with the International Academic Advising Center sponsored by ECA and shared their booth in Novi Sad. Recruitment continued in and out of Belgrade.
- In November, World Learning conducted a power point presentation on participant processing services for the staff of a new USAID Contractor in Serbia, Institute for Sustainable Communities. USAID Mission staff provided positive feedback following the presentation.
- In December, World Learning made two presentations for new USAID programs beginning in Serbia to let them know about USAID training procedures and WL's processing services – the Institute for Sustainable Communities (NGO/democracy building) and the joint DAI/CHF/BAH SCOPES project (emergency preparedness/economic development for cities affected by refugees, IDPs, or natural disasters).
- WL had a visit from CTO, Jim Nindel, in December. He met with WL staff and was briefed on the office's operation, issues that have been encountered with the rather unique processing situation and the FORECAST Exchange Program, and WL also attended a meeting with Jim and Sanja Nikolin of USAID/Serbia about current and possible future programs. Jim attended a recruitment presentation for the FORECAST Exchange Program at the American Corner in

Belgrade also attended by Jon Berger and Vukica Stankovic of the US Embassy in which previous scholarship winners also participated.

- WL staff made a presentation at Singidunum University in Belgrade in December attended by about 100 students. WL traveled to Kraguevac with Jon Berger and Vukica Stankovic of the US Embassy to meet with the Rector of the University who promised his full support and to do two presentations for recruiting students at the university and the American Corner. WL made another presentation at the Economics Faculty of the University of Belgrade with Jon Berger, and WL staff helped the American Corner staff a booth there with materials/information about the Program. WL met the pro-dean of the Physics Department of the University of Belgrade who promised to send an email to each student in his department. We did a presentation on FORECAST Exchange for 20 students at the Faculty of Special Education at the University of Belgrade. We also began with the Embassy the process of recruiting members for the selection committees.
- Jelena Piergiovanni attended a media workshop at USAID in December on how to write success stories and take pictures for such stories and press articles.
- January 15 marked the application closing date for FORECAST Exchange in Serbia; and January 16 in Montenegro. WL looked through all applications for completeness and eligibility and notified students to allow them to get extra documents in. A total of 126 applications were passed on to the selection committees in Serbia and Montenegro. WL organized the selection committee process and briefed selection committee members on their responsibilities and prepared all the materials they would need. WL also met with the committees and facilitated their selection of semi-finalists in Serbia. In Montenegro part of this process was facilitated by the Public Affairs Office; however, WL facilitated the process of interviews, English testing, etc. in Montenegro with a staff person traveling there.
- In February, WL completed the selection process for the FORECAST Exchange Program in both Serbia and Montenegro, working with the selection committees, testing all the students in English, and administering and correcting all their extemporaneous essays. Snezana traveled to Montenegro to assist with the process there and Mary Fran Doyle assisted the selection committees in Serbia. WL scheduled all the students for the TOEFL exam. All students will be tested during the month of March and should have their scores within 15 business days from the date of their exam.
- In February WL met with ABA-CEELI's new COP Julie Roig and explained the USAID participant training procedures in Serbia. WL also met with Ana Ilic, a new staff person of BAH-Small Enterprise Development Project, to do the same. In addition staff met with Christina Thomas of World Learning/Delphi/DC to explain our programs, especially the FORECAST Exchange Program, and to understand Delphi's new youth exchange program in

Serbia and to discuss some mutual collaboration possibilities with our students. She introduced us to her colleagues at Civic Initiatives in Serbia.

- As WL will no longer be continuing to support USAID/Montenegro's participant training processing activity due to lack funds, WL/Serbia is working with Ana Lekovic from the Montenegrin Program Office of USAID in to assist to assume the tasks that WL did for them previously.
- WL/Serbia met again with Christina Thomas of WL/Delphi and her counterpart from Civic Initiatives in March to explore how our programs could coordinate information and augment change possibilities and preparedness of youth for such exchange programs, especially since some of the FORECAST Exchange students will be at one of the universities that the Delphi students will attend.
- WL/Serbia scheduled all students to be tested with the TOEFL exam in March and facilitated them getting to the test and helping them prepare. All students have now been tested and we are awaiting the results. Two students (1 finalist and 1 alternate) withdraw from Serbia. We gathered supplementary information about students' coursework and majors needed by World Learning/ DC and translated it to assist in better placement of the students.
- We processed a high profile program with the Municipal Economic Growth Activity Program here, which has been highly praised, and as a result of this trip and the previous one last month, mayors will take new initiatives to lobby Parliament for increased autonomy for local governments. Our expanded processing included procuring the Czech visas as well as a fairly extensive pre-departure orientation for which our staff developed special brochures on the Czech Republic.

Cost Savings

- By not having to pay value added tax (VAT), the office has saved considerably when making these purchases.
- Singidunum University donated space for ALIGU testing in Serbia, and the Economic Faculty donated space in Montenegro for both ALIGU testing and selection committee meetings.
- \$150 was saved by traveling to Kraguevac with a US Embassy van.
- \$385 was saved between November and January by renting a copy machine instead of outsourcing photocopying.

- \$204 was saved by processing VAT charges.

Total Cost Savings.....\$739

VII. APPENDIX

A. Intervention Status Report – October 2006-March 2007

B. Success Stories for October 2006-March 2007

APPENDIX A: INTERVENTION STATUS - NEW STARTS - OCTOBER 2006 - MARCH 2007

	UST	TCT	ICT	TA	Small Grants	EMT	Academic	Partnerships	HICD Activities	TOTALS
Number of Interventions										
Albania - period	3	1	3	3	2	0	0	0	0	12
cumulative	9	9	7	8	9	0	0	0	0	42
Bosnia-Herzegovina - period	0	5	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	8
cumulative	5	19	7	1	2	0	0	0	2	36
Kosovo - period	0	6	0	5	0	0	0	0	6	17
cumulative	1	8	0	6	0	0	1	0	8	24
Regional - period	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
cumulative	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
TOTALS - period	3	12	3	8	4	0	0	0	7	37
cumulative	15	37	14	15	11	0	1	0	10	103
Number of Participants (if applicable)										
Albania - period	9	13	262	25	n/a					309
cumulative	49	82	469	43	n/a					643
Bosnia-Herzegovina - period	0	60	0	n/a	n/a				n/a	60
cumulative	21	202	1729	n/a	n/a				n/a	1952
Kosovo - period	0	31	0	n/a			0		n/a	31
cumulative	8	44	0	n/a			3		n/a	55
Regional - period	0	0	0	0						0
cumulative	0	58	0	0						58
TOTALS - period	9	104	262	43			0			418
cumulative	78	386	2198	43			3			2708

Appendix B to FORECAST Semi-Annual Report
October 2006-March 2007
Success Stories

Albania - FORECAST

Headline: Raising the Bar: The Promise of Transparency in the Legal Sector

Subhead: Legal institutions demand higher standards, ushering in a new era for licensing attorneys in Albania.

Photograph



Photo caption: *Members of the National Chamber of Advocates honored by US Ambassador Reis and former USAID Mission Director Harry Birnholz during an awards ceremony.*
(photograph taken by Blendi Kumi, Foto Kumi, used with permission)

The Challenge: The prevalence of corruption in Albania is a major barrier to the country's transition and development and its integration into the European Union. According to recent polls, corruption in the judiciary is widespread and lawyers are perceived as playing an intermediary role. The National Chamber of Advocates, Albania's professional association of which all attorneys are obligatory members, is responsible for disciplining members' professional conduct, compliance with licensing rules and procedures, and administering the bar exam for all new attorneys. With an extremely high passing rate, 99 percent, the integrity of the bar exam was perceived as questionable, and consequently a poor reflection on the integrity of the Chamber itself.

Initiative: With the support of USAID, key members of the National Chamber of Advocates attended a one-week training program in Plano, Texas provided by The Center for American and International Law during which they discussed with members the importance of improving their bar exam. In discussions with the Executive Director of the Texas Board of Law Examiners and others involved in administering the Texas bar exam, members obtained information about ways to ensure a bias-free process and the rules established to determine the qualifications of applicants seeking bar admission.

Results: Based on their experience in Texas, the National Chamber of Advocates overhauled the 2006 bar examination. The bar exam contained more challenging questions and steps were taken to prohibit unfair disclosure of exam questions. The Chamber also improved their grading of the exam to ensure a more transparent and equitable evaluation of an applicant's performance levels. As a result of these measures, only 57 percent of the applicants passed the exam. According to Vitore Tusha, Deputy Head of the National Chamber of Advocates, despite the poor performance of this year applicants', the reforms have improved the image of the institution and will lead to greater integrity throughout the profession.

Quote: "Attorneys now realize that the bar exam is serious and demands both high levels of knowledge as well as personal integrity," said Vitore Tusha, Deputy Head of the Albanian National Chamber of Advocates.

Background Information:

Date of photograph: March 2, 2006

Country of Story: Albania

City or Region of Story: Tirana

USAID Program: FORECAST/Participant Training Program

Presidential Initiative: No

Contractor: World Learning

Submitter:

Name: Matty Bellows Thimm

Organization: World Learning

Email: mthimm@albnet.net

Phone: +355-04-240305

Name of Group: National Chamber of Advocates Disciplinary Procedures

Date and Location of Intervention: Dec 3-10, 2005 in Texas

Name of Intervention Provider: The Center for American and International Law

Summary

As part of the on-going struggle against corruption in the judiciary, members of Albania's National Chamber of Advocates followed up their training program in Texas by overhauling their country's bar exam. The result is that the pass rate has reduced from 99% to a more realistic 57%. The deputy head of the chamber said, "Attorneys now realize that the bar exam is serious and demands high levels of knowledge as well as personal integrity."

Albania - FORECAST

Headline: Enterprise Pays Off for Albanian Students and the Community

Subhead: USAID support helps Albanian students win 2006 European competition for Students In Free Enterprise

Photograph:



Albanian Students in Free Enterprise top French, United Kingdom and Russian teams in 2006 European Competition for Best Business Projects (photograph used with permission of Saimir Sallaku)

The Challenge: Despite great advances in the market economy since the collapse of communism, many Albanians still lack basic market economy skills. Business planning, business start-up, basic and sophisticated marketing, business ethics, and producer collaboration remain a challenge for young people just entering the labor market as well as many established businesses. University students interested in business learned the theory of market economics from revised textbooks generally with examples from much more developed economies and teachers who themselves were learning the reality of the subject. Absence of accurate data and information on both the macro and micro level made research and useful Albanian examples hard to come by. Opportunities to learn the practical aspects of business by

getting involved with business projects were few. Finally, by 2005 favoritism, poor rule of law and a lack of transparency had made the business environment in Albania one of the least favorable in Europe.

Initiative: In 1996 USAID initiated the Albanian Students In Free Enterprise (SIFE) program through the University of Nebraska's support to the Economic Faculty of the University of Tirana. The SIFE program provided students and faculty with the opportunity to create links with businesses and learn the practical aspects of business while benefiting the community involved in the projects. Every year students created and implemented various projects designed to create economic opportunity for others by helping them understand how a market economy operates, acquire skills needed to succeed in a competitive global economy, learn how to succeed as an entrepreneur, develop personal financial management skills and commit to ethical business practices. The SIFE program gradually expanded to other universities throughout the country and held annual competitions to recognize the most outstanding projects. In 2004, assisted with airfare by USAID's Participant Training Program, the first Albanian team attended a SIFE World Cup.

Results: Participation in the international competitions pushed the advisors and participating students to design ever stronger projects and polish their presentation skills. It also generated participation among students of all years, thus ensuring the sustainability and strength of the SIFE program as younger students gained experience. In September 2006, the team from the University of Tirana topped teams from France, the United Kingdom, Russia, Poland and the Netherlands to win the European Symposium in Paris. In its presentation of 6 of the 13 projects developed in 2005/2006, the Albanian team wowed judges with the remarkable impact and variety of their projects that involved 178 students and improved the lives of 2,280 people. Projects helped imprisoned women market handicrafts, enabled students to hone marketing skills by designing and implementing a successful marketing campaign for an insurance company, assisted olive oil producers to export their product and facilitated summer activities for students.

Quote: Judges anonymously commented on the "remarkable impact that students' work had on the community", the "variety of target groups in their projects", their "excellent presentation skills" and "the driving force, enthusiasm and motivation students showed in working with their projects".

Background Information:

Date of photograph: September 11, 2006

Country of Story: Albania

City or Region of Story: Tirana

USAID Program: FORECAST/Participant Training Program

Presidential Initiative: No

Contractor: World Learning

Submitter:

Name: Matty Bellows Thimm

Organization: World Learning

Email: mthimm@albnet.net

Phone: +355-04-240305

Participant Data:

Name of Group: SIFE World Cup

Date and Location of Intervention: September 8-14, 2006, Paris, France

Name of Intervention Provider: SIFE

Summary:

With support from the World Learning Participant Training Program, a group of students from Albanian universities attended the Students In Free Enterprise (SIFE) World Cup and European Symposium. Facing strong competition from teams from France, the United Kingdom, Russia, Poland and the Netherlands, the Team from the University of Tirana won first prize in the European Symposium for their projects that included helping women prisoners market their handicrafts and olive oil marketing for export

Albania - FORECAST

Headline: USAID supported Micro-Finance reaches 10,000 Albanians

Subhead: Training helps loan officers reach more clients with micro finance.



Photo caption: PSHM Fushe Kruje's senior loan officer, Emila Cangu, celebrates Klarita Topi's successful bakery started and expanded through successive micro-credit. (photograph taken by Matty Thimm, used with permission)

The Challenge: Opportunity International's Albanian Partners in Micro-Credit (PSHM) has been operating in Albania with USAID assistance since 1999. By winter of 2004 it had 3,000 clients served by 30 loan officers from 10 offices. The goal of PSHM was to exceed 10,000 clients with each loan officer servicing an average of at least 225-230 clients. At the time, this seemed an impossible goal, since loan officers couldn't even imagine finding, let alone serving, so many clients. In May 2004, USAID/Albania requested its participant training program, PTP/START, to organize a week's training in a country where ten PSHM loan officers could see with their own eyes how a successful microfinance organization can sustainably serve 10,000 clients. As a result of the training by "Partner" Tuzla, Bosnia & Herzegovina,

participating loan officers increased their case load from 178 to 208 and mentored others to increase their case load, mostly by tailoring their marketing.

Initiative: By April 2005 PSHM had approximately 4,400 clients served by 32 loan officers who averaged 160 clients, although a few served more than 250 monthly. They were still far from the goal of 10,000 clients serviced by fewer than 45 loan officers with an average of 225 clients each. Expecting that a repetition of this successful program would give a similar boost to the loan officers, USAID/Albania through its participant training program, FORECAST, sent another 12 loan officers and managers to Bosnia for essentially the same training. These loan officers were already successful, averaging 220 clients each, but hoped to achieve even more.

Results: After the return of the second group from training in Bosnia, participating loan officers urged PSHM to make some procedural changes based on their observations in Bosnia. As a result, onerous penalties for late repayments were replaced with more reasonable late fees. This resulted in the 10%-15% of clients previously driven away by high penalties continuing as good clients. Procedures were also changed so that loan officers could meet each others' new clients and review their loan applications instead of the branch manager. Loan officers also sign an agreement with employers of clients to automatically collect wages so that fewer clients fall into the time-consuming delinquent category. Loan officers focused even more on communicating often with clients and assisting them whenever possible. As a result, the participating loan officers increased their client load to an average of 270 and mentored another eight new loan officers to average 150 clients each.

Quote: "It was our experience in Bosnia that got us started signing contracts with employers and convinced us that high penalties for late repayment was not necessary," explains Emila Cangu, senior loan officer from PSHM's Fushe Kruje office who now serves more than 400 clients.

Background Information:

Date of photograph: November 23, 2006

Country of Story: Albania

City or Region of Story: Fushe Kruje

USAID Program: FORECAST/Participant Training Program

Presidential Initiative: No

Contractor: World Learning

Submitter:

Name: Matty Bellows Thimm

Organization: World Learning

Email: mthimm@albnet.net

Phone: +355-04-240305

Participant Data:

Name of Group: Micro-Finance Bosnia II

Date and Location of Intervention: February 12-18, 2006

Name of Intervention Provider:

Partner, MIKROKREDITNA ORGANIZACIJA

Tuzla, ULICA 15 Maj, Trzni Centar Sjenjak.

TEL/FAX: +387 (35) 300-250, 245-780

Email: partner@partner.ba

Summary:

As a result of what they observed on two training programs in Bosnia-Herzegovina, loan officers in Albania's Partners in Micro-Credit Program introduced more flexible and client-oriented procedures. The result has been an increase in the number of clients served by each officer of 70%, an important factor in helping Albania's Partners in Micro-Credit reach its goal of serving 10,000 clients.

Bosnia – FORECAST

Headline

Milk Quality Control Leads to Larger Profitability of Bosnian Farmers

Subhead

Mr. Zlatko Jokic helped to increase milk quality and production in Prnjavor Municipality

Photograph**Challenge**

Bosnia and Herzegovina's economic recovery, like its physical reconstruction, is a complex process, which must focus on its own resources and implementation of modern techniques.

Due to the high unemployment and lack of intensive industry in which to employ workers, the next best alternative for employment is agriculture.

Although the dairy sector is growing fast relative to the other agricultural sectors, there is a lack of knowledge of modern techniques in dairy production, including dairy breeds, cow nutrition, housing, milk quality and proper forage production and harvesting. Very few farmers keep good production or accounting records, so it is difficult for them to determine their costs of production, notice the cause and effects of changes in management, and to know which cows are producing a profit.

This training aimed to help BiH dairy producers increase their production, become more profitable, expand their herd size and employ more people.

Initiative

USAID funded a six-day program in Germany for thirteen BiH representatives of large dairy farms, cooperatives, farmers' associations, agricultural institutes, agricultural faculty and other agricultural leaders.

By encouraging the development of a dairy herd improvement system that records production, quality and cost/profit on a per-cow and per-farm basis, the training program aimed to help farmers identify what is working for them and what is not. After this training, they could begin making changes to increase their production, sales, profit, and herd sizes in order to increase locally produced products and finally employ more people in the agricultural sector.

During the program, visits were organized to the Dairy Herd Improvement Association, the Institute for Milk Quality Analysis, a data processing organization, different breeding organizations and to several stables and dairy processors.

Results

Although there is no law obliging farmers to test their milk, Mr. Jokic initiated an Association that introduced milk quality testing in his Municipality upon his return from the program. Mr. Jokic volunteered to coordinate a milk sample testing of eight dairy farms, including his own, by a veterinarian Institute. Prior to the introduction of milk testing, only two farms fulfilled the quotas and milk quality standards set by their milk processor. Following the introduction of milk testing, four more farms have fulfilled the quotas and increased their profits. After these results, more farmers in the area are interested to join in this action.

With improved production and increased profits, Mr. Jokic is committed to develop his farm facilities according to European and international ecological standards. The next step, planned for summer 2007, is to increase his herd size from 20 to 70 cattle, purchase additional equipment, and employ a larger work force.

Pullout Quote

“Thanks to this training program I have gained valuable knowledge which helped me improve my dairy business and indirectly the dairy business of other farmers in my municipality.” Mr. Zlatko Jokic

Background Information

The photos were taken during the site visits to different farms in Germany.

Date February 2, 2007
Country of Story Bosnia and Herzegovina
City or Region of Story Velika Ilova-Prnjavor
USAID Program
Is the story about a presidential initiative? no
Contractor, if any
Other

Submitter

Please tell us who we should contact regarding this story.

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Name of Group: Dairy Herd Improvement: Recording and Analyzing Production, Breeding, Feeding and Profitability Records
Date and Location of Intervention: October 16 -23, 2005, Germany
Name of Intervention Provider: ADT- Projekt GmbH Bonn

Summary

Following a training program in Germany on dairy farming, one farmer has now introduced the practice of milk quality testing, and is developing his facilities according to European and international ecological standards. He is also planning to more than triple the size of his herd. "Thanks to this training program I have gained valuable knowledge which helped me improve my dairy business and indirectly the dairy business of other farmers in my municipality," he said.

BiH – FORECAST

Headline

USAID Assists in Improving Judicial Ethics in Bosnia-Herzegovina

Subhead

Representatives from the High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council of Bosnia and Herzegovina meet with their counterparts in San Francisco in order to learn news skills and techniques in dealing with disciplinary sanctions against magistrates.

Photograph

N/A

Challenge

The High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council of Bosnia and Herzegovina (HJPC) established in June 2004 is the principal responsible body for appointment and disciplining of magistrates or more broadly, protection of the public and judicial system. The Council has oversight responsibility over the Office of the Disciplinary Counsel (ODC). The latter has been tasked with investigating complaints and starting disciplinary proceedings before the first instance

panel of the Council. The position of Disciplinary Counsel was nationalized as of October 1, 2005 (until this date an US attorney held the position). At the end of 2005 the HJPC adopted the Codes of Ethics for judges and prosecutors. USAID/East West Management Institute – Justice Sector Development Project (JSDP) works with the Council's Standing Committee on Ethics to elaborate the ethics standards. Training and exchanging information in best practices in investigations and disciplining, as well as the identification of trends would be the next logical step in capacity building of the HJPC in the field of judicial ethics. In addition, as a result of this study tour, EU accession process in the area of judicial ethics would be enhanced.

Initiative

In May 2006 four members of the HJPC, one staff of the Secretariat of the HJPC and five employees from the ODC, including the President, participated in a training program regarding judicial discipline and ethics at the California Commission on Judicial Performance (CJP) in San Francisco. The training was organized and administered by World Learning in coordination with USAID-JSDP, Sarajevo. The trip was aimed at acquainting the disciplinary component of the HJPC with the regulations, proceedings and practices of the California Commission on Judicial Performance and other bodies dealing with judicial ethics in the state of California.

Results

This program has had manifold, positive effects for the future work of HJPC as a whole. The acquired experience enabled the HJPC to introduce some new and advanced practices in its internal operations, which will contribute to the improvement of capacity building of the HJPC in the field of judicial ethics. In addition, based on the results of the study tour, JSDP has had an opportunity to design additional activities as a form of continuous support to this Office in its exercise of the disciplinary mandate. One specific result includes the preparation and implementation of a Backlog Reduction Plan and upgrading the HJPC database. From June–December 2006 the ODC staff reduced the number of complaints by 25-30%, and increased the number of resolved complaints by 86%. By way of comparison, from June to December 2006 ODC closed 813 cases while at the same time in 2005 they completed 437 cases.

Pullout Quote

"The ODC came back from this study trip with a developed Group Action Plan. The major activities that were outlined in this Plan have been implemented to the greatest extent possible. I personally find the reduced number of complaints the most meaningful result of this plan that we achieved", Mr. Anđelko Marjanović, Chief of Disciplinary Council.

Background Information

Date of Photograph: May 2006

Country of Story: Bosnia and Herzegovina

City or Region of Story: Sarajevo, Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina

USAID Program: High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council's Disciplinary Prosecutor Training

Is the story about a presidential initiative? No

Contractor, if any: East West Management Institute (EWMI)– Justice Sector Development Project (JSDP)

Other

Submitter

Please tell us who we should contact regarding this story.

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Name of Group: **High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council's Disciplinary Prosecutor Training**

Date and Location of Intervention: **May 20 – June 3, 2006, San Francisco, CA**

Name of Intervention Provider: **DPK Consulting**

Summary

Representatives from the High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council (HJPC) trained with their counterparts in San Francisco to learn the latest techniques in dealing with disciplinary sanctions against magistrates. One result has been a 30% reduction in the number of complaints, and an almost 90% increase in the number of resolved complaints. The chief of the Disciplinary Council said, "I personally find the reduced number of complaints the most meaningful result of this Action Plan that we have achieved."

Kosovo - FORECAST

Headline: NGO and Government Leaders Make Joint Recommendations to Kosovo Parliament on NGO Laws Following Training in Hungary on Public Funding Strategies

Challenge

Across the region, governments are recognizing the increasingly critical role that NGOs play in development and have adopted and implemented models and mechanisms of public financing to support NGO sustainability and strengthen NGO/public sector partnerships in solving critical social and economic issues. To date, Kosovo has not developed a comprehensive legal framework or transparent mechanisms for public financing of NGO activities. With final status determination expected by mid-2007 it is important that efforts be made to initiate multi-party discussions and develop strategies for future implementation.

Initiative

Through USAID's Participant Training Program, 10 representatives of Kosovar NGOs and government ministries traveled to Budapest, Hungary to study successful regional models and mechanisms for direct and indirect public financing of NGOs. Topics covered during the training included a comparative overview of government funding models/mechanisms for NGO activities at the central and local levels; policy considerations in providing support to NGOs; the legal framework; and sources and mechanisms of government support, such as subsidies, grants, lottery proceeds, tax benefits for NGOs, percentage philanthropy legislation and promotion of tax incentives for corporate and individual giving. Participants also had working group sessions to discuss the development of a framework for potential funding models and mechanisms within the Kosovo context.

Results

Upon their return, participants formed a working group (named the Working Group for Civil Society) to discuss NGO-government cooperation in developing and reviewing pending legislation impacting NGOs in Kosovo. Group members include the Political Adviser for Civil Society to the President's Office, Political Adviser for Social and Civil Society Issues to the Prime Minister's Office, the Specialist on Donor Coordination, Ministry of Finance and Economy and several representatives from leading Kosovar NGOs.

On January 6, 2007 the group submitted a packet of recommendations to Mr. Kole Berisha, President of the Parliament of Kosovo, referencing examples of NGO legislation in Europe they saw during their training program. The packet included:

- Recommendations on the Draft Law on the Registration and Operation of Non-governmental Organizations in Kosovo (which has been pending for more than two years now) developed by the group. The group's recommendations covered NGO registration and re-registration, recommendations on the formulation of an obligatory NGO network, and micro-credit/the right of NGOs to investment.
- Development of public financing mechanisms for NGOs in Kosovo – the group is currently working on a packet proposal of a suitable model for Kosovo.
- Recommendations on VAT tax and NGOs.
- The recommendation of the development of Draft Law on Volunteerism (relevant Hungarian law cited)
- An offer to assist the government in completion of the Strategy on the Civil Society Sector.

On January 10, members of the Group met with the President of the Parliament to discuss the packet of recommendations. Mr. Berisha agreed to support the Group's recommendations and will designate a Member of Parliament to work with the Group as the recommendations go forward in intra-governmental discussion.

Participant Data:

Name of Group: Public Funding Strategies for Kosovar NGOs

Date and Location of Intervention: November 04-11, 2006, Budapest, Hungary

Name of Intervention Provider: European Center for Not-for-Profit Law

Summary:

Following a training program in Hungary, a group made up of government and non-governmental officials established a working group to develop legislation on registering and operating NGOs. The recommendations that they made – that include public financing mechanisms for NGOs, VAT, and a draft law on volunteerism - have been supported by the President of the Parliament, and are under further discussion.

Kosovo - FORECAST

Improving Road Construction In Kosovo

Challenge

Current road construction in Kosovo is poor, resulting in wasted taxpayer money and hindering trade between Kosovo and its neighbors. One of the main obstacles to quality road-construction in Kosovo has been the lack of local knowledge for managing and operating asphalt plants – which produce road-construction raw materials.

Initiative

Through USAID's Participant Training Program, 10 representatives of Kosovo's asphalt production industry traveled to Berlin, Germany to study quality control and asphalt plant management in line with EU best practices and standards. Topics covered during the study tour

included the entire hot-mix asphalt (HMA) production process, with a focus on operational efficiency, quality control and quality assurance. Through the program, participants were exposed to EU standards and regulations for the operation of hot-mix asphalt plants.

Results

Through the program, participants developed an improved understanding of making and marketing products, quality control, and new management principles that will assist them in being more competitive and successful. Since the training program, participants from asphalt plants in Peja, Prizren, Ferizaj, and Suhareke have implemented energy efficiency measures and quality control measures that they observed during the study tour.

Upon returning from the study tour where he saw alternative heating systems, Mr. Vesel Miftari convinced the management of his plant (Papenburg/Adriani company in Ferizaj) to rebuild the plant's heating and heat circulation system. While this required a \$190,000 investment, Papenburg/Adriani now spends between 40% and 50% less on heating – a savings which should return the investment in under one year. In addition, Mr. Miftari worked to establish a new quality control unit at Papenburg/Adriani. This unit has now been certified by the Ministry of Trade and Industry and verifies not only the work of Papenburg/Adriani, but of other asphalt and road construction companies in Kosovo as well.

“During the study tour, we saw the importance of quality control in being able to guarantee your product. Since we have established the quality control unit, we can now guarantee the quality of our work with confidence. With this guarantee, we cannot fail.” says Mr. Miftari.

Participant Data:

1. Vesel Miftari, Papenburg/Adriani Company, Ferizaj
2. Ibush Rysha, Eskavatori Company, Ferizaj
3. Ramadan Gashi, KAG-Asfalt Company, Prizren
4. Mefail Deda, Burimi Company, Kacanik
5. Bekim Zymberi, Asfalti Company, Decan
6. Ismet Loshaj, Graniti Company, Istog
7. Ivan Vukojevic, AS Company, Leposavic
8. Veli Dakaj, Clirimi Company, Malisheve
9. Musli Shala, Viktoria Invest Company, Suhareke
10. Valdet Osmani, KCBS, Pristina

Date and Location of Intervention: May 8 – 12, 2006, Berlin, Germany

Name of Intervention Provider: Teltomat Asphaltmischanlagen Plant

Summary

10 representatives of Kosovo's asphalt production industry traveled to Berlin to learn how to improve production and quality control, which will result in better road construction. One of the returned participants convinced the management of his plant to establish a new quality control unit, and to develop an alternative heating system, resulting in 50% savings. “Now we have established the quality control unit, we can guarantee the quality of our work with confidence. With this guarantee, we cannot fail,” he says.