

SUPPORT TO PEACE AND STABILITY IN KOSOVO

After the NATO intervention ended in 1999, Kosovo became a UN protectorate, even though still legally within Serbia. Its future status is expected to be determined over the next two years. As the negotiation talks continue, political and civic stakeholders need to acquire a nuanced understanding of public opinion to find the most widely accepted agreement. Media also can profoundly influence the negotiations' success: serving as the only channel of communications if talks break down and playing a constructive role in fostering public willingness to compromise on key issues through its portrayal of relevant events and issues and the norms its programming conveys. Accordingly, the objective of the USAID-funded Support to Peace and Stability in Kosovo Program is to improve the public information environment surrounding the Kosovo future status process through public opinion survey and inter-ethnic broadcast media activities.

To date, project accomplishments include:

- Mapping of stakeholder positions and dialogue initiatives underway in Kosovo.
- The first round of Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices Survey (KAPS) & focus group polling completed. The KAPS breaks down public opinion on status talk issues, identifies obstacles and enablers of coalition-building among active and passive supporters of the status process, and suggests likely status outcomes. AED engaged key stakeholders in the KAPS design process since the results will be useful to them as negotiations continue.
- Six teams of journalists from local Albanian Kosovar and Serb Kosovar TV stations in three ethnically divided communities in

- Kosovo produced documentaries that explore community perspectives on issues and themes related to local stability, inter-community relations, and Kosovo's future status. The "Looking to the Future" documentary series includes six segments where one to two characters from each TV station's community reflect upon present life and the future. Community screenings of the documentary series were hosted by local organizations within each TV station's viewing area, and lively intra-community dialogue sessions followed the viewing with the participation of TV stations' documentary teams. The series is being condensed into a 45-minute segment to be broadcast across Kosovo.

- AED will build upon the success of the "Looking to the Future" documentary series by engaging the same TV stations in producing a TV Magazine Series. This bi-weekly series will comprise five to seven minute short documentaries and/or investigative journalism pieces. The series, tentatively titled "Kosovo Realities," will tackle current social issues and inter-community tensions during the July to late October broadcast period.

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