



USAID Sustainable Local Development Project

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Photo: USAID SLDP

The Regional Workforce Training Center in Novi Sad was created through inter-municipal cooperation.

Project funded by:

U.S. Agency for International Development; USAID/Serbia

Project implemented by:

Chemonics International
Maxima Consulting
Berman Group

Key counterparts:

Government of Serbia ministries and offices; Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities (SCTM); National Alliance for Local Economic Development (NALED); and others

Where we work:

Eight IMC areas; 32 partner municipalities led by the cities of: Vranje, Nis, Novi Pazar, Kraljevo, Uzice, Novi Sad, Subotica, and Zrenjanin

Project duration:

December 2010 to December 2015

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BACKGROUND

USAID's Sustainable Local Development Project is a five-year project supporting local governments, businesses and civil society to increase their efficiency and achieve economies of scale through Inter-Municipal Cooperation (IMC) aimed at accelerating economic growth. The project's core activities are focused on supporting inter-municipal partners to add jobs and reduce unemployment in regional economies. The project provides technical assistance, grants and subcontracts.

ACTIVITIES

- Assisting IMC partners to add jobs by supporting private sector expansion;
- Strengthening public administration to enable inter-municipal business growth and investments;
- Reinforcing IMC partnerships to integrate youth equitably into local economies;

RESULTS

Private sector expansion increases jobs in IMC areas:

- A public-private partnership (PPP) exceeding €1 million was established by Lafarge Corporation and Beocin to create a new business park, attract investors and generate new jobs in the Novi Sad-led IMC area;
- A multimedia laboratory in the Kraljevo Mechanical Engineering Faculty's Business Innovation Center was furnished to help entrepreneurs acquire new skills, reduce production costs and improve production processes;
- Value chain analysis and marketing plan improved dairy production and increased regional competitiveness in the Novi Pazar-led IMC area;
- A "Diversification of Agricultural Production" study recommended the introduction of new crop varieties in the Subotica-led IMC area.

Public administration enables inter-municipal business growth:

- Novi Sad, Sombor and Nova Varos, representing three IMC areas, received Business Friendly Certification (BFCs) sponsored by the National Alliance for Local Economic Development (NALED); databases of potential investors and brownfield locations improved the business environment in nine municipalities and advanced their BFC process;
- Regulatory and administrative barriers to business growth in five municipalities of the Nis-led IMC area were analyzed by NALED and 21 recommendations were made for improvements.

Programs develop youths' skills for employment:

- Some 44 young entrepreneurs were matched with business mentors; 28 companies sponsored 40 short-term internships; 209 youths were trained in business and social entrepreneurship skills;
- Ten Mobile Career Guidance teams were created to deliver career counseling services to youths in 10 municipalities;
- Architectural designs were finished for the Regional Workforce Training Centre in Novi Sad, which will train graduates in high-demand services;
- A labor supply and demand analysis of 5,500 companies was conducted with the National Employment Service to increase youth employment.