



## SUCCESS STORY

### **Cost Sharing Triples Impact of Kosovo Water Project**

**Rural areas receive clean drinking water with multi-donor funding.**



Photo by: International Relief and Development



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In September 2008, 60 percent of rural communities in Kosovo did not have clean drinking water. That’s when USAID stepped in with a \$5 million investment and a three-year plan.

Six years later, thanks to a pioneering cost-sharing arrangement, the initial investment was tripled and percentage of communities without access to clean water has been nearly cut in half.

“We believe that quality of life begins with clean water,” explained USAID/Kosovo Democracy and Governance Director Sara Buchanan at the program’s closing celebration on August 15. “It is the foundation for a healthy, productive, and happy society.”

USAID’s Small Infrastructure for Water and Sanitation project established partnerships with local government authorities in four municipalities in central and western Kosovo and their respective water companies with the agreement that construction and implementation costs would be shared equally. Local partners exceeded the cost-sharing agreement by a combined \$3 million.

“This water program was the best thing our municipalities could have asked for,” said Isni Kilaj, former mayor of partner municipality Malishevë/Mališevo. “Without the help of USAID, it would have been impossible to gather enough funding to install the infrastructure necessary to get water out to the more remote villages of my municipality.”

Seeing the success of the project’s first phase, which reached over 85,000 beneficiaries, the Swiss Cooperation Office in Kosovo stepped in to contribute an additional \$3.4 million, enabling the project to reach an additional 72,200 people.

“The synergy seemed like a natural fit given our shared interest and focus on water and sanitation,” said Ardiana Efendija-Zhuri, Swiss Cooperation Office National Program Officer for Water and Sanitation. “This was the first time the Swiss government has committed to an agreement like this, but due to its success, it has no doubt paved the road for future collaboration.”

In 2010 and 2012, the project received an additional \$2.2 million from the Government of Kosovo and \$268,000 in USAID funding for projects in an additional three municipalities in Kosovo’s Serb-majority north.

Over its six year duration, Kosovo’s Small Infrastructure for Water and Sanitation project benefited a total of 167,000 citizens – nearly

25% of the country's rural population. The project concluded in August 2014.