



CASE STUDY

Holding Elected Officials Accountable

After Kosovo’s first open ballot elections, 27 mayors respond to constituents



The Mayor of Viti/Vitina Municipality (Mr. Nexhmedin Arifi, on stage) updates citizens on progress toward his campaign promises during nationally televised debate.

The USAID-supported initiative provided citizens of Kosovo with an opportunity to hold elected officials accountable for their promises and their performance.

Telling Our Story
U.S. Agency for International Development
Washington, DC 20523-1000
<http://stories.usaid.gov>

Challenge

Kosovo’s first open list municipal elections in which citizens could vote for individual candidates as opposed to only choosing a party, took place in November 2007. Voters and mayoral candidates participated actively in public debates leading up to the election. These debates were well-received, effective, and a strong example of direct democracy in action. However, few mechanisms were in place to track and discuss fulfillment of campaign promises made during the mayors’ tenures.

Initiative

Several months after the local elections a series of nationally televised debates, called “Life in the Municipality” aired. The debates provided a forum for citizens to check on progress toward the mayors’ campaign promises but the debates required prior research in measuring the one-year performance of mayors in their posts. Through USAID’s support the local organization producing the debates was able to conduct thorough investigative research in the municipalities, which served as a great mechanism for measuring the one-year performance of mayors that was discussed at the municipal public debates.

Results

Reacting to inquiries during the investigation and in anticipation of the televised discussion, mayors initiated a flurry of actions on their campaign promises, including a road repair project that began in Deqan/Decani; placement of waste baskets in the village of Bardhosh in Fushe Kosovë/Kosovo Polje; and new desks purchased and brought to a school in Novobërd/Novobrd.

In addition, citizens and municipal personnel report increased responsiveness on the part of the mayors and local administration. The USAID-supported initiative provided citizens of Kosovo with an opportunity to hold elected officials accountable for their promises and their performance.

Photo: Balkan Investigative