

IREX
Kosovo Independent Media Program
(CA no. 167-A-01-00107-00)

Quarterly Report
October 1, 2002-December 31, 2002

IREX submits this quarterly report in accordance with the requirement of the Kosovo Independent Media Program (CA no. 167-A-01-00107-00). IREX feels the report provides sufficient detail to allow USAID to adequately monitor the program or ask follow-up questions. IREX/DC and field staff has also been in close contact throughout the quarter on program implementation. IREX welcomes USAID comments and questions on the report, directed to Tadd Eakin, Senior Program Officer (teakin@irex.org).

I. SUMMARY

This quarter the Kosovo Independent Media Program (KIMP) focused on improving the professionalism of television broadcast news, on specialty writing for print media, and on association development. Concurrently, IREX continued to assist television stations KTV and RTV21 to improve their business and programming strategies.

IREX conducted seminars for environment and business reporting, as well as held a roundtable on freedom of information. A number of television stations also received in-house training from visiting consultants. The KosovaLive News Agency launched its news radio news wire, benefiting from visits from former CNN Executive Editor Ted Iliff.

IREX continued its work in association development this quarter. Ardita Zajnullahu began as the first executive director of AMPEK and the association held its first all-member meeting. The Association of Professional Journalists of Kosova launched its website, as it determines how its secretariat will be run, advertises for a secretary general, and seeks to raise its membership. The advertising Joint Industry Committee (JIC) met for the second time and continues to prepare for a television survey.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- **IREX sponsors environmental reporting seminar.** The three-day course, spanning speeches on the status of the environment in Kosovo, a visit to the Kosova-B power station, and reporting exercises, generated numerous articles on the subject.
- **AMPEK names executive director.** The Association of Media Executives and Programmers of Kosovo (AMPEK) named Ardita Zajnullahu as its full-time executive director. Zajnullahu will focus on enlarging AMPEK membership, working with the board to establish programs and training for 2003, and organizing an AMPEK congress in January.
- **IREX helps launch KosovaLive broadcast news service.** Former CNN Executive Editor Ted Iliff finished three weeks as Journalist-in-Residence at KosovaLive News Agency, during which he assisted in the creation of a service that provides professional, marketable newscast scripts for broadcast media. The Internet-based service seeks to further develop the agency's self-sustainability by extending a product its offers to newspapers to radio as well.

- **Association of Professional Journalists of Kosovo launches website.** The Association of Professional Journalists of Kosovo launched its website, available in Albanian and English at www.kosovajournalist.org. The website contains information on the organization and its programs, along with an online registration form for membership, and links to the International Journalists' Network (IJNet) of the International Center for Journalists (ICFJ).
- **Kosovo television stations receive in-house training.** Two television journalists/trainers visited national stations KTV and RTV 21, monitoring their output, and offering guidance. The visits focused in particular on the room for improvement in matters such as editorial meetings, story generation, visual and audio presentations, foreign news, and target audiences. The two consultants also undertook a series of in-house training sessions at KTV, TV21 and six regional television stations around Kosovo.
- **Business reporting seminar sheds light on privatization process.** The two-day seminar on business reporting, examining the way in which socially-owned enterprises (SOEs) are being run and re-organized in Kosovo, gave journalists the chance to closely question international and local decision makers and opinion formers.
- **IREX hosts roundtable on freedom of information.** The largest gathering of journalists at such a seminar ever in Kosovo, the session provided an opportunity to analyze the draft law on freedom of information and develop changes in proposed legislation before it is discussed in parliament.

II. MEDIA ENVIRONMENT

The panel of experts convened by the Temporary Media Commissioner (TMC) presented their review of broadcasting in Kosovo in October. The controversial report, presented at a full meeting of the Task Force on the Independent Media Commission, generally recommended retaining the status quo. However, it also highlighted the failure of the Kosovo Electricity Company (KEK) and Radio Television Kosovo (RTK) to meet as they had been mandated to discuss the collection of license fees. The report triggered a number of meetings at USAID and the US Office Pristina (USOP), with USOP Chief of Mission Reno Harnish making a presentation to the Task Force and winning a 30-day extension for consideration of the report. USAID and IREX also developed a series of briefings on the matter.

UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Kosovo (SRSG), Michael Steiner, announced that the headquarters of the Kosovo Transitional Authority, which handles the privatization process, will be moved to North Mitrovica. The UNMIK office was opened in the building where the parallel Serb administration had been operating. Steiner also signed an administrative regulation deeming Mitrovica to be legally unified, telling the media that the Serb parallel community has been closed down and that there will be no parallel structures in the future. The leaders of the Serb University in North Mitrovica, however, said that they will continue to work according to curricula of the Government of Serbia and will ignore the Kosovo Ministry of Education.

The Kosovo government rejected a proposal for the inclusion of Kosovo into the Union of Serbia and Montenegro, as mentioned in the text of the Constitutional Charter of the new state, arguing that Kosovo is currently a UN protectorate whose final status will be decided in accordance with the will of its citizens. The government appealed to international democratic authorities not to recognize this section of the charter's preamble, calling it a serious provocation of the peace and democratic processes initiated in Kosovo and the surrounding region.

Five members of the "Dukagjini Group," former members of the Kosovo Liberation Army accused of murder, illegal detention, causing serious bodily injuries and risking the safety of others, were sentenced to a total of 31 years in prison. Daut Haradinaj and Bekim Zekaj were sentenced to 5 years in prison, each on charges of illegal arrests and physical abuse, while Idriz "Togeri" Balaj was sentenced to 15 years on charges of beating, illegally arresting and driving victims to the crime scene. Ahmet Elshani and Ramush Ahmetaj were sentenced to 3 years each for illegally detaining and causing serious bodily injury to the victims.

In October, top representatives from UNMIK and the government of Kosovo attended a donors' conference in Brussels to secure financial assistance for Kosovo for the next three years. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan visited Kosovo and met with international and local authorities in November. Chairman of a 15-ambassador delegation of the United Nations Security Council, Ole Peter Kolby, ended the delegation's December visit noting that substantial progress had been made, security in the region has been significantly improved and the returns process is underway. The Albanian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ilir Meta, also paid a visit to Kosovo, meeting with Michael Steiner and senior Kosovar political leaders to outline the content of his talks in Belgrade and Moscow.

III. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

IREX reports on its activities according to the workplan approved by USAID.

INTERMEDIATE RESULT 1: Journalists Provide Citizens with Objective, Balanced, and Fact-Based Information

1.1 Journalists Follow Accepted and Recognized Professional Standards

Television journalists/trainers Graham Addicott and Julian Tarrant visited national stations KTV and RTV 21, monitoring their output, and offering guidance. Their visits focused in particular on the room for improvement in matters such as editorial meetings, story generation, visual and audio presentations, foreign news, and target audiences. Addicott and Tarrant also undertook a series of in-house training sessions at KTV, TV21 and six regional television stations around Kosovo, including Men TV and TV Prizren. In addition, the two prepared a report on the financial health of the national television stations in preparation for a meeting between IREX, USAID, and the Open Society Institute (OSI).

A third journalist, Andrew Clayton, held a two-day seminar on business reporting that examined the way in which socially-owned enterprises (SOEs) are being run and re-organized in Kosovo. The seminar gave journalists the chance to closely question international and local decision makers and opinion formers, as well as to build the bridges that may prove useful for both sides when the critical moments in the privatization of SOEs arrive in the first half of next year. Speakers included Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General of the United Nations Mission in Kosovo, Andy Bearpark, who heads the reconstruction and economic development pillar of the UN Mission, and Ahmet Shala, deputy managing director at the Kosovo Trust Agency (KTA), responsible for selling the socially-owned enterprises. Additional sessions of the seminar focused on topics such as critiques of the KTA, the use of detailed evidence and statistical analysis in business reporting, and the effect of corruption on small businesses.

Former CNN executive producer Ted Iliff continued a consultancy to help set up a radio "rip and read" news service at KosovaLive news agency. Senior Media Advisor Tim Kenny traveled with Iliff to several radio clients in cities around the country to determine if they were using the new broadcast wire and how it could be improved. Kenny has been working with KosovaLive to implement recommendations that the news needs to be faster and more complete. At a marketing meeting, KosovaLive editor Kelmend Hapciu explained the growing need in the coming year for clients to begin paying at least some portion of the KosovaLive costs. Hapciu also

worked to prepare a business report with budget and requirements for the addition of another writer/editor. In addition, consideration is being given to a new product that can generate income from sources within Kosovo as well as from neighboring countries. A start was made on e-mailing the radio broadcast wire to six Serbian-language radio stations, with stories translated from Albanian to Serbian. The service was reviewed with an eye for how it can be maintained as donor funds dwindle.

USOP Chief of Mission Reno Harnish opened IREX's three-day seminar on environmental reporting, a subject that elicits great interest in Kosovo but receives little coverage. Participants from a cross-section of Kosovo newspapers, the Kosova Press and KosovoLive news agencies, and television attended the seminar, which included speeches on the status of the environment in Kosovo and a visit to the Kosova-B power station, shut down after it was reportedly struck by lightning earlier in this year. Seasoned journalist and environmental reporting expert Colin McIntyre also introduced participants to a number of reporting exercises, covering different angles, innovative presentations, interviewing techniques, and Internet resources. The course generated immediate results, including 10 articles on the environment and an exhibition of power plant photographs sponsored by IREX.

1.2 Independent Media Provide Comprehensive News and Public Affairs Coverage

A number of business journalists in Kosovo were involved in the investigative preparations for the business reporting seminar, including the compilation of case studies of privatized or about-to-be privatized businesses that were either state- or socially-owned.

IREX also worked to place a number of Kosovo journalists at Dow Jones London for practical training.

1.3 Facilities and Equipment for Gathering, Producing, and Distributing News are Modern and Efficient

Approved subgrants for television equipment included an encoder for RTV21 and spare equipment parts for KTV.

Applications for assistance were submitted for three radio stations, representing Turkish, Serbian and Albanian language programs, to help with election coverage. Media Advisor Emine Berisha appraised new grant submissions, finalizing grant proposals for Radio M, Radio Prizren and Radio Yeni Donem. Requests for small amounts of aid to Radio Kent and Radio Prizren were initiated along with Radio Peja and Radio Vizioni.

Intermediate Result 1 – Results

- Two television journalists/trainers visited national stations KTV and RTV 21, monitoring their output, and offering guidance.
- KTV, TV21 and six regional television stations around Kosovo received in-house training.
- A two-day seminar on business reporting gave journalists the chance to closely question international and local decision makers and opinion formers on the way in which socially-owned enterprises (SOEs) are being run and re-organized in Kosovo.
- Business journalists in Kosovo contributed to the compilation of case studies in privatization.
- KosovaLive's radio "rip and read" news service continued to develop.
- Three-day seminar on environmental reporting generated immediate results, including ten articles on the environment and an exhibition of power plant photographs.

INTERMEDIATE RESULT 2: Supporting Institutions Function in the Professional Interests of Independent Media

2.1 Broadcasters Association (AMPEK) Provides Training to and Representation for Independent Broadcasters

Ardita Zajnullahu, a former financial director for Save the Children, Pristina, began as the first executive director of AMPEK, working on quarterly and annual budgets and visiting radio and television stations to increase membership. AMPEK also held its first all-member meeting, in which it outlined ways the group hopes to improve professionally.

Senior Media Advisor Tim Kenny coordinated a meeting of AMPEK members to allow the association to respond to the report issued by the TMC's Task Force panel of experts.

2.2 Transmission System Effectively Managed by Non-Partisan Kosovar NGO

Private contractor Galla continued to build a low frequency mobile communications mast at KTTN's Golesh site, despite a UNMIK license that states that permission to build is subject to the structure not interfering with other transmitters (KTTN or military). While various authorities have been unable to agree on action, efforts continue to prevent the tower's construction. IREX Local Law Advisor, Filloreta Bytyci, who has been helping to investigate the towers at both Golesh and Zatriq, won an injunction against Galla, and met lawyers of Lipjan municipality to discuss enforcement. The British and US Army met with KTTN general manager Ridvan Jusufi and IREX Chief of Party Keith Hayes to discuss the use of a tower near the south-west borders of Kosovo, guarded by the British, for KTTN expansion.

2.3 Publishers Association Represents the Interests of Independent Media Outlets

Currently no formal publishers association exists in Kosovo. Print media presently competes to offer printing services and have been engaged in competitive struggles for competent staff. In order to focus resources and as indicated in the Cooperative Agreement, IREX will readdress this activity in year two of the project. IREX thus reports no activities in the development of a publishers association this quarter.

2.4 Journalists Association Provides Journalism Training

The Association of Professional Journalists of Kosovo launched its website, available in Albanian and English at www.kosovajournalist.org. The website contains information on the organization and its programs, along with an online registration form for membership, and links to the International Journalists' Network (IJNet) of the International Center for Journalists (ICFJ). The launch follows the association's continued development, as its steering committee begins to meet regularly and assume greater managerial responsibility. The association, which recently registered as a non-profit organization with the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), is presently determining how its secretariat will be run and has advertised for a secretary general. A membership registration drive set a target of 200 registered journalists. An all-members congress is being planned for February, at which time a new slate of board members will be voted in.

In other activities, president of the Association's steering committee, Baton Haxhiu, held a press conference to explain the results of last of the Gani Bobi media monitoring reports from the election. The Association also issued a press release upon the first anniversary of the murder of a Bota Sot reporter, urging solidarity among journalists and appreciation for the often dangerous work they perform. After deciding against a journalism award set up by the TMC, the Association also launched its own project for Journalist of the Year.

Intermediate Result 2 – Results

- Ardita Zajnullahu began work as the first executive director of AMPEK.
- AMPEK held its first all-member meeting.
- IREX Local Law Advisor, Filloreta Bytyci, won an injunction against the construction of a low frequency mobile communications mast at KTTN's Golesh location.
- The Association of Professional Journalists of Kosova launched its website.

INTERMEDIATE RESULT 3: The Legal and Regulatory Framework Supports Free Speech and Access to Public Information

3.1 Legal Framework Protects the Right to Gather, Produce, and Disseminate News

IREX Local Law Advisor Filloreta Bytyci, in association with the Association of Professional Journalists of Kosova, organized a successful roundtable on freedom of information in Pristina on December 18. The roundtable was attended by 70 journalists from throughout Kosovo, as well as leading representatives from USAID, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the TMC, and the Kosovo parliament. The largest gathering of journalists at such a seminar ever in Kosovo, the session provided an opportunity to analyze the draft law on freedom of information and develop changes in proposed legislation before it is discussed in parliament. Bytyci also discussed several recommendations arising from the roundtable with the Prime Minister's Office.

In addition, Bytyci spent time developing the Association of Journalists, meeting with members of the steering committee and working on their UNMIK registration. She revised the association's constitution, as requested by UNMIK NGO liaison office, and had the document translated into both English and Serbian. Bytyci also worked with Senior Media Advisor/consultant David Bellin on legal and constitutional matters for the advertising Joint Industry Committee, drawing up basic documents for its establishment and function.

3.2 Media Licensing is Fair and Apolitical

IREX attended the Task Force meeting that unveiled the TMC experts' report on broadcasting. In the light of the report's disappointing findings, Chief of Party Keith Hayes and then-Senior Media Advisor David Bellin worked closely with USAID and USOP to examine an initiative on regulation for collecting KEK/RTK television license fees as well as the transparency of RTK's budget and advertising limitation. Consultant Rich McClear also researched and wrote a report on this matter, including a reaction to the Task Force experts' criticism of professionalism in Kosovo mainstream broadcasting.

OSI completed an audit on Radio Contact Plus in Mitrovica and Radio Contact in Pristina. The TMC has been considering revoking the licenses of the two stations and discussed with OSI and other donors about a change of ownership. The stations have been suspected of misappropriating funds and attempting to pass ownership of one station to a political party. The TMC was still deliberating on action at the end of the quarter.

3.3 Indigenous Non-Governmental Institutions Represent Rights of Media Outlets and Journalists

Gani Bobi completed a subgrant to monitor reporting of the Kosovar elections at the request of the Association of Professional Journalists of Kosovo.

IREX also provided support to local associations during this reporting period, namely AMPEK and the new journalists association. (Please refer to IR 2 above for more information.)

Intermediate Result 3 – Results

- 70 journalists from throughout Kosovo attended the roundtable on freedom of information.
- IREX worked closely with USAID and USOP to examine an initiative on regulation for collection KEK/RTK television license fees as well as the transparency of RTK's budget and advertising limitation.
- Gani Bobi completed a subgrant to monitor elections reporting at the request of the Association of Professional Journalists.

INTERMEDIATE RESULT 4: Publishers and Station Managers Manage Media Outlets as Efficient, Profit-Seeking Businesses

4.1 Independent Media Utilize Strategic Business Plans

Consultant Julian Davies reviewed business plans and advised on sustainability for a number of clients, including KosovaLive, TV21, Teuta, TV Syri and others. His report has formed the basis for planning to be included in the coming work plan. David Bellin also completed business plans for TV21 and KTV. KPMG also completed an audit of the two stations, which was submitted to OSI and IREX and passed to the stations for comment before being reviewed for action.

Senior personnel from both IREX Pristina and IREX Washington prepared data reflecting the activities of TV21 and KTV for a document that was discussed by Chief of Mission Dale Pfeiffer and IREX Media Development Division Director Mark Whitehouse and Senior Program Officer Tadd Eakin at a summit at USAID/Pristina. The resulting future strategy will serve as a basis for meetings with OSI in Budapest in January and subsequently with the stations themselves.

4.2 Independent Media Utilize Market Research

David Bellin and IREX business consultant Ramis Ahmetaj joined Filloreta Bytyci in holding the second meeting of the Joint Industry Committee (JIC), an advertising group established last quarter by consultant Helen Harrison. IREX personnel also met with RTK deputy/general director Astrit Salihu to agree on the JIC's structure. In addition, progress was made in the process of drafting a code of conduct, as well as determining the basis of a television survey. Harrison continued to offer her expertise on this matter.

The low-cost, small-sample size audience survey would permit television stations to increase frequency of surveys in the future, thus making it more useful to advertisers and ensuring additional advertising sales. By better gauging their audiences, stations would also be able to make better programming decisions in the future. The survey structure will employ a continuing ratings scheme which can make a substantial difference to the way that commercial funds are distributed among media in Kosovo.

IR 4.3 Female Media Managers Achieve Parity in Professional Opportunities

IREX reports no activities this period that address female media managers achieving parity in media.

As with many sectors of Kosovo society, existing obstacles prevent the full equality of women in the media. However, given the large number of female journalists, editors, and business staff, there is reason to believe that women can achieve relative parity in media.

IR 4.4 Entertainment Programming Attracts Audience and Increases Revenue

Entertainment programming is important in order to keep private television stations competitive with RTK and to enable them to attract an audience, leading them to better advertising sales and increased revenues. If programmed properly, an increased audience from entertainment may also yield larger audiences for news and public affairs programming.

Approved subgrants during this quarter included NBA basketball coverage, film acquisition, and an MTV series.

IR 4.5 Local and Regional Radio Develop Marketing and Programming Networks

IREX continued to pursue its intention to start establishing links between stations (via KTTN links on KTTN towers), which will allow stations to share news and entertainment programming. IREX would in turn assist the network in developing marketing materials that would allow "one-stop shopping" for advertisers who wish to reach a province-wide audience. The network can guarantee ad placement on members' stations. This will allow local radio to expand its ad base beyond its local market.

Discussions continued on how KTTN can set up a radio network, which will now form the basis for this section in the new work plan. Business consultant Ramis Ahmetaj conducted research to identify six radio stations that may comprise the core of this network. Visits are also being made to television companies that might complement this with a TV network.

Intermediate Result 4 – Results

- The Joint Industry Committee (JIC) held its second meeting.
- The JIC made progress on drafting a code of conduct and determining the basis of a television survey.
- Discussions continued on how KTTN can set up a radio network.
- RTV-21 and Koha Vision continue to benefit from IREX consulting on management and programming strategy.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE AND OTHER ISSUES

- Behar Zogiani joined IREX as media advisor for broadcast media, filling the place of Evliana Berani, who resigned in September to take a position at UNMIK.
- Chief of Party Keith Hayes met with Mike Michener and Mike McClellan to discuss coordinating training activities.
- Keith Hayes also met with Earl Gast, Mike Michener (USAID) and Aferdita Kelmendi to discuss the wishes of TV21.
- IREX met with the USOP concerning B92's ambitions to open a bureau and television station in Kosovo.
- Senior Program Officer Tadd Eakin completed his tour of Kosovo and met the TMC's panel of experts.
- Keith Hayes visited Belgrade to meet with IREX/Serbia Chief of Party Sam Compton to discuss mutual problems, training methods with local consultants, and a visit to Pristina by resident Television Advisor Russell Peasgood.
- IREX Media Development Division Director Mark Whitehouse and Tadd Eakin visited Pristina to attend USAID meetings in December.
- Meetings with the American bank of Kosovo were held and a system set up to monitor cash inflows.

