



SUCCESS STORY

School Repairs Promote Learning and Team Work

A renovated sports field creates supportive environment for children



Photo by: USAID Advancing Kosovo Together

A safer sports field brings joy to children

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March, 2017—Sport is one of the most powerful tools for breaking down barriers and helping children make new friends, have fun, and learn to work well in a team, while promoting good health through exercise. The best place for children to enjoy sport in the outdoors is on school grounds that are safe and easily accessible.

However, at Kosovo’s Trajko Perić primary school in the village of Veliko Ropotovo/Ropotovë e Madhe in the municipality of Ranilug/Ranillug, the old sports field was almost in ruins and without a fence, so children there could not participate in sports.

Worried residents approached officials in Ranilug/Ranillug to help them rehabilitate the sports field. In the last two years, the municipality has helped renovate 12 classrooms at Trajko Perić school, including installation of central heating as part of a project to improve energy efficiency. But while local administration was dedicated to improving learning conditions in the schools, they simply did not have sufficient funds for the sports project. As a result, the community and the municipal officials sought additional funds from donors.

In November 2016, the municipality and the USAID **Advancing Kosovo Together** program joined forces to rehabilitate the outdoor sports field, where around 200 school-children engage in sports each day.

“This project will enhance development of our children and their emotional well-being, which will inspire them to be better students. So, it is not only about rehabilitation of the sports field; this project will have a long-term impact on our community,” explained Milan Stanojević, a physical education teacher at Trajko Perić.

Katarina Petrović, a sixth grade student, says that children are very happy with the new playground: “Unlike the previous playground, the new field is so much better.”

Her classmate, Marko Rašković, agrees with Katarina: “The conditions are much better!”

USAID’s Advancing Kosovo Together program, which runs from 2014 to 2017, aims to increase constructive interethnic cooperation between Kosovo’s majority and minority populations, which is vital to the security and stability of the region. The program takes a holistic approach toward the integration of minority populations by partnering with municipalities and other government partners to support targeted communities. In particular, the program works to improve conditions to enable ethnic minorities to actively engage in the work force and Government of Kosovo institutions while preserving and protecting their unique cultural heritage.

Over 14,000 participants have been engaged in USAID’s activities that foster positive inter-ethnic cooperation in addressing common problems of social needs, unemployment, and municipal service improvement in 16 partner municipalities, some 46 priority projects affecting 23,910 direct beneficiaries have been completed. Additionally USAID’s work with multi-ethnic micro-enterprises and farmers led to increased sales of 113 and 149 new jobs.