

**YOUTH GET A KICK START IN NIS**



*Snezana Nikolic from Babusnica (with son) receiving small grant from CHF for the improvement of the translating service agency she operates. Snezana, with her colleague, bought a printer, which will ease their work and improve the quality of their services. One of new users of their translating service is Babusnica Local Self Government.*



*Milorad Stojkovic, Tasana Markovic and Jasmina Tonic bought a monitor, a scanner and graphic card with the grant money they received from CHF. They will start Web-Design service. Their first job will be making the data base program for real estate agencies.*

NIS, SRBIJA – In this fragile economic environment, youth, women, minorities, refugees and displaced persons are usually the last to be employed. In fact, many young people move from their communities because of poor economic conditions, further harming the potential future and sustainability of these villages. It is for these reasons that CHF created the Kick Start Program (KSP), which provides people with existing businesses or entrepreneurship ideas the opportunity to compete for small grants in order to start or develop their own business. These are small grants - \$200 for one individual; \$400 or \$600 for partnerships of two or three individuals – that encourage people to develop and realize their entrepreneurship ideas and contribute to the development of their family and their community. The KSP also provides workshops on business plan development and other trainings to support first-time business owners and entrepreneurs.

Slavko Palocevic is from Kosovo, but was displaced by the war and now lives in Zitkovac. Slavko was still in the Army

of Serbia and Montenegro when he sent business proposal to the CHF KSP. Before the end of his military service, Slavko was informed by CHF that he had won a small grant to open his hair salon. The grant enabled him to equip the salon and prepare to open the business while Slavko was finishing his service in the Army. Today, the salon is open and Slavko is now working as a professional hair dresser in Zitkovac. "CHF helped me to start living through this job", said Slavko.

The KSP was developed as part of the economic pillar of CHF Serbia's USAID-funded Community Revitalization through Democratic Action (CRDA) program. Through CRDA, CHF Serbia supports entrepreneurship initiatives that create jobs, increase incomes and attract funds to the local economy, especially for the more vulnerable populations. To date, 137 entrepreneurship ideas have been awarded with grants totaling over \$63,800 through the Kick Start Program. Slavko Palocevic is a prime example of what is possible with dedication, hard work, and strong partnerships.