

BUSINESS CLUB FOR A BETTER LIFE IN LEBANE



CRDA program improves working conditions for entrepreneurs in Lebane



Entrepreneurs and citizens of Lebane at the opening of Business Club

LEBANE, SERBIA – In the name of USAID Community Revitalization through Democratic Action (CRDA) program, which in east and southern Serbia is implemented by CHF International, citizens, the Community Development Council (CDC) and entrepreneurs from Lebane gave their own contribution to the economic development of their community.

Lebane, located in the south of Serbia has been suffering consequences of the economic crisis that lasted for ten years. In mid 90s (1996/97), about 4,500 workers were employed in the textile, metal and graphics industry. At present only 1,000 of those are still employed and are in the private business sector. Luckily, Lebane citizens do not give up easily and are ready to face new challenges.

By establishing the Association of Entrepreneurs, the citizens of Lebane strived to promote modern economic trends. In the past, they could not adequately organize among themselves in terms of skills development and application of new knowledge. For this purpose, the Association was in great need of additional assistance.

The CDC therefore organized several meetings involving groups of private entrepreneurs, representatives of local authorities and CHF's economic

development officers. The meetings resulted in the establishment of the Business Club to offer technical assistance to private entrepreneurs in Lebane.

After only 120 days of its existence, the Business Club justified the purpose of its establishment. Contacts with various producers and commercial chambers have been established; new business contracts have been concluded; information and education on possibilities of modern marketing in business was provided in cooperation with CHF.

The Business Club has extended its activities with legal counseling for private entrepreneurs from the field of accountancy, bookkeeping, business planning and business plan drafting. One of the very important activities of the Business Club is the establishment of a collective farm in the frame of the Association of private entrepreneurs. Already at this point, the Business Club in Lebane is self-sustainable.

By establishing Business Club in cooperation with USAID and CHF, the CDC gave only an initial injection to economic development of Lebane. New jobs have been agreed upon, incomes have increased and several people were provided with new jobs up to now. CRDA program in Lebane goes on.