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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 17, 2009

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PRESS RELEASE

New Systems Improve Public Services in Fushe-Kruje

FUSHE KRIJA, DECEMBER 17, 2009 Fushe-Kruje, with the support of USAID's Local Governance Program in Albania (LGPA) launched today a new computerized municipal tax system and a computerized Public Information Office. The new systems will provide greater access to information for the public in a customer-friendly environment.

Fushe Kruja's tax department, like so many other Albanian municipalities, had to do the majority of its work manually. With the new computerized system, the tax department will more accurately be able to calculate tax bills and track tax payments, and even develop the necessary revenue projections and analyses so important for city-planners and officials. Computerizing the tax system, will help the city improve tax collection and increase tax revenues so that Fushe-Kruje can deliver higher-quality services to its citizens. It will also reduce the number of one-on-one interactions with tax officials which are cited as a source of corrupt practices.

The new automated tax system will increase monitoring and evaluation and reduce manual errors.

The new Public Information Office provides an easy and convenient "one-stop-shop" where citizens and businesses will receive professional and efficient assistance on an array of issues from up-to-date information on laws, procedures, and investment and business opportunities in the city. The office was developed with the assistance of LGPA grantee the Albanian Socio-Economic Think Tank (ASET).

USAID/LGPA's technical and material support to the Fushe-Kruje Tax Department and the Public Information Office totals over 4,045,000 Lek.

USAID's Local Governance Program in Albania (LGPA) works with its partner municipalities in Albania to foster local economic growth, improve local governance, and strengthen civic and private sector engagement in local development. In addition to Fushe-Kruje, USAID's local governance program is assisting Elbesan, Fier, Gramsh, Korçe, Kukës, Lezhe, Librazhd, Pogradec and Shkodër.

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