



An International Center  
for Soil Fertility and  
Agricultural Development

# Success Story

## Kosovar Agribusinessmen's Investment in Poultry Farm Pays Off

The success story of the Adi Poultry Farm under the leadership of Abdurrahman Konjufca illustrates the impact of IFDC's current efforts in Kosovo. With IFDC's help this member of the IFDC-supported Association of Kosovo Agribusiness (AKA) was able to invest nearly \$1 million in his business since the war. The money comes in the form of loans from international development organizations like the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), which supports the American Bank of Kosovo (ABK). Konjufca is a prime example for a new generation of entrepreneurs in Kosovo. These businessmen are willing to take calculated financial risks, which are necessary for the development of a healthy free market economy.

Konjufca's success story started with a major setback in 1990. He had worked for Shpendaria, a state-owned Kosovar egg producer, for seven years when he was dismissed, like all other Kosovar Albanians on staff, due to new Belgrade policies. The graduate of the University of Pristina had started as an accountant and worked his way up to the position of General Manager. After his dismissal in 1990, Konjufca was able to establish the now prosperous private egg-production company, Adi. The company's success later enabled him to gain control of Shpendaria after the Kosovo Conflict. Konjufca was able to do so through the United Nations' commercialization initiative, under which state-owned assets were leased to investors like him for 10 years.

At the moment, Konjufca is modernizing and expanding his businesses with the credits extended to him by the ABK and others. These credits helped him to increase his production capacity from zero, immediately after the conflict, to 53,000 layers and 77,000 pullets. A large feed mill is part of the Adi Poultry Farm as well. Konjufca was also able to upgrade the company's technology this year with machinery from Slovenia. Moreover, he was able to invest in repairs on his caging system, which had become necessary. IFDC is glad to assist agribusinessmen like Konjufca by supporting the Kosovo Poultry Farmers and Feed Millers Association (SHPUK).

To stabilize and support Kosovo's agricultural sector after the conflict in the region, IFDC has implemented a project, which encourages private entrepreneurship and introduces Kosovar farmers to new technologies and means to market and sell their products. "While each project presents its own set of challenges and opportunities, the Kosovo project has been particularly challenging," says IFDC Soil Fertility Scientist and project member Dr. Debbie Hellums. "Despite this, the IFDC Kosovo Agribusiness Development Program has successfully established an association network and private extension services that produce success stories like Konjufca's." Changes in the structure of the agricultural sector are already evident. Kosovar farmers embrace progress and new technologies. Moreover, private investors such as Konjufca are learning to take calculated business risks, which allow for a healthy level of entrepreneurship and competition. A key factor in IFDC's efforts is the use and support of trade associations like SHPUK. Within these organizations farmers and agribusinessmen exchange ideas and experiences. Furthermore, IFDC uses them as outlets for demonstrations of new technologies and marketing methods.

IFDC has compiled and evaluated statistics on the progress of its efforts in Kosovo. These figures show that from 1999 to 2001 agricultural output has increased by more than 30% for goods such as potatoes, wheat, and maize. Furthermore, the poultry industry was able to increase production of eggs by 79% and sales revenues by 52%. The most significant indicator, however, is the shift in attitudes of Kosovar farmers and potential agricultural investors, who have come to embrace the idea of a strong private sector and are willing to take risks to improve Kosovo's agriculture. This ultimately translates into a better overall economy, better employment opportunities for Kosovars, and a dependable food supply. "The overall statistics give an idea as to the success of the project, but seeing positive changes in our clients' daily lives are the true measure of success," says Dr. Hellums.