



# USAID

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Press Release

## USAID BRIDGE Public Works Program Opening Ceremony in Ijevan on December 3, 2007

The BRIDGE program aims to assist vulnerable communities in achieving greater self-sufficiency by providing them with vocational training in construction skills and employment opportunities on public works projects that will rehabilitate community-prioritized infrastructure. The objectives of the BRIDGE is to rehabilitate vital social/economic infrastructure, increase employment through public works projects and targeted vocational skills training, provide community awareness and their participation in the program.

USAID provided funding for the rehabilitation works of Ijevan Park and Water Basin. The project was recently completed and the official opening ceremony will take place in Ijevan on December 3, 2007.

Ijevan Park occupies the central part of the city and serves as the main leisure and entertainment venue for the community. The park has also an open-air exhibition of large stone sculptures, which were carved by internationally recognized sculptors. Since independence, renovation works had not been carried out at the park, and the water basin was not functioning. As a result, the park did not serve the community, while the neighboring cafeterias and stores were not able to draw sufficient customers.

To address these problems, Ijevan centre community proposed this project to the USAID BRIDGE Public Works Program in 2006. The BRIDGE program, along with UNDP and the Ijevan municipality financed the construction works, including the rehabilitation of the park pathways and lighting, construction of the irrigation system, positioning of the sculptures, rehabilitation and improvement of the entire park grounds. A local company, Drenazh, carried out the works.

Immediately after the completion of the project, the city core became energized. The park already attracts community residents and tourists, while the private sector has much more clients. Following the 2006 construction, World Vision International also added a children's playground from its funds, further increasing the use of the park.

In 2007, the BRIDGE Public Works Program and Ijevan municipality responded to the community's request, and proceeded with the rehabilitation of the park water basin and surrounding grounds.

The project provided 25 community members with short-term work in 2006, while 12 persons were able to find work during the 2007 construction season. In addition, BRIDGE provided training in concrete and stone masonry to 10 community members who were able to reinforce their skills during the construction works on the water basin. BRIDGE will present certificates of completion and tool boxes to the vocational training graduates at the opening ceremony.

For more detailed information about the USAID BRIDGE Public Works Program please contact Hasmik Sargsyan via phone (37410) 260015, 210015 or by e-mail at [hsargsyan@chf.am](mailto:hsargsyan@chf.am).