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**USAID Kosovo EMPOWER Private Sector
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EMPOWER THROUGH JOB CREATION!

FAST FACTS

News from the Wood Processing Sector

A three-month **internship program** will place 40 young people in wood processing companies to acquire practical training in design, production operations, sales/marketing, and business administration, thus equipping unemployed youth with skills that make them more employable.

Elnor, Ukaj, Tefik Çanga, Design, Divani, Deco and Tedes participated in the **annual fair in Bad Salzufen**, Germany, which attracts Europe's major distributors, agents, retailers, specialty stores, chains and Internet platforms. As a result, 50 new jobs are expected to be created.



Kosovare Bërdynaj at the FIT training class, the American University of Kosovo

More Jobs for Women Means More Economic Success

There cannot be real economic success without full integration of women in the workforce, at all sectors and all levels. Creating more jobs for women is one of the top priorities of USAID's EMPOWER Private Sector. When these jobs are created, women are empowered and become agents of social change. This job creating agenda is reflected in the breadth of activities we support.

EMPOWER Private Sector is currently working on five programs with the ICT sector. These programs benefit nearly 235 young individuals, and it is expected that around 190, of whom nearly 105 women, will be employed upon completion of the training or internship program.

Kosovare Bërdynaj, participant of the *Females in IT*, one of our programs, has already started an internship with one of the largest internet service providers in Kosovo. "At the university, we learn things from the academic perspective. But the employers look for a different set of skills, which the FIT program is equipping us with."

On a different side, EMPOWER Private Sector partnered with the Center for Women Development in North Kosovo to support a new initiative for professional childcare. This program responds to the growing need of families in North Mitrovicë/a for these services by properly trained staff. Having such services available will help more women join the workforce.

"The Females in IT training made me more competitive in the labor market." – Kosovare Bërdynaj, participant.

The numbers look promising: as of September 2015, a total of expected 465 individuals have jobs, of whom 255 are women. By creating jobs for women and the right conditions for them to work, we help companies and the economy grow stronger. More women employment means there is better use of resources and their talent makes companies more successful and more competitive.



Clockwise: Alicia English, ENRA, Nazmi Pllana, KCBS, and David King, EMPOWER Private Sector

Supporting the Success of Kosovo Companies

USAID's EMPOWER Private Sector is collaborating with the Kosovo Center for Business Support and ENRA to explore the potential supplier network of used motor oil for recycling. The analysis will support BTP Holding, the only licensed company in Kosovo for used oil recycling to expand its collection network, increase sales and create at least 4 new jobs immediately. More importantly, the activity will have a broader environmental impact.



Marking of Kosovo segment of Via Dinarica begins

We Welcome Via Dinarica

USAID's EMPOWER Private Sector contracted the Kosovo Mountaineering and Alpinist Federation to physically map Via Dinarica's Kosovo segment. This activity connects Kosovo to the global outdoor tourism market. As a long-range hiking trail currently running from Slovenia to Albania, now extending to Kosovo and then to Macedonia, Via Dinarica brings outdoor lovers and organizations together with locally owned and operated small businesses to protect and promote the vast natural and cultural resources of the western Balkans



Working together on women's economic growth

Investing in Women Has Great Returns

Women have a great potential to grow their businesses. But they do encounter greater barriers when it comes to finding jobs or running their own business. Some of these barriers range from lack of access to finance, to fewer employment opportunities and lower paid jobs for women, property rights challenges, lack of specific job skills, and even networking opportunities. As a result, they are underrepresented at every level.

At the second meeting of the Women in Economic Growth Coordination Group meeting hosted by USAID's EMPOWER Private Sector we discussed about what we can do to improve things and align the efforts of member institutions and organization for women's economic empowerment.

"We are happy to collaborate with you and join our efforts in any activity that creates jobs for women, as we all have funds to work together on this," said David King, EMPOWER Private Sector Director.

At this meeting, new members joined the coordination group: the Agency for Gender Equality, USAID's EMPOWER Credit Support Program, and SOS Children's Villages – Family Strengthening Program.



Business women from Kosovo at the Regional Women in Business Event, Belgrade

This month, we also supported eight women business owners from Kosovo, four of them from the north, to participate in the Regional Women in Business Event and B2B in Belgrade, where they networked with other businesswomen from the region. Private sector grows and businesses become more profitable when more women are involved.

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USAID's EMPOWER Private Sector, which started in July 2014, is a five-year project designed to stimulate large-scale job creation by elevating the competitiveness of Kosovo firms. The project is funded by USAID, and is implemented by Cardno Emerging Markets USA, Ltd.