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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 grant agreement signed with **Te Naseri** will complement the company's investment to equip new production facilities and showroom. Nearly **100** new jobs are expected to be created, of which **70** for women.

With the grant awarded in October to **Binni**, the company will be able to acquire a particular kind of technology that increases precision, efficiency, and quality of products. And there is more than just quality improvement. As a result, some 28 new jobs are expected to be created.

Baking Sweets Brings More Jobs for Women

After Lirie lost her job in the 90s, she dedicated her time and energy to raising her sons, and to making plans for her future. She did not want to settle with being a housewife, as there was a lot more she wanted to do with her time and energy. Her plans always were about different business ideas and employing other women.

In 2008, Lirie's plan materialized when she decided to combine together two of her skills: her professional knowledge of food ingredients, as a former food lab technician, and her knack of making sweets.

Thus was Rolleo born; out of her own kitchen, where she baked overnight trays of *tatli* and *sheqerpare* for a local supermarket in her hometown of Ferizaj/Uroševac. "The owner of the supermarket, Baca Sylë (*Uncle Sylë*), helped me launch my business; he assigned a refrigerator for my products and provided me with the first packaging material," says Lirie, who now sells her products across Kosovo in the largest supermarket chains.

Once the business got going, Lirie moved the production from her kitchen to her garage space, and hired 3 employees. In the course of a month, the number increased to 17. They would work all day, to meet the increasing demand from buyers.

"I always wanted to own my business and create jobs for women." – Lirie Ilazi, Rolleo.



Lirie Ilazi, owner of Rolleo, at her production space

Now, Lirie is building a two-floor factory on the plot of land she inherited from her father. USAID EMPOWER Private Sector will support Lirie by co-funding through a grant the new equipment needed for the factory, an activity that will create some 40 more new jobs for women.

"I always wanted to own my business and create jobs for women," says Lirie. "I took a risk and I did it; I own my business. My message for the other women is not to lose confidence in themselves and dare to achieve their dreams."



USAID Deputy Mission Director Mike de la Rosa, and Godži owner, Goran Jocić inaugurate the new machine



Successful completions of the three-day training in Pristina



EMPOWER Private Sector and Menakon Fashion House handing out certificates



Busy day recycling used plastic at Izolimi Plast

Contact Us

USAID EMPOWER Private Sector

Str. Pashko Vasa No.6

Qyteza Pejton, Pristina

+381 38 222 855

info@empowerkosovo.org

www.empowerkosovo.org

<https://www.facebook.com/empowerkosovo>

Supporting the Success of Kosovo Companies

USAID Deputy Mission Director Mike de la Rosa and Goran Jocić, owner of wood processing company Godži, inaugurated the expansion of the company's unit that produces doors, windows, kitchen, and interior elements. The new edge banding machine of Godži increases the quality and productivity. The company has already hired nine new people, and nine more will be hired in the coming months.

Regional Adventure Tourism Keeps Up with Global Trends

The Adventure Travel Trade Association (ATTA) and the USAID EMPOWER Private Sector organized a three-day training for adventure travel agencies and guides from the region on adventure trends, safety and risk management, product development and marketing for adventure travel ground suppliers. EMPOWER Private Sector's Director David King said "You are the agents to bring more tourists in Kosovo and the region. This is how you create more jobs in this industry."

Investing in Women Has Great Returns

Menakon Fashion House in Gjilan/Gnjilane distributed certificates and employment contracts to fifteen women trained in four different tailoring processes, thus bringing to a successful completion the six-month vocational training program supported by a grant from USAID EMPOWER Private Sector. Metush Zymberi, owner, said "This training program is a good example of how we can empower women by equipping them with technical skills for which there is a market demand, and creating permanent job opportunities for them." At the training program that started in March this year, the group of women learned about cutting, sewing, handiwork and ironing processes needed for wedding and formal gown production.

More Jobs in the Recycling Business

"I would see the plastic waste lying around, and I was constantly thinking of how it could be reused. I knew it could be reused. So, I conducted a research and decided to start up my own business", says Alban Rama, owner of Izolimi Plast, one of the newest beneficiaries of USAID EMPOWER Private Sector.

Izolimi Plast recycles used plastic into granulates and then transformed into thermos-isolation foils for the construction industry and agriculture. The grant will support the company to purchase new parts for the foil-production machine to increase the number of products. This operation is expected to create nearly 38 jobs, mostly for women, who will work in sorting and cleaning the recycled plastic bags used.

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.