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**USAID Kosovo EMPOWER Private Sector
Newsletter No. 9, December 2015**

EMPOWER THROUGH JOB CREATION!

FAST FACTS

New Grants Awarded

Ebbers Group is a newly opened foundry. The grant enables the company to grow sales and increase the existing number of 8 employees to nearly 60.

OSA Termosistem Company will use the grant support to upgrade its equipment to increase the productivity and improve the energy efficiency of all its insulated products, and create at least 34 new jobs in the process.

The grant awarded to **Monter-B** gutter producer helps the company acquire a machine for cutting metal sheets in different sizes to match the product style. The new production line will create some 11 new jobs.



Seven women already certified as childcare providers

Certified Childcare Providers Deliver Quality Services for Everyone

To provide quality childcare services, love for children does not suffice. Childcare service is not just babysitting; it is a profession. As a profession, it requires knowledge how children grow and what their educational needs are. It also requires skills to communicate effectively with both children and their parents, passion for the profession and commitment to accompany children in their journey to a healthy adulthood.

This is exactly what the NGO Center for Women Development in North Mitrovicë/a is seeking to achieve through their new initiative of training and certifying educators and childcare providers.

“Educators and childcare providers help raise children in the safest and most appropriate way,” says Dijana Hasani, Executive Director of CWD. “Our program trains the childcare professionals in several areas, as pedagogues, nutritionists, and psychologists. They also receive training in first aid, self-defense, and speech therapy.”

The training program is accredited by the School for Childcare Providers in Belgrade, and the certificates are internationally recognized.

Sanja Lazarević from CWD says, “I am a mother. I remember how difficult it was to find someone to look after my child, as I had to go back to work. I am glad that now families in our area will have an additional option for childcare – either during day hours, or whenever they need such services.”

“Educators and childcare providers help raise children in the most appropriate way.” – Dijana Hasani, CWD.

USAID EMPOWER Private Sector’s grant to support the training is expected to create some 36 new jobs, mostly for women. As childcare service is not only a woman’s job, this activity goes beyond merely job creation.

The certified childcare providers will work with parents and families to ensure a high level of services that benefit everyone, in more ways than one, for example, free up busy schedules of women from unpaid care work thereby allowing them to be involved in paid work outside of their homes. This is another contribution to women’s economic empowerment and to a better economy.



Left to right: Ambassador Greg Delawie, Shefqet Kuçi, and James Hope

Supporting the Success of Kosovo Companies

At the inauguration of the new production line of children's shoes by Solid Shoe factory, Ambassador Delawie said "By creating 55 new jobs to work this new production line, you will create opportunities for your employees and their families to build better lives – a fact of which you should be extremely proud. I encourage you to continue expanding in the right direction: new innovative products, new markets, and more jobs for everyone. The United States is proud to be your partner."



Vasilije Marković (second from right) talking about the new CNC machine

More Jobs Created in the North

USAID's Scott Cameron and Vasilije Marković, owner of "Marković" furniture producer inaugurated the recently upgraded production line of the company. As a result of a new CNC machine the company acquired through a grant from USAID, this family-owned business is able to process solid wood at a quality, cost and volume to respond to requests from buyers. The activity is expected to create at least 7 new jobs.



Mladen Miličević (right) and Scott Cameron checking out the newly-produced pellets

Nine people have already started working for pellet producer Europa Company in Leposavić/q after the company acquired a high-capacity wood chopper through a grant from USAID. At the inauguration ceremony, USAID representatives met with the owner of Europa and the new employees, and we learned that as a result of the new wood chopper, the company has increased the output of wood pellets from 600t to 1500t per year. This activity will result in some 20 new jobs in total.

New ICT Training Program for Youth Launched

A recent study by the Kosovo Information and Communication Technology Association indicated that the ICT professionals with certain skills are much in demand by both local and foreign companies, which is translated into new and better jobs for Kosovo's youth, and signifies more economic growth. To help address the need, USAID partnered with the Kosovo Association of Information and Communication Technology (STIKK), and the Governments of Norway and Germany. In December, STIKK launched the new training program to be delivered in two rounds, each lasting 6 months that will equip youth with the skills currently in demand by employers. This training program acknowledges the increasing role of technology in changing and shaping the new reality of the labor market in Kosovo as anywhere else in the world, and about new skills and profiles required by the employers. The good news is that some 70 new jobs for young women and men in this sector will be created.



Vjolla Çavolli, Executive Director of STIKK, at the event launching the training program

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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.