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USAID Kosovo EMPOWER Private Sector
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EMPOWER THROUGH JOB CREATION!

FAST FACTS

New Business Opportunities at the SwissBau Fair

Elnor signed 9 pre-contracts, discussed 20 potential, and achieved 270 other contracts. Expected sales from pre-contracts is nearly €90,000. Business partners indicated their greatest interest in Elnor's kitchens.

Shehu signed 12 pre-contracts, and discussed 300 other potential contracts. Expected sales from pre-contracts is nearly €80,000. Shehu reached an agreement with a Swiss company to be their representative in the Swiss market.

Lesna signed 33 pre-contracts, and discussed 350 other potential contracts. Expected sales from pre-contracts is nearly €250,000. Lesna also reached an agreement with a Swiss company to be their representative in the Swiss market.

Kosovo Wood Processing Companies Hit Success at SwissBau Fair in Switzerland

On January 12-16, 2016, Elnor, Shehu and Lesna, three wood processing companies from Kosovo, exhibited their products ranging from kitchens, chairs, and wooden stairs to doors and windows at the 5-day international furniture and interior fair SwissBau in Basel, Switzerland. This was the first time that Kosovo producers exhibited at this large international event.

"All three exhibiting companies succeeded in creating new business contacts and initiating potential deals," said Arieta Pozhegu, Executive Director of the Association of Wood Processors of Kosovo that co-supported with USAID EMPOWER Private Sector the companies' exhibition at SwissBau Fair.

SwissBau Fair is the major wood and construction fair in Switzerland. The three Kosovo companies exhibited their products for interested businesses and clients, mainly from Switzerland, also from other European countries. These products included doors, windows, wooden stairs and other furniture items.

The initiative proved quite fruitful. Therefore, it is important that Kosovo companies, even from other sectors such as production of isolation and other energy saving materials, or construction furniture, participate in the next fair that will take place in January 2018. This is a good competitive opportunity for Kosovo companies, since the Diaspora owned companies are very powerful in Switzerland.

*"Actual pre-contracts agreed amount to a total of
€420,000"*



Furniture made in Kosovo exhibited in SwissBau Fair

The participation of the three Kosovo companies at the Swissbau Fair was supported by the Kosovo Investment and Enterprise Support Agency (KIESA) which operates under the auspices of the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI), USAID EMPOWER Private Sector, and PPSE-Swisscontact, with support by the Association of Wood Processors of Kosovo.



Left to right: Labinot Gruda and James Hope switching on the new equipment

Supporting the Success of Kosovo Companies

On January 29, 2016 USAID Mission Director James Hope and Labinot Gruda, CEO of Ultra Cosmetics Company launched the company’s newest product “ULTRA Clean Touch”. This product consists of four single-packed wet wipes used for different purposes: nail polish remover, eyeglass lens cleaning, screen cleaning, and makeup remover. Director Hope said “The best investment is investing in people and providing job opportunities.”



Positive energy while developing #EcShlirë

Women Using Technology to Empower Other Women

Thirty young women are learning how to leverage from front-end technology to develop mobile applications for Android and iPhone during a nine-day workshop, part of an initiative by Open Data Kosovo and Girls Coding Kosovo with Kosovo Women’s Network. The outcome of this workshop will be #EcShlirë, an app that women can use anonymously to report cases of sexual harassment. The activity will continue with internships for this group of young women, and five of them are expected to be employed. USAID EMPOWER Private Sector is supporting this program through a grant allocated to Open Data Kosovo. Canada Fund for Local Initiatives, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, and RIT Kosovo are also supporting the program.



Sharing tools for creating decent employment for women

Making Markets Work for Women

Nineteen participants representing fourteen local and donor-funded organizations in Kosovo that seek to strengthen and advance inclusion of women in the country’s economic growth were part of a two-day training organized by USAID EMPOWER Private Sector in collaboration with Promoting Private Sector Employment-SDC. The “Making Markets Work for Women” training used participatory methods to help participants increase their understanding of gender concepts as business arguments. The training provided practical and comprehensive tools for market interventions with a gender perspective and how to develop strategies and business models in value chains that create more decent jobs for women.



Presentation of the wood biomass analysis report

Analyzing Kosovo wood biomass

In January, USAID EMPOWER Private Sector brought together 25 representatives of the wood biomass stakeholders to discuss about the findings and recommendations stemming from the analysis of the locally produced pellet quality. Stakeholder discussions focused on the report recommendations pertaining to continuous monitoring of the wood biomass product quality, while emphasizing the importance of continuous institutional support so that producers can achieve the highest standards in wood pellet production. This meeting is part of the ongoing activities of EMPOWER Private Sector to support wood biomass product optimization and quality improvements, which is in accordance with the project’s goal to support the emerging “green energy” value chain of products and services.

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>

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.