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**USAID Kosovo EMPOWER Private Sector
Newsletter No. 14, May 2016**

EMPOWER THROUGH JOB CREATION!

FAST FACTS

Green Festival Activities

The “**Green Pavilion**” brought together 19 Kosovo companies that displayed their green products, services and technologies to the public.

The 3-day “**Green Forum**” highlighted priority issues in the policy, legal, and regulatory environment for the business of energy. Panelists were representatives of business, government, and civil society, and the sessions attracted over 130 attendees. The forums covered solar energy, recycling, energy efficiency, and biomass energy.

The activities organized in the center of Pristina involved the public and encouraged awareness and public contribution to environmental sustainability.

The Business of Energy - Kosovo Goes Green

On May 25, US Ambassador to Kosovo Greg Delawie joined the Minister of Environment and Spatial Planning Ferid Agani, Minister of Economic Development Blerand Stavileci, the Ambassador of the Czech Republic in Kosovo Ivo Šilhavý, and ProCredit CEO Ilir Aliu to open the first ever “Green Festival”.

This event was organized with USAID support through EMPOWER Private Sector. This event was entirely dedicated to the “Green Business” in Kosovo, which covers renewable energy, recycling and energy efficiency.

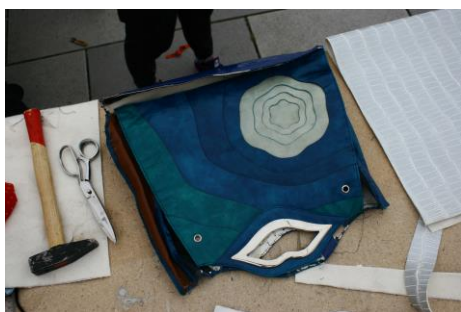
The “Green Festival” aims to promote Kosovo green business and job creation, to stimulate needed legal regulatory improvements for the green business environment, and to expand public awareness of the benefits of adopting green technologies and how they can support environmental sustainability. The “Green Festival” aims to advance the development and growth of green business, and contribute to the amelioration of global climate change.

“I believe that Kosovo can be a positive example to other countries in addressing global climate change, and indeed a leader in promoting economic growth through innovative green business” - US Ambassador Greg Delawie.



The “Green Festival” is intended to help improve Kosovo’s ecology and beauty, and, more broadly, contribute to amelioration of global climate change, and also to be the first installment of what will become a regular annual event in Kosovo, and could even grow into a larger regional show.

The “Green Festival” took place alongside the EXPOKOS Fair 2016 in Pristina.



Recycling is fashionable and fun

Supporting the Success of Kosovo Companies

Creating new memories out of old items – this is what Loreta Ukshini and Isah Mustafa, owners of I'm LU bags and accessories store did for the visitors of the “Green Festival” activities in the center of Pristina. While creating fashionable new items by recycling old T-shirts, bags and other items visitors brought them, they also helped increase awareness of the overall benefits of recycling.



Adventure Next Event in Ohrid, May 2016

Attracting Adventure Tourism Fans to Kosovo

In May, USAID EMPOWER Private Sector supported participation of five Kosovo tour operators at the Adventure Next event in Ohrid. These operators: Catun, AirTour, Balkan Outdoor Experience, Kosovo Holidays and Outdoor In presented their packages to the fellow operators from across the world. The other organization that received support to participate – the Destination Management Organization West (DMO West) acted as an agent for the western Kosovo destination presenting the business opportunities on behalf of the operators in Pejë/Peć, Deçan/Dečan, and Junik. The activity was part of EMPOWER Private Sector work in the tourism sector, with special focus on adventure tourism, the regional cooperation as well as the development of signature products such as the Via Dinarica Kosovo.



USAID Mission Director James Hope delivering certificates of completion of the internship program

Internship Program Assists Youth Find Employment

In May, 40 youth were certified for successful completion of a 3-month internship program with fourteen wood processing companies. Already 29 of them have full-time regular jobs with these companies. “We need to help workers obtain the skills required to qualify for jobs in the marketplace, and in partnership with Wood Producers Association, Institutions of Higher Learning, Vocational Training Centers, and companies in the wood sector, we are working to provide internship opportunities for Kosovo’s youth ,” said USAID Mission Director James Hope at the certificate ceremony.



Last group of 20 completed Females in IT Program

Successful Completion of Females in IT Program

The second and final group of 20 young women successfully completed this year-long course at AUK, bringing to 70 the total number of participants equipped with skills as desktop support technicians, network systems administrators, and software application developers, which are much in demand in the labor market in Kosovo. Careers in ICT are dynamic, flexible, and well-remunerated. FIT and other similar programs enable greater inclusion of women in the ICT labor market. The program was supported by USAID and EYE.

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.