



EMPOWER THROUGH JOB CREATION!

FAST FACTS

EMPOWER supported wood processor Idrizi, with a grant of €40,000, to purchase new equipment for its new greenfield production facility. The grant will enable the company to expand production and create 40 new jobs.

A grant of €35,000 was awarded to wood processor Albed to co-finance new equipment to produce leather furniture. Albed will become the first in Kosovo to produce such products. The company will create 33 new jobs.

EMPOWER signed a grant of €30,000 with raspberry producer Agro-Art to co-finance the purchase of post-harvest cooling and freezing chambers. Agro-Art will create 31 new jobs over the next two years.

A grant of €30,000 was awarded to carbon fiber automotive parts producer KOSHI GROUPE to purchase new equipment. The grant will enable the company to increase production capacity and create 20 new jobs.

EMPOWER signed a grant of €14,500 with IPKO Foundation to support the implementation of this year's Girls in ICT Day and DokuTech technology conference. Both events will provide opportunities for Kosovo youth interested in the ICT field.

Wood processing company Genkor was awarded a grant of €2,500 to obtain the quality management system certification ISO 9001:2015. This will help the company expand throughout Kosovo and export.

Kosovo Wood Processors Successful at European Fairs

Trade fairs provide exhibiting companies with the opportunity to present their products to international buyers, determine market opportunities, make contacts, and create new business deals. For this purpose, earlier this year, ten Kosovo wood processing companies participated at the two biggest furniture fairs in Europe. EMPOWER Private Sector in partnership with Sida supported three Kosovo furniture companies to exhibit their products at the IMM interior design fair in Cologne, Germany, during January 15 – 21, 2018, and another seven companies at the Swissbau building trade fair in Basel, Switzerland, during January 16 – 20, 2018. The exhibitions provided the perfect opportunity for the Kosovo companies to expand to new markets and present the Kosovo wood processing industry to international buyers. The ten companies made a great impression on buyers with their Kosovo-made furniture, including kitchens, stairs, modular walls, wooden houses, doors and windows, tables and chairs, sofas, and contract furniture for hotels, restaurants, and cafeterias (HoReCa).

The Kosovo wood processors were very pleased with their participation at the fairs. They made important contacts and, more importantly, signed lucrative contracts. "In addition to establishing some very serious contacts with prestigious German, Swiss, Austrian, Dutch and English companies, we also made concrete sales deals" – said Ekrem Shahini from Palma, one of Kosovo's leading wood processors. As a result of their participation at the fairs, the ten companies have signed €3.3M worth of contracts, over €3M in pre-contracts are expected to be signed, and made over 1,000 serious contacts with individual and company buyers. Export deals were made with companies from the EU, Switzerland, UK, Africa and Saudi Arabia.

Furthermore, the designs of Kosovo-made furniture attracted a lot of attention from visitors. Albed, in particular, achieved a lot of praise for its designs, with the company receiving the prestigious Archiproducts Design Selection Award 2018 from a professional jury for one of its Kosovo-designed and made chairs.

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Kosovo company Albed exhibiting its products at the IMM fair in Cologne, Germany.

Kosovo's wood industry is one of the most developed industries in the country, and it continues to grow. For the past three years, EMPOWER Private Sector has supported this industry through various activities, including grant funding, support in obtaining quality certifications, technical assistance, and by enabling linkages to export markets. This is the second time EMPOWER Private Sector has supported Kosovo wood processing companies to exhibit at the fairs. This year, USAID's EMPOWER Private Sector in partnership with the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency was joined by the Kosovo Investment and Enterprise Agency, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit in coordination with the

Association of Wood Processors of Kosovo, to support the participation of the Kosovo companies at the fairs.



Jaha Solar employees making photovoltaic solar panels at the Jaha Solar factory in Fushe Kosove

Jaha Solar Signs Big Contracts

Kosovo’s sole photovoltaic solar panel producer is expanding fast. In February and March 2018, Jaha Solar signed three major projects. The company signed a contract with local company SGE company to design and install a 3MWp PV Plant in Kamenicë, which will be the biggest solar project in the region. Jaha Solar signed two projects in Montenegro, one with international company Invicta to design, supply, and install a photovoltaic project in Montenegro with a capacity of 416kWp, and another project with Eco Solar System DOO, from Montenegro, for a 996kWp rooftop solar system. The latter represents the biggest solar project in Montenegro until now. The projects are expected to create many new jobs in Kosovo. EMPOWER Private Sector in partnership with Sida has supported Jaha Solar to obtain necessary product quality certifications for its photovoltaic solar panels and has cooperated with the company in the Solar Roofs Pilot Project to incentivize the use of renewable energy resources in Kosovo and promote solar panel installations.



Former President Jahjaga led the Global Mentoring Walk in Prishtina

Empowering Women at the First Global Mentoring Walk in Kosovo

On March 10th, 2018, the first ever Global Mentoring Walk was held in Prishtina, with the theme of Empowering Entrepreneurial Women. Held annually on the same day, the event celebrates International Women’s Day in over 60 countries of the world, so that established businesswomen and leaders can mentor and support women aspiring to their roles. The former Kosovo President Atifete Jahjaga led the walk and spoke during the ceremony, noting the numerous legal, structural, and cultural barriers that Kosovo women face. “Only by supporting each other and by extending a hand to those in need, we can achieve the change that we want to make.” – said former President Jahjaga. The Global Mentoring Walk was organized through the partnership of Vital Voices and Melita & Partners, BCC, and G7, with support from EMPOWER Private Sector in partnership with Sida, SDC-funded PPSE project, and Banka Ekonomike.



Tiki Mosaic employees working on mosaic tiles made from recycled glass.

Kosovo Companies Turn Trash into Treasure

Kosovo companies are helping solve environmental problems by recycling Kosovo’s waste into export-quality products. Tiki Mosaic collects glass waste from all over Kosovo and recycles it into colorful and beautiful mosaic tiles. EMPOWER Private Sector in partnership with Sida supported the company from its startup stages through grant support to expand production capacities and to obtain two quality certificates through EBRD. Similarly, Izolimi Plast recycles plastic waste and turns it into insulation material. Through grant support from EMPOWER, the company increased its recycling capacities from 300 tons per year in 2015 to 1,200 tons per year in 2017. Lastly, Al-Tec has become Kosovo’s first meat recycling and animal feed production startup thanks to grant support from EMPOWER to purchase equipment. Collectively, these companies have created 120 jobs thus far.



Mr. Furkan Rada from Fashion Network learning techniques for making uniforms at the HAVEP factory in Skopje.

Kosovo Apparel Producers Learn from Macedonian Counterparts

On March 14th and 15th, 2018, five Kosovo apparel companies visited four Macedonian apparel manufacturers to gain first-hand knowledge on production processes. During the two-day visit, Kosovo companies Creative, Fashion Network, CroFashion, Puntex, and Artatex learned about quality control, factory layouts that maximize production efficiency, and fabric testing. They also visited the Vinica Textile High School and Institute for Textile Engineering in Skopje and learned about ways manufacturers can collaborate with students. The visit was organized by EMPOWER Private Sector in partnership with Sida, the Kosovo Apparel Marketing Association and Macedonian Textile Trade Association.

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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 Sida, and is implemented by Cardno Emerging Markets USA, Ltd.