



EMPOWER THROUGH JOB CREATION!

FAST FACTS

Wood processors Candeo and Mobilieria Real were awarded EMPOWER grants of €30,000 and €25,000, respectively, to co-finance the purchase of machinery, expand production capacity, and improve quality. Collectively, they will create 56 new jobs.

EMPOWER signed a grant of €25,000 with mosaic tile manufacturer Tiki Mosaic to purchase new equipment, increase production capacity and create 16 new jobs. Tiki Mosaic recently inaugurated its first showroom in Prishtina.

An EMPOWER grant of €25,000 was awarded to energy company Decon to purchase new equipment for its laboratory to test and control its electrical equipment. The grant will enable the company to increase production capacity and create 23 new jobs.

EMPOWER supported energy company Alstone with a grant of €20,000 to establish a new laboratory with the necessary equipment to maintain its CE Mark quality product certifications, expand its exports, and create 20 new jobs.

EMPOWER awarded a grant of €19,000 to woman-owned, sweets producer Embelsia DPZ to purchase equipment and expand production. The grant will enable the company to create 13 new jobs.

EMPOWER supported apparel companies Creative, CRO Fashion, and Agnesa Tex, with grants of €15,844, €25,000, and €17,000, respectively, to purchase new equipment. The grants will enable the companies to expand production and collectively create 90 new jobs.



Kids at the BONEVET makerspace in Prishtina learning new skills and abilities in the field of ICT.

Kids and Youth in ICT: A Basis for Development in Kosovo

The youth of a country is considered its biggest asset, and with over 50% of Kosovo's population under the age of 25, Kosovo's youth is arguably its strongest advantage. Kosovo's young population provides the country with the potential to fuel the growth of many industries, especially in Information and Communications Technology (ICT). However, for the country to thrive on this advantage, it is extremely important to support, invest and create a supportive environment for Kosovo's youth to flourish. Young, curious, and willing to learn, the Kosovo youth's interest in ICT is growing quickly. Moreover, in recent years the ICT sector has become very attractive for local and international entrepreneurs and investors.

For over three years, the USAID EMPOWER Private Sector project, in partnership with the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), has supported ICT companies and NGOs to improve the ICT-related skills of Kosovo youth and create job opportunities in this sector. In late 2017, BONEVET Makerspace became one of the latest ICT initiatives to be supported by the project. This non-for-profit community encourages imagination, problem-solving, creativity, and team building among youth. It aims to help youth develop skills that meet the labor market demands of today and the future. These abilities will better prepare young people to make the transition from school to the workforce.

BONEVET opened its first makerspace in 2014 in Gjakova. After its big success, its founders wanted to extend the opportunity to more Kosovo youth, and decided to open a makerspace in Kosovo's capital. Seeing this as an excellent opportunity for Kosovo's youth, EMPOWER Private Sector supported the establishment of the BONEVET Makerspace in Prishtina with a grant of €49,768 to set up two modules and covered the costs of office equipment and inventory. At its official inauguration on April 24th, 2018, the US Ambassador Greg Delawie, USAID Mission Director James Hope, Ambassador of Switzerland Jean-Hubert Lebet, Prishtina Mayor Shpend Ahmeti, and the First Secretary at the German Embassy in Kosovo Martin Menger, witnessed the talent of young people, and noted the significance of such an opportunity for Kosovo's youth.

"We need places like BONEVET, that teach Kosovo's children early on that they can and should take on new challenges, push themselves to study and explore unfamiliar areas, and learn how to respond to challenges and setbacks without feeling discouraged. We need places that don't just educate, but spark imaginations and inspire new dreams, and new ambitions." – US Ambassador Greg Delawie.

The BONEVET Makerspace in Prishtina provides new types of trainings that help kids and youth develop knowledge and skills required by the ICT sector. It is expected that during 2018 up to 1,000 young Kosovars will have completed various courses and workshops.

For over three years, EMPOWER Private Sector has supported Kosovo's ICT companies through various activities to increase the employability of youth in the ICT sector, and create jobs. To date, the project has supported 55 ICT companies through 22 activities. These activities created 964 new jobs, of which 459 were taken up by youth. In addition, 1,404 people have received training in ICT through EMPOWER Private Sector support.



Women employees making finger joint planks at Dijamant wood processing factory.

Encouraging Women's Employment in the Wood Processing Sector

Similar to other countries in the world, the wood processing industry in Kosovo is mostly dominated by male workers. USAID's EMPOWER Private Sector project in partnership with Sida promotes social inclusion and encourages Kosovo's wood processing companies to hire more women. Through support and encouragement, the project's wood processing grant beneficiaries, Dijamant and Te Naseri, are setting an excellent example for others in the industry. Since receiving grant support, around 50% of the new jobs created by both companies went to women. Collectively, both companies have employed 68 women to work at their factories, showrooms and administration. Since July 2014, EMPOWER Private Sector engaged in activities which resulted in the creation of 1,135 (38%) jobs for women, including 193 in the wood processing sector.



Truck loaded with Elektrostublla's products and on its way to Switzerland.

Fair Participation Spurs Kosovo's Exports

The export of Kosovo-made products to other countries is vital for the development and growth of Kosovo's economy. EMPOWER Private Sector in partnership with Sida supports export-ready companies in various ways, including assisting these companies to participate at local, regional, and international fairs. Earlier this year, EMPOWER Private Sector supported Elektrostublla, an electrical products manufacturer, to participate and exhibit its products at the Light + Building Fair in Frankfurt, Germany. The company's successful participation at the fair resulted in the signing of several export contracts. On April 17th, 2018, the company made its first export shipment to Switzerland, followed by exports to Slovenia and Albania. Elektrostublla produces over 50 products that comply with European standards, demonstrating that Kosovo companies can produce high-quality products that are competitive in the global market. Up to date, EMPOWER Private Sector has supported 410 firms to attend 55 fairs around the world, resulting in \$12M in direct sales and another \$23M in sales are expected soon.



Young girls networking with potential employees at the Girls in ICT job fair in Prishtina.

Kosovo's Young Women Gather to Celebrate Girls in ICT Day

On April 27th, 2018, girls and young women from all over Kosovo who aspire to flourish in the field of ICT celebrated this year's International Girls in ICT Day in Prishtina. The event is held annually all over the world to empower and encourage girls and young women to consider education and careers in the field of Information and Communications Technology. USAID's EMPOWER Private Sector in partnership with Sida supported the event for the third year running. This support enabled the organization and delivery of the event. This year, participants acquired new skills at five different workshops led by tech institutions and ICT companies, and learned from inspirational presentations delivered by international and local leaders in the ICT field. The event concluded with a job fair where 35 companies and organizations participated and introduced their open calls to more than 250 participants of the fair. Out of the 20 girls that were interviewed by the companies, two were employed in full-time positions, and three received internship positions.



Hypertalk session at DOKU.TECH.

DOKU.TECH Connects Youth with Technology

On June 9th and 10th, 2018, tech-savvy youth from around Kosovo participated in DOKU.TECH, one of the leading technology events of its kind in the country and the region. DOKU.TECH took place in Termokiss, an abandoned industrial building located in Prishtina, managed by Kosovo youth. The various workshops, presentations, do-it-yourself fairs, and activities allowed participants to share their experiences and learn from each other. Kosovo youth had the chance to interact with more than 20 organizations and companies and connect with successful and motivational speakers from different backgrounds and countries. EMPOWER Private Sector in partnership with Sida supported DOKU.TECH for the second year running through enabling the organization and delivery of the event.

Contact Us

USAID EMPOWER Private Sector

Str. Pashko Vasa No.12

Pejton, Prishtina +383 38 222 855

info@empowerkosovo.org

www.empowerkosovo.org

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

UPCOMING EVENT

The third edition of the Green Festival will be held from September 19th to the 21st, 2018, at the Palace of Youth and Sports in Prishtina. The event will offer a networking platform for Kosovo green sector businesses, government agencies, donors, and the private sector.

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.