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USAID Kosovo EMPOWER Private Sector
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EMPOWER THROUGH JOB CREATION!

FAST FACTS

EMPOWER Private Sector signed a grant agreement with Rroni Fer, a Kosovar producer of cold drawn wire, and cold rolled narrow strips used in construction and as elements of fences. A grant of €40,000 was awarded to Rroni Fer to co-finance the acquisition of a new 630 kW electrical transformer substation for the expansion of its wire rolling line. The investment will contribute to the creation of 71 new jobs over three years.

Gemix, a manufacturing company of paints, facades, varnishes, and adhesives was awarded a grant of €25,000 by EMPOWER for the purchase of a stone dying machine. The machine will enable Gemix to introduce a new production line at their factory in Drenas, and thus create 25 new jobs.

Mobilieria Prishtina, a wood processing company in the furniture industry, was awarded a grant of €20,400 for the purchase of a branding machine, that will enable the company to improve product quality and increase its output quantity. The new investment will contribute to the creation of at least 20 new jobs.

Grants were signed for quality and production standard certifications with Jaha Energy J.v.G., a local producer of photovoltaic solar panels and Jaha Foods, a newly established food processing factory. EMPOWER will contribute €20,000 for 14 certifications for Jaha Energy, and €10,000 for three certifications for Jaha Foods. The certifications will contribute to a substantial increase to the workforce of both companies.

EMPOWER Continues Supporting Women in Online Work (WOW)

The third phase of the Women in Online Work (WOW) kicked off on the 14th of February, 2017 at a ceremony held in Gjilan. USAID/Kosovo Mission Director James Hope joined by the Deputy Minister for Economic Development Besa Zogaj – Gashi and Mayor of Gjilan Lutfi Haziri, committed to working together to achieve a high degree of cooperation and success in implementing the project, by signing the Memorandum of Understanding.

The WOW training program aims to mobilize and skill 110 women, 60 from the Gjilan municipality and 50 from Pristina, to work online using internet labor marketplaces. It will be implemented in Gjilan and Pristina municipalities by Cactus Education.

The training program consists of a two-month intensive in-class and home-based training on technical and soft skills including remedial English. The training modules include: Soft Skills/Employability, Front-End Web Development, and Graphic Design.

The training will be followed with a mentorship program which will be held for a duration of three months, with a personal mentor appointed for each participant. Participants will work and consult continuously for a period of three months. Bi-weekly group meetings will also be organized at training venues, to discuss mentor-mentee matters, and exchange experiences and best practices.

Women aged 18-34, who have or are currently completing university-level education, are currently unemployed or underemployed, and have intermediate knowledge of the English language, were encouraged to take part in the WOW training program.

USAID is supporting the 3rd phase of WOW through EMPOWER Private Sector in partnership with Sida - Styrelsen för Internationellt Utvecklingssamarbete, and Advancing Kosovo Together – LocalSolutions in partnership with Community Development Fund – CDF.



James Hope, Besa Zogaj and Lutfi Haziri
signing the Memorandum of Understanding



Certified Interns at the ceremony in Zubin Potok

21 Interns Certified in the Wood Processing Sector

On January 31st, 2017, 21 interns in the wood processing sector were certified at a ceremony in Zubin Potok. USAID/Kosovo Mission Director James Hope spoke at the event along with Goran Paulsson, Head of Development at Sida and Patrick Etienne, Head of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation in Kosovo. Seven of the certified interns have already been employed by Fontana, a wood processing company based in Zubin Potok. The internships were supported by EMPOWER Private Sector in partnership with Sida - Styrelsen för Internationellt Utvecklingssamarbete and the Empowering Youth Endeavors (EYE) project.

Kosovo-Made Furniture on Show in Cologne, Germany

Kosovo furniture and interior companies showcased their products at the IMM Cologne Furniture Fair in Germany, from the 16th to the 22nd of January, 2017. Binni, Palma, Albed and Graniti, had a selection of their beautifully crafted products on show. The fair is Europe's largest B2B event and trade fair for furniture and interior producers, and participation is vital for any furniture producer wishing to export to Europe. It was a very fruitful event for all four companies, having made serious business contacts and initiated potential deals. Palma was particularly successful as it signed two substantial contracts. Their participation was supported by EMPOWER Private Sector in partnership with Sida - Styrelsen för Internationellt Utvecklingssamarbete and the Association of Wood Producers in Kosovo AWPK.



Palma furniture on show at the IMM Cologne Furniture Fair in Germany

Apparel Companies Trained in Manufacturing Price Calculation

A training session on manufacturing price calculation in the apparel sector was organized by EMPOWER Private Sector and Kosovo Apparel Marketing Association (KAMA) for Kosovo apparel companies. The training session was delivered by apparel production expert, John Haycock, and attended by several apparel company representatives. Participants learned about the costs to be considered when calculating the price of a product, and how to calculate the price per minute, in preparation for entering discussions with potential buyers. Mr. Haycock stressed that to offer services as CMT (Cut-Make-Trim) or produce for well-known brands, companies need to know well the efficiency of their workers and the quality required. Since Kosovo has a high potential to export through CMT, or private label, it is mandatory for domestic producers to know the minimum price and the desired price.



John Haycock training companies on manufacturing price calculation in apparel sector

Kosovo Energy Companies Attend BAU Munich Fair

Six Kosovo companies from the energy sector attended the world's leading trade fair for architecture, materials and systems – BAU Munchen, on January 18th to 21st, 2017 in Munich, Germany. Representatives of Izolimi Plast, Fiberglass Kosova, Orient Kosova, Gemix, Jaha Energy and Ekofix were very pleased with the outcome of their visit, as they established valuable contacts, initiated two product certifications, and negotiated tens of supply and sales contracts. In addition, Izolimi Plast, negotiated a large export contract which it expects to sign in the next few months. The visit was made possible through EMPOWER Private Sector in partnership with Sida - Styrelsen för Internationellt Utvecklingssamarbete.



Izolimi Plast owners Alban Rama and Sabri Rama meeting with German company BST at BAU Fair

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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.