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2017
DECEMBER

Newsletter.

CREATING JOBS
AND MARKET
OPPORTUNITIES

In the picture below: The adventure trail leads to Kosovo. Read more on page 3.



Moving Ahead!

The principal goal of the Promoting Private Sector Employment (PPSE) project is increase employment in Kosovo through improved efficiency and competitiveness of the private sector.

Through its strategic activities during Phase I (2014 - 2017) in the two focus sectors: food processing and tourism, PPSE has surpassed expectations. A total of 850 full-time employment were created, net additional income amounted to €2 million, and 1,000 small and medium enterprises benefited from the project.

In the food processing sector, PPSE collaborated with farmers and companies in an array of interventions areas, mostly focusing on introduction of new hybrid industrial varieties and medical aromatic plants, improvement of cultivation, collection and processing capacities, standards and quality of products, participation in in-

ternational trade fairs and identification of new markets, resulting in an overall cohesion of the fruit and vegetable production and processing.

PPSE engagement in the tourism sector focused mainly on promoting Kosovo as an adventure tourism destination and on new product development. The transformation of a nascent tourism industry into a sector with prosperous results and more potential over the past three years is reflected in the new products developed and successfully launched in the market, and support of companies to participate in international trade fairs.

Companies were also supported through the Opportunity Fund mechanism. In Phase I, PPSE invested approximately €800,000 in 14 projects. The private sector co-invested around €1,700,000. Additional support was provided through private

sector governance activities, such as corporate governance training, or contract financing and advocacy initiatives with the public sector. The improved competitiveness of the private sector improves employment of women and minorities, which were addressed in all PPSE activities.

On 13 December 2017, the Kosovo Minister of Trade and Industry Bajram Hasani and the Director of the Swiss Cooperation Office in Kosovo Patrick Etienne signed an agreement to continue the support of the Swiss Government for employment creation in the private sector in Kosovo. Phase II of PPSE runs from November 2017 - November 2021, with an approximate budget of 7 million CHF. The focus intervention areas will be in two sectors: food and natural Ingredients, and tourism.

Looking forward to continuing collaboration with all the partners!

HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR WORK

Kosovo Mushrooms Travel the World

■ Fatmir Krasniqi, owner of FUNGO FF believes that non-wood forest products can be a good basis for the development of economy in Kosovo. Indeed, the company is successfully playing its part in this. Already, FUNGO FF products are exported to Switzerland, Italy, Germany, the Netherlands, Montenegro, Macedonia, Romania, Lithuania, and USA. In 2016, its products were well-received at the Slow Food Fair in Zurich.



Fatmir Krasniqi, owner of, FUNGO FF

FUNGO FF has further diversified its offer through some traditional recipes with a new twist, like the mushroom ajvar. Milled dried mushrooms to be used as spice

and frozen wild berries are new products added to the shelf. Constant upgrading of technology and processes is key to maintaining the competitive edge. With support from PPSE, FUNGO FF acquired new equipment that guarantees the quality of packed products. Through this support, the company created some 60 new full time and seasonal jobs. In fact, the company works with a broad network of collectors all over Kosovo, engaging over 1,000 individuals. Forty of the company's current employees are from the Roma community in the area. This is an opportunity for them to earn a decent living. To find out more about FUNGO FF watch a [video here](#).



The company's offer includes a selection of herbal tea, plant-based products for healthy living, like home-made apple vinegar or herbal creams.



The Scented Path of Hard Work to Business Success

■ She started 9 years ago, with 10 packets of chopped fresh nettles sold at a fair. Now, Havushe Bajrami runs 99 LULE, a small business, which collects, dries and processes medicinal and aromatic plants, nature's gift to us. The company's offer includes a selection of herbal tea, plant-based products for healthy living, like home-made apple vinegar or herbal creams. The timing was right for Havushe's business to leave the "small" behind and aim higher. With PPSE support, Havushe established a network of 15 women farmers, who were contracted to cultivate sage and calendula for the company's processing needs. This support activity consisted in provision of inputs (seedlings and irrigation system) and advice by an agronomist. In addition, Havushe organized a series of open days to share knowledge and practices with other farmers and interested parties. Further, PPSE linked Havushe with a specialized market intelligence and



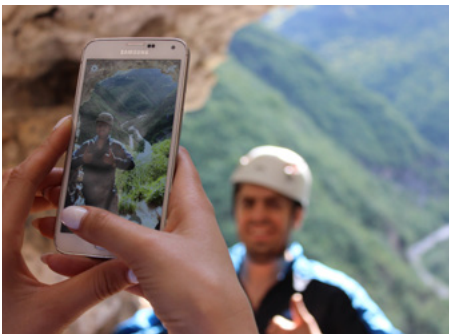
Havushe Bajrami, 99 LULE

marketing company to support 99 LULE improve its brand and competitiveness, have a clear strategy for diversification and explore further market opportunities. Havushe said "This ensures our growth and the future." To find out more about Havushe's story watch a [video here](#).



The Trail of Adventure Leads to Kosovo

■ Stepping into adventure and outdoor fun has never been easier for international tourists choosing Kosovo as their destination, or for local visitors looking to explore their country. Outdoor activities of varied types and difficulty, like hiking, mountain biking, cave exploration, night-skiing, yoga and camping, kayaking, climbing, Zipline, Via Ferrata or Adventure Park and more are blooming in Kosovo. The PPSE vision for tourism sector change included development of new products and activities, driven by innovation. In Phase I the tourism interventions focused mainly on Western Kosovo, as a region that offers plenty of opportunities to develop outdoor and adventure activities. The result is tangible: new tourism products, intensified international tourism promotion and new business linkages that have substantially improved Kosovo's tourism offer. The number of tourists and overnight stays has increased with 75%, resulting in new jobs and market opportunities, both being tools for sustainable economic growth. Most importantly, Kosovo is leaving its mark as a destination that speaks to



the adventure-seeking souls. We put together a list of some activities developed through PPSE support for the reading pleasure of adventure and outdoor enthusiasts. [Check out the list here.](#)

Where Adventure Meets A Magnificent View

The ADVENTURE PARK located on top of a hill in Pejë/Pec offers an absolute experience of outdoor adventure and adrenaline at almost 900 meters above sea level. There, visitors can enjoy nature while engaging in various fun activities, like horse riding, walking on rope air platforms of varying levels of difficulty, or climbing rope ladders. The ADVENTURE PARK is a unique product for Kosovo, and the region, and has fast become one of the top destinations in the country, attracting visitors of all ages. As a product that introduced innovation to the tourism sector, it is an icebreaker for other innovative ideas emerging from this sector. The ADVENTURE PARK project was supported by the Municipality of Pejë/Pec and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation in Kosovo through Promoting Private Sector Employment. It was constructed with the expertise of a Czech company specializing in outdoor adventure park construction, adding to the fact that this is a safe place for everyone. The ADVENTURE PARK now enriches the tourism offer in this city, and in Kosovo, attracting more visitors. What's more important, it is fun, it is safe, and the view from the top of the Giant Swing is magnificent. To find out more watch this [video](#).

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DID YOU KNOW...?

A

On-farm demonstration of planting and processing of industrial vegetable varieties is a great tool for farmers and processors to be constantly updated with useful information and exchange experience. PPSE collaborated with AGROCELINA and farmers around Kosovo who hosted a series of open field days to demonstrate the advanced techniques and technologies that farmers can use. The open days also facilitated promotion of good agricultural practices and contract farming between farmers and processors. The goal of this activity is to introduce new varieties and improve product quality and yield, which means more profit and more jobs..

B

Products made of buckwheat taste good, abound in health benefits and now are easier to find. TRBOLJEVAC Company in Leposavi / Leposaviq grows this plant. Then they process the grains and bake a variety of non-industrial products. PPSE supported the company to fully utilize the processing capacities for buckwheat and keep up with the growing demand. In fact, the TRBOLJEVAC bakery is also bringing a positive change to the area, as more farmers are growing buckwheat in a more organized way.

C

Kosovo's tourism offer has reached the Japanese market. In September 2017, three tour operators from Kosovo: ALTAVIA, FIBULA and AIRTOUR, and the Kosovo Alternative Tourism Association were exhibitors at the annual Tourism Expo Japan, one of the world's largest tourism promotion trade fairs. "Tourism is an effective way to promote more cooperation and attract investment" said Leon Malazogu, Ambassador of the Republic of Kosovo in Tokyo. With the support of the Kosovo Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Turkish Airlines, in November 2017, a group of Japanese journalists visited Kosovo to discover this new destination for potential tourists from Japan.

D

In May 2017, a group of about 20 tour operators and journalists from the Balkan region experienced various tourism products such as: hiking, mountain biking, Via Ferrata, Zipline, and paragliding in Zubin Potok as part of a FAM Trip organized by InTER. The aim was to increase the knowledge of the overall tourism offer in the northern part of Kosovo and promote this destination. PPSE organized a series of FAM Trips in collaboration with local organizations to promote Kosovo as an outdoor tourism destination and facilitate cooperation with regional tour actors.

BLUEPRINT FOR CHANGE



"I want to say that not only do I know how to make bread and how to sell it, but this training has taught me how to introduce my company, how to hire employees and how to behave like an entrepreneur."

FARMA TRBOLJEVAC
Jadranka Trboljevac

Rethinking Internal Firm Organization

■ PPSE experience and research show that for SMEs to grow with their feet planted strongly on solid foundation, it is critical they apply internal firm organization and good corporate governance practices. Embedding these practices is key to expansion and creation of new employment opportunities. One of the PPSE interventions in private sector development and governance was to support Kosovo SMEs, mainly from the food processing and tourism sectors, improve their internal organization so they take the leap into their next level of firm performance and expansion. In part-

nership with RECURA, a program tailored to each SMEs' needs was designed to deliver training in internal firm organization and corporate governance to CEOs, owners and managers, followed by in-house coaching. The program now can serve as a reference and framework for in-depth understanding, practicing of good corporate governance and better internal firm organization. The effects of this program go beyond the sessions that were held. SMEs that were part of the program progressively apply good internal organization practices while the demand for such services is gradually increasing.

Let's Talk About Equal Property Rights

■ To transform norms and practices surrounding women's right to property there is a need to raise the awareness of both men and women. This includes the need to educate men, boys, women, and girls about the importance of women registering their property and the positive benefits that it will bring to their families and society more broadly. "Hisja" ("The Share") is a forum theater play that seeks to increase awareness on gender equality in inheritance cases and to promote joint property registration by women and men. The play was part of the project "Real Property and Gender Equality" of the Kosovo Women's Network in collaboration with Center for Art and Community - ART-POLIS, supported by PPSE. Watch [the full play here](#) After watching the forum theater play, the audience was engaged in a lively discussion. [Watch the video](#) to listen to their thoughts and comments.



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