

Market Strategy Report

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About PPSE

The Promoting Private Sector Employment (PPSE) project in Kosovo, financed by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation in Kosovo (SDC) and implemented by Swisscontact (lead partner), Riinvest Institute and PEM Consult, aims to assist small and medium size businesses (hereafter SMEs) operating in competitive and well-organized economic sectors, where public policies better match private sector needs, to provide increased sustainable employment for women and men. The main

domestic partners are the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI) and the Kosovo Chamber of Commerce.

PPSE utilizes the Market System Development (MSD) approach (formerly the Markets for the Poor or M4P approach) specifically focusing on market facilitation through new business models to ensure large-scale sustainable change. The program outcomes/objectives are:



1) The increase in productivity, additional income and employment generation; 2) The influence of well-established and organized SME's on sector policies; 3) The reduction of barriers for women to access sustainable employment while their decision-making power is increased.

In selected sectors, PPSE will contribute to SME's increasing their productivity and generating additional income and employment, through enabling service and input providers to develop advanced and sustainable products (goods and services) and production practices. Moreover, PPSE will enable service and input providers to deliver market system processes in specific value chains.

With regard to private sector development governance, PPSE will design specific interventions which will support SMEs internal organization and sector organization in the project related sectors. Transparency, accountability and efficiency are fundamental good governance principles that will be addressed in order to target advocacy initiatives and policy changes.

At the impact level, there is a considerable gap in employment between men and women. Women in Kosovo represent an untapped resource, underemployed and underrepresented as business owners and

managers. To decrease gender inequality and provide equal benefits for women and men, a Women's Economic Empowerment outcome and strategy is a cornerstone approach. As a result, the enhanced access to employment and decision making for women is key to a sustainable and gainful employment.

Based on expected results, seven hundred and fifty SME's of selected sectors will increase their productivity and generate additional income and employment. As such the program aims:

- Net income increase of CHF 1,900,000 across selected sectors
- The creation of 800 additional Full Time Employment (FTE's), 30% attributed for women.

Initially, the program is focused on two main sectors: **the food processing sector** (specifically the fruits and vegetables processing and the non-wood forest products sub-sector), The third **manufacturing sector** will be selected during the implementation phase.

All sectors, offer excessive potential improvements for employment and asset utilization through removing hurdles uncovered by our alpha to omega analyses of the sectors.

The PPSE project initiated the inception phase in October 2013. The implementation phase is launched in November 2014 and will be active through November 2017. Pilot interventions have been implemented for the tourism and food processing sectors. Moreover, the project has established an **Opportunity Fund** – an additional instrument to boost growth and employment creation for Kosovo entrepreneurs. PPSE uses a solid Monitoring and Results Management (MRM) framework on establishing baselines, assuring output quality, defining indicators, estimating impact, and reporting data per each intervention.

Project is **the first** program in Kosovo that uses the **DCED** (**Donor Committee on Enterprise Development**) standard for quality assurance. Mainstreaming of women, governance, and minorities as cross cutting issues are crucial in all interventions. The project will disaggregate data along gender and ethnicities, and a special effort will be given to include K-Serb SMEs.





Brief sector description of tourism in the Western Kosovo destination

Western Kosovo or Pejë/Peć region is home to the Bjeshkët e Nemuna/Prokletije or the Accursed Mountains range. The municipality of Pejë/Peć is the area's largest city, positioned at the entrance of the Rugova Valley. The nearby Mount Gjeravica/Đeravica, at 2,656m is the highest mountain of Kosovo, ideally suited to develop summer and winter nature and adventure tourism products. Since 2002, local mountain enthusiast groups started to explore outdoor and adventure activities: hiking, mountain climbing, rockclimbing and caving, particularly in the Rugova Valley area. With donor and NGO support, tourism infrastructure—hiking trails, trekking trails, rock climbing routes, Via Ferrata² and mountain bike routes— have been developed and promoted with rural families supported to become home stay tourism providers. Visitor information services have been established and printed promotional tools are available. A majority of the products are summer mountain activities that cater for less adventurous summer visitors, supported by a number of hotels, guesthouses, homestay/ bed and breakfast, mountain huts, campsites, and restaurants, all reachable by car. A short ski lift in the village of Bogë/Boga caters for snowboard and ski enthusiasts.

The Rugova valley is home to roughly fifty small villages or alpine pasture settlements. Before the war, some 400 families lived on permanent basis in the valley. During the war, residents deserted the valley. Many families return to the Rugova valley, at least during summer time. Sector assessment interviews done by the PPSE team and the tourism expert consultant show that only 10 houses are permanently inhabited.

In December 2012, the new National Park "Bjeshkët e Nemuna" was established. The park covers 62.488 hectares and lies within the of Gjakovë/Đakovica, Junik, Deçan/Dečan, Pejë/Peć, and Istog/Istok. Establishment of a national park management plan is underway. Large parts of the new National Park, in particular to the south of the Rugova valley, await the development of nature tourism products and basic infrastructure. Summer tourism is blooming in the Rugova Valley and lasts for six months (May - October) with a clear high season peak in July and August. The snow season lasts four months (December - March) but lacking activities, fails to attract tangible visitor numbers.

As an emerging destination, Western Kosovo has potential to attract more visitors from different segments. A wider range of tourism better facilities and services products, combined with promotion have the potential to increase visitor numbers and expenditures. Nature and mountain tourism have not yet been developed, in particular in Deçan/Dečan municipality, which falls behind its neighbors. Complex and rich histories add to Western Kosovo's attractiveness as a travel destination. Deçan/Dečan, Pejë/Peć, and Junik offer a range of cultural tourism attractions and form the starting places to explore, with notable cultural attractions—the Patriarchate of Pejë/ Peć and the Monastery of Deçan/Dečan –true marvels of medieval Orthodox architecture.

¹ Via Ferrata: (Italian) Iron Road protected climbing route.



A baseline survey of Western Kosovo tourism shows domestic visitors account for 42% of the demand, while diaspora tourists 20%, with international customers representing 38%. The natural beauty of the area and lack of development in the tourism industry forms a high-impact potential environment for the PPSE project.

Enterprise-level marketing efforts of hotels, guesthouses, holiday homes and other accommodation services are ineffective. Just three hotels are represented on hotel reservation platforms (Booking.com). This suggests that most accommodation service providers lack effective marketing channels, with most bookings taking place via telephone calls. Most accommodation service providers are not linked with inbound tour operators with package rates. Most tourism MSMEs are family owned and operated, and few people have a professional background in tourism. Marketing remains "word of mouth"³.

Interviews with tourism service providers conducted by the PPSE team, demonstrate bookings have been increasing slowly over the last two years, and tourism MSMEs believe this will continue. The Pejë/Peć tourism office estimates roughly 30,000 tourists (overnight

staying guests) and 15,000 daytrip visitors for 2013.

The average daily expenditure for tourists is estimated to be 108.83€/person/day for tourists and 154€/person/day for day trip visitors⁴.

Pejë/Peć inaugurated a Via Ferrata as an attraction in November of 2013, further supported through the NGO Marimangat for improvement in 2014 by PPSE, 100 tourists climbed the Via Ferrata in October 2014, compared to 14 tourists in October 2013. The donor-supported initiative from Rugova Experience, in cooperation with Slow Food International for local gastronomy, "Il Sentiero del Gusto," is in the development stage. Tourism products developed by local NGOs have never been properly commercialized.

No local inbound tour operators are linking the growing portfolio of attractions and activities with the demand. The visitor information centres in Pejë/Peć and Junik act as intermediaries between (walk-in) customers and the tourism products. NGOs that have been involved in tourism product development have attempted to act as tour operators, often resulting in overpriced and unprofessional tour services.

^{2 &}quot;WESTERN KOSOVO TOURISM BASELINE SURVEY", prepared by Riinvest on behalf of PPSE, November 2014

^{3 &}quot;WESTERN KOSOVO TOURISM EXIT SURVEY", prepared by Riinvest on behalf of PPSE, November 2014

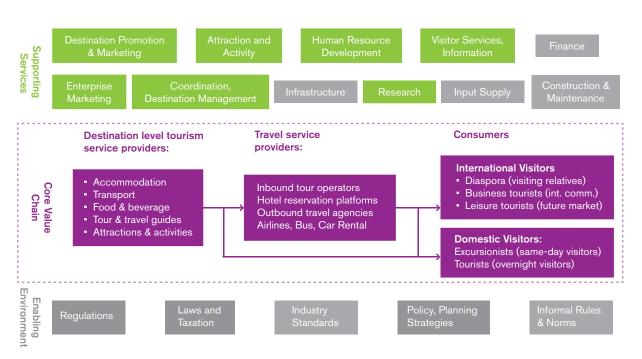
⁴ II Sentiero del Gusto: (Italian) Road of taste

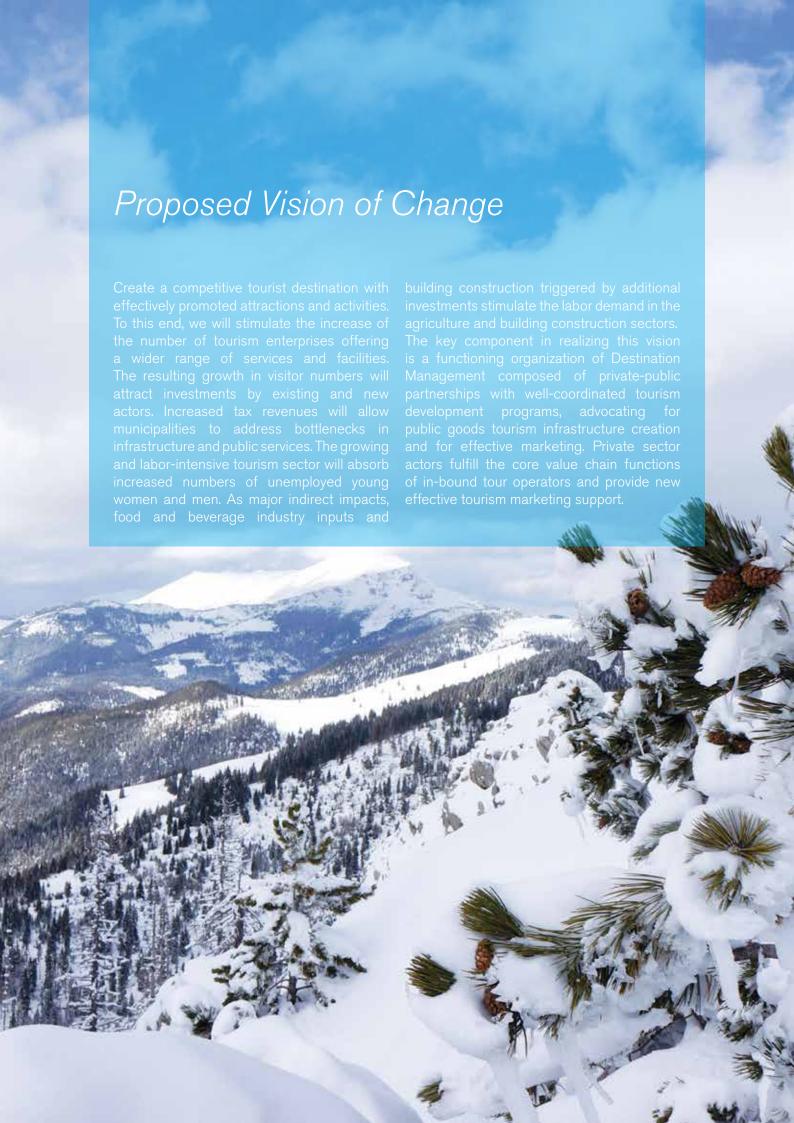
Problem Analysis with Intervention Logic Framework Analysis an MSD (former M4P) tool

(1) Problem /Symptom	(2) Underlying Causes	(3) Services / (4) Enabling environment	(5) Service weaknesses	(6) Interventions	Market Actors
Lack of coordinated action in destination development	Limited financial and human resources for tourism development Municipality tourism offices lack skills and experience in destination management Actors face collective action problems in product development and destination marketing	Provision of information services for tourism MSMEs Delivery of research & market intelligence information Establishment of coordination and destination management services	No funding scheme for municipality tourism development Lack of tourism sector data; lack of research services Lack of a coordinating and managing body leads to: Insufficient inter-municipality and private sector actor coordination Lack of strategic planning and development action	# Promotion of a functional organization of DM # Public good infrastructure & product development system # Effective destination branding and #International promotion of touristic packages	Municipality tourism offices NGOs, associations, enthusiast groups Tourism MSMEs Market research service providers Directory of National Park "Bjeshkët e Nemuna/Prokletije"
Lack of effective tourism MSME marketing marketing Enterprises do not see the need and the benefits Enterprises do not know where to market Enterprises lack information on low cost marketing channels		Provision of enterprise e-marketing support services Provision of research & market intelligence information services Provision of information on cost effective e-marketing	Absence of enterprise e-marketing support services Lack of research & market intelligence information	# Effective tourism enterprise marketing services # Promotion of a functional organization of DM	DM groups Associations/NGOs University "Haxhi Zeka" of Pejä/Pe E- marketing service providers PR Solution Hotel booking platforms: Booking.com; Google Maps, Open Street Map etc
Lack of commercialization of attractions and activities	Potential candidates do not yet see market opportunity; Candidates lack skills and experience Candidates are risk averse NGOs claim ownership of developed public good products but fail to sell	Provision of information and know how in the development of tourism products Provision of research & market intelligence information services	Lack of professional and private sector oriented local inbound tour operators. Lack of tourism sector data Lack of research & market intelligence information	# Promotion of local inbound tour operators # Promotion of a functional organization of DM	Tour operator training service providers (Gears Up; TDB Consulting) Business start-up training providers Promotion service providers Outdoor Kosovo, Catun, Rugova Experience Trekk, Associations/NGOs;
(1) Problem /Symptom	(2) Underlying Causes	(3) Services / (4) Enabling environment	(5) Service weaknesses	(6) Interventions	Market Actors/Tourism MSMEs associated with specific strategic visitors flows.
tourism product development	Private sector is risk averse Tourism MSME have limited incomes and lack capital	information Delivery of study tours to experience new products Capacity building on new activities Financial services, including PPSE Opportunity Fund	No business membership association, no organized study tours; limited range of products available in Kosovo, particularly winter activities	# 1 Promotion of a functional organization of DM	Upcoming inbound tour operators Technology service providers
Mountain area tourism MSMEs lack revenue outside of summer season	Domestic visitors do not perceive Western Kosovo as an attractive year round destination Lack of products appealing for domestic visitors, e.g. festivals, food promotion, activities for children. Aside form one village with a ski lift there is a near complete lack of winter attractions and activities	Establishment of coordination and destination management services Destination marketing services Provision of enterprise marketing support services Delivery of exposure/study tours to experience potential new products Financial services, including PPSE opportunity fund	Lack of a coordinating and managing body Lack of research & market intelligence information Lack of strategic planning and development action Weak promotional efforts	All interventions	DM West Kosovo NGOs, Associations, tourism system heads and tourism MSMEs

(1) Problem /Symptom	(2) Underlying Causes	(3) Services / (4) Enabling environment	(5) Service weaknesses	(6) Interventions	Market Actors
Unsustainable efforts in public good tourism infrastructure and products development	Lack of non-donor funded initiatives Lack of destination management, planning & coordinated action Many stand-alone initiatives implemented by NGOs	Enabling environment Establishment of a funding scheme Establishment of destination management services, incl. strategic destination planning	No initiatives except from donor funded projects. No sustainable public good product development system. Public good tourism products have so far been developed by donor funded NGOs lacking overall strategy	# Product development and promotion # Promotion of a functional organization of DM #Public good infrastructure and product development systems #International promotion of touristic packages	DM Tourism system heads NGOs, associations Regional companies (Peja beer, Rugova Water, Restaurants, Hotels in the mountains etc.) Directory of National Park "Bjeshkët e Nemuna/Prokletije"
Lack of effective destination marketing	No data on visitors and supply side actors No analysis of visitors and source markets Lack of marketing coordination between NGOs, tourism office, and enthusiast groups Lack of a marketing material database with pictures and descriptions No destination marketing plan available Limited marketing budget Lack of marketing skills	Delivery of research & market intelligence information services Establishment of coordination and destination management services Enabling environment Lobbying for and establishment of tourism tax regulations for visitor & tourism enterprises Provision of marketing skills development services Provision of destination promotion & marketing services	No one provides market intelligence information Lack of a coordinating body Insufficient funding scheme for municipalities for destination marketing Existing marketing companies have little experience in tourism. Marketing material conform to ToRs (Terms of References) from NGOs. There is a lack of focus on key visitor markets, as well as on target audiences. English language, picture and print quality are not very professional. Lack of cost effective marketing tools.	# Promotion of a functional organization of DM # Effective destination branding and promotion	DM Tourism system heads NGOs and associations PR Solutions, promotion, marketing and branding companies
Lack of new private sector	Private sector is not seeing the market potential	Provision of product and market	Absence of product & market information for MSMEs	#Public good infrastructure and product development system #International promotion of touristic packages	DM of West Kosovo

The tourism value chain







Accomplishments to date

Intervention 1:

Promotion of a functional organization of DM

The promotion of a regional functional organization of DM aims at making a shift towards an effective management of the destination of western Kosovo. By facilitating coordinated action, the DM scope of services is expected to address the following weaknesses:

- Lack of stakeholder coordination and lobbying
- Lack of sector data and statistics (general lack of market information on visitors, tourism service providers, business opportunities, economic impact, employment, source markets and trends)
- Lack of analysis and planning for the development of existing and future strategic visitors flows (SVFs)
- Lack of coordination and strategic business area development planning and action
- Lack of public good type tourism product development and product maintenance systems
- Lack of comprehensive online information for visitors and the travel industry
- Lack of effective destination promotion functions with appropriate channels to address the targeted visitor markets, including the lack of familiarization trips and travel writer⁵ support.

The development of identified strategic visitors flows combined with effective marketing will contribute to a wider menu of attractions and activities that is able to satisfy existing visitors and draw more visitors.

For 2014, PPSE has assisted creation of a twelve member task force, composed of municipal officials, business representatives and civil society who will work towards the establishment of a functional organization of DM. A legal assessment was done to determine the means of establishing the DM as a legal entity and thus funding options. This assessment revealed that Kosovo's legal framework meant that the DM must be a non-governmental organization, financially supported by the three municipalities Pejë/Peć, Deçan/Dečan and Junik. PPSE facilitated the Saint Gallen Destination Model (SGDM) workshop, conducted by PWC Company. The SGDM will be the pillar approach of the DMO, which keys destination development upon demand side. During 2014, DMO Albania assisted the task force with the development of a marketing plan, with a four-year implementation timeline.

Intervention 2:

Tourism enterprise marketing services

The short-term intervention assists tourism MSMEs to make use of low-cost on-line tools, notably Google maps, Open Street map s and Trip Advisor. This is a quick-win intervention, addressing the following service market weakness:

- Lack of tourism enterprise level promotion and marketing services
- Lack of qualified human resources

Improved enterprise marketing efforts are expected to increase customer numbers in tourism MSMEs. PPSE introduced the tourism enterprise level promotion and marketing services intervention, by partnering with PR Solutions. PR Solutions located in Prishtina/Priština, is the only company in Kosovo specialized in public relations, media, advertising, event organizing and others, with some tourism experience. The company won world's best national campaign award "Kosovo- the Young Europeans". PR Solutions has a wide range of local and international partners. The company was interested in the introduction of tourism enterprise marketing services. Following the MSD approach, PR Solutions registered about 70 tourism enterprises and 10 attractions in Google Street map and Open Street map portals. Four enterprises were registered in booking.com, whereas the other enterprises did not meet portal criteria (booking.com, hotels.com, agoda.com and trip advisor). PR Solutions is planning their own online booking platform in Kosovo to address the need, being the first business in country to offer such a service.

Intervention 3:

Public good infrastructure & product development system

To address the limited number of touristic products in the region, PPSE has supported the local NGO "Marimangat" as a local partner to improve and extend the Via Ferrata trail in the Rugova valley in Peja/Peć. The NGO and the municipality of Peja/Peć have shown commitment by allocating funds and resources for the improvement of this touristic attraction, which is expected to attract more tourists in the region. An agreement between the NGO Marimangat and tourism SMEs to offer the Via Ferrata service for a fee which shall be used for maintenance and for building other tourism products provides motivation and ownership of the local actors. The interest of the tourism enterprises is to increase profits by selling activities to local and international visitors/tourists. On the other hand visitors/ tourists will get a pleasant experience from the region. This specific contribution is one part of the overall intervention of developing touristic products. Based on preliminary data the number of visitors to Via Ferrata have been increasing, also thanks to proper marketing and advertisement. From 14 visitors in 2013, about 100 visitors did the Via Ferrata in October 2014.



Women's position in the Western Kosovo Tourism sector



Blerina Sallaj - Regional Tourism coordinator for Dukagjini area:

"We needed an opportunity to harmonize all touristic offers, we also needed a regulator for the increased performance of actors in the tourism sector, and the making of these offers as attractive as possible. Such things were only wishful thinking until now, but with the support of PPSE for the establishment of a destination management organization, this will become possible"

In the three municipalities of Pejë/Peć, Deçan/Dečan and Junik, there are handful of tourism Economic Development officials (in all cases, the employees are male). There are no existing policies at the municipality level to encourage the tourism sector to involve more women.

In the target area for tourism development there are some thirty active NGOs, mostly donor-driven, focusing on tourism developments. Currently there are only seven women in management positions. Considering community perceptions on gender roles division, mountain tourism is seen as a male province. Recently at Via Ferrata three female guides have been engaged (compared with none before the intervention), after realizing the potential for income generation.

Enthusiast Groups are comprised mainly of the young and middle-aged, with mid- and high-incomes, coming from mainly from urban areas. Most of enthusiast groups are male, but there is a trend of women becoming mountain enthusiasts (in rare cases, women participating in the enthusiast groups have altered their roles and now work as local guides for tourists).

For MSMEs, women's roles consist mainly of low-skill business functions. The baseline study details that 31% of women in tourism work in kitchen roles, 28% in maintenance jobs, with just 5% in management occupations. Despite a minimum wage required by labor law in Kosovo of €220, the average monthly salary for women ranges from €100 to €150, mostly in informal employment. Typically, women involved in the tourism sector have no educational attainment, lack information and previous experience, and lack of control in family finances. Such businesses are family driven, so the role of women is mainly informal and dictated by family needs. As situated, these women have strong financial dependency upon their husbands.

The following opportunities have been identified by PPSE to tackle the aforementioned issues:

- Contemporary tourists show more interest in community based initiatives; DM can help to create initiatives so that a complementarily shared market is created. DM in cooperation with NGOs and local government could develop simple strategies to improve access to markets. (Create promotion programs to increase the number of tourists who buy local products, such as handicrafts, food, clothes etc., and use local services, such as local guides).
- Establishment of training and education programs for women. Training and education should aim to encourage women to move into non-traditional occupations that require more skills with better pay. Improvement of their job status is a long-term goal.

- Creation of child development activities. Childcare and special programs for children including games, storytelling etc., can be of service for tourists and local inhabitants. Helping local women increase capacities in the region offers services for community families.
- Support of women's entrepreneurship (existing and new businesses). Explore local tradition and habits in food processing (i.e.

processing of fruits and vegetables to jams, juices, and dried fruits and vegetables, etc.). These can be local products branded and be included in the local attraction basket.

-Good representation of women's associations and women-owned businesses in the DM. A Code of Conduct can be developed requiring gender equality actions and commitment from all members.

Private Sector Development Governance

PPSE will address the main principles of Good Governance (Accountability; Transparency; Non-discrimination; Participation; and Efficiency) at different levels of the private sector, both at firm and the sector level, intending to improve internal firm organization

well as sector organization. Specific consideration will be given to the inclusion and nondiscrimination of minorities in the sector interventions. Contacts will be established per intervention with the private relevant sector actors along the value chain including other clusters of actors in the North and South of Kosovo to promote inclusiveness of all communities living in Kosovo. Business models that offer intrinsic selfmotivation for the actors to increase participation and avoid any ethnic and gender

related discrimination will be promoted. However, if such constraints are identified, specific consideration will be given to activities and interventions addressing them. The overall sector governance strengths and weaknesses are presented in the table.

	Key features	Key strengths/ Opportunities	Key weaknesses/ threats	Major trends
Context beyor the sector	d -Subject disciplining effect of competition stemming from high sector specific substitutability	-Potential for growth - Potential for cross-border cooperation	-Lack of industry standards -Lack of policy, strategy, and action planning -Weak legislative and regulatory framework -Weak infrastructure	-Opportunity for growth, given the unexplored potential.
Actors, interes and incentive		-Several layers of actors apart from political and core public institutions Subject to different check and balance and disciplining relationships.	-Resistance for change among key actors. -Possible diverging/ conflicting interests among actors.	-Opportunity for reform because of promising mix of actors.
Governance. accountabilit relations		-Good mix of actors.	-Weak checks and balances organizations. -Lack predictability in terms of future engagements of the government. -Asymmetric information among market actors.	-Positive signals but not properly defined (the sector strategy is not made public yet).

Minorities

Tourism offers good potential for the inclusion of Serb minorities in the interventions. Inbound tour operators will be encouraged to include the wine routes in Rahovec/Orahovac, Brezovica and Zubin Potok, areas with an already developed tourism industry and menu of attractions and activities. Two main religious monuments in the western

region—the Monastery of Deçan/Dečani and the patriarchate of Peja/Peć—are already included in tourism offers, but the collaboration will be expanded. Also, relationship has been built with Outdoor in, a tour operator in Zubin Potok which has already established some tourism mountain products in North Kosovo.

PPSE is an equal opportunity employer. PPSE is against discrimination and racism. PPSE project employees are obliged to maintain a non-political profile in their dealings in official and public matters.



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