



SUCCESS STORY

Kosovo's Businesses See Value in Going Green

First annual Green Festival opens new markets



Photo by: USAID/Kosovo EMPOWER Private Sector

In just four months, Orient Kosova Mosaic CEO Faruk Kosumi is already halfway to his two-year goal of creating jobs at his new company

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—Faruk Kosumi, CEO of Orient Kosova Mosaic

September 2016 – Faruk Kosumi is a born salesman, but he insists that his newest venture – Kosovo’s first glass waste recycler – sells itself. “What we end up with is more than just a product, it is art,” the 32-year-old CEO explains.

His company, Orient Kosova Mosaic, is a joint venture with a Turkish company that transforms clear glass waste into high-end decorative wall tiles. Using recycled glass seemed the obvious choice for the company, which opened in April 2016. Not only does it reduce production costs, but also virtually eliminates this type of waste, which was otherwise contributing to the country’s major refuse problem.

“We have to take the first step in finding business solutions that meet market expectations and create a better future for our country,” Kosumi explained.

Orient Kosova was one of 16 companies to participate in Kosovo’s first annual Green Festival sponsored by USAID’s EMPOWER Private Sector project in May 2016, where the tile manufacturer made its first foreign deal provide tiles for a beach resort in nearby Ulcinj, Montenegro. The three-day festival was organized to promote the environmental and economic benefits of Kosovo’s businesses working in renewable energy, recycling, and energy efficiency.

“Solar energy is a very new concept here in Kosovo, so USAID’s support in helping us to promote our business and explain the value of this new technology has been essential,” said Gazmend Haxholli, CEO of Jaha Energy I.V.G., another festival participant and the first manufacturer of solar photovoltaic panels in the Western Balkans.

Inconsistent energy supply costs Kosovo’s businesses an estimated \$456 million annually, due to the cost of generators, equipment failures, and idle time. By supporting Jaha Energy I.V.G. and a cluster of 13 solar panel installation companies with installation and maintenance training, USAID is working to provide renewable energy options for Kosovo and prepare companies to meet increasing demand abroad. GET Group, a member of this cluster, claimed a record 30 new deals with local companies coming out of the Green Festival.

USAID has invested over \$400,000 to support Kosovo's new green businesses, and increase production of energy efficient products already on the market.

OSA Termosistem, Kosovo's leading provider of heating and cooling equipment for food storage and processing, was able to reduce the associated electricity costs for its products by 30 percent after USAID supported the company's switch to a more energy efficient insulation system.

"This system has helped us meet market demand for a higher quality, energy efficient product both in Kosovo and for export," explains manager Arian Osa. "Without USAID's help, we would not have been able to secure enough funding from private investors for another couple of years to take this important step."

The five-year USAID EMPOWER Private Sector project, which is also funded by Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, has been working since July 2014 to stimulate large-scale job creation by elevating the competitiveness of Kosovo firms in the growth-ready sectors of apparel, wood processing, ICT, renewable energy, tourism, and metal processing.

To date 179 companies were supported and 1,047 people were employed as a result of this assistance.