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KOSOVO

SUCCESS STORY

Souvenir Shop Bridges Ethnic Divide in Kosovo

New equipment and more products meet the demand

Grant received from USAID - enables the northern Mitrovica-based company to boost its business



Gift employee demonstrating the high performance capabilities of the new equipment

“We’ve already hired 3 new employees, but with this new modern equipment, in two months’ time, we will employ two more people,” says Mirko Krivokapić, the owner of Gift

It’s been said that business dealings pass over ethnic boundaries. The Gift souvenir shop in Kosovo’s divided city of Mitrovica serves as an example.

This small family business established in 2004 was swamped with demands from clients throughout the country. Keeping up with the high market demand and boosting the company’s range of products while using old equipment was difficult.

A USAID grant of \$26,000 [30,000Euro] in July 2013 helped the company purchase a printing machine that could print on various materials, including glass, plastic and metal. This capability meant the company could offer a greater range of products. In addition, the new printing process is faster and cheaper, making souvenirs affordable to more customers.

The owner of Gift, Mirko Krivokapić, says that he has come a long way since his first started producing souvenirs, adding that hard work, dedication and love for handmade crafts finally paid off. He estimates that production will soon be about 40 percent higher as a direct result of the USAID grant.

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The company has expanded the quantity and diversity of products for sale in the Mitrovica store as well as a retail shop at Kosovo Force Headquarters in Pristina. Today, Gift’s clients are Kosovars, Albanian and Serbs alike.

The grant was part of USAID’s Community Action Initiative Program, which started in July 2010 and ends July 2014. The program supports community development and infrastructure rehabilitation in 40 Kosovo communities, builds strong civil society organizations, and improves economic and employment opportunities.