

BUILDING A JOB MARKET THAT WORKS FOR EVERYONE: PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS FOR PROJECTS AND NGOS

WHY

is the employment market not working for everyone in Kosovo? How can we improve the market system, so everyone benefits from economic growth? Those are the questions that EYE sought to answer. The focus was on women, Serbs or Serbian-speaking communities, and Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in Kosovo. EYE reviewed the existing studies and research reports and conducted several new discussions with key informants, particularly organizations representing or advocating for the interests of non-majority people.

This action brief contains a summary of the findings and recommendations. It is intended to help other projects in Kosovo or in the wider Balkan region to improve the way they influence the development of the job market so that all youths in society have an equal opportunity to become employed.



Main findings:

- 1** Most of the constraints and opportunities to improve inclusion in the market system are related to governance, rules, norms, customs, attitude, motivation, self-confidence, expectations, values, perceptions, standards, trust, and employment practices. So, project interventions that focus only on improving the training provision and other support services, such as digital marketing, are not enough to make the employment market fully inclusive. Making the employment market more inclusive will not be a quick fix.
- 2** Support services such as training providers and job intermediation services can innovate to provide services that better suit women and non-majority communities. There is lots of room for improvement. Also, there is sufficient demand for services to reward the efforts of businesses that bring innovation to the market.
- 3** Some challenges that socially excluded people face are related to access to services particularly due to lack of information and infrastructure. Access to information is determined by language and trust; key infrastructure is a smart phone and transport to training venues.



THIRTEEN RECOMMENDATIONS WERE IDENTIFIED:

- 1** Work through role models to provide direction and confidence to the youth. Role models prove the case that 'we can do it' and inspire young people to believe in themselves and overcome prejudice.
- 2** Promote successful pilots so that they can be repeated in more settings. Do not presume that a successful small-scale pilot will be noticed. Funds should be reserved for promotion of the pilot success and lessons. Civil society organizations representing or advocating for the socially excluded youth may be in an excellent position to promote successful piloting.
- 3** Make better use of skilled migrants from socially-excluded groups returning to Kosovo. They can become trainers.
- 4** Identify and select trainers who are women or from non-majority communities because they are more able to build confidence and trust in potential trainees.
- 5** Facilitate improved access to information about training opportunities. Intervene to improve rights, power and ability to find information. Use appropriate means to share information; social networks are an existing supporting structure on which projects can build.
- 6** Package training opportunities with a future job. A clear pathway to work encourages youths to commit to training.
- 7** Help trainers communicate value. Training providers can be helped to communicate better the value of the courses they offer in ways that reach socially excluded youth and highlight value points that resonate with them.
- 8** Ensure training is accredited. Certificates of accredited training, especially if recognized internationally, are a particular incentive for socially excluded youth who hesitate to pay for the training.
- 9** Challenge social norms. Help youth to consider businesses as a valid source of jobs. It is time to help youths to not rely solely on patronage to find a job in government. Public campaigns that local government and political parties are not the "one-stop shops" to find a job. Young men and women can get jobs based on competence, attitude, and experience.
- 10** Start with the willing: the young women and men who want to improve themselves. Try to prioritize intervention efforts to support the more motivated youths, those that are actively interested to improve their employment situation. Civil society organizations may be helpful to select these youths.
- 11** Improve the mindset of young people for economic aspiration, helping them to become more committed to learning and competing for work.
- 12** Facilitate more non-formal training in English. As the younger generation in Kosovo communicates mainly in English, standard non-formal training courses should have the program offered in English at least (when they do not have both Albanian and Serbian). These courses provide the possibility of having Albanian and Serbian-speaking youth in the same class.
- 13** Be realistic on scale and pace of change. The roots of social exclusion are old and deep and will not be easily removed. Realise that the systemic change to reduce social exclusion cannot be represented just in the scale of change as described by simple project targets. Projects should more fully communicate the systemic nature, sincerity and institutionalization of the achieved changes.

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