

# SUCCESS STORY

## FURNITURE BUSINESS IN KAMENICE – YOUTH GETS TRAINED ON-THE-JOB AND EMPLOYED

**M**rs. Pajtesa Kryeziu, 24, lives in Rrogoqica, a village close to Kamenice, eastern part of Kosovo, with beautiful nature surrounded by hills, and one of many villages in which S4RE project intervened to improve youth employability. Like many other villages in the region youth faces many employment challenges. Due to a lack of qualified local work force the furniture producing company “Linda ES” had to recruit people from neighboring country, which increased its operation costs considerably and limits the production capacity. Specialized in producing living room furniture, “Linda ES” produces for retailers in cities such as Gjilan, Ferizaj and Prishtina.

Pajtesa has been looking for a job for more than a year. At the age of 16 the family arranged her engagement with a man that would prohibit her further education and work. Thus, Pajtesa has completed only primary school. Being the youngest in the family of five with no income, Pajtesa broke her engagement and started working as a bakery shop worker earning a minimum wage, but not for long. Having no education and technical skills it was hard to find a job in an area with high unemployment and with labor market outcomes being more unfavorable for women than men.

“It’s hard, none of the family members are working. I have my mother with a chronic disease that needs regular treatment. My two older siblings were not able to find a job. We don’t have a land that would enable us to deal with agriculture,” says Pajtesa. “I was suffering the family situation, the inability to contribute to welfare, thus I was constantly seeking for opportunities,” Pajtesa continues.



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Pajtesa joined the group of 11 youth who were interested to increase their employability through training provided by the private business “Linda ES” and facilitated by S4RE. The training started in March until end of May 2015 providing skills on manufacturing a living room sets. After training completion trainees gained skills in using the working tools and machines, wood pattern making, pattern cutting of fabric/leather and foam, assembling and finishing the living room set, packaging and delivery to customers. All group members have been successfully employed with the business and are generating monthly income.

“I am surprised with the outcome of the training,” says Pajtesa, full of joy “in a very short period of time less than two months we have learnt the process of production, with dedication and hard work. I work as a pattern cutter and have a monthly income of 250 Euro. I’m very happy now, I can cover family expenses and some personal needs. We have a great working environment, a motivating and friendly staff. We are growing together, hoping to become leaders in the furniture industry, so I can continue working with the same employer.”

“I am grateful to Helvetas for the opportunity. It is a salvation for me and my family. It couldn’t be better.” – closes the story Pajtesa. The on-job training supported by the project has enabled employment of 11 youth and it is expected to reduce operational cost and increase the production of the local company “Linda ES”.

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