



FOSTERING EMPLOYMENT AND GROWTH
OPPORTUNITIES

THE GENDER INCLUSION ASSESSMENT AND STRATEGY



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The main purpose of this assessment is to analyze and identify key gender inequalities and constraints that the project will aim to improve. The assessment will guide the FEGO team, its partners, and other stakeholders to consider gender throughout the project cycle, especially through intervention design, implementation, and monitoring. The gender analysis has foreseen the power dynamics specific to project-related sectors, specifically rural tourism, apparel, and furniture. It provides specific recommendations for gender mainstreaming into project interventions and activities.

The research forms part of a project entitled “Fostering Employment and Growth Opportunities (FEGO),” which aims to generate employment and income for women, men, and youth living in poverty and socio-economic marginalization. This is intended to be achieved through sustainable and scalable growth of micro/small (family) businesses and start-ups in the apparel, furniture, and rural sectors. The project aspires to bring about lasting structural changes in the market systems for three sectors, with a high potential for employment and income generation for this target group: the apparel, furniture, and rural tourism sectors.

This assignment's objective was to understand women's role in the labor force for FEGO-related sectors, their opportunities, constraints, and how they can benefit from FEGO interventions and activities, which are reflected in the project's expected outcomes, objectives, and results. The Gender Inclusion Assessment and Strategy aim to identify women's level of access to land ownership, resources, technology, and equipment, identifying key stakeholders such as government institutions and agencies, NGOs, and women associations or groups whose work focuses on gender-related topics.

For conducting a Gender Inclusion Assessment and Strategy, a mixed methodological approach was utilized for data gathering. The assessment was carried out in May 2020, beginning with meetings with project staff to agree on the process. First, consultative meetings were organized with the project implementation unit to coordinate and agree on the process. In-depth desk research was conducted. In addition, interviews with key-value chain actors and stakeholders were conducted in the three sectors targeted by the project. Information was collected using semi-structured interviews.

The findings of this assessment confirm the data gathered by the Swisscontact internal assessment and provide gender-specific information on the three sectors. The furniture sector is male-dominated, although the gender division of roles has been challenging in recent years, with an increased number of women interested in the sector. Women continue to be in a disadvantageous position compared to men to establish and maintain a business in the furniture sector due to a women's lack of ownership and collateral to apply for bank loans for their business needs. In the apparel sector, the situation is different regarding women's and men's engagement. This sector is women-dominated, although there are some indications that the interest is decreasing among young women.

Concerning the rural tourism sector, there is an increased interest in rural communities to explore the opportunities provided in their area for income generation activities. The sector functions within a family unit, where both men and women are actively engaged. The sector is characterized by certain challenges, such as the lack of support in maximizing the product quality and promotion of business at the national and regional levels and the lack of joint branding and a unified guide.

Lastly, some of the key recommendations in this report contain proposed interventions that support women in small furniture sector initiatives, facilitating access to local markets, and capacity building for young women interested in non-conventional areas, among others.

INTRODUCTION

Understanding the broader context: Gender equality in Kosovo

Gender mainstreaming is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, policy, or programme in all areas and at all levels before any decisions are made and throughout the whole process. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of policies and programs so that both women and men benefit and inequality is not perpetuated. Gender mainstreaming is not a goal in itself but an approach to promoting gender equality (SIDA, Gender Mainstreaming, 2015).

Kosovo has a comprehensive legal framework on gender equality, starting with the Law on Gender Equality. The Law on Gender Equality in Kosovo, No.2004/2, article 4.15, states that: Local government bodies shall establish an Office of Gender Affairs and shall appoint a Gender Affairs Officer in [each] municipality. The competencies of the Officers in municipalities shall be set in a special regulation drafted by the Department of Local Administration in the Ministry of Public Services and the Kosovo Civil Service Regulation. (United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo, 2004a). The Agency for Gender Equality was established under the Prime Minister's Office. In line with this, Officers for Gender equality within ministries and Municipal gender equality officers are responsible for advancing gender equality within their respective ministries and municipalities.

Kosovo Programme for Gender Equality 2020-2024 defines gender equality as a fundamental right and one of the important factors for economic growth, development, and stability in society. The Kosovo Program for Gender Equality 2020-2023 aims to "ensure that gender equality is placed at the center of the transformation processes in Kosovo, within all structures, policies, procedures, practices, and programs of the government, agencies, civil society, the private sector, and the donors' community." The programme obliges institutions to implement the programme, while the Agency for Gender Equality within the Office is obliged to monitor the implementation and to annually report on the implementation of the programme.

As it can be seen, Kosovo already has institutional mechanisms for gender mainstreaming in place. Yet, implementation of these mechanisms remains to be a challenge, given that these mechanisms are not fully aligned with the strategic priorities of government development sectors.

In Kosovo, discriminatory stereotypes regarding the roles and responsibilities of women and men in the family and society persist, including their property rights. Data shows that only 17 percent of women in Kosovo own property, while 7 percent of women inherit property. Kosovo has the lowest employment rate in the region, where women are the most represented of all unemployed. The Labour Force Survey (2021) shows that women's representation in the labor market is 22.7 percent, whereas, women's inactivity in the labor market is 77.3 percent compared to 43.5 percent of men.

Research shows that women are underrepresented in corporate boards, comprising 10% of board members, enterprises active in Kosovo in 2020, 20 percent of enterprises active in Kosovo are owned by women (Kosovo Women's Network, 2021). Several factors contribute to this, including lack of financial and entrepreneurial skills among women, limited access to finance and property, and a stereotypical perception that women lack the skills to manage businesses.

Concerning the participation in decision-making processes, women and men have different decision-making power dynamics within a rural household (Riinvest, 2022), whereas in most households, men are the only or co-decision makers and are more engaged in household decision-making than women. However, in households where women are employed and/or well educated, evidence suggests that decision-making is more gender-balanced. Studies show that even doing businesses is harder for women. Only 38 percent of women entrepreneurs have invested in their businesses during the past year, and only 12 percent of the women-owned businesses have used loans from banks or other financial institutions for their investment purposes (Riinvest, 2017).

Lastly, regarding the national policies in place, it should be noted that the Ministry of Local Government Administration has endorsed the Strategy for Local Economic Development 2019-2023, which presents a strategic document based on the action plan aimed at drafting and coordinating policies for local economic development. The strategy nowhere in the document mentions gender issues nor addresses the furniture sector or apparel sector.

The situation of women in the furniture, apparel, and rural tourism sector

Although there is no structured data on the position of women in these three sectors, the information below will attempt to shed light on gender inclusion and roles in these three sectors.

The furniture sector. The furniture sector is considered to have experienced high growth rates in recent years, both in terms of turnover and the number of employees. According to official data by the Ministry of Trade, Entrepreneurship, and Trade (MoIET), the furniture sector recorded a market turnover of over 70 million euros in 2019, with over 2,000 people employed (MoIET). Based on Swisscontact's internal assessments, the furniture sector represents good potential for youth inclusion and empowerment. According to the Ministry of Industry, Entrepreneurship, and Trade (2020), the furniture industry in Kosovo is an industry dominated by micro, small and medium enterprises. This sector is considered male-dominated, although the gender division of labor in this sector is changing. There is an increased number of women interested in this sector, thus, breaking the gender stereotypes previously associated with this sector, mainly in interior design and furniture construction. However, there are also women who are interested to learn milling, which previously was considered very atypical for women.

The apparel sector. There are currently 111 private enterprises engaged in manufacturing textiles in Kosovo with 629 employees and a turnover value of 15.38 million euros. The majority of them are manufacturers of final products (German Economic Chamber, nd). The apparel sector has been one of the industries reborn in Kosovo in the last few years. With about 3000 people

employed, Kosovo's apparel industry is in the early stage of development (Alexandriysky, 2015). The available data show that family businesses usually characterize this sector, and most of the entrepreneurs are above their 40s. A study conducted by the Ministry of Trade and Industry in 2015 (Rizvanolli, 2015) shows 182 active businesses cover firms in the manufacture of textiles, manufacture of wearing apparel, processing of leather, and manufacture of leather products. The same report found that the vast majority of firms are individual businesses. According to this report, the apparel sector is dominated by women, not only in terms of workforce participation but also as business owners. The main market of the apparel sector is the domestic market; however, sector companies also export a share of their products, mainly in the EU market. The report highlights that women's ownership and employment dominate this sector. In terms of employees in these enterprises, the highest number of employees is in the manufacturing sector, which is seen as the key activity of the enterprise. The rest are employed in the sales and administration sector (ibid).

The rural tourism sector. Rural tourism influences the community by reducing rural migration and promoting the inclusion of women. In this context, along with rural tourism, new forms of family organization arise, affecting the division of labor whenever the proximity between the tasks performed in the domestic environment and the rural productive activity contributes to the redefinition of roles and gender division of labor.

Rural tourism plays an important role as a significant economic generator and employment sector. It encompasses a wide range of activities and contributes to economic development, environment, social and cultural development. The main target groups of rural tourism in Kosovo are local, diaspora, and European tourists, mainly engaged in outdoor activities during the summer and winter seasons. According to data from the tourism info point in Peja, in 2019, out of around 65,000 tourists, 6,000 were international tourists hiking the Peaks of the Balkans trail, accommodated in mountain guesthouses, whereas about 26,000 were local and diaspora engaged in other outdoor activities in rural areas (Swisscontact internal assessment, 2020).

Drawing from the project outcomes and outputs, this assessment provides meaningful information on identifying key gender inequalities and constraints that the project will aim to improve. It also provides concrete and strategic recommendations for areas of intervention to support rural women's economic empowerment through income diversification and entrepreneurship in three sectors.

Identifying key stakeholders at the national and the local level

This report seeks also to shed light on key stakeholders such as government institutions and agencies, non-governmental organizations, and women associations whose work focuses on gender related topics. Within the Ministry of Trade, Entrepreneurship and Innovation, there is a Department of Tourism, which among others, that promotes Kosovo as a tourist destination. At the municipal level, all 38 municipalities have Directorates for Economy and Development .

However, a number of municipalities also have the Department of Tourism: Kllokot, Novobërd, Ferizaj, Skenderaj, Prizren, Prishtina (Department of Parks), Peja, Rahovec and Kaçanik.

Although no NGOs address furniture, apparel, and rural tourism issues at the local level, Annex III is a list of NGOs whose work relates to the promotion of economic development, business, and tourism in particular.

From a gender perspective, municipal institutional mechanisms that are responsible for leading and monitoring the implementation of gender equality at the municipal level are Gender Equality Officers. Cooperation with them should be deepened during the implementation of the project in order to identify key municipal actors in addressing gender issues in these three sectors.

ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

Gender Inclusion Assessment and Strategy on FEGO sectors will serve as guidance to the FEGO team, its partners and other stakeholders to consider gender throughout the project cycle, especially through intervention design, implementation and monitoring. The assessment will oversee the gender targets to be reached and indicators to be measured, in order to ensure proper gender mainstreaming and equal benefits of both genders and all groups of people.

As specified in the call, for conducting a Gender Inclusion Assessment and Strategy, a mixed methodological approach will be utilized for data gathering. The following steps were followed:

Consultative meetings with the project implementation unit. Two consultative meetings with project staff have been conducted to agree on the process.

In-depth desk research, which will inform the tool design and focus on the analytical report, and will contain the following:

- Analysis of the existing legislation, policies, and strategic documents and programs on identifying opportunities and constraints of women to participate in the labor force;
- Identifying their level of access to land ownership, resources, technology, and equipment;
- Identifying key stakeholders such as government institutions and agencies, NGOs, and women associations or groups whose work focuses on gender-related topics. This literature review will inform the tool design and focus of the assessment.

Interviews with key-value chain actors and stakeholders. In addition to a literature review, individual interviews will be conducted with key-value chain actors and stakeholders. Information was collected using semi-structured questionnaires.

Validation workshop. A presentation with the project team and key stakeholders will be conducted to validate the assessment findings.

Limitations

Although the report has contributed to identifying key gender issues in the furniture, apparel, and rural tourism sector, some limitations need to be addressed. It is important to note that there is a substantial lack of data related to the three sectors, especially in addressing gender issues. The lack of qualitative or quantitative data has made it challenging to provide a comprehensive summary, especially on the position of women in these three sectors. Finally, the limited time to complete the assessment for three very different sectors has been insufficient.

ASSESSMENT FINDINGS

The information provided in this section represents a general overview of findings from the three sectors from the gender mainstreaming perspective. More detailed information on each sector will be provided throughout the following sections of the report.

Desk research conducted for this report found that there is no comprehensive research conducted on gender issues in the three sectors. Although there are differences among the sectors, challenges and barriers are generally quite similar. While there are some fragmented data on these three sectors, it is difficult to know the approximate number of women and men employed in these sectors. The Labour Force Survey, generated quarterly by the Kosovo Agency of Statistics, does not provide separate data for furniture, apparel, or rural tourism, making it impossible to understand the dynamics of these sectors, needs, constrain, and barriers.

The available data and in-depth interviews confirmed that men are more engaged in decision-making roles in the furniture and rural tourism sector. In contrast, women are mostly involved in providing supportive services. An exception is the apparel sector, which will be further discussed below. Regarding marketing, it looks that both men and women are engaged in marketing, in all three sectors, mainly through using social media. It should be taken into consideration that women-owned businesses are at higher risk of failure due to limited access to resources and opportunities that will boost their businesses compared to men. It is worth noting that women carry out much unpaid work in family businesses, especially in apparel and rural tourism. Unpaid and undeclared activities performed informally by women do not provide legal protection or allow women access to social protection. For larger companies, the lack of a sustainable labor force creates a problem in planning their work in the long run, accompanied by the lack of professional training in this sector. The private business representatives consider that training provided by the Vocational Training Centers is often inadequate and very basic. Young employees in this sector usually go through systematic training to ensure that they are equipped with the skills needed to perform the job.

For this assessment, information is also provided on the work of the Vocational Training Centers. The Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare, through the Kosovo Employment Agency, manages eight Vocational Training Centers (VTC), which are concentrated in the seven regions. Vocational Training Centers (VTCs) provide training for the unemployed and jobseekers for a specific profession for free, focusing on applying practical skills and knowledge using teaching in different cabinets. The purpose of institutional training is to enable or enhance the professional knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for effective performance within a profession.

A presentation of the training provided by these centers (see Annex I) was presented to see how they relate to the three sectors of the project and whether there may be any interconnections in the future and how the project can contribute to the future through its interventions. While there are trainings provided on tailoring and construction (in some Vocational Training Centers), none of the eight centers provide training on tourism, more specifically on rural tourism.

In Kosovo, the absence of sex-disaggregated data and information continues to present a challenge for the design of gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation systems. This gap is problematic for policy planning because these types of data and information are necessary for developing policies based on local communities' heterogeneity, including gender roles, enjoyment of rights, concerns, and access to opportunities. Data focused on women and gender issues would facilitate the development of targeted policies and frameworks to achieve gender-sensitive policies, strategies, and programs. Due to the lack of data, women's potential roles in furniture, apparel and rural tourism sectors have never been fully discussed, nor has women's exact level of participation been defined.

The lack of sex-disaggregated data in the furniture, apparel, and rural tourism sector at the national and local levels is challenging. The situation might be worse than in the informal sector. In this regard, the project will collect quantitative and qualitative sex-disaggregated data in all three sectors. The data will go beyond numbers and provide a solid foundation to ensure adequate measurement of gender participation in the project interventions and activities. It is very important for the project to continuously measure qualitative indicators which allow for the case and context-specific assessments through focus groups with a smaller number of current and/or potential project beneficiaries; direct observations of project interventions through field visits; key informant interviews with project partners and beneficiaries; surveys on key aspects of project impact; and case studies.

Gender issues in the furniture sector. Men are predominantly engaged in all phases of the product delivery, whereas women are engaged mostly as sales clerks. However, although male-dominated, the gender division of labour in this sector is changing. There is an increased number of women interested in this sector and breaking the gender stereotypes previously associated with this sector, mainly in interior design and furniture construction¹, and milling, which previously was considered atypical for women.

Considering that initiating a business in the furniture sector requires a substantive economic capacity (e.g., purchasing the equipment), women are in a disadvantageous position compared to men to establish and maintain a business. This is due to women's lack of ownership and collateral to apply for bank loans for their business needs. Moreover, being a male-dominated sector, women are also less likely to access information and resources for various opportunities and networking. Lastly, the barriers to women business owners in this sector include mobility issues, such as traveling and participating in various fairs to promote the products, both in Kosovo and outside.

Gender issues in the apparel sector. Regarding gender composition, this sector is highly dominated by women. It is worth noting that interviews with representatives from the apparel sector show that only a small number of young men are interested to be engaged in sewing, and

¹ Meeting with representatives in the furniture sector.

the majority of employees are women² (approximately 95% of them). Although the number of women engaged in this sector is high, there are some indications that young women are less interested in working in this sector, especially in sewing, given that the work is inside facilities and is characterized by long working hours. However, this needs to be further addressed and explored.

On a positive note, the number of women who own businesses and who have made substantive success, also internationally, is encouraging. Although there is no comprehensive research on why it is easier for women in this sector to achieve greater success, it might be assumed that investing in this sector is more financially affordable, given that the majority of these women businesses have started working from home, then gradually increasing the scope and target audience for their businesses.

Lastly, considering that the sector is flourishing, things to be considered regarding employees' status and long-working hours, which might be typical for this sector, need to be addressed.

Gender issues in the rural tourism. Rural tourism is gaining increased attention among rural communities, and more families see it as an opportunity to generate income and provide financial sustainability for their families. Findings of this assessment show that the sector is still underdeveloped, and it needs substantive support to achieve competitiveness in the regional level. Considering that there was a mass migration of people from rural to urban areas in the last two decades, rural areas for some time were not seen as an attractive place for livelihood and income generation. Although not explored, there are some indications that in rural areas, typically mountain areas, there is an increased interest of rural communities to explore the opportunities provided in their area for income generation activities. One example is the Rugova region³ where families have created small-scale businesses initiatives to provide rural tourism-related services to their tourists.

Regarding the gender issues in rural tourism, there is a different picture in this sector. The family unit provides small businesses and initiatives where both men and women are actively engaged. There are no clear gender roles in this sector as in other sectors. In rural tourism, women are engaged in all product delivery cycles, starting from food, maintenance, administrative support, and operating businesses. There are also young women guiders. However, the challenges for women and men in this sector differ. When we talk about rural tourism in the mountains, women usually do not operate these businesses alone, without direct involvement and support from family men. This might be due to safety reasons, which characterize working in mountain areas.

² Meeting with representatives of two businesses in the apparel sector, Prishtina

³ Meeting with the representative of the Municipality of Peja (Check Point)

Given this is a new sector, what is common for both men and women, is that there is not a sufficient capacity to address the requests of their potential clients. Service providers usually do not participate in capacity-building initiatives or study visits which would help them increase their capacities to provide high-quality services and learn from the best regional practices. The sector also lacks support in maximizing the product quality and promotion of business at the national and regional levels. For instance, some families might need to buy specific equipment that keeps their products fresh, but cannot do so due to the lack of financial means. Branding was considered an issue that needs to be addressed, especially in this sector. Having a joint branding and unified guide, which provides information for the tourists about all the available services provided in the area, is considered crucial.

Interviews with local tourism stakeholders indicate an increasing trend of tourists wishing to engage in authentic local experiences accompanied by outdoor activities in nature and guided tours. This trend would open opportunities for the sustainable economic growth of women and men living in remote areas. Additionally, it could trigger opportunities for other micro and small businesses to provide local lodging and in-nature activities such as hiking, cycling, wild-fruits picking, snowshoeing, and ski-touring.

Lastly, the rural tourism sector provides fragmented services, which are often not competitive at the regional level. The lack of cooperation among rural communities is often considered to happen due to the lack of information on the necessity to do so to ensure the sustainability of the service provider in the long run.

Constraints and opportunities for women in the furniture, apparel, and rural tourism sector

Although there is no structured data on the position of women in these three sectors, the information below will attempt to shed light on gender inclusion and roles in these three sectors. Women's barriers in these three sectors are different and unique, which could be grouped into several factors, such as:

- **Social and cultural factors** hinder women's activity in the labor market through gender discrimination in the workplace, lack of educational opportunities for women, and occupational standards determined by gender. Even the capacity-building opportunities might differ among women and men, also those provided in the Vocational Training Centers, given that the training offered to job-seekers might follow a gender bias selection, given that women tend to be encouraged to attend training that fit into the certain categories (e.g., hairdresser, kitchen, tailoring).
- **Policies:** The lack of affordable childcare services in Kosovo is one of the main contributors to hindering women's access to the labor market, especially for rural women. Talking about the three-targeted sectors in this project, women working in the apparel sector might be especially vulnerable due to a lack of affordable childcare services.

- **Lack of social network and infrastructure;** women, especially those from rural areas, generally are in a disadvantageous position concerning their access to information and resources, which paves the way for their activity in the labor market and increases the business potential for women business owners, through networking with other similar businesses. In addition, women's barriers to finances need to be taken into consideration. Given the small percentage of women who own property, it makes it difficult for them to get a loan or apply for a government grant or subsidy, where the collateral is needed.
- **Training opportunities:** Limited access to information and opportunities related to training opportunities might put women in a disadvantageous position, especially those interested in the furniture sector. Although the situation is changing with regards to women's access to these training, the chances are that women who are more educated and have easier access to information and resources (including transportation means) have a higher participation rate in these trainings, which are not always provided by the state institutions, such as Vocational Training Centers.

Regarding the opportunities of women in the furniture, apparel, and rural tourism sector, it is important to highlight two of them:

- Women's engagement in non-conventional areas of the sector, especially the furniture sector, where women's interest is increasing (e.g., industrial dyeing, milling), could be seen as a real opportunity for women.
- Rural women's engagement in the rural tourism sector, especially women who work from home, in preparing homemade food, dairy products, and crafts, which could be potentially distributed/sold to nearby restaurants and guesthouses.

MAINSTREAMING GENDER IN THE PROJECT: RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the issues identified, the following recommendations are proposed in this gender inclusion and assessment strategy. First, cross-sectorial recommendations that apply to three sectors will be provided, then continuing with specific recommendations categorized for each sector.

CROSS-SECTORIAL RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Work with the media outlets (e.g., through training and inviting them in-field visits) to promote rural tourism in particular and provide training on gender sensitivity of media reports on three sectors, with a specific focus on empowering young men and women who work in sectors, which are considered nonconventional for them. Moreover, the project could also sponsor radio and TV programs that portray successful women from the three sectors.
- Identify women for participation and leadership in non-traditional areas within the three sectors.
- Provide support to rural tourism by developing unified guides from the best lessons learned internationally.
- Address women's voice in decision-making affects their livelihoods and can further increase marginalization and poor position in society. Women's exclusion from decision-making could potentially determine their ability to access project resources and services such as funds and training opportunities. Moreover, it is important to address women's unpaid work in the family business, especially in rural tourism.
- Continuously promote work that breaks with the roles and stereotypes traditionally attributed to women and men, especially in the furniture sector for women and apparel sector for young men (e.g., sewing).
- Work with existing trade unions to address the needs and constraints of women working in the furniture, apparel, and rural tourism sector, particularly in addressing the issue of access to decent work, especially for women in the apparel sector, considering their long working hours.
- Support joint forums, which facilitate women job seekers with potential employers, given that women tend to have less access to information and opportunities in the labor market.
- Facilitate access to information and resources available in this sector, particularly information related to government subsidies and grants, in three sectors.

SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FURNITURE SECTOR

- Provide support to women in small initiatives in the sector (e.g., lamp-shade, home accessories) where women's interest is increasing.

- Provide support by facilitating access to local markets to women entrepreneurship initiatives (including sales online) in marketing skills, networking, and easier access to information and resources.
- Facilitate capacity building for young women interested in nonconventional areas of this sector (e.g., industrial dyeing, milling).
- Provide Training Voucher Scheme, especially for women interested in male-dominated activities within the sector, such as industrial dyeing.
- Facilitate continuous and periodic meetings and forums among women working in this sector.

SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE APPAREL SECTOR

- Facilitate access to market to women small businesses and initiatives through capacity building, marketing skills, networking, and access to information and resources.
- Address financial barriers for the women owners of small businesses, such as capacity building in writing business proposals, loan applications, and applications for government subsidies and grants.
- Address long working hours and overtime of women working in this sector, especially in large companies, given an extra burden on women who serve as primary caregivers in their families.
- Advocate and closely work with the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare and the Labour Inspectorate in taking into consideration decent work principles and long working hours for women working in this sector.
- Considering the risk of labor shortages in this sector in the upcoming years, facilitate dialogue between employers and women representatives working in this sector to see the possibilities of providing affordable child services to women working in this sector, especially in large manufactories.

SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE TOURISM SECTOR

- Support to women in developing start-up businesses in rural tourism to develop authentic products for tourists, adding value to their businesses.
- Facilitate access to a sustainable market for rural women who might work from home in preparing homemade food, crafts, and dairy products for restaurants and guesthouses.
- Provide capacity building to rural women in ensuring quality products (homemade food, crafts, and dairy products) for rural tourism.

- Facilitate marketing and selling of products and services provided by rural women by increasing their marketing skills and improving branding for their products.
- Consider the support of women who can work from home in the rural tourism sector to ensure access to information and resources.
- Facilitate women's participation in decision-making processes at the community level, particularly their decision-making positions in the so-called village councils.
- Assess the capacities of rural areas/families for the services they can provide & then their connection with the market and marketing skills (use of social media to promote/sell products).
- In data collection, cooperate with businesses in providing data on the involvement of households in the sale of products (e.g., how many households sell products in restaurants - how many women are approximately involved in the provision of these services).

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE PROJECT

Establish and strengthen cooperation with government institutions

- Work with Gender Equality Officers at the line ministries and municipal level to push gender equality and mainstreaming in three sectors.
- Support the Kosovo Agency of Employment in producing a Vocational Training Programme for Tourism, where one of the main objectives would be to integrate a gender perspective. In addition, the project might support both Vocational Training Centers and businesses in strengthening their cooperation and coordination to ensure that the training provided matches the market demands.
- Advocate to the Kosovo Agency of Statistics to generate specific sex-disaggregated data on three sectors: furniture, apparel, and rural tourism.
- Strengthen cooperation with Kosovo Employment Agency in identifying capacity-building needs for both women and men in three sectors, especially in furniture and rural tourism, where there is a lack of training programs provided by Vocational Training Centers. Furthermore, given that Vocational Training Centers might encourage, very often due to lack of gender sensitivity, women or men in certain fields of training that they think are more "suitable" for them, it is important that the project addresses these gaps throughout its implementation.
- Provide gender-sensitive informational sessions to the key government and non-governmental partners in three sectors. Provide support at the policy-making and decision-making level for the government institutions at the local and central levels for all

three sectors, in mainstreaming gender, given there are still misunderstandings and misconceptions about gender issues.

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