

Skills development with industry leaders (EYE Kosovo)

This is an intervention summary from the MSD for employment (MSD4E) landscape assessment.

The intervention supported large input suppliers to set up private training centres offering in-demand training on key topics. As a result, companies are investing in continuous training for employees which has contributed to improved sales. In addition, individuals can access training that supports access to wage work or self-employment. Training is sustained through fees for the service.

Background information

Project	EYE Kosovo
Funder	SDC
Implementer	Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation and MDA (local consortium partner)
Contact	Albina Berisha (Albina.Berisha@helvetas.org)
Rural or urban?	Rural and urban
Sectors	Hospitality (pastry), wood products
Intended employment outcomes	Access to jobs Job quality
Target group (end beneficiaries)	Youth (18-35) employed in the wood and pastry sectors, and unemployed young people looking to enter these sectors.
Cross-cutting priorities	GESI
Years of operation	2018-2023

What constraints did the intervention aim to address?

The intervention addressed constraints to the skills development function within the labour market. It leveraged the economic incentives of companies to invest in training their own staff and the incentives of larger input suppliers to set up training to enhance product and service marketing. A key innovation is having the skills development 'supplier' also being part of the supporting function for the economic sector.

Which market actor partners did the intervention work with?

1. **Three industry leaders** (on average around 50 employees) from two sectors - hospitality (pastry) and wood processing - which are also key input suppliers. These firms have established training centres to provide commercially viable training solutions, including a commitment to employing full-time trainers. The training model involves offering specialised modules, developed and taught by industry experts, and scheduled to accommodate work commitments (e.g. via post-work sessions).
2. **Other firms** in the sector sending employees for training.

3. **National Qualifications Authority** providing accreditation and certification.

What were the intended behaviour changes for these partners?

1. **Industry leaders:** While these companies initially had limited experience in managing training programmes, they have been improving processes to foster continuous learning. This includes integrating feedback on product quality or recipes to refine future training. The motivation for this model is the incentive to provide training at reduced fees. By doing so, these input suppliers impart skills and knowledge and enhance their sales to other firms in their sector. For example, in the pastry industry, training on cake-making techniques using specific products has contributed to a reported 70% increase in product sales.
2. **Other companies** finance training for their employees and contribute to the development of the training curriculum to ensure it aligns with their specific work needs.
3. **Employees** benefit from these training programmes by gaining knowledge and skills, which in turn improves their job performance.
4. **Jobseekers** can enrol in these training courses, paying for them with the aim of acquiring skills and knowledge necessary to start their own businesses.
5. **The National Qualifications Authority** is responsible for approving new occupational standards and for the accreditation of new training centres.

How sustainable are these behaviour changes?

Adopt: These firms, supplying inputs such as pastry ingredients and wood processing machinery, recognise that improving training can lead to increased sales, providing an incentive to finance training over the long term. In some instances, the establishment of a training centre has increased sales by as much as 60%.

What were the intervention's key results?

- Training centres are offering training programmes, independently of project support, with the private sector actively sending participants.
- A total of 1,000 young women and men have completed training in pastry and wood processing. Out of these, 70% have had their training fees paid by companies, while the remaining 30% have self-funded their training. 30% of these trainees have either found better employment opportunities or new jobs.
- 13 out of 16 of the companies that sent their employees for training reported improvements in employee performance and productivity, averaging a 37.5% increase compared to the period before the training.

<i>Has a third party been involved in measuring these results?</i>	No
<i>Is the partner behaviour change the sole/major/minor contributing factor towards the employment-related outcome you've reported? (i.e. are there other contributing factors?)</i>	Major
<i>Results chain available?</i>	No

Relevant project documents

- <https://helvetas-ks.org/eye/en/publications/>
- Case study: https://helvetas-ks.org/eye/file/repository/Success_Story_From_Cooking_at_Home_to_Business_Owner.pdf
- Wider study on the impact of non-formal training providers: https://helvetas-ks.org/eye/file/repository/Report_Assessing_the_Impact_of_Non_Formal_Training_Providers_and_Youth_Employment_in_Kosovo.pdf

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