




An EU funded project managed by the European Union Office in Kosovo



# INCREASING EMPLOYMENT OF ROMA, ASHKALI, AND EGYPTIAN COMMUNITIES THROUGH A RECYCLING COLLECTIVE

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Implemented by:



EUROPEAN CENTRE  
FOR MINORITY  
ISSUES KOSOVO

In partnership with:

Health For All





## WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT?

The Project aims to increase self-employment opportunities for members of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities who, in an informal way, are engaged in collecting recyclable waste, which they sell for a living. The project seeks to provide support to these members by using and expanding the existing business model that they have established by supporting them to improve their skills, broaden their access to resources and capacity to collect the recyclable waste.

With a goal of formalizing their current business model, the project seeks to encourage and support joint forms of entrepreneurial cooperation between informal collectors through the provisions of establishment of a joint association, which also provides them a platform to engage with public institutions in the ongoing debate on the restructuring of waste management and recycling in Kosovo.

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## TARGET GROUPS AND BENEFICIARIES

The main target group is sixty (60) members of the Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities engaged in informal collection of recyclable materials in five (5) target municipalities: Prishtinë/Priština, Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje, Lipjan/Lipljan, Gračanica/Gračanice, and Obiliq/Obilić. More broadly, the project supports families of the waste collectors by creating opportunities for increased revenues from the work they are engaged in.





## ACHIEVED AND EXPECTED RESULTS

The project began in December 2014 and is expected to be successfully finalized in December 2016. During this period, numerous results have been achieved and a number of others are expected to be rounded off by the completion of the project. By utilizing existing recycling initiatives and business models within the informal collector community, the project has increased human, legal, and infrastructural capacities by:

- Organizing a series of specialized trainings for sixty (60) project beneficiaries designed to enhance their skills, knowledge, and small-scale entrepreneurship;
- Providing fifteen (15) beneficiaries with significant infrastructural equipment in order to enhance their operational capacities in the form of moto-cultivators and tricycles with trailers;
- Establishing four (4) recycling collection centers, fully equipped with large capacity pressing machines and scales for processing and compressing recyclables;
- Providing all beneficiaries with the necessary uniforms and protective gear allowing them to handle recyclables in a sanitary manner;

- Establishing and supporting the Association of informal waste collectors “Collective Recycling Initiative Kosovo” (CRIK) in drafting and implementing all of the necessary legal framework (Statute, Rules of Procedure, Board of Directors);
- Supporting the Association with technical and legal expertise as it works to develop into a common platform for informal collectors to advocate for their rights in the fields of employment, education, and better community representation;
- Undertaking an awareness-raising campaign informing the wider public of the net positive effect informal collectors have on their household economic and the environment, leading to reduced stigmatization of their work and profession;
- Creating and successfully managing a savings-and-credit scheme providing financial incentives to beneficiaries with the ultimate goal of boosting their savings rate towards better financial planning.

Through the provision of necessary trainings and infrastructural subsidies which significantly enhance their capacity to collect, transport, and process recyclable materials, twenty (20) informal collectors are now fully self-employed and have the tools and capacities necessary to significantly raise their incomes.



## As a result:

- Fifteen (15) beneficiaries are self-employed in collecting and transporting recyclable materials to collection centers
- Six (6) beneficiaries are self-employed in the Collection Centers operating machinery and processing waste;
- Approximately 20 tons (20,000kgs) of recyclables collected, transported, processed and compressed (baled) since the beginning of the Action;
- Approximately 15 tons (15,000kgs) of recyclables sold to larger companies, generating income for beneficiaries since the beginning of the Action;
- Incomes for informal collectors have increased due to:
  - ▶ A significantly higher collection rate due to efficient and fast transportation minimizing time from collection to sale
  - ▶ Informal collectors compressing and bailing recyclables themselves using provided machinery, thereby fetching a higher price on the market
- Existing structures (legal and infrastructural) will remain in place after the end of the project, thereby ensuring long-term sustainability and effects.

## ABOUT US

The European Centre for Minority Issues Kosovo (ECMI Kosovo) is the principal non-government organisation (NGO) engaged with the protection and promotion of the rights and interests of all minority communities in Kosovo. Our overarching goal is to contribute to developing an inclusive, democratic and stable multi-ethnic society in Kosovo.

ECMI Kosovo is responsible for the overall coordination of the project, which it implements in partnership with Health for All (HFA) and Roma and Ashkalia Documentation Centre (RADC), two non-governmental organizations with broad experience on issues related to Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities. For this, it relies on a longstanding experience in supporting government institutions and civil society in a broad variety of fields, including on employment, education, and capacity-building sectors.



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