

# KOSOVO

## OUR WORK IN KOSOVO

### STATUS OF WOMEN IN KOSOVO

THE WAR IN KOSOVO ENDED IN 1999 AFTER 16 MONTHS OF FIGHTING, BUT THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION AND CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION ESTIMATE THAT AS MANY AS 20,000 KOSOVAR WOMEN WERE THE VICTIMS OF SYSTEMATIC RAPE DURING THE CONFLICT.

In a very traditional culture in which to touch a woman is to dishonor her family, many women were abandoned by their families and ostracized from their communities as a result of what they suffered during the war. Kosovar women still often suffer from violence. Incidences of sexual assault, domestic violence, and sex trafficking are exceptionally high in Kosovo; legal protections against rape do not prohibit marital rape; and there are no laws against sexual harassment. Many women fear speaking out against perpetrators of sexual violence due to the severe stigmatization they would likely face.

Kosovo remains a patriarchal society where women struggle for economic and social equality. Even before the war, girls were often excluded from education, which has resulted in low literacy rates among women, especially in rural areas. This exclusion further constrains women's participation in government and other aspects of public life.

### WOMEN FOR WOMEN INTERNATIONAL IN KOSOVO

JOB SKILLS ALONE ARE NOT ENOUGH TO EMPOWER WOMEN: THEY MUST KNOW THEIR RIGHTS, BE ABLE TO SPEAK OUT ABOUT THEM, AND HAVE RESOURCES TO HELP THEM MAKE DECISIONS BEFORE THEY CAN USE VOCATIONAL SKILLS TO CREATE LONG-TERM ECONOMIC STABILITY IN THEIR LIVES.

Women for Women International first opened its doors in Kosovo in 1999, and since then has trained 31,259 women in its 12-month core program. The country office headquarters is located in Pristina, and the organization's work is concentrated in Viti, Kaganik, Shterpcë, Fushe Kosovë, and Ferizaj. In 2014, an estimated 2,630 women will be served in the Women for Women International program.

## STRONGER WOMEN, STRONGER NATIONS

### OUR MISSION

In countries affected by conflict and war, Women for Women International supports the most marginalized women to earn and save money, improve health and well-being, influence decisions in their home and community, and connect to networks for support. By utilizing skills, knowledge, and resources, she is able to create sustainable change for herself, her family, and community.

## WHAT WE DO: OUR PROGRAM

WOMEN FOR WOMEN INTERNATIONAL'S 12-MONTH TRAINING PROGRAM PROVIDES POLITICALLY, ECONOMICALLY, AND SOCIALLY EXCLUDED WOMEN IN COUNTRIES AFFECTED BY VIOLENCE WITH THE VOCATIONAL SKILLS, HEALTH INFORMATION, AND RIGHTS EDUCATION THEY NEED TO OVERCOME POVERTY, MAKE HEALTHY DECISIONS, AND BUILD LOCAL NETWORKS TO ADVOCATE FOR THEIR RIGHTS.

When women are able to sustain an income, be well, make decisions, and have social networks to support them, they develop the confidence they need to transform their lives, families, and communities. Our program promotes women's social and economic empowerment as the key to building more peaceful and stable societies.

Program participants are assigned to a group of 25 women who meet bi-weekly to engage in learning together. They receive life skills training, including lessons in health awareness, decision-making, negotiation, and civic participation. Women also learn business and vocational skills and gain access to income-generating activities that enable them to move towards economic self-sufficiency.

All of the trainings are led by local trainers and tailored to local contexts and markets. Prior to vocational training, numeracy training covering fundamental arithmetic skills is offered to participants identified as innumerate.

Every month during the training program, each participant receives a small cash transfer as a condition of participating in the program. Participants are free to use these funds however they wish. Many use them to purchase medicine, food, clothing, or transportation, to pay tuition fees for children, or to invest in starting a small business. Women for Women International also encourages participants to save a portion of their monthly training stipend.

### KOSOVO

#### COUNTRY OFFICE

STARTED: 1999

HEADQUARTERS: Pristina

PROGRAMS IN: Viti, Kaganik,  
Shterpce, Fushe Kosove, and  
Ferizaj

#### AVERAGE

#### PARTICIPANT PROFILE

AVERAGE DAILY INCOME: \$0.02

CHILDREN IN CARE: 3

ILLITERATE: 20 percent

ATTENDED PRIMARY SCHOOL:  
54 percent

AGE: 31-40 years

#### VOCATIONAL

#### SKILLS & TRAINING

Bee-keeping

Dairy Production

Handcrafts and Tailoring

Horticulture

Service Industries

## INCREASING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES: JOB PLACEMENT PROGRAM

WOMEN FOR WOMEN INTERNATIONAL HAS FOUND THAT WHILE PROGRAM GRADUATES IN URBAN AND SUBURBAN AREAS MAKE MEASURABLE PROGRESS IN THE AREA OF DECISION-MAKING, HEALTH, AND SUPPORT NETWORKS, THOSE WHO ARE EAGER TO JOIN THE WORKFORCE HAVE FOUND IT DIFFICULT TO FIND VIABLE EMPLOYMENT.

Women for Women International responded to this challenge by establishing a Job Placement Office (JPO) in 2012. During its two-year pilot period, the JPO has been instrumental in assisting 327 graduates to find profitable employment in a highly competitive market.

They have built strong relationships with local employers in sectors that match Women for Women International's professional training tracks, including child and elderly care, retail sales, cleaning, catering, and tailoring. Close ties are also maintained with relevant stakeholders, such as the Ministry of Trade and Industry; Ministry of Labour and Welfare; Regional Placement Office, Kosvet-6; and job portals such as KosovaJob and Telegrafi. There are currently 220 employers in the JPO database in Kosovo, and its reputation continues to grow due to the high service standards maintained by our graduates.

In addition to the 327 Women for Women International graduates who have been placed in jobs, there are currently 500 women who are still seeking jobs through the JPO database. Their need, coupled with the JPO's success, highlights our determination to continue to provide critical services to graduates of the 12-month training program.

### IMPACT

NUMBER OF GRADUATES  
FINDING JOBS THROUGH  
WFWI DATABASE:

327 graduates

NUMBER OF EMPLOYERS IN JOB  
PLACEMENT OFFICE DATABASE:

220 Employers

WFWI-KOSOVO IS ACTIVELY  
ENGAGING STAKEHOLDERS  
TO CONNECT WOMEN TO NEW  
OPPORTUNITIES:

Ministry of Trade and Industry  
Ministry of Labour and Welfare  
Regional Placement Office  
Kosvet-6  
KosovaJob  
Telegrafi

## OUR IMPACT

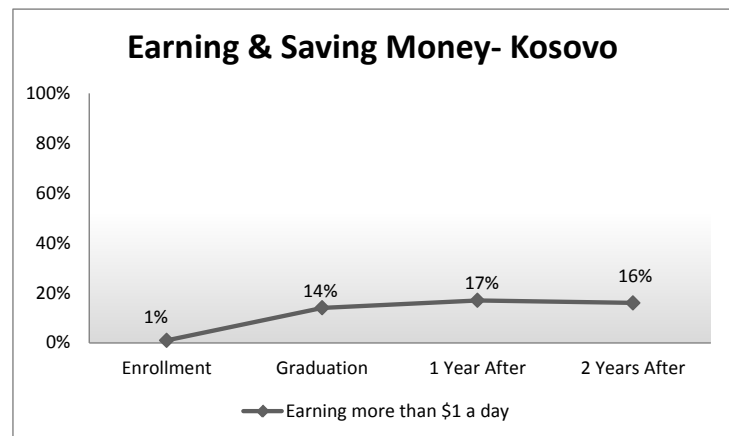
OUR PROGRAM IS FOCUSED ON HELPING WOMEN ACHIEVE THE FOLLOWING FOUR KEY OUTCOMES:

### 1 WOMEN EARN AND SAVE MONEY

When women earn an income, they reinvest a much higher portion in their families and communities, compared to men.

In Kosovo, women demonstrate the ability to increase their daily income even two years after graduating from our program, earning an average of \$0.42 per day two years after graduation, compared to \$0.02 at enrollment.

(See footnote 1)

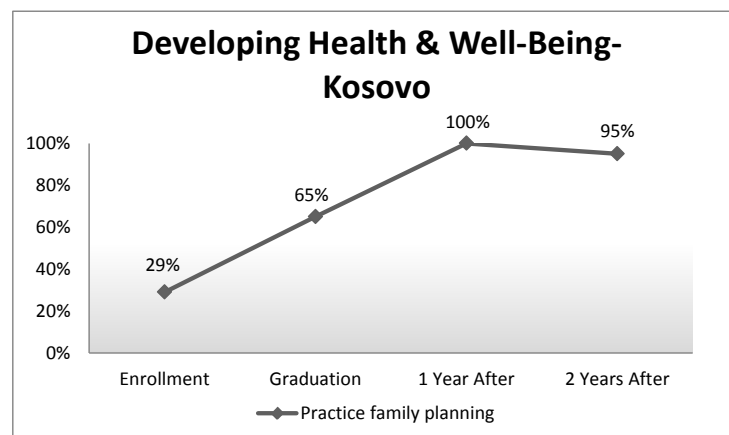


### 2 WOMEN DEVELOP HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Access to affordable and accessible healthcare – as well as training in disease prevention – significantly reduces preventable deaths.

Women continue to apply improved knowledge about how to protect their health and well-being after graduating from our program. 29 percent of women report practicing family planning at enrollment, compared to 95 percent two years after graduation.

(See footnote 1)

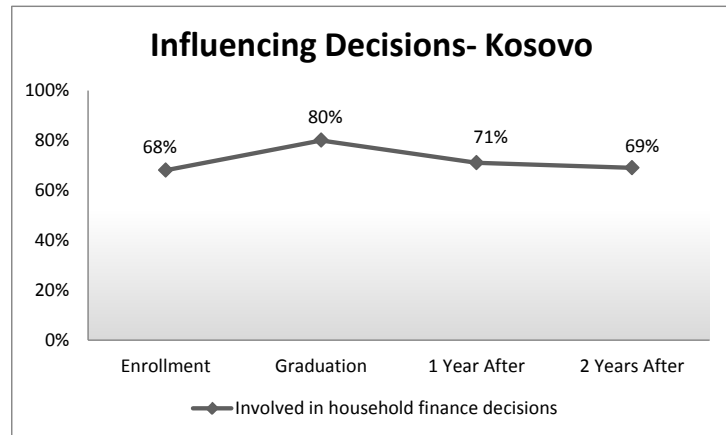


### 3 WOMEN INFLUENCE DECISIONS IN THE HOME AND COMMUNITY

Studies show that women exercise greater decision-making power within their families when they are educated, earn a stable income, and have access to resources such as land and credit.

Women become increasingly involved in making the decisions that affect their lives. 68 percent of women reported being involved in household financial decisions at enrollment, compared to 69 percent two years after graduation.

(See footnote 1)

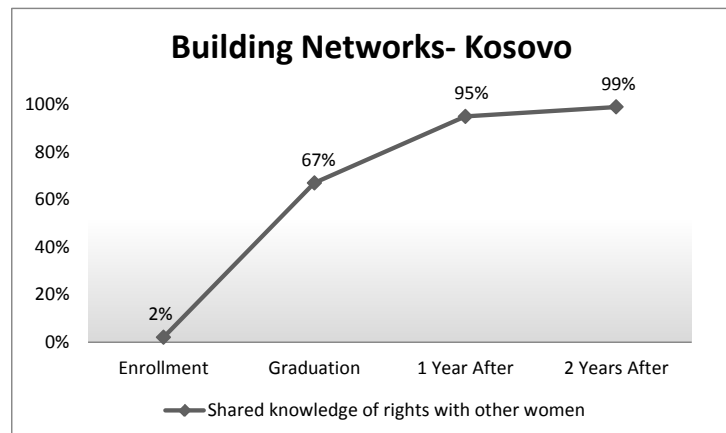


### 4 WOMEN CREATE AND CONNECT TO NETWORKS FOR SUPPORT AND ADVOCACY

As program participants, women learn the importance of working together. By working in groups, they also benefit from a support system and social networks.

Women share what they learn about their rights with other women in their communities. Almost all women reported educating another woman on her rights at graduation, one and two years after graduation, compared to 2 percent at enrollment. Educating a woman yields dividends not only for herself, but for others in her community.

(See footnote 1)



## FACTS ABOUT WOMEN IN KOSOVO

In Kosovo, women account for just 27 percent of the labor force.<sup>2</sup>

87 percent of girls who enroll in primary school will finish the last grade of primary education.<sup>3</sup>

Of Kosovo's 17 ministries of central government, only 2 have women ministers.<sup>4</sup>

Just over 45 percent of the labor force is unemployed, the highest unemployment rate in Europe.<sup>5</sup>

Only 64 percent of the population has access to clean water.<sup>6</sup>

Less than 50 percent of the population is connected to public sewage, in rural areas this number drops to just 7 percent.<sup>7</sup>

## LEARN MORE

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## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Data represents women who graduated from our program in Kosovo between 2010 and 2011.

<sup>2</sup> "Kosovo Mosaic 2012: Overview of perceptions on public services and local authorities." (2012, December ). Retrieved August 15, 2014, from [http://www.ks.undp.org/content/dam/kosovo/docs/Mozaik/Kosovo\\_Mosaic\\_2012\\_Eng\\_735317.pdf](http://www.ks.undp.org/content/dam/kosovo/docs/Mozaik/Kosovo_Mosaic_2012_Eng_735317.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> "Primary Completion Rate, female (percent of relevant age group)." The World Bank. Accessed 15 August 2014.

<http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.PRM.CMPT.FE.ZS>

<sup>4</sup> "Kosovo." UNDP. Accessed 15 August 2014. <http://www.ks.undp.org/content/kosovo/en/home.html?cid=2,120>

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> "Unicef in Kosovo, The Children, Early Years." Unicef. Accessed 15 August 2014. <http://www.unicef.org/kosovoprogramme/children.html>

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.