



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Celebrating success and embracing inclusion
with the Kosovo Senior Recruitment Project

March 2024



British Embassy
Pristina

TALOGY

IDEAS | PEOPLE | TRUST

Taking a gender-lens - our project's support to Women's Networking in Kosovo

In the past few years since the project started, Anne Stratton and Edmonda Kelmendi (BDO consultants) have been supporting the 'Network to Empower Women in Decision Making Positions in the Public Sector' to become established in Pristina, Kosovo.

The purpose of the Network is to unite women, providing them with opportunities to learn, network, and thrive together. Specifically, we wanted to encourage women to apply for and thrive in pivotal decision-making roles in central public and independent institutions.

The Network stands out for several reasons:

1. **Inspirational Conversations:** Participants engage in thought-provoking dialogues, gaining fresh perspectives and insights.
2. **Helpful Networks and Relationships:** We foster connections that extend beyond the events, creating a supportive community.
3. **Confidence Building:** Through shared experiences and encouragement, women build their confidence and assertiveness.
4. **Topics of Diversity and Inclusion:** We explore vital issues, championing diversity and inspiring confidence in all attendees.



Women's Network Event bringing Senior Leaders from Kosovo Public Institutions



Women's Network Committee Members with the British Ambassador in Kosovo, Nicholas Abbott (above)

Women's Network Committee Members meeting young girls to discuss the important of women leading and inspiring leadership (below)



An inaugural event took place in October 2023, where we engaged in candid discussions about career challenges, shared valuable experiences, and identified ways to support one another.

A second event in February 2024 was a remarkable symbol of inclusive collaboration: the Network joined forces with the British Embassy's "Be an Ambassador for a Day" competition for young girls, where participants discussed the meaning of "inspiring leadership" and why women must also become leaders.

"Together, we're striving to elevate women's voices, influence, and impact in decision-making."

Celebrating success and embracing inclusion with our Empowerment Network of Women in Decision-Making Positions in the Public Sector



The theme of this year's International Women's Day is **#InspireInclusion**, and we are delighted to share the findings from our latest Women's Network meeting, where the spirit of inclusion really shone through.

Vlora Spanca, Auditor General, delivered an impactful talk on the significance of inclusion at the National Audit Office in Pristina. She advocated for inclusive practices, role models and democratic leadership styles that foster accountability to deliver. Vlora shared her personal journey in building a culture of collaborative decision-making and talked about the positive impact on her team's confidence, performance and ultimately, well-being.

Addressing the all-female audience, Vlora emphasised the importance of fairness and equity for all, emphasising that inclusion transcends gender, age and other potential biases. She spoke about the approaches taken to invite everyone to speak up and to make them feel valued, sharing the impact of openness and improved performance. The impact at the National Audit Office has resulted in people being more highly motivated, more agile and taking a real sense of responsibility.

The subsequent exchange of ideas and experiences really showcased the power of collaboration among women.

Initial discussions focussed on the overall culture towards women in Kosovan workplaces: it was generally felt that women's professional contributions were under-valued and behaviours towards women were sometimes exclusionary. Examples were given of how these translate into practice, such as unfair delegation of tasks or the exclusion of women in decision-making processes.



The under-representation of women in senior roles and some of the self-limiting behaviours of women who hesitate to step forward were also perceived as restricting factors to the attraction, recruitment and appointment of women into senior leadership roles.

We then considered how women could actively promote a culture of inclusiveness:

- Empower ourselves and others to lead and call out inequality as and when we experience it;
- Act with integrity to treat everyone with respect and dignity to stop discrimination;
- Shift workplace dialogue towards inclusivity, educate leaders on fairness and how to build trust;
- Encourage teamwork, provide support and training for leaders and team members;
- Conduct fair performance reviews, based on accurate assessments of competencies;
- Create forums where business topics can be discussed in detail at every business level.

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When discussing the benefits of this approach, we felt inspired by the future possibilities of a more inclusive workplace.

We all agreed that we wanted to work where fairness, trust and respect are present and considered additional benefits. We concluded that offering equal delegation opportunities will motivate staff to meet objectives and encourage them to voice their ideas. This pro-active approach would minimise micromanagement, lead to better decision making, cooperation and collaboration. In turn, more goals would be achieved, more performance targets met, and the organisation's sustainability and performance would significantly improve.

After our really insightful roundtable discussions, it was clear that inclusion is not just a buzzword for us; it is a guiding principle. It shapes our organisational culture, drives us towards a more diverse, equitable and collaborative future.

#InspireInclusion is an essential strategy for the future.

On behalf of BDO and the Kosovo Senior Recruitment project, we wish you a Happy International Women's Day!



For further information about the project and access to key support resources, you can visit:

www.kosovoselection.org