

GREEN BUSINESS PROGRAM



GREEN BUSINESS COMPETITION

The Green Business Competition is an activity organized by Partners Albania since 2012. It aims to stimulate and encourage innovation for green business ideas at the local level and explores the role of philanthropy in engaging local communities to generate green business ideas that utilize local resources and revitalize disappearing traditional production chains and community-based markets.

By supporting innovative, local sustainable economic development initiatives, The Green Business Competition aims to substantively contribute to building a peaceful, competitive, and prosperous Western Balkans and Greece region in line with the seven (7) Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda.

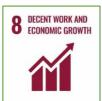














Partners Albania offers services of incubators and accelerators in the field of green start-ups and social enterprises, related with capacity building, mentoring in developing business ideas. networking opportunities, exposure to international markets. seed and funding. The seed funding provided through a pool of funds established as a combination of philanthropic institutions, donors, and local businesses contributions. The main social impact donors over the vears have been Rockefeller **Brothers** Fund. Credins Bank. Telekom Albania. One Telecommunications, Tirana Bank, Erasmus+. The Balkan Trust for Democracy.



- + 125 entrepreneurs have received training & coaching
- 41 SEs have been supported, 28 are still active
- Direct employment to over 60 individuals
- 5 times Albanian
 Winners at Regional
 Green Ideas Competition

SUPPORT

During the two days of the Green Business Competition, finalists selected among competitors from non-profit organizations, social enterprises, small business ventures, and individuals, present their business ideas before an independent jury of experts in the area of economy, education, and business development.

The competition supports business ideas in two main LOTs, according to their stage of maturity:

LOT 1: Business Ideas at Conceptual Stage

LOT 2: Businesses in Pre-Seed Stage

Three winners at the national level, are automatically part of the "Balkan Green Ideas" Competition, together with the winners from the national competitions from Kosovo, Serbia, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Greece.

Since 2012, 41 green social enterprises have been supported through the Green Business Competition in Albania, out of which, 28 are still active in the market.



RESEARCH

Partners Albania provides its contribution in research and advocacy, in particular related to the legal framework of social PA enterprises. has pioneered research of social entrepreneurship in Albania, covering issues of sector mapping. understanding challenges and its opportunities in local markets, existing funding and institutional support, the potential for growth and the role of state and non-state actors in social entrepreneurship development.

Partners Albania has been part of several research initiatives on social enterprises and social entrepreneurship in the Western Balkans. Its research findings make the basis of advocacy at national and European level, backed up by participation in diverse networks such as EMES, EUCLID, Balkan Social Enterprise Research Network, Diesis, etc.

Regarding the research of the green enterprises specifically, Partners Albania has contributed to the development of the "Roadmap of Green Entrepreneurship Ecosystem in the Western Balkans".



4 EYES **4 NATURE**

aos-alb.org



aos_alb (O





The idea 4 eye for the nature of the Albanian Ornithological Society (AOS) organization promotes Birdwatching as a new branch of eco-tourism. It helps to protect biodiversity and revitalize the local economy of the natural protected areas, taking advantage of local tradition of hospitality and culinary arts.

AOS has designed and is selling 4 green touristic packages covering the area of Divjaka-Karavasta, Saline-Narta, Valbona, and since 2017 included Prespa Lake, in Southeast of Albania.



As a result of cooperation with well-known travel companies and tour operators, and thanks to an extensive promotion campaign, Albania is now included as one of the destinations for visitors interested in this kind of tourism.

Around 150 visitors participate annually in birdwatching tours organized by AOS, benefiting also 14 local providers of hospitality and culinary services.





AGRI-TOURISM ECO SOCIAL FARM



infothedoor.com



thedooralbania







The Eco-Social Farm is established in the Oblikë village, Shkodër and is run by organization The Door.

A significant number of domestic and foreign tourists, bikers and camper users, visit this area, but agro-tourism services in the area are very few and the Eco-social Farm offers a good alternative due to the favorable location and competitive prices.

Through this initiative, 22 people with disabilities were trained and involved, members of the musical band who perform during cultural activities organized at the Ecosocial Farm.

The organization expanded the services of Eco-social Farm by hiring 2 full time employees at risk of social exclusion, 3 parts – time employees coming from families with low income, and 10 volunteers providing camping services for about 1,500 tourists visiting the area annually. 3 local businesses from the village support the Farm by providing products and culinary services. The Farm, also offers an appropriate infrastructure for accommodation in tends, family grill, bicycle rides, guides to the attractive places around the Farm.







CULTIVATION OF SAFFRON

bletashafran









Cultivation of saffron is implemented by Figiri Guxha, teacher and agronomist in Daias village. The passion for agronomy has driven him to test and cultivate many agricultural products even when he was no longer working in this field.

Daias is an area that lacks self-employment initiatives through cultivation of agricultural products. Also, being near Tirana and having a beautiful landscape, the location has attracted many construction companies that aim to build resorts in the area, destroying the

Since October 2016, the business is working for the preparation of the soil in perfect condition to cultivate saffron. The cultivation of saffron preserves the soil since it is a plant with high curative and nutritional value, and is an entirely bio product, due to not using pesticides or other hazardous chemicals.

6 women and man from the village are trained and employed for the entire process, from cultivation of the plant until the product packing. The business has encouraged 5 other farmers from Daias to cultivate saffron in their lands, thus stimulating the economic development of the area.



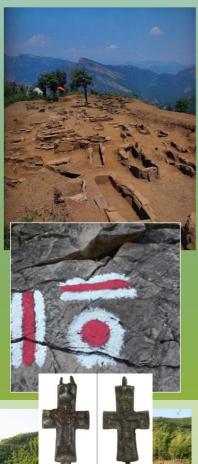




KOMANI SPEAKS

cospeonlus





Komani culture was tracked in 1898 through the discovery of a large cemetery near Dalmaca Castle in Koman and later with the discovery of about 30 similar cemeteries, mainly spread in Northern and Middle Albania. Since decades ago till currently, there have been several archaeological expeditions in the area, testifying the history of this country.

The Komani civilization is a multi-dimensional treasure consisting of archaeological remains, a splendid nature and the existence of old copper mines which can be restored. It makes a tremendous asset for the country's economy as well as a very important model for the world civilization.

Organization COSPE is working on promotion of this historical, cultural and natural heritage through responsible tourism.

The organization built 8 trails for visitors that highlight the assets of the area, such as acropolis, old churches and other buildings, as well as the wonderful natural environment, linking this destination with other areas like Valbona or Sarda. In addition, a mobile application is created through which tourists visiting the area can find all trails and landmarks

Since the idea started to implement, 10 local families have adapted their homes into guest houses, bars and restaurants in order to provide culinary and hospitality services to visitors. 15 youngsters from Komani were trained as touristic guides, accompanying 300 tourists visiting the area annually, showing them the history and the culture of this civilization.



AROMA THERAPY

aromatherapyalbania.com



aroma_therapy_albania







Aroma Therapy is an enterprise established by Kreuza Kotorri, which has created a completely natural and healthy cosmetic line. Products are created through processes that do not cause pollution, are not tested on animals, and are packed with recycled paper. Following an environmental-friendly strategy, the workshop and the shop facilities are furnished with recycled wood.

The grant assisted the business in expanding the machinery equipment, enabling the increase of the products range, made with local raw materials such as bee wax, sugar, olive oil, salt, almonds, hazelnuts, sunflower, lavender, chamomile etc. This would impact the economic growth of the local areas the raw material will be purchased from, as well as will increase employment.

Through this entirely Albanian product line, the business aims to promote the values and nature of our country. Albania has already become known to produce essential oils, and Aromatherapy aims to make it known even for the final product that is created with these oils: the Aromatherapy product, turning it into a national brand.







SOFRA **E ANEVE**

www.gjirokastra.org/gjirokastra-foundation/



fondacioni.gjirokastra





Traditional cooking based on rich organic farming and livestock products is one of the many values of Gjirokastra, a city with an exceptional architecture, rich history and culture, and diverse nature.

The idea of Gjirokastra Foundation "Sofra e Aneve" (Grandma's Cooking) aims the inclusion of culinary tours in the touristic offer Gjirokastra, as potential for further development of tourism in the area. Culinary tours will help improve the visitor experience, prolong their stay and contribute to perennial development of touristic activity, increasing employment, and boosting the social & economic development of the area.



Through the new touristic packages to be marketed under the name "Giirokastra CulTours", local traditional cooking made of delicious and organic based products will be promoted, as a way of eating healthy.

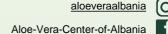
Gjirokastra Foundation provides training for guides and households on specialized service in culinary tourism, towards improvement, expansion of the products range and professionalization of the traditional ways of serving food.







ALOE VERA





The enterprise was established by Albi Sulo and consists in growing the Aloe Saponaria plant (for the first time in Albania) in a suburban area of Tirana, aiming to turn the cultivation of Aloe Vera in a successful and lucrative venture.

The western and south-western regions of Albania are suitable for the cultivation of this new crop, for its effects and financial benefits from the sale of the plants and the gel it produces.

This innovative local initiative is expected to serve as an incentive for a wider cultivation of this plant in Albania, making use of the abandoned land, and enhancing employment and wellness. The enterprise has extended the offered products, including also different types of Aloe Vera and different compositions.







GREEN PATHS

vjosa-explorer.business.site



rafting_vjosa_explorer





The idea of Vjosa Explorer Association aims to increase the tourist offer in Përmet district through the construction of the Green Paths, as an untapped potential that improves the visitor experience, increases the quality of their stay and influences in reducing the seasonality of tourism activity in favor of employment growth, and social and economic development.



Through this idea, four green trails are built, and also a digital map is created, including GPS marking, points of interest and all necessary information about the trails.

The realization of these trails is expected to encourage the inhabitants of the 8 villages involved in their itinerary, to adopt their homes into guest houses to provide accommodation and services for visitors, as well as to increase the production of typical local products relying on the raw material provided by nature.







PEMLA LIVING FOODS

pemla.al











The social enterprise established by Ana Shima, through Pemla sh.p.k, aims to produce high quality, artisanal nut butters using local ingredients, and to stimulate rural economic development through promoting cultivation of tree nuts, and oilseeds.

Licensed by the National Food Authority (AKU), the business produces walnut, hazelnut, and almond butters with locally sourced ingredients. The products are present to more than seven supermarkets and healthy food stores in Tirana, and plan to expand to other cities due to an increasing demand.

Pemla.al has trained and employed two women from marginalized groups and the Roma Community. Furthermore, the business has established collaboration with local farmers to buy the raw materials to produce nuts butters. 67 collaboration opportunities have been established so far.







TABLE OF TASTE

qek.al (



qendra per edukim kulinar (O)





"Tryeza e Shijes" (The Table of Taste) is a business idea implemented by Culinary Education Center. It promotes traditional Albanian cooking and local products in an inclusive environment. The novelty relies on the fact that all guests and clients are seated in the same table, referred to as the Social Table, in order to share the experience together and interact with each other.

All culinary products are produced by 8 youngsters, coming from marginalized groups who were trained by the most esteemed chiefs and are working in this initiative.



"Tryeza e Shijes" is located in Tirana and since its inauguration in October 2019, it has organized 21 social tables with an income of 10,000 EUR. The restaurant follows the guidelines of HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points) regarding waste management and recycling processes.







PEDALO NË BELSH

belshbike.al



pedalo_ne_belsh (O)





"Pedalo në Belsh" implemented by Albert Hysa, is a rental bicycle service shop located in the small city of Belsh. It aims to promote the touristic attractions of the area by exploring the 84 lakes through bicycle and establish a bicycling culture for the young people and not only. It also aims to convey the message to the young people to not migrate, but to invest and engage in local communities by generating incomes for themselves and their families.

Three youngsters trained are employed through this local business. During the first half of the year, the bike rental shop had over 1,600 clients, and a profit of proximally 136,000 ALL. In the coming months the business aims to increase the number of bicycles to fulfil the high demand.

Pedalo në Belsh was supported again by Partners Albania through the Green Business Competition in 2022, with the scaled-up idea of using city-coco electric motorcycles.





MARGJELO FILIGRAN ALBANIA



margjelo_filigran.albania



Margjelo-Filigran-Albania





Margjelo Filigran Albania run by Aurora Piranej, is a new enterprise aiming to increase the skills and employment opportunities of artisan women of the city of Shkodra, in the processing of silver with handicraft techniques such as filigree, knitting or crochet, producing various decorative objects, souvenirs and jewelry.

Currently, the social enterprise employees 3 full time employees and is collaborating with 2 painters to design the products, combining the traditional with the modern.













RINORA **HANDMADE**

rinorahandmade









Rinora Handmade is an enterprise established by Rakip Belishaku, focused on the production of artisanal soaps and natural sponge "Made in Albania", offering to the consumer a natural product made entirely from raw materials of our country.

The social enterprise has employed 3 women (part-time) to collect Luffa raw material and has established cooperation with local farmers for supplying the aromatic plants.



As part of its business's social responsibility, 10% of the profit from the sale of each Rinora Handmade product goes in support of women and children, victims of domestic violence.

Rinora Handmade was one of the winners of the regional competition #BGI2020, where entrepreneurs from the Balkans competed for extra funds.





HAZELNUT OIL PRODUCTION



<u>hazeland.al</u>







This new enterprise established by Julvin Marku, besides bringing to the market this product made from the hazelnut fruit, aims to encourage cooperation with other farmers of Gramëz village in Thumanë, to obtain from them the raw material.

Upon receiving the support from Partners Albania, the enterprise hired 4 seasonal workers to harvest the fruit, while the hazelnut oil reached the market by December 2020.

Besides the hazelnut oil, the enterprise has now expanded the offered products to hazelnuts and other types of nuts, turning it to a hazelnut farm.







KROI I MJALTIT

kroi_mjaltit (O)







Kroi Mjaltit, was established by Besart Lama.

The enterprise is focused on the production of honey and its byproducts such as honeybee milk and honeycomb.

Within a very short time, through support, Partners Albania enterprise achieved to increase the production by 40%, contributing also to the increase of local employment and productivity of agricultural crops in the village of Shullazë, Kurbin.







ROMIX COMMUNITY TOYS











ROMIX TOYS is a brand established in 2021 by Xhenson Çela. It started with the publication of the first comics book with children's stories and now the product is diversified into producing simple and unique toys made of recyclable materials, mostly from textile pieces.

A portion of the revenues generated from the sales is used as a fund to support social initiatives.

This social enterprise serves as a source of employment for at least three (3) women from the Roma minority and/or from other vulnerable groups (as tailors) as well as supports traders from these communities by purchasing from them the necessary raw materials.





PËRMETI'S YUMMY TREASURES



thesareteshijevetepermetit



Thesaret-e-Shijeve-te-Permetit







Përmeti's Yummy Treasures established by Blerina Zyberi, through the financial support from the Green Businesses Competition. It is an exhibit shop selling organic products which are typical of the Përmeti area. This store offers healthy products for its customers, as well as support to farmers. producers. housewives to sell their products. They sell berries. cornelian cherries. strawberries, blueberries, various types of jams, honey, brandy, wine of different varieties, white sheep cheese, medicinal plants, artisan bread, and pies of different flavors.

This shop aims to maximize the experience of tourists and visitors of Përmeti, by providing organic-gastronomy and agrotourism, and by offering and serving the local produce in a unique way.

Përmeti's Yummy Treasures was one of the winners of the regional competition #BGl2021, where 21 entrepreneurs competed from the Balkans.







THE PUNNET OF TASTE

The Punnet of Taste (Arka e Shijes) aims to bring back once again to the consumer tables the values and tastes of autochthonous, organic products of the Tirana area. It was established by Edmir Uku.

Considering the high consumer demand for healthy fruits and vegetables, with the same taste as the ones once served in pout tables, this business offers agricultural products from indigenous seeds, engaging other farmers in the area, and thus contributing to the improvement of the local economy.





THE **HAZELNUT TOUR**



agrofermaxheviti.al



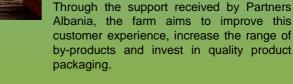
agrofermaxheviti (O)





The Hazelnut Tour is organized at the "Xheviti's Farm", a business set up in the area of Mallakastra by Kreshnik Hegimaj, focused on the cultivation of hazelnut and olive products.

The Hazelnut Tour organized in the form of a fair, helps local farmers to sell their products during the harvesting period, and offers a unique experience for visitors who not only buy the local products, but enjoy also the experience of the harvesting process.









SHEBENIK EGNATIA EXPLORERS



shebenik egnatia explorers (O)



Shebenik-Egnatia-Explorers







The idea consists in setting up camps in the Shebenik National Park and in specific segments of the Egnatia road. The ideator, Alliu has 2-year experience organization of various tours in the Park and on Via Egnatia.

Shebenik Park is the largest national park in Albania, with many different villages, which unfortunately are on the verae abandonment. Exploring all the area of the park and its different attractions, takes time. Therefore, the idea is to use the camps in order to reach as many destinations as possible, serving also as an opportunity for tourists to have fun. In the same way, the only offer camps not tourists accommodation, but they are conceived as a variety of mix activities, including games, stargazing with a telescope, tasting of local traditional food and organization of biking tours. To be mentioned are one-day hiking trips, 2-3 day mountain camps, historical tours, awareness raising activities and students' bootcamps, and training sessions specialists from the environment or other fields.





WOODPECKER **EDUCATIVE** TOYS



qukapiku.al_lodra_druri







A start-up, focused on the production of educative wooden toys, produced from natural wood, untreated with any chemical substance, certified with the FSC certification (coming from sustainable managed forests).

It is founded by Ina Fasko, a young woman entrepreneur, that has identified a problem in the market, i.e. the absence of high-quality wooden toys with a reasonable price, deciding to become the local alternative to this problem. Wooden toys help children during their learning and development phases. Research shows that mental and emotional development is highly improved by using open-ended toys. By avoiding the use of video games and instead incentivizing the use of creative wooden toys, parents get involved in the process as well, and interact more with their children.

It is the first start-up in Albania that operates in this field. By producing educative wooden toys, it contributes to creating an added value product for costumers, to protecting the environment by presenting and putting in place eco-friendly practices, and to offering employment opportunities for the local community.







FUNKY CABINS GLAMPING

funkycabin2021 (O)



funkycabin2021







Funky Cabins is a 5-star outdoor hotel through ecological wooden cabins, equipped with 360-degree glass views. It was designed by Rizvan Kurti and combines traditional camping with the comfort of a accommodation. The cabins resemble Indian and are entirely self-sustainable, operating through their own electricity system and ecological bathroom, equipped with Wi-Fi. The interior design of each cabin embodies minimalist and traditional elements. The use of traditional carpets, low tables and candle lights create a very cozy and warm atmosphere.

Funky Cabins is an ecological hotel for touristic services, designed to serve the deepest and most remote areas of the country. The local communities benefit in employment complementary services. Since the placement of the cabins in Çekrezi lake, the road has been systematized, some bars in the area have approached and joined the initiative, more than 4 families are now employed in the land and hotel service of the cabins, and this includes women and men of these families.







BELSH SMART CITY

www.belshbike.al





"Pedalo in Belsh" is a start-up established by Albert Hysa, and financially supported through the Green Business Competition in 2019. It successfully continues running, employing 2 people from the area.

"Belsh Smart City" idea consists in expanding the service, bringing in electric 'City Coco' motors, which are quite preferable among young people but not only, as a way to increase the market share and generate additional income. The motors are positioned in the town square where the business currently carries out its bicycle rental activity, thus scaling-up to a brand-new service within it and offering a solution for visitors of Belshi destinations as well as for the residents themselves.



The expected impact of the initiative is the environment protection, direct employment and contribution to local economy of the areas surrounding Belshi lakes, through other services offered for tourists and visitors.





LIKA **API-TOURISM**

sebishtiguesthouse (O)







The idea consists in converting the existing facility where Figiri Lika continues his family tradition а beekeeper. into as accommodation unit welcoming the tourists in the village of Sebisht. He aims to maximize the tourist's experience offering different activities during their stay, such as tasting local food, involving them in the beekeeping processes such as feeding, guarding, collecting honey, and caring, otherwise called "Api-tourism".

The village of Sebisht is a fabulous tourist spot, but it still lacks quest-houses or accommodation units for visitors. The services will be offered in the form of tourist packages, accommodation include accompanying in the indoor and outdoor activities. It will also boost the sale of local products such as nuts, plum juice, raki, cornelian berries and cherries compote, honey and many other organic products, eliminating the transportation costs of delivering these products to the city. The idea is based on local tradition and bringing visitors in the village brings a positive economic impact for other residents, through sale of products and services to the tourists.





PURTEKA. **GARDENING** FOR CHILDREN



purteka (O







The business idea consists in investing in a "mobility" shop for selling gardening products, such as the "Gardening for Children" book, by the entrepreneur herself as author, which offers information for the plantation of 38 plants in indoor conditions in the form of small projects; packets of edible plant seeds; accompanied by instructions to be used by children at home; as well as other gardening objects such as tote bags, watering cans, bee hotels, free-range bird feeders, flowers, vegetables, and tree seedlings, etc., thus completing the full range of products in a store. The idea is brought by Marcela Tringaj, who, starting from practice and identifying the gap in the teaching curricula for training children to cultivate plants, aims visiting the main neighborhoods, squares, boulevards, gardens and schools of the city, transforming the "mobility" shop in a space where projects for

Through this type of product and service, which constitutes an innovation for the market in Albania, this green enterprise affects and influences several sensitive areas, such as: sustainable agriculture, education, sustainable cities and the local circular economy.

children will be carried out for free.







AMËZA E DHEUT

ameza_e_dheut (C)







Palushaj's idea (Earthly scent) Leonida consists in creating a workshop for the preparation of ceramic products. It will serve as a community space for the organization of residential classes, evening courses, or clubs for children and adults, including people with physical abilities, who can come together, learn a new skill, and develop their creativity. It will serve also as a catalyst for returning attention to the clay and ceramic processing and the importance of transmitting it to the younger generations, as well as creating new opportunities for income generation by better complementing the tourism product of area. Another peculiarity of the business idea has to do with experiential tourism, where tourists can be involved in one or several processes of clay processing to create products that they can take with them.

The objectives are: to preserve the knowledge of clay processing and the art of pottery; to authentic values, handcrafted products and recyclable material, i.e. circular economy; to provide development opportunities for most of the population with different physical abilities, that as a result continue to be excluded from the labor market.







DANJA'S RASPBERRIES

mjedrat.e.danjes (O')









The idea consists in the cultivation of raspberry fruit, thus bringing a new product to the area of Vau i Deiës and offering to the consumers an organic fruit certified according to the "Organic" standard, with high nutritional values.

The idea was brought by Sentiljana Marku, who aims to become the first farmer engaged in the cultivation of raspberries in the territory of the Municipality of Vau i Deja and in the regions of Shkodra and Lezha.

The short-term objectives are related to the reconstruction of the farm and the trade of products, while the long-term objectives include: extension of the raspberry plantation, increase the capacities for the storage and conservation of the product, expansion of the activity in the regions of Shkodra and Lezha, as well as the diversification of the raspberry product, otherwise known as the "Red Gold".

The target group are individuals as well as businesses, including confectionery shops, organic product shops, supermarkets, restaurants, and agritourism units in the surrounding area.



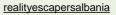


REALITY ESCAPERS ALBANIA



<u>realityescapersalbania</u>









Reality Escapers Albania is a tour operator providing tourist services mainly in outdoor sports, such as hiking, camping, bird watching and kayak tours in areas around Vlora district. It is implemented by Ornold Bazaj, who, based on his long experience in the tourism sector and the direct contact with local and foreign tourists, has identified as issues the lack of diversification of the tourist offer in Vlora, regarding the existence of new services and the varieties of choices to explore, discover and enjoy outdoor sports, closely related to the local tradition and culinary; the short tourist season; but also the lack of security, mainly along the mountain activities. Through the support from the Competition, Reality Escapers Albania will offer as a new service "hiking" tours, which includes hiking in Cika Mountain, the fantastic and wild bays of Karaburun Peninsula, water caves. the kayaking, as well as the birdwatching activity. The possibility will be created for tourist activities to be developed safely according to European and world standards throughout winter, which in turn will affect the extension of the tourist season, as well as the creation of the first "Adventure Point" in Albania.







TRENDY TRADITË

Trendy Tradite f





The "Trendy Traditë" idea consists preserving the local culture and tradition through the traditional clothes of the Vau i Dejës area, promoting the craft work, and transmitting it to the youngest generation.



The idea is implemented by Marjana Jakini, continues the tailoring tradition. transmitted since childhood by her aunt. The aim is to preserve and advance this tradition, as well as to offer new models that combine traditional elements with contemporary ones, in accordance with the clients' needs and demands, contributing to making the business a valuable asset for the area.

The support from the Competition will be allocated to investment in machinery and equipment, as a way to facilitate the work of the women involved in the local community, affecting the reduction of labour costs and the increase of product quality.







Partners Albania for Change and Development

www.partnersalbania.org Rruga e Elbasanit, ndërtesa Park Gate, kati 10, ap. 71/73, Tirana, Albania