



**Joint introductory meeting of mentors/mentees report:  
"Empowering Youth for a Peaceful, Prosperous, and Sustainable Future in Kosovo"  
3 September 2019**



## **INTRODUCTION**

On the 3rd of September 2019, the introductory meeting of the mentors and mentees for the “Empowering Youth for a Peaceful, Prosperous, and Sustainable Future in Kosovo” was held in Prishtinë/Priština. This activity is part of the joint 18-month project implemented by UNDP-UNV, UNICEF and UN Women in the framework of the UN Kosovo Team, funded by the Secretary General’s Peacebuilding Fund (PBF). The aim of the activity is to strengthen the leadership capacity and influence of young women and girls to engage in peacebuilding throughout Kosovo. The meeting agenda and list of participants can be found as annexes to this report.

## **OPENING OF THE MEETING AND REMARKS**

The meeting highlighted the importance of the mentor/mentee relationship in empowering young women to serve as leaders and promoters of peace within their communities and to represent. This six-month component aims to challenge divisive conflict narratives that have existed within Kosovo by providing opportunities for young women to serve as leaders and peacebuilders under the guidance and mentorship of experienced female professionals from diverse sectors of society. The mentees will be placed in the offices of their mentors to work side-by-side with them daily. Participants were encouraged to identify their development needs and further training that the project could provide in addition to the training in coaching and mentoring that mentors have recently had as well as planned training in leadership and communication skills that would be held for mentees. The need for mentors and mentees to jointly develop action plans to guide their partnership over the next six months was also discussed. The interest of the project in gathering stories of change experienced by the participants individually and collectively was highly stressed, mentioning that the change cannot be affected at any level if individuals are unable to change themselves through their approaches and attitudes.

Today’s event was an important milestone in the mentorship programme. The diversity of backgrounds of the participants coming from business and management, civil society, human rights, government, academia, and women’s empowerment was also reiterated. The project aims to promote change at different levels including the local and central levels to influence behaviour and policy but also at the individual level, reiterating that change starts with people. The catalytic role that the participants could spark through the sharing of their knowledge and expertise with the broader community will be fostered through this mentorship programme. The programme is playing a critical role in facilitating this partnership and the key role of UN Women in highlighting the importance of women as peacebuilders.

It was mentioned in the meeting that this is a unique initiative and opportunity to learn and create as women leaders and professionals in Kosovo society. It was also discussed how this experience would open many doors for the participants encouraging them to stay in the moment and benefit from the activity. It was stressed that volunteering is about contributing to others and that they would now be part of the UNV community and roster.

The outstanding abilities and skills of women serving in the public and private sector in Kosovo was recognised, and especially since many times their contribution may go unnoticed. The participants urged to maximize this opportunity to have mentors and coaches to guide them in their professional development and to enjoy their experiences.



## REFLECTIONS FROM MENTORS & MENTEES

The six pairs of mentors and mentees expressed their appreciation for the joint project and provided their perspectives on this activity. One of the mentors commented on how she had benefited from the training she had received recognizing that despite her knowledge and experience, she was continuously learning more. She shared that being a woman in the business sector was not easy and that she wanted to be recognized as a business professional capable of contributing to the sector and not just as a female.

Another mentor who is a lawyer shared that although she was surrounded by lawyers in her family and in her social circle as a young professional, she was not mentored. She received no guidance and had to learn on her own. She has benefited from the training on coaching and mentoring and has changed her approach to see this experience as a joint journey in passing her experience onto her mentee and provide guidance. At the same time, her mentee will make her own decisions and approaches in understanding the challenges of the legal profession and her role in it.

Another mentor shared that she learned not only about coaching and mentoring in the training session but that mentoring is an individual process of building a relationship of trust. She would also encourage joint initiatives to bring the entire group together to work on the joint project aims so that all can benefit. She reiterated that this is an important initiative and that it should be encouraged even more.

One mentor who works in various areas including education, politics, women's issues, the media, and culture highlighted the opportunities her mentee would benefit from with an integrated approach. She also stressed the need to discuss how women handle multiple roles in their family and professional lives.

## CONCLUSIONS AND CLOSING REMARKS

- The Resident Representative commented on the enthusiasm that this activity has generated thus far and that a good start has been made. She encouraged mentees to take full advantage of the experience not just professionally but also in understanding how to combine personal and professional lives. Women are always struggling with multiple priorities often more so than men. It is a great opportunity for mentees to have an experienced woman to talk to about these issues. Mentors are encouraged to push their mentees to do things they would not otherwise do and to challenge themselves.

## ANNEX 1: MEETING AGENDA

### **"Empowering Youth for a Peaceful, Prosperous, and Sustainable Future in Kosovo"** **Joint meeting of mentors and mentees**

Date: Tuesday, 03 September, 10:30hrs to 13:00hrs

Venue: UN Common Premises, Large Conference Room, Zagrebi str. 58, Prishtinë/Priština

#### **Agenda**

<b>10:30 – 11:00</b>	<b>Arrival of participants and coffee</b>
<b>11:00 – 11:15</b>	<b>Welcome, introduction and opening remarks:</b> Ms. Ulrika Richardson, UN Development Coordinator Ms. Maria Suokko, UNDP Resident Representative Mr. Blerim Azizi, Programme Analyst, UNV Field Unit
<b>11.15 – 11.20</b>	<b>Brief presentation of mentoring programme</b> Mr. Ferdinand Nikolla, Joint Project Coordinator
<b>11:20 – 11:45</b>	<b>Reflections from the mentors and the mentees on the project expectations</b> Ms. Iliriana Osmani Serreqi (mentor) and Ms. Flaka Vitaku (mentee) Ms. Aleksandra Jovanovic (mentor) and Ms. Djudjica Kazic (mentee) Ms. Vlora Dumoshi (mentor) and Ms. Arbnora Nokaj (mentee) Ms. Dafina Turkeshi (mentor) and Ms. Vlera Recica (mentee) Ms. Florina Sefaj (mentor) and Ms. Hana Rizvanolli (mentee) Ms. Besa Luzha (mentor) and Ms. Aurora Pula (mentee)
<b>11.45 – 12.05</b>	<b>Next steps:</b> Developing joint workplan Training for mentees Logistics – workplaces for mentees
<b>12.05 – 12:10</b>	<b>Conclusions and wrap-up:</b> Ms. Ulrika Richardson, UN Development Coordinator
<b>12:10 – 13:00</b>	<b>Lunch at UN Common Premises</b>

## ANNEX 2: PARTICIPANTS LIST:

Name/Surname	Title	Organisation/Institution
1. Maria Suokko	Resident Representative	UNDP
2. Blerim Azizi	Programme Analyst	UNV Field Unit
3. Marta Gazideda	Governance and Peacebuilding Portfolio Manager & Deputy Programme Coordinator	UNDP
4. Valbona Bogujevci	Assistant Resident Representative and Programme Coordinator	UNDP
5. Ferdinand Nikolla	Joint Project Coordinator	UNDP
6. Sue Tatten	Joint Project Chief Technical Advisor	UNDP
7. Dejan Antić	Project Field Monitoring Officer	UNDP
8. Armenda Filipaj	Project Assistant	UN Women
9. Iliriana Osmani Serreqi	Mentor for Flaka Vitaku	Mentor
10. Flaka Vitaku	Mentee for Iliriana Osmani Serreqi	National UN Youth Volunteer in Law
11. Aleksandra Jovanovic	Mentor for Djudjica Kazic	Mentor
12. Djudjica Kazic	Mentee for Aleksandra Jovanovic	National UN Youth Volunteer in Civic Engagement
13. Vlora Dumoshi	Mentor for Arbnora Nokaj	Mentor
14. Arbnora Nokaj	Mentee for Vlora Dumoshi	National UN Youth Volunteer in Women's Empowerment
15. Dafina Turkeshi	Mentor for Viera Recica	Mentor
16. Vlera Recica	Mentee for Dafina Turkeshi	National UN Youth Volunteer in Business & Management
17. Hana Rizvanolli	Mentee for Florina Sefaj	National UN Youth Volunteers in Human Rights
18. Besa Luzha	Mentor for Aurora Pula	Mentor
19. Aurora Pula	Mentee for Besa Luzha	National UN Youth Volunteer in Civic Engagement