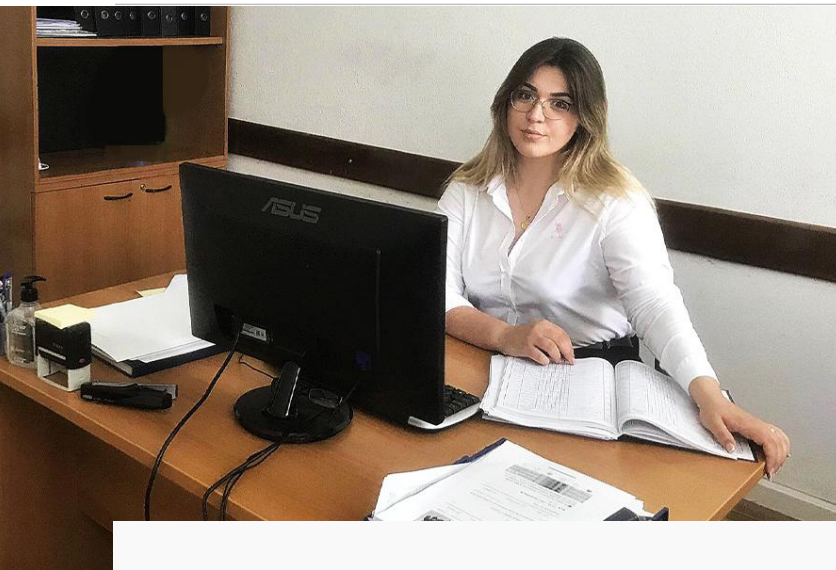


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Elza Ejupi, UN Community Volunteer in Kosovo (as per UNSC 1244).  
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## Bridging local employment offices and communities amid COVID-19

When the humane feelings of enthusiastic UN Community Volunteers meet professional work, wonders happen. Elza Ejupi is a young law student and UN Community Volunteer at the employment office in Podujevë/Podujeva, Kosovo<sup>1</sup>. She shares her experience over the past few months.

Despite the arduous situation occasioned by the COVID-19 pandemic, Elza kept working remotely during the lockdown, giving more than 640 job applicants a second chance to find a job by correcting technical errors in their application documents.

**“** *When I acknowledged that many job applications were left unreviewed and that this could have caused the applicants to lose their chances of being*

*“ employed or to receive the emergency package offered by the institutions, I decided to step in: I took the whole batch at home, went through thousands of them and reached out to the candidates to correct their errors. The situation was not easy, but I believe that helping people should be unconditional, against all the odds. --Elza Etjupi, UN Community Volunteer*

Elza was appointed seven months ago to improve outreach and assist in the delivery of public service to her peers. Her work has offered young job-seekers information to enhance their employability. Employment offices bridge the gap between job-seekers and employers, and Elza’s goal is to increase job-seeker awareness about the diverse professional opportunities in Kosovo. Ultimately, she hopes to help job seekers become confident in their ability to identify their professional selves.

*“ Before starting, I wasn’t fully aware of the power of an employment office as a medium for changing individuals, but working there made me understand that if you want a job and actively seek it, you will find it, and it will transform you. —Elza Ejupi*

The commitment and hard work of UN Community Volunteers are inspiring. Communities, their friends, and extended family feel the positive impact, proving that volunteers are genuine change agents who can impact the lives of individuals. Nora Kelmendi, a young aspiring teacher and volunteer for the Employment Office in Mitrovicë / Mitrovica, is a perfect example. During her assignment, she relentlessly encouraged her friends to register as job-seekers and to stay active.



Nora Kelmendi, UN Community Volunteer, Kosovo (as per UNSC 1244).  
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“ Many of my friends were undecided. They didn’t know what to do after graduation, so I advised them to come to the employment office. Seven of them found jobs in a short time. —Nora Kelmendi

Nora prides herself on increasing her peers' level of knowledge about employment opportunities and is confident, staying informed. Above all, she cherishes volunteering and is grateful to be part of the learning experience.

“ Of all professions out there, I have the biggest respect for volunteerism —Nora Kelmendi

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Elza and Nora's assignment were made possible by the UN Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund as part of the project "Empowering Youth for a Peaceful, Prosperous and Sustainable Future in Kosovo" jointly implemented by UNDP-UNV, UNICEF, and UN Women. Today, 48 UN Community Volunteers (67% young women and 33% from non-majority communities) working in public institutions and community-based organizations, assist in the delivery of public service to their peers as part of the UNDP-UNV project.

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[1] References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999)

This [article](#) was also published by the United Nations Development Programme.

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