UN Volunteer Arta Ponosheci in Kosovo (as per UN SC 1244) and beneficiaries crossing out the items that have been purchased for their guesthouse.

UN Volunteer promotes entrepreneurship in the tourism and hospitality sector in her community

Arta has been involved in the Territorial Employment Pact, an innovative joint initiative of the municipality of Gjakovë/Djakovica, Austrian Development Agency and UNDP aiming to promote inclusive local economic development, serving people who are looking for skills and income to achieve a better life.

After graduating from the Rochester Institute of Technology in Kosovo, Arta started working in The Ideas Partnership, a non-governmental organization that promotes employment, social inclusion, preservation of cultural heritage and healthy environment.

During this time, she promoted volunteerism, coordinated and mobilized volunteers and assisted them in their efforts to improving the lives of marginalized communities in Kosovo.

Today, Arta is a volunteer herself, serving with UNV, and her experience will be one to
Working in this type of project allows you to showcase your creativity to ease up the way towards being more effective and achieving the aim of the project. It also exposes you to different environments where you have the chance to learn more in depth about the community, while continuously receiving and incorporating their advices in the project. --National UN Volunteer Arta Ponosheci

Considering that Gjakovë/Djakovica has a rich cultural and medieval heritage, noteworthy natural landscapes and gastronomic diversity, a lot of visitors, both local and international, have pinned it on their maps.

One of the interventions that Arta has been involved in is promoting employment opportunities for youth and women in the tourism and hospitality sector. Through her assignment, Arta has facilitated the process through which the beneficiaries received grants and turned their dwellings into guesthouses, ready to receive guests.

As a results, the initiative has identified and provided support to six households. Also, training on managing the guesthouses and accessing the market was provided to the beneficiaries/owners of these households.

As a national UN Volunteer, Arta not only helped the community in Gjakovë/Djakovica but, at the same time, she built her own capacities and gained additional experience in the field work.

One thing I’ve realized during the project is that the level of awareness of people of Gjakovë/Djakovica – especially on utilizing local institutions towards improving their lives by applying for grants or financial support – has increased dramatically. I think this is of great significance, as it indicates that the initiative has also served as an emancipation tool, while establishing trust between the community and the local institutions. -- Arta Ponosheci
National UN Volunteer Arta Ponosheci on her way to meeting with project grant beneficiaries. (UNV, 2018)

Self-fulfillment was another reason why Arta decided to become a volunteer. She shares, "seeing ideas that had sprung up in my head materialize into something real is what I liked the most about my engagement in this project. These ideas have put a smile on a lot of people’s faces. Seeing them happy, has also given me a sense of pleasure and fulfillment."

"Sometimes they would even bring me gifts, thinking that I was doing them a favour. But, of course I would explain that they deserved all the credit being awarded with the grants," says Arta with a smile on her face.

For those interested in the development sector and the work of the United Nations, and have a chance to become UN Volunteers, Arta highly recommends it.

"Becoming a UN Volunteer is very appealing and beneficial in terms of career, especially for youth, because of UNV’s full integration in the UN system. Given that the UN is the largest organization facilitating development, youth have a lot to contribute and explore. --Arta Ponosheci

Understanding that volunteerism can bring fervour, energy, and creativity to development processes in Kosovo, while simultaneously strengthening their own capacities and enhancing their experience, many young Kosovars have expressed their interest to serve as volunteers with UNV.

All references to Kosovo shall be understood in the context of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999).

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