

Assistance to Kosovo Institutions to Fight COVID-19

The UN in Kosovo¹ is committed to working towards the Sustainable Development Goals by supporting Kosovo authorities in achieving Agenda 2030. To get there, UN Development Coordinators Office led by Ms. Ulrika Richardson in cooperation with Office of the Speaker of the Assembly of Kosovo, Ms. Vjosa Osmani and Ms. Albena Reshitaj and MP and Chairperson of the Sustainable Development Council, organized a kick off event in support of the Council. Members of diplomatic missions in Kosovo



To strengthen the Kosovo's capacities in the fight against COVID-19, the Centre for International Health Protection (ZIG) at the Robert Koch Institute (RKI) deployed a delegation on a joint RKI/EMT/WHO-GOARN mission to Kosovo. The 2-week mission, is initiated and organized by the RKI in close co-operation with WHO and the Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network (GOARN). RKI experts including partner specialists form part of the RKI delegation to advise in the fields of surveillance, epidemiology, risk communication and laboratory diagnostics landed to Kosovo on 21 September 2020. A possible deployment of a mobile laboratory is integrated in the mission too. In collaboration with a WHO consultant, RKI staff will perform the assessment, implementation and monitoring of the Go. Data field data collection platform. Further assessments of Go.Data in the scope of RKI's running Global Health Protection Programme (GHPP) project in Kosovo are planned. For full article see [LINK](#)



UNDC Ulrika Richardson, press point during the Ceremony of kick-off of the WHO Coordinated Assistance to Kosovo Institutions, provided by RKI / Copyright @UNKosovoTeam 2020

HIGHLIGHTS:

- WHO Coordinates a 2 week mission of Robert Koch Institute to Kosovo to assist Kosovo in the fight against COVID-19
- Istanbul Convention is included in the Kosovo Constitution
- Reinvigorated Sustainable Development Council
- Project Support to Anti-Corruption Efforts in Kosovo, Project facilitated the signing of a cooperation agreement between the Office of the Chief Prosecutor and the Basel Institute on Governance
- First Ever Equal Pay day marked on 18 September

UN Kosovo Team Spotlight

1 September, UNHCR and its partner organization Advancing Together in the scope of the project UN COVID-19 Response and Recovery Multi-Partner Trust Fund in response to recovery from COVID-19 has commenced with implementation of vocational trainings for non-majority communities. Trainings on welding and patisserie brings employment opportunities for returnees and the displaced persons. For a Story: A returnee family assisted to apply for fiscal package, please see [LINK](#)

7 September, UNDP's Kosovo Safety and Security Programme (KSSP) through the Support to Countering Illicit Arms Trafficking – Border (CIAT) project in partnership with the Kosovo Police Training Department organized 2 - two days (07-08 and 09-10.09.2020) virtual trainings on Common Integrated Risk Analysis Model (CIRAM2) for 43 border police officers, Customs, and the Centre for Border Management officials. Read more: [LINK](#)

8 September, Rule of Law Project, the Kosovo Judicial Council, and the Faculty of Law of University of Pristina, including the Research Institute for Legal Studies agreed on the way forward for the tripartite upcoming partnership and cooperation launched this year, aiming to support the Faculty of Law students gain hands on experience on small research projects in courts. Read more: [LINK](#)

UN Kosovo Team - In Brief September 2020



Istanbul Convention included in the Kosovo Constitution recognizing its direct applicability

With 93 votes pro and zero against, on Friday September 26th, the Kosovo Assembly voted for the inclusion of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence Treaty, recognized as the "Istanbul Convention" in the Kosovo Constitution. This is a great achievement, as it will strengthen the commitment of Kosovo towards addressing genderbased violence in all its forms, by taking measures to prevent violence against women, protect its victims and prosecute the perpetrators. For more information please follow [LINK](#)



WELDING TRAINING



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

10 September, UNDP, through its Rule of Law project, delivered personal protective equipment to the Agency for Free Legal Aid to enhance their services during the pandemic. The packages contain hand sanitizers and masks for all seven Legal Aid regional staff, and the vulnerable population receiving legal aid assistance Kosovo wide during the Free Legal Aid Week. Read more: [LINK](#)

15 September, UNDP marked the International Day of Democracy with a webinar "The future we want to see - democracy and rule of law in times of crisis", to discuss the impact of Covid-19 in the context of rule of law and human rights. Speakers included Ms. Vjosa R. Osmani, Speaker of the Kosovo Assembly and Ms. Maria Suokko - UNDP Resident Representative joined by Mr. Hilmi Jashari, Kosovo Ombudsperson, Mr. Skender Çoçaj, Head of Kosovo Judicial Council, and Ms. Sarah Rattray Hildebrants, Global Policy Specialist for Human Rights. Watch the webinar: [LINK](#)

17-19 September, UNFPA through Balkan Sunflowers Kosovo (BSFK) have delivered a three day training on Sexual Reproductive Health Rights to some 20 youth from the municipalities of Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo polje, Obiliq/ć, Shtime/Štimlje and Gračanica/Gračanicë. The training also included a module on COVID-19 pandemics based on WHO materials. [LINK](#)

17 September, UNDP's Kosovo Safety and Security Programme (KSSP), through the generous funding by the Federal Republic of Germany, is increasing the capacities of the Kosovo Police Border Department to tackle illicit arms trafficking (IAT), illegal possession, and firearms confiscation. The project is being implemented in close cooperation with the Kosovo Police under the Regional Road map for the Small and Light Weapons Control in the Western Balkans 2024. Read more: [LINK1](#) and [LINK2](#)

18 September, International Equal Pay Day, is celebrated for the first time this year. Globally, the gender pay gap stands at 16%, meaning women workers earn an average of 84% compared to the earnings of men. On Equal Pay Day, UN Women Head of Office Vlora Tuzi Nushi, and Member of Parliament Mimoza Kusari discussed the gender pay gap, live on Radio Television of Kosovo (RTK).

21 September, UN Women marked the International Day of Peace, highlighting women peacebuilders who are shaping peace for their communities and the world. To mark this day UN Women produced quote cards from Assembly President, Vjosa Osmani; Kosovo Women's Network Executive (KWN) Director and Human Rights Activist, Igballe Rogova; and Edita Tahiri, Past Chief Negotiator in the Brussels Dialogue and Chair of the Regional Women's Lobby for Justice Peace and Security in South-Eastern Europe (RWLSEE). The quote cards can be found in the following links Vjosa Osmani – [LINK](#); Edita Tahiri - [LINK](#) and Igballe Rogova - [LINK](#)

23 September, The UNDP Support to Anti-Corruption Efforts in Kosovo Project (SAEK III) facilitated the signing of a cooperation agreement between the Office of the Chief Prosecutor and the Basel Institute on Governance. Basel Institute is world leader in supporting investigative authorities track down stolen hidden assets domestically and abroad. This partnership will provide Kosovo's prosecutors with international legal expertise on their corruption and financial crime cases by assisting them in tracing and returning to Kosovo the hidden stolen assets. Read more: [LINK](#) This agreement is made possible thanks to the support of the Swiss Cooperation Office in Kosovo, and SIDA.

23 September, UNDP and UN Volunteers are supporting the COVID-19 Call Center and Helpline for Psychological Support with PPEs (masks and disinfectants) and daily allowances covering food and transport expenses from mid-August until the end of November 2020. Read more: [LINK](#)

23 September, 'Kosova Rehabilitation Centre for Victims of Torture' -KRCT team in partnership with UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency in Pristina, organized the first workshop with asylum seekers on air dry clay in Asylum Center in Magure. Read more: [LINK](#)

29 September, UN Women and Sida (Swedish International Development Cooperation) on launched a four-year regional initiative aiming to support the governments in Kosovo, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Serbia in advancing the integration of gender equality at all stages of central and local policymaking and budgeting processes. North Macedonia will also be part of this initiative with the ongoing project for promoting gender-responsive budgeting. See more at: [LINK](#)



"We still do not see women as part of the peace negotiation table globally, and that is a huge challenge. When women are involved, the main topics cover the real situation of people and their well-being."



Igballe (Igo) Rogova, Kosovo Women's Network Executive Director and Human Rights Activist

30 September, UN Women Head of Office spoke on the Summit on Antigypsyism organized by the Voice of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians in collaboration with Terre de Hommes and Advancing Together. [LINK](#)

Communication for Development and Campaigns

14 – 20 September UNDP marked the 'Partners at Core Week' dedicated to the European Union with a series of social media posts. To learn more about the watch video in the [LINK1](#), [LINK2](#), or read following articles [LINK3](#), [LINK4](#), [LINK5](#) and [LINK6](#).

Importance of birth registration-UNHCR partner organization Civil Rights Program Kosovo (CRPK) during the September continued organizing meetings with communities on the importance of birth registration. UNHCR produced a video of local comedian Rasim Thaci-Cima, community activists Mirjeta Qehaja, Roma Education Fund for Kosovo, Driton Berisha, UNICEF Head of Office and UNHCR Chief of Mission. The video was widely disseminated on social media, and can be found at the [LINK](#)

Campaigning to keep the distance, wear a mask and wash hands. Thanks to the Government of Japan the #SkaMaLehte #itseasy2makeitwork two weeks awareness raising campaign has been organized in 15 Kosovo Municipalities engaging young volunteers to organize activities in schools and city centers, promoting preventive measures and healthy behaviors to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Political leaders, mayors, celebrities, and many citizens joined the campaign. In addition, through the #SkaMaLehte campaign more than 500 packages equipped with preventive materials against COVID -19 have been distributed to children of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian community in Fushe Kosovo Municipality by Youth – Led project following youth solutions for COVID—19.

Awareness raising Campaign on Covid-19 related impact on women, was launched on 7 September. The Rapid Impact Assessment Survey by UN Women, UNDP and UNFPA showed that as a result of the pandemic, 56% of businesses shot down their activities, and that the economic crisis created by the pandemic has affected especially self-employed women (71%). To raise awareness on the need to support women businesses UN Women launched two videos with women entrepreneurs explaining how the pandemic has affected their work. In addition, the awareness raising campaign will be extended to promote the mobile app available to public to report all cases of violence including both those of domestic and gender-based violence, recently launched by the Kosovo Police. Besides promotion, the existing app will be updated to include an additional feature on DV and GBV cases. [LINK1](#) and [LINK2](#)

Community Outreach & Assistance Delivery

18 September, UNDP procured and handed over 7,500 CE-IVD real-time PCR test kits to the Institute of Public Health, funded by the Government of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, through LuxDev, and the Government of Austria, through the Austrian Development Cooperation. Read more: [LINK](#)

21 September, UNHCR, UN Development Coordinator's Office and Jahjaga Foundation organized a virtual meeting with non-majority women, including voluntary returnees from several locations in Kosovo. The event was attended by Ms. Atifete Jahjaga, former Kosovo President, Ms. Ulrika Richardson, UN Development Coordinator, Mr. Erol Arduç, UNHCR Chief of Mission, Dr. Lulzim Raka, Microbiologist, and Dr. Sergey Koryak, World Health Organization, office in Pristina. The participants discussed the COVID-19 pandemic and ways the members of communities can cope with the situation. [LINK](#)

27 September, UNFPA through Balkan Sunflowers Kosovo (BSFK) has distributed 1350 hygiene kits in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo polje, Graçanicë/Gračanica, Obiliq/ć and Shtime/Štimlje as part of the Sexual and reproductive health support for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities during COVID-19.

29 of September, UNICEF in partnership with USAID, delivered PPEs at the Primary School & Vuk Karadžić in Šilovo/Shillovë for 13 teachers and 40 students. Similarly, primary schools in 38 municipalities have been supported with hygienic kits, and protective tools during the safe #Back2School process. Whereas 200 packages of protective equipment against COVID-19 for students of Selami Hallaqi in Gjilan were distributed the same day in the presence of Mayor of Gjilan/Gnjilane, Mr. Lutfi Haziri and Deputy Director of USAID Kosovo.



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UNICEF Head of Office with the Japan Embassy Chargé d'Affaires, SDG Champion Uta Ibrahim, UNICEF Comms and the team.

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During **September** 2020, with the support of the Government of Luxembourg and in partnership with Utalaya 24 Municipalities were supported with distribution of Early Childhood Education - ECD kits for children 0-6 years old. 4005 children and families were contacted and are receiving their ECD kits from the Centers for Social Work and local NGOs supported by UNICEF.

472 children from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian in Gjakove/Đakovica started receiving their ECD kits. Direct engagement visits were conducted to distribution centers in 4 municipalities. Visits were marked by the presence of the Mayor of Gjakove/Đakovica and Uta Ibrahim, the alpinist who engaged with children regarding her experiences and her storybook "Uta of the Mountains", included in the ECD kits.



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UNFPA supported Kosovo Agency of Statistics, KAS, with 560 PPE units to ensure that both enumerators and the public participating in the pilot census are equipped to reduce the transmission of COVID-19 throughout this process. UNFPA through Balkan Sunflowers Kosovo (BSFK) has distributed 1350 hygiene kits in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo polje, Graçanicë/Gračanica, Obiliq/ć and Shtime/Štimlje as part of the Sexual and Reproductive Health support for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities during COVID-19.

Other Achievements

1 million euros allocated to the Agency for Gender Equality for the direct support for the economic empowerment of women during and after COVID-19 after lobbying directly with the Minister of Finance, and the Prime Minister. At the same time a separate budget code was allocated within the Ministry of Trade and Industry with an amount of 400,000 Eur for grants for women SMEs and the call was launched immediately.

During September, IOM, through its MPTF project, jointly implemented with UNHCR and UN Women, has signed 37 agreements with private companies for 3 month long on- the-job training / job placement for vulnerable members of Kosovo society. They will have an opportunity to gain new skills and have higher chance of employability, be it at the same workplace or within similar sectors. The companies vary from food production to retail, and from electric services to woodwork. The activity is undertaken as a socio-economic response to COVID19 pandemic, with specific focus on vulnerable communities in Kosovo.

1 September, UN Women started implementation of the project "Gender-Responsive Approaches and Efforts to Combat the COVID-19 Outbreak in Kosovo" project funded by the Canadian Government.



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