



From the left: Kadire Rexha (Intern) and Agron Kastrati (Legal Officer)

Interview with: **AGRON KASTRATI** by: **KADIRE REXHA dhe SINAN MORINA**

"If it wasn't for our Mobile Office in Malisheva, our clients would face many barriers in accessing justice. Our clients are poor and we are the only address left..."

We were the lucky ones who had the opportunity of interning at the Free Legal Aid Agency (FLAA) in their mobile office in Malisheva. We have worked alongside Agron Kastrati, for almost a year now and as a result, we are understandably more aware of both the nobility of the job and the challenges that come with it. Therefore, when Justice Matters Activity approached us with the "listening" project: An



Agron Kastrati - Legal Officer

Interview with professionals, we jumped immediately to it. We wanted to showcase inspiring professionals like Agron to other young lawyers. He is committed to his job and his contribution to the community, regardless of the obstacles particularly during COVID-19 restrictions. Therefore, we were honored to conduct an interview with him and share his story below.

1. Why did you decide to be a lawyer?

The main reason I decided to become a lawyer was to serve the citizens of the country and to contribute to the field of justice, which our country desperately needs.

2. Why did you decide to work for the Free Legal Aid Agency?

Upon completion of Master studies, as well as many different pieces of training, my commitment was to find a job around the justice system. Therefore, after going through a competitive procedure, I was selected for the legal officer position at FLAA. I took this job with a lot of responsibility to work and contribute to FLAA and building my career. Working with the community is a dream job.

3. What do you think you will achieve by working at FLAA?

Working as a legal officer at the FLAA will greatly help my career. This experience will help me to pass the bar exam in the future, which will later enable me to join one of the free legal professions.

4. How is a typical working day for you?

Like all other institutional officials, we start work at 8 a.m. and we finish at 4 p.m. First check the mails and then continue with daily tasks, mainly working with clients and drafting legal documents based on priorities. Sometimes, we have engagements outside the office where we participate in different meetings and events with representatives of the level local institutions.



Agron, Kadire, and Sinan at the mobile office in Malisheva

5. How satisfied are you with your job? How is working with citizens?

So far, I am very happy with my job. I am very pleased with the leadership and colleagues. They are always ready to support and assist me in implementing my daily tasks. Of course, the best part of the job is working with clients and helping them with their cases. I had the opportunity to help a considerable number of citizens by offering legal advice and representation. If it wasn't for our Mobile Office in Malisheva, our clients would face many barriers in accessing justice. Our clients are poor and we are the only address left for them to seek support. Therefore, I find joy and personal fulfillment in every case that I can help.

6. What professional skills are needed to succeed in your job?

In addition to the education and previous work experience, as an FLAA officer, you must have personal and interpersonal skills. You need to be open to the public and the clients. You need to be communicative. Carefully read and understand the nature of the case, analyze and compare cases, and take into account the specific circumstances of every client.

7. How hard has it been to work during the COVID-19 pandemic, how did you get the job done?

During this time, it has been difficult because it has not been a normal situation to perform our work with clients. But based on the decisions of FLAA and other institutions, we have switched to online work. We have helped our clients with their cases through emails and phone calls. In addition, FLAA together with its cooperating actors USAID and GIZ, has organized online training and meetings, which we have held with great will and curiosity.

8. Has your work as a legal aid officer at FLAA helped you grow professionally?

Of course. From a professional point of view, my experience with FLAA has significantly influenced my development. I have been exposed to many training opportunities which enabled me to advance my knowledge of the law. Additionally, I have developed my interpersonal skills due to the opportunities I have had to attend events and meet with different institutional representatives.

***About this interview:** This interview was conducted by Justice Matters interns as part of a "listening" project: Interview with legal professionals. Justice Matters Activity is a three-year project to improve access to justice for all, inclusive of disadvantaged and marginalized groups, by strengthening the institutions, actors and processes for providing legal services and legal information.*