A young woman with long dark hair and a neutral expression is looking directly at the camera. She is wearing a dark top. Overlaid on the image is a list of dreams in a bold, sans-serif font. The first line is white, and the rest are blue.

I have a dream,
to become an actress,
to go to school,
to become a presenter,
to become a painter,
to travel the world,
to become a model,
to become a doctor,
to become a politician,
to become a lawyer,
to have a normal life,
to become an architect,
to become a dancer,
to become a boxer,
to become independent.

I have a dream...

The “I Have a Dream” photography project, by UN Women Albania and Jutta Benzenberg, illustrates the dreams of Albanian young and adolescent women from remote areas of the country. In front of the camera, they freed themselves from the customary surroundings and the patriarchal norms, embracing the liberty of their dreams for an attainable future.

With her observing, empathically intuitive lens, Benzenberg captures the true spirit of such dreams through a contemplative study of the young women’s eyes as they entrust their aspirations to the camera. Suddenly, the remote comes near, the subject becomes real; the unknown portraits cross into the familiar sphere, with their distant, limited environments growing into a world of possibilities.

These photographs do not just narrate stories, they enable the viewer to pass the state of mere spectator and develop an actual connection with the human behind the image, with her hopes, her energy, the true manifestation of her being. The voices of these Albanian young women and girls can now be heard, their desires can be felt, their aspirations understood, whether they dream of becoming an artist, a doctor, a lawyer, or just a strong independent woman making their parents proud.

You will find their inspiring dreams in full at the end of this publication. For the purpose of protecting their privacy, we intentionally did not associate their words with their photos. It is up to the viewer to enjoy the photos and freely associate them with the dreams.

This project does not end here. It is a call to society for equal rights and opportunities, for defying gender stereotypes. It is a plea to bridge the gap that still stands between those dreams and their actual achievement.

This photography project is an initiative of UN Women Albania realized with the precious support of the Swedish Government.



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UN Women Albania & Jutta Benzenberg

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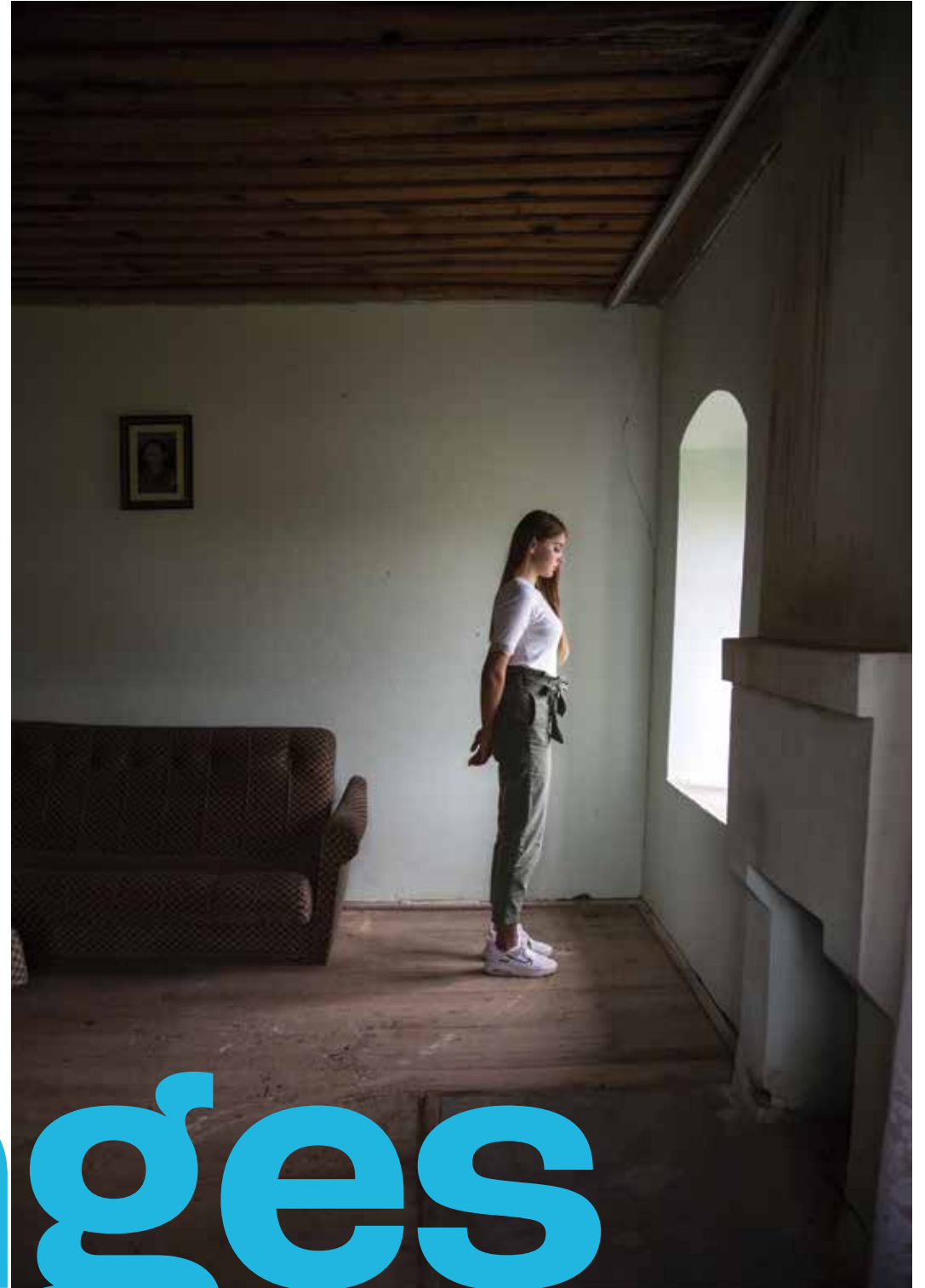
Photography: Jutta Benzenberg

Title:
I HAVE A DREAM



one day

facing challenges



to help people

My name is Albiola and I live in a village called Letaj. My biggest dream is to become a successful doctor. Curing and helping people is something magnificent to me. I would be so proud if someone out there is alive or just feeling better because of my hard work.





I have a dream

My name is Nepa.

**My biggest dream is to
become a strong woman,
that kind of woman that
inspires. And I also want to
become an amazing doctor.**



to be happy



**I am Elsaeda from
Has and I dream of
becoming a judge.
I really want this.
Even though I am
poor and with
divorced parents,
I have my mom
supporting me.**

just being





My dream is to become independent,

My name is Erta, sister of Fatma and I live in the Vajkal village. My dream is to become independent, to find a job that I love, to help my family and staying close to them and being there for them.

and find a job that I love.



insecurities





a normal life

I am Violeta from the Xhuxhe village. My dream is to become a singer. Singing for me is a passion, in singing I find myself and show my spiritual side.



prevail

strong



women



I have a dream

sense of freedom

I am Kasandra from the village of Bisak. I always wanted to become a dancer, maybe it was the first contact with the stage that made me passionately fall in love with dancing. It is a wonderful feeling of freedom, passion, the most beautiful and pure feeling, which is still unfulfilled. But I think nothing is impossible especially for an ambitious girl.



**with
passion**



I have a dream



really
want
this

change the world



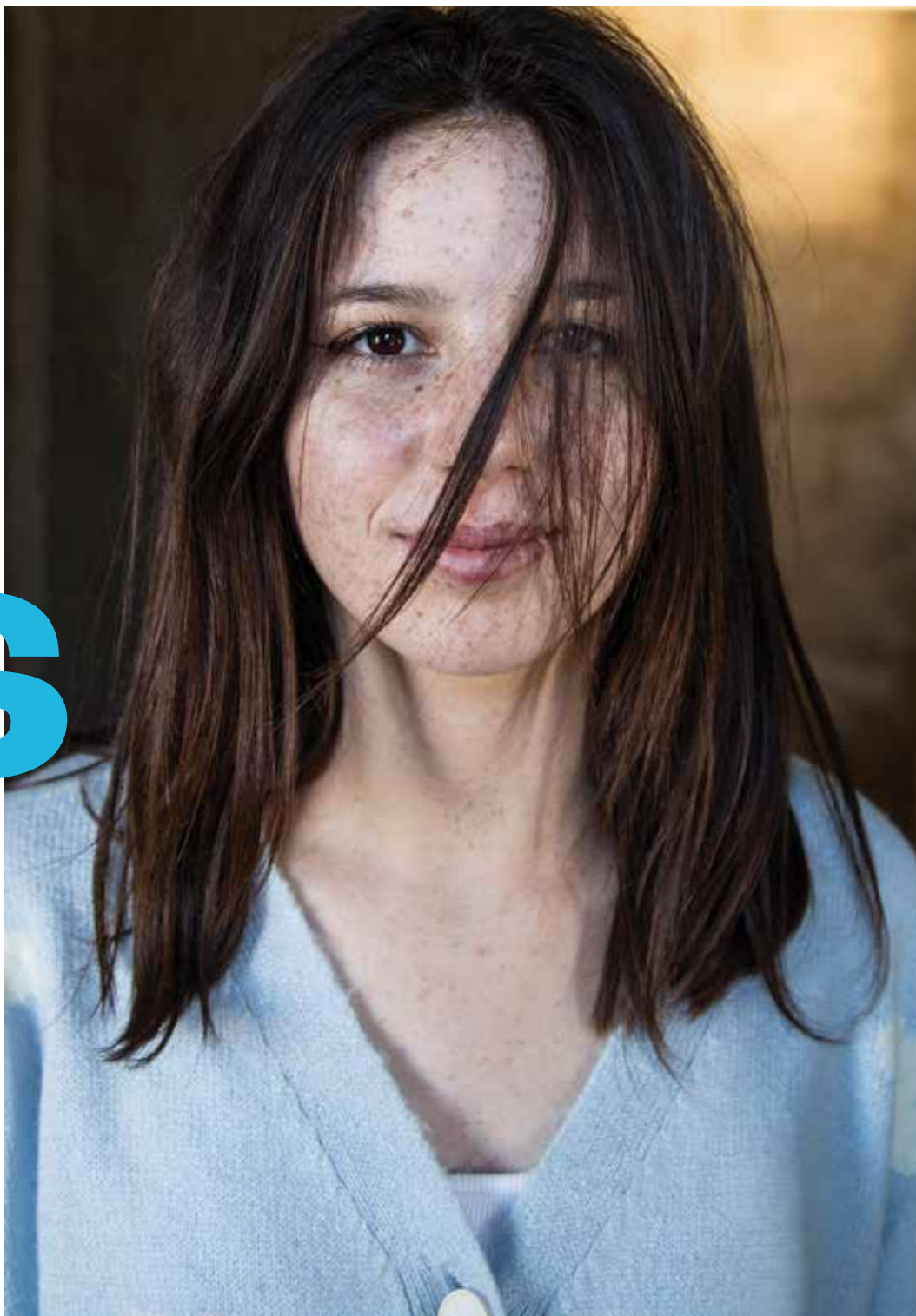
feel the emotions

My name is Klejda and I am from Tirana.
My dream is to become an actress, to
feel the emotions on stage when I am in
front of thousands of people, to feel the
happiness of knowing that people like
what I do. It will feel so good.



find
myself

famous





that inspires

**I am Veriona from Mirdita!
I want to become an actress.
Not only do I like this
profession a lot, but I think
I can do it because I have
the right skills to become an
actress.**



has a



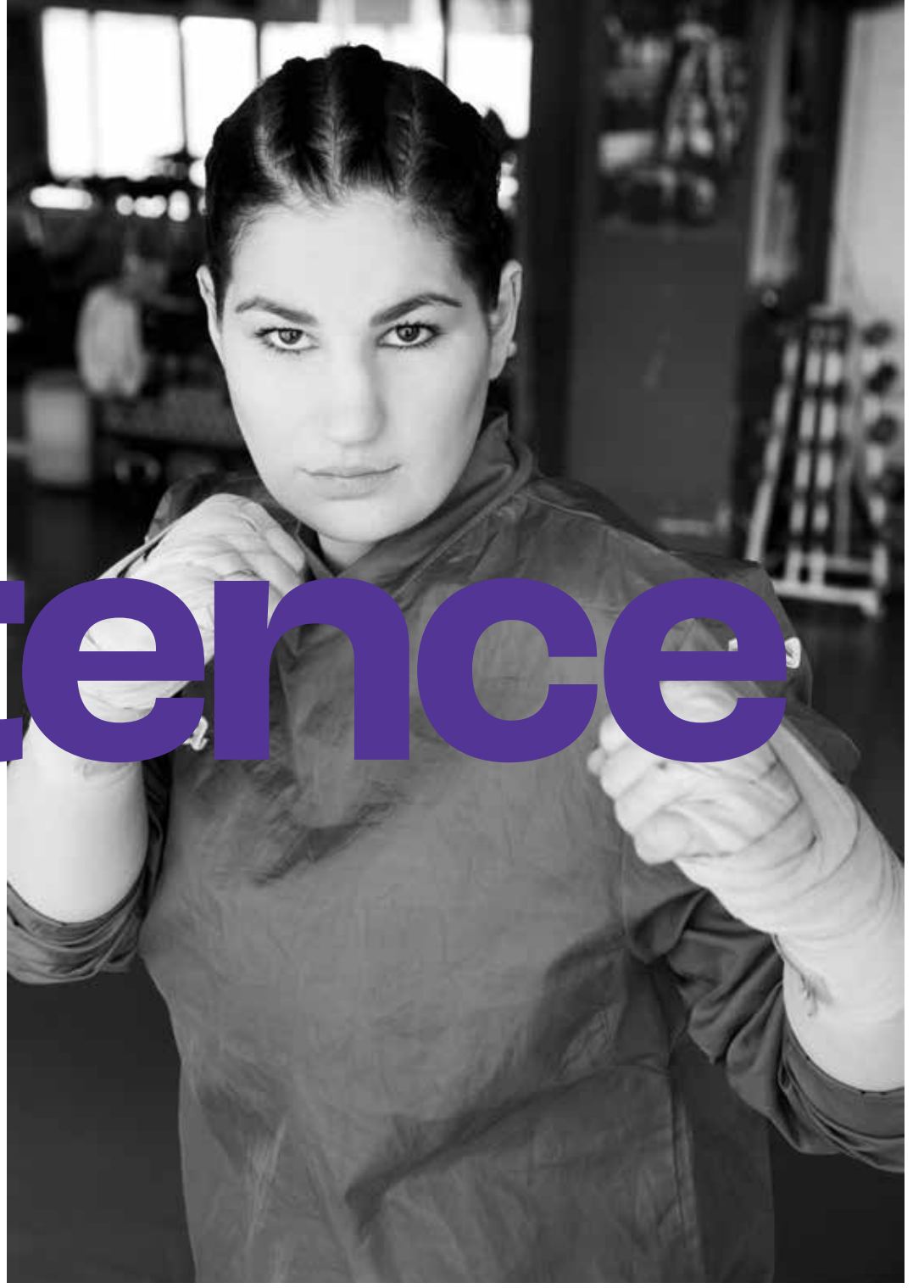


dream

My name is Megi and I live in Kukës. Everyone has a dream in life which they want to achieve when they grow up. To do that, you must keep your dream in mind and remind yourself daily about it. But the most important thing is to work hard to make it a reality. My biggest dream is not to do a job that just makes me rich, but to love the work I do every day. My biggest dream is to become a TV presenter, because every time I start to present, my world takes on different colors and my emotions explode. That is the best feeling and I want to experience this every day. I will fight every day, until I can say to my parents “Yes, this girl on TV is your daughter”.

**I will
fight
every
day**

persistence



travel all around the world

I am Sara from Puka and my dream is to travel all around the world. But it is early to talk about the future for now. The present is not so good, but we hope for better days.





it
never
ends



all of our dreams

1

My name is Klejda and I am from Tirana. My dream is to become an actress, to feel the emotions on stage when I am in front of thousands of people, to feel the happiness of knowing that people like what I do. It will feel so good.

2

I am Sindi and I live in the village of Rëmenj. I am a girl who has faced many hurdles in life. I have always wanted to have the opportunity to realize every dream of mine, one day. I really want to go to school, and while I tried hard, circumstances made it impossible. One day, I want to become a hairdresser, a profession I really adore. I try hard to learn new things and I hope that one day, I will fulfill all my wishes.

3

My name is Kristina and I live in the village of Cërrava. I dream of painting, so that one day I can become myself a painter. For now, I am just hoping.

4

I am Sara from Puka and my dream is to travel all around the world. But it is early to talk about the future for now. The present is not so good, but we hope for better days.

5

I am Njomza from the Peraj village. My dream is to become as successful as possible, and I aspire to work hard for it! My hidden dream is to become a model. But whatever path I choose to follow I will work hard to be successful.

6

I am Kleisia and I live in the village of Shushica. My dream is to become an actress. Being on stage and hearing the applause of the audience is something very beautiful and special, but I think it will remain just a dream. I know that finding a job as an actress is not easy. Because of this, I think that my profession in the future will be in the field of medicine, as there are more job opportunities than in acting.

7 (Two sisters)

My name is Albiola and I live in a village called Letaj. My biggest dream is to become a successful doctor. Curing and helping people is something magnificent to me. I would be so proud if someone out there is alive or just feeling better because of my hard work.

My name is Nepa. My biggest dream is to become a strong woman, that kind of woman that inspires. And I also want to become an amazing doctor.

8

I am Elsaeda from Has and I dream of becoming a judge. I really want this. Even though I am poor and with divorced parents, I have my mom supporting me.

9

My name is Jasemina from Bajram Curri. My biggest dream has always been to become successful as an artist. I feel like art flows in my veins since I was born. I paint because painting shows exactly what I cannot say through words, what I am, my every emotional and spiritual state. In the future, I see myself as a real artist somewhere outside Albania, as I find it difficult to realize my dream here. I will fight to reach the top in the field of art and I will make myself and my parents proud. Art cannot be explained, art is understood... just like dreams cannot be explained!

10

I am Amalia from Përmet and I don't have any big dreams. I just want to become a nurse and live a normal life.

11

Hello, this is me, Megi from the Piskova village. I want to become a doctor that works hard and passionately.

12

I am Borjana and I come from Tropoja. I have woven many dreams all my life and I am now trying to realize them. I chose to continue my dreams in another country, as Albania does not give one many opportunities, so this year I started my studies to become a nurse a go to Germany. The main reason why I decided to focus on this profession is because I really hope to help a lot of people.

13

I am Melisa from Bulqiza. I have been thinking about my future and finally I have come to a decision. I want to become an architect, it is such an appealing profession to me. I want to pursue my studies away from my city. I hope my dream comes true one day.

14

I am Violeta from the Xhuxhe village. My dream is to become a singer. Singing for me is a passion, in singing I find myself and show my spiritual side.

15

My name is Erta, sister of Fatma and I live in the Vajkal village. My dream is to become independent, to find a job that I love, to help my family, stay close to them and be there for them.

16

I am Fatma, Erta's sister and I live in Vajkal village. My dream when I grow up is to become a famous and successful stylist. To design clothes for all people. To be happy, next to my family.

17

I am Kasandra from the village of Bisak. I always wanted to become a dancer, maybe it was the first contact with the stage that made me passionately fall in love with dancing. It is a wonderful feeling of freedom, passion, the most beautiful and pure feeling, which is still unfulfilled. But I think nothing is impossible especially for an ambitious girl.

18

I am Luisa, I live in Tirana. My dream is to become a model, something that in Albania seems a bit impossible. You often need to have the right connections and a certain face. However, I have always liked fashion shows, photography and modeling in general, especially because it seemed like an opportunity to fight my insecurities. In a world where I have always been “thinner than I should be”, models have been an inspiration to me. Since I have decided to study outside Albania, I think that I will make my dream possible there.

19

My name is Elsidita and I am from Shkodra. I dream to become an internationally renowned boxer. I train with boys because we don't have girls in boxing, so I can't compete in Albania. Boxing is more than sport for me, it is in perfect harmony with my personality and my mental state, which can be seen as aggressive from outside but is full of passion and love inside. For me, boxing is not just a dream, it gives purpose to life. My persistence to challenge the mentality that sees girls as fragile and not strong enough, has helped me succeed until now, and not give up on my dream. My trainer says 'the punch has no gender'. This motto has made me win European medals and will accompany me forever.

20

My name is Uarda, I live in Vora. My dream is to become a famous model. If this does not work, I will become an economist.

21

I am Sara from Mallakastra, and I dream of continuing my studies in the field of medicine and have a successful career.

22

I am Amanda and I live in Kamza. I dream of a successful future in order to make myself and my family happy and become a successful person. I dream of studying medicine or law because they are profitable professions and play an important role in people's lives. I also dream of being a sincere and optimist person.

23

I am Veriona from Mirdita! I want to become an actress. Not only do I like this profession a lot, but I think I can do it because I have the right skills to become an actress.

24

My name is Eleni and I am originally from Gramsh but I live in Gjengjan, Elbasan. I want to do a professional training for styling and nail care. Then, I want to open my own beauty salon. I want to graduate from law school and become a lawyer. I will have my own office where I can work and pursue my dream with passion. I have a desire to promote justice, because lately the world is not as just as it should be. I want to do something different for my country with my work and help innocent people.

25

My name is Megi and I live in Kukës. Everyone has a dream in life which they want to achieve when they grow up. To do that, you must keep your dream in mind and remind yourself daily about it. But the most important thing is to work hard to make it a reality. My biggest dream is not to do a job that just makes me rich, but to love the work I do every day. My biggest dream is to become a TV presenter, because every time I start to present, my world takes on different colors and my emotions explode. That is the best feeling and I want to experience this every day. I will fight every day, until I can say to my parents "Yes, this girl on TV is your daughter".

26

My name is Alkida and I am from Thumana. My dream is to become a politician and build a country of girls and women, ruled by women! It would be an amazing thing for me!

27

My name is Anfrila and I come from Vau-Dejës. I dream of being happy with myself! In this dynamic and diverse world, the opportunities and time dedicated to oneself are insufficient. When I will be at the peak of my personal and professional fulfilment, I want to feel calm and happy with myself. I want to know my pleasures very well and enjoy myself without hesitation!

28

My name is Sara and I am from Mirdita. My dream is to become a photographer and take beautiful photos. Photography is something that really amazes me!

29

I am Fjolla and I am from Puka. I dream of becoming a surgeon and helping everyone in need. This would make me very happy!

Strong
INDEPENDENT
Woman

