



When Chadians went to the polls on 25 April 2011 in their country's presidential elections, UNV Electoral Agents were on duty. (Toussaint Dan/UNV, 2011)

## UN Volunteers assist in Chad's first local elections

Since assisting in Chad's presidential elections in April 2011, 21 UNV Electoral Agents have been supporting local branches of Chad's Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI) in organizing the country's first municipal elections which will be held later this year.

Under the UNDP "Support Project to the Electoral Cycle in Chad", 21 UN Volunteers were recruited to support the Chadian Independent National

Electoral Commission (CENI). During their assignment the UN Volunteers will provide technical support to the CENI local branches in the country's first municipal elections.

Of the total contingent, 18 UNV Electoral Agents reached their duty station in time to contribute to the presidential round of elections on 25 April 2011.

Like many of his colleagues, Joseph Brice Sossouhounto (Benin) arrived in Chad with more than five years of experience in electoral support. He recently served in Côte d'Ivoire, under the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (ONUCI) and said, "I had already met some members of the CENI at regional level and I found them very welcoming and open delegates. From the first contact, I was fully part of the team in charge of the supervision of military personnel's early voting operations on 24 April and subsequently was part of the monitoring of the presidential elections on the 25th."

He added, "The collaboration seems to be working perfectly so far and that certainly promises a collegial working atmosphere for my months ahead in the Salamat region."

Following the April election and over the next three months, the UN Volunteers' task will be to focus on supporting the local branches of Chad's Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI) to organize the country's first local elections to be held during the second semester of 2011. This is indeed, a challenge for the Chadian nation and the development partners.

*Thomas d'Aquin Yameogo is the UNV Programme Officer in Chad.*

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