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UN Volunteers in West and Central Africa support the United Nations in its response to the COVID-19 pandemic
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Skilled UN Volunteers join the fight against COVID-19 in West and Central Africa

With the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, there are more than 2,750 active cases identified in West and Central Africa to date. The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme plays an important role in addressing the outbreak within the region – either by providing medical support or conducting awareness-raising campaigns. From Bamako (Mali) to Lomé (Togo) and Bissau (Guinea-Bissau), UN Volunteers are an asset to UN agencies in this emergency context.

The United Nations system is gearing up its efforts to support national COVID-19 response plans in West and Central Africa. UNV is no exception. UN Volunteers add value to UN and government efforts, like Dr Philemon Niyitegeka (Rwanda), a UN Volunteer Technical Assistant in Mobile Care Strategies, serving with the United Nations Development

Programme (UNDP) in Togo.

Dr Niyitegeka supports with estimating medical needs for UNDP's response to COVID-19 in the country, monitoring UN staff members in self-quarantine and training community leaders on how to prevent COVID-19. He is s at the frontlines of the fight against the pandemic.

“ People should strictly observe sanitary precautions to protect themselves against COVID-19. These have been implemented by the Health Ministry, through information, awareness and advocacy activities. -- Dr Philemon Niyitegeka, UN Volunteer with UNDP, Togo

Meanwhile, in Mali, Barthelemy Kouassi (Cote d'Ivoire) is a UN Volunteer Staff Counsellor assigned to the United Nations clinic who raises the awareness of staff members and their families of mental health issues. He also provides constant support to colleagues who are in quarantine remotely.

“ In this situation, there is so much information circulating which negatively impacts people's mental health and has negative consequences on their psychological state, as does the solitary confinement. -- Barthelemy Kouassi, UN Volunteer with the UN, Mali

Silvina Sico, a national UN Volunteer Child Protection Officer with UNICEF in Guinea Bissau. She supports the World Health Organization in addressing COVID-19 at a national level.

She assists WHO in coordinating the country's inter-agency strategies, as well as liaison with government and other partners for common initiatives against the pandemic.

Silvina also works on emergency recruitments, monitors the materials and equipment needs for the United Nations clinic and national medical facilities, and manages the availability of quarantine rooms.

In West and Central Africa, UN Volunteers support WHO by providing technical skills in areas such as statistics, data entry and information system management, communications and media relations, human resources, donor relations and more to address COVID-19 and ensure health improvement in the region, in line with SDG 3, aiming to ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages.



• COVID-19 • Corona pandemic • Togo • Guinea Bissau • UNDP • UNICEF • WHO

Sustainable Development Goal: [SDG 3: Good health and well-being](#) [SDG 6: Clean water and sanitation](#) [SDG 17: Partnerships for the goals](#)