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Yolanda Sibiya, UN Volunteer Movement Control Assistant with UNISFA, handling a shipping container in Abyei, Sudan.
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Women preserving the momentum towards peace in Sudan

Supported by UN Peacekeeping missions, Sudan's transition towards peace started over a decade ago, and women have been involved in the process all along. Today, we celebrate women UN Volunteers who serve in volatile areas and sometimes precarious conditions for peace in Sudan, in support of the UN-African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) and the UN Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA).

A total of 185 women UN Volunteers have served with UNAMID since 2008 and UNISFA since 2012 in a multitude of fields, including medicine, health, engineering, finance, technology and supply chains. Comprising no more than 25 per cent of the total UN Volunteer workforce supporting these two missions, women have been handling challenging tasks and benefiting the communities they serve.

Irene Haroub (Zimbabwe), a UN Volunteer HIV/AIDS Trainer/Counselor with UNAMID, hopes the impact of her work will benefit mothers and communities in Darfur for many years to come.

During one field visit to a hospital in southern Darfur, Irene was deeply moved by the lack of facilities for examining expecting mothers. With the support of her supervisor, she was able to launch a dedicated centre at the hospital. When she shared her idea with representatives of the State Ministry of Health, they welcomed it and requested her to devise [similar](#)

[projects.](#)

For Sunita Shakya (Nepal), who serves as a UNV Support Officer with UNAMID, organizing activities that directly benefit and empower women – especially those with disabilities – is always a pleasure. One such activity was delivering training of trainers to women from internally displaced people's camps and communities in El-Fasher, North Darfur, on the production of leather bags and purses.

“ The presence of women within UN Peacekeeping missions can provide a sense of confidence and reassurance, especially among host community women and children. Our presence encourages them to come forward and contribute to their community. --Sunita Shakya, UN Volunteer with UNAMID

Yolanda Sibiya (South Africa) serves as a UN Volunteer Movement Control Assistant with UNISFA. She is one of the few females serving in UN Peacekeeping missions who operate material handling equipment including 3-15 tonne forklifts, heavy trucks and minibuses.

Following the outbreak of COVID-19, Yolanda is now involved in ensuring that all essential medical supplies, such as hand sanitizers, face masks, ventilators and other essential equipment, are received on the ground in Abyei in a timely matter.

“ Serving with UNISFA and the experience gained cannot be quantified. Indeed, the peculiar location and the nature of activities in UNISFA Abyei is something that can never be eroded from my memory. If I can do it, then any woman given the opportunity can also do it. –Yolanda Sibiya, UN Volunteer with UNISFA

Delphine Mensah (Liberia) is another woman serving with UNISFA as a UN Volunteer Material & Assets Management Associate. Her daily duties include ensuring that proper controls and procedures are followed for the issuance, inspection and receipt of assets and materials in the warehouses.

Delphine takes pride in being the only female in the Supply Chain Unit and is meeting deliverables in a traditionally male-dominated field. She believes that women should be given more opportunities where they can apply their talents and experience.

“ Women are at the forefront of improving people’s lives, leading in roles from decision-making to being in the field. Sharing more responsibilities with men, we can deliver better results together. -- Delphine Mensah, UN Volunteer with UNISFA

 Arab States

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