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UN Volunteer Nnoko Angela training on Mainstreaming Gender into Humanitarian Action in Niamey, (UNV, Niger 2016)

Different Needs, Equal Opportunities: Mainstreaming Gender into Humanitarian Actions

In my assignment as an international UN Volunteer for the Regional Humanitarian Program for the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) for West and Central Africa in Dakar, one of my duty is to make sure that humanitarian actions incorporate issues of gender and diversity.

Dakar, Senegal: In my assignment as an international UN Volunteer for the Regional Humanitarian Program for the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) for West and Central Africa in Dakar, one of my duty is to make sure that humanitarian actions incorporate issues of gender and diversity.

This process aims at ensuring that the needs of women, girls, men and boys of all ages are taken into consideration during Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) and the actual execution phase itself.

Mainstreaming gender into humanitarian action does not only help in effectively meeting the needs of those concern, it's a tool through which women can be empowered and change the balance of power between women and men in communities.

From the 11-16 July, I joined colleagues in Niger to facilitate two trainings aimed at strengthening the capacities of humanitarian actors intervening in Diffa (A community in the north of Niger hosting thousands of refugees from Nigeria and IDPs as a result of the Boko Haram attacks)

The training methodology was mostly participative proceeding from theoretical presentations, group exercises and discussions. The exercises were aimed at bringing theory to daily professional practice as well as to meet the challenges in the field through gender needs assessment, that is, needs that are specific to men, women, girls, boys, the elderly and handicap.

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Participants came from different UN agencies, International and local NGOs. The government of Niger was represented by the Ministry of Humanitarian action and the Management of catastrophes.

UN Women made sure that the timing for the training was appropriate (a week before 2017 HRP) so as to enable participants use the knowledge gained in the planning process. This training also had as aim correcting the errors which emanated after the 2016 HRP during which the outline of humanitarian needs (HNO) did not consider the specific gender needs and therefore it was difficult to develop sectoral response plans that were gender sensitive. Most projects submitted for financing on OPS didn't integrated gender. Gender analysis is highly needed also because of the lack of data disaggregated by sex and age.

I hope that this training will help humanitarian actors to address these shortcomings. Still they must have the support required during the year and if there is an Institutional will. Each organization will be able to overcome

the challenges to meet the IASC gender policy.

All organizations have indeed gender policy, but unfortunately, accountability is not there and nobody follows the implementation consistently. This is explained in particular by either a lack of interest on the part of most managers, or a lack of real knowledge on gender and the tools to implement them.

I feel very grateful to be part of UN Women as a UN Volunteer and to be able to contribute to its mandate, leading people to take action and at the same time empowering myself.



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Sustainable Development Goal: [SDG 5: Gender equality](#)