

28 September  
2020



Anta (blue scarf) conducting a focus group discussion on sexual and reproductive health with young people from Velingara, Senegal.  
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## Ten volunteers improve community access to reproductive health in Senegal

"I work closely with local partners to develop integrated sexual and reproductive health services, including maternal and adolescent reproductive health and family planning, especially for vulnerable people," Anta Diop says proudly. "In Senegal, we believe that a small daily deed can change the lives of many people. It is a real honour to participate in building communities." The 24-year-old joined the management team of the Saint Louis health district in northern Senegal a few months ago as a UN Community Volunteer.

Through their partnership, the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) and UN Volunteers (UNV) programme have deployed 10 such UN Community Volunteers in the different regions of Senegal.

The UN Community Volunteers are supporting a project for the improvement of the health and welfare of women and adolescents in Southern Senegal, funded by Canada, and another for strengthening access to quality basic health services for the most vulnerable populations in the northern and central regions, funded by Luxembourg. Both projects are based on the vision of harnessing the demographic dividend in line with national priorities articulated in *Senegal Emergent 2035*.

“ The partnership with UNV will strengthen our interventions at the community level to accelerate implementation of the action plan of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). This will help achieve the three UNFPA transformative outcomes which are: zero preventable maternal deaths, zero unmet needs for family planning, and zero gender-based violence and harmful practices. --Ms Cécile Compaoré Zoungrana, UNFPA Resident Representative

Recruited during the COVID-19 pandemic, the community volunteers received technical and psychosocial support from UNFPA before becoming operational.

"I joined UNFPA in a telecommuting context and was impressed by the human resources management. Each staff member develops an annual performance plan with activities and indicators, which demonstrates UNFPA's willingness to deliver quality results and data for the greater good of our beneficiaries," says Jean Thimotée Sagne, a UN Community Volunteer assigned to Ziguinchor, in southern Senegal.

The volunteers who quickly adapted to the current situation are strongly committed to carrying out their mission. One of these is Papa Gueye, a highly-motivated community health technician based in Fatick, central Senegal. He sees his assignment as a great opportunity to share his knowledge and experience.

“ "We noticed a slump in the activities of the communities and are working to get them on track and to revitalize the health units. We are conducting community dialogues in the area of reproductive health, to raise awareness and involve traditional and religious leaders, village chiefs and youth associations. --Papa Gueye, UN Community Volunteer with UNFPA

His motivation is also shared by Moustapha Diankha, from the Tambacounda region. "I discovered new socio-cultural realities in the field and new initiatives for girls' empowerment, such as the club for the young adolescent who cultivates excellence in school and at the same time invests in market gardening to generate income.

"Young people are agents of change. By recruiting UN Community Volunteers, UNFPA contributes to the realization of young people's potential, while allowing them to serve their

communities," says Ms Compaoré Zougrana.

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• Luxembourg • UN Community Volunteers • reproductive health • COVID-19 • Coronavirus

Sustainable Development Goal: [SDG 3: Good health and well-being](#) [SDG 4: Quality education](#) [SDG 10: Reduced inequalities](#) [SDG 17: Partnerships for the goals](#)