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Elodia Cheitou, national UN Volunteer with the World Food Programme, participating in an event held at an orphanage in Bertoua.

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## Nourishing the future of children and women in Cameroon

Elodia Cheitou is a national UN Volunteer serving with the World Food Programme (WFP) in Cameroon. Elodia, fondly called 'the mother of babies' by her colleagues and partners, is supporting the fight against hunger and nourishing the future of children and women in Cameroon. She shares her experience.

My name is Elodia Cheitou and I am 28 years old from Cameroon. I am a national UN Volunteer serving with WFP in Bertoua, in the eastern part of Cameroon.

As a UNV Field Monitoring Assistant, I contribute to fighting hunger among refugees from the Central African Republic (CAR) and the host population in the region. Our field office collaborates with local and international partners to implement three main activities: unconditional general food distribution, livelihood and resilience activities for the refugees and host population, and nutrition activities for young children and people living with HIV.

My main duties consist of supervising food distribution at our distribution sites, collecting food basket monitoring, supporting our partners to organize social and behavioural change communications in communities. I also conduct cooking demonstration, sensitization of gender-based violence, and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) sessions.

For livelihood activities, I supervise conditional food assistance to 2,200 households and observe the implementation of activities like community farms, fruit and vegetable farms and fishponds.

For nutrition activities, I support the implementation of programs for young children such as Blanket Supplementary Feeding Program (BSFP) and Food by Prescription (FbP) as well as the social intervention program for people living with HIV. I prepare food release notes and monitor the repositioning of food in 22 distribution sites for over 13,500 beneficiaries.

I also ensure efficient coordination with nutrition stakeholders by organizing meetings with partners and providing reports and monitoring tools. During my field missions, I organize discussions with beneficiaries on Infant and Young child Feeding (IYCF) practices and Village Saving and Loan Association (VSLA) model.

I also act as a gender and protection focal point to ensure the mainstreaming of gender equality and protection across all the activities in our field office. I make sure gender and protection issues are considered during food distribution and support organizing capacity-building workshops for partners and beneficiaries. I frequently share key messages with colleagues on gender and protection issues including the prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment.

Our field office and UNV colleagues support campaigns and activities such as 16 days of activism against gender-based violence, financial and psychological support to children and their mentors in orphanages and to women in prison.

“ My assignment is exciting and touching! I work with very welcoming and hardworking communities. They have accepted to move forward in their lives and it really helps my daily work.

Furthermore, my colleagues are very openminded, joyful and hardworking and they are always ready to support each other. Our work atmosphere is just perfect!

The biggest challenge I face during my assignment is language. A significant number of our beneficiaries, both the refugees and local population, are illiterate. They only speak their local languages and I always need support from a member of the community who speaks French or English to communicate. So, I am learning Fulfulde, a widely spoken language among the beneficiaries, for better communication and inclusion in the community.

Now I know volunteering is part of my life and I encourage all young people to engage in humanitarian and development activities.

“ Because you will feel the peace of mind and inner joy when you see your work immediately contributing to changing and saving lives. My motto is 'every day, a smile on a vulnerable face.' ”

Elodia studied medical anthropology at the University of Douala and project management at the Pan African Institute for Development. She started volunteering at the age of 12 at her local community and continued volunteering throughout her life with various organizations in Germany and Cameroon. She also shared her volunteer experiences in a [video](#).



• refugees • nutrition • 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence • gender equality

Sustainable Development Goal: [SDG 2: Zero hunger](#) [SDG 5: Gender equality](#) [SDG 17: Partnerships for the goals](#)

