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Danielle Scarpassa do Prado, UN Volunteer Associate Community-Based Protection Officer, during gender-based violence training. This was conducted together with governmental partners in the Maratane Refugee Settlement.

## From individuals to community: UN Volunteers helping refugees and displaced persons

With World Refugee Day coming up on June 20th, four UN Volunteers share how they are helping the vulnerable access the services they need for better futures. Dejen, Senait, Danielle and Deiliany serve with the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) in Rwanda and Mozambique, supporting persons of concern — including refugees, displaced persons and others.

**Dejen Yehalaw Gebreslassie** (Ethiopia) is an international UN Volunteer serving as an Interpreter/Translation Officer with UNHCR in Nyamata Field Office, Rwanda, which mainly engages evacuees from Libya. The evacuees temporarily reside in the Gashora Emergency Transit Mechanism (ETM).

Dejen's main role is to interpret/translate to and from English and Tigrinya/Amharic. From this, he assists persons of concern through processes relating to refugee status determination, resettlement, child protection, community-based protection and registration interviews. His task also includes translating different documents, supporting medical and embassy appointments, availing health-related information materials, and other community-related activities.

In many cases, the role of translator/interpreter is indispensable. This is not only because many caseworkers and/or staff do not speak the language of the persons of concern, but also because the translations can create smooth communication with service providers and during visits to the camp. "This helps them access the protection they need, and ultimately, they can find durable solutions to their issues, one of which is often resettling in a third country. I am glad that I am part of this process in their lives," Dejen says.

This is also the case of UN Volunteer Interpreter, **Senait Robel Gebremedhin** (Eritrea), who also works closely with ETM. In line with UNHCR's goals to provide emergency protection to refugees, asylum-seekers, children-and-youth at risk, she plays a vital role in creating a conducive environment to encourage the evacuees to open up and cooperate.

Beyond executing her core tasks as an interpreter/translator, Senait also builds a strong rapport with the evacuees, so that they feel well taken care of. She shares, "Volunteering is all about giving back to individuals or communities. As a UN Volunteer, I am glad that I could positively impact the lives of refugees and contribute to the achievement of global efforts by UNHCRs."

“ The cultural connection makes the communication smooth in all aspects. It also gives them the courage to share their catastrophic life experiences and trauma without reservations, which is the first step towards a healing process and on the journey to a decent life. --  
**Senait Robel Gebremedhin, Interpreter/translator UNHCR**

Further South, in Mozambique, two UN Volunteers are making visible changes in the community by protecting refugees and displaced population.

**Danielle Scarpassa do Prado** (Brazil) is a UN Volunteer Associate Community-Based Protection Officer serving with UNHCR in the Nampula province. She is responsible for dealing with gender-based violence prevention, risk mitigation and response, education and the protection of people with special needs.

Through her assignment, Danielle is responding to the protracted refugee situation in the Nampula Province and with internally-displaced people. Through a community-based

approach, she interacts directly with communities, establishes trust ties and guarantees that the voices and engagement of refugees are included in protection planning.

“ Protection is invisible but essential work; we are the ones who need to be attentive listeners and should use perception skills to recognize the concerns of the people and include their voices within our response plans. --Danielle Scarpassa do Prado, UN Volunteer Associate Community-Based Protection Officer, UNHCR

**Deiliany Souza** (Brazil) is a UN Volunteer Community-Based Protection Officer with UNHCR Mozambique. In the field, she has been responding to the vital protection needs of refugees and internally-displaced persons.

As a Community-Based Protection Officer, Deiliany has been implementing projects that put the affected community, both displaced persons and the local population, in the driving seat, so they can address the challenges by themselves. In addition to that, she has participated in a project in which displaced persons could access legal counseling to have new documents. She mentioned that this was particularly inspiring, as the team could give back dignity to so many who were forced to leave the proof of their own identity behind.

Deiliany's work also includes addressing gender-based violence in the refugee community. She recalls, "By hearing the voices of survivors and their struggle, I could see their incredible strength. They just needed people they can trust and can support them and stand alongside them as they recuperate and build their resilience."

“ Being a volunteer gives me the chance to see life as an opportunity to serve others. Although the work that we do can be a drop in the ocean, this can one day make the world a better place for all — especially the most vulnerable, women, children, persons with disabilities and elderly persons. --Deiliany Souza, UN Volunteer Community-Based Protection Officer, UNHCR



• World Refugee Day • Mozambique

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