



Ensuring conflict-sensitive programming in the Caribbean

Benjamin Scholz (Germany) served as international UN Volunteer Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Officer with the World Food Programme (WFP) in its Panama Regional Bureau. He was frequently deployed to disaster-hit countries, mostly Haiti, to support the delivery of food assistance in emergency situations resulting from natural disasters such as earthquakes and hurricanes.

The World Food Programme's Panama Regional Bureau oversees operations in 11 countries throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. One of Benjamin's tasks was to ensure the protection of populations affected by emergencies in these countries.

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“Through my work I aimed at ensuring that the resources provided by WFP were fairly-distributed, efficiently utilized, and would not stir up or fuel existing conflict in local communities,” Benjamin explains.

Benjamin was in charge of putting in place complaints and feedback mechanisms for community members, thus fostering transparency, ownership and trust among its members. These mechanisms enabled affected people to raise protection-related issues and concerns, so that incidents such as violence during food distribution or Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) could be quickly escalated and adequately addressed.



Benjamin Scholz (Germany) served as international UN Volunteer Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Officer with the World Food Programme in Panama between July 2016 and October 2017.

“One of my most important achievements was the establishment – during various field missions to Haiti – of a toll-free hotline for affected communities, in collaboration with other UN agencies and NGOs on the ground,” Benjamin explains. “This was part of the WFP emergency response to Hurricane Matthew, which hit Haiti in October 2016. To this day, the hotline has received well over 1,000 calls by community members.”

Benjamin also led data collection exercises in the field, handling knowledge and information management platforms, and compiling quarterly online newsletters to generate evidence of best practices.

He provided strategic guidance to country offices, technical assistance and oversight regarding targeting, data collection and analysis, budgeting and reporting.

“For example, I made sure that performance indicators concerning amount of food delivered and people reached were properly reported by each Country Office and for each project,” he says.

“I think that my work has contributed to enhanced accountability of WFP to its beneficiaries and donors, by better pointing out achievements and impact, to more effective and flexible programming, and to enhanced transparency and trust in WFP,” he concludes.

This story is published as part of the campaign for [International Volunteer Day 2017: Volunteers Act First. Here. Everywhere.](#)



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