



National UN Volunteer Nadege Tshibola meets local authorities to assess the situation of women and raise awareness of their rights in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

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Advancing human rights protection with compassion, empathy and rigor

UN Volunteers on the ground are supporting UN entities to create equal opportunities for all and address issues of inequality, exclusion and discrimination. It is important to recognize these efforts, especially after COVID-19, which has created new threats and intensified inequality, discrimination and other gaps in human rights protection.

In Niger, three UN Volunteers in humanitarian affairs are facilitating the work of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA). Oumou Moumouni, Fajimata Abba Gana and Farida Zakaria Abderrahmane are assigned to Niamey, Tillabéry and Tahoua regions respectively.

“ In a sector that requires more women, Farida, Fatima and Oumou are more than welcome. In some areas, the socio-cultural constraints are such that, despite the emergency, only women can interact with the

“ women. So having these volunteers on our team is a huge help. --Ms Khadidjatou Yara, Head of the OCHA Tahoua sub-office, Niger

Farida was instrumental in coordinating the emergency response to the Bakoret attack in Niger, which forced more than 500 families to flee. She worked directly with the beneficiaries, mainly widows and orphans, to determine their urgent needs, in close collaboration with the government and humanitarian partners.

“ Working in the field requires compassion and empathy, but also rigor, to quickly define appropriate emergency responses. The direct contact with victims has instilled in me the true meaning of what I do and the necessity to do it well, to help them recover their rights. --Farida Zakaria Abderrahmane, UN Volunteer with UNOCHA, Niger

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), national UN Volunteer Nadege Tshibola serves with the UN Development Programme (UNDP). She is the focal point of a project for justice and empowerment of women and girls in Kananga, Dibaya center, Tshimbulu, Kinshasa and the Ituri region.

Nadege facilitates awareness-raising activities, medical care and psychosocial support for women and girls. She collaborates with UN partners like the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), UN Joint Human Rights Office (UNJHRO) and local non-governmental organizations. She also works a lot with traditional leaders. The project she is involved in has a legal and judicial component to defend the rights of women victims of gender-based violence and empower them through income-generating activities.

“ Thanks to our human rights-based approach, some traditional chiefs have already started to refer women's rights violations cases to us and are raising awareness among women. Their support is helpful in

“ the local context, where some women have gone through quite a lot. --Nadege Tshibola, UN Volunteer with UNDP, DRC

International UN Volunteer Edokossi Kodjo Agbemebia also supports UNJHRO, within the framework of the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO). A former human rights activist in his home country, Togo, he volunteered abroad to broaden his experience. Kodjo serves in Bukavu, in South Kivu, where he facilitates the implementation of the human rights mandate. He monitors prison facilities and the conditions of prisoners. Kodjo also follows up on individual cases and issues with authorities to stop or prevent human rights violations.

“ After several years of activism in my country, my ambition was to be part of international human rights protection. This volunteer opportunity allows me to empower individuals to stand up for their rights, but also stand up for the rights of others. --Edokossi Kodjo Agbemebia, UN Volunteer with UNJHRO, DRC

UN Secretary-General António Guterres stated that "recovery from the pandemic must be an opportunity to expand human rights and freedoms, to rebuild trust in the justice and impartiality of laws and institutions, and confidence that a life of dignity is within reach." On the occasion of Human Rights Day and International Human Solidarity Day, we draw inspiration from the volunteers pursuing these goals.

 **West and Central Africa**

• Human Rights Day • International Human Solidarity Day • Gender-based Violence • UNJHRO

Sustainable Development Goal: [SDG 5: Gender equality](#) [SDG 10: Reduced](#)

inequalities SDG 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions SDG 17:
Partnerships for the goals