



UN Volunteer Dalila Ksir overseeing the delivery of equipment to the youth centre of Remada, Tataouine.

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Building bridges out of solidarity with underprivileged youth in Tunisia

Dalila Ksir is one of seven national UN Volunteers serving with the UN Development Programme in Tunisia as local coordinators of projects aimed at accelerating progress towards peace in Tunisia. In this story, we highlight how Dalila is fostering solidarity and reciprocity among citizens and strengthening trust, to maintain an enabling environment that is conducive to peace and development.

Dalila is assigned to Remada, one of Tunisia's southernmost towns near the borders with Libya. To her, serving as the sole representative of the only UN entity working in this remote area has been both a challenge and a privilege.

Remada has long been left behind due to lacking development efforts. It witnesses recurrent protests denouncing the deteriorating economic

situation and the limited access to opportunities, with unemployment rate reaching 33 per cent in 2020, according to the [Municipality of Remada](#).

With her strong knowledge of the local setting, being herself from Remada, Dalila is committed to youth empowerment and to strengthening trust between youth and local authorities.

As a UN Volunteer, she has been acting as a connector between youth, local institutional actors, civil society organizations, including volunteer involving organizations, and other UNDP projects intervening in the region. For instance, she has been connecting youth with the Scouts Organization of Tatouine, which is located 80 kilometers away from her duty station, with the aim of creating opportunities for youth to engage in positive forms of civic participation.

Through her assignment, Dalila worked with 120 hard-to-reach youth in remote locations around Remada, such as Borj Bourguiba to the southwest. She helped facilitate their participation in social life and public dialogues and supported their capacity building. She also supported 30 of them to design and implement 16 successful community initiatives within their localities.

At the same time, Dalila has been supporting local authorities by taking part in the development and implementation of capacity-building initiatives, and in the design and implementation of a youth-oriented communication strategy. The development of the latter brought together different stakeholders to facilitate youth inclusion by providing the necessary support.

Dalila's work has been informed by the data she gathers from the field. To ensure the relevance of youth inclusion efforts, she conducts field surveys aimed at assessing perceptions and at gathering inputs for improvement.

“ My main goal has always been to ensure the success of the project in the region, and to gain more experience by conducting field research in remote areas, such as Borj Bourguiba. I am committed to mobilizing young people who are the most difficult to reach, to facilitating their integration and participation, and to enhancing their knowledge and skills. --Dalila Ksir, UN Volunteer Local Coordinator, UNDP Tunisia

To ensure the sustainability of the progress achieved so far, UNDP set up the Remada Peace and Youth Hub as a multi-actor participatory space composed of representatives of civil society organizations, alongside youth, municipal and local administration officials and media. The Hub, which Dalila contributes to, aims to be a platform for dialogue and action to propose and support youth initiatives.

"Self-confidence, problem solving skills, positivity and overcoming psychological barriers hindering communication with others," responded Dalila, when asked about what she learned from her UN Volunteer experience.

"These skills helped me start up a dynamic interaction with youth, leading to their continued civic participation beyond the duration of the project. The creation of a Scouts branch in the locality of Kambout has been one example," she added.

Moreover, Dalila strongly believes in the role of volunteerism in bolstering solidarity and creating a sense of unity around sustainable development.

“ Volunteering contributes to the advancement of societies and fulfills the social needs of individuals and the society at large. It helps make new friends, expand networks, and enhance social skills. My journey as a volunteer does not stop here. I aspire to further develop my capacities, and to provide value on both national and international levels. --Dalila Ksir



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