



Emmanuel Chileshe Musonda (with blue vest), UN Volunteer Health and Nutrition Associate with UNHCR Zambia, supporting the Ministry of Health COVID-19 vaccination campaign during the arrival of refugees in the Mantapala settlement.

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Increasing the accessibility of health care services among the refugees in Zambia

Access to healthcare is a fundamental human right. Everyone, especially people from marginalized communities, deserves to be provided with the essential primary healthcare services to build thriving, sustainable societies. Emmanuel Musonda, a UN Volunteer serving with the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), shares how he promotes equality and inclusion in healthcare access for refugees in Zambia.

My Name is Emmanuel Chileshe Musonda, and I am currently serving as a UN Volunteer Health and Nutrition Associate at UNHCR's Kawambwa field office in the Mantapala refugee settlement. As a UN Volunteer, I mainly support the planning, implementation and analysis of health and nutrition projects in the refugee settlement. From a strategic standpoint, I provide technical guidance and programmatic recommendations on the overall design and focus of public health and nutrition programmes in the settlement.

Additionally, I ensure community involvement in public health and nutrition programmes in the settlement, seeking the diverse views of all stakeholders – men, women, girls and boys, adolescents, youth, elders, persons with disabilities and others – and helping partners

apply inclusive approaches in the implementation of the health programmes in the settlement.

During my assignment, I have learnt that community engagement and participation play a major role in the success of community health programmes. People are more inclined to support ideas and initiatives when involved from the beginning.

“ I am passionate about promoting inclusion. When people are involved in programmes that target them, the outcomes become more meaningful and impactful. --Emmanuel Chileshe Musonda, UN Volunteer Health and Nutrition Associate, UNHCR Zambia



Throughout my work, I have coordinated different kinds of health programmes – including on malaria, reproductive health, HIV/AIDS and mental health. In conjunction with the government of Zambia, other UN agencies, non-governmental organizations and other partners, we have ensured the effective delivery of public health and nutrition services to host and refugee communities in the Mantapala refugee settlement.

Along with that, I have contributed to the development of an effective health information system that integrates data collection and monitoring tools with tracking and reporting tools that include basic health indicators. These have ensured improved efficiency in providing

adequate reporting, timely updates and briefings to all stakeholders, donors and management.

“ While serving as a UN Volunteer, I have learnt the skill of managing a challenging work environment to achieve set programme objectives. I have learnt the importance of teamwork and the value of diversity in providing equitable basic health care services – particularly in the context of a refugee community. --Emmanuel Chileshe Musonda

One of the achievements that I am proud of as a UN Volunteer is supporting the Ministry of Health in increasing the accessibility of specialized health services among refugees in the Mantapala settlement. Through the programme efforts, we were able to reach 588 persons of concern – 313 women and 275 men – with key health services including mental health, physiotherapy, dental, eye screening, male circumcision and cervical cancer treatment.

We installed air-conditioners and beds in the pharmacies and facilitated the construction and equipping of the COVID-19 isolation center. Additionally, I supported the vaccination of more than 1,000 refugees in the settlement.

“ Volunteerism has brought me a lot of satisfaction and proved to be a source of motivation. I get a lot of contentment whenever I see other people’s lives improving due to my interventions and efforts. --
Emmanuel Chileshe Musonda

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Sustainable Development Goal: **SDG 3: Good health and well-being** **SDG 6: Clean water and sanitation** **SDG 17: Partnerships for the goals**