



UNDP supports democratic governance and peacebuilding in the Arab States through its Youth Leadership Programme. This empowers youth to develop solutions to challenges in their communities and use their passion to contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

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Advancing social cohesion and conflict prevention during the democratic transition in Tunisia

In Tunisia, the UN Development Programme (UNDP) has been supporting the government, civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders in the democratic transition following the revolution in 2011.

Despite the progress Tunisia made since establishing a new constitution in 2014, there are many elements in the democratic transition that have not yet been completed. These include justice and security sector reform, anti-corruption and revision of the legal institutional framework. In addition, Tunisia is facing new challenges, such as countering terrorism and extremism.

Mai Matsukuma served as a UN Volunteer from May 2020 to May 2021 through the Japan-funded Human Resources for Development programme. She worked on projects related to supporting social cohesion and conflict prevention during the transition.

As Programme Analyst, she provided quality assurance and coordinated projects related to social cohesion, including ongoing projects on preventing violent extremism, community

policing, support to civil society and youth inclusion. At the time, six other UN Volunteers were supporting governance and peacebuilding with UNDP.

Mai was the focal point for projects financed by the Government of Japan, a key development partner of UNDP in Tunisia, and supported the establishment and strengthening of the strategic partnership and resource mobilization. She facilitated the creation and management of knowledge in the field of social cohesion, and contributed to mobilizing people to volunteer in their communities, also as part of COVID-19 response.

“ Gender mainstreaming is an important pillar in UNDP governance programmes. The community policing project aimed to reinforce integration of gender equality of chances., provide a guide on gender equality to the Ministry of Interior and train 450 police officers on the same. I contributed by including gender perspectives in projects under development. --Mai Matsukuma, UN Volunteer Programme Analyst, Social Cohesion and Conflict Prevention, with UNDP in Tunisia

"As my role was at the programme level, my contribution included quality assurance of the implementation of the project. While I wasn't responsible for individual projects, many are designed to scale and support the design or implementation of a national strategy on specific issues. For example, the expansion of the community policing approach of the security sector reform project was requested by the Ministry of Interior," Mai shared.

“ Mai contributed to the Sustainable Development Goals by increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of projects through the creation of synergies and facilitating communication. One of her achievements was introducing a new structure to the governance programme, the largest in the office in terms of budget and staff, and filling the gap in the absence of the team leader of the governance programme. -- Eduardo Lopez-Mancisidor, Coordinator of SDG16+ portfolio at UNDP, Tunisia

For Mai professionally, her assignment at the programme level enabled her to better understand not only the project management cycle, but also programme management and communication.

"I needed to establish good relationships with the team leaders of the projects for which I was responsible for monitoring and quality assurance. Each team had their own way of communicating and management. At first, I used the same communication style for each team leader – which didn't work well with certain people. I realized I needed to change my approach.

"As a result, I have gained new communication skills that enabled me to facilitate synergies among different projects in the programme. My experience as a UN Volunteer was very rewarding, both personally and professionally," Mai said.

Mai's assignment contributed to the achievement of SDG 16 – Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels.

 Arab States

• Human Resource Development Programme for Peacebuilding and Development • Japan • Full Funding Programme

Sustainable Development Goal: [SDG 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions](#) [SDG 17: Partnerships for the goals](#)