



Protecting the mangrove in Ziguinchor, Senegal.

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## UN Volunteers enhance environmental management and reduce plastic waste

Environmental protection in West and Central Africa is essential to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Ecosystems are under pressure in the Sahel region, which is manifested by environmental degradation such as shrinking of lake Chad, crop failures as a result of shifting rain patterns and extreme weather socks affecting already vulnerable populations.

UN Volunteers assigned to UN entities such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), play important roles, advocating for improvements in environmental management and engaging communities to protect the ecosystem.

In 2017, 266 UN Volunteers in West and Central Africa, or 17 per cent of all

volunteers deployed in the region, served in assignments linked to environmental issues.

UN volunteers with assignments linked to environmental issues, for example in Senegal, Liberia and the Central African Republic, are committed to improving the living conditions of the population through outreach programs or environmental protection or clean-up activities.

#### CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC: ENGAGING COMMUNITIES TO PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT

In the Central African Republic, three very energetic UN Volunteers work in the Environment Unit of the UN Peacekeeping Mission MINUSCA. They bring many years of environmental experience to the team. As part of Earth Day on 22 April, UN Volunteer Sahon Flan and her colleagues participated in clean-up and tree-planting activities organized by the MINUSCA in a school located in the 7<sup>th</sup> district of Bangui. An activity in the college “Etat des Rapides” mobilized students, MINUSCA peacekeepers and the local community, who worked together to remove plastic waste and planting trees.

Sahon explains the importance of beating plastic pollution by taking sustainable measures to protect the environment:

“ As a UN volunteer, acting for environmental causes beyond the fact that it is part of my work, means helping people and communities to adopt sustainable practices, protect our planet and the environment and improve their health. --Sahon Flan, UN Volunteer with MINUSCA

The head of MINUSCA’s Environmental Unit, Ms Georgia Michelle Caruthers, testifies on the positive contribution of UN Volunteers in protecting the environment in the Central African Republic:

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“ UN Volunteers are always among the first to engage in environmental initiatives and to help improve MINUSCA’s environmental footprint. Partnerships between the UNV office and the Environment Unit have continued with other events such as the week of activities in June 2018 for World Environment Day. UN Volunteers are a delight and a real asset to the mission. --Georgia Michelle Caruthers, Head, MINUSCA Environment Unit



*Mamadou Lamine Coly (Senegal), UN Volunteer Forestry and Environment Engineer, on a radio show in Kassumay FM 107.0 to raise awareness in Ziguinchor region about the importance of reforestation of the mangrove.*

#### SENEGAL: INFORMATION AND OUTREACH ACTIVITIES TO ENSURE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

In Senegal, Mamadou Lamine Coly, a Forestry and Environment Engineer, has been serving as a UN Volunteer for UNDP since December 2017. He is involved in several environmental information and outreach activities to protect the environment, including contributing to the reforestation of mangroves in the south of the country.

As part of the Management of Mangroves Ecosystems, several tens of hectares in Sédhiou (08 villages) and Ziguinchor (04 villages) were replanted in 2017, facilitating the return of fish and biodiversity.

In his view, it is important to promote resilient land management practices and build the capacity of people to respond to the challenges of climate change.

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“ The dissemination of research results is a guarantee of Sustainable Development. --Mamadou Lamine Coly, UN Volunteer Engineer in Forestry and Environment



West and Central Africa

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Sustainable Development Goal: [SDG 13: Climate change](#) [SDG 15: Life on land](#) [SDG 17: Partnerships for the goals](#)