



UN Volunteer Associate Field Protection Officer with UNHCR, Bouchra Makhlouf, with refugees from the Central African Republic in Goré refugee camp, Chad.
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Facilitating durable solutions for the uprooted with the UN Refugee Agency in West and Central Africa

Since the beginning of 2018, 224 UN Volunteers have been mobilized with the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) in West and Central Africa, including 101 nationals and 123 internationals. In countries such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, Chad or Togo; UN Volunteers deployed with UNHCR are at the front lines on a daily basis when it comes to providing support to refugees. Despite difficult conditions, they are making tremendous efforts to improve the living conditions of those displaced and strengthen their capacities to make a positive contribution to their new community.

Refugee children, the hope and future of Chad and the Central African Republic

Thousands of refugees from the Central African Republic fled to southern Chad since the end of 2017, many of whom lack food, shelter and access to medical care. They settled in more than 40 villages and four camps near the town of Goré – an area that already hosts around 43,000 refugees from the Central African Republic and 45,000 returnees from Chad, predominantly women and children.

For UN Volunteer Bouchra Makhoulouf (France/Morocco), Associate Field Protection Officer with UNHCR in Goré since June 2017, the current challenge is to quickly provide a secure, multi-sectoral and inclusive humanitarian response. Her mission is to identify and register the refugees and ensure that newly arrived or former refugees effectively access their most basic rights.

Bouchra is responsible for relocating refugees to secure sites, identifying people with special needs and reporting cases of unaccompanied minors. She also engages in community mobilization, assists distribution of essential relief supplies, and ensures the availability of shelters and schools.

In Goré, Bouchra devotes considerable attention to refugee children, considering them as her greatest motivation, inspiration and the hope and future of Chad and the Central African Republic.

“ We identify and register refugees so that they regain their identity and dignity, that their uprooting is recognized and that durable solutions based on their real needs are included. --UN Volunteer Bouchra Makhoulouf



Promoting fast and sustainable development

UN Volunteer Associate Livelihoods/Environment Officer Canisius Gakwandi (Rwanda) is an international UN Volunteer based in Goz Beida, which is a

remote town in Eastern Chad not too far from the border with Sudan and characterized by harsh living conditions.

Canisius is deeply involved in setting up innovative livelihood activities carried out by both refugees and host populations to promote development and peaceful coexistence between the two of them.

Among the activities is the introduction of greenhouse cultivation (photo above) which helps to promote the development of market gardening crops which are seen as profitable in the region. This initiative is a real breakthrough as such type of cultivation is totally new in this part of Chad. Canisius Gakwandi supports the farmers in the communities of Hillborn et Koutoufou to enhance their skills and productivity.

As part of an integral approach, entrepreneurship and financial management trainings were conducted for the 60 village savings and loans associations with an emphasis on peaceful coexistence and conflict resolution.

More emphasis on sustainable work

Togo currently hosts 13,134 refugees of which 9,695 are rural Ghanaians and 2,688 are of various nationalities from urban areas of Cote d'Ivoire, Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo and beyond. Many of these refugees live in difficult conditions due to increased poverty.

Komi Mawuli Dossou-Djigah (Togo) is a UN Volunteer serving with UNHCR as a Local Integration Assistant in Togo. His mission is to help identify most vulnerable refugees and support their individual or collective economic integration through income-generating activities, capacity building, apprenticeship or vocational training in craft trades.

Thanks to an improved procedure for selecting the beneficiaries for both income-generating activities and vocational training grants, and with the contribution of Komi, nearly 200 refugees were supported in setting up their micro-enterprises, 60 per cent of which are still in operation after 12 months.

“ I have helped to raise the awareness of many refugees to put more emphasis on sustainable work, rather than hoping for assistance all the time. --UN

Volunteer Local Integration Assistant Komi Mawuli
Dossou-Djigah



Showing the refugees from another angle

According to UNHCR, in January 2018, more than 540,000 refugees had reached the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and there were 4,5 million internally displaced people in the country. Since May 2018, more than 87,300 people from the Central African Republic have arrived in the provinces of Nord-Ubangi and Bas-Uele.

Mohamed Ag Assory (Mali) is a UN Volunteer Communications Officer serving with UNHCR in the DRC (right in photo above). He underlines the need to step up campaigns to raise awareness of the difficult living conditions of the refugees to better protect them. In his view, World Refugee Day is the perfect opportunity to show that refugees can work or learn new skills to make a positive contribution to their community.

“ To ensure better integration of refugees, I make sure to show them from another angle, to highlight their contribution to the local economy and their involvement in the host communities. --UN Volunteer Communication Officer Mohamed Ag Assory

On World Refugee Day 2018, sign the [petition](#). #WithRefugees

 West and Central Africa

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