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Amabel Nagaba, international UN Volunteer, Gambella, Ethiopia



Amabel Nagaba, UN Volunteer Associate Fleet Management Officer, performing a pre-trip inspection for one of vehicles going on a road mission.

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'Boots on the ground': UN Volunteer manages UNHCR fleet in Ethiopia

Volunteering in Gambella, located in western Ethiopia and bordering South Sudan, has been both challenging and very exciting. Gambella region hosts over 402,028 refugees and other persons of concern who arrived in different waves since 1993, in 2012 and following post-December 2013 conflicts in South Sudan. I enthusiastically joined the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), sub-office Gambella, as an international UN Volunteer to contribute towards addressing the plight of persons of concern and provision of protection services which is the core mandate of UNHCR.

Since December 2015, I have been the 'boots on the ground', managing and coordinating the fleet and transport facilitation for UNHCR staff.

“ I proudly serve as UN Volunteer Associate Fleet Management Officer, a role that challenges me to give more for humanity as I ensure that transport for staff that serve refugees and other persons of concern is available. --Amabel Nagaba, international UN Volunteer, Gambella,

“ Ethiopia

Throughout my assignment, my main achievement has been to ensure that vehicles are well-maintained, serviced and roadworthy. I have also been tasked to ensure that all drivers assigned and vehicle movements are well-coordinated to ensure minimal disruption to operational activities in the field.

Successful and well-coordinated operations provide the foundation for delivery of the different humanitarian and development goals in the region, including the provision of basic services like food and nutrition, shelter, health, education, access to clean water and sanitation, and support to livelihood activities for sustainability in the different refugee camps.

I have also worked to ensure fuel efficiency and accountability and proper disposal of vehicle spare parts, helping minimize financial and environmental wastage and reduce emissions, pollution and the carbon footprint of field operations.

Serving in Gambella is not just another ‘cup of tea’. A considerably hardship duty station with regular emergency operations, daily work here requires utmost commitment, resilience and determination which I embraced from the start. The region is at security level 4 and continues to face an unpredictable influx of refugees from South Sudan, and is regularly characterized by civil unrest due to ethnic tensions.

Despite the hardships, I lean on my strengths of passion and compassion, and the vision to be and remain part of a team that is practically involved in responding to more frequent conflict-driven emergencies in the world.



• UNHCR • Gambella • refugees • South Sudan

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