



Manon Cabaup (second from right) shares a moment with students on Mwali Island in December 2015. (UNV, 2015)

Making a difference through communication

I was a UN Youth Volunteer in Comoros for a little less than a year. Comoros is situated off the south-east coast of Africa; Mozambique is on its east and Madagascar on the north-west.

During my assignment, I worked as a UN Youth Volunteer in Communication for the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Communication, to me, is so important. Before I joined the UNDP office in Comoros, there was almost no communication material. I helped draft the UNDP communication strategy, develop the social media for UNDP and One UN Comoros. The social media on One UN Comoros had a very active twitter following and Facebook presence.

The last four months of my assignment were spent supporting the Office of the Resident

Coordinator.

UNDP activities in the country included environmental protection and sustainable development. Through my role in communications, I wrote about these activities. I was particularly interested in writing about agriculture issues, a geothermy initiative that deals with cost-effective, sustainable and an environmentally friendly source of energy, and the Karthala Volcano – the highest point in Comoros.

“ As a UN Youth Volunteer, I was part of a human rights tour at Mwali Island, one of the islands in Comoros. Through this tour, I visited local schools and universities to talk about human rights.

I was especially proud of the activities I organized around the International Volunteer Day (IVD) – our day, a day where we celebrate volunteerism and make a voluntary action however small count. Cleaning the streets, and participating in a conference about volunteering alongside volunteers from the Peace Corps and the Red Crescent is what made IVD so special.

Human rights are at the core of all work at the United Nations. As a UN Youth Volunteer I was part of a human rights tour at Mwali Island, one of the islands in Comoros. Through this tour, I visited local schools and universities to talk about human rights. The tour ended with a special ceremony where the President of the country and other UN Representatives were in attendance.

As my assignment has come to an end, the time spent in Comoros will be long remembered. My contribution however small, either to video record the solar electrification in Mwali Island or the photographic reporting of women farmers in Anjouan island who are trying to be autonomous, is something that I feel I have made a difference to through communication.

 Sub-Saharan Africa

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