Meet national UN Volunteers with IOM sharing their experiences from three continents

EDUCATION AND EMPOWERMENT KEY IN CONFLICT SITUATIONS

Hassane Abdoulsalamou has been serving as a national UN Volunteer with IOM since November 2016. He supports a project for the empowerment of youth in Niger (AJPANI), which offers youth at risk of conflict opportunities to develop through socio-economic participation and mechanisms facilitating participation in decision-making and peacebuilding.

"I have been able to ensure close monitoring of vocational training for young girls and boys in risk situations from 15 to 24 years old, and have made a difference in the lives of 83 of them. This experience has been a complete success for me on a personal and professional level." --Hassane Abdoulsalamou, UN Volunteer with IOM, Niger
Hassane and other volunteers keen on improving the management of migration in Niger were guided in their work by the Priority Plan for Peacebuilding, approved in August 2015 by the Consolidation Support Office and the Joint Steering Committee.

One strategic project under this plan was the empowerment and peaceful involvement of young people in risk areas.

Another was dedicated to conflict prevention and management, covering not only inclusive governance, but also the promotion of dialogue and participation of young people and women in peaceful, transparent and peaceful elections.

The third strategic area involved strengthening the stability and security of border areas.

Nine volunteers were mobilized for the implementation of the monitoring and coordination of the activities of the three projects.

For Hassane, his greatest challenge was ensuring the participation of project partners in communal management mechanisms in areas of peacebuilding and security, in order to create synergy in interventions.

“Supporting intersectoral coordination and consultation processes was exciting and an opportunity for me to learn more about peacebuilding interventions. Less demanding tasks involved the preparation of monthly monitoring reports on the progress of the project and the guarantee for the cross-cutting themes of gender, human rights and development. --Hassane Abdoulsalamou

SERVING MIGRANT FAMILIES WITH A PASSION IN HONDURAS

Honduras is one of the poorest countries in Latin America, with a third of the population living on less than a dollar a day.

Frequent natural disasters and extremes weathers such as prolonged drought and hurricanes severely affect the ability of subsistence farmers to produce enough food to feed their families.

These issues have a major impact on the food security of the country’s most vulnerable people, in particular, those living in the southern and western regions. One in four children suffers from chronic malnutrition according to the World Food Programme.
National UN Volunteer Sandra Molina was one of two UN Volunteers assigned to the Care Center for Children and Migrant Families Belén in San Pedro Sula, Honduras. The other was Douglas Alexander Fajardo Ramirez, a UN Volunteer Driver.

Sandra’s main functions included administrative activities necessary for the proper functioning of the center, including establishing administrative procedures and supervising personnel. She also managed the building facilities and equipment, thus guaranteeing the safety and the proper use of assigned equipment and materials in all areas of the Care Center.

Sandra describes that at the moment, the project has been going on for more than a year, starting since 2016, and she hopes that it will continue and expand even more since it has scientifically contributed to the benefit of the migrant children and families who are received in Belem.

“It has been a nice experience to work here and benefit migrant children and families as a UN Volunteer. UNV always makes a difference, since its volunteers are committed to an excellent performance and are passionate about what needs to be done.”
–Sandra Molina, UN Volunteer with IOM, Honduras

Sandra was responsible for coordinating food and medical supplies and their transportation and stocking, as well as the respective inventories. Additionally, she ensured that each meal served for girls, boys and migrant families at the center complied with hygiene and nutritional regulations.

WHY MY UN VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE WAS A TURNING POINT IN MY LIFE

While Rana Elwakeel (Egypt) was completing her Master’s degree in European Political and Administrative Studies in Belgium, the number of people embarking on the perilous journey across the Mediterranean Sea was rapidly increasing.

Fleeing from violence, repression and poverty in their native countries, the number of migrants reaching Europe, seeking asylum and safety was on the rise.

Due to the geographical position of Egypt, the country represents an important transit or destination point along different migratory routes from the Horn of Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa.
“During my post graduate studies, our classrooms turned into debates where we tried to better understand the world we live in, discuss current challenges and think of potential solutions,” Rana shares.

Upon her return to Egypt after an enriching experience, Rana was looking for an opportunity to make a real impact and positively contribute to such a pressing global issue. She joined the UN Migration Organization (IOM) as a national UN Volunteer Project Coordination Officer.

“Through volunteering at the International Organization for Migration, I was not only able to enhance my knowledge base, but I was given the opportunity to be part of a strong support mechanism to rebuild productive lives, strengthen capacities and foster social inclusion in communities faced with challenging situations in Egypt. --Rana Alwakeel, UN Volunteer with IOM, Egypt

Rana describes her UN Volunteer experience as valuable, one where she learned something new every day, where she expanded her horizons and nurtured an increased sense of responsibility for her community and beyond.

Sub-Saharan Africa

- Egypt • Honduras • youth • vocational training

Sustainable Development Goal: SDG 10: Reduced inequalities, SDG 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions, SDG 17: Partnerships for the goals