UNV and UNDP work together to provide income-generating activities for displaced people in North-East Nigeria

UNV and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) are on the ground since early 2018, with funding support from the European Union Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid (ECHO), to assist the communities affected by the humanitarian crisis. The Sengere community, located in the Adamawa State is one of them.

Ndachem Abubakar is one of the UN Community Volunteers who are deployed in 10 communities across crisis-affected North-East Nigeria, with a focus on Borno, Adamawa and Yobe States.

Jumpstarting economic recovery in the community of Sengere.

Since February 2018, Ndachem is serving in the Sengere community, located in Girei,
Adamawa, one of the three most conflict-affected States in North-East Nigeria. Consequently, Sengere is a host community which has become home to thousands of internally displaced persons (IDPs) who were victims of the Boko haram insurgency.

Ndachem’s role as Community Village Supervisor is vital in the implementation of the village savings and loan association (VSLA) project, which is a community-based social safety net mechanism in Sengere. Ndachem, who originates from Sengere and speaks the local language, is responsible for community mobilization and awareness-raising about the VSLA, and especially to ensure that women are included in this project.

“Operating in the field and having direct contact with the people affected by the conflict, especially Internally Displaced Persons, was the motivating factor during my application. - Ndachem Abubakar.

Ndachem’s contribution is one important step to an effective economic recovery of communities affected by the humanitarian crisis in Adamawa State and beyond, as UNDP and UNV are looking to extend assistance to IDPs in more localities in North-East Nigeria.

In Sengere alone, a community with an estimated local population of over 3,000 people, which is hosting about 3,250 IDPs, she successfully created 86 women group, 48 youth group and 57 elders group, with 25 members per group as beneficiaries of the VSLA.

“It was a huge task, as the only UN Community Volunteer coordinating the registration of such a large population, in an environment with diverse tribes, religions and cultures. - Ndachem Abubakar.

But through direct contact and dialogue with the community, she was able to convince the men and leaders to let their wives come out and join the women group to benefit from the programme. The turnout was impressive. The women were all pleased and happy to be getting access to financial means and be able to launch their own income-generating activities.
Ndachem Abubakar (left) promoting and managing the registration of women of the Sengere community to the VSLA programme. @UNV 2018

For Ndachem Abubakar, one of the highlights of her UN Community Volunteer assignment with UNDP is the opportunity to work with people with disabilities, who also came to register for the VSLA project. Some of them were elected into leadership positions in the three different groups created to manage the VSLA. In the elders VSLA, 30 percent of the members are women; and this number increases to 40 percent for the youth VSLA, and to 100 percent for the women VSLA.

Ndachem reports that, amongst the people with disabilities, there is a lady who was shot at the hip by Boko Haram in Michika but is currently internally displaced in Sengere without any sources of income or ways to establish livelihood opportunities. Another elderly man also suffered the same fate with his leg shot by Boko Haram in Michika, as did the mother of one of the released Chibok girls residing in Sengere as an IDP. She encouraged all of them to join and take leadership roles in the execution of the VSLA. She explains that “leaving no one behind” is a core principle for UNV and UNDP, for more inclusivity in the crisis response in North-East Nigeria.
They were all happy with the initiative, and that UNDP, UNV and ECHO care about them and their plight. - Ndachem Abubakar.

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