



UN
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Bimonthly Newsletter
November 2015

UNV **Flash** Côte d'Ivoire



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EDITORIAL

Dear Volunteers, dear Colleagues,

It is my pleasure to introduce the fourth edition of UNV Flash in Côte d'Ivoire!

First of all, I am pleased to inform you that we are now a complete integrated UNV Field Unit, with the recent arrival and entry on duty of our new UNV programme Officer, Victor Kitembo, who comes from Congo Kinshasa. Victor will be based at UNDP (United Nations Development programme) and we will work jointly for a continuous support to the UN Volunteers in Côte d'Ivoire, and further advocacy for volunteerism in the country.

In this edition, you will be able to know more about the national UN Volunteers, which is one of the modalities that the UNV programme offers to host agencies, programmes, and peacekeeping missions.

Currently, 9 National UN Volunteers are serving in Côte d'Ivoire, bringing their outstanding dedication, their expertise, and their knowledge of the local context to the communities and the United Nations in the country.

While I am writing this editorial, we are approaching the presidential elections in Côte d'Ivoire. In that context, many UN Volunteers assigned at UNOCI (United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire) and the agencies and programmes have contributed to prepare for peaceful elections and to create a climate of peace in the country, through various awareness raising activities and projects with their different partners.

During our recent field visit to San Pedro and Tabou, I have been able to meet with UN Volunteers serving in the field of Human Rights, Civil Affairs, and assistance to refugees, and I am very grateful for the work that is being done in the field, sometimes despite difficult conditions of living.

UNV programme has also played a proactive role in the newly approved Sustainable Development Goals, which will take effect on January 2016. In Côte d'Ivoire, as one of post-2015 advocacy focus countries of the UNV programme, we have celebrated the Gender Promotion Day, patronized by the Ministry of Social Affairs, on 23rd September 2015. On this occasion, the UNV programme had the opportunity to feature the contribution of volunteerism in the fight against gender equality.

The whole UNV Field Unit in Côte d'Ivoire is fully dedicated in this last quarter of the year, for the implementation of the Capacity Development event which is to take place in Yamoussoukro, in November, and of course International Volunteers Day, on December 5th. More information on these events will be communicated shortly.

I would like to thank you all for your support to the UNV programme and for your restless efforts as UN Volunteers in Côte d'Ivoire.

Enjoy your reading!

Pauline Deneufbourg

UN Volunteer Programme Manager,
Côte d'Ivoire



About us

UNV programme :

The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme is the UN organization that contributes to peace and development through volunteerism worldwide.

Volunteerism is a powerful means of engaging people in tackling development challenges, and it can transform the pace and nature of development. Volunteerism benefits both society at large and the individual volunteer by strengthening trust, solidarity and reciprocity among citizens, and by purposefully creating opportunities for participation.

UNV contributes to peace and development by advocating for recognition of volunteers, working with partners to integrate volunteerism into development programming, and mobilizing an increasing number and diversity of volunteers, including experienced UN Volunteers, throughout the world. UNV embraces volunteerism as universal and inclusive, and recognizes volunteerism in its diversity as well as the values that sustain it : free will, commitment, engagement and solidarity.

www.unv.org

Online Volunteering :

The Online Volunteering service is one of the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme's corporate tools to mobilize volunteers for development.

The Online Volunteering service connects volunteers with organizations working for sustainable human development. Volunteers contribute their skills online to help organizations address development challenges.

Online volunteers are...

professionals, students, homemakers, retirees, people with disabilities and expatriates from across the globe who support organizations over the Internet. They are people who commit their time and skills over the Internet, freely and without financial considerations, for the benefit of society. What they have in common is a strong commitment to making a real difference to development.

www.onlinevolunteering.org



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Introducing... the National UN Volunteer modality

The National UN Volunteer modality

The UNV programme is made up of different categories of volunteers, namely international volunteers, youth volunteers, online volunteers and national volunteers.

National volunteers are UN volunteers who work in their own country. They have the advantage of knowing the local realities (challenges and perspectives) and can serve as liaisons between the organization and institutions, local governments and communities. In addition to these daily functions, they may encourage other international staff and volunteers to participate in community and cultural activities.

In Côte d'Ivoire, the majority of the United Nations national volunteers work within United Nations agencies (UNDP, UNEP (United Nations Environment Programme), UN Women...) and play an active role in implementing projects and programmes of these different bodies.

If you are considering a position as a United Nations national volunteer, then you must register in the Roster (database) of the UNV programme and apply for the volunteer positions offered by UNV or by the United Nations agencies in Côte d'Ivoire.

The ideal candidate for a position as a United Nations national volunteer would be someone devoted to the values of volunteering, be at least 22 years of age, possess a university degree or professional qualification, have a minimum of two years professional experience, and speak at least French or English.

For more information on the United Nations Volunteer programme, visit the link www.unv.org.

Check out the Facebook page [Volontaires des Nations Unies en Côte d'Ivoire](#).

Or go to the UNV programme Field Unit located at the UNDP country office.

Jordan Sera

UN Volunteer Communications
and Public Relations Assistant
UNDP Côte d'Ivoire



The UN Volunteers and the elections

- UNDP supports the government in national police capacity building

- In San Pedro, sensitizing sessions are organized by ONUCI's Human Rights division

Within the UN's agencies, programmes and funds, as within the ONUCI mission itself, there are many UN volunteers who over the past few months

have been getting to grips with preparations for the presidential elections in Côte d'Ivoire, scheduled for 25th October 2015.

Two of them, Jordan at UNDP and Patricia in the Human Rights section of ONUCI, explain to us what their work consists of in their respective specialisations.

At UNDP, we support the government to strengthen the capacity of the National Police Force



The year 2015 marks the start of the 2015-6 electoral round, beginning with the Presidential elections on 25th October.

With the aim of helping the government in its efforts to establish a peaceful and safe electoral environment, UNDP along with its development partners has undertaken a number of initiatives, including strengthening National Police capacity to make the elections safe, and the creation of a

Closure ceremony for the dialogue workshops between the police and the population (Jordan Sera, 2015)

conflict management framework for the duration of the election period, via workshops allowing for dialogue between the Police and the Ethics Advisory Committees representing the different communities.

In fact, within the context of the social and security dialogue funded by the European Union, the work developed by UNDP seeks both to strengthen police operational capacity and also to set up an ongoing dialogue

between the police and the local population, especially during the electoral period. This has allowed police officials and community leaders to create a framework for concertation in various Côte d'Ivoire locations, which will enable them to facilitate conflict prevention and limit violence during the coming elections.

Moreover, training for the police forces in making elections safe, which has been funded

by Japan, has allowed for enhanced understanding of the mission and responsibilities of the security forces during election periods, as well as of democratic crowd control, and how to respect the basic rights and freedoms of citizens while maintaining law and order.

These two UNDP activities are benefitting from the UNV programme's expertise in matters of advocacy and communication.



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The United Nations Volunteer programme actively supports the work of the United Nations system in Côte d'Ivoire. Indeed, a UN volunteer has been recruited by UNDP to address matters of communications and public relations during the implementation phase of its projects supporting the Security Sector. Thus, within UNDP's support to the electoral process in Côte d'Ivoire and especially to the security sector, this volunteer supplies expertise in terms of communication, advocacy and reporting. More specifically, **the volunteer's work consists in developing messages aimed at creating a peaceful electoral environment, ensuring social cohesion and applying conflict management techniques. Furthermore, he has increased the visibility of the UN's operations, particularly by using social networks.**

Jordan Sera

UN Volunteer Communications
and Public Relations Assistant
UNDP Côte d'Ivoire

In San Pedro, ONUCI's Human Rights section arranges group sessions to raise awareness

Patricia, a UN Volunteer responsible for human rights work in San Pedro, organizes meetings to raise the population's awareness in preparation for the presidential elections on 25th October. Her objectives? To encourage a massive turnout and ensure a calm electoral

environment. Her targets? Mainly women. In fact, it means encouraging women to realize their own value, as well as their capacities to mobilize, organize and show leadership, so as to take part not only in large numbers but also as informed and aware voters, and even perhaps as

candidates in the various electoral encounters to come. They have thus been brought up to speed on major themes such as leadership values, organization, motivation, and the concept of governance: elections, voter power, and the participation of women in the forthcoming electoral contests.



Patricia sensitizing women on their role in the electoral process- Sassandra 10 September 2015 (Patricia, 2015)



Patricia's intervention at the ONUCI Tour in Pogreagui- 11 September 2015 (Patricia, 2015)

Patricia Nwoteigho

UN Volunteer Human Rights officer,
ONUCI San Pedro.



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We hand over to...AFemIRA

Women's Action Initiative for an African Renaissance

**Enough! Let's have done with it!
School has no gender!
School has no age!
School has no class!
School for each and every girl and boy.**

Saddened by the situation of so many out-of-school girls in Africa, young girls made to marry without their consent under threat of parental cruelty,

young girls longing to learn to read and write, but without the means to do so and with no support from their parents, we were originally four female law

students (private and public law) who decided to pool our knowledge and skills to help other Ivoirian women and girls.



Directory board of the association AFemIRA (AFemIRA, 2015)

We were concerned at the way these scourges served to undermine our daily lives, and so in 2014 we set up an NGO which we called AFEMIRA (Action féminine à l'Initiative de la Renaissance de l'Afrique, or

Women's Action Initiative for an African Renaissance), as our way of contributing to this proud and inclusive combat. Based in Abidjan-Cocody, our group was soon joined by other dynamic young women who shared our

vision and inspiration, aimed above all at the rural areas.

Our key belief: empowerment of women, the cause of the 21st century.

We seek to contribute to this empowerment of women by



promoting:

- Financial independence
- Basic literacy
- Knowledge of their rights

Today we represent more than a dozen young women activists believing in this vision.

On 21st September 2015, we organized an event with the local community in Yakassé Mé. Over fifty people turned out for this meeting, including some thirty or so women aged from 18 to 37, many of them single mothers of dependent children. We gave a presentation of our NGO, and an initial outline of our project: the creation of a centre for teaching dress-making and literacy skills. Our aim was to confront this idea with the needs and expectations of the women present, but also with the daily realities of their lives, in order to tease out appropriate proposals. The recommendations resulting from

these discussions focused on an initial project for agricultural cash crops, the profits from which would help launch the training centre. The women present proved to be strongly motivated, wanting to get started as soon as possible. The first crop suggested was pimento, grown for three months on land already available to women involved in the project. This first crop will be followed by beans, then corn, in two villages.

The project met with full support from the local authorities. The officer responsible for youth, representing the chief's authority in Yakassé Mé, attended the meeting, and on that occasion we also met with the Préfet and the Secretary General of Yakassé Attobrou, the chief of Bieby village Nana Kouassi, and finally an official, Gaspard, from Sangouiné. These leaders

welcomed the project and said they wanted to support it. The village chief from Bieby even offered us some open land on which to build the training centre, for which we still need to find the funding. The cost is estimated at 936,000 CFA francs, which the NGO needs to fund-raise for. We are also looking for the equipment needed for the different crop-growing activities. Our NGO AFemIRA is looking for partners to help implement its activities, and in particular volunteers with specialized skills in :

- Cash crops
- Literacy training
- Dress-making and tailoring

As well as any other volunteers willing to support our work!

Email : ongafemira@gmail.com

OULAI Monné Delphine

AFEMIRA chair.

Our priority: the empowerment of women
Women, so as to write the story
of an African renaissance



We were there ! Gender Promotion Day

On the 23rd September 2015, our UNV office took part in the Gender Promotion Day organized by the Gender Unit of the Ministry of State for Employment, Social Affairs and Professional Training. The theme of this first event was "Women and the Industrial Sector in Côte d'Ivoire: Risks and Challenges."

*Gender promotion day
(UNV programme, 2015)*



Well-known speakers took the floor in the morning, drawn from State officials and the private sector, as well as the UN system. The only stand, set up in a prominent position in the entrance hall and for

the whole day, was that of the UNV programme. This allowed us to reach out to over five hundred people, most of them young people and women. The afternoon was devoted to thematic workshops. The one

run by the UNV programme focused on the theme of "Volunteering as a tool for women's empowerment" and it was a clear success with over sixty people who took part.



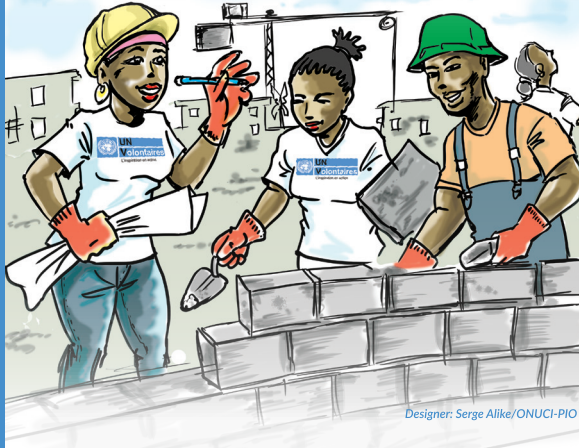
Gender Promotion Day (UNV programme, 2015)



Gender Promotion Day (UNV programme, 2015)



Le Volontariat: Outil d'émancipation des femmes !



Designer: Serge Alike/ONUCI-PIO



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Thanks to financial support from the UNV programme earmarked for the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Objectives, we were able to put together a variety of specific communications material geared to Gender and Volunteering.

In fact, as you know, Objective 5 aims to “achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.” Now, volunteering offers an excellent way of empowering women, allowing them to show what they are capable of, while acquiring new skills and capacities. Volunteering also allows women to access sectors usually reserved to men, and to take on new roles, especially as leaders and managers. Women volunteers can serve as role models, and inspire others to follow in their footsteps. An additional reason to Volunteer!

Isabelle Rampa

UN Volunteer Project and Capacity
Development officer,
UNV Support, Abidjan



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UN Volunteers in the Field... AK Camp

• “An architect? What does an architect really do in the UN?”

• From Rwanda to AK Camp: the journey of an electrical engineer volunteer

“An architect? What does an architect really do in the UN?”

The sole fact of an architect working in a peacekeeping mission has been more impressive to most of my friends and acquaintances than moving from Greece to Africa itself. It did, however, come as a surprise to me that the level of complexity and the range and variety of the projects involving an architect is extended and surprisingly interesting.

Since the beginning of the mission, it was always a UN Volunteer who occupied the post of the architect, and it has been all those volunteers who designed all the camps premises of the mission. Anonkoua Koute Camp (AK Camp) is the latest, and perhaps one of most demanding projects realized within the mandate of ONUCI.

*Vasiliki in a meeting
(Bethzabe Rodriguez, 2015)*



Anonkoua Koute Camp as a multileveled engineering project.

AK camp was initiated as an integrated infrastructure in Yopougon for the accommodation of military components and the relocation - centralization of the different logbases in Abidjan. The military component comprises of nine military units, the Sector East Headquarters and a transit camp. Among the military units where the three engineering platoons that were tasked to undertake the project, in

cooperation with the Engineering section and all the other involved parties. The civilian component is, in principle, the Logbase, and is composed of offices and rubhalls for different sections involved, (Transport, CITS - Communication & Information Technology Services, Supply etc), as well as other facilities (restaurant, hospital, stores), a fuel point, a firing range and an extended container yard. Construction of AK started

in November 2012, when the military engineers started clearing the first area of what was initially an extended bush, for the Engineering Section workers to install the first prefabricated units. Since then the area has been transformed in very short time. The realization of such a complex endeavor is the result of the cooperation of many different elements, military and civilian. The military were tasked with the horizontal



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works like excavations, street constructions etc while the civilian components with the vertical works (construction of rubhalls, buildings etc). Often, more specialized parts of the project were outsourced, bringing even more stakeholders on-board. For each and every stage of such a project the overall planning, coordination and supervision was under the Engineering section. The versatility of the nature of designs needed for this project is what makes it a very interesting experience for the architect involved; from large scale layout plan to details like security access, from all types of infrastructures (mobility, sewage, drainage) to landscaping. Therefore, the level

of knowledge and experience acquired is priceless, especially the one that emerges through the interaction with the stakeholders

and the facility users, in order to comply with their needs and convert their experience in an efficient masterplan.



Vasiliki in a meeting with chief Engineering, Paulos (Bethzabe Rodriguez, 2015)

A camp as a canvas for creativity

But is there any room for design in such a complex, technical project? For an architect there is always room for innovation and I will briefly describe the one I saw in stormwater management. The drainage was perhaps the most intriguing part of the project. When construction commenced the area was an extended bush. As it always happens, the construction of the camp's access street boosted urban development, formal and informal. As a result, both the urban and physical geography of the area changed dramatically, having huge impact on the camp itself; being the lowest point of the surrounding area it accumulates huge amounts of water, while the discharging options have been minimized due to the uncontrolled urbanization of the area.



Anonkoua Koute (ONUCI, 2015)

The final study proposes the realization of a constructed landscape that serves as a buffer zone for the floods. A centralized reservoir is designed to capacitate the maximum amount of stormwater projected

on a pick rain event, in order to prevent the infrastructures from flooding and to give time to the pumps to discharge the water off the site. Moreover this zone will be landscaped with the use of constructed wetlands, which can



treat the collected water naturally, while minimizing mosquitoes. The capacity of the wetlands to purify water, give us the possibility to reuse in for all sorts of purposes. This integrated



Anoukroua Route (ONU CI, 2015).

and scapes is an environmentally sound, cost effective project that could form an example for the local society and other camps as well. Various other scenarios were elaborated, like discharging water in the underground with the use of infiltration wells (which would function like a sink drain). In conclusion, working for a 30 Ha integrated camp like AK camp embodies the level of complexity of an engineering project in a mission. As a professional experience for an architect, AK camp has been so far a very valuable and challenging experience.

Here are some other UN Volunteers working in AK Camp



Sonam Phuntsho, UN Volunteer electrical supervisor (Bethzabe Rodriguez, 2015)



Abdu Ba, UN Volunteer generator mechanic (Bethzabe Rodriguez, 2015)



Emile Luma, UN Volunteer vehicle technician (Bethzabe Rodriguez, 2015)

&



Bethzabe, our photographer! (UNV programme, 2015)

Vasiliki Tsioutsidou

UN Volunteer Ingénieur de conception-architecte
Section du Génie, Abidjan

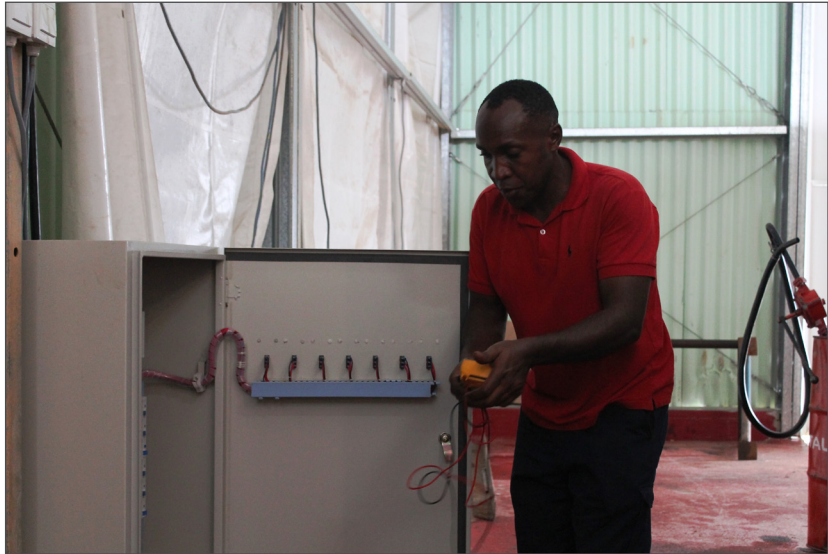


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From Rwanda to AK Camp: the journey of an electrical engineer volunteer

I was born and grew up in Rwanda.

After I finished high school, I got a scholarship to study in Russia (it was the Soviet Union at the time). I went to the University of Moscow to study Electro-mechanical engineering. It was a big challenge to learn Russian! Even if we had a specific class for French speaking students, with a teacher that spoke both languages in order to translate if necessary, the classes were in Russian. I stayed six years: one year studying Russian and five years in my specialty. When I obtained my degree, I went back to Rwanda and became a teacher in the National University while also working for a printing company in the electrical maintenance department. About two years later, while I was in China doing an inspection of electro-mechanical material for the company I was working for, the war started in my country. I couldn't go back, so I decided to bring my family (wife and two kids) out. We met in Tanzania and flew to New Zealand, where we applied for a permanent residence, and fortunately got it followed by the citizenship. I then decided to go back to University, in Australia, to upgrade my skills. I did another master for three years, in Electrical Engineering. After the completion of my studies in the University of New South Wales (Sydney), I worked for the Coca Cola Company in New



Innocent at AK Camp (Bethzabe Rodriguez, 2015)

Zealand for three years doing electrical maintenance. I then went back to Australia, working for a contracting company doing domestic electrical work (from air conditioners to domestic underground wiring) for three years. Then I found a job with Queensland Cable Services Company, where I was in charge of Electrical Maintenance. The company was dealing with the repairs and termination of big size Cables for the underground and open cut coal mines in Queensland. I worked there for another three years. That's when I was offered my UNV assignment in Côte d'Ivoire. I had been in the UNV roster for years, updating my profile regularly with my new experiences. I had participated in a few interviews, without success. This was finally my chance.

In August 2014, I joined the UN as UN Volunteer Electrical Supervisor in Abidjan. My travel here was a long journey! I had to travel all the way from Brisbane to Abidjan. My journey was long as there was no direct flight from Brisbane (Queensland) to Abidjan. I had to travel from Brisbane to Abu Dhabi (United Arab Emirates (14hours), Abu Dhabi to Accra (Ghana, 8hours) and Accra to Abidjan (2 hours). The whole trip took me 24 hours in the air. As I reached Abidjan, I was new in the country and it was a new challenge. My work involved all sites around Abidjan, and my biggest challenge was the driving: passing from right hand driving to left hand in Abidjan's crazy traffic! My first day on the road, I was sweating when I was surrounded by the Gbakas (note by the editor: the local transportation) !!!!





*A Gbaka, local transportation
(Yatao-commonswiki, 2007)*

At the moment I am assigned in AK Camp. I started when they were putting up all Rub Halls, Prefabs and all the other buildings in the Log base. Our duty is to make sure that we supply power to all the facilities

in AK Camp. We are on call 24/7 for all Abidjan, and need to be able to get to any ONUCI site if there is a blackout.

The UNV adventure is a good professional experience for me because, for example, the colour coding for the cables from European countries is different from the Commonwealth. This means you need to know where each machine comes from, the electrical standard for that country including its colour coding for the cables, in order not to make mistakes. In high voltage you can create a big damage if you mix up the cables! On a personal level, it is also very

interesting to meet new people from different backgrounds and make new friends!



Innocent at AK Camp (Innocent, 2015)

Innocent Niyonsaba

UN Volunteer, Electrical Supervisor,
Engineering (Abidjan)



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LAND OF TERANGA – WELCOME TO SENEGAL

“If we are killed, we are not dishonoured”

Situated several thousand kilometres from both Europe and America, the West African country of Senegal covers a surface area of 196,722 km². It is bordered by the Atlantic Ocean, Mauritania to the North, Gambia in its centre, the two Guineas – Bissau and Conakry – to the South, and Mali to the East. The national language is Wolof, while French is the language of official business.



Map of Senegal (based on a 2007 UN map)

By reason of its position, Senegal enjoys a climate with two seasons: a dry season from December to May, when temperatures are at their lowest, especially along the coast from Saint-Louis to Dakar, Mbour and Ziguinchor; and a rainy season from June to the end of November, with high temperatures (28°C in Dakar and 40°C in the desert regions such as Matam and Podor in the North). This means that Senegal can attract winter tourists. The country has some fine golden sandy beaches, stretching along the coast from the Barbary strip north of Saint-Louis as far as the seaside resorts of Saly, Mbodiène, Somone and so

on, where the climate is more clement.

Historically, Senegal was made up of kingdoms, such as the Tekroun kingdom of Toucouleurs in the North, the Diolof of Alboury Ndiaye for the Wolofs, the Cayor under its charismatic leader Lat Dior, the Siné-Saloum, the Boundou of the Niani and the Gabou.

The Portuguese were the first Europeans to set foot on this territory, when they discovered the isle of Gorée in 1444 and installed trading posts for the slave trade and the commerce in spices, gold and above all, gum Arabica. Following them came the British, then the Dutch. The French settled along the coast

in the 17th century and set up trading posts in Saint-Louis, Rufisque, Gorée and Dakar. It was from Senegal's first commercial capital of Saint-Louis that these same Frenchmen set off to conquer Africa. The time was also ripe for Christian missionaries to come and preach the good book.



Dakar, former capital of French West Africa :

The city of Dakar is the capital of the Senegalese Republic, and it constitutes the most populous region of the country, by reason of its own inhabitants and those arriving in large numbers from rural areas in search of a better

future. It is a multi-cultural hub, attracting Guineans, Malians, Cape-Verdians, Sérère people from the centre, Peuls from the North or Bainounks from the South, looking for the native Lebous of the Cape Verde peninsula on which Dakar is situated, whence the diversity

of traditions and customs which give the city its charm.

Take a stroll around the Kermel and Sandaga markets in the very heart of the capital and you'll be dazzled by the profusion of handmade craft products, and the many colourful sights, sounds and smells of the souks.



Kermel Market in Dakar (Neil Rickards, 2005).

The African Memorial Cathedral and the Grand Mosque in Dakar bear witness to the country's history.

What I especially like at home is the extent of inter-faith dialogue between Muslims and Christians. We are a secular country with a Muslim majority, and there are no differences among us because we all feel Senegalese first and foremost, ready to celebrate together at the first opportunity.

The African Memorial Cathedral, Dakar (Adama Coulibaly, 2013)



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A good meal of méchoui to celebrate the end of the Ramadan fast and the Tabaski festival, to be shared with all our friends and family.

A good dish of spit-roasted lamb (méchoui) (Amy, 2015)



Let's take the boat over to the Isle of Gorée, a UNESCO World Heritage site (1,500 CFA francs for locals, 3,000 CFA francs for visitors). Here we can visit the House of Slaves, built by the Dutch in 1776, with its famous "Gate of No Return" where slaves left for the Americas. If only this house could talk, it would have much to tell us about the suffering, ill-treatment and despair of the thousands who passed through it, never to return.

This was the last slave-house on Gorée. The first were built by the Portuguese under Captain Dias in 1536.

We cannot leave this sad and lovely island without shedding a tear for all the horrors and atrocities committed in its history.



Gorée Island (Senegal): entrance to the House of Slaves (Serge Ottaviani, 2007)



The pink lake (Bernard bill5 -, 2004)

In all of West Africa, Senegal is the only country to have a PINK LAKE, a marvel of nature as you can see from this sublime image. And whoever recalls the famous Paris-Dakar Rally will inevitably think of its last leg past the pink lake situated a few metres from the Atlantic Ocean.



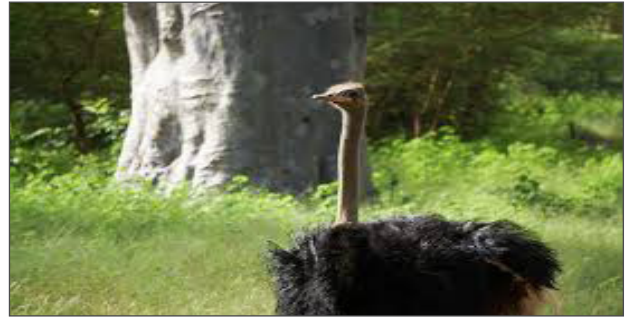
This short excursion has made us hungry, so let's make a quick detour via the monumental "African Renaissance" statue constructed on the flank of the extinct Mamelles volcano overlooking the Léopold Sédar Senghor Airport (named after

independent Senegal's first president) to go and eat at the Pointe des Almadies overlooking the Atlantic Ocean : charcoal-grilled fish, clams and other seafood: oysters from the Sokone mangrove-swamps, lobsters, sea-urchins, cockles

and other shellfish, all fresh from the ocean. And later we'll dive into the turquoise blue waters at the Point, go surfing at the Virage beach, or take a dugout boat over to Ngor Island.



Zebras in the Bandia Nature Reserve (Kalyan Nelamraju, 2012).



Ostrich at the Bandia Nature Reserve (Kalyan Nelamraju, 2012)

If you are looking for something more peaceful, try the Petite Côte and the seaside resort of SalyPortudal, 70 km from Dakar, with its fine sandy beaches. And don't forget to take in the Bandia Nature

Reserve to see some local wildlife, or go for a walk or a trek or a climb in the Baobab Forest. And why not go further to see the seashell island, or visit Joal Fadiouth, birthplace of Senegal's first president,

Léopold Sédar Senghor, where all religions are to be found, before venturing further to the Saloum Delta.



The Saloum Delta National Park (United States Geological Survey).

On our visit to the Saloum Delta, we can't fail to see the women who harvest the oysters of Sokone, Missirah and Toubacouta. This is also a favourite spot for dolphins, manatees and giant marine turtles.

My country's special feature is its hospitality; smiles and a good plateful of TiepbouDien (a hearty fish stew) to welcome you – hence our motto, the land of Teranga or Welcome – to the sound of some lively Mbalax music by Viviane Ndour, YoussouNdour and other well-known musicians.

Amy Cissé

UN Volunteer Finance Officer, UNV Support Office, Abidjan.



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UNV Specialists

Tito, UN Volunteer Pharmacist shares with us information on self-medication

What do we mean by self-medication?

Self-medication refers to medical treatment undertaken by an individual without medical supervision.

■ The concept of self-medication is not well defined: it could refer to “leftovers” in the family medicine chest, products passed on by a friend, or to non-medicinal treatments.

■ The specialities of self-medication are medicines bearing a label showing they

have formal approval to go on sale (AMM in French), that are suited for personal treatment of some minor ailments (aches and pains, headaches, fevers, coughs, stomach upsets...) or for clearly defined situations (morning-after contraception, giving up the tobacco habit), where you don't necessarily need to consult a doctor.

■ Self-medication can take

several forms :

- The patient modifies the dose or the prescription herself
- She uses medicines on the advice of friends or else what she can find in the family medicine chest
- This is not without risk, and the doctor should ask patients what they are taking.

What self-medication can be used for

For fairly harmless ailments: upper-respiratory tract infections, pain from knocks and other physical traumas, headaches, viral fever, digestive discomforts

(heartburn, diarrhoea, constipation), travel sickness, minor eye complaints. There is also emergency contraception using the “morning-after pill” Lévonorgestrel. Certain

chronic situations, such as giving up tobacco products, migraines, recurrent cystitis, can sometimes mean prescriptions “in case” of future need.

The Ten Commandments of self-medication

Self-medication needs to follow certain rules, if it is to be applied responsibly and safely:

1. Asks your pharmacist for advice.
2. Consult your doctor if in any doubt, if you are pregnant or nursing, or for treating a baby.
3. Only practice self-medication for an appropriate length of time. If your overall state worsens or fails to improve as a result

of treatment, it is essential to consult a doctor. In every case, do not exceed the stated duration of treatment, as given on the product instructions.

4. Do not self-medicate secretly, and do not hide what treatment you have taken or are taking from your doctor.

5. Read the instructions and keep the package.

6. Avoid simultaneous use of several different medicines.

7. Avoid alcohol during treatment.

8. Keep your medicines in a safe place, in proper conditions.

9. Keep them away from children.

10. Know when to stop self-medication.



The dangers of self-medication

Delayed diagnosis

1. Failure to respect the rules of usage
2. Side effects
3. Medicinal interaction (the main risk)
4. Risk of unintentional side-effects during pregnancy

Advice

Self-medication helps us treat relatively harmless symptoms for a limited period without going to the doctor, but with advice from a pharmacist – for example, treating light or moderate pain, fever, colds, sore throats, cold-sores (labial herpes), occasional gastric reflux, and so on. In all other cases, please consult your doctor.

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About, UN Volunteer and trainer in the HIV/AIDS Unit, tells us about the good and the bad news

The Good...



According to the “UNAIDS Report on the Global AIDS Epidemic” released few years ago, data from over 182 countries shows that new infections have decreased by almost 20 percent in the past 10 years and AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome)- related deaths are down by nearly 20 percent in last

five years.

Encouraging news indeed, when we can say that global HIV/AIDS (human immunodeficiency virus infection) epidemic, which has claimed over 25 million lives and affected many millions more, looks to have begun its reverse trajectory.

The Bad...

- “Even though the number of new HIV infections is decreasing, there are two new HIV infections for every one person starting HIV treatment” UNAIDS said.

- Investments in HIV prevention programs as a whole have not been adequate or efficiently allocated. HIV prevention investments comprise about 22% of all

AIDS-related spending in low- and middle-income countries.

- Sub-Saharan Africa continues to be the region most affected by the epidemic, with 69 percent of all new HIV infections, according to UNAIDS.

- In seven countries, mostly in Eastern Europe and central Asia, new infection rates have increased by 25%.

- UNAIDS said in the Asia-Pacific region, 90 percent of countries have laws that obstruct the right of people living with HIV.

- Despite the lower numbers of new HIV infections and AIDS-related deaths, UNAIDS said the demand for resources is surpassing the supply.

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