



*Together, Against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse !*

# WELCOME



## Dear Colleagues,

As we reflect on a year marked with both challenges and accomplishments, I am pleased to introduce CDT Connect, our new bi-monthly newsletter dedicated to upholding exemplary standards of conduct and preventing sexual exploitation and abuse.

We have chosen December - a time for reflection and renewal - for this inaugural issue. It is a fitting moment to celebrate our progress, reaffirm our shared commitment, and set our sights on the opportunities and goals of the coming year.

In this first edition, we highlight key initiatives from recent months, including impactful activities during the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence and the observance of International Volunteers Day, honoring United Nations Volunteers.

However, CDT Connect isn't just about updates, it is our platform - a space to celebrate achievements, foster meaningful dialogue, and amplify our collective impact. Your voices and ideas are invaluable, so I encourage you to provide feedback and suggestions to help shape future editions.

I hope you enjoy this inaugural issue, and I wish you all a joyful holiday season filled with peace and inspiration.

Happy reading!

**Bintou KEITA**

Special Representative of the Secretary-General in the DRC

#ToServeAndProtect

# I AM THE CHANGE



## **"I believe my father is still alive. The lack of this affection causes me pain."**

After the volcanic eruption of 2002, Agnes\* was left to rebuild her life on her own after becoming a victim of abuse.

While efforts have been made to provide support through the Trust Fund in Support of Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, this testimony sheds light on an unacceptable reality: these acts not only violate fundamental human rights but also undermine the very mission of MONUSCO, which is to protect and serve the most vulnerable population.

Although efforts have been made to offer support through the Trust Fund for Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, this testimony highlights an unacceptable reality: these actions not only infringe upon fundamental human rights but also undermine MONUSCO's core mission to protect and serve the most vulnerable populations.

Children born of such abuse are often left behind, stigmatized, and condemned to grow up in suffering. Without recognition or support, they bear the burden of actions that are not their fault, while their mothers struggle in securing a better future for them.

Agnes' story highlights the urgent need for a strong and sustained commitment to preventing such behaviors and delivering justice for victims. Each instance of exploitation or abuse represents a violation of the United Nations's core values.

It is essential to mobilize all available resources to protect victims, hold perpetrators accountable, and restore the trust of local communities in the Mission.

*\*The name has been changed to ensure anonymity.*

**Witness or Victim ?  
Contact us!  
Conduct & Discipline Team**



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# ■ 5 DECEMBER, INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEER DAY

From Beni to Bunia, and from Kinshasa to Goma, United Nations volunteers with MONUSCO, seized the opportunity on their designated day to reaffirm their ongoing commitment to combating sexual exploitation and abuse.

**Ana Maria Coronado Nunez**  
UN Volunteer (Peru)  
Quality Assurance Officer  
MONUSCO, Goma (DRC)

“ I am attentive to any situation that could harm my integrity, that of a loved one, or a colleague. Contributing to a culture of respect is important. #IVD2024 ”





**Mukesh Krishna Devadiga**  
UN Volunteer (India)  
Assistant Fuel Officer  
MONUSCO, Beni (DRC)

“ Together, let us act to strengthen the values of respect and responsibility. #IVD2024 ”





**Vedran Vignjević**  
UN Volunteer (Bosnia and Herzegovina)  
Budget and Administrative Assistant  
MONUSCO, Goma (DRC)

“ Strengthening the fight against sexual exploitation and abuse, requires raising awareness of the profound impacts they have on victims and communities. #IVD2024 ”





**Ravnit Sahota**  
UN Volunteer (Canada)  
Planning Officer  
MONUSCO, Bunia (DRC)

“ Sexual exploitation and abuse undermine everything the United Nations stands for. #IVD2024 ”



**Jingxiu Zhang**  
UN Volunteer (China)  
Human Rights Officer  
MONUSCO, Kinshasa (DRC)

“ Sexual exploitation and abuse cause harm and violate human rights. #IVD2024 ”





“ Let us remember that the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse is a collective responsibility. #IVD2024 ”



**Didier Vignon Dossou**  
UN Volunteer (Benin)  
Public Information Officer  
MONUSCO- Bunia (DRC)



# NEWS



## BENI

A training workshop bringing together 40 members of the Community-Based Complaint Network (CBCN) was held on Thursday, December 5, 2024, at the Okapi Hotel, organized by the Conduct and Discipline Field team. This workshop equipped participants with a better understanding of the United Nations policy against sexual exploitation and abuse.



A joint night patrol was conducted in Beni on December 13, with the support of the Bangladesh Military Police and the Malawian Battalion of the Force Intervention Brigade. This initiative aimed to assess the compliance of MONUSCO personnel with the curfew regulations currently in effect in the region.

# NEWS



The Conduct and Discipline Team participated in a Civilian Pre-Deployment Training (CPT) for newly recruited personnel, from November 19 to 22 at the Entebbe Regional Service Center. CDT's session aimed at raising awareness on standards of conduct expected of United Nations personnel and increased awareness on the importance of prevention of Sexual exploitation and abuse.



Installation of CCTV cameras at the entrance of the Log Base in Bunia. This initiative is part of efforts to strengthen internal control mechanisms and enhance risk management.

# NEWS



The Conduct and Discipline Field Team in Kinshasa raised awareness among 67 students from Lycée Toyokana on November 25 about sexual exploitation and abuse, its consequences, and the available reporting mechanisms. This initiative was organized in partnership with the school and the NGO "Les Inattendus."



# IN THE FIELD

## With Farrukh Bashir



***"My message to all peacekeepers is that, despite of all our diverse nations, cultures, and backgrounds, we are united by our shared commitment to protect humanity. Let us continue to uphold the principles of integrity, impartiality, and neutrality."***

### **Could you please introduce yourself and tell us about your role?**

I am Major Farrukh Bashir from Pakistan, serving in the Conduct and Discipline Team (CDT) field office in Goma since July 2024. My primary role is to advise the Military personnel on Conduct and Discipline matters, with a focus on preventing and raising awareness about Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA). This includes conducting awareness sessions, risk assessments, training focal points, participating in assessing misconducts cases and contributing to the effective reporting mechanisms.

### **What are the most effective methods you have found to promote awareness of SEA prevention among Mission personnel?**

The most effective method for promoting awareness of sexual exploitation and abuse, as well as its prevention, is the consistent engagement of contingents in awareness-raising campaigns. One of the responsibilities of the Conduct and Discipline Team is to keep focal points fully informed through regular updates on policies, rules, and new regulations.

### **How does your role ensure that MONUSCO personnel maintain the trust of local communities?**

As a member of the Conduct and Discipline Team, it is my duty to ensure the rigorous implementation of guidelines on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse. A safe and protected environment fosters greater cooperation and collaboration, strengthens trust in the Mission's integrity, improves relationships with local communities, and ensures that MONUSCO is perceived as a trustworthy and reliable organization.

### **What message would you like to convey to your colleagues?**

My message to all peacekeepers is that we represent different nations, cultures, and diverse backgrounds, but our shared commitment to protecting humanity unites us. Let us continue to uphold the principles of integrity, impartiality, and neutrality. Let us support each other in difficult situations, foster cooperation and collaboration, and aim for excellence in our duties.

***"United for peace, together we make a difference."***

# COMMITTED TO ACTION

## With Mado SAKAJI



*"When certain people hold positions of power, they create a climate of fear, making it difficult for junior staff members to report possible prohibited conduct."*

I am a Public Information Assistant at MONUSCO, working within the Outreach Section of the Strategic Communications and Public Information Division (SCPID). My focus is on raising awareness about the Mission's activities and sharing relevant information with the public and the media. My goal is to facilitate dialogue and contribute to improving MONUSCO's image.

Within the Outreach Section, I am fully aware of the importance of maintaining a healthy and respectful working environment. However, I am cognizant of the fact that this can prove challenging because



Mission personnel and external partners alike can be unfamiliar with the United Nations/MONUSCO Standards of Conduct and other regulations. This can lead to situations where individuals who are insufficiently informed, may find themselves either disoriented or unsure of how to navigate challenging situations that may arise in the workplace.

In some cases, such colleagues or external partners may even be subjected to a prohibited conduct from others but choose to remain silent due to lack of knowledge or fear.

For example, interns who are new to the Mission may feel hesitant to report incidents due to their entry-level status, leading them to endure pressure. This silence can have severe consequences on their well-being.

To address this issue, it is essential that we work closely with the Conduct and Discipline Team to strengthen awareness campaigns and to enlighten all concerned individuals about United Nations and available reporting mechanisms.

By providing clear resources and organizing more training sessions, we can enhance awareness of the rules and foster a climate of trust.

I encourage each of us to become a role model of exemplary behavior.

Our actions should reflect the values promoted by the United Nations, particularly respect for others and dignity.

These principles must become a priority in our professional lives for the well-being of ourselves and our colleagues.

It is also crucial to adopt a listening and supportive attitude regarding sexual exploitation and abuse.

Every action matters, and by doing so, we can make a real difference in preventing such behavior.



# VOICES FROM THE COMMUNITY

On December 10, in Mugunga, near Goma, 50 displaced persons participated in a sensitization session conducted by the Goma CDT, focused on preventing sexual exploitation and abuse. In this section, we amplify their voices and share their reflections and questions, highlighting the complexities and challenges faced by people living in fragile settings.



## BREAKING THE SILENCE

"Sometimes it's hard to report because we don't always realize that we are victims of abuse. There is also fear: these individuals seem influential, and we feel vulnerable. This fear keeps us silent. A relationship may bring a brief moment of happiness, but the suffering that follows is far greater. By reporting, you help protect other potential victims."

## NAVIGATING PRECARIOUS CHOICES

"As war-displaced individuals living in precarious situations, it is hard to resist an offer of money. But have we thought about the consequences? A relationship might seem like an immediate solution, but it can also lead to serious issues like infection or pregnancy. Let's think about the future and what this means for us and our children."



# VOICES FROM THE COMMUNITY



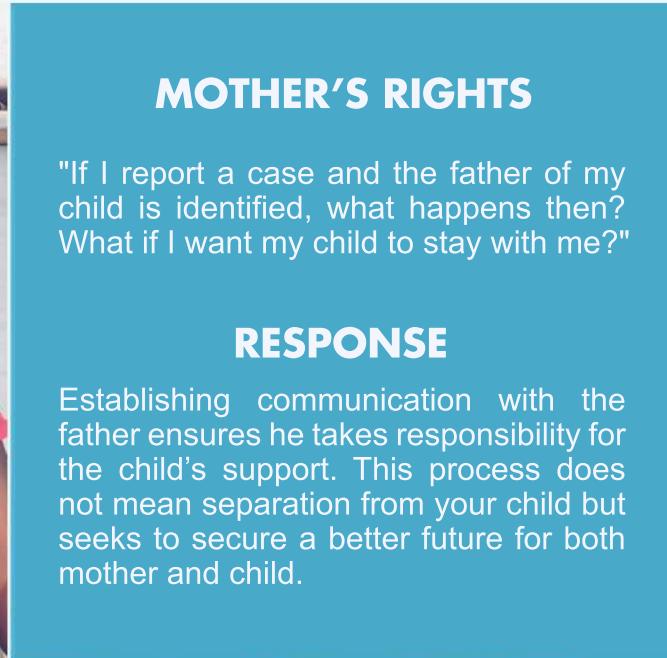
## SEEKING JUSTICE WHEN THE FATHER IS DECEASED

"What happens if I report a case, but the alleged father is deceased? How do you establish paternity in such cases?"

### RESPONSE

In cases where the alleged father is deceased, DNA tests can still be conducted if sufficient information is available. A DNA test can be performed with close family members (biological brothers and sisters, etc.).

For cases after 2014, pre-deployment DNA samples from contingents enable analysis, even in the event of death.



## MOTHER'S RIGHTS

"If I report a case and the father of my child is identified, what happens then? What if I want my child to stay with me?"

### RESPONSE

Establishing communication with the father ensures he takes responsibility for the child's support. This process does not mean separation from your child but seeks to secure a better future for both mother and child.



Our Voice Matters!

# FEATURED GUEST

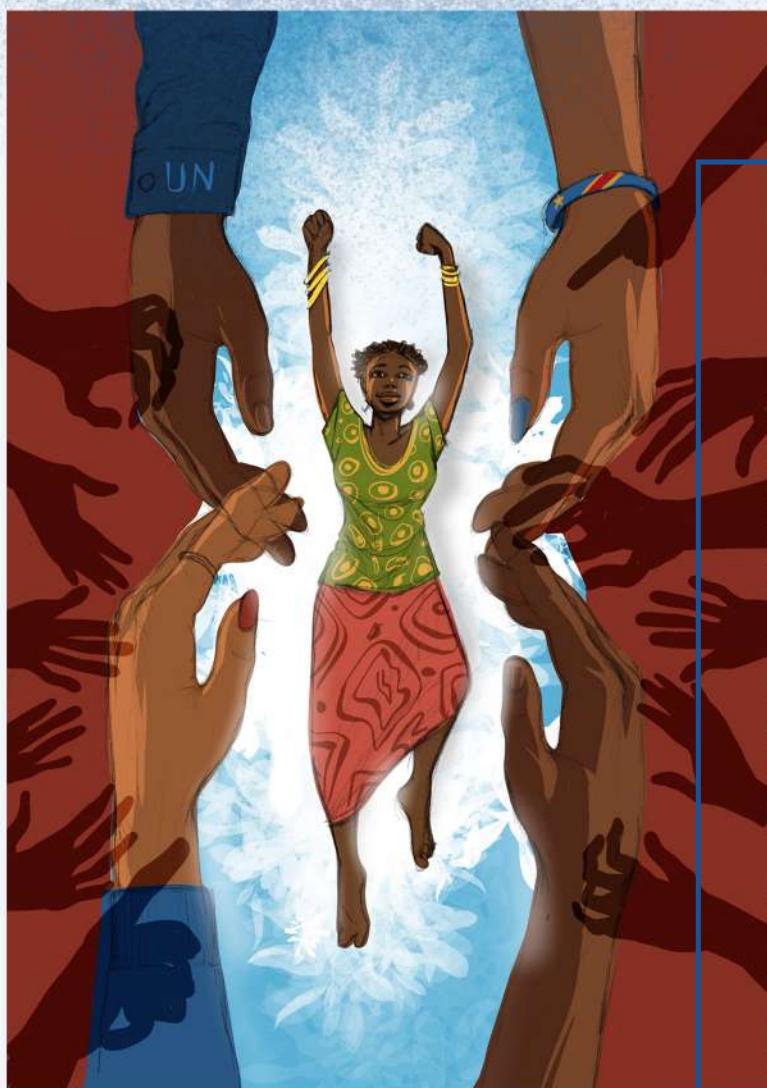


I am a visual artist based in Goma. When I learned that the MONUSCO CDT office was looking for illustrators to raise awareness about the fight against exploitation and sexual abuse, I immediately wanted to contribute.

For this first edition of the CDT Connect newsletter, I chose to depict a woman who is thriving, living safely in a society that protects her from abuse and sexual exploitation, including by those entrusted with her protection.

My goal is to share a vision of an environment where women can fully flourish, supported by a just, respectful, and protective society.

Through my work, I aim to highlight the commitment of MONUSCO and its local partners on the ground.



MUSAWI  
EDIZIONE



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