

## Portrait of Esperance MASIKA



*"Ms. Esperance MASIKA joined MONUSCO Civil Affairs Section (CAS) in 2012 as Community Liaison Assistant (CLA). She has rendered exemplary services in the light of the Core UN Values of Integrity, Professionalism and Respect for Diversity. Since joining MONUSCO Civil Affairs, Esperance has been on record as a great example of a hardworking, results-oriented person. She enjoys interacting with the local population and that makes collecting valuable information for early warning and CAS's Community Alert Network a natural process. Over the years, she has demonstrated that the Civil Affairs Team is her next family.*

*In the face of challenges, Esperance is always wearing a broad smile "her smile plays the role of opening up channels of communication with my clients, including the local population, local authorities as well as local forces of law and order all of whom I meet daily in the course of my official duties," echoes her immediate supervisor Ephraim Abwe Diabe, Civil Affairs Officer and Team Leader, Protection of Civilians, Civil Affairs/Goma Office. Mr. Diabe went on saying: "Esperance makes my job lighter as her immediate supervisor. I find her so easy to coach, mentor or guide. She*

*has an open mind for new ideas; especially open to other ways of getting the job done for greater results. I think she is an embodiment of hard work, resilience, patience, and above all, humility." And he concluded by saying: "During my last field visit to Munigi where she currently serves, the Company Commander referred to her light-heartedly, as the "silent but powerful one". As a female staff serving in a male-dominated environment the majority of whom male staff, to ensure the liaison between the Mission and the local population she manages to overcome some challenges: the capacity to meet the highest and ever-increasing expectations of the local population and to be focused with respect to making use of the available resources to implement the respective mandates.*

In my quest to try to get to know more about the driving force that sustains this woman with lots of professional values, I believe one testimony would look subjective, let us also listen to what her colleagues have to say about her. Esperance's colleagues in the Goma Office were also asked to

make a few comments about her. They described her personal qualities in glowing terms and noted her commitment to delivering high quality service despite challenges. Orlin Mudosa said: ***“Esperance is a very likeable person. Since her recruitment as Community Liaison Assistant, she has been deployed in different Company Operating Bases such as Himbi, Mech Aero and Urubatt (in Goma) working with military components. Her main tasks consist in contributing to an enhanced collaboration and communication between MONUSCO and local communities and authorities, supporting capacity building of local communities in Protection of Civilians and social cohesion, implementation of Community Protection Plans, information collection for the polling project, good civilians – military collaboration and information collection, analysis and reporting. She is reliable, well – organized, and shows great initiative. She shows capacity to mitigate challenges related to the collaboration between military and civilians. She integrates gender aspect in her daily work. During her career, CAS Management gets reports on her professionalism and good collaboration with local partners. She has experience in multi-cultural and ethnic environments with sensitivity and respect for diversity and core UN values.”***

Jacques MUBALAMA noted: ***“Esperance is a very nice person. She works with us and has demonstrated that she is an asset for MONUSCO, especially on the joint MONUSCO-HHI-UNDP Polling project. She is very engaged in this activity where she interacts with local populations, conducting interview with women to get their perception on security, peace and justice in eastern part of DRC for enhancement of Protection of civilians. As far as this project is concerned, no quarter is too distant; no street is too rocky and no hill too steep for Esperance. She has braved scorching sun heats and cold mornings. She has braved heavy rains. These conditions have***



*alternated; but one thing stayed constant-the excellent quality of work done by Esperance. Through interviews conducted by Esperance Masika, the voices of hundreds of women from Goma town, Masisi and Nyriragongo territories were echoed and their perception on Peace, Security and Justice taken into account by MONUSCO, Harvard Humanitarian Initiative HHI and United Nations Development Program UNDP. Most of these women expressed their expectations to witness a positive change in terms of Security, Peace and Justice. On this project Esperance Masika displayed another hidden quality-that of being a great listener. She always found time to listen to even long and somehow boring accounts."*

In her free time, she loves reading books, listening to music (especially gospel) and spending her precious time with her grandchildren. She also spends her free time gardening often once a month. On weekends, Esperance, who is member of a large family, visits other family members. She also loves participating in church activities on Sundays in the company of her children and grandchildren to recover her emotional balance.

By Alphonse Yulu Kabamba