



MONUSCO

Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies
pour la Stabilisation en République
démocratique du Congo

United Nations Organisation Stabilization
Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo

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Portrait of Bonsdawinde Oubda Bamogo

If you are looking for a « beautiful » person, look no further. For we have found that person; her name is Bonsdawinde Oubda Bamogo, and she is with MONUSCO, working within the Public Information Division (PID). You will recognize this as you get to get to know this “Great Lady” through this portrait. Better known under her family name, Oubda is a “keener lover” of technology. She is head of PID’s IT Unit, IT focal point between PID and CITS and currently OIC Chief Technical Unit. Her regular duties are focused around support for users, IT equipment fixing, monitoring and maintenance of physical and virtual servers such as the domain controller, the file and application servers, and the printer and FTP servers. To which she adds: *« the unit I am in charge of also manages a number of specialized servers for music scheduling, as well as a server for the live broadcasting of Radio Okapi programs over the Internet. Since December 2013, I have been serving as interim chief of the Technical Unit; as a result, my responsibilities have expanded to include supervising Radio Okapi broadcast transmitters and studios throughout the DRC. »*



It is with a high degree of ease that she intervenes in solving computer problems. There’s no shortage of testimonies about how relieved her colleagues feel after their computer issues have been fixed. One colleague comments: *“She solves your problem and provides you with a detailed explanation of how to do it. As a good teacher, she explains to you the steps to follow, and again goes over the procedure with you to make sure you understand every step to solving that problem. She suggests you take notes to ensure your mastery of the procedure. She teaches you to be independent but still lets you know she remains available to assist you whenever you need her”*. I do not know too many people who listen and give of their time to you as she does, though she heads up a team of technicians, all equally capable of addressing ICT problems that staff are often confronted with. The explanation is simple: her accessibility is so remarkable that it has rubbed off on all her team members. They are all people of remarkable patience, calm and willingness – qualities which I find myself envying them, especially their patience.

Mrs. Oubda Bonsdawinde did several internships and held temporary positions within the Central Bank of West African States (BCEAO), the *Societe Generale de Banques au Burkina* (SGBB), Itconsult and HugoTech in Burkina Faso, before joining the United Nations in 2005, as a UN volunteer with the World Food Program (WFP), in Guinea-Bissau. *« At the end of my 6-month UNV contract, I served as Consultant for 5 months before joining the UN Mission in the DRC, »* she says.

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Oubda holds a bachelor's degree in IT engineering from the *Institut Supérieur d'informatique du Burkina*. She is currently studying for a master's degree in computer sciences with specialization in Information System Management, via e-learning at the University of Liverpool.

Oubda is aware that her work is geared toward satisfying the needs of the “clients” and so she isn’t too hung up on protocol. Give a phone call, or send her an email or just go directly to her office and she will help you with your computer problem with the same eagerness. At PID, she is often seen walking down the hallway with quick steps heading towards some office where her help is needed. Sometimes, coming up with a solution for some recalcitrant machine that refuses to work may have her stumped. When this happens, she honestly admits her temporarily defeat, but promises to find a solution shortly. And that promise is always kept, because when she gets back on that failed computer, it better behave itself, for she is rather gifted, haven’t I told you so? Madam Oubda speaks to machines. To quote the title of a famous movie: « she is a machine whisperer. » In front of a machine that refuses to function properly, Mama Oubda will grumble and persists, and then a miracle takes place (a least this is how we, non-technicians, interpret it): everything is back to normal!. Then with a smile on her lips, she invites you to go on with your work, and always with some word of reassurance.

One of her collaborators particularly appreciates “the *respect she shows for them, and her sensitivity and humanism. She likes things to be done well and in an orderly and disciplined manner,*” he adds. *For those who show a lack of courtesy, she firmly but politely reminds them of their obligation to comply with the rules and procedures of the United Nations. The question of integrity is an issue of particular importance to her. Whenever the technical service places items of equipment at our disposal, she always makes a point of recalling the regulations and rules of the United Nations regarding the use of UN property and assets.*”

A helpful soul, she is always available to offer assistance if needed. She always makes a point of supporting the activities of the Public Information Division. Socially, she dedicates herself to helping others, ready to support projects for the promotion of convivial and friendly relations within the service. On several occasions she has been involved in organizing relaxation and recreation encounters of staff of the Division. Thanks to the openness of spirit that characterizes her, Madam Oubda is well integrated into the Congolese cultural milieu where she has learned Lingala. Finally, we would like to point out that Oubda is a member of the Burkina Faso-based First Technova Sciences Foundation whose objective is to promote information technology innovation in universities and secondary schools.

A Burkinabe national, Oubda is married and the mother of two children, and during her family holidays, she becomes “*a mother at home taking care of my husband and our children and attending to household tasks,*” she says. Has she passed the “computer bug” on to her children? « *They are all IT enthusiasts,*” she says, and adds, “*if not for their father keeping a close watch, they would be spending their days and nights sitting in front of that computer!*” Hmm! Hmm! Isn’t this what their mother does? What else do you do with your free time, Oubda, when you don’t have your face buried in that computer screen? « *I find myself doing a little bit of sport to keep in shape,*” she says. Well, we all need to.

If you ask me, I’ll say: “*this woman is simply admirable!*”

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