

Travel diary ✈

CHAD



Supporting Alliance for African Mobility

FROM: Spain, San Viator and Asociación Mundus
TO: Chad, École Professionnelle Don Bosco N'Djamena

06/11/2021 - 13/11/2021

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Travel diary

📍 Chad

Let's discover our two mobility experts

Begoña Inchaurrega and Sergio Lagarde are the perfect team! Their expertise in mobility projects and their enthusiasm make them great SAAM ambassadors in Chad. Let's get to know them!



BEGOÑA INCHAURRAGA

International Affairs Department in San Viator

My name is Begoña Inchaurrega, since September I am part of the International Affairs Department of Centro San Viator and part of SAAM. After finishing my studies in Law, I decided to continue my studies with a Master of International Business.

Internationalization has always been part of my life, when I was 4 I started studying in a French school, getting to speak another language and before turning 16 I was already studying abroad in the United States.

Since working in San Viator, I have been lucky enough to go through many different projects, not only SAAM, so I have been working in KA1, KA2 and KA3, and even a COVE.

SERGIO LAGARDE

SAAM project technician

As project technician, Sergio coordinates the SAAM day-to-day tasks, the communication with the partners and the coordination and interaction among the Work Packages leaders. He knows every single partner well and he is probably the person after Bea who knows SAAM better. Since COVID-19, he is hosting the online meetings and leading "The Voyage". Moreover, he co-leads the Quality Assurance Work package together with AKMI (SAAM partner from Greece).

Despite his age, Sergio has a wide experience abroad planning and executing International Cooperation projects. He went to Senegal and co-founded an NGO that works with youth in both Spain and Senegal. Then, he worked with another NGO in Senegal. After that, he has been leading life-changing experiences for youth in international projects.



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Travel diary ➤

📍 **N'djamena, Chad**

Saturday, November 6th

Excited and very motivated as every time we go to Africa, we met each other at the Paris' airport. Sergio was coming from **Madrid** and Begoña from **Bilbao**. There are not so many flights to go to **Chad (N'djamena, the capital)**. We took the one leaving from **Paris Charles de Gaulle**. This flight goes to **Abuja** (Nigeria, in 5h30) and then to **N'djamena**. It was the first time for the both of us that we were taking a plane stopping at one city like a bus stop. We had to wait in the plane for 1h30 and then after 1h20 we arrived at N'djamena, around 00:30, making the flight a total of **9.30 hours**.



At the airport we had to do the **"quick COVID test"**. It was quite well organized and fast and then we went straight to the Police Station, behind the Frontier Control to proceed with the VISA. We had a **"Facilitating document"** to get into the country and we had just to notify the police who were already aware of our visit. They kept the passport and we had to go to **"Migration"** on Monday to take the VISA and to get the passport. And of course, pay the price of the VISA.

At the airport **Father Marius and Brother Oumar** were waiting for us. We arrived almost at 3 am to the Salesian after a 15 minutes drive and we slept in.

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📍 **N'djamena, Chad**

Sunday, November 7th

We slept in because we arrived late to the **Salesian Community** in Chad. We woke up to start getting to know the place and its surroundings.



Chad has a desertic climate with very high temperatures. The sun shines very strongly from 5:30 am to 5:30 pm. It is essential to drink water very often and to avoid being under the sun for too long.



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📍 **N'djamena, Chad**

Sunday, November 7th

The Salesian Community here has **two buildings** near the school. There is a nice living room with a dining room and a big kitchen. **Adrian** is the one in charge of the kitchen, and he makes sure we always have delicious meals., quite simple in ingredients and without a lot of spices. **A very easy diet to follow for the stomachs of people coming from abroad.**

Unfortunately, **Father Marius ends his stay in Chad** this Tuesday and he is now preparing to leave for Cameroon for his next mission. **Brother Oumarou and Mr Blaise, from the employment and development office of the Vocational Training Centre will be in charge of the SAAM project from now on.**



DID YOU KNOW...?

Since Chad has a very dry and hot climate most of the year, there are not a lot of vegetables and fruits. However, there are different kinds of meat (from different animals) and we had the chance to eat camel meat. The meat is a bit dry but delicious!



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📍 **N'djamena, Chad**

Monday, November 8th

Every morning, in the **Chad Salesian Community** mass is celebrated at 6am. Breakfast is right after, at 6:40.



Later that day we went to the Episcopal Conference, more specifically to **Mr Vincent's Dangou, honorary consul of Spain**. Mr Vincent Dangou issues visas for all countries that do not have an embassy in Chad. In fact, to come here you have to go through the Chadian Embassy in Europe (Paris and Brussels as far as we know) or do what we have done. In fact, France, which is in charge of issuing visas for people from Chad, has closed borders for them and therefore the Chad's embassies in Europe have done the same for Europeans, so the best thing to do is to do as we have done:

Mr. Vincent Dangou sends a request to the Ministry of Migration and we get a personalised letter to allow us to enter the country. With this printed letter and our passport, we enter the country directly through the police office at the passport control at the airport of Chad.



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📍 N'djamena, Chad

Monday, November 8th

Afterwards, we had a very interesting meeting with the **EU Delegation in Chad** and the representative of International Affairs of Spain. We presented the project, asked for collaboration and talked about similar projects that the EU and other International Development Agencies from Europe are developing in the country.



Tuesday November, 9th

We started the day with a very interesting meeting with the **“Chad Diocese”** to which the Don Bosco VET centre belongs. They have a strong influence in education in Chad and they have 5 VET schools in the country. **In Chad, there are three main confessions: Muslims, Catholics and Protestants, with a good relationship among them.**

We presented SAAM to the **General Vicar and the Episcopal Vicar** for Training and Education and we talked about the most important challenges the youngsters have in Chad to enter the labour market. They offered their support to the project and courage to implement the activities in the country.

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 **N'djamena, Chad**

Tuesday November, 9th

Then, we had the opportunity to attend an official meeting involving the main representatives from the most important players in education in Chad: **representatives from the Ministries, Don Bosco administration team, The National Fund from Employment, Head of other VET schools, etc.** This meeting was to present and validate the Training Program and Educative Approach of Don Bosco for the upcoming years.

This event was such an interesting opportunity to get to know the challenges of the country, debate about a wide range of possible solutions, the role of VET in the development of the country, etc. from the perspective of experts and VET actors.

“There are a lot of efforts happening in the capital but the surroundings and the rural life are experiencing very low-income conditions compared to the capital. There is a huge problem in Chad out of the capital of resources both economic and material. This country has big problems due to the clima, very short raining period and very high temperatures”

“It is necessary to perform sensibilization activities and events constantly with parents and teenagers to understand the importance of VET and the link with the labour market. There is a huge need for people trained in VET and specially well-trained in VET. Things are made quick and with a lack of planning and you can tell the lack of knowledge and training”

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📍 N'djamena, Chad

Tuesday November, 9th

It was very interesting to understand how the problems in youth employability and VET education are the same ones as in Spain and Europe!

For example: The traditional mindset of thinking going to University is a success and going to VET is a failure for people not able to study in the University or the old mindset of parents about the new educational fields of VET such as IT, Energy, etc.

This debate was a success for Don Bosco. The strategy was validated and the atmosphere around the school and these actors was very close and fruitful.

In the afternoon we met with the students' parents to present the SAAM focusing on the **mobility of students**. We presented in detail the mobility, the organization, the aim of the activities, the countries involved, the VET centres who will host their sons and daughters.



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Travel diary

Mandelia, Chad

Wednesday, November 10th

Today has been a very special day in our trip to Chad. We have left the capital to visit the **Agriculture VET centre based in Mandelia, located 50 kms from N'djamena**. The road to go there is easy but full of holes and it makes it **challenging and fun!**



On the way you can find **several small villages and “informal” businesses** such as small markets, vendors, etc. And the landscape is beautiful.



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Travel diary ➤

📍 Mandelia, Chad

Wednesday, November 10th

Mandelia is a small town with around **3000 inhabitants**. Life there is very different from the capital: Out of the city, life is more peaceful and less chaotic and way more impoverished. There are no buildings or anything made out of concrete or bricks. Instead, houses are made out of adobe, wood, sheet metal and/or straw.

We visited the most important authorities in the town: **“Le Prefet” (Regional president), Le Maire” (Town Mayor) and the Chef du Village (Traditional Mayor)** to introduce ourselves, the project and ask for support and cooperation.



Chad is 187^o out of 189 in the Human Development Index, the indicator created by the UN to evaluate the poverty and development (socially, politically, economically and well-being) of a country.

Despite these circumstances, there is a big will to foster youth employment and training, there are several sustainable initiatives in the country and a general pursuit of development.

People speak mostly arabic (local variety) and the local language (there are three main “ethnies” in Chad: Nomads (arabic), Gambay and Sara.

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📍 **Mandelia, Chad**

Wednesday, November 10th

The **Agriculture VET centre** is located 7 kms from **Mandelia**, in the middle of the Sabana. To arrive there it is necessary to drive into the Sabana and it is such an awesome experience. On the way you always find Nomad groups with animals walking around.

The **VET Centre** is a **Salesian Project** funded by **DBTech Africa** and started in 2017 by **Father Marius**. There are 4 educational fields:

- Agriculture
- Cattle breeding (livestock)
- Food transformation
- Agromechanic (to use the Agriculture machines)

It had 12 students the first year and this year will start on 15/11 with 25 students.



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📍 **Mandelia, Chad**

Wednesday, November 10th

Students live in the VET centre during the 6 months of training. **It is fascinating how they build their community living, training and working together.** They all sleep in one room with mattresses. A cook from the next village is hired and prepares lunch and dinner for them over a fire outdoors.

According to a research project of the Swiss cooperation agency in Chad, 75% of the active population works in the primary sector (livestock and agriculture).

Training here lasts **6 months in the VET centre and 3 months of internship.** Don Bosco has a partnership with ITRAD, the National Research Institute for Agriculture for the students to do the internship.



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Travel diary ➤

📍 **Mandelia, Chad**

Wednesday, November 10th



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Travel diary ➤

📍 N'djamena, Chad

Thursday, November 11th

Today is the **Poland National Day** and in the Salesian Community we celebrated it since **Father Jan**, a member of the community, is Polish.

Today, we had very important meetings:

We started with a meeting with the Director of FONAP, the National Fund to Support VET education in Chad. Despite the lack of resources, schools and illiteracy problems in the population, the Chad government understands VET is a key element for the development of the country and the employability of youth. **So much so that they have created a specific government funding vehicle to support vocational training for educational centres, for entrepreneurship projects and to support and monitor young people's integration into the labour market.**

According to UNESCO in 2018, the illiteracy rate in Chad is 77%.

We had the opportunity to visit another **VET school located in the muslim neighbourhood.** **However it belongs to a LaSalle community.**

After lunch, we had a very interesting meeting with the **minister (Madame Kassire Isabelle Housna)** for vocational training and employment and her team of management counsellors. **SAAM always seeks cooperation with the main authorities and dissemination of the project.**



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📍 **N'djamena, Chad**

Thursday, November 11th

A very interesting thing here in Chad: The motto/slogan of the country is “Unité, Travail, Progrès”. These words are chosen because:

Unité (Unit/Unity):

Chad has experienced different wars (civil wars and conflicts against the surrounding countries, especially Sudan). Wars are horrible and impede the development of a country. That is why the most important thing in a nation is to feel part of a whole, to be united and to work for the common good. That is the beginning of development.

Travail (Work):

Nothing comes for free, and history has shown this. To develop, to grow and to prosper, it is necessary to work, both individually and collectively. Working together for the common good and the fruit of the effort will come the reward of progress.

Progrès (Progress):

It is the ultimate goal of a nation and it will come as a reward for collective work and unity as a people.

Finally, we had a **very interesting meeting** with one trainer from the VET centre who works as well in the ITRAD.

He works at the centre to pass on his knowledge and to collaborate in the development of young people who in turn will work for the progress of their country.



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📍 N'djamena, Chad

Friday, November 12th

We started the day going to do the PCR Test and to pick up our passport and VISA from the Episcopal Conference, to the office of Mr Vincent Dangou, honorary consul of Spain.

After that, we visited the "Fair/Exhibition of the green economy". It is a project promoted by the EU Commision with the **Fund Archipelago**, coordinated by the **Italian NGO Acra** together with several partners in Chad. This project aims to train trainers and students in eco-construction, renewable energies and ecological agriculture. It is a very interesting project with local training centres and companies.



That day was the Exhibition of the little projects and products each partner has such as consultancies for eolic or photovoltaic projects, ecological products for the soil, solar panels, etc.



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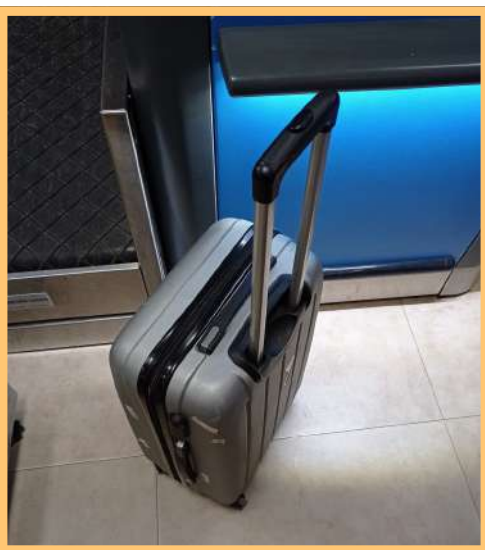
📍 N'djamena, Chad

Friday, November 12th

It was our last day, time for leaving, but we were up to enjoy every minute of the day we had left in Chad. First of all, we went to pick up our Covid tests, the process was as easy as the previous day. After getting our covid test we had an amazing opportunity, we were interviewed for Radio Oxygène, local radio in the capital and talked about SAAM, what an experience!

Next part of the day allowed us to visit **Madame Delphine**, whom we had met before during our visit to Mandelia. We had the opportunity to exchange some words about our visit and the Center from Don Bosco. The hosting from her and her mother in law is excellent and we enjoyed it a lot.

The day kept going on and we had a lot of things to prepare for our return. The last days are always sadder, we went to the school in the afternoon, where you can find kids from the surrounding area playing every type of sports or game you can imagine, we even saw a wedding. Taking advantage of the time we still had we went with Father Francis to the parish, an incredible place where they do many different activities for every age. We took a tour around and enjoyed every minute until we went back to the congregation, where we had a meeting with Frère Omarou and Blaise to make a meeting and talk about our stay and the project.



After dinner, it was time to leave for the airport.

The people there were extremely nice and made our last hours in the country even better.

THANK YOU!

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