



**Spotlight
Initiative**
*To eliminate violence
against women and girls*



Ms. Nneoma Albert-Benson

Is a non-profit leader with over 12 years of multi-faceted award-winning experience, offering distinguished career in advocacy, policy development, compliance, and global operations for non-profit organizations and businesses. She is proficient in developing and implementing innovative programs and partnerships; and developed expertise in international human rights law, women & children's rights, and corporate governance. A highly principled woman, serial entrepreneur, mother, with an innate passion for equity, justice, protection of rights and livelihood securities of vulnerable populations especially women and girls.



Ms. Laetitia Tonye Loe

Laetitia Tonye Loe is a feminist activist born in Cameroon in the 90s. She is the **Co-founding President of the Parler D'Elles Association**. She left the world of advertising and communication to dedicate herself to her activism. Director of the film "**Les Prisonnières du Silence**", a documentary about rape and domestic violence in Cameroon released in 2019, she is also the author of the feminist essay "**Dans la Tête d'une Femme**" published the same year. She is co-founding president of the association "**Parler D'Elles**", International Gender Consultant, and works specifically on issues related to strengthening the Francophone movement.



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Ms. Lilian Olivia Orero



Lilian Olivia Orero is a **Lawyer, Global Peace Ambassador, and Youth Advocate** from **Nairobi, Kenya**. She has represented young women's voices in national, regional, and international conferences and forums. She has contributed to building sustainable county-level capacities of women-led civil society actors, female student leaders, community influencers, and common interest groups that focus on peace and counter-radicalization for effective promotion of human rights and conflict management in Nairobi, Kiambu, and Kisumu counties.

As an Award-Winning Writer, she has written articles on topical issues such as **Sexual Consent and Rape, Domestic violence, and Police Brutality** which have been published on various platforms for public consumption. She has come up with strategies that ensured maximum participation from women in campaigning against discrimination, sexual and gender violence.

Ms. Litlhare Rabele



Ms. Litlhare Rabele is a **gender expert** with more than 15 years of working with international organizations, civil society organizations and the diplomatic community. Her main areas of work are women and political participation including women in areas of decision-making, governance and election as candidates. She is a strong advocate of women's inclusion in leadership in peace processes and mediation in conflict. She works on prevention and addressing Gender Based Violence and Femicide (GBVF) in South Africa collaborating with government, civil society organizations and the diplomatic community.

She has worked as **political officer for the embassy of Denmark** in Pretoria and among her roles was engagement with government and lobbying for the support of victims of GBVF. Her interests are also in gender budgeting as a strategy to alleviate GBVF and ensuring women's economic empowerment. She has extensive work experience on women's participation in elections across the SADC region, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Ghana in West Africa having worked with the

National Democratic Institute of International Affairs and The Carter Centre. She has elections and democracy experience in working with the African Union in election observation missions and the role of women in East and Horn of Africa; Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia and South Sudan. Ms Rabele has just completed her PhD in Political Science with the University of Pretoria (2018- 2021) and holds a Masters Degree in Public Policy and Governance and a Bachelors Degree in Development Studies from the National University of Lesotho (2006).





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Rev. Dr. Lydia Mwaniki (PhD)

Lydia is the **Director, Gender and Women at the All Africa Conference Churches (AACC)**. She was a Lecturer at St Paul's University, Kenya before joining AACC. She is a Postcolonial Feminist Scholar with a PhD in Theology and Gender from the University of Kwazulu Natal, SA, a Master of Theology in African Christianity (MTH) from the same University and an Anglican Priest in Kenya. Dr. Mwaniki's exceptional contribution to church and society as a scholar and astute advocacy in gender justice in Africa, received recognition by the Archbishop of Canterbury through The Lanfranc Award for Education and Scholarship on June 30th 2020. Lydia has published widely in revered books and journals including her most popular book, **Gender and Imago Dei: A Postcolonial African Reading of 1 Corinthians 11:1-16**, among others.



Ms. Mariama John

Mariama John is an advocate for women's and children's rights, and entrepreneur. She is the **Acting National Coordinator for Think Young Women (TYM) in Gambia**. Mariama also served as the Administrative Secretary and Programme Officer of TYW in 2016. She worked at Network Against Gender-Based Violence (NGBV) in 2019, an organization in the Gambia that addresses issues affecting young women by building their skills, strengthening their voices to create more impact, and supporting the achievement of women's rights.

Mariama is an ardent advocate of food and healthy eating in her community. She is a vital voice who has constantly demonstrated her passion as a youth leader through her participation in many community initiatives. She is very keen on helping the less fortunate and vulnerable and always advocates for the efficient and effective utilization of resources, especially for the marginalized. She has a wealth of experience in food

processing and has represented Gambia youth in many national and international fora. Since 2020 she has been running a project called the Free Meals Project where she shares free meals to the needy people in her community from her personal savings.

Mariama is the **founder and CEO of a food processing company called Afri Taste** allowing to create employment for the youth. She demonstrated this in the way she managed, led, and worked productively with the team at Afri Taste. As the owner of Afri Taste, she has demonstrated that she is a very trustworthy person who also recognises other people's accomplishments and contributions.





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Ms. Abimbola Aladejare-Salako

Ms. Aladejare-Salako is a Nigerian FGM- Survivor Activist and anti-GBV Campaigner. She is the Founder and Executive Director of The New Generation Girls and Women Development Initiative. As The Girl Generation End FGM Ambassador for Nigeria, Abimbola was one of the Panelists at the 1st United States End FGM Summit in 2016; she also supported the training of End FGM Organizations in Nigeria, The Gambia, Senegal, Mali, Burkina Faso, Kenya among others.

She is the **West African Saleema Ambassador** for the African Union, a Member of the National Technical Committee on FGM in Nigeria since 2014; Abimbola is also a member of Ekiti State SDG Board and SDG 17 Youth Advocate. Abimbola has 14 years full time

working experience in supporting girls, women, children, and youth in Africa. She is the author of the Book: **A Different Lady**.

Abimbola is a Member, of Ekiti State 40-Persons Covid-19 Taskforce; she was recently awarded the Most Outstanding Personality of the year award in the area of Gender Advocacy by the Chairman of Nigeria Governor's Forum. Abimbola is one of the seasoned Speakers at the Dubai Expo 2020.



Ms. Sylvette Balungwe

Sylvette is a young woman who is very active in the promotion and protection of women's rights in DR Congo. She plays an essential and determining role in the strengthening of women's rights organizations and feminist movements to whom she brings support in the establishment of social justice and has been able to mobilize youth around gender issues and women's rights. Her passion and current advocacy for women's rights are evident in her vigorous campaign to end

gender-based violence, rape, sexual slavery, and other forms of sexual violence, including those related to armed conflict. Her commitment is to create an inspiring environment for young women, promote women's leadership development, educational growth, and encourage civic engagement.

Her dedication to women's rights is also exemplified by the successful combination of her work in women's rights with her studies in gender and development. She strongly intends to spend the rest of her life empowering others, especially women living in remote rural areas with knowledge and skills in gender and intersectionality to make DR Congo in particular and AFRICA, in general, a better place in the world to be and live as a girl and a woman.





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Upendo Chitinka

Upendo Chitinka is a certified GBV advocate, author, poet, and development work professional.

She is the **founder of the feminist organization Harakati za Mwanamke Imara Foundation (HMIF)**. She earned her bachelor's degree in business administration from Punjab Technical University, India.

At the Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies, Tanzania, she was promoted as the Gender Advisor and worked with the women's group assigned to peacebuilding and peacekeeping in the African Great Lakes Region with a focus on the empowerment of communities in the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse of women and girls.

Upendo has also curated various events and workshops including Uani, community gatherings for creating dialogues and events centered around GBV. Her experience is passionately pursuing opportunities that center and alleviate women, specifically working on women empowerment, advocating for women's rights and social justice.



Dr. Mildred Mushunje

Dr. Mildred Mushunje is a passionate and self-driven advocate for gender and social justice. She is the immediate past premiere Chair of the Spotlight Initiative CSRG for Zimbabwe. Within this role she successfully steered the group to be recognized as an example of a successful CSRG.

She has also participated in the development of the CSRG global Scorecard for monitoring the implementation of SI. Mildred has also been recognized by the International Federation of Social Workers for her work on GBV in Africa.

She brings to the CSRG a wealth of experience in GBV. Her experience includes working with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN where she worked as a Gender and social protection specialist. She is the **founding Chairperson of the Institute of Women Social Workers** and currently works with young people on SRHR and GBV. She holds a Doctor of Philosophy Degree from the University of KwaZulu Natal (S.A).





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Florence Sesay

Florence Sesay is a media development practitioner specializing in women's rights in development with extensive experience in TV and broadcast media and special expertise in innovative programming targeting rural women and girls. Her background in media and communications has led her to become an avid campaigner and defender of women's rights in the far reaches of rural Sierra Leone; strengthening and defending the rights of some of the most vulnerable people on the planet.

She is currently **Executive Director of Media Matters for Women-Sierra Leone (MMW)**, an NGO which earned recognition from UNESCO and UN Women in 2015 for its innovative approach to addressing the information needs of rural communities in Sierra Leone. MMW links traditional systems of radio broadcasting with mobile phones to create communication networks for rural women and girls so that they can access and fully enjoy their rights. She is a

member of Sierra Leone Association of Journalists (SLAJ) and founding member of Women in Media Sierra Leone (WIMSAL) and Sierra Leone Association of Women in Journalism (SLAWIJ).

Florence is a proud winner of the **2020 Women Forward Mentor of Distinction Bronze Award** by BPeace—The US Women's Business Council for Peace. This award was given due to her work in creating radio drama that educate rural men and women about female genital mutilation (FGM), Sexual reproductive healthcare issues, teenage pregnancies and child marriage issues.



Mr. John Ede

John Ede has been **President/CEO since 2013 at Ohaha Family Foundation**, a Nigeria-based NGO working to alleviate human suffering, deliver social protection and life-saving interventions to vulnerable groups. He has been engaged in social protection and humanitarian work for around 2 decades, providing leadership, policy advocacy, partnership, and programme management in conflicts and forced displacement settings for Protection of Civilians, promoting gender equality, and increasing access to healthcare in the region through different NGOs and networks.

He is an invitee to the Grand-Bargain- Localization-Work stream, Inter-Agency- Standing-Committee-Result-Group-3, co-facilitator Country-Level-Dialogue-on- localization, co-chair Advocacy Working Group Charter-for-Change, panelist UNDSS Security Symposium, 4-time speaker selection committee member UN-NGLS. John holds a degree in Geography from University-of-Jos-Nigeria; Advanced diploma from University-of-Geneva; Trained GenderPro George-Washington-University; Certificate in Civilian services Peace-Operations-Training-Institute (POTI); INSSA Certified Security-Risk- Management-Country-level; Austrian-Study- Centre-for-Peace-and-Conflict-Resolution- (ASPR) IPT Master Class Gender, Intersectionality and Peacebuilding; Certificate in understanding-violence-against-Women-and- girls UN-Women-Training-Centre; and published an article on gender.



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Mme ADAM DIAOU

Mme Adam started her career as the Reporter Assistant in the National News Daily and on to become a **member of the Executive Bureau of the NGO Action Coordination Unit in Mali “CCA-ONG”** where she was responsible for the regional coordination of NGOs in Mali. She has extensive experience in monitoring and evaluation as well as the development of female entrepreneurship and leadership, advocacy against violence against women, HIV / AIDS, Family planning, Reduction of maternal, neonatal, and infant morbidity and mortality, nutrition, Hygiene / environmental sanitation, and environmental education, excision

Adam is a **Coordinator for ASSAFE**, a programme for the abandonment of harmful practices and the protection of children

and girls. She is responsible for the empowerment of women and girls in the region of Ségou, circle of Macina, Niono, Bla, Ségou. Since 1999 she has been responsible for the partnership between ASSAFE and CARE Mali, which was set up as a way for the Mali government to respond to emergencies.

Mme Adam is the ASSAFE coordinator on SPOTLIGHT with UNICEF since April 2021 as well as the ASSAFE Partnership Officer for the KJK Project (Kènèya Jemuka Kan) which focuses on the protection of maternal and child health (2016- 2019). She has participated in meetings and forums on Education for All, EPT, HIV/Aids, political dialogue, sustainable Human Development in Dakar, (Senegal), Addis Ababa (Ethiopia), Ayérou (Niger), Uganda, and Douala (Cameroon).



Ms. Hodan Ali

Hodan Ali is a Lawyer with more than 10 years of experience in Human Rights for the protection of Women, Men, Youth, and Children.

Currently, she is working for **Taakulo Somali Community in Buraco, Somaliland** where she is responsible for the women empowerment portfolio. Key responsibilities include: The implementation of project activities to achieve project goals; The design of indicators and the monitoring and evaluation of systems and frameworks; Managing quality control of Sexual Gender Based Violence (SGBV) and empowerment programmes; Developing and coordinating beneficiary training; Participating in knowledge and information sharing within the programme; and Representing TAAKULO in Gender based violence (GBV) working group meetings.

Previously Hodan worked as a Legal Officer (Gender and legal Aid) where she coordinated the paralegal work in partnership with the Legal Advisor.

For close to 6 years Ms. Ali was a **Commissioner at the Somaliland National Human Rights Commission (SLNHRC)** (Hargeisa, Somaliland). Before that she was a Coordinator at the Somaliland women Lawyers Association.



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Ms. Nanahemaa Adjoa Awindor

Nanahemaa Adjoa Awindor is the Development Queen mother of Afigya-Kwabre District in Ashanti Kingdom in Ghana. A Multi-media, Marketing, Communication, OSD Consultant. A Trainer and a very passionate advocate for Women and Children especially the disadvantaged in society.

She is the **co-founder and CEO of Premier Productions Group**, a Multi-Media Production which was established over 25 years ago with 3 vibrant sections (Premier Productions, Premier Media Academy, Premier Events & Promotions).

Nana is also **Executive Director and Founder of Obaapa Development Foundation**, an NGO that supports Women and Children through Advocacy, Health and Education. She is the current Continental Board Chair of the African Queens and Women Cultural Leaders Network (AQWCLN), which she **co-founded with Queen Sylvia Nagginda of Buganda Kingdom** in Uganda.

She has had formal professional training in various fields, which includes but not limited to: Graduate in Film and Television Production at the National Film & Television Institute (NAFTI) Ghana; Training of Trainers course at the Radio Netherlands Training Centre; Professional Certificate in Organizational Systems Development (OSD) at the Gestalt Institute of Cleveland, USA & OD Centre – Ghana; Post-Graduate Diploma in Business Administration at the European Business School Cambridge, UK; Certificate in Women and Management and a Certificate in Marketing Management, both from the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration (GIMPA), etc.

As the 1st Professional Video Camerawoman in Ghana and an Editor by training, she has produced over 30 video documentaries especially on development-oriented issues.

Nana has supported various projects and Campaigns such as Ending Child Marriage with Ministry of Gender, World Vision International and Plan Ghana; The fight against FGM and Gender-based Violence with UN Women; Maternal Mortality and Championing Newborn Care with PATH and Ghana Health Services; HIV/AIDS (PMTCT) with UNAIDS and Ghana Aids Commission; Population Control with UNFPA and Ghana Population Council; Human Trafficking (with emphasis on Child Trafficking) with International Justice Mission (IJM) and International; Organisation for Migration (IOM); Ghanaians Against Child Protection (GACA) with UNICEF and DCD; SHRH, SSGBV/HP with UNFPA, SDGs, etc



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