

2013

HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCATES PROGRAM

THE 25TH CLASS

INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF HUMAN RIGHTS



COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK



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Videos are available on our YouTube channel:
<http://youtube.com/user/humanrightsadvocates>

1 INTRODUCTION

I feel encouraged by this program to never give up. I have been able to meet others facing the same struggles and the motivation and encouragement that I have gained from this experience will help me not give up either. Coming here gives me a refreshed perspective on ways that I can help my country and my people. I am the first South Sudanese in HRAP, but I cannot be the last.

2013 Advocate Biel Boutros Biel, South Sudan

The 2013 HRAP marked the program’s 25th class. Through academic coursework, skills-building workshops and networking opportunities with the human rights, academic and donor communities in NYC and D.C., HRAP has strengthened the skills,



The Advocates’ first workshop was on interviewing techniques.

knowledge and networks of 271 grassroots human rights leaders from more than 80 countries since 1989. We are always heartened to hear from Advocates such as Biel

that they “feel encouraged by this program to never give up.” We thank them for joining us at Columbia University and for making HRAP the program it is.

Through a very competitive selection process, 11 human rights advocates representing 10 countries were selected from 321 applicants to participate in the 2013 HRAP. The 2013 Advocates came from Bosnia, Georgia, Guatemala, Kenya, Liberia, Nepal, Nigeria, South Sudan, Uganda and Zambia to share and deepen their expertise on a number of issues including prison reform, disability rights, peace building, the rule of law, transitional justice and sexual- and gender-based violence.

The 2013 Advocates join the HRAP alumni body whose members have been recognized for their commitment to human rights. In October 2013, 1996 Advocate Twesigye Jackson Kaguri, who has been recognized as a CNN Hero for his work with HIV/AIDS orphans in rural Uganda through the Nyaka AIDS Orphans Project, spoke to more than 100 members of the Columbia community including the 2013 Advocates. Recognized recently by the New York City Police Department for his support to the city’s immigrant community, 2010 Advocate Bakary Tandia worked with the 2013 Advocates on maximizing their time in HRAP during regular meetings. 2009 Advocate Florencia Ruiz met with the Advocates on several occasions to help them acclimate to life in New York City. Given that the 2013 HRAP marks the program’s 25th class, we have included a section with recent HRAP alumni news in this report. In honor of the 25th class, we also created a Facebook page and a YouTube Channel where Advocates can meet and learn more about one another and exchange information.

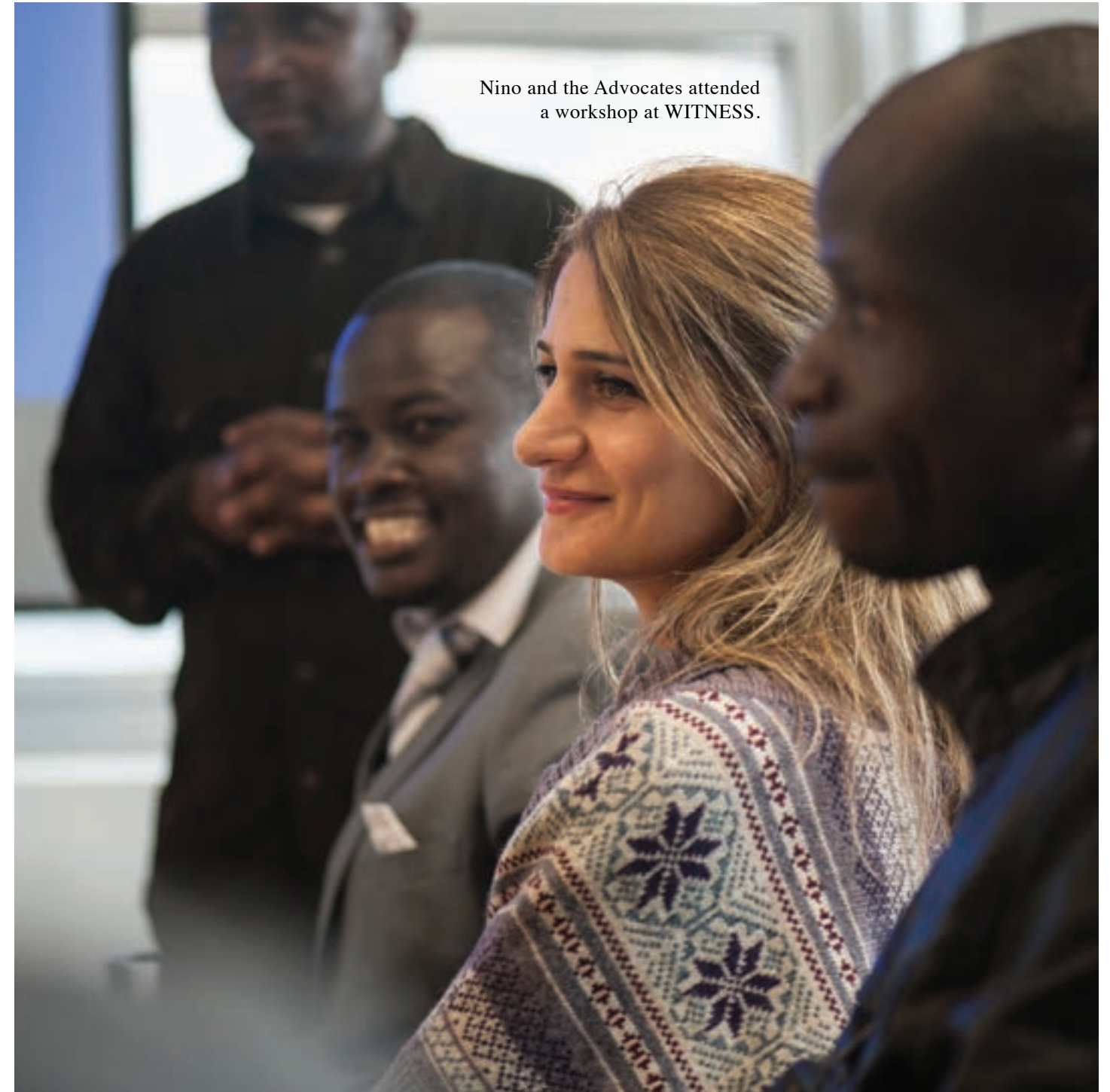
The Advocates supported one another throughout the Program.



Angeline and Musola worked together for the first time at an early workshop.



Nino and the Advocates attended a workshop at WITNESS.



2

THE ADVOCATES IN THEIR OWN WORDS

ABSOLOM SHALAKHA

National Adviser, Conflict Early Warning, Early Response
Peace and Development Network Trust (PeaceNet Kenya)
KENYA

Before the 2007 elections in Kenya, Absolom conducted interviews countrywide for a research firm. While out in the field in the weeks leading up to the elections, one

of Absolom’s colleagues asked him to interview a group of young people that had refused to speak with her. The youth informed him they would not speak with his col-

league because she was a member of the Kikuyu ethnic group. Absolom says, “It was then that I realized the extent to which the youth were being poisoned by the ethnic divisions being promoted during that election season. I realized I needed to speak with youth to try to change their perspective to one of respecting those from different communities.”

Another incident confirmed his realization that he needed to affect positive change among the youth. He says, “After the election violence had broken out, a person was pulled from a matatu (minibus) and killed. He looked just like my brother – he wasn’t, but he could have been. He was someone’s brother. I realized then that I needed to feel that I was making a difference.”

Absolom began travelling out of Nairobi to speak with youth groups around the country. This led him to volunteer with PeaceNet Kenya, which later hired him to work on HIV/AIDS awareness and outreach in remote communities. His next

After the election violence had broken out, a person was pulled from a matatu (minibus) and killed. He looked just like my brother – he wasn’t, but he could have been. He was someone’s brother. I realized then that I needed to feel that I was making a difference.

assignment with PeaceNet Kenya involved collaborating with other organizations on UWIANO, the monitoring and response system that brought together peace actors to respond to reports of violence and hate speech during the 2013 elections.

Reflecting on his time in the HRAP program, Absolom says: “It was an experience like none other. This gave me an enormous opportunity to network with different organizations that are doing different things or the same things in different ways. It has been quite helpful seeing how they work. The fundraising workshop was an essential one for me. I also learned the importance within the human rights community of sharing one’s work—unless you share what you do, no one knows about it or can help. Back home, speaking about these things might be considered ‘blowing your own horn,’ but in HRAP I learned that it is so important to talk to each other and share our work. This has been one of the biggest things I learned.”

Absolom plans to continue his outreach to communities about their rights under Kenya’s new Constitution and the need to hold the coun-

try’s leaders accountable. Absolom shares, “The leaders we put in place through our ethnic sentiments and biases are now showing their true colors. This is seen through the controversial legislations being passed in Parliament for selfish reasons, and poor leadership at the county level. This will be a good opportunity to educate communities on good leadership and holding leaders accountable.”

FACULTY MENTOR

Francis M. Ssekandi
Lecturer-in-Law, Columbia Law

CLASSES

Seminar in Sexuality, Gender, Health, and Human Rights
Human Rights and Development Policy

NETWORKING

New York City
ACT-UP
Columbia University, Center for Sustainable Urban Development
Clinton Global Initiative
Ford Foundation
Health Global Access Project
Human Rights Watch: Africa and Programs

International Center for Transitional Justice
International Peace Institute
Open Society Foundations: Justice Initiative, International Women’s Program, and Africa
United Nations Development Programme
Virginia Gildersleeve International Fund

Washington, D.C.

ActionAid
FHI-360
Fund for Peace
Human Rights First
Institute for Inclusive Security
Institute of International Education
International Law Institute
National Endowment for Democracy
PACT
RFK Center for Justice and Human Rights
United States Institute of Peace
World Bank, Fragile and Conflict-Affected Countries
World Bank, The Inspection Panel

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Role of Civil Societies in Development Policy. Sponsored by Human Rights and Development Policy (course), School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University. Guest lecturer with Geoffrey Kuletela.

Conflict Prevention in the 2013 Kenyan Elections: Cooperation and Competition in the Use of Mapping Platforms. Sponsored by Prof. Ted Perlmutter as part of Conflict, Social Networks, and Communication Technologies (course), School of Continuing Education, Columbia University.



ANGELINE P. SWEN

Community Advocate Team Leader

medica mondiale Liberia

LIBERIA

As a child growing up in a loving family in Liberia, Angeline witnessed how other girls in her community were treated. She noticed that they had to take on a large share of the cooking and cleaning and were frequently subjected to beatings. She heard stories of girls

being sexually abused by their family members. When she asked questions about the abuse of girls in her community, her father replied that it was none of her business.

As she grew, Angeline observed that this injustice was faced by

women and girls across her country. She decided to make this injustice her business. After the Liberian civil war, she joined the police force and worked in the juvenile protection division. Angeline observed that while police stations had special units and procedures for working with juveniles, women who were reporting gender-based violence didn't receive specialized treatment. Angeline and others successfully lobbied for the creation of dedicated reporting areas for gender-based violence, with gender-sensitive procedures and specially-trained staff. Angeline then asked herself, "If in this central city women are treated poorly, what about women in rural areas where the services are even worse?"

Over time, Angeline began to feel that her ability to create change was limited due to the corruption within the police system. Angeline shares, "I was limited when I investigated a case. Let's say, for example, there was a case of a minister abusing his wife or sexually abusing a child, and it [was] brought to the police for investigation. Before any progress could be made, you would see 'invisible hands' enter the investigation – a police director or other top brass would call me and tell me to forget about that case. So I was completely limited, I couldn't do anything and was told 'Duty before complaint.' I had women coming to me looking for

help, feeling empowered by seeing me behind the desk, my presence making them comfortable. Yet I knew that their cases wouldn't be resolved. I couldn't work in that type of environment. I needed to work somewhere I could make real change." In 2006, Angeline left the police force to join the organization medica mondiale Liberia where she continues to work today.

Reflecting on HRAP, Angeline said she enjoyed the courses at Columbia University, especially a course on rural development that addressed topics of vital importance for Liberia's future such as infrastructure, food production and sustainability issues. Angeline was also very inspired by a visit to the Columbia Health Sexual Violence Response. She hopes to adapt this type of sexual violence response program to the school systems of Liberia, especially at the university level where she reports sexual exploitation by teachers is rampant.

FACULTY MENTOR

J. Paul Martin

Adjunct Professor and Director
of Human Rights Studies
Barnard College

CLASSES

Seminar in Sexuality, Gender,
Health, and Human Rights
Issues in Rural Development

NETWORKING

New York City

Clinton Global Initiative
Columbia Health Sexual
Violence Response
Ford Foundation
Global Fund for Women
Global Justice Center
Human Rights Watch:
Africa and Programs
International Peace Institute
Keep a Child Alive
NGO Working Group on Women,
Peace and Security
Open Society Foundations:
International Women's
Program and Africa
United Nations Development
Programme
Virginia Gildersleeve
International Fund

Washington, D.C.

Amnesty International,
Women's Division
Center for Health and Gender Equity
Human Rights First
International Association
of Women Judges
Institute for Inclusive Security

International Women's
Democracy Center
National Endowment for Democracy
RFK Center for Justice and
Human Rights
The Fund for Global Human Rights
U.S. Department of State,
Bureau of Democracy,
Human Rights and Labor
Vital Voices Global Partnership
Women Thrive Worldwide
World Bank: Fragile and Conflict-
Affected Countries and
the Inspection Panel

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Human Rights in Action.
Sponsored by Keep a
Child Alive. With Musola
Kaseketi and Rupa Upreti.

Local Perceptions of International
Human Rights Activity.
Sponsored by the Human
Rights Working Group,
Human Rights Graduate
Student Group, Working
Group on Peace, Conflict
and Education and ISHR,
Columbia University. With
María Eugenia Carrera Chávez,
Minja Damjanovic, Rupa
Upreti and Musola Kaseketi.

My Work in Liberia. Sponsored
by History of Peace Education
(course), Teachers College.

If in this central city women are treated poorly, what about women in rural areas where the services are even worse?



BIEL BOUTROS BIEL

Executive Director

South Sudan Human Rights Society for Advocacy

SOUTH SUDAN

Biel was born one year before the outbreak of the Second Sudanese Civil War, becoming part of the Sudan People's Liberation Army at a young age. After spending time in Ethiopia, Kenya and South Sudan, he eventually went to Uganda to study. It was then that he and his fellow South Sudanese realized that they did not have the human rights to which they were entitled

back home. Biel says, "The protection and promotion of human rights quickly became my chief concern. I wanted to do something for my people. When I got to law school, it was a dream come true."

Biel and his fellow students founded the South Sudanese Human Rights Society, where he is the Executive Director today. Biel's

human rights activism has exposed him to challenges and risks along the way, but throughout he maintains his commitment to human rights change in his country. Biel says, "When I look back, there are challenges that make it hard to continue to do this work. When I reach the point that the challenges become overwhelming, I find another story of a fellow citizen that consoles me to move on."

Biel has appreciated the fresh perspective and new knowledge that he has gained through HRAP. He reports, "The Transitional Justice class [taught by Graeme Simpson at Columbia Law] touches deeply on my life and the life of my country. I wish many more people from my country could be here—this knowledge is so key for us. I feel that I have also learned so much from Human Rights Watch and WITNESS in terms of human rights documentation for advocacy and evidence. When I return, I will share all this with my colleagues as we move toward reconciling with our past in South Sudan."

Biel has also enjoyed meeting and learning from his fellow advocates and students. Biel says, "I feel encouraged by this program to never give up. I have been able to meet others facing the same struggles and the motivation and encouragement that I have gained from this experience will help me to not give



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FACULTY MENTORS

Amir H. Idris

Professor and Chair
Department of African and African American Studies
Fordham University

Francis M. Ssekandi

Lecturer-in-Law, Columbia Law

CLASSES

Transitional Justice
Human Rights, Law and Development

NETWORKING

New York City

Center for Constitutional Rights

Columbia Law School
Crisis Action
Ford Foundation
Harvard Kennedy School
Human Rights Watch:
Africa and Programs
International Peace Institute
International Refugee Rights Initiatives
Open Society Foundations:
International Women's Program and Africa
United Nations Development Programme
Virginia Gildersleeve International Fund

Washington, D.C.

Enough Project
FHI-360
Fund for Peace
Human Rights First
Institute for Inclusive Security
International Law Institute
National Endowment for Democracy
PACT
RFK Center for Justice and Human Rights

United States Institute of Peace
World Bank: Fragile and Conflict-Affected Countries and the Inspection Panel

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Sudan and South Sudan: Current Issues and Political Implications. Sponsored by Crisis Action and Sudan Democracy First Group.

Roundtable with Columbia University's Human Rights Advocates. Sponsored by International House.

The Challenges of Human Rights and Transitional Justice in South Sudan. Sponsored by the Carr Center, Harvard Kennedy School. With Jehanne Henry of Human Rights Watch.

Human Rights and the Need for Context-based Transitional Justice in South Sudan. Organized by Human Rights Watch, Africa Division, and sponsored by Roosevelt House at Hunter College.

The Causes of Political Conflict and Crises in South Sudan. Sponsored by Human Rights Working Group, School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University.

Human Rights and Ethics. Sponsored by the Earth Institute, Columbia University.

The Language of Instruction in Formal Schooling: A Case Study of South Sudan. Sponsored by Teachers College.

MARÍA EUGENIA CARRERA CHÁVEZ

Coordinator, Forensic Area Division

Centro de Análisis Forense y Ciencias Aplicadas

GUATEMALA

It wasn't until María was a student at the Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala that she learned of the massacres of indigenous populations that had taken place in her country during the decades of armed conflict. María says, "For me, it was incredible to only discover this when I was 18 – it was very shocking that I never learned of this before. It made me realize that we need to change something so this doesn't happen again. This is when I first knew I wanted to work for human rights, historical memory and transitional justice."

María joined the National Police Historical Archive in 2006. The armed forces of Guatemala had always denied the existence of these archives, which contained thousands of documents related to the repression, killings and disap-

pearances during the conflict. It was part of María's job to review these historical documents, many of which detailed evidence of state-sponsored monitoring, repression and murder of activists and other targeted individuals.

One day, María's work took a personal turn. She shares, "I always knew my grandfather had been killed when I was 2 years old. I grew up thinking it was a carjacking murder as my family believed. One day when I was working in the archive, I found a document with my grandfather's name and date of death on it. The report showed he was a victim of torture, and contained other signs inconsistent with a carjacking. I asked my family more about it and found out that at the time of his death, he had been involved with organizing a union

with his colleagues. My family had never suspected that his murder was political. Many people in Guatemala who do this work have been touched directly by the conflict and disappearances. I was never one of them, but I now I am and I have this additional motivation for my work."

María's work took her to CAFCA, where she works directly with affected indigenous communities in the rural areas of Guatemala. María says, "There are thousands of human remains in the rural areas from the conflict. Many times, people in the rural areas just want the remains of their family members, to have some closure for their pain and to move beyond the conflict. There are others who only want to move on and not look back, to forget. That overlooks the recovery that is needed. How can you deal with your future if you cannot deal with your past?"

María looks forward to a Guatemala made stronger by the process of transitional justice and respect for human rights. She says, "I want to encourage greater political participation of women in my country and the HRAP program has given me a lot of tools to do this. This program is so full of opportunities – every single person you meet here brings you a new opportunity and a new perspective."

There are thousands of human remains in the rural areas from the conflict. Many times, people in the rural areas just want the remains of their family members, to have some closure for their pain and to move beyond the conflict. There are others who only want to move on and not look back, to forget. That overlooks the recovery that is needed. How can you deal with your future if you cannot deal with your past?

FACULTY MENTOR

Elazar Barkan

Professor of International and Public Affairs

Director, Human Rights Concentration, SIPA

Director, Institute for the Study of Human Rights

CLASSES

Transitional Justice

Law of Genocide

NETWORKING

New York City

American Non-Governmental Organizations Coalition for the International Criminal Court

Amnesty International

Columbia University, Center for Human Rights Documentation and Research

Columbia University, Institute for Latin American Studies

Ford Foundation

Global Fund for Women

Global Justice Center

Human Rights Watch, Programs

International Center for Transitional Justice

John Jay College of Criminal Justice

NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security

Open Society Foundations: International Women's Program and Justice Initiative

Physicians for Human Rights

Tinker Foundation

United Nations Development Programme

Washington, D.C.

Guatemala Human Rights Commission

Human Rights First

Institute for Inclusive Security

International Association of Women Judges

National Endowment for Democracy
National Security Archive, George Washington University

Open Society Foundations, Latin America Program
RFK Center for Justice and Human Rights

The Fund for Global Human Rights
Washington Office on Latin America
World Bank, The Inspection Panel

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Forensics, Archives and Transitional Justice in Guatemala. Sponsored by Global Studies and Center for Human Rights Documentation and Research, Columbia Libraries. With Kathy Doyle of the National Security Archive.

Central America's Dirty Little Secrets, Photo Projection & Speak Out. Sponsored by

John Jay College of Criminal Justice. With Marcia Esparza, Associate Professor of the Department of Criminal Justice and Director of the Historical Memory Project, John Jay College of Criminal Justice.

Local Perceptions of International Human Rights Activity. Sponsored by the Human Rights Working Group, Human Rights Graduate Student Group, Working Group on Peace, Conflict and Education and ISHR, Columbia University. With Angeline P. Swen, Minja Damjanovic, Rupa Upreti and Musola Kaseketi.

Roundtable with Columbia University's Human Rights Advocates. Sponsored by International House.



MAYAMBA GEOFFREY KULETELA

Executive Director and Founder
Prisoners Future Foundation
ZAMBIA

Geoffrey is a Zambian prison reform advocate in a unique position to know the challenges faced by the country's prison system: he is a former prisoner himself, having previously served 10 years. Geoffrey says, "I first discovered the potential in me when I was a prisoner. I was able to convince the prison guards to allow me a place to study where I learned as much as I possibly could. Instead of letting prison take away my rights, I found my voice to claim my rights and eventually the rights of others within the prison system." Geoffrey recalls abysmal conditions within the prison, including long pre-trial detention, extreme overcrowding and lack of health care. Geoffrey says, "I saw my colleagues finish their sentences without an appeal coming out, so they stayed. I remember how long I stayed after being arrested myself before I was able to appear before

the court, much longer than the 24 hours stipulated in the Constitution. There were health challenges—people were dying day in and day out. Tuberculosis was everywhere. By the time someone was diagnosed with TB, 10-15 more people would have contracted it due to the overcrowded conditions."

In prison, Geoffrey actively pursued studies in project planning and monitoring & evaluation. In 2007 he was released early for good behavior. This came as a surprise to Geoffrey, and he quickly came to directly experience the challenges faced by prisoners reentering society after prison. Geoffrey's education assisted his job search, and he obtained a position with a PEP-FAR-funded project on HIV/AIDS. Geoffrey says, "Despite this job, my heart wanted to work on issues related to the prisons. Around this time, the government reached out

to me for an audit they were doing on prison conditions, as they had heard of my educational successes in prison." The project included research visits to prisons in Zambia – including the one where Geoffrey had served his sentence. Of this experience, Geoffrey says, "It gave me memories and also gave me hope, in that my new plans for my life were a result of passing through prison. As I went around all of the prisons, it was saddening to see my colleagues who had been released prior to me serving in other prisons. This helped to illuminate the vital importance of reintegration services."

In 2011, Geoffrey founded his own organization, Prisoners Future Foundation (PFF). Geoffrey says, "Prisoners are human beings and they need a true second chance. They need hope and they need to be encouraged. I felt like I could be the right person to be a part of this bandwagon, so that I could give voice to these concerns on their behalf. They were not being given a platform to voice their concerns. The fact that I had been down this path made me realize I needed to work for my colleagues so that they could enjoy their human rights."

Geoffrey now hopes to advance PFF's work and to make PFF sustainable. Geoffrey says, "The networking with current and past HRAP participants was my favorite

aspect of the program. I was able to learn from my fellow advocates who are working for prison reform in their countries, and I am very thankful for this. For me, doing this program was an opportunity to open windows into understanding different ways that this work is being done, from Western countries to countries like my own."

FACULTY MENTOR

Dr. Ernest Drucker
Adjunct Professor of Epidemiology
Mailman School of Public Health

CLASSES

Human Rights and Social Change
in Sub-Saharan Africa
Human Rights and
Development Policy

NETWORKING

New York City

ACT-UP
Amnesty International
Columbia Law School
Ford Foundation
Fortune Society
Health Global Access Project
Human Rights Watch:
Africa and Programs
Open Society Foundations:
Justice Initiative, International
Women's Program and Africa
Osborne Association
United Nations Development
Programme
United States District Court
(Brooklyn Courthouse)
Vera Institute

Washington, D.C.

ACLU National Prison Project
Campaign for Youth Justice

Human Rights First
Institute for Inclusive Security
National Endowment for Democracy
National Juvenile Justice Network
RFK Center for Justice and
Human Rights
World Bank: Fragile and Conflict-
Affected Countries and
The Inspection Panel

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Role of Civil Societies in
Development Policy. Sponsored
by Human Rights and
Development Policy (course),
School of International and
Public Affairs, Columbia
University. Guest lecturer
with Absolom Shalakha.

Prison Reform in Nigeria, Georgia
and Zambia. Sponsored by the
Osborne Association on two
separate occasions. With Nino
Gelashvili and Sylvester Uhaa.

Prison Reform in Nigeria, Georgia
and Zambia. Sponsored by
the Mailman School of Public
Health, Columbia University.
With Nino Gelashvili
and Sylvester Uhaa.

Prison Reform in Nigeria, Georgia
and Zambia. Sponsored by
the Columbia University
Partnership in International
Development. With Nino
Gelashvili and Sylvester Uhaa

Human Rights Behind Bars.
Sponsored by the Human Rights
Students Working Group at
the School of International
and Public Affairs, Columbia
University. With Nino
Gelashvili and Sylvester Uhaa.

Roundtable with Columbia
University's Human Rights
Advocates. Sponsored by
International House.

I first discovered the potential in me when I was a prisoner. I was able to convince the prison guards to allow me a place to study where I learned as much as I possibly could. Instead of letting prison take away my rights, I found my voice to claim my rights and eventually the rights of others within the prison system.



MINJA DAMJANOVIC

Executive Director

United Women Banja Luka
BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA

When asked about her domestic violence work, Minja says, “It found me. When I went to university, I wanted to volunteer—to make a difference somehow. My friend’s mother was in charge of a domestic violence organization. I started as a volunteer in 2002 answering the project’s crisis hotline for victims of domestic violence. Even though I had been trained extensively, I was terrified at first of answering these calls.”

As Minja spent more time at the organization, she became more deeply involved. She says, “When I saw how little there was to offer in terms of state services, and the flaws in the system, I wanted to provide more options. Women would ask us to take them to a safe place and there weren’t any. Women would tell us, ‘He’s going to kill me. Can you help me? I am outside with my kids.’ It was terrible knowing that calling the police wouldn’t

do anything and that there wasn’t a safe place for women to go. I then began my first advocacy project, collecting signatures on a petition for a women’s shelter in my town.”

Minja observed other systemic issues that further barred justice for victims of domestic violence. She reports, “There were no measures to help women who were economically dependent on abusive husbands. There is also a reluctance of the police and public prosecutor’s office to investigate cases of domestic violence. If a case is actually investigated, and gets to court, the perpetrators get fines or short jail sentences at best. There is extreme stereotyping in the court and the judicial system—courts do not want to imprison perpetrators because they worry about who will provide for the family. There is also dysfunction in the system. In one situation, the judge didn’t know the perpetrator had already been in

court for domestic violence twice before – even though it had been that same court. It is very challenging to work in a system that is so flawed and weak.”

Minja is now focused on the implementation and harmonization of domestic violence legislation with the Istanbul Convention, monitoring of domestic violence trials, and installing a gender mainstreaming mechanism in the underserved Brčko District. Minja will also work to improve her organization’s fundraising strategies. She credits the fundraising, storytelling and documentation sessions of the HRAP program for her returning with enhanced skills in these areas. She says, “From HRAP I have gained skills in international advocacy and lobbying—now I know how to frame our work in a clearer and stronger way. This will help our fundraising, which is essential to our sustainability. We also can do better to document the work that we do.”

Minja recalls her favorite part of HRAP: “I met women activists who have been an inspiration. Working on women’s empowerment is half a step forward and two steps back. It motivates me to see how many other women are working on these same issues—their courage and passion gives me more motivation to continue my work.”

It motivates me to see how many other women are working on these same issues—their courage and passion gives me more motivation to continue my work.

FACULTY MENTOR

Yasmine Ergas

Director of the Gender and Public Policy Specialization at SIPA
Lecturer in International and Public Affairs, SIPA
Associate Director, Institute for the Study of Human Rights

CLASSES

Seminar in Sexuality, Gender, Health, and Human Rights
International Human Rights Law

NETWORKING

New York City

Columbia Health Sexual Violence Response
Columbia University, School of Social Work
CONNECT – Safe Families Peaceful Communities
Clinton Global Initiative
Ford Foundation
Global Action to Prevent War
Global Fund for Women
Global Justice Center
Global Network of Women Peacebuilders
Human Rights Watch, Programs
Open Society Foundations, International Women’s Program
New York City Anti-Violence Project
NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security
UN Women
United Nations Development Programme
Virginia Gildersleeve International Fund

Washington, D.C.

Center for Health and Gender Equity
Human Rights First

Institute for Inclusive Security
International Association of Women Judges
International Center for Research on Women
National Endowment for Democracy
RFK Center for Justice and Human Rights
United States Institute of Peace
World Bank: Fragile and Conflict-Affected Countries and The Inspection Panel

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Women’s Rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Sponsored by Human Rights in the Western Balkans (course), School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University.

Gender Responsive Budgeting Workshop. Sponsored by the Gender Policy Working Group at the School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University.

Local Perceptions of International Human Rights Activity. Sponsored by the Human Rights Working Group, Human Rights Graduate Student Group, Working Group on Peace, Conflict and Education and ISHR, Columbia University. With María Eugenia Carrera Chávez, Musola Kaseketi, Rupa Upreti and Angeline P. Swen.

Roundtable with Columbia University’s Human Rights Advocates. Sponsored by International House.



MUSOLA CATHRINE KASEKETI

Executive Director and Founder
Vilole Images Productions
ZAMBIA

When asked about how she got involved in disability activism, Musola says, “As a child, I didn’t know I was different. I grew up treated like any other child, and didn’t know what a disability was. I had always been interested in drama, music, poetry and dance. When I went to secondary school, my mother instructed the matron not to put me in the sick bay where other girls with disabilities were accommodated. As a drama member, I was always placed in the back and not allowed to take leading roles. This led me to question my situation. One day, I had a chance to do a poetic drama before the future first President of Zambia, Dr. Kenneth Kaunda, during his visit at our school. I saw him shed tears as I recited. This gave me the confidence to fight for my rights.”

After school, Musola founded the Zambia National Association for the Physically Handicapped Traveling Theatre, a platform for raising issues of the rights of persons with disabilities through dance, poetic drama and theatre. She wrote her first play “Rejection of Reality,” which became very popular and contributed to changing negative attitudes towards disability. Musola says, “A television representative saw the play and asked to film it for television broadcast. It was shown in the 1990s. It actually got me into problems with the government, as they thought I was opposing the way the government treated those with disabilities, and I was summoned by them for questioning. In this way, I entered into advocacy quite innocently.”

Musola moved from theatre to film, founding the Vilole Images Production Company, using film to advocate for the rights of women and girls with disabilities. Musola founded two more projects, the first Zambian Film Festival (the Shungu Namutitima International Film Festival of Zambia) and a women’s meeting space called Pachibwase. Recently she initiated another project called the Kids Meeting club, a place for children with disabilities to socialize, play and learn. Musola says, “When I go back, my dream is to make these projects successful and long-lasting so they can continue to improve the lives of women and children living with disabilities.” Musola is now working on a documentary profiling 13 women and their experiences with disability, gender-based violence and HIV/AIDS. The documentary will be used in advocacy during the 2014 16 Days of Gender Activism Campaign.

Musola enjoyed the opportunities presented through the HRAP program, saying, “The meetings, workshops, and seminars have been an incredible resource for me. I have come to realize that I need to fight harder for what I want and to push for more change in Zambia. I also have had an incredible experience with my mentors. My experience has been great, and such a dynamic opportunity cannot be taken for granted.”

A television representative saw the play and asked to film it for television broadcast. It was shown in the 1990s. It actually got me into problems with the government, as they thought I was opposing the way the government treated those with disabilities, and I was summoned by them for questioning. In this way, I entered into advocacy quite innocently.

FACULTY MENTORS

Pratima Kale

Adjunct Professor of International and Public Affairs, SIPA

Michelle Sondra Ballan

Assistant Professor of Social Work, School of Social Work

CLASSES

Tools of Human Rights
Advocacy: Documentary Film & New Media
Seminar in Sexuality, Gender, Health, and Human Rights

NETWORKING

New York City

Columbia Health Sexual Violence Response
Clinton Global Initiative
Disabled in Action
Ford Foundation
Global Fund for Women
Global Justice Center
Human Rights Watch:
Africa and Programs
Keep a Child Alive
NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security
Open Society Foundations:
International Women’s Program and Africa
United Nations Children’s Fund
United Nations Development Programme
United Nations Secretariat on the Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities
Virginia Gildersleeve International Fund

Washington, D.C.

Human Rights First
Institute for Inclusive Security
International Association of Women Judges

International Center for Research on Women
National Endowment for Democracy
Open Society Foundations,
Disability Rights Initiative
RFK Center for Justice and Human Rights
U.S. Department of State
World Bank, The Inspection Panel

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Global Rights and Local Challenges: Disability, Inclusive Education and Rural Environments. Sponsored by Fordham University. With Richard Mukaga.

Human Rights in Action. Sponsored by Keep a Child Alive. With Angeline P. Swen and Rupa Upreti.

University Seminar and Disability Caucus. Sponsored by the School of Social Work, Columbia University. With Richard Mukaga.

Local Perceptions of International Human Rights Activity. Sponsored by the Human Rights Working Group, Human Rights Graduate Student Group, Working Group on Peace, Conflict and Education and ISHR, Columbia University. With María Eugenia Carrera Chávez, Minja Damjanovic, Rupa Upreti and Angeline P. Swen.

Roundtable with Columbia University’s Human Rights Advocates. Sponsored by International House.



NINO GELASHVILI

Founder
Youth for Justice
GEORGIA

Nino originally set out to be a sociologist but reports, “I decided to work in human rights instead because I had an urge to go to the field, to hear the stories of people and to make change.” After her studies in England and the Netherlands, Nino returned to Georgia shortly before the war with Russia broke out in 2008. Nino says, “The war was the biggest incentive to change my profession and to begin working in human rights. There was rape, hostage taking, the destruction of houses, forcible displacement, and other violations. I witnessed the horror of this conflict with my own eyes, and it made me want to create change.”

Nino began working with Human Rights Priority and traveled around the country to document cases of war-related violence. Nino helped to present cases before national courts and also before the European Court of Human Rights. Nino says, “We helped those affected by the war to see what options they had, which they weren’t aware of due to their deep shock. I felt that I was truly doing something to help in the

aftermath of the conflict and it felt good. The strongest feeling that I have is my desire to help those in vulnerable situations. I realized that I want to keep stakeholders and the government awake and not give them room to do the wrong thing.”

Nino and two colleagues went on to found their own organization, Youth for Justice. The organization first began to work on issues around the access to health care for prisoners, an issue worsened by the high imprisonment rates following the conflict.

Now the organization is working towards increased sustainability. Nino says, “When I get back I want to bring something with me from here, which is funding. One of the main priorities in coming here was to create connections to help raise funds to enable our organization to survive. This program helps immensely in this direction, there have been many opportunities to meet with donor representatives and to present our work and to get feedback.”

Nino reports that she also highly valued the skills-building workshops, especially the six-part workshop on research, documentation and writing, which was led by Diederik Lohman and Jane Buchanan of Human Rights Watch. Of her fellow HRAP participants, Nino says, “It has been good to have a chance to see the different approaches to prisoner rights and prison reform. I really enjoyed meeting and getting to know people. I know that our roads will cross someday. Our work is not only for our own countries, it has bigger outreach potential.”

FACULTY MENTOR

Dr. Ernest Drucker

Adjunct Professor of Epidemiology
Mailman School of Public Health

CLASSES

Law Policy and Human Rights
Human Rights, Law and
Development

NETWORKING

New York City

Act-Up
American NGOs Coalition for the
International Criminal Court
Amnesty International
Columbia Law School
East-West Management Institute
Ford Foundation
Fortune Society

Global Justice Center
Health Global Access Project
Human Rights Watch, Programs
Legal Aid Society
New York Law School
NGO Working Group on Women,
Peace and Security
Open Society Foundations,
International Women’s Program
Osborne Association
The Center for Prison Health
and Human Rights
The Reset Foundation
United Nations Development
Programme
United States District Court
(Brooklyn Courthouse)
Vera Institute

Washington, D.C.

American Civil Liberties Union,
National Prison Project
Campaign for Youth Justice
Human Rights First
Institute for Inclusive Security
International Association
of Women Judges
National Endowment for Democracy
RFK Center for Justice and
Human Rights
United States Institute of Peace
World Bank, Fragile and Conflict-
Affected Countries and
The Inspection Panel

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Prison Healthcare Advocacy
Programs in Georgia.
Sponsored by the Harriman
Institute, School of
International and Public
Affairs, Columbia University.

Prison Reform in Nigeria, Georgia
and Zambia. Sponsored by
The Osborne Association
on two separate occasions.
With Sylvester Uhaa and
Geoffrey Mayamba.

Prison Reform in Nigeria, Georgia
and Zambia. Sponsored
by the Mailman School of
Public Health at Columbia
University. With Sylvester
Uhaa and Geoffrey Mayamba.

Prison Reform in Nigeria, Georgia
and Zambia. Sponsored by the
Columbia University Partnership
in International Development
(CUPID) at Columbia
University. With Sylvester
Uhaa and Geoffrey Mayamba.

Human Rights Behind Bars.
Sponsored by the Human Rights
Students Working Group at
the School of International
and Public Affairs, Columbia
University. With Sylvester
Uhaa and Geoffrey Mayamba.

Roundtable with Columbia
University’s Human Rights
Advocates. Sponsored by
International House.



I witnessed the horror of this conflict with my own eyes, and it made me want to create change.

RICHARD MUKAGA

Program Manager
Cheshire Services Uganda
UGANDA

Richard realized the importance of human rights for individuals with disabilities when he was studying at Makerere University in Uganda in 1999. “When I was at campus, there was an affirmative action policy for students like me who had a disability. However, there was a challenge when it came to the allocation of dormitory rooms. The allocation of the good rooms was based on an individual’s active participation in sports and games held on campus. This clearly excluded the disabled from the good rooms. The rooms that were left for us were the worst rooms next to the university toilets. I mobilized other students with disabilities. We went to the dean of student affairs and lodged our complaint. He saw our side of the issue. We were then allowed to pick our own rooms after that day. This made me realize, ‘Oh, this means you need

to come out and speak up.’ I never used to talk. I didn’t think my voice would do anything but this opened my eyes. After that day, I began to speak up against injustices for the disabled when I saw them around campus and beyond.”

After university, Richard began to work for an organization that works on disability issues, eventually coming to his current work with Cheshire Services Uganda where he designs programs that address education, health and employment barriers for persons with disabilities.

Upon returning to Uganda, Richard wants to apply the knowledge of human rights he has gained through the HRAP program and courses to his work at the local level, emphasizing the practicability and the implementation of these rights for

Ugandans especially those living with disabilities. Richard says, “I want to combine our service delivery with the human rights principles I have learned here. Any future project I do will have human rights at its core.”

“These four months in HRAP have given me a lot of energy to face those who have tried to violate my rights in the past and to speak up for others whose rights have been violated. It is interesting that when laws become norms they are much more respected. What I want to see is the movement of the laws that Uganda has signed into norms that will be adhered to so they make a difference for those they were intended to benefit. I am incredibly thankful to HRAP for being on the side of disability rights and for giving me this opportunity.”

I didn't think my voice would do anything but this opened my eyes. After that day, I began to speak up against injustices for the disabled when I saw them around campus and beyond.

FACULTY MENTORS

Michelle Sondra Ballan
Assistant Professor of Social Work, School of Social Work

Francis M. Ssekhandi
Lecturer-in-Law, School of Law

CLASSES

Human Rights and Social Change in Sub-Saharan Africa
Human Rights and Development Policy

NETWORKING

New York City
ACT-UP
Columbia School of Public Health
Ford Foundation
Health Global Access Project
Human Rights Watch:
Africa and Programs
Open Society Foundations:
International Women’s Program and Africa
Rebecca School for Autistic Children
United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF

Washington, D.C.
Human Rights First
Institute for Inclusive Security
International Association of Women Judges
National Endowment for Democracy
Open Society Foundations,
Disability Rights Initiative
RFK Center for Justice and Human Rights
U.S. International Council on Disability
U.S. Department of State
United States Council on International Disabilities



World Bank: Disability Division and The Inspection Panel

University Seminar and Disability Caucus. Sponsored by the School of Social Work, Columbia University. With Musola Kaseketi.

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Human Rights Advocacy: Disability Rights in Uganda. Sponsored by the Office of Graduate Legal Studies, Columbia Law School, and ISHR.

Global Rights and Local Challenges: Disability, Inclusive Education and Rural Environments. Sponsored by Fordham University Law School. With Musola Kaseketi.

RUPA UPRETI

Secretary General
Youth Action Nepal
NEPAL

Rupa is a passionate advocate for sexual and reproductive rights for the youth of Nepal and for gen-

der equality overall. Of her work, Rupa says, "Since I was a child I have seen that in my country there

is not the same level of respect for women as there is for men. I observed consistently that women were not at the same level and are put on a different track from early on in their lives. Seeing this gender inequality coupled with the caste system made me want to fight injustice in my country and to fight for equal rights and opportunities for all."

Seeing how deeply embedded stereotypes were being used to justify gender-based violence in her country, Rupa became interested in working with youth to combat these attitudes. As a core team member and the Secretary General of Youth Action Nepal, Rupa focuses on coordinating coalition activists and facilitating training workshops focused on sexual reproductive rights and health. Rupa is currently also a youth representative on the Adolescent Reproductive Health Subcommittee organized by the government of Nepal. A lawyer by training, Rupa is also a member of the National Alliance of Women Human Rights Defenders.

In terms of her motivation, Rupa says, "I really believe that we all are the same, we are all human beings and we should all be treated equally. Yet each day we hear of murder and rape cases. Even if I am struggling or thinking about a different type of work, seeing these types of injustices continue is what



Seeing this gender inequality coupled with the caste system made me want to fight injustice in my country and to fight for equal rights and opportunities for all.

inspires me to keep going. I feel inside me that as a youth, I have a duty to my country to use my voice for the thousands who cannot. I need to speak up for them also."

Rupa says she greatly enjoyed the course on Gender Justice, in addition to the workshop on human rights research, writing and documentation with Human Rights Watch.

FACULTY MENTOR

Yasmine Ergas

Director of the Gender and Public Policy Specialization at SIPA

Lecturer in International and Public Affairs, SIPA

Associate Director, Institute for the Study of Human Rights

CLASSES

Gender Justice

Human Rights, Law and Development

NETWORKING

New York City

Center for Reproductive Rights

Clinton Global Initiative

CUNY Advanced Research

Collaborative at the Graduate Center

Columbia Health Sexual Violence Response

Ford Foundation

Global Fund for Women

Global Justice Center

Human Rights Watch, Programs

Keep a Child Alive

NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security

Open Society Foundations, International Women's Program

United Nations Development Programme

Washington, D.C.

Center for Health and Gender Equity
FHI 360

Human Rights First

Institute for Inclusive Security

International Association of Women Judges

International Center for Research on Women

National Endowment for Democracy

Plan International USA

RFK Center for Justice and Human Rights

World Bank: Fragile and Conflict-Affected Countries and the Inspection Panel

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Human Rights in Action.

Sponsored by Keep a Child Alive. With Musola Kaseketi and Angeline P. Swen.

Local Perceptions of International Human Rights Activity.

Sponsored by the Human Rights Working Group, Human Rights Graduate Student Group, Working Group on Peace, Conflict and Education and ISHR, Columbia University. With Angeline P. Swen, Minja Damjanovic, Marija Eugenia Carrera Chávez and Musola Kaseketi.

SYLVESTER TERHEMEN UHAA

Executive Director

Citizens United for the Rehabilitation of Errants-Nigeria

NIGERIA

Sylvester became a Jesuit priest in 1998. As part of his duties, he conducted frequent prison visits. Following the Jesuit practice of daily prayerful reflection, Sylvester came to realize that where he found the most personal fulfillment was through these visits. This feeling became stronger and persisted for four years as his work in the prisons increased and he heard more of the prisoners' stories.

“On the first day of service, the church we had built was full of people from the prison. I saw a

very old woman—the same age as my grandmother—standing there. I went to ask her why she was there, not believing she could be in prison. She told me that her grandson had fought with her neighbor's son, and because they couldn't find him, the police arrested her. I wept when I heard this and said something is wrong with the criminal justice system. That day, in that church, I decided I needed to leave the Jesuits to work for prison reform.”

As he began to work more in the prisons, Sylvester saw many problems within the system, such as prisoners detained without knowing the charges against them, missing case files, and lack of health care. “Another day, I was informed that a pre-trial detainee was sick. He was HIV positive and wasn't receiving appropriate attention. That weekend, he fell very ill and needed a blood transfusion. He received it, courtesy of me, but it was late. He died. This too made me realize that my calling was elsewhere. These moments are the ones I remember when the work is hard.”

For Sylvester, improving prison conditions in Nigeria is not a job, but a calling. He shares, “As human beings we need to know what we are passionate about and commit to it, so if you ever lose everything, there will be something that sustains you, your passion. For me, it is my work. This work for me is my vocation. I do it whether it is difficult, whether it is easy, whether I have money or not. If it were not my passion, I would have abandoned it long ago because of the challenges.”

Sylvester will now focus on making CURE-Nigeria sustainable. “I started with \$50 that I used to register my organization. We have struggled to get resources and it has been difficult, but I have many plans for us.” Sylvester has several projects lined up, including a conference on juvenile justice; a documentary film on pre-trial detention, women in prison and children living in prison with their mothers; and continued advocacy against the death penalty and litigation for indigent inmates. He is also collecting donations of reading materials, computers and software to open libraries and computer labs in the prisons. Sylvester reports that the most fulfilling parts of HRAP were the workshops, especially the ones on research, writing and documentation led by Diederik Lohman and Jane Buchanan of Human Rights Watch, stress management for

human rights professionals led by Sheila Platt and video advocacy led by Bukeni Waruzi of WITNESS as well as the numerous speaking opportunities and the performance of The Lion King.

FACULTY MENTOR

Dr. Ernest Drucker

Adjunct Professor of Epidemiology
Mailman School of Public Health

CLASSES

Seminar in Sexuality, Gender,
Health, and Human Rights
Human Rights and
Development Policy

New York City

Amnesty International
Columbia Law School
Double Discovery Center at
Columbia College

Ford Foundation
Fortune Society
Human Rights Watch:
Africa and Programs
Open Society Foundations:
Justice Initiative, International
Women's Program and Africa
Osborne Association
United States District Court
(Brooklyn Courthouse)
United Nations Development
Programme
Vera Institute

Washington, D.C.

ACLU National Prison Project
Campaign for Youth Justice
Human Rights First
Institute for Inclusive Security
National Endowment for Democracy
National Juvenile Justice Network
Office of U.S. Senator James
Inhofe of Oklahoma
RFK Center for Justice and
Human Rights

World Bank: Fragile and Conflict-
Affected Countries and
The Inspection Panel

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Prison Reform in Nigeria, Georgia
and Zambia. Sponsored by
The Osborne Association
on two separate occasions.
With Nino Gelashvili and
Geoffrey Mayamba.

Prison Reform in Nigeria, Georgia
and Zambia. Sponsored by
the Mailman School of Public
Health at Columbia University.
With Nino Gelashvili and
Geoffrey Mayamba.

Prison Reform in Nigeria, Georgia
and Zambia. Sponsored by the
Columbia University Partnership
in International Development
(CUPID) at Columbia
University. With Nino Gelashvili
and Geoffrey Mayamba.

Human Rights Behind Bars.
Sponsored by the Human Rights
Students Working Group at
the School of International
and Public Affairs, Columbia
University. With Nino Gelashvili
and Geoffrey Mayamba.

Human Rights and Ethics.
Sponsored by Foundations
of Sustainable Development
Practice at the Earth Institute,
Columbia University. With
Biel Boutrous Biel.

Prison Conditions in Nigeria:
Matters Arising, Challenges and
the Way Forward. Sponsored
by the College of Social Work,
University of Illinois at Chicago.

Roundtable with Columbia
University's Human Rights
Advocates. Sponsored by
International House.

On the first day of service, the church we had built was full of people from the prison. I saw a very old woman—the same age as my grandmother—standing there. I went to ask her why she was there, not believing she could be in prison. She told me that her grandson had fought with her neighbor's son, and because they couldn't find him, the police arrested her. I wept when I heard this and said something is wrong with the criminal justice system. That day, in that church, I decided I needed to leave the Jesuits to work for prison reform.



3

WORKSHOPS

HRAP organizes a number of skills-building workshops to help the Advocates succeed in their advocacy efforts. The Program deeply appreciates the time—which always goes beyond the scheduled hours—that the workshop instructors devote to the Advocates.



Geoffrey presented the prison reform advocates' Video Action Plan.

DOCUMENTATION

Pamela Graham

Columbia University

The Center for Human Rights Documentation & Research (CHRDR) at Columbia University holds an extensive collection of archives of human rights NGOs. Director Pamela Graham discussed the col-

lecting program and the process of working with NGOs to preserve their records. She noted the value and importance of preserving the record of human rights advocacy. The CHRDR is also developing the Human Rights Web Archive, an online resource that captures and preserves the websites of hu-

man rights organizations and blogs. Graham demonstrated the HRWA and discussed the issues associated with preserving this information and encouraged advocates to consider contributing their websites to this collecting effort.

EDITORIAL WRITING

Melissa Batchelor Warnke

In this four-session workshop, Melissa Batchelor Warnke instructed the Advocates how to compose effective op-eds in support of their human rights advocacy goals. She focused on writing for clarity, brevity, information, authority and style, examining op-eds that did this effectively. Advocates finished the course with a well-edited op-ed ready for submission to local, national or international outlets. Melissa is a freelance writer and editor who has worked at the Google Creative Lab, Open Society Foundations' Africa Office and the Save Darfur Coalition.

EFFECTIVE PRESENTATIONS

Stephanie V. Grepo

Columbia University

The Advocates learned how to make concise and effective presentations on their work. Stephanie encouraged the Advocates to provide constructive feedback to one another in a supportive environment.

ETHICS AND COMPLIANCE

Michael Silverman

Columbia University

Michael Silverman, Adjunct Associate Professor at School of International and Public Affairs, led a workshop on the broader issues of managing organizations to meet their respective compliance and ethical challenges. Michael has held various offices specializing in strategic planning, program management, compliance and policy development in both the public and private sectors.

FUNDRAISING

Erik Detiger

Philantropia Inc.

With more than a decade of experience working in the field of international philanthropy and fundraising, Erik Detiger provided the Advocates with an overview of concepts and strategies in international fundraising. The workshop focused on fundraising from institutional donors and individuals.

HUMAN RIGHTS SKILLS AND ADVOCACY

Jo Becker

Human Rights Watch

Jo Becker, Advocacy Director for the Children's Rights Division at Human Rights Watch, frequently represents Human Rights Watch before the media, government officials and the general public on issues including child soldiers, abusive child labor and juvenile justice, her primary areas of expertise. In her workshop, Advocates explored broad-based human rights campaigns, the use of the media,

and advocacy with UN bodies, the U.S. government and the private sector (corporations).

INTERVIEWING

T.R. Lansner

Columbia University

Thomas R. Lansner provided basic skills and tips for preparing and presenting positive and proactive media and public appearances that promote the Advocates' messages.

MAXIMIZING YOUR TIME IN HRAP

Bakary Tandia

African Services Committee

2010 Advocate Bakary Tandia helped the Advocates to maximize their time in HRAP. He described the U.S. government system through the lens of advocacy and presented resources available to advocates in the USA. He also facilitated discussions in which the Advocates shared what they learned in the various courses they attended while in HRAP. Tandia is a case worker and policy advocate at African Services Committee in New York City.

RESEARCH, DOCUMENTATION AND REPORTING

Diederik Lohman

Jane Buchanan

Human Rights Watch
Human Rights Watch Senior Researchers Diederik Lohman and Jane Buchanan led a six-part workshop on Research, Documentation and Writing. The workshop covered the conceptualization of

a research project, interviewing victims and witnesses, interviewing perpetrators and accomplices and writing.

STRESS, TRAUMA, AND RENEWAL

Sheila Platt

Community and Family Services International

A psychiatric social worker and consultant to the United Nations on the support of emergency relief workers, Sheila Platt offered a two-day workshop on understanding stress, trauma and renewal from the perspective of human rights workers. Advocates reflected upon their own experiences and learned how to care for themselves while they care for others.

THEATRE OF THE OPPRESSED

Jeremiah Drake

Riverside Church

Jeremiah Kyle Drake of the Education Ministry of The Riverside Church in The City of New York introduced the Advocates to Theatre of the Oppressed, a forum of participatory theatre.

VIDEO ADVOCACY

Bukeni Waruzi

WITNESS

The Advocates travelled to WITNESS in Brooklyn, where they participated in a workshop on the effective use of video advocacy as a complement to traditional approaches to human rights advocacy. Advocates learned the ways in which stories, visual evidence and personal testimony can be used as part of a human rights advocacy strategy to inform policy.

4 SUPPORT

The Institute for the Study of Human Rights is very grateful to the following for their financial support of the 2013 Program.

ALBERT ACOSTA

Bronx, NY

HARRIMAN INSTITUTE

Columbia University

DR. ZELMA HENRIQUES

John Jay College of Justice

OPEN SOCIETY FOUNDATIONS

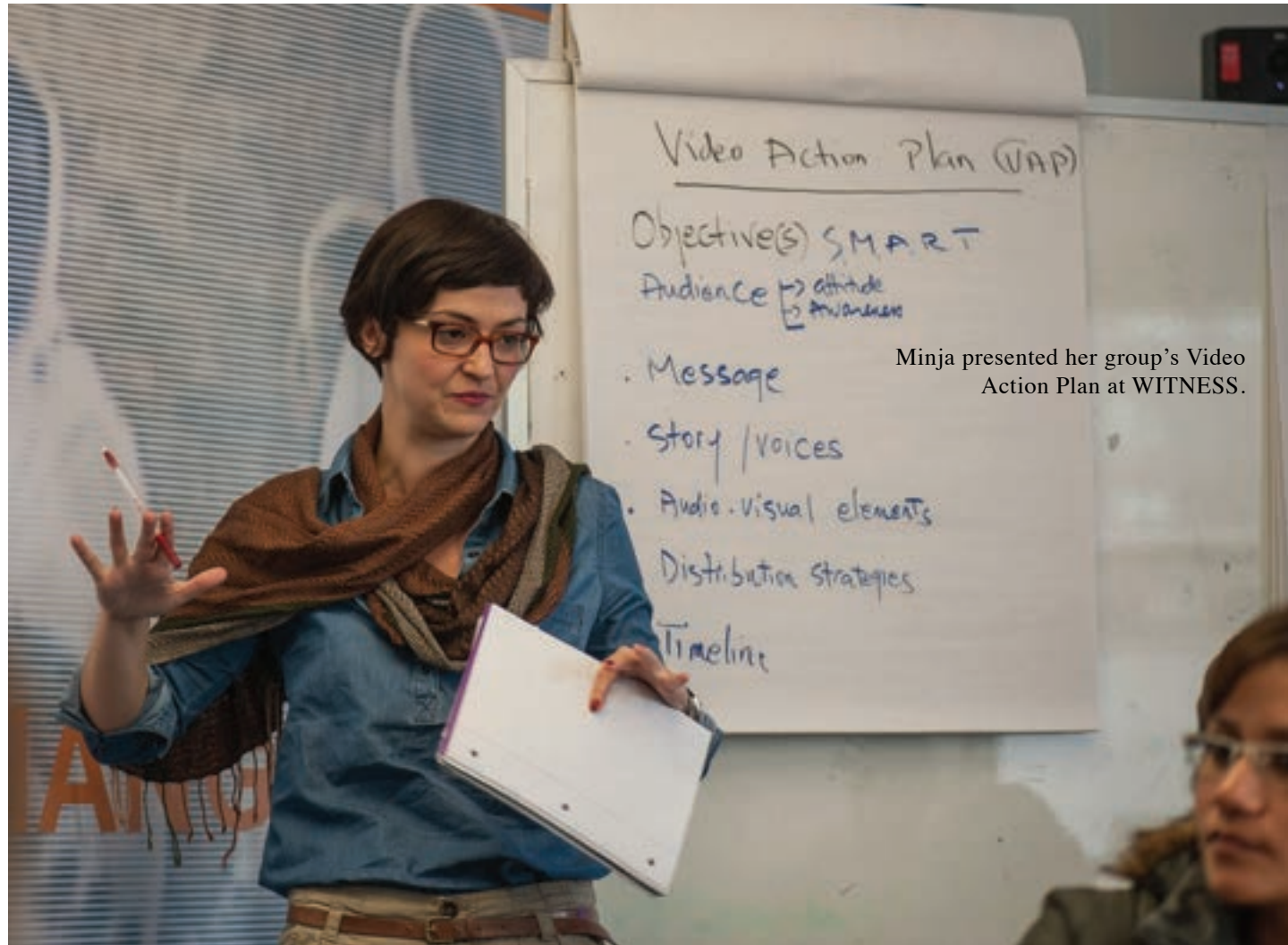
Africa Programs

OPEN SOCIETY FOUNDATIONS

International Women's Program

SPERRY FUND

ANONYMOUS DONORS



Minja presented her group's Video Action Plan at WITNESS.

5 HRAP ADMINISTRATION

Stephanie V. Grepo

Stephanie V. Grepo joined ISHR as the Director of Capacity Building in August 2008. From 2000 to 2007, she was seconded by the U.S. Department of State to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the world's largest regional security organization. Stephanie contributed to the first post-conflict elections and developed multi-ethnic experiential education programs in Kosovo; implemented confidence-building projects in the former crisis region of Macedonia; worked on return and integration issues and led a field office of 10 staff in central Croatia; and served as the youth and education advisor in Serbia. As an international observer for the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, she observed elections in Bosnia (2010) and Georgia (2012). In 1999, she co-directed a UNESCO-

funded summer school for secondary school students on the Croatian island of Vis. Stephanie earned a master's degree in human rights from The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University in 2000. Previously, she worked as an editor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Her volunteer experience with resettling Bosnian refugees through Catholic Charities of Boston in the 1990s led her to work in human rights.

Allison Tamer

Allison Tamer was the 2013 Human Rights Advocates Program Coordinator. She joined ISHR after completing a master's degree in Human Rights Studies from Columbia University. She focused her studies on human rights NGOs during the Cold War, writing her thesis on the relationship between Helsinki Watch and the underground

human rights movement Charter 77. In 2012, Allison participated in ISHR's Graduate Student Volunteer Program. She worked with 2009 Advocate Evalyne Achan at Charity for Rural Development in Gulu, Uganda. Allison previously held positions at the Health Care Policy Department at Harvard Medical School and the U.S. Global Leadership Campaign in Washington, D.C. She holds a bachelor's degree in International Relations from Boston University. In late 2013, she joined American Jewish World Service as a Grants Management Associate.

Rose Anderson

Rose Anderson is currently pursuing a master's degree in the Human Rights Studies MA program at Columbia University. Previously, she spent five years with WITNESS on their gender-based violence program, training and supporting activists in using video as an advocacy tool in Kenya, Uganda, Sudan and Kyrgyzstan. Before WITNESS, Rose worked at the PeaceWomen Project of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, which monitors the UN's progress on women peace and security issues. Rose earned her BA from Global College, a global study-abroad and experiential learning program of Long Island University, where she focused her studies on peace, reconciliation and gender.



T.R. Lansner led a workshop on interviewing techniques.

6 ISHR STAFF

- Yotam Amit**
Web Developer
- Irene Atamian**
Business Manager
- Elazar Barkan**
Director
- Jillian Carson**
Program Coordinator
- Kristina Eberbach**
Director, Education
- Yasmine Ergas**
Associate Director
- Danielle Goldberg**
Coordinator, Peace-building and Rights

- Stephanie V. Grepo**
Director, Capacity Building
- Ariella Lang**
Director, Alliance for Historical Dialogue and Accountability
- J. Paul Martin**
Senior Scholar
- David L. Phillips**
Director, Peace-building and Rights
- Elsa Stamatopoulou**
Director, Indigenous Peoples' Rights Program
- John Washburn**
Adjunct Research Scholar, International Criminal Court Program
- Janine White**
Program Coordinator



Richard, Absolom and Sylvester met for the first time during Orientation.

7 COMMENTS FROM HRAP'S PARTNERS

We were honored to host a discussion in Washington, D.C., with this year's HRAP participants. The Institute for Inclusive Security supports women globally in promoting more inclusivity in peace processes, so what a sheer pleasure to be in the company of advocates and activists who breathe, eat, and sleep 'inclusion.' Fighting for the rights of those existing on the forgotten fringes, from those with 'disabilities' to prisoners, from women to youth, and more, their personal passion permeated our entire discussion. What was also clear were their messages about the what and why of their work! We encourage the women we support to be incredibly concise and compelling in their advocacy, so hearing the HRAP participants declare their visions in such a direct but colorful way, including the use of concrete statistics as well as stories, truly stuck with me. Thank you!

Farah Council
South Sudan and Sudan Program
Institute for Inclusive Security
Washington, D.C.

Every year, for quite some time now, the Inspection Panel has the honor to host the participants of the Human Rights Advocates Program, in our offices in the World Bank in Washington, to introduce the Panel and its work. We, at the Panel, look forward to this annual event as a learning opportunity as well, because the Advocates



Sylvester was filmed as part of the interviewing workshop.

share with us their experiences and knowledge of human rights issues and can relate closely to the work of the Panel—to respond to complaints from people who are affected, or might be affected, by a World Bank-financed project.

Dilek Barlas
Deputy Executive Secretary
The Inspection Panel
The World Bank

I met Richard and Musola at a State Department screening of our film Lives Worth Living. Columbia's program gives participants like Richard and Musola an opportunity to learn about advocacy and fighting for the rights of their

people. Knowledge is one of the most powerful tools to fight discrimination. Columbia empowers its participants to return to their home countries and start changing the world around them.

Alison Gilkey
Producer
Lives Worth Living

It always a pleasure to work with your team and the advocates. We genuinely learn from them. We look forward to supporting your next group of advocates.

Colleen Lewis
Director, Disability Services
Columbia University

We were so inspired by the stories of these amazing women and how they have taken action to make a difference in their communities and their countries.

Peter Twyman
CEO
Keep a Child Alive
Brooklyn, NY

It is clear that the HRAP team is committed to the pursuit of social justice. Their dedication was clearly illustrated when three of the Advocates spoke about prison conditions in their own countries to parolees and probationers at the Osborne Association in New York City. The clients were so stunned to learn about the horrific condi-

tions in the jails and prisons there. Fortunately, the clients also realized the importance of the work of the prison reform advocates. I look forward to presenting more Human Rights Advocates to our clients in the years ahead!

Kimora
Professor
John Jay College of Criminal
Justice

Sharing WITNESS' experience in video advocacy with Advocates from the Human Rights Advocates Program and enabling them to strengthen their knowledge in human rights advocacy strategies has been the core goal of the long-standing collaboration between

WITNESS and HRAP. The short-term training provided a participatory space for sharing knowledge in human rights advocacy, enhance theoretical and technical skills on video advocacy and open discussion on various human rights issues. Participants posed thoughtful questions and demonstrated a broad range of expertise and passion for human rights. We are grateful to meet and train these Advocates and leaders, and we certainly look forward to keep this collaboration alive for many more years to come.

Bukeni Waruzi
Senior Program Manager
WITNESS



The prison reform advocates cooperated on a Video Action Plan.

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ALUMNI SUPPORT

The Institute for the Study of Human Rights is very grateful to the following HRAP alumni who kindly interviewed candidates for the 2013 HRAP:

- 1998 Advocate [Silvana Turner](#), ARGENTINA
- 1999 Advocate [Mikheil Mirziashvili](#), GEORGIA
- 2003 Advocate [Patricia Guerrero](#), COLOMBIA
- 2004 Advocate [K.R. Renuka](#), INDIA
- 2007 Advocate [Ly Pisey](#), CAMBODIA
- 2008 Advocate [Roger Luhiriri](#), DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO
- 2008 Advocate [Peter Mulbah](#), LIBERIA
- 2009 Advocate [Evalyne Achan](#), UGANDA
- 2009 Advocate [Akiny Ocholla](#), KENYA
- 2009 Advocate [Ambika Paudel](#), NEPAL
- 2010 Advocate [Najlaa Ahmed](#), SUDAN
- 2010 Advocate [Susan Aryeetey](#), GHANA
- 2010 Advocate [Bakary Tandia](#), MAURITANIA/USA
- 2010 Advocate [Agnes Atim](#), UGANDA
- 2011 Advocate [Lana Ackar](#), BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA
- 2011 Advocate [Nadia Juliana Bazan Londono](#), COLOMBIA
- 2011 Advocate [Lydia Cherop](#), UGANDA
- 2011 Advocate [Ngungua Sangua Gisele](#), DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO
- 2011 Advocate [Colins Imoh](#), NIGERIA
- 2011 Advocate [Rita Mainaly](#), NEPAL
- 2011 Advocate [Elvis Mbembe Binda](#), RWANDA
- 2011 Advocate [John Mwebe](#), UGANDA
- 2011 Advocate [Salima Namusobya](#), UGANDA
- 2011 Advocate [Huda Shafiq](#), SUDAN
- 2011 Advocate [Abu Tunde](#), NIGERIA
- 2012 Advocate [Rachel Wambui Mburu](#), KENYA
- 2012 Advocate [Lydia Jacenta Nakiganda](#), UGANDA
- 2012 Advocate [Primah Kwagala Namudiba](#), UGANDA

1998 Advocate Silvana Turner interviewed Maria.



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RECENT HRAP ALUMNI NEWS

In July 2013, 1989 Advocate **Hina Jilani**, internationally known human rights defender from Pakistan, joined The Elders, a group of independent leaders working for peace, justice and human rights. The group was first convened by Nelson Mandela in 2007.

1990 Advocate **Raji Sourani** was recognized for his work defending and promoting human rights for all in Palestine and the Arab World for 35 years with the Right Livelihood Award in 2013. Sourani established the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights.

Congratulations to 1996 Advocate **Twesigye Jackson Kaguri** of Uganda who was recognized as a CNN HERO in 2012 for The Nyaka AIDS Orphans Project.

1999 Advocate **Delphine Djiraibe** of Chad was named a Reagan Fascell Democracy Fellow at the National Endowment for Democracy.

The Arcus Foundation recently named 2000 Advocate **Adrian Relu Coman** of Romania as Director, International Human Rights Program.

Last year, the International Forum for Democratic Studies at the National Endowment for Democracy named 2000 Advocate **Nang Lao Liang Won** (“Tay Tay”) a Reagan-Fascell Democracy Fellow. As a fellow, she explored strategies for protecting women’s human rights and

promoting women’s participation in Burma’s democratization process.

2002 Advocate **Saifuddin Bantasyam** was named Director of the Center for Peace and Conflict Resolution Studies of University Syiah Kuala in Banda Aceh, Indonesia.

2003 Advocate **Patricia Guerrero** is one of two women recently chosen by more than 50 organizations and networks of female grassroots activists to the National Peace Council, a multi-sector advisory council charged with finding a lasting and sustainable peace for Colombia. Patricia is the founder and director of Liga de Mujeres Desplazadas (LMD) an independent, nonprofit organization that advocates for the restitution of the fundamental rights, which displaced women do not have because of the armed conflict in Colombia.

2004 Advocate **Jacqueline Moudina** of Chad was one of the 2013 recipients of the prestigious Alison Des Forges Award for Extraordinary Activism, granted by Human Rights Watch. Jacqueline was recognized for her efforts to bring to justice the former Chadian dictator Hissene Habre.

2009 Advocate **Nazibrola Janezashvili** was named Executive Director, Association Unity of Judges of Georgia.

Congratulations to 2010 Advocate **Bakary Tandia** of Mauritania/USA who was one of 27 leaders and orga-

nizations honored by the New York City Police Department Community Affairs Bureau in 2013 for their continued support to the immigrant community and for helping the New Immigrant Outreach Unit in improving community relations throughout the city.

In 2013, The Diplomatic Courier and Young Professionals in Foreign Policy named 2011 Advocate **Elvis Mbembe Binda** of Rwanda to its list of the 99 most influential foreign policy leaders under the age of 33.

2011 Advocate **Salima Namusobya** of Uganda became the Founding Executive Director of the Initiative for Social and Economic Rights. She is a lawyer and human rights advocate who has specialized in international human rights law and forced migration.

2012 Advocate **Marayah Fyneah** of Liberia was one of 51 women chosen out of more than 500 applicants for the 2013 Women in Public Service Institute at Bryn Mawr College.

2012 Advocate **Kemal Pervanic** of Bosnia and Herzegovina is nearing completion of his documentary *Pretty Village*, which, he reports, “remembers those killed and gives back voices to those who survived.”

2012 Advocate **Sabrina Mahtani** of Sierra Leone has been selected a 2013-14 Wasserstein Public Interest Fellow at Harvard Law School.

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CONNECTING COLUMBIA STUDENTS WITH HRAP ALUMNI TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

The Graduate Student Volunteer Program (GSVP) at the Institute for the Study of Human Rights (ISHR) was created in 2011 to support alumni of the Human Rights Advocates Program (HRAP). ISHR sends Columbia University human rights students abroad each summer to contribute to the advocacy efforts of HRAP alumni-led organizations. Between 2011 and 2013, a total of six students volunteered at HRAP-affiliated grassroots organizations in India, Sierra Leone, Uganda and Kenya. GSVP is beneficial to the human rights students too in that it immerses them in grassroots human rights advocacy efforts and gives them first-hand knowledge of human rights in the field.

Allison Tamer, who earned the Human Rights Studies MA (GSAS), travelled to Gulu, Uganda, in 2012 to work at the Charity for Rural Development (CHAFORD), which was co-founded by 2009 Advocate Evalyne Achan. The organization’s mission is to transform the lives



Allison volunteered in Gulu, Uganda.

of the communities affected by conflict through socio-economic interventions and good governance. Allison reported: “CHAFORD’s small staff and numerous projects provided me with a very hands-on and enriching volunteer experience. I traveled to Atiak frequently as the

organization has a second office located in this region. During my extended trips to the field in Atiak, I was responsible for documenting CHAFORD’s projects for their quarterly reports. I monitored and observed CHAFORD’s facilitation of their women’s support groups such as the Village Savings Loans Associations and Land Rights Groups. I conducted interviews with CHAFORD’s beneficiaries and these interviews will be published in CHAFORD’s upcoming newsletter and website. Lastly, I took frequent day trips into the Amuru district to witness and facilitate community conflict resolutions for land disputes.”

Spending time with CWDR gave me insight into the management and structure of a grassroots NGO that should prove very valuable in my future endeavors.

Randi Aho

Interning with NMJD in Sierra Leone was a deeply impacting experience for me, as it showed me firsthand the impacts that the mining and extractives sector has on both children's rights and certain economic rights in the country.

Jennifer Wilmore

Evalyne writes that people in her village still ask about Allison. She added, "As a result of my experience hosting Allison, Gulu University, in partnership with universities in Belgium, asked my family to host student volunteers from Belgium. At the moment, we have two student interns who are living with us and six more will come before the end of the year."

Jennifer Wilmore, who earned the MIA from SIPA with a concentration in Human Rights, worked with 2006 Advocate Agnes Tamba at the Network Movement for Justice & Development (NMJD) in Sierra Leone. Established in 1988, the organization plays an important role in organizing and mobilizing civil society organizations, capacity-building organizations and social movements around the country into strong networks and coalitions for effective and creative engagement with strategic stakeholders at all levels. While volunteering at NMJD in 2011, Jennifer visited artisanal mining sites in the western area of Sierra Leone with a research team of human rights activists. They documented the status of child miners just before

the observance of the Day of the African Child on June 16.

Of the experience, Jennifer said, "Interning with NMJD in Sierra Leone was a deeply impacting experience for me, as it showed me firsthand the impacts that the mining and extractives sector has on both children's rights and certain economic rights in the country. It planted in me an interest in improving citizens' access to information regarding their land rights and government agreements with foreign mining companies operating in their communities. This experience led me to study the issue further during my time at graduate school, and I also addressed similar issues related to access to information and property rights following graduation through my work with the World Justice Project."

Aminata Kelly-Lamin of NMJD reported that Jennifer executed her responsibilities "with tact, aptitude and emotional stability. She performed every task... with great amount of managerial ability. She supported among others the launch of a sub-national and national report on cost benefit analysis on two

corporate mining agreement, acting in the capacity of the Program Manager who was unavoidably absent due to some other crucial engagement. Jennifer exemplified her leadership ability by preparing an executive summary of the report and a press release to back-up the process for the press."

Two students have worked at the Centre for Women's Development and Research (CWDR) in Chennai, India, which was founded by 2004 Advocate K.R. Renuka in 1993 in collaboration with other female activists committed to increasing the number of women leading NGOs in India. CWDR serves 90 slums in Chennai and 25 villages in Edaikazhinadu Panchayath, Kancheepuram district. The organization's programming focuses on three groups: domestic workers, single women, and adolescent girls. It has recently expanded its programming to include income-generation projects for women, job placement for domestic workers and an afterschool program to help girls reach graduation and enter university.

At CWDR in 2011, Kimberly Rogovin, who earned the Human Rights Studies MA (GSAS), worked on grant proposals as well as conducted a survey with local shop owners and customers on the types of soap they buy in order to inform the Center's soap-making business. She also started a Facebook page on the Center at www.facebook.com/cwdrindia.

In 2012, Randi Aho, who earned the MIA from SIPA with a concentration in Human Rights, designed a new format and theme for

CWDR's website using Photoshop. She updated information on the website and edited the information for grammar and new content. She was also responsible for updating the organization's Facebook and Twitter accounts. She drafted a letter to potential donors, asking for funding for a project called Girls to Graduates. The program provides girls from the slums with school materials and after school support in order to ensure they successfully reach graduation. Randi summarized her experience as follows: "CWDR has an impressive history in defending women's rights and promoting the development of women and girls. Their mission was well implemented and they have a surprising wealth of programming for such a small organization. Spending time with CWDR

gave me insight into the management and structure of a grassroots NGO that should prove very valuable in my future endeavors."

In 2013, ISHR sent a student, Morag Mwenya Mapoma Neill, for the first time to work at the Nyaka AIDS Orphans Project, which was founded by 1996 Advocate Twesigye Jackson Kaguri. Morag reported: "I was responsible for broadening its local fundraising strategy in Uganda. After my third week, I traveled to the Kanungu and Rukungiri districts to visit the Nyaka School. During this trip, we delivered nine donated computers to the classroom teachers at the Nyaka School. This trip gave meaning to my fundraising research; it demonstrated the extent to which the founder's vision for implementing

a holistic program to end poverty has been realized."

Kelly Voss, Nyaka's director of development, said the following about the benefits of having volunteers: "Their commitment and passion ensures we can carry out our mission to work on behalf of HIV/AIDS orphans in rural Uganda to end systemic deprivation, poverty and hunger through a holistic approach to community development, education, and healthcare. Hosting volunteers from Columbia University helps to bridge the gap between the continents of Africa and North America. It helps bring developing nations into the lives of students who are the next leaders of our ever-shrinking globe. It is a win-win for us all. Thank you!"



Jennifer volunteered with 2006 Advocate Agnes Tamba at the Network Movement for Justice & Development in Sierra Leone.



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All photos except for those on pages 37 and 39 are by Alan Orling.
Program report designed by Blue Sky eSolutions.