Wine Tatiana Camilo, Angola

Wine is a passionate advocate for children, refugees, and asylum-seekers. She works as Senior Protection Assistant at UNHCR, where she is responsible for interviewing, as well as providing counseling, designing activities that teach self-reliance and empowerment to women. She empowers young refugee and asylum-seeking girls to think analytically about power dynamics and gender roles as a step toward gender equality. She spearheaded a project to collect information about 445 unregistered foreign-born children living in Angola, partnered with the National Registration Office and Notaries, and sent letters to government authorities to call attention to the mass of unregistered children who did not have birth certificates and thus did not have rights (including the right to education) in Angola. Wine plans to continue her work with refugees and asylum seekers, facilitating dialogues and self-reliance projects in Angola and overseas.

Sènan Eloignon sè Ursule Amoussou, Benin

Sènan is a PhD student in Private Law who is involved in the protection and promotion of persons with Albinism. She serves as a law adviser at Divine Connexion Worldwide, an NGO for Human Rights advocacy for People with Albinism in Benin, a group whose mission is to educate people with Albinism, to dissuade them from taking outdoor jobs that would raise their risk of skin cancer. Sènan also serves as the administrative secretary of the National Council for Assistance to Refugees. She plans to use her passion and drive to become a politician who advocates for the involvement of people with disabilities in politics, with the ultimate goal of changing the discourse around disability in Benin.
Fanta carine Zongo, Burkina Faso

Fanta has an extensive background studying Literature. She received her Bachelor’s degree in American Civilization and Literature at the University of Ouagadougou, and now teaches English in a public school in Burkina Faso. She believes in the link between illiteracy and poverty, and advocates for the importance of school in her community. She also connects community members in need with employment opportunities and girls who have abandoned school with financial aid so they can start their own small businesses. Fanta aims to improve the educational system in her country through research, creating new programs, re-vamping teaching methods, and proposing plans for systemic improvement to the Ministry of Education.

Alexis Habonimana, Burundi

Alexis empowers youth to grow to their full potential while contributing to societal transformation. He is the founder of Joshua Generation, a Shakespearean Theater Group that aims to give opportunities for inspiration and empowerment to youth in his community, as well as to teach English and moral values through acting. He believes the educational system in Burundi does not give youth an understanding of their potential role in societal transformation. To combat this problem he challenges youth in the Joshua Generation to think beyond the status quo, discover their potential, and apply their skills and knowledge to solve problems in their communities so they can transform their lives and those of the people around them. He plans to expand his mentoring platform until it becomes a nationwide staple for empowering youth to lead societal change, especially in the realm of women’s societal roles.
Nangoh Nangoh Maweo, Cameroon

Nangoh uses his medical and managerial skills to respond to the ongoing cholera outbreak in the rural area of Fik of the Somali Region of Ethiopia. As the Lead Focal Point in this response, he advocates for government involvement and commitment to the response, coordinates community mobilization for information education and communication (IEC) on the disease, and trains Ministry staff on social and medical aspects of cholera. In addition to his current work in Ethiopia, he is a practicing general healthcare provider. Nangoh dreams of supporting, in collaboration with local, NGO, government and other stakeholders, the design, development and implementation of sustainable, culture-specific and needs-based health programs and interventions for refugee and internally displaced populations in Cameroon and other countries in Africa. He plans to continue to learn about policy design and implementation so that he can design healthcare policies to positively impact many countries in Africa.

Nandjim Kossadoum Corneille, Chad

Nandjim has more than six years of experience working for World Vision International. He has served as Project Coordinator, Development Facilitator, and Education Officer. Through this work, he equips community groups with the skills and confidence to engage with the local government to hold them accountable for their decisions and actions that affect education. He has experience in education, project management, and community development, and his current projects are: to increase school enrolment in the Cluster of Logone Oriental, Doba, to help identify schools that need rehabilitation, to construct more temporary and long-term learning spaces, and to provide trainings that improve teachers’ professional skills. He plans to continue these efforts in order to continue to influence those responsible for making decisions about educational policy in Chad.
Carine Zere Nzimba, Republic of the Congo

Carine is a fierce advocate for the rights of indigenous people in the Republic of the Congo. As a member of the indigenous community of Congo Brazzaville, she lives and understands the discrimination against indigenous people; they have few economic opportunities, limited legal rights, and limited access to hospitals and schools. Carine holds a Masters degree in public law, works for an NGO dedicated to promoting the rights of indigenous people, and serves as an assistant to the National Parliament of Congo Brazzaville, where she is learning how to write and pass laws. She is also a member of the NGO Comite de Liason des ONG du Congo. She also founded an NGO (ADFAC), which aims to promote and protect the rights of indigenous women and children. Carine plans to continue her work and hopes to become a member of parliament in the Republic of the Congo, where she could be the ultimate advocate for her community’s rights.

Abena Yeboaa Tannor, Ghana

Abena is a medical doctor who has a passion for Rehabilitation. Six years ago, she recognized that most Ghanaians with disabilities are discharged from hospitals with no therapy, so she started volunteering in a physiotherapy department. She then obtained her master’s degree in Rehabilitation and started the first locally-led medical rehabilitation service in Ghana. Abena also coordinates a telemedicine training program for nurses in rehabilitation, serves as a member of the International Society of Physical and Rehabilitation Medicine, and leads a multidisciplinary Rehabilitation team, which works to improve the quality of life in persons with disabilities with the goal of helping people develop independence. She also teaches free sexual health education programs for couples, with the goal of reducing the incidences of marital discordance that stem from the stigmatization of sexual health education in Ghana. Abena plans to continue her work to become a disability advocate, to train physicians in rehabilitations, and to create multidisciplinary teams nationwide to educate more couples on sexual health.
David Reed Akolgo, Ghana

David is a passionate advocate for education in Ghana. Throughout his own education, he experienced how Ghanaian children often suffer in their quest for formal education. He believes that for any country to develop, education must be taken seriously. So, he attended St. John Bosco College of Education to earn his degree in Basic Education, as well as the University of Cape Coast to earn his degree in the Psychological Foundations of Education. He now works with the Ghana Education Service as a headmaster of a rural school in Zabzoaga. He also tutors at the College of Distance Education at the University of Cape Coast. He loves his current work with children and is excited to expand his work to train young professionals to become great teachers.

Paschal Awingura Apanga, Ghana

Paschal is a public health physician specialist and medical superintendent of Talensi District Hospital, where he provides surgical and obstetric care and carries out public health interventions. He also organizes community meetings and home visits to educate community members on the importance of antenatal care, family planning, neonatal care, and immunizations. He was appointed medical officer in 2012, during which time he got a good grasp on the systemic health issues that affect Ghanaian society. He earned his Masters of Public Health at the University of Sheffield, and The Ghana Health Service Council appointed him substantive medical superintendent. He aims to use his experience as a medical provider, extensive research experience, and passion for public health to influence healthcare policy decisions that affect all of Ghana.
Winnie Anyango Singwa, Kenya

Winnie is a fierce advocate for girls’ health and education in Kenya. She holds a diploma in Social Work and Community Development from Kenya Polytechnic-Kisumu, and works as a HIV/AIDS Health Screener in Siaya County. She is also the head of an organization called Wing It Up-Kenya, which aims to collect sanitary products for girls, to empower them through discussion groups on girls’ issues, and to gather and grant them educational scholarships. Previously, she worked with Family Care, administering family planning methods in Kisumu County, and with the Hope Alive Campaign as the head of the Dignity Program, which collected sanitary products for girls in need. Winnie aims to ensure that no girl in Kenya misses school because of a lack of proper sanitary products during menstruation. She wants to expand Wing It Up-Kenya to communities across the country to empower and inspire young girls so they can get education without menstruation as an obstacle.

Gonkarnue Nuahn, Liberia

Gonkarnue is a medical doctor who has been the deputy chief medical officer at the Jackson F. Doe Hospital for the Ministry of Health of Liberia for one year. While most young professionals prefer to work in Monrovia because of the vast availability of social services, Gonkarnue prefers to stay in Tappita so he can work more closely with his community. In addition to his medical practice, he speaks at school programs and on the local radio station to create health awareness. He advocates for summer employment opportunities at the hospital for college students for Tappita, and contributes financially to community improvement initiatives. He hopes to continue his work to make the Jackson F. Doe Hospital a major training center for health practitioners in Liberia.
Clarence-Nocky Kaapehi, Namibia

Clarence-Nocky is a strong advocate for youth. In addition to his work in the government as a forest ranger, he is the founder of HANO Youth Foundation, a charity organization registered with the Ministry of Health and Social Services, which aims to uplift quality of life for youth, focusing on education, training, and practical skills-development. HANO provides activities that create a supportive structure for vulnerable and orphaned children. HANO is one of the most active organizations in Namibia, with branches in Namibia, Botswana, and Canada. Clarence-Nocky is passionate about steering youth toward successful futures, and is aware that many community organizations fold because of poor management skills. He wants to develop his management skills so and HANO can continue to support the development of youth in Namibia.

Abdulrasak Opeyemi Ejiwumi, Nigeria

Dr. Ejiwumi, A. O. is a medical doctor with experience in Humanitarian Emergency Interventions involving outbreaks of Severe Acute Malnutrition, Malaria, Measles, Meningitis, and Cholera amongst children and mothers in under-resourced areas of northern Nigeria. He is working on a proposal to establish a Youth Center in north central Nigeria to address the numerous unwanted pregnancies, unsafe abortions, and STIs in the community’s young people. Dr. Ejiwumi is a strong advocate for sexual and reproductive health education. He was the chairperson of a NGO that traveled around Nigeria teaching about sexual and reproductive health. He is also concerned with the rise of Severe Acute Malnutrition and mothers in Northwestern Nigeria, where the Boko Haram insurgency has rendered thousands of people homeless. Beyond his medical practice and volunteer teaching, Dr. Ejiwumi hopes to empower youth to create societal change. He plans to use his experience, passion, and expertise to get involved in the politics of his community and his country to reduce health crises and increase youth potential in Nigeria.
Fatou Binetou Ba, Senegal

Fatou works for the President of Senegal, developing strategies to protect children from abuse, rights violations, and exploitations. She is passionate about homelessness and migration to other countries among children in Senegal. She believes that advocacy is a strong weapon, but that it is not enough; she believes communities must develop a will to participate in their own advancement—they must understand the issues they face, share their perspectives with the government, and hold the government accountable to addressing their needs. Fatou currently advocates for child protection and is excited to turn to advocating for more general human rights. She plans to hone her skills in advocacy to defend human rights in Senegal and eventually in Africa as a whole.

Moth Diop, Senegal

Moth is an advocate for intercultural exchange and active citizenship. He holds a Masters degree in the Literature and Civilization of the English-Speaking World from the Université Gaston Berger de Saint-Louis and has ten years of experience in project management. He is currently the project manager of “Intercultural Universe,” a project that aims to facilitate intercultural exchanges. Moth recognized that children from ages 0 to 15 make up 45.6% of his community’s population, and that most of the children’s parents did not have a formal education. He believes strongly in the importance of education, and founded a program for children below average to take summer classes, and for adults to learn reading and writing in French and English. Moth also created a nonprofit called Citizen Initiative, which organizes free training sessions of leadership, social entrepreneurship, and participatory leadership. He is a second year doctoral student who promotes democratic governance and participatory citizenship. He plans to continue his work to become a proactive leader in citizenship; he wants to empower citizens to fulfill their duties and to grasp the responsibilities that come with being a citizen.
Rahma Abdirahman Ahmed, Somalia

Rahma holds a certificate in Midwifery and a degree in Public Health. She works for German Agro Action, focusing on WASH and community awareness of nutrition. She volunteers as a midwife during deliveries and providing postnatal care for mothers and their newborns while they are in the hospital. Rahma recognizes the problems mothers face in Somalia and wants to advocate for the introduction of national health policies that address these problems. For example, women in Somalia cannot sign for a caesarean section without their husbands’ consent, which often leads to loss of life. Rahma seeks to address laws like these in her advocacy work. Furthermore, Rahma is considering forming a Reproductive Health Counseling Center in Somalia that would inform Somali families about their choices with regard to reproductive health (antenatal care, postnatal care, family planning, and STI and HIV transmission counseling).

Roné Deléne McFarlane, South Africa

Roné is an education researcher and activist determined to dismantle the unequal access to education left from South Africa’s apartheid history. She has been a leader and a teacher in more than nine countries. Currently, she works as a Campaigns Researcher for the South African NGO Equal Education, where she conducts policy analysis and research, compiles submissions to Parliament, provincial legislatures and the Basic Education Department, and represents Equal Education in the media and in spoken presentations. She also works as a researcher for Cambridge University, coordinating the South African section of an international study on youth, violence, and surveillance. She is a tutor and graduate research assistant at the University of Cape Town, focusing on school governance. Roné is also a qualified journalist who believes in translating her research into accessible articles that inform the public. Furthermore, she is in the process of establishing an education social enterprise that allows township schools to share resources. Roné looks forward to shifting from working in civil society to working in government through the Mandela Washington Fellowship.
Vuyokazi Abegail Mafilika, South Africa

Vuyokazi is a director for student development and support for the Department of Higher Education and Training. In this position, she provides documents, develops policies, and creates systems that enable technical and vocational colleges to provide holistic support to their students. Her current work focuses on the bursary scheme that benefits of 200,000 financially needy and academically capable students, as well as on guiding and supporting student leadership development and students with special needs. She runs national programs on advocacy and outreach regarding student health and wellness. She previously worked for the office of the Auditor General South Africa. For the last ten years, Vuyokazi has also been involved in a community project that seeks to educate people in rural communities about HIV/AIDS and other chronic illnesses such as diabetes. Through that work, she has made connections that allow her to provide needy families with groceries, donate learning materials to rural schools, and give motivational talks and career advice in rural areas. Vuyokazi is passionate about protecting the rights of poor children and youth who experience barriers to information and opportunities.

Zola Valashiya, South Africa

Zola’s background is in law and policy studies. He works at Corruption Watch as Youth Coordinator and Stakeholder Management, engaging youth on issues around leadership ethics and accountability. He hosts workshops for youth to develop leadership skills. He previously worked at the Institute for Reconciliation and Social Justice, where he developed an interest in social and public policy. He also has experience in project development and campaign coordination. Zola recognizes the low literacy rate in South Africa, so he volunteers to teach public speaking and debate at disadvantaged schools in order to improve literacy skills, as well as oratory and analytical skills and self-confidence. He hopes in helping students develop these skills, he is helping them to excel academically and be prepared to become influential leaders who can build a better society. Zola plans to steer his work into policy and projects for African youth that promote good governance in Africa.
Immaculate Willbroad Kyamanywa, United Republic of Tanzania

Immaculate works with Tanzania National Parks (TANAPA) as a Human Resources and Administrative Officer. She is passionate about making a positive difference in Tanzania and in individual lives through her service. She has previously worked as a Human Resources Intern at Kiondoni Municipal Council and as a Duty Manager at Star Times Tanzania Limited. She also volunteered for The Foundation for Tomorrow, completed an internship at the United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, and has volunteer experience educating women and children affected by HIV/AIDS about their rights. Much of her passion centers on women’s issues and health issues; she volunteers teaching art to children whose parents died of HIV/AIDS, she educates and empowers women to speak out against violence against women and children, she educates men on their role in ending violence against women and children, and she conducts seminars on the impact and possible prevention of HIV/AIDS. She envisions herself as a Human Rights Activist engaging in social change around women and children.

Rachel Samuel Nungu, United Republic of Tanzania

Rachel is a medical doctor who focuses on pediatric health. There are 3000 children born with clubfoot in Tanzania each year, each of who often end up with a permanent disability and the stigma that comes with it. They are typically not sent to school and do not receive typical employment opportunities. Rachel wants to improve the lives of these children by educating the community about the treatability of the condition. She is involved in an organization that treats children born with clubfoot each year. She works to educate her community about their rights to health services, to advocate for people seeking treatment for club footedness, and to establish and support clinics in locations all around Tanzania. She believes that a healthy child creates a happy family, which creates a happy and productive community. Rachel wants to be an advocate for health rights in Tanzania. Her goal is to take part in health policy formation in the Tanzanian government.
Rebecca Kasika, United Republic of Tanzania

Rebecca believes that change begins with individuals. For the last five years, she has worked as a Social Worker, Social Administrator, Project Administrator, and Outreach Coordinator at the Brien Holden Vision Institute on projects that aim to provide better eye care and eye health awareness to her community. She is passionate about eye care and strives to eradicate preventable blindness; beyond her roles at the Institute, she advocates for regular check-ups, doctors’ visits, and healthy lifestyle choices. Rebecca is a skilled mentor, leader, and community builder who wants to continue to help others make use of their skills to better the community as a whole. She plans to continue studying mentorship and leadership skills so she can continue to improve her community and the world.

Hezouwe Moise Akebim, Togo

Hezouwe is a linguist and grammar school teacher, as well as a clerk of the court. He focuses on cases about women’s inheritance rights, abandoned children, and divorced women’s rights. He has experience working with NGOs and other public service organizations as well. He also manages a project that creates local groups of Amnesty International Togo in rural villages in order to work toward a strong public partnership. Hezouwe volunteers his time to contribute to the welfare of his peers. He trains children and rural women on human rights and justice issues, assists people in getting substitute birth certificates so they can participate fully in public life, and guides rural women who have land or inheritance problems obtain justice. He hopes to be a strong partner of the civil society, fully vested in fighting injustice and promoting justice and human rights.
Ian Banda, Zambia

Ian is a member of the Youth Equality Disability Pressure Group, which aims to promote and protect the rights of children with disabilities through self-advocacy and representation. As a person with a disability himself, he understands the challenges people with disabilities face and has become a strong advocate for the rights of children with disabilities in all realms of life. He aims to end discrimination against people with disabilities. Ian educates his community on empowering children with disabilities so that they will grow up to contribute to society and be less likely to require social welfare assistance. In turn, that money can be spent on programs that benefit the whole society, such as education or healthcare. He plans to continue to be a strong advocate for equality and justice.