

Arifa Mamane Amadou Arifa - Niger



Arifa Mamane Amadou Arifa has more than three years of experience in project management, community development, and leadership engagement. Currently, Arifa Mamane is a project manager for Seconde Chance, a project under the auspices of the Rotary Club of Niamey Moringa International that supports underprivileged children and orphans in Niger by providing better education, access to healthcare, and improved living conditions. He has previously served as president of his undergraduate student union and volunteered in different international non-governmental organizations, working to eradicate poverty and social injustice and to improve education in Niger. Arifa Mamane holds a bachelor's degree in Business Administration with a specialty in

Business Law from African Development University. He is passionate about education, community development, and leadership engagement, and is committed to empowering youth to design and drive Niger's development. After completing the Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders, Arifa Mamane plans to work with an international organization in Niger to implement policies and projects that will create opportunities for capacity development and economic growth.

Wisdom Apusiga - Ghana



Wisdom Ayinbono Apusiga is an award-winning nurse with 11 years of experience. Currently, he works at Sandema Hospital as the first line nurse manager of the pediatric ward. Wisdom holds a bachelor's degree in Nursing with a specialty in Pediatrics from the University of Ghana, and has a special interest in public health that has motivated him to advocate for the improvement of local and national health policy. In 2018, Wisdom founded Impact Mission Ghana in response to a high prevalence of hepatitis B in the country. Through this organization, he has offered over 4,000 free hepatitis B screenings and vaccinations to rural northern communities, as well as continuous counseling to people living with hepatitis B & C. Wisdom hopes to use the skills and knowledge

acquired through the Mandela Washington Fellowship to improve policies related to viral hepatitis, provide mentorship, and scale up his hepatitis B advocacy work.

Eduard Beukman - *South Africa*



Eduard Beukman has six years of experience in hybrid and online learning design. Currently, Eduard is online coordinator at Stellenbosch University in South Africa, focusing on academic and research leadership and management, continental and global leadership, and bursary support programs. Eduard has also worked in the national and international policymaking space and social entrepreneurship environment. Eduard was a Mandela Rhodes Scholar for his Master of Philosophy in Science and Technology Studies (cum laude) at Stellenbosch University. His research interests included the history of science and technology and the development of indicators for forecasting emerging science and technology. Eduard is committed to ensuring that Africa

can take part in the new frontiers of science and technology without suffering the negative externalities that can come from the adoption of new technologies. After completing the Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders, Eduard plans to complete his doctorate and develop a center focusing on policy and skills development in emerging fields of science and technology. He is particularly interested in how leadership development and entrepreneurship can bring the benefits of technology to every community.

Bobit Alain (Daddy Bob) - *Cameroon*



Belack Alain Bobit has more than 15 years of experience in youth leadership through music and performance. Currently, Belack is chief executive officer and founder of Highest Praise International, a Christian association with more than 18 bands in Cameroon and representation across Africa, Europe, and the United States. He is presently the music director at Salvation Baptist Church Obili Yaounde. He volunteered for more than 10 years as music director with the Cameroon Baptist Convention and was music instructor for Amity International College for 6 years. Belack holds a bachelor's degree in Common Law and is pursuing a Master of Arts in Theology. He is motivated to see young Africans explore their potential and serve their community and the world. After

completing the Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders, Belack plans to return to Cameroon with the experience and skills he acquired and set up art centers where African youth can pursue their passions. By 2027, he hopes to have such centers across West Africa to enable young people to live fulfilled and meaningful lives in their communities and the world.

Leif Bundi - Kenya



Leif Bundi has more than six years of experience in the medical field. Currently, Leif is senior medical officer at Hola County Referral Hospital Coast Region, Kenya, where he works as a general practitioner. He also volunteers in community medical outreach activities and is a keen athlete, mentoring school children in sprint athletics. Leif holds a bachelor's degree in Medicine and Surgery from Moi University, Kenya. He is committed to improving patient clinical care outcomes and advocating for better policies in healthcare that will give the public easier access to services. After completing the Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders, Leif plans to apply his new skills, shared experiences, and networks to innovate solutions to

pressing healthcare system gaps, starting with his local health facility and the coastal region at large.

Karim Y. Darboe - The Gambia



Karim Y. Darboe has more than 12 years' experience in public and community service. Currently, Karim is youth affairs counselor at Mansakonko Area Council, where he represents the needs and aspirations of Gambian youth and women. Karim is also a program officer in environmental impact assessment (EIA) at the Gambian National Environment Agency, where he is responsible for all class B projects according to EIA regulations. In addition, Karim volunteers at Activista The Gambia. Karim holds a higher education teacher's certificate in Science and Agriculture and a bachelor's degree (with honors) in Biology and Environment. He is currently pursuing a master's degree in Public Administration at the University of The Gambia. Karim is

committed to serving his community and supporting decentralization of state resources to rural areas. After completing the Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders, he plans to establish an organization that will empower Gambian youth and women, especially those in rural areas. He also hopes the Fellowship will give him the leadership skills he needs to best serve his people effectively and efficiently.

Gogo Diaw - Senegal



Gogo Diaw has more than three years of experience in foreign language teaching (English and French). Currently, Gogo teaches English as a second language at Cosmopolitan Bilingual Academy, where she improves students' reading, listening, writing, and speaking skills. She is also general secretary of Africa Up, a youth organization that promotes self-empowerment and self-consciousness in the fields of education and the environment. She is municipal councilor for Sicap-Liberté, Dakar, and vice coordinator for the youth organization JPS Sicap-Liberté. Previously, she was treasurer of the British Senegalese Institute's English Club. Gogo holds a master's degree in Linguistics and Grammar and is pursuing a master's degree in Political Science. She is committed to

improving living conditions in her community. After completing the Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders, Gogo plans to establish her own non-governmental organization to provide vital support to vulnerable populations' economic activities and to promote the education of children, especially girls.

Annelie Nadia Cornelia - Namibia



Annelie Jash has more than 14 years of experience in the teaching profession. She is currently a professionally qualified senior primary teacher at the Ministry of Education in Namibia. She has a broad interest in community projects and development, particularly working with young girls and women. She is interested in reducing teenage pregnancies, drug and alcohol abuse, and early dropout from school. She loves agriculture, and she has a big backyard garden in which she produces some of her own crops. Annelie holds a Bachelor of Education Honors degree in General Teaching and Learning. Her inner drive comes from hardships she faced as a child. As an adult, she is a conqueror and a firm believer in achieving the impossible. She has seen the disparities in

communities that are not well represented; therefore, she believes that people need to be made aware of public education and engagement in issues that affect them. After completing the Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders, she intends to fight for equal distribution of information through the regions and beyond, within all sectors of the government. She also plans to promote girls' and women's groups in rural and remote communities.

Ester Nanyanga Kayala - *Namibia*



Ester Nanyanga Kayala has more than five years of experience in environmental management and nature conservation. Currently, Ester is a park ranger at the Ministry of Environment, Forestry, and Tourism, focusing on managing and conserving wildlife, vegetation, and the landscape in Namib Naukluft National Park. She also volunteers as a marketing administrator for the Give Organization, a non-profit organization that provides humanitarian aid to impoverished communities in Namibia and carries out environmental education and climate-change projects. She has worked for several organizations as a research or ecology intern. Ester holds a Bachelor of Science (with honors) in Environmental Biology and is pursuing a

Master of Science from the University of Namibia. She aspires to empower youth and women in the conservation field, and her passion for nature and eagerness to conserve natural resources for future generations drive her career. After completing the Mandela Washington Fellowship, she hopes to combat poaching by educating communities near Namib Naukluft National Park on the importance of nature conservation.

Luthando Kolwapi - *South Africa*



Luthando Ayachuma Kolwapi is a communications and public policy specialist with five years of experience in the public and private sectors. Currently, he is senior executive adviser to the member of the Mayoral Committee of Social Development in Tshwane, South Africa. Previously, he was spokesperson for the 2019 Gauteng General Elections. He holds a Master of Science in Media, Communications, and Governance from the London School of Economics and was a 2019 British Chevening Scholarship recipient. After completing the Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders, Luthando looks forward to returning to the government of South Africa and making a positive contribution to the state.

Ayanda Kunene - South Africa



Ayanda Kunene has more than nine years of experience as a pharmacist. Currently, Ayanda supervises a central dispensing unit at Right ePharmacy, where she looks for innovative, strategic solutions for dispensing, distributing, and collecting medicine. She is also sessional pharmacy practice lecturer at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, where she lectures second-year pharmacy students on innovation in distribution and automation in pharmacy. Ayanda holds a bachelor's degree in Pharmacy and is currently pursuing a master's degree in Pharmacy Practice, focusing on the attitudes and perceptions of pharmacists and patients regarding automation and digital health. A passionate believer in female leadership, she is committed to finding

solutions to problems of inequality in health care and in the education of girls and women. After completing the Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders, Ayanda plans to run a non-governmental organization that promotes female empowerment through training and personal development while providing students a world-class education in digital health and automation. Through the organization, Ayanda hopes to make pharmacy as a career appealing and attract more young people to the profession, thus bridging the skills shortage in the pharmaceutical sector.

Sophia Lawal - Nigeria



Sophia Lawal has more than five years of experience in the non-profit field. Currently, Sophia serves as volunteer management officer at Tomorrow's Needs Education Foundation, ensuring that volunteers maintain a consistent level of commitment. She mentors youths by organizing training sessions, introducing them to global opportunities, and preparing them to become thought leaders. Sophia volunteers as an administrative assistant at the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs where she ensures that meetings are effectively organized. She holds a bachelor's degree in International Relations. Sophia is passionate about youth development and believes that all people, especially youth, should be given the opportunities to become

changemakers regardless of race, gender, sexuality, economic status, and religion. After completing the Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders, Sophia plans to leverage her new experience, exposure, and network to help scale her organization's current impact. She also hopes to launch a youth empowerment program and youth hub that will focus on global citizenship and civic education, increase youth global consciousness, decrease youth political apathy, and develop citizens' cognition so they can demand accountability and transparency from their government.

Selemani Makwita - *Tanzania*



Selemani Abdul Makwita has more than seven years of experience in policy improvement and project management. He has worked on various local, national, and regional projects such as The Africa We Want project, which is aimed at implementing the African Charter on Democracy, Elections, and Governance. Currently, Selemani is national secretary of Activista, ActionAid's international global youth network that advocates for policy change through campaigns. He holds a diploma in Social Sciences, a bachelor's degree in Politics and Social Development Management, a postgraduate diploma in Economic Diplomacy, and a postgraduate diploma in Business Studies and is currently completing a master's degree in Leadership and Good

Governance. After completing the Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders, Selemani hopes to improve governance systems through good policies, legal and justice systems, and strong institutions in Tanzania and Africa.

Beata Matasane - *Lesotho*



Beata Emily Matasane has more than six years of experience in sign language interpreting. Currently, Beata is a sign language interpreter at National University of Lesotho (NUL), a part-time sign language lecturer at NUL, a volunteer sign language interpreter at Lesotho Television, and a Ladies Hope boutique owner. Beata promotes quality and inclusive education to people with hearing loss. Beata holds an honors degree in South African Sign Language; an honors degree in Educational Management, Leadership, and Policy Studies; a bachelor's degree in Education; a certificate in Lesotho Sign Language; and a certificate in South African Sign Language. Beata is motivated by the challenges faced by her students, which push her to promote high-quality education for students

with hearing loss. Beata wants to be part of the team that reimplements Lesotho's inclusive education policy. After completing the Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders, Beata plans to continue advocating for full inclusion of people with hearing loss in education, finance, and churches. She also plans to invent the first Lesotho sign language application for smartphones.

Vera Maulidi - Malawi



Vera Maulidi has three years of experience in youth work and four years of experience in public health work. Vera currently is environmental health officer in the Ministry of Health at the Zomba District Health Office, where she advocates for preventive healthcare. In addition to her core duties, she coordinates all activities related to integrated disease surveillance and response for Zomba District. She has worked with both rural and urban populations in Malawi to improve the lives of others. She has held motivational talks and career-building sessions, through which she has reached at least 1,000 young people. She has volunteered with Vision Grow Foundation, which works to empower young boys. Vera holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Environmental Health from

the University of Malawi. She believes that there is great power in knowledge transfer; as such, when she returns home after the Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders, she hopes to share the lessons and skills she gained with her formal and informal networks. She expects to build a strong network during the Fellowship for both business and professional development, which will help her view developmental issues from a global perspective.

Rashid Mfinanga - Tanzania



Rashid Mfinanga has more than four years of experience in development planning. Currently, Rashid is ward executive officer at Same District Council, focusing on advocacy for development in rural Tanzania and development planning and capacity building among youth and women for economic empowerment. Rashid has been tutorial assistant at the Institute of Rural Development Planning in Dodoma, Tanzania, tutoring more than 2,000 students in subjects related to the principles of development planning, development studies, and business mathematics. Rashid holds a bachelor's degree in Regional Development Planning and is pursuing his master's degree in Development Economics at the Institute of Rural Development Planning.

Rashid is passionate about facilitating planning practices in rural areas with the local government authorities so that the foreseen development is people-centered and well understood. After completing the Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders, Rashid plans to establish a learning center for school-aged girls in rural areas to attain digital and soft skills so that Tanzania will see an increased number of girls in tertiary education taking science, technology, engineering, and mathematics courses.

Victoria Mwanziva - Tanzania



Victoria Charles Mwanziva from Tanzania, is a graduate of a Master's degree in Public Administration at the Harbin Institute of Technology; in Harbin; China. has a background of a bachelor's degree in Political Science and Public Administration with a major in International Relations from the University of Dar-es-salaam. Victoria Charles Mwanziva is currently serving as the Secretary for Publicity, Mobilization and Pioneers UVCCM-Umoja wa Vijana wa Chama Cha Mapinduzi; (The Youth League of the governing party of Tanzania; CCM) Directly serving Youths through a multitude of developmental activities such as on site trainings on leadership, community service, political strategy, mobilization, online and on-site activism, self advancement through capacity building to young people in

Tanzania. All have always been Victoria's pillar stone in service to fellow youths in Tanzania. This work defines her passion which is service to people, volunteering for the youths development in Tanzania- and ensuring that the potential of youths is advanced to be at the frontline of the developmental agenda in this country by making their voices heard, participation in politics, policy formulation and implementation in communities- at the top of this agenda is female participation in leadership and politics, bridging the gap to ensure that more young female leaders get their spaces in leadership and governance at large.

Mya Naggita - Uganda



Mayimuna (Mya) Naggita is the founder of the community-based organization Women and Youth Platform for Action, where she has worked for the past three years. The organization provides career guidance to children in school and combats gender-based violence, child marriage, and other women's rights issues. To advocate for policy change in these sectors directly, Mya ran for office and was successfully elected in 2021 to a councilorship position in the municipal council. She holds a bachelor's degree in Computer Science. After completing the Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders, Mya plans to advance her political career and continue her social work to fulfill her vision of a just society comprised of self-reliant people.

Ibrahima Ngom - Senegal



Ibrahima Ngom has more than three years of experience as a researcher and teacher at the Polytechnic School of the Cheikh Anta Diop University in Dakar, Senegal. His research and teaching activities focus on renewable energies, energy physics, control systems, and issues related to climate change and sustainable development. He also works as an independent renewable energy consultant and contributed to the African Union's draft on climate change informing the 2063 horizon. Ibrahima is committed to helping his community secure affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy according to the Sustainable Development Goals. He is passionate about conducting high-quality research while teaching and mentoring undergraduate and

graduate students, developing practical strategies that help rural households access affordable electricity and modern cooking services, and improving climate resilience through simple energy efficiency practices and measures. Ibrahima holds a doctorate in Energy Systems and Environment. After completing the Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders, Ibrahima plans to use his new skills to train and mentor future young leaders in the energy sector to promote sustainable development. His vision is to set up a training center dedicated to clean energy professions.

Emmanuel Ntivuguruzwa - Rwanda



Emmanuel Ntivuguruzwa has five years of experience in his local government's territorial administration and has more than seven years of experience in media. Currently, Emmanuel is executive secretary of Bweramana Sector, Ruhango District, Southern Province, Rwanda. He coordinates and monitors the government programs and policies, as well as service to institutions, in the sector. Emmanuel works with various stakeholders and the community to foster good governance and to set out and implement strategic plans and goals for socioeconomic transformations at the sector level in light of district and national policies and strategies. He was previously executive secretary of Mwendo Sector, and he worked with the

community and stakeholders to position the sector as a top performer in socioeconomic transformations. He holds a bachelor's degree in Journalism and Communication from National University of Rwanda. After completing the Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders, Emmanuel plans to use the acquired knowledge and experience to improve his sector's performance and share this knowledge and experience with his peers at the sector and district levels to expand the impact of the Fellowship beyond the community he leads.

Dennis Nyarko - Ghana



Dennis Nyarko has more than eight years' experience in medical practice. In 2018, he served as the senior medical officer of the United Nations Level I Hospital in Leer, South Sudan. Dennis is currently a senior medical officer at the Renal Unit of the 37 Military Teaching Hospital in Accra, Ghana, where he manages patients with complications from kidney disease and trains nurses and junior doctors in modern management protocols, such as renal replacement therapy. He also volunteers, serving on medical screening teams and raising funds for women and children who urgently need treatment. Dennis holds a Doctor of Medicine from the Ulyanovsk State University and a certificate in Clinical Nephrology and Hemodialysis from the Kobry El Kobba

Medical Complex in Cairo. He is an alumnus of the Ghana Military Academy and International Peace Support Training Centre in Karen, Nairobi. Dennis is determined to help establish a plasma exchange center in Accra. After completing the Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders, Dennis plans to continue to help needy people with kidney damage, set up a foundation that will support needy patients, facilitate palliative care for those with end-stage kidney disease, and foster awareness of kidney disease and its causes.

Milka Otieno - Kenya



Milka Otieno has over three years of experience in public health. Currently, Milka is a program outcomes analyst at Assent Kenya, focusing on supporting the Supplier Success team in obtaining declarations and other important information from non-responsive suppliers in clients' supply chains. She also is a volunteer mentor for teenage girls and teenage mothers from underprivileged areas. Milka holds a bachelor's degree in Public Health, and is motivated to bring hope for teenage girls and teenage mothers. Upon completion of the Mandela Washington Fellowship, she plans to make reusable pads for teenagers, teach them handwork skills to prepare them for entrepreneurship, and provide them with education to prepare them for future independence.

Mirriam Owino - Uganda



Mirriam Owino has more than seven years of experience in agricultural extension, food security, and environmental advocacy. Currently, Mirriam is an agricultural officer with Alebtong District Local Government, where she focuses on livelihood, agricultural production, and environmental advocacy. She has been actively involved in gender-related campaigns addressing local land policy, and mentors youth in her Ugandan community. Mirriam holds a Master of Science in Food Security and Community Nutrition, and participates in a land and ecosystem restoration fellowship. She is committed to improving the livelihoods of rural communities and designing tools to cope with climate change and environmental disasters. After completing the Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders, Mirriam

plans to open a rural resource center that will disseminate agricultural and environmental information, provide extension services across Africa, and through its advocacy contribute positively to land policy across Uganda.

Su'di Isse - Djibouti



Su'di Isse is a reproductive health specialist with eight years of experience in public management. She has a postgraduate diploma in Public Health Research and is based in Somalia. Through her role as reproductive health program manager for the Ministry of Health in Puntland State, Somalia, she has demonstrated leadership, project management, and influencing skills. To ensure that there will be zero preventable maternal deaths, she coleads the Reproductive Health Working Group, which established a referral system that focuses on remote areas and scaled up primary health centers to provide comprehensive emergency obstetric and neonatal care. After completing the Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders, she plans to continue

enhancing Somalia's sexual and reproductive health services, strengthening links between programs, and building the capacity of health professionals to international standards. She believes her work will reduce gender inequality and maternal mortality and morbidity in Somalia.