



# Blessing Fambisai

Acting Deputy Director,  
Financial Sector Policy Department in the  
Ministry of Finance and Economic Development

## ABOUT

Blessing Fambisai is a government official currently serving at the level of Acting Deputy Director, Financial Sector Policy Department in the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development. The department is responsible for formulation of policies regarding the financial sector. Blessing has financial expertise in identifying, researching and implementing financial stability policies, through reviewing and enacting legislative reforms. She is also experienced in Disaster Risk Financing and Management.

**Qualifications:** Blessing holds a Master of Commerce degree in Finance from Great Zimbabwe University, Executive Master of Business Administration from University of International Business and Economics, China and a Bachelor of Commerce Honors degree in Banking and Finance from Great Zimbabwe University.



## Dr Mariame Maiga

Regional Gender and Social Development Adviser of CORAF, the West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development

## ABOUT

Dr Mariame Maiga is the Regional Gender and Social Development Adviser of CORAF, the West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development, based in Dakar, Senegal. She has more than 20-year experience in work with international institutions as Winrock International, FAO, and the World Bank on community driven development to empower socially marginalized groups for food and nutrition security.

She was Expert Group Member for the peer review of the Sectoral African Gender and Development Index on Agriculture (AGDI), United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, African Centre for Gender, and Social Development in 2007, and the Africa Region HIV and AIDS expert for the evaluation of FAO's role and work related to gender and development in Kenya, Uganda, Zambia, Congo-Brazzaville, and Niger in 2010-2011. Dr Maiga served as member of the Continental Task Force led by IFPRI to provide advisory services to the Regional Economic Commissions and their Member States to mainstream gender in National Agricultural Investments Plans (NAIPs) Appraisal and design, implementation of the policy, institutional, and investment actions required to achieve the Malabo commitments across the continent. From 2018 to 2021, she served in the Independent Advisory Committee (IAC) for the CGIAR Research Program on Grain Legumes and Drylands Cereals (CRP GLDC) led by ICRISAT, with responsibility to provide advice on gender and youth inclusion in the implementation of the program in Asia and in Sub Saharan Africa. Dr Maiga is member of the Technical Working Group 4 of the CAADP Biennial Review on Enhancing Agriculture's Contribution to Economic Growth and Significant Poverty Reduction, and the Lead of the Gender Technical Working Group of CAADP-XP4, a continental project on Climate Smart Agriculture, with implementing institutions as FARA, ASARECA, AFAAS, CCARDESA, and CORAF. She Co-chairs the ECOWAS Rice Observatory (ERO) Technical Committee on Equity, Resilience and Monitoring and Evaluation Learning.

She holds a PhD in Sociology and Gender Studies from Wageningen University in the Netherlands, and a post-graduate (DEA) in Development Philosophy from Abidjan-Cocody University in Cote d'Ivoire. Her research interests include gender integration in policies and programs on Climate Smart Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Security, Women and Youth Empowerment in Agriculture.



# Carsterns George Mulume

Humanitarian Programme Officer, Caritas Africa

## ABOUT

Carsterns George Mulume (MSc. Animal Science) is a Humanitarian Programme Officer for Caritas Africa. This is the social pastoral ministry of the Catholic Church in Africa and, one 7 Regions of the Caritas Internationalis Confederation. It is a network of 46 National Caritas Organizations in 46 Sub-Saharan African Countries. Carsterns is responsible for ensuring timely, effective and quality emergency response by the Caritas Africa network.

Carsterns is a well-qualified rural development, humanitarian and agriculture expert with over 20 years implementing humanitarian, community managed disaster risk reduction, climate change and resilience programmes. He is well trained in Result Based Management (RBM) and Strength Based Approach (SBA) to development. He has designed, managed and undertaken development work which has changed lives of vulnerable communities through well designed programmes. Carsterns has facilitated trainings in climate change and mitigation for different groups of people.

As a Caritas expert in advocacy and practitioner in climate change, Carsterns has greatly contributed to the development of the Climate Change, Disaster Risk Management and National Agricultural Policies. Furthermore, Carsterns has shared such policies with the communities to enable them monitor implementation of such policies and be able to take the duty bearers to account if not properly implemented.

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## Papa Demba DIAW



## ABOUT

Papa is Senegalese national with over 13 years of experience in field and strategic management roles in the international development sector, focusing mainly in West and Central Africa Region.

In the last few years, Papa worked with the International Committee of the Red-Cross (ICRC) as head of office (in Niger and South Sudan) supervising multidisciplinary and multicultural teams in the field, managing security and safety, networking with IOs, UN Agencies, NGOs, Clusters, designing, supporting the implementation, monitoring and evaluating emergency responses (disaster, conflict, violence) building resilience and development interventions in the areas of access to health care, water, sanitation and habitat, food security and livelihoods, nutrition, protection of vulnerable people etc.

Papa also worked with UN World Food Programme as Programme and Policy Officer at its HQ in Rome (Italy) and with West & Central Africa Regional Office of the European Commission - Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Operations (ECHO) in Dakar (Senegal).

Earlier in his career, Papa worked with various international NGOs as food security and livelihoods programme officer. He also worked as a deputy country director and country director of Terre des Hommes Suisse NGO in Senegal.

Papa joined UN WOMEN in February 2023 at the West & Central Africa Regional Office in Dakar (Senegal) as Programme Coordinator - Humanitarian, Resilience and Disaster Risk Reduction.

He holds an Engineering Degree - Agricultural Economics specialized in Rural Economics and Sociology from Polytechnic University - National College of Agriculture in Senegal. He also holds master's degrees in project management from The African Center for Higher Studies in Management (CESAG) (Dakar - Senegal) and in International Relations from the French Institute for International and Strategic Affairs (IRIS) in Paris.



## Vincent Kabiru

**Disaster Risk Eradication and Reduction Specialist**

### ABOUT

Vincent Kabiru is a Kenyan Male with over 28 years experience of impressive success within public and private sector, carrying out a number of functions including leading professional teams in Disaster Risk eradication and Reduction especially in Insurance related fields. Expert at leading teams to accomplish projects, setting long term and short term strategic goals aimed at reducing exposure of the vulnerable , the marginalized and persons living with disabilities. Such goals includes development of crop, livestock and health insurance policies, in order to respond to extreme weather conditions, climate changes, natural disasters and public health emergencies.

#### Other Key Skills and Competencies

- ◆ Astute leadership and direction with the ability to embrace change and innovation.
- ◆ Expertise at developing and directing effective public institutions and policy guidance aimed at poverty eradication within the vulnerable and marginalized groups.
- ◆ Possession of strong analytical and problem solving skills, with the ability to make well thought out decisions. Involved in offering insurance products which replaces expensive collateral required by the banks making the products unaffordable to the less endowed in the society.
- ◆ Enhance cultural awareness and sensitivity to customs and cultural differences which inhibits advancement in women, older persons, youth children and persons with disabilities.
- ◆ Working with other stake holders within the East Africa Community and the Comesa region in order to build resilience in vulnerable groups with a view of reducing disasters.





## Johanesa NIANDONIRINA

Activiste et ancienne membre de la Société Civile  
Malagasy

### ABOUT

Activiste et ancienne membre de la Société Civile Malagasy, Johanesa NIANDONIRINA milite pour l'égalité de Genre depuis 15 ans. Ses débuts ont été plus remarquables dans les recherches académiques. Voulant entrer dans le feu de l'action, elle a commencé à collaborer avec des organisations et des structures œuvrant dans la promotion des droits de la femme et apporter son expertise. En 2012, après avoir bénéficié d'un renforcement de capacité en Genre et Engagement Citoyen, elle a été élue Présidente Nationale de l'Association des Universitaires pour la Promotion du Genre (AUPRoG), fonction qu'elle a assuré jusqu'en 2019. A part les actions de sensibilisation au niveau des 6 universités publiques de Madagascar et quelques universités privées, AUPRoG appui et soutien les travaux de recherches sur le Genre. En même temps, l'association a travaillé avec d'autres structures et a soutenu des initiatives engagées par d'autres organisations ayant les mêmes valeurs qu'elle. C'est ainsi que Johanesa a été désigné Vice-Présidente en Charge du Cluster Média de la Fédération Nationale pour la Promotion Féminine et Infantile en 2016. Par ailleurs, elle a aussi été enseignante en Genre et Médias et en Genre et Développement Local à l'Université d'Antananarivo de 2015 à 2018.

En 2016, un groupe de jeunes intellectuels engagés, dont Johanesa NIANDONIRINA, a créé une ONG experte dans le monitoring des médias et les analyses des thématiques spécifiques dans les médias. Toujours dans cette volonté d'honorer ses engagements, Johanesa est en charge des activités Genre et Média au sein de l'ONG Communication – Idea – Development.

En 2020, son désir d'apporter le changement et plus d'impacts, a conduit Johanesa à quitter le milieu académique et faire de son combat un métier à part entière. C'est ainsi qu'elle a intégré l'équipe du programme ADRIFi de la Banque Africaine de Développement, mis en œuvre par la Cellule de Prévention et d'appui à la Gestion des Urgences – Primature de Madagascar où elle assure jusqu'à ce jour les fonctions d'Experte en Genre. En avril 2023, elle a créé un Cercle de Femmes qui ambitionne d'engager le pouvoir de la sororité, d'accompagner et de soutenir les femmes dans leur cheminement ; il s'agit également d'un espace d'écoute et de conseil.



# Kenneth Welman Chaula

**Deputy Director of Agriculture Extension Services in Malawi**

**Responsible for mainstreaming gender and HIV in Agriculture Programmes and Projects**

## ABOUT

Deputy Director of Agriculture Extension Services in Malawi responsible for mainstreaming gender and HIV in Agriculture Programmes and Projects. I obtained my MSc. Degree in Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development from University College Dublin in 2010. I have 22 years' experience in designing and implementing gender transformative approaches to enhance the capacities of women, youth and other vulnerable community groups to participate effectively in food and income security programs and projects. In this regard, I have extensive practical experience in developing gender analysis tools, training manuals, guidelines, policy briefs and other IEC materials on Gender and HIV in agriculture.

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## Dr. Nomathemba Mhlanga

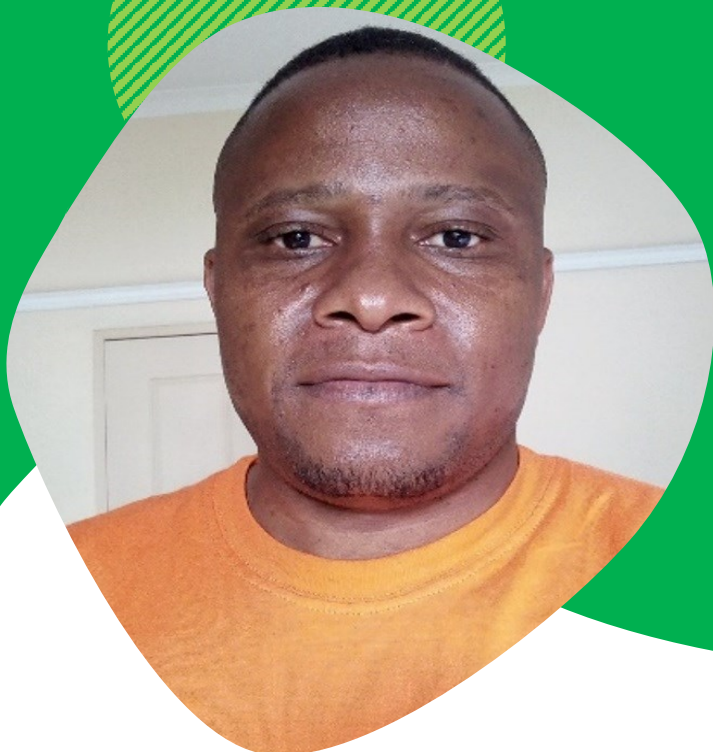
Agribusiness Officer- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

### ABOUT

Ms Nomathemba Mhlanga (Noma), is an Agribusiness Officer and Programme Manager for FAO's regional programme on decent employment in agrifood systems in Africa. In the Eastern Africa sub-region, Noma leads the organization's normative and field programme on agribusiness and value chain development, including post-harvest management, agricultural finance and investment. Additionally, she supports entrepreneurship and decent employment opportunities, especially for youth and women, ending child labour in agriculture, and tackling distress migration.

Noma holds a PhD in Applied Economics and Management, an MSc Degree in Agricultural Economics from Cornell University, USA and a BSc Honours Degree in Agricultural Economics from the University of Zimbabwe.





## Canaan Kennedy Samhembere

District Coordinator for FACT Zimbabwe

### ABOUT

I have experience in GBV and Disaster Risk Reduction, as well as Food Security in emergencies during the post Cyclone IDAI period in Manicaland Province of Zimbabwe. Currently I work as District Coordinator for FACT Zimbabwe, and am driven by integrity, transparency, and equality. I am Social Scientist and development practitioner, who envisions a GBV free society, where women and girls are given equal access to services. My primary job functions of leading a coordinated response to post Cyclone IDAI GBV response has been recognized by my organization and as a result, I was given an opportunity to lead coordination activities in Makoni District of Zimbabwe.



## Ronald Phiri

Deputy Director of Gender for Gender Mainstreaming in the Ministry of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare

## ABOUT

Ronald Phiri is a gender, rural development, agriculture and education specialist and researcher with twenty-two years of progressive experience in the delivery of gender services, research and capacity building targeting Government Institutions, Civil Society Organizations; Public Universities; Private Sector and Faith Based Organizations. He is currently working as Deputy Director of Gender for Gender Mainstreaming in the Ministry of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare, Government of Malawi which involves coordination of Gender Mainstreaming and Gender Based Violence in the Department of Gender Affairs in Malawi. He has been in civil service for 22 years. He works in collaboration with the African Union, United Nations, SADC, Civil Society Organizations, Media and Private Sector. He coordinates country gender mainstreaming, Interagency Gender in Humanitarian Working Group, gender based violence and prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment networks among others. He leads Gender Humanitarian Working Group and coordinates gender integration in disaster risk management. He has been a part-time lecturer for Gender and Development for ten years at the Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

He holds a Master of Science Degree in Agribusiness Management from University of Malawi; Postgraduate Diploma in Leadership Development from Dublin City University, Ireland; Bachelor of Science in Rural Development from University of Malawi and possess a number postgraduate certificates and basic certificates in gender mainstreaming, gender based violence response and leadership development from National University of Rwanda, ESAMI, Arusha Tanzania; India, China and Uganda. He has outstanding programme and project management skills. He has first-class analytical and problem-solving skills.



## MARIAM AKIROR

Advocacy and Strategic Partnerships Coordinator  
Action Against Hunger USA-Uganda Office

### ABOUT

Ms. Mariam Akiror, a National of Uganda is responsible for leading the Action Against Hunger USA-Uganda Mission Advocacy and Strategic Partnerships work. Since December 2021, she is coordinating an Advocacy Campaign on Communal Production, Consumption and Marketing of Nutritious Food Crops in the 2 District Local Governments that has seen Community Landlords donate 3480 acres of land to 1,620 individuals from both Refugee and Host Communities.

Prior to joining Action Against Hunger, Mariam worked for International Food Policy Research Institute as the Advocacy Specialist Africa Region HarvestPlus from July 2016 to April 2019.

In 2017 and 2018, Mariam jointly with the HarvestPlus Head of Public Policy & Advocacy Ms. Margaret Willingham participated in the US Congressional and Senate Advocacy Meetings that resulted in the mention of Biofortification in the Report of the US Senate Committee on Agriculture and its recommendation for funding under USAID Feed the Future.

In May 2022 at the African Union CAADP Meeting, Ms. Mariam was recognized for her pivotal role in the positioning of Biofortification into the African Union Development Agenda that resulted to an African Union Continental Declaration on Biofortification. In August 2018, Mariam received an Accolade from the International Sweet Potatoe Center-CIP in Appreciation for committed and dedicated service to Combating Hidden Hunger through Nutritious Food Basket. In January 2016, Mariam was recognized by the EU Representative to Uganda as the best Project Implementer for the EU Consortium Project on the Elimination of Violence against Child in the Schools and Community and in November 2006, Mariam was a Recipient of the Best Junior Investigator Honour Award for the 2nd African Congress on Pain held in Tripoli Libya.

Mariam has over 18 years of professional experience in leadership positions implementing a wide variety of Programs/Projects related to; Policy, Advocacy, and Communications on Nutrition Sensitive Agriculture, Health, Human Rights, Child Protection, and Clinical Care of HIV/AIDS and/or terminally ill cancer patients and their families at global and within Africa at continental, regional, national, and subnational levels with several Non-Governmental Organizations.

## Rita Missal

Global Recovery Advisor for United Nations Development Programme's Crisis Bureau



## ABOUT

Rita Missal is the Global Recovery Advisor for United Nations Development Programme's Crisis Bureau. Rita is a Post Disaster Recovery Practitioner with over 20 years of experience in the field of disaster recovery. She started her career in Disaster Management after the Super Cyclone in Odisha in 1999 at the UN office in India and then in Maldives after the Asian Tsunami in 2004. Since 2007, Rita has been working in various positions in Geneva, Bangkok and in New York. Rita leads the UN partnership on conducting post disaster recovery assessments and in this capacity has led UNDP's global efforts in conducting COVID-19 Recovery Needs Assessment.

Rita has extensive experience in working with multilateral and bilateral agencies in disaster recovery preparedness and post designing and planning Recovery programmes. She is a passionate and global advocate for advancing goals of risk reduction and resilience. Rita's key areas of expertise include disaster risk reduction, post disaster recovery, climate change, disaster displacements, and working with people with disabilities in crisis context

Rita holds a double Masters in Disaster Mitigation and English Literature with diploma in Disaster Management and Comprehensive Crisis Management.