

LET GIRLS LEAD



GIRL-LED ADVOCACY AT THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Let Girls Lead amplifies the voices and power of girls to ignite change around the world. Through the Girls' Voices Initiative, Let Girls Lead is building a global movement of 2,500 girls who are advocating for girls' rights in their countries. Let Girls Lead is working to ensure that girls' needs, goals, and potential are prioritized in the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, in partnership with the Nike Foundation, UNICEF, and the U.S. Fund for UNICEF.



Jimena is 12 years old and lives in Jalapa, Guatemala. At the age of eight, Jimena began volunteering with her local youth group to create a school to educate girls about violence prevention and human rights. As the daughter of a teenage mother, Jimena credits her mother with her commitment to adolescents' rights, and has already become a strong local leader speaking on behalf of girls' rights in health and education. Jimena believes that early pregnancy severely limits the development of girls, and she plans to finish college and devote her life to ensuring the protection and potential of girls in her country.



Laura is 18 years old and lives in Kampala, Uganda. Laura works to eliminate inequities in healthcare services experienced by HIV positive girls and women in her country, including her mother and sister. Laura's work at the YMCA and as a fashion artist enables her to mentor other girls and help them find their paths toward economically sustainable futures. As an advocate for the health and safety of girls, Laura is excited to be at UNGA to help exemplify girls' empowerment and potential.



Tisungeni is 13 years old and lives in Blantyre, Malawi. Tisungeni has overcome tremendous challenges in her young life to become a powerful advocate for girls. In 2015, Tisungeni joined Let Girl Lead's Girls' Voices Initiative where she learned about advocacy and began to raise her voice for girls' rights. UNGA is Tisungeni's first experience traveling outside of her country, and she looks forward to sharing her experiences and advocating for girls' priorities in New York. Tisungeni also continues to advocate on behalf of girls in Malawi while she works part time order to pay for secondary school.



Kula Fofana is 25 years old, and was born during the Liberia's Civil War. She grew up on a farm in Grand Cape Mount County, Liberia which was overrun by rebels, and most of her young life was defined by violence and displacement. She now advocates for young people's issues with an emphasis on girls and women. In 2012, Ms. Fofana was appointed by President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf to co-chair Liberia's Vision 2030 Committee. As the only youth representative on that committee, she worked to develop the country's postwar development plan.



Aisha Wreh-yonnoh Cooper Bruce has served as Let Girls Lead's Country Representative for Liberia since 2011. In this role, she coordinates the activities of 24 Fellows and their grantee organizations. Aisha also serves as the Executive Director of Helping Our People Excel, Inc. In 2012, Aisha received a Special Appreciation Award from the Ministry of Gender and Development in Liberia for the strategic role she played in advocating for Passage of the National Children's Law, and is a Fellow of the Women-Led Business program of the Femmes d'Afrique Solidarities. Aisha holds a Bachelor in Family Studies from the University of Maryland-College Park.



Harriet Kamashanyu is 25 years old, and the Founder and Executive Director of the community-based organization Rhythm of Life in Kampala, Uganda. Rhythm of Life works in Kampala's red light districts to prevent HIV among the daughters of commercial sex workers, and improve their access to health care and education. Harriet's powerful work and personal story won first prize in Let Girls Lead's 2014 Global Girls Video Contest, and she now serves as Let Girls Lead's Country Representative for Uganda. Harriet holds a Bachelor in Development Studies from Makerere University, Kampala.



Tracie Saravia is a 2013 Let Girls Lead Champion from Guatemala. Tracie has been involved in human rights advocacy since childhood, with a focus on children, and has led diverse local and national advocacy campaigns for children, youth and women. She serves as the General Coordinator for the Advocates for Children and Adolescents Collective, and the technical secretary for the Observatory on Sexual and Reproductive Health (OSAR) in Jalapa. Tracie holds a Bachelor in Law & Social Sciences, with an emphasis in indigenous rights, and is completing Master in Higher Education.



Joyce Chikakuda Mkandawire co-founded the Girls Empowerment Network (GENET) and is a leading Malawian advocate for girls' rights. Since 2010, Joyce has pioneered innovative community-based and girl-led advocacy with village chiefs to end child marriage, bringing a passion for marginalized adolescent girls and young women. Most recently, Joyce played a key role in the passage of Malawi's national child marriage ban. Joyce is a 2010 Let Girls Lead Fellow, a member of the steering committee of AGANET (Adolescent Girls' Advocacy Network) Malawi, and serves as Let Girls Lead's Country Representative for Malawi.

ABOUT LET GIRLS LEAD

Globally, 600 million girls struggle to eat, attend school, and see a doctor when they need one. Research demonstrates that investing in girls reduces global poverty, but only two percent of international funding goes to programs for girls.

Let Girls Lead is building a global movement of champions to ensure that girls can attend school, stay healthy, escape poverty, and overcome violence. Since 2009, Let Girls Lead's model – endorsed and supported by leading foundations – has contributed to better health, education, livelihoods, and rights for more than 7 million girls.

Let Girls Lead catalyzes scalable change for girls by investing in visionary leaders and organizations through advocacy, leadership development, organizational strengthening, and grant-making. Let Girls Lead's innovative model achieves systemic change and sustainable impacts by improving laws, policies, funding, and programs for girls around the world.

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