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THEME

YOUTH **POWER**
AS A **PATHWAY** TO
AFRICA'S **FUTURE**

DARE CONFERENCE 2026

More information visit:
www.dare.africa

Social Media Handles

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ABOUT DARE CONFERENCE

DARE Conference, organised by YouthHubAfrica, seeks to foster collaboration among African youth, governments, and civil society organisations to work towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It also provides an opportunity for participants to learn, engage in discussions, network, and identify opportunities across four thematic areas: Health; Democracy and Governance; Employment and Entrepreneurship; and Education.

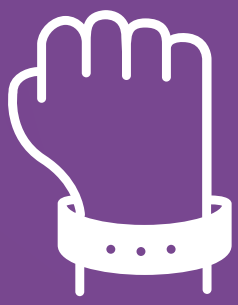
The 2026 conference will bring together more than 500 young Africans under the theme "Youth Power as a Pathway to Africa's Future." Participants will engage with speakers and artists who will share their personal experiences, success stories, and visions for the role of young people. The conference will also highlight the need for greater collaboration to achieve the future young people desire for Nigeria and Africa as a whole.

DARE Conference 2026 will challenge young Africans to become actively involved in processes that harness their energy and creativity to develop solutions to the challenges facing young people especially young women and girls in Nigeria and across Africa.

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CONFERENCE GUIDE

The conference is scheduled to last for two days. As such, the following guidelines have been provided to help you navigate your way around.



Wrist Bands

These bands are for identification during the conference. It should be on your wrist at all times for the two-day event.

It is a stylish and durable band that does not come off easily unless it is broken. We therefore advise you not to remove it until the event ends. If your wristband comes off for any reason, kindly present the damaged band at the registration desk so that it can be replaced.



Breaks

Meals will be provided to all participants throughout the event.



Games

Please feel free to enjoy the variety of games that will be available during the breaks.



Concert

Good music and great performances from various artists, as well as the NYSC Band, will be featured as part of the pop-up performances.

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ACTIVITY TYPE



Pop-up Performance

Music, poetry, and spoken word performances to spark conversation and energise the atmosphere.



Pop Up Session

Thought-provoking and innovative ideas that challenge and inspire the audience while exposing them to current trends on the continent, delivered in 10 minutes each.



Panel Session

An hour-long, TV-style panel bringing together practitioners, activists, and policymakers to discuss a specific theme, with dedicated segments for audience Q&A.



Tea Conversation

One-on-one, in-depth conversations with changemakers and opinion shapers to broaden young Africans' knowledge of specific themes, with segments for Q&A through social media.



Fireside Conversation

A relaxed, informal, engaging conversation designed to share personal experiences. This is a conversational atmosphere that allows for audience interaction and meaningful exchanges.

POWERED BY

YOUTHHUB AFRICA

DARE CONFERENCE 2026

ABOUT YOUTHHUBAFRICA

Youth Foundation for Development, Education and Leadership (YouthHubAfrica) is a nonprofit organisation founded in 2011. It serves as a platform where young people across Africa who are involved in social change can interact, learn, and collaborate in innovative, creative, and accessible ways.
The organisation was registered in Nigeria with the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) in 2014. YouthHubAfrica is a youth advocacy and policy-oriented organisation based in Abuja, Nigeria, with programmes across Africa and beyond.

YouthhubAfrica's Thematic Areas:
- Education and Girl-child Literacy
- Governance and Accountability
- Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights
- Youth Empowerment and Entrepreneurship

The organisation has worked with stakeholders to provide advisory and technical support for development communications, use social media to drive advocacy and campaigns, and structure youth engagement at the national and regional levels. In line with this mission, YHA has staff and volunteers, most of whom are young people working at its headquarters in Abuja, as well as volunteers in Lagos, Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia, and Ghana.

YouthHubAfrica began by creating a blog that profiled opportunities for young Africans, including scholarships, conferences, workshops, news articles, and events that contribute to youth development. Over the years, the blog has grown into one of the largest youth-development platforms on the African continent, reaching more than 160,000 young Africans who have signed up for and interact with its social media channels.

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DAY 1:

Host: Morenikeji Olonilua

Time	Session	Speakers
7:30	Registration/Networking	
9:00 - 9:10	**Pop-up performance 1**	National Anthem - NYSC
9:10- 10:00	**Opening Tea Conversation:** Democracy/ Governance **Topic:** From Protest to Leadership: Youth Power in Shaping Governance **Moderator: Rotimi Olawale**	Andrew Mamedu (Country Director of ActionAid, Nigeria) Onyinye Onyemobi (Grant Officer, Ford Foundation)
10:00 - 10:15	**Pop-up session 1:** Governance **Topic:** Why the System Needs You to Disrupt It.	Cynthia Mbamalu
10:15 - 10:25	**Pop-Up Performance 2** Musical Performance	Rebirth City
10:25 - 10:40	**Pop-up session 2:** Governance **Topic:** A people centered Democracy is possible in Nigeria.	Hamzat Lawal
10:40- 11:40	**Panel Session 1** Governance **Topic:** Active Youth Participation and Better Governance: A Myth or Reality in Africa? **Moderator: Faruk Ibrahim**	Bem Aga Afolabi Adekaiyaoja Chinenye Uwanaka (Virtually) Sholape Sonuga Tsema Yvonne Ede
11:40- 11:55	**Pop-Up Session 3:** Governance **Topic:** Changing the Game from the Inside - Why organising on the outside is no longer enough to fix governance.	Luke Onofiok
11:55 - 12:25	**Tea Break and Kahoot Games**	

12:25 -12:35	**Pop-Up Performance 4** Spoken Word	Tosin Babalola
12:35- 12:50	**Pop-up session 4:** Governance **Topic:** From Community Actions to Sustainable Social Change: Lessons from the SPA II Experience	Blessing Ifemenam
12:50- 1:20	**Fireside Conversation 1:** **Topic:** Still Young at Heart: A Conversation Across Generations **Moderator: Fauziya Aminu**	Dr. Kole Shettima
1:20- 1:35	**Pop-up session 5:** **Topic:** Starting Again: The Power of Second Chances.	Rector Pascal
1:35 - 2:15	**Lunch Break Innovation Corners Game Zones Book Reading Stand, etc**	
2:15 - 2:35	**Games - KaHOOOT** Click, Profit, Harm: Climate, Technology and Women: Who Benefits?	Rotimi Olawale
2:35 - 2:50	**Pop-Up Session 6:** Technology **Topic:** Safety by Design: Protecting Women and Girls in Nigeria	Ugochi Ihe - Digital Literacy Lead Ajuma Drisu - ERF Project Lead
2:50- 3:45	**Panel Session 2:** Climate **Topic:** Reframing Climate Leadership Through Technology **Moderator: Tsema Ede**	Ken Henshaw Ameedat Abdulsalam Jennifer Abomnger Ibiso Ikiroma-Owiye
3:45 -4:40	**Closing Tea Conversation:** Technology **Topic:** The Digital Culture We're Building: Creativity, Influence, and Digital Safety in Nigeria **Moderator: Chioma Agwuebo**	MI Abaga
4:40 -4:50	**Pop-Up Performance: 5** Spoken Word	Pelemo Nyajo
4:50 -5:00	**Pop-up session 7:** Governance/Nigeria Youth Agenda Health **Topic:** Youth Voices, Democratic Priorities and Accountability: Shaping the Nigeria Youth Agenda and Accountability Charter 2027	Blessing Ifemenam
5:00 - 5:10	**Pop-Up Performance: 6** Musical Artist	Worship Yakubu
5:10	**Closing**	

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DAY 2:

Host: Bitto Bryan

Time	Session	Speakers
9:00 - 9:10	National Anthem	Susan Achin
9:10 - 9:15	Presentation of UNFPA's Executive Director's statement	Muriel Mafico
9:15 - 10:05	**Opening Tea Conversation:** Health **Topic:** From Policy to Practice: Sex, Data, and Protecting Young People's Rights in the Digital Age **Moderator: Rotimi Olawale**	Dr. Salma Ibrahim Muriel Mafico
10:05 - 10:20	**Pop-up session 1:** Health **Topic:** The Burnout Generation: Managing Pressure, Ambition, and Expectations	Deborah Omage
10:20 - 10:30	**Pop-up Performance 2:** Musical Artist	Day3
10:30 - 11:20	**Panel Session 1:** Health **Topic:** Strengthening Africa's Health Systems Through Innovation **Moderator: Peter Akinnusi**	Omei Bongos-Ikwue Temitope Boladale Dr. Chioma Nwakanma-Akanno Martina Mbabie
11:20 - 11:50	**Tea Break / Level-Up Card Game**	
11:50 - 12:20	**Fireside Conversation 2:** Education **Topic:** Lessons for Young People from Life Unscripted **Moderator: Rotimi Olawale**	Ibraheem Sanusi
12:20 - 12:30	**Pop-Up Performance 3** Spoken word	Zakari Maikalma
12:30 - 12:45	**Pop-Up Session:** Entrepreneurship **Topic:** Access to Funding for Young People: The iDICE Program	Dolapo Adedapo - BOI - iDICE Coordinator

12:45 - 1:00	**National Essay Competition Winners Announcement**	
1:00 - 1:15	**Pop-up session 3:** Education **Topic:** When Education has an Age Limit: A Lived Experience	Acho Zion
1:15 - 1:25	**Pop-Up Performance 3** Musical Performance	Meemah Jackson
1:25 - 2:10	**Lunch Break Innovation Corners Game Zones Book Reading Stand, etc**	
2:10 - 2:30	**Pre- DARE Community Dialogue** Launch/ Issuing of Certificate	Rotimi Olawale
2:30 - 3:20	**Panel Session 1:** Education (An All-Girls Session) **Topic:** Amplifying Girls' Voices to close the gap on Access and Quality of Education in Nigeria **Moderator: Shekinat Kareem**	Hasana Dauda Fatimah Ali Tijani Dorcas Paul Inji Maimuna Ahmad
3:20 -3:35	**Pop Up Performance 5:** Dance Performance	Armstrong Dance Group
3:35 - 4:25	**Panel Session 2** High-Level Education Dialogue **Topic:** Advancing Girls' Education Through Gender-Responsive Governance **Moderator: Funom Yakubu**	Maryam Danburam Rinmicit Temlong Abubakar Sadiq Mohammed Sabo Keana
4:25 - 4:35	**Pop-Up Performance 6** Spoken Word	Testimony Odey
4:35 - 5:20	**Closing Tea Conversation:** Education **Topic:** Rethinking the Future of Education in Nigeria **Moderator - Dr. Elisabeth Onyeche**	Oby Ezekwesili
5:20 - 5:40	**Navigating Life as a Young Nigerian** Moderator: Kofo Odozi	Salem King
5:40	Wrap Up	Rotimi Olawale

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Cynthia Mbamalu

Cynthia Mbamalu is a human rights and women's rights advocate with 19 years of experience advancing democracy, political inclusion, legislative reform, and electoral integrity across Africa. A lawyer with an LLM in Comparative Constitutional Law from Central European University (CEU), she is the co-founder of Yiaga Africa and serves as its Director of Programs, leading bold, on-the-ground initiatives in democratic practice, gender equality, and electoral integrity in Nigeria and beyond.



Afolabi Adekaiyaoja

Afolabi Adekaiyaoja is a research analyst and a writer on the politics of policy, institutions and governance, as well as African geopolitics. His recent roles include a predoctoral research fellowship on taxation and traditional institutions in Sierra Leone and a research analyst position at the Abuja-based Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD West Africa).



Deborah Omage

Deborah Omage, MPH is a youth mental health advocate and the Founder of Mental Health Transformation Organisation (MHT), a youth-led nonprofit working to advance mental health literacy, advocacy, and sustainable support systems for young people in Nigeria and beyond.



Hamzat Lawal

He is the founder of Connected Development (CODE), and under his leadership, CODE won the ONE Africa 2016 Award which recognizes, rewards, and advances the exceptional work of Africa based organizations; dedicated to helping the continent achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

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Acho Zion Chisimdi

Acho Zion Chisimdi is a Nigerian 15 year old author of two, with over 50 unpublished manuscripts to her name. She graduated from secondary school in 2025, and although she was denied admission, continues to release books and now advocates against excessive and negative social media presence in the life of youths.



Zakari Emmanuel

Zakari Emmanuel, also known as 2plies Zakari, is a UNDP Creative 4 Peace awardee, a global spoken-word poet, podcast host, and community organiser, based in Abuja, using storytelling as a tool for social change. He is the author of The Autopsy: A Poetic Compendium, recipient of the Book for Peace Award in Rome, and host of the Beyond The Ballot Podcast, which discusses governance, elections, and civic life to a growing audience.



Maryam Danburam

Maryam Danburam is the Partnership Manager for Nigeria at Malala Fund, where she co-leads strategic partnerships and ecosystem strengthening efforts to advance girls' education and drive policy reform. In her role, she oversees a multi-million dollar grant portfolio, working closely with community-based organizations, policymakers, and movement actors to strengthen locally led advocacy focused on education financing, ending child marriage, and institutional accountability.



Pelemo Nyajo

Pelemo Nyajo is a Nigerian poet, and globally recognized disability inclusion advocate known for her radical honesty and deeply human approach to social development. Her work centers the rights, visibility, and dignity of women, girls and persons with disabilities, drawing from both lived experience and years of advocacy across local and global spaces.
Pelemo is the founder of Movement Beyond Walls, a creative initiative using art, play, and informal education to challenge discrimination and reshape how people understand disability inclusion.

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Bem Aga

Bem Aga is a democratic governance expert specializing in governance, policy analysis, community organizing, advocacy, inclusion, political party development and elections. Bem has 20 years of experience working on these issues in civil society and international development agencies. Bem currently serves as Program Director at the National Democratic Institute (NDI), and previously worked at the International Republican Institute (IRI) and the Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC).



Solape Sonuga

Solape is the Director of the Legislative Mentorship Initiative (LMI), where she leads initiatives to nurture the next generation of public sector leaders, equipping young professionals with the skills, knowledge, and networks required to drive governance reform in Nigeria.



Day 3

Day 3 is a multifaceted creative known for his fine blend of singing and song writing as well as a novel Afro fusion approach to spoken WORD and POETRY. Day 3 also doubles as an author with his first book, "I Think I Like this Girl" released in 2024. A book that centres around helping teenagers & young adults navigate adolescence, emotions and all the in-betweens.



Bọ́ládalẹ́ Tèmítọ́pẹ́ Maryam

Bọ́ládalẹ́ Tèmítọ́pẹ́ Maryam is a lawyer and creative whose superpower lies in using storytelling and content creation to drive social impact and access to social services like education, environmental protection, and health. She is building a social enterprise, Ìlera Lójù in Nigeria to improve health outcomes and environmental protection in Nigeria, leveraging the media, arts, and research.

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Dr Salma Ibrahim Anas MBBS, MWACP, FMCPH

Dr Salma Ibrahim Anas MBBS, MWACP, FMCPH is a Public Health Physician with over 25-year wealth of experience in Public Health programme and interventions at both national and international level. She has vast experience and expertise in Health System strengthening with specific focus on PHC strengthening and very passionate on improving access to quality Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child Adolescent and Elderly Health plus Nutrition (RMNCAEH+N) services, including Sexual and Reproductive Rights, as well as Gender Based Violence.



Omei Bongos

Omei Bongos leads the health practice at Gatefield. She develops advocacy and communication campaigns that result in high-impact policy change, including the introduction of Nigeria's first ever sugar-sweetened beverage tax in 2021, as well as programs focused on women's health and non-communicable disease prevention. She leads Gatefield's tobacco control advocacy program and led the multi-state youth hub program that equipped youth to drive effective advocacy campaigns.



Ibiso Ikiroma-Owiye

Ibiso Ikiroma-Owiye is a social impact and sustainability consultant, marine researcher, and climate justice advocate with over 8 years of experience at the intersection of climate change, community resilience, and ocean health. Ibiso serves as Chairperson of the Commonwealth Blue Charter Ocean Youth Working Group, advancing youth leadership in ocean-climate policy.



Armstrong Aluna Aluna

Armstrong Aluna Aluna is a dancer, model, actor, swim instructor, digital content creator, youth leader, and social impact advocate from Makurdi, Benue State, Nigeria. He is the CEO of Arm Strong Nation Studio and Co-CEO of Royal Africa Modeling Agency, where he has trained aspiring models and featured on prestigious runways, including Benue Fashion Week and Men's Fashion Week Abuja.

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Ameedat Abdulsalam

Ameedat Abdulsalam is a Nigerian youth advocate, researcher, and development practitioner working at the intersection of climate policy, gender justice, youth engagement, and inclusive development. She has experience in research, program management, advocacy, policy engagement, and strategic communications, with a strong focus on ensuring that young people and marginalized communities, particularly women, are meaningfully represented in decision-making processes.



Chinenye Uwanaka

Chinenye Uwanaka is a legal innovator, policy strategist, and venture builder working at the intersection of capital formation, frontier technology, and governance in emerging markets. She is the Founder and Managing Partner of The Firma Advisory (TFA), a global law and consulting firm delivering strategic counsel across corporate affairs, artificial intelligence, energy, infrastructure, finance, and sustainability.



Rinmicit Temlong

Rinmicit Temlong is a Policy Specialist and gender advocate with over 19 years of experience in policy development and implementation, women's economic empowerment, women's leadership, peace and security, and grassroots engagement across West Africa. She began her career as a State Researcher with the Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme, where she conducted research on peace and conflict, including baseline research that contributed to the establishment of Peace Clubs for young people in Plateau State, as well as research mapping women's participation in conflict and peacebuilding.



Testimony Odey

Temidayo Testimony Omali Odey, mostly known as Testimony Odey, is a Nigerian writer and multidisciplinary artist. Working across literature, film, spoken word poetry, and music, her writing has appeared in over twenty literary magazines and journals, her films have screened at New Culture Studio, and her music has reached listeners in more than twenty countries.

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Tosin Babalola

Tosin Babalola is a Nigerian writer, spoken-word artist, storyteller, and social impact enthusiast whose work explores identity, womanhood, society, faith, and the lived realities of young Africans. Through poetry and raw, emotionally resonant storytelling, sheseeks to provoke thought, spark conversations, and give voiceto experiences that are often left unspoken.



Worship Yakubu

Worship Yakubu is an Abuja-based singer, communication expert, event planner/ host, creative director, writer and lots more. She captured national attention as a Top 7 finalist on Nigerian Idol 2025 but has been doing remarkable things before then .



Tsema Yvonne Ede

Tsema is a lawyer with experience in human rights, governance, and gender. She is a policy expert who has worked with the government, business corporations and non-governmental organisations on implementing people-centred policies to protect citizens' rights. Before going into development, she founded a law firm where she worked as a litigation lawyer doing pro bono work, helping low-income individuals gain access to justice.



MARTINA MBABIE

Martina Mbabie is a Licensed Clinical Psychologist and Programme Manager at She Writes Woman Mental Health Initiative (SWW), where she leads the organisation's Support Unit and oversees programmes focused on accessible trauma-informed mental health support.

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Ibraheem Sanusi

Ibraheem Sanusi is an accomplished international development executive and strategic policy advisor with over 18 years of experience leading large-scale programs, shaping continental policies, and driving institutional transformation across Africa.



Morenikeji Olonilua

Morenikeji Olonilua E.Y. is a Development Communications Strategist, media professional, moderator and corporate compere with over a decade of experience using communication, storytelling and public engagement to create conversations that matter.



Fauziya Aminu

Fauziya Aminu (Fauzee) is a content creator, social media manager, and communications professional who enjoys storytelling, connecting with people, and sharing ideas that matter. Through her work in digital media and communications, she is passionate about creating meaningful conversations and making room for different perspectives to be heard.



Joan Bisho

Joan Felix Bishio is an environmental storyteller and communications professional. She previously coordinated the Youth Climate Collective at Surge Africa, a pan-African network of 60+ organisations, and led coalition campaigns that secured documented government response to youth-driven climate policy advocacy.

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Perfect Johndick

Johndick Perfect (Animi) is an Ecofeminist, storyteller, campaign strategist, and communications professional working at the intersection of environmental and gender justice She is the co-creator of the Rooted Rising Initiative, where she designs and leads creative campaigns that amplify frontline voices, challenge dominant narratives, and mobilize people towards meaningful change.



Ameenah Muhammad

Ameenah Muhammad is the Founder and Executive Director of CHAFHEIN, a nonprofit organisation advancing the rights, wellbeing, and empowerment of women, girls, and marginalised communities. She is an international facilitator, development practitioner, and advocate with over eight years of experience in gender equality, GBV prevention, SRHR, youth empowerment, and social justice, particularly in Northern Nigeria.



Msen Nabo

Msen Nabo is a seasoned development communications specialist with a strong track record of implementing strategies that drive awareness, promote inclusion, and shape policies. Her expertise spans communication and campaign strategy, graphics design, digital advocacy, scriptwriting, video production, and social media management.



Rt. Hon. (Barr.) Onofiok Luke

Rt. Hon. Onofiok Luke is an accomplished Nigerian lawyer, distinguished legislator, and dedicated public servant whose career is marked by notable reforms and commitment to participatory governance. Luke's extensive public service journey began with foundational leadership roles, including serving as the Students Union President of the University of Uyo in 2002 and later as the Pioneer Speaker of the Nigerian Youth Parliament in 2008, following earlier roles as an Aide to a State Legislator (2003) and Protocol Aide to the Governor of Akwa Ibom State (2007).

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Shekinat Kareem

Shekinat Kareem is a communications and media practitioner currently working with YouthHubAfrica, where she supports communications and content development across youth development, gender equality, governance, and social change. With a background in Mass Communication, Shekinat has experience across media and development spaces.



Ken Henshaw

Ken Henshaw is Executive Director of We the People, a civil society organization based in the Niger Delta cities of Port Harcourt and Calabar. In the last 25 years, Ken has worked closely with communities in the Niger Delta especially in those communities where oil and gas have been extracted for decades with devastating environmental, health and social consequences.



Onyinye Onyemobi

Ms. Onyinye Onyemobi is a dedicated leader in the nonprofit sector, committed to advancing social justice, equity, and collaborative leadership. As a professional at Ford Foundation, she plays a vital role in shaping impactful initiatives that drive meaningful change and empower communities, championing equity and systemic change in west Africa.



Dr. Funom Yakubu

Dr. Funom Yakubu is a gender and development specialist, and feminist researcher, with over seven years of experience working at the intersection of girls' education, adolescent health, sexual and reproductive health and rights, humanitarian action, and human security in Nigeria and regional policy spaces. She currently serves as Programme Manager, Partnerships and Fundraising at Education as a Vaccine (EVA), where she leads strategic partnerships, resource mobilisation, and programme coordination.

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Amanda Archibong

Amanda Archibong-Doukouré is a bilingual climate, investment and economic transformation expert with over 15 years of experience working across African institutions, governments and international development organisations. She is the Founder and Executive Lead of Women Leading Climate Action (WLCA), a pan-African platform advancing women's leadership, access to climate investment and participation in Africa's green economy.



Rector Pascal

Rector Pascal is a Nigerian social activist, creative director, Founder of Rector pascal foundation and the "We are not thugs initiative, he's also the CEO of Rejulz homecare, Georgia Atlanta. He promotes a non-judgmental approach, viewing substance use disorder as a mental health issue rather than a moral failing.



Paul Dorcas Inji

Paul Dorcas Inji, she is 16 years old and she is from Sanga Local Government Area of Kaduna State. she is currently in Senior Secondary School (SS3) at Government Girls Secondary School (GGSS), Independence Way, Kaduna. she is friendly, resilient and deeply passionate about personal growth and self-development. Beyond academics, she has a strong heart for empowering the girl child, helping young girls believe in themselves, know their worth, and pursue their dreams without fear.



Fatimat Tijani

Fatimat Ali Tijani is a 14 year old girl interested in child development, inclusion, education, and creating spaces where every child feels valued and included. She also enjoys learning new things, expressing herself creatively, and being part of activities that help children connect, learn, and grow.

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Dr. Chioma Nwakanma-Akanno

Dr. Chioma Nwakanma-Akanno is a reproductive healthcare physician, researcher, two-time TEDx speaker and health communications expert. She is the Creative Director of Dr. Zobo, a health literacy and advocacy platform that uses witty visual storytelling to advance the health and rights of African women and adolescents. She also convenes Boditok (Body Talk), a growing SRHR conversation experience that uses Africa-centred card games to help diverse audiences talk openly about bodies, sex and reproductive health.



MI Abaga

Jude Lenmfani Abaga, popularly known as M.I Abaga, is a pioneering hip hop artist, entrepreneur, and changemaker who has spent two decades shaping Africa's creative industries. Rising to prominence with Crowd Mentality and celebrated albums like MI2: The Movie, The Chairman, and The Guy, he quickly became one of the continent's most influential musical voices. Beyond his artistry, he served as CEO of Chocolate City from 2015 to 2019, where he played a key role in building one of Africa's most powerful music labels.



Blessing Ifemenam

Blessing Ifemenam is a development practitioner with 15 years of experience advancing democratic governance, climate action and economic development in Nigeria and internationally. She currently serves as Programme Lead at ActionAid Nigeria, coordinating the DANIDA-funded Strategic Partnership Agreement II (SPA II) where she leads and manages complex, partner-based programmes, working with civil society organisations, social movements, networks, government institutions and other stakeholders.



Bitto Bryan

Bitto Arumun Bryan is a vastly experienced broadcaster with over two decades of demonstrated history and versatility in the media industry. He is currently the Head Of Programmes and Host Of The Morning Show at Advocate Broadcasting Network (ADBN TV Abuja). Bitto is also a Professional Compere, Master Of Ceremonies and an award winning orator with a fluent understanding of over four Indigenous Nigerian Languages.

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Kofoworola Odozi

Kofoworola Odozi works at at the intersection of editorial strategy, audience development and public-interest storytelling. Her work focuses on building stronger ways for journalism and civic information to reach people, particularly young audiences, and making complex social and political issues easier to understand and engage with. She currently works at Gatefield, where she leads editorial work for gst, a social-first newsroom covering democracy, social justice, economic justice, health and social norms.



Salem King

Salem King is a Nigerian content creator, influencer, digital educator, cofounder of Creatorium, recognized as one of the most trusted voices in Africa's creator economy.

Twice nominated for the prestigious Future Awards Africa in Content Creation, Salem has trained over 4,000 creators, garnered over 5,000 digital product sales, built a thriving community of over 400,000 across platforms and worked on influencer campaigns for global corporations like Spotify, HP, MTN, Meta Google, and a constellation of others.



Hasana Dauda

Hasana Dauda is a 17 year-old student and young girl advocate currently living at the Guruku Interfaith IDP Camp. As a young person affected by conflict, she brings a lived perspective on the challenges faced by girls and young people in displacement settings. She is passionate about education, peaceful communities, and creating opportunities for young people to have their voices heard.



Maimuna Ahmad

Maimuna Ahmad was born in Kaduna State, Kaduna North Local Government Area. she attended primary school at Army Children School, N.D.A Barracks, and later proceeded to Government Girls Secondary School to obtain my Junior School Certificate in 2021. she is now in SS3 at GGSS Kawo, Kaduna, and she is currently the Senior Prefect of the school.

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Dr. Kole Shettima

Kole Shettima is the Director of the Foundation's Africa Office in Abuja, Nigeria. He is also responsible for grant making in the areas of Population & Reproductive Health, Human Rights and International Justice, Girls Secondary Education, Higher Education and & Accountability. Prior to joining the Foundation in 1999, Shettima taught at the University of Maiduguri, Nigeria, the University of Toronto, and at Ohio University, USA.



Jennifer Abomnger

Jennifer Abomnger is a seasoned disability rights and inclusion advocate whose work is grounded in her lived experience as a woman with a disability and over six years of working with persons with disabilities across diverse thematic areas. Her advocacy spans gender and disability, disability justice and inclusion, climate justice, SRHR, policy advocacy, and lived-experience mobilisation.



Mohammed Sabo Keana

Mohammed Sabo Keana is a development practitioner working at the intersection of child rights, education and policy advocacy. For over a decade, he has worked to bring Almajiri and out-of-school children in Northern Nigeria into national policy conversations, engaging federal institutions, the African Union and United Nations .



Andrew Mamedu Ahmad

Andrew Mamedu is the Country Director of ActionAid Nigeria, appointed in September 2023. With over 23 years of experience in project management, resource mobilization, and strategic advocacy, he has been instrumental in advancing social justice and poverty eradication in Nigeria, also having worked in Tanzania, Cameroon, and other West African countries. His work spans diverse projects and policy advocacy at both national and continental levels.

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Abubakar Sadiq Mu'azu

Abubakar Sadiq Mu'azu is the Founder and Executive Director of the Centre for Advocacy, Transparency, and Accountability Initiative (CATAI), one of Northeast Nigeria's leading national humanitarian organisations. A Global Education Champion with the Malala Fund and a member of the Nigeria Humanitarian Fund (NHF) Advisory Board, he has spent more than a decade advancing locally led humanitarian action, girls' education, and community resilience across the Humanitarian–Development–Peacebuilding nexus.



Dr. Oby Ezekwesili

Obiageli "Oby" Ezekwesili, born April 28, 1963, is a Nigerian economic policy expert, advocate for transparency, and activist. She served as Vice President of the World Bank's Africa Region (2007-2012), overseeing operations in 48 Sub-Saharan countries. She was Nigeria's Minister of Education (2006-2007) and Minister of Solid Minerals (2005-2006), and headed the Budget Monitoring and Price Intelligence Unit, earning the nickname "Madam Due Process" for reforming public procurement. Ezekwesili co-founded Transparency International and was a pioneer director (1994-1999).



Ugochi Ihe

Ugochi Ihe is a digital rights and tech policy advocate working at the intersection of digital safety, inclusion, and systems change. At TechHer NG, she currently serves as the Digital Literacy and Education Lead, where she leads work spanning digital safety prevention & response, policy advocacy, and research, with a focus on advancing safer digital spaces for all women and girls in Nigeria. Her work is grounded in the belief that safety, access, and agency are not optional features of digital participation, but foundational.



Ajuma Drisu

Ajuma Drisu is a Program Officer at TechHer, where she leads the SGBV Emergency Response Fund (ERF), supporting timely emergency assistance for survivors of sexual and gender-based violence across Nigeria. Her work includes coordinating with frontline organisations, managing support requests, and contributing to survivor-centred responses. At TechHer, Ajuma has also supported programmes and initiatives focused on gender, technology, and social impact, including work related to technology-facilitated gender-based violence.

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MEET THE SPEAKERS



Dolapo Adedapo

Dolapo Adedapo is a seasoned international fundraising, partnerships, and creative economy specialist with over 15 years of cross-continental experience advancing development initiatives across Africa and the United States. She currently serves as Creative Sector Specialist for the Investment in Digital and Creative Enterprises (IDiCE) Programme at the Bank of Industry (BOI), where she supports initiatives designed to strengthen Nigeria's creative economy ecosystem.



Muriel Mafico

Ms. Muriel Mafico is UNFPA Representative for the Federal Republic of Nigeria. She brings three decades of dedicated experience in international development across diverse regions, including the Arab States, Eastern Caribbean, and Southern Africa. For over two decades in the United Nations, she has driven impactful humanitarian and development programmes in population dynamics, sexual and reproductive health, social protection, gender equality, education, and youth empowerment.

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