

The Institute for the Study of Human Rights
at Columbia University
welcomes the 2024-25 cohort of the



Human Rights Advocates Program



GUSTAVO MIRANDA COUTINHO

Operations Coordinator
ILGA-LAC

BRAZIL



Gustavo Miranda Coutinho (he/him) is a Brazilian lawyer, researcher and human rights activist focused on LGBTI+ rights, racial equality and the protection of human rights defenders.

He began his career at the LGBTI+ Human Rights Center of Bahia, where he worked on severe human rights violations. He then worked as a lawyer for the Federal Program for the Protection of Threatened Victims and Witnesses

where he began to articulate protection policies in Brazil. He has been a member of several coalitions, including the Brazilian Committee of Human Rights Defenders. He is currently a consultant to the Brazilian Ministry of Human Rights and Citizenship.

He was vice president and president of the Brazilian Association of Gays, Lesbians, Transvestites, Transsexuals and Intersexuals (ABGLT), where he coordinated a network of 350 civil society organizations and advanced ABGLT's strategic litigation and advocacy. He is currently the operations coordinator of the International Lesbian, Gay, Transgender and Intersex Association - Latin America and the Caribbean (ILGALAC) where he is developing the organization's programmatic areas and advocacy in the Inter-American human rights system.

He holds a master's degree in Constitutional Law which he earned on the Diogo Sant'Anna Scholarship for Black Students at the Brazilian Institute of Education and Research.

He was recognized for writing the best dissertation in 2023, "Anti-gender human rights: The revision of the rationality of human rights by the Bolsonaro government in LGBTI+ policies (2019-2022)."

Gustavo is a participant in the 2024-25 Human Rights Advocates Program at the Institute for the Study of Human Rights at Columbia University.



THEHOYA DY

Head of Anti-Human Trafficking and Migration Unit
Center for Alliance of Labor and Human Rights

CAMBODIA



Since 2015, Thehoya Dy (he/him) has been promoting and protecting the rights of migrant workers as the Head of Anti-Human Trafficking and Migration at the Center for Alliance of Labor and Human Rights (CENTRAL) in Cambodia.

At CENTRAL, Hoya leads the organization's efforts in coordinating the rescue, repatriation and integration of victims of exploitation and trafficking from foreign territories. He and his

colleagues provide legal consultation and safe-migration guidance to migrant workers and stakeholders. They promote awareness about the dangers of high-risk migration in collaboration with NGO partners and the local authorities, especially through forums aimed at educating rural communities. They empower and organize Cambodian migrant workers abroad, especially in Thailand and Malaysia, through the formation of worker networks to protect their rights and through fostering ownership through training sessions. Hoya serves as the organization's primary media contact for migrant worker issues, and participates in key organizational decision-making, strategy initiation and development. He has contributed to the formulation of national policies and mechanisms aimed at safeguarding migrant workers' rights.

A former monk, Hoya earned a political science degree from Chulalongkorn University in Thailand. While at university, he was a radio program producer and moderator. From 2008 to 2012, he worked for the Working Group for Peace where he coordinated a consortium of 30 NGOs in Cambodia to build peace with Thailand. From 2012 to 2015, Hoya worked for the Community Legal Education Center as an online radio producer and migration officer focused on promotion of the rights of land activists and laborers.

Hoya is a participant in the 2024-25 Human Rights Advocates Program at the Institute for the Study of Human Rights at Columbia University.



ADIJA ADAMU

Africa Grants Coordinator, Ayni Fund
International Indigenous Women's Forum

CAMEROON



Adija Adamu (she/her) is a Mbororo Fulani Indigenous Woman from Cameroon. She is working with the International Indigenous Women's Forum (more commonly known by the acronym FIMI) under the Ayni Fund program as the grants coordinator for Africa. She has also worked as a project consultant with the African Indigenous Women's Organization (AIWO) in

French West Africa and as a program coordinator for AIWO in Southern Africa. She conducts multidisciplinary research on the issues of Indigenous Peoples in Africa and is involved in academic discourse about Indigenous Peoples issues as well as conferences and workshops advocating for rights of Indigenous Women at leading international NGOs, the African Union and the United Nations.

She has an honors degree in International Politics from the University of South Africa (UNISA) where she is currently pursuing a master's degree in international politics with a specialization in Diplomacy. She has participated in many capacity building trainings including a certificate program in Indigenous Peoples' Rights at the University of Pretoria, a certificate in Human Rights Mechanisms from the Indigenous Women's Global Leadership School, and a certificate in Public Authority and Humanitarianism from the Firoz Lalji Institute for Africa at London School of Economics and Political Science.

Adija speaks English, French and Fulani. She enjoys participating in community activities and reading about political and social issues. She cares about education, the environment, political awareness, and women's economic empowerment.

Adija is a participant in the 2024-25 Human Rights Advocates Program at the Institute for the Study of Human Rights at Columbia University.



WANJA NGURE

Grant Manager

UHAI EASHRI

KENYA



Wanja Ngure (she/her) is a Kenyan feminist and human rights activist based in Nairobi, Kenya. She is currently serving as a Grant Manager at UHAI EASHRI, a feminist fund supporting sex workers, LGBTIQ+ communities, and people at the intersections of drug use across seven Eastern Africa countries. She has a degree in social work and a Masters of Arts in Human Rights from the University of Nairobi. She has

over 18 years of experience working with marginalized, sexual and gender minorities and other key and vulnerable populations in Eastern Africa and in Malawi.

With almost two decades of experience in feminism and human rights programming, feminism, policy advocacy, public health, research, grant management, participatory monitoring and evaluation, as well as policy advocacy. Wanja has consistently led innovative initiatives and influenced policies in the realm of human rights, feminism and sexual and reproductive health rights and HIV response in Africa.

Her advocacy encompasses championing laws and policies that ensure access to basic and fundamental rights including health care without discrimination, and placing communities at the forefront of development.

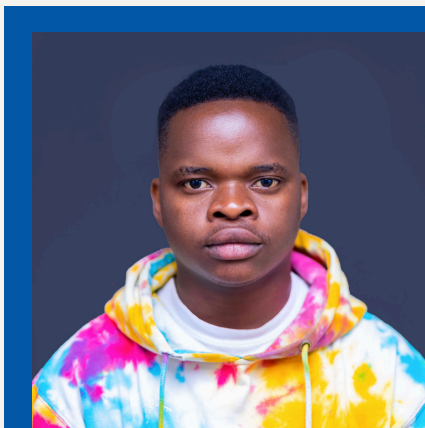
Wanja is a participant in the 2024-25 Human Rights Advocates Program at the Institute for the Study of Human Rights at Columbia University.



CONNEX KHOMBA

Advocacy and Grants Officer
Ivy Foundation

MALAWI



Connex Khomba (he/him) is a transgender man and a dedicated human rights researcher and activist from Malawi. Connex serves as the Advocacy and Grants Officer at the Ivy Foundation, an organization committed to advancing gender equality and advocating for the rights of LBQ women, intersex and transgender individuals. Connex led the development of the shadow report submitted

by the Ivy Foundation for the 8th periodic review of Malawi by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which was presented to CEDAW during its 86th session in Geneva in 2023. Connex has also been instrumental in advocating for policy changes to recognize intersex and transgender individuals in order to introduce a third gender marker in Malawi.

As a volunteer human rights researcher at ReportOut, Connex has been contributing to global LGBTQI+ research. Connex was recently recruited as a data interpreter for a key populations bio-behavioral study and size estimation in Malawi. He is driven by principles of inclusivity, boldness and accountability, which guide his efforts to champion diversity and human rights in his community. He studied Journalism at the University of Malawi.

Connex is a participant in the 2024-25 Human Rights Advocates Program at the Institute for the Study of Human Rights at Columbia University.



BOJANA JOKIC

President, Board of Directors
LGBT Forum Progress

MONTENEGRO



Bojana Jokić has been the President of the Board of Directors of LGBT Forum Progress since 2016. The mission of LGBT Forum Progress is to create a safe, inclusive, and stimulating environment in Montenegro for all LGBTQI+ people through community development, social and health protection, political and economic participation, representation and advocacy. Bojana has been a member of the National Team for Coordinating the Implementation of the Strategy for Improving

the Quality of Life of LGBTI Persons in Montenegro, the Trust Team of the LGBT Community and the Police Directorate, the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights' Commission for Allocating Funds for Financing NGO Projects/Programs in the area of "protection and improvement of human rights of LGBTI persons," and the team for monitoring hate speech on the internet.

She was also a member of the Working Group for Drafting the Law on Same-Sex Partnerships and the Working Group for Developing the Strategy for Improving the Quality of Life of LGBTI Persons in Montenegro. She was a member of the Radio and Television Council of Montenegro. She has published extensively on the rights of LGBTI persons. Bojana holds a Bachelor's and Specialist degree in Tourism and Hospitality from Mediterranean University. Additionally, she has completed various education programs in feminism, as well as in safeguarding the rights of children and other vulnerable groups in society.

Bojana is a participant in the 2024-25 Human Rights Advocates Program at the Institute for the Study of Human Rights at Columbia University.



KATHIA CARRILLO

President

Asociacion Las Comunes

PERU



Kathia Carrillo is an Afro-Indigenous communications professional and a decolonial and anti-racist feminist activist. She has worked for many years with Indigenous organizations and autonomous governments in the Peruvian Amazon, designing advocacy campaigns on territories, self-determination and the defense of collective rights for climate, economic and social justice.

Kathia worked as communications officer for ONAMIAP, the national organization of Indigenous women of Peru; and also as communications, press and campaigns coordinator for the Autonomous Territorial Government

of the Wampís Nation (GTANW) and for PUINAMUDT, an advocacy platform of four Indigenous organizations from the Peruvian Amazon affected by the oil industry. She also provided communication advice to the Awajun Autonomous Territorial Government (GTAA) and communications workshops to the Achuar Nationality of Peru (FENAP), as part of the Indigenous Peoples Program of the Centro de Políticas Públicas y Derechos Humanos - Perú Equidad.

She has written the handbook "How to approach Amazonian contexts from activism? Guidelines for approaching the Peruvian Amazon in relation to climate change" for the Citizen Movement Against Climate Change, which emphasizes the need for climate activists and organizations to decolonize their actions and interventions.

She's currently the president of "Asociacion Las Comunes", an all-women non-profit organization that aims at generating and strengthening collective organized processes of liberation, social, economical, environmental and gender justice. Las Comunes is mainly working with women from grassroot organizations, but also with unions and feminist activists.

She funded Las Comunes with other female colleagues from the Human Rights sector in order to generate a safer and more autonomous work environment, centering an intersectional and decolonial approach to their actions. Las Comunes incorporates arts, culture and communications in their projects given their potential as means for social transformation.

Kathia is a participant in the 2024-25 Human Rights Advocates Program at the Institute for the Study of Human Rights at Columbia University.



KUTLWANO MAGASHULA

Executive Officer for Programs
The Other Foundation

SOUTH AFRICA



Kutlwano Magashula (they/them) is a human rights activist and lawyer with a commitment to advancing freedom, recognition, and dignity for all through strategic advocacy and policy reform. Kutlwano champions issues of gender, social class, sexuality, race, and ability within the broader agenda of societal change. They hold a Masters in Law in Sexual and Reproductive Rights in Africa and have published extensively on LGBTI

inclusion. Beginning as Prosecutions Counsel in the Directorate of Public Prosecutions of Botswana, Kutlwano transitioned to roles of significant impact in the human rights sector. This includes being the Regional Programmes Coordinator at the Coalition of African Lesbians (CAL) where they collaborated with activist groups across sub-Saharan Africa to spearhead advocacy campaigns addressing personal, institutional, and ideological change. Later they worked as a Sexual Rights Legal Researcher with the Initiative for Strategic Litigation in Africa supporting strategic impact litigation to amplify the voices of women and other marginalized people in legal and policy frameworks.

Currently, Kutlwano serves as the Executive Officer for Programmes at The Other Foundation, overseeing grant management and advocating for the rights of LGBTI people in Southern Africa.

Kutlwano is instrumental in monitoring LGBTI policy advocacy efforts across national and regional levels, ensuring that the Foundation's programs remain effective and responsive to evolving challenges.

Kutlwano is a participant in the 2024-25 Human Rights Advocates Program at the Institute for the Study of Human Rights at Columbia University.



ERICK LUWONGO

Human Rights and Legal Empowerment Officer
HakiMadini

TANZANIA



Erick Luwongo (he/him) is a distinguished lawyer serving as the Human Rights and Legal Empowerment Officer at HakiMadini. With over a decade of experience, he has dedicated his career to advocating for the rights of miners and mining-affected communities in Tanzania. His work encompasses legal analysis, human rights activism, and policy advocacy within the extractive sector. Luwongo is renowned for his efforts in educating mining communities about their rights and empowering them to claim and

defend these rights. He has played a pivotal role in influencing global and regional mining policies through strategic partnerships and coalition building. Luwongo's advocacy has successfully brought attention to human rights abuses in the mining sector, including arbitrary arrests and physical harm. He is also committed to capacity building, conducting training sessions for paralegals and human rights monitors.

Collaborating with his co-workers, Luwongo empowers women miners through leadership and rights-based training. As the Northern Zone Coordinator for the Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Coalition, he addresses human rights violations with meticulous documentation and reporting. His contributions extend to international advocacy, including submissions to the Human Rights Council for Universal Periodic Reviews of Tanzania. Luwongo's expertise in Tanzania's Mining Laws ensures that legal frameworks align with the needs of small-scale miners and affected communities, solidifying his role as a key advocate for human rights and environmental justice.

Erick is a participant in the 2024-25 Human Rights Advocates Program at the Institute for the Study of Human Rights at Columbia University.



HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCATES PROGRAM 2024-2025

THE 2024-25 HRAP started online in the fall with workshops led by staff from organizations including Human Rights Watch, Philantropia, and Candid. The advocates participated in a session led by a member of Columbia Health on adjusting to life at Columbia and ways to make the transition easier. The advocates met with Columbia faculty and students and also learned from HRAP alumni about their experiences in the program and the impact it had on their work.

The advocates will join the Columbia University community in January 2025 for the spring semester during which time they will continue to attend skill-based workshops while also networking with donors, organizations and institutions in NYC and DC, attending graduate-level courses, and speaking about their work both on- and off-campus at venues including the UN, the US Department of State, and other universities and colleges in the Northeast. Many of the advocates will participate in the UN Commission on the Status of Women and the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

ISHR would like to thank the following for supporting the 2024-25 HRAP:

Joanne Csete

Joan M. Ferrante and Carey McIntosh

Arcus Foundation

International Indigenous Women's Forum

Packard Foundation

UHAI-EASHRI

Wellspring Philanthropic Fund

Harriman Institute, Columbia University

Institute for the Study of Sexuality and Gender, Columbia University

To learn more about ISHR and HRAP, including when the next HRAP application will open, please sign up for the ISHR Newsletter [here](#).

To support HRAP, please consider making a gift [here](#). Thank you.