



# Conversations For Africa

## The Generation Equality Series

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Project Report  
April 2022

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**It's been so gratifying to develop a strategy to identify the research that supports the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals**



## About the Project



“

**None of us have all the answers, but together, we have the ideas and solutions we need to fasttrack gender equality on our continent**

**Angelique Kidjo**

Founder, the Batonga Foundation

Hi,

I am Angélique Kidjo, and today, I am excited to invite you to follow a wonderful new project: Conversations For Africa.

In my life, in my career and in the work I do through the Batonga Foundation, I always try to amplify the voices of those who are left behind, never heard, nor listened to. Like many before me, and like many today, I believe in the power of love and uniting people, and working to make our world a better place to live and to thrive.

Conversations For Africa is a series of online conversations to talk about issues faced by girls and women in Africa and in the world. I will be talking with people I admire and support as well as people who do the work tirelessly and perhaps most importantly, selflessly. None of us have all the answers, but together, we have the ideas and solutions we need to fastrack gender equality on our continent.

In this first series, we will be addressing some of the main themes of the Generation Equality Forum, a global initiative that aims to encourage radical change for gender equality. Through conversations with african changemakers and visionaries, and street interviews of folks all around the continent, we've built a space for vibrant, authentic and purposed conversations.

These conversations are for us all, designed by us, and about us.

So come chat with us.



## About the Project (continued)

The Batonga Foundation and its Founder, Angélique Kidjo, designed Conversations to Africa to diversify the spaces and content of conversations around Gender Equality and the African continent in the lead up to the Generation Equality Forum of July 2021.

Batonga and Angélique were engaged in the GEF process since December 2019, through:

- Angélique's representation by Batonga on the GEF's Multi-Stakeholder Committee,
- Batonga participating in the Forum's Design Sprints as well as Action Coalition Leadership selection process.
- Batonga's launch and coordination of one of civil society's biggest initiatives around the Forum, "Nos Voix Comptent" (Our Voices Count), in partnership with the Global Fund For Women.
- Angélique's participation in the Owls network, as well as the Women Leaders for Generation Equality network, a network of high-level women leaders coordinated by UNWOMEN.
- Finally, Batonga is a proud member of the Nest network created by United Nations Foundation.

With "**Conversations For Africa: the Generation Equality Series**", Batonga wanted to ensure that Angélique's influence and capacity to mobilize support from various African stakeholders was fully leveraged in the run up to the Forum and in its aftermath. With rapidly evolving economic, political and social contexts on the African continent, as well as globally, the messages from and priorities of African women and girls were at risk of being diluted or left aside. The Generation Equality Series of CFA was designed to highlight the importance of their leadership and contributions, as well as push for more involvement and commitment throughout this process from stakeholders in the private sector, civil society, and government. Batonga and Angélique also wanted to connect audiences and amplify grassroots women's priorities with high-level African public figures who can build visibility and support for some of these issues on mass scales. The topics covered directly fed into the six Actions Coalitions, and/or other feminist agenda priorities set by the women's rights movement.

Conversations For Africa main objectives:

*Objective 1: Increased knowledge, awareness and interest in the Generation Equality process and grassroots women's priorities and needs for african audiences.*

- Sub-objective: regional and national-level engagement through virtual spaces of dialogue and exploration, as well as media engagement

*Objective 2: Increased engagement of key African stakeholders around Generation Equality and Action Coalition's agendas and priorities.*

- Sub-objective: African high-level figures across various sectors use their platforms to amplify the GEF and a call for action.





# Project Overview

## Data Insights

### Total Conversations published

There were 4 Conversations For Africa held between January 2021 and April 2022.

Convo 1: Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

Convo 2: Gender-Based Violence

Convo 3: the Young Leaders Edition

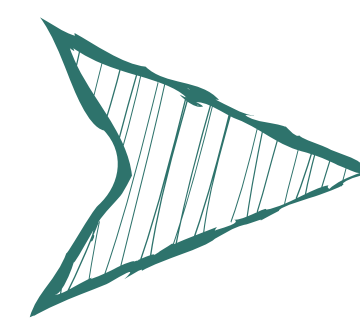
Convo 4: Women's Economic Empowerment

The project profiled **12 African leaders** from **10 countries** on the continent, with a total combined following of around 272,173 people on Instagram, which was the project's main platform (a big majority on the continent).

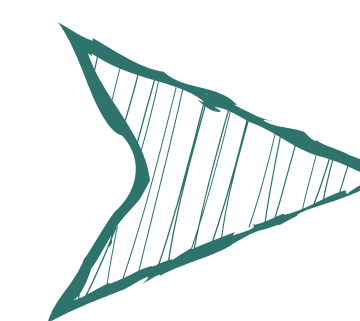


### Total online reach

We've reached new audiences and groups that have previously not been able to connect or be part of online conversations around #GenerationEquality and #GenderEquality. Here are a few overall numbers.

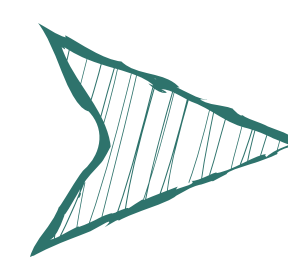


On Facebook and Instagram, we had **ThruPlays of 78,562** (number of times a Conversations For Africa video/extract/post was played through completion).

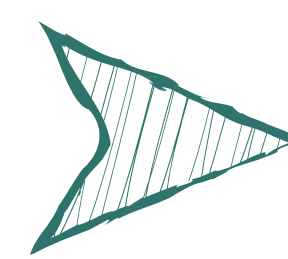


In April 2022 only, we reached **some 963,100 individuals** through Facebook and Instagram posts highlighting the GEF and Conversations For Africa.

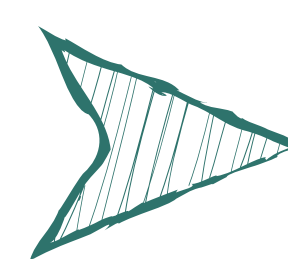
Between April 2021 and April 2022, we reached:



**1,165,112** impressions on



**925,927** people on



**293,681** people on





# Elements of the Project

Articles that have the most impact, in terms of Field Weighted Citation Index, were from SDG7, Clean Energy, with publications cited 49% more than the world’s average. With SDG12, Responsible Consumption, SDG13, Climate Action and SDG6 Clean Water all featuring high FWCI.



## The Conversations

is our most valuable asset and we believe that everyone deserves access to the best possible care. We strive to make healthcare safer and more integrated while improving training for caregivers.

## The Street Interviews

Our mission is to help science and healthcare realize its full potential through quality content, data, analytics and inclusion. But if research has blind spots, algorithms discriminate, or medical treatments don’t take into consideration the gender dimension of research, we cannot truly serve our communities.

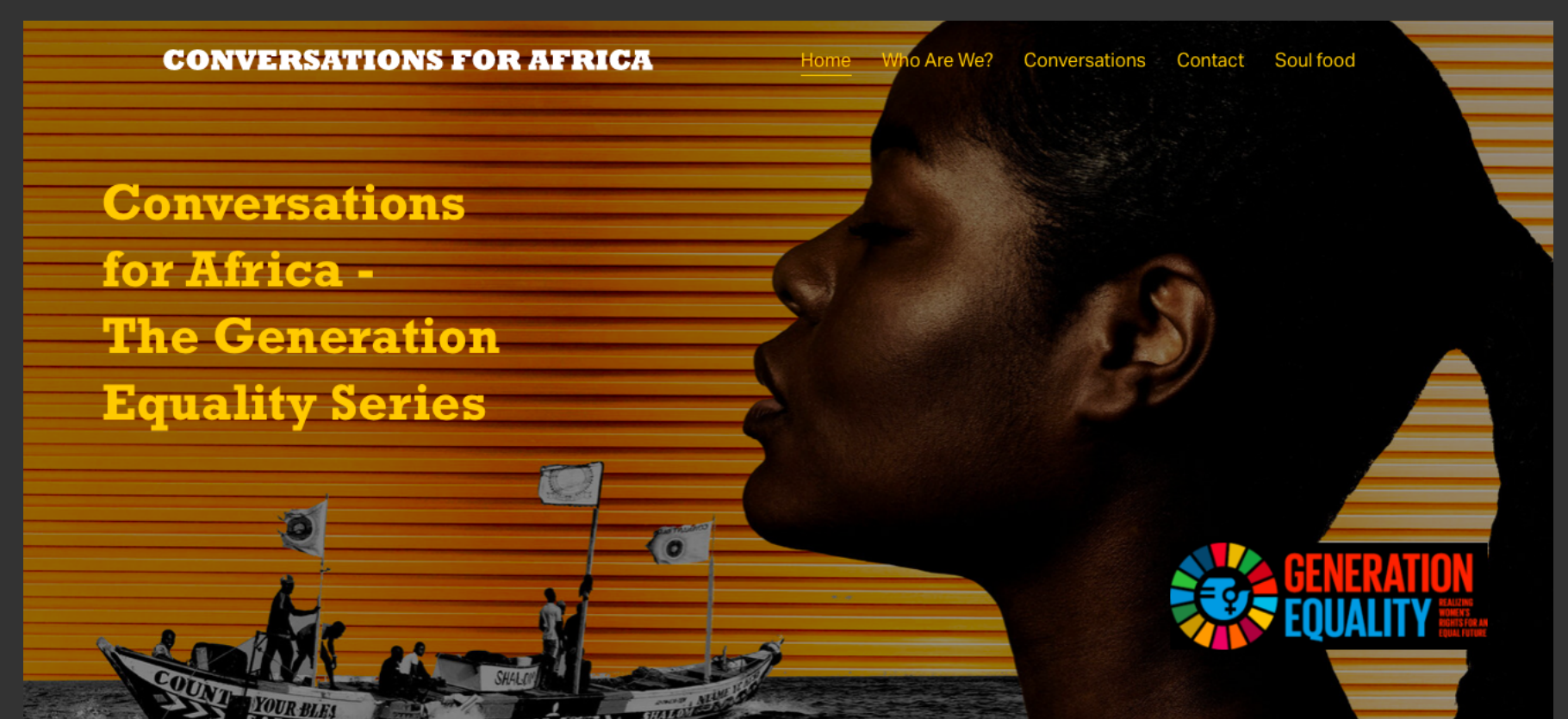


## The online engagement

Science and research are key drivers for positive global societal change. As a partner in the research ecosystem, we have a role to play in reducing inequalities: we do this as a founding partner of Research4life, by driving accessibility initiatives, and by supporting open science.

## The website/ Digital Learning Space

Launched on June 25th, at the same time of the release of the second Conversation, the Conversations For Africa website became the digital depository for both the conversations and the themes discussed in each. It provided with content selected by the Foundation, the online learning hub provides content on Sexual Health and Reproductive Rights, Gender-based Violence and Economic Rights and Justice in the form of videos, scholarly and research articles as well as a page that is designed to host music playlists.





# Convo 1 Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

## Moderator



### Angelique Kidjo

Artist, Singer, Composer  
Global Advocate for Girls  
UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador  
Founder, the Batonga Foundation

## Guests



### Ketty Nivyabandi

Burundian Poet and Human Rights Activist



### Blitz Bazawule

Ghanian Filmmaker and Musician

- Went live on May 4, 2021.
- Was viewed 436 times on **YouTube**
- Instagram: 716 people reached, 40 engagements
- Facebook: 763 people reached, 46 engagements



## HIGHLIGHTS:

### Three street interviews:



Hajar, from St Louis, SENEGAL



Rose from Fadiouth, SENEGAL



Aminata, from St Louis, SENEGAL

"I'm raising a young boy, and I realize every day that my actions are going to speak louder to him as to what kind of man he's going to be (...) The idea about allyship becomes very important because in any situation where there is strife between oppressor and oppressed, there is no neutral ground".

**Blitz Bazawule, Ghana**

"This very communal way of addressing sexuality in the home.. we need to be able to re-create that (...) and to make it happen again. And to give it value. Give traditional knowledge and traditional ways, iformal ways of teaching about sexuality, giving them value".

**Ketty Nivyabandi, Burundi**



# Convo 2 Gender-Based Violence

## Moderator



### Angelique Kidjo

Artist, Singer, Composer  
Global Advocate for Girls  
UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador  
Founder, the Batonga Foundation

## Guests



### Thando Hopa

South African model, activist, and lawyer.



### Badara Ndiaye

Creative Director at BADARAOFFICIAL, model, and consultant.



### Jessica Horn

African feminist activist, writer, poet, and technical advisor on women's rights.

- Went live on June 26, 2021.
- Was viewed 205 times on (convo + teasers)
- Instagram: 1150 people reached, 73 engagements
- Facebook: 665 people reached, 34 engagements

## HIGHLIGHTS:

### Three street interviews:



According to you, what are the impacts of gender-based violence on the whole community?



"If we do not have accountability management as a core, we are basically saying as a society that you can impose harm and there is not real problem with it".

**Thando Hopa, South Africa**

"As an advocate, our work is to create accountability and to hold governments to account because it has already been recognized (...) that these things are crimes".

**Jessica Horn, Uganda**

"I didn't talk to my parents for eight years when I told them about my sexuality. It's a challenge (...) I never thought one day I would be looking at someone and say "hey, this is me".

**Badara Ndiaye, Senegal**



# Convo 3 The Young Leaders Edition

## Moderator



**Frédérique Kragbé Leininger**

Editorial Director ELLE Ivory Coast,  
TV Animator - TV Life TV

## Guests



**Chaneline Mevowanou**

Feminist Activist and organizer,  
Social Media Officer at the Batonga Foundation



**Jane Dorothy Anika**

Activist, East Africa Coordinator of AMPLIFY,  
YALI RLC alumni



**Sylvain Obedi**

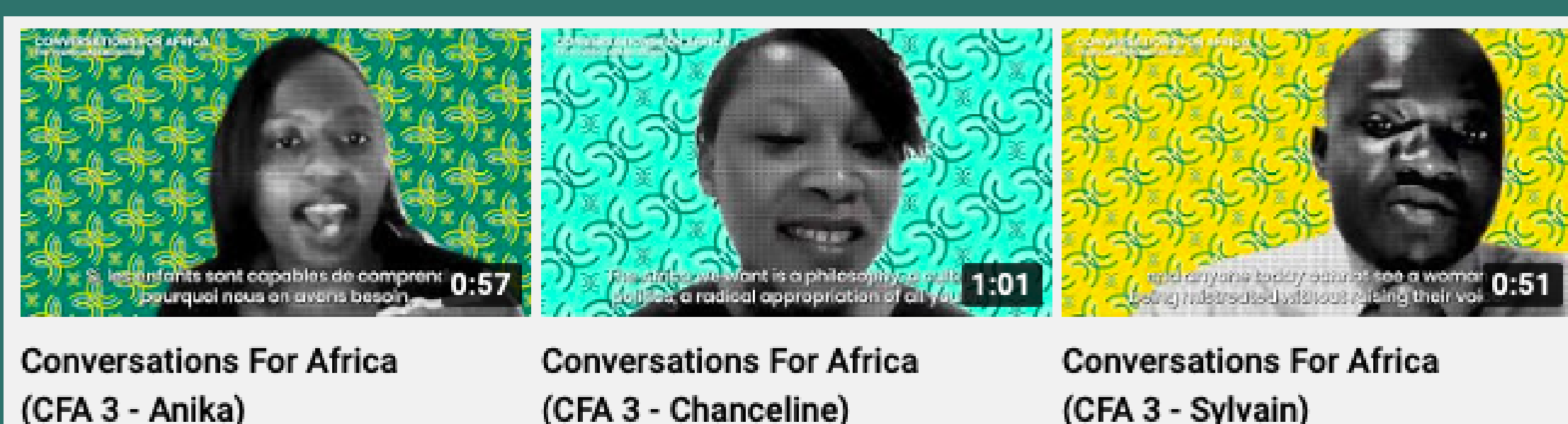
Disabilities Activist  
Country Coordinator, Enable the Disable Action DRC,  
Youth Task Force

- Went live on February 28, 2022.
- Was viewed 173 times on (convo + teasers)
- Instagram: 692 people reached, 38 likes
- Facebook: 1431 people reached, 64 likes

## HIGHLIGHTS:

### Conversation Drivers:

- What did African youth feel worked for them about the Generation Equality Forum? What didn't work for them?
- What do African Youth Leaders want to see come next for GEF?
- How can the next international forum be better tailored to African youth's needs?
- Were you able to transform this space to meet your demands and priorities?
- How do you think African youth can transform this space and claim it in the future?



Conversations For Africa (CFA 3 - Anika)

Conversations For Africa (CFA 3 - Chaneline)

Conversations For Africa (CFA 3 - Sylvain)

"There are more than enough elements that show the impact of the Forum. The struggle is not only for women anymore, it has become a common struggle. And no one today can see a woman being mistreated without raising their voice".

**Sylvain Obedi, DRC**

"We need to introduce gender equality as a common topic in our schools. If children are able to understand why we need it, then maybe we can raise a generation that understands each other and also influences each other for the better".

**Jane Dorothy Anika, Kenya**

"What we are aiming for goes beyond the linguistic barriers. The Africa we want is a philosophy, a culture, politics, a radical appropriation of all youth. Because in fact, if young people in Africa do not work together, we cannot represent a powerful force, a strong critical community".

**Chaneline Mevowanou, Benin**



# Convo 4 Economic Empowerment for African Women

## Moderator



**Teslanik Gbèdonou Houndegnon**

Coordinator of the Nos Voix Comptent Initiative

## Guests



**Natacha Agbahoungba**

Beninese Entrepreneur  
Program Manger, Young Women's Economic Empowerment at the Batonga Foundation



**Diane Ndarbawa**

Cameroonian activist  
President of AMIS Cameroon

- Went live on April 14, 2022. Conversation held in French, in partnership with another GEF-focused initiative, "Nos Voix Comptent".
- 86 live video views
- Instagram: 96,213 people reached; 989 profile visits, 192 new followers
- Facebook: 433,415 people reached , 780 profile visits, 58 new likes

## HIGHLIGHTS:

### Conversation Drivers:

- What is behind women's economic empowerment? What is the state of affairs for women's economic independence on the continent?
- What are the different approaches used to empower women economically in the countries where you work?
- What are the interconnections between women's economic empowerment and the other big gender equality issues and challenges on the continent?
- Economic Justice and Rights are at the center of the #GenerationEquality process and the key theme of one of its Action Coalitions: can you share your experience of working with the Action Coalition on this topic, and how African women -especially francophone - are integrated into these discussions and decisions?



"In Africa, we can see women in rural communities, in agriculture, who suffer from stereotypes. This is why it is so important to fight for their economic empowerment: African women do incredible things, accomplish so much that is not recognized or valued by society".

**Diane Ndarbawa, Cameroon**

"Women have suffered the most from the COVID crisis. Because they are on the frontline, they are in precarious jobs (...) I believe in the strength of grassroots organisations collecting data that can help inform our efforts towards economic empowerment".

**Natacha Agbahoungba, Benin**



# Our Guests' Bios



## Ketty Nivyabandi

**Burundian poet and human rights activist.**

Ketty Nivyabandi is a Burundian poet and human rights activist living in Canada. She was born in Belgium and grew up in Burundi, where she studied International Relations and worked as a journalist. Her French-language poetry has appeared in literary magazines and in anthologies. In 2012, Ketty became an activist during Burundi's constitutional crisis of 2015. She led Burundi's first women-only protest and was a founding member of the Women and Girls Movement for Peace and Security in Burundi. She was forced to flee the country when she was targeted by the government. She has been appointed as the Secretary General of Amnesty International Canada in 2020. Presently, Nivyabandi resides and works in Ottawa, Canada.



## Blitz Bazawule

**Filmmaker, musician.**

Blitz Bazawule is a Filmmaker and Musician born in Ghana and based in New York. Blitz's feature directorial debut 'The Burial Of Kojo' premiered on Netflix in 2019 via array. He co-directed Beyoncé's Black Is King which earned him a Grammy nomination in 2020. Blitz is directing 'The Color Purple Musical' for Warner Bros produced by Oprah Winfrey, Steven Spielberg, Quincy Jones and Scott Sanders. Blitz is the founder of Africa Film Society and the recipient of the Guggenheim Fellowship, the TED Fellowship and the Vilcek Prize.



## Thando Hopa

**South African model, activist, and lawyer.**

She is the first woman with albinism to be on the cover of Vogue. While working as a prosecutor, she was scouted to work as a model. Hopa aims to portray albinism in a positive way. In 2018, Hopa was recognized with the 100 Women award from BBC for her diversity and inclusion advocacy. In 2020, she became a fellow at the World Economic Forum, narratives lab and she was mentored by singer-songwriter, actress and activist Angelique Kidjo.



## Badara Ndiaye

**Creative Director at BADARAOFFICIAL, model**

Former Basketball Player, Badara Ndiaye, a Senegalese born, is Creative Director at BADARAOFFICIAL, a model, and a former contributor to L'OFFICIEL HOMMES UK & the NEW YORK STYLE GUIDE. Today, Badara is using all of his life experiences to help brands/companies / people through consulting on different approaches on digital media communications while contributing to the GLOBAL GOALS of the UNITED NATIONS.



## Jessica Horn

**African feminist activist, writer, poet, and technical advisor on women's rights**

With roots in Uganda, Jessica's work focuses on women's rights, bodily autonomy and freedom from violence, and African feminist movement building. She was named as an African woman changemaker by ARISE Magazine and as one of Applause Africa's "40 African Changemakers under 40". She has worked at the African Women's Development Fund and is currently Regional Director for East Africa at the Ford Foundation.



## Frédérique Kragbé Leininger

**Editorial Director ELLE Ivory Coast, TV Animotor - TV Life TV**

Former Danser and Fashion Designer, Frédérique is the Editorial Director of the magazine Elle Côte d'Ivoire, and also a TV host on Life TV. She has also been a Director at the magazine Mall Magazine and a Speaker and StoryTeller, as well as Founder, of Maison FMK.



## Jane Dorothy Anika

**Activist, East Africa Coordinator of Amplify**

A YALI RLC alumni, Ms Anika is the East Africa Coordinator of AMPLIFY. Ms. Anika is currently serving the Political Parties Liaison Committee as a steering board member. She was also elected secretary to the women's program of the PPLC. She convened the Young Women In Political Party Leadership KE. She was a pioneer fellow of the Green Talent Accelerator Program by Westminster Foundation for Democracy. She also serves Executive Director of the Green Congress Of Kenya, a member of the Global Greens. She is also part of AWLN technical committee in Kenya. Lastly, she is a ONE East Africa Champion where she lobby decision makers in effort to create changes need for gender equality. Ms. Anika holds a Masters in Women, Leadership & Governance in Africa from the University of Nairobi..



# Our Guests' Bios (continued)



## **Chaneline Mevowanou**

**Feminist Activist and organizer**  
**Community Engagement Officer at the Batonga Foundation**  
**Member of the GEF Youth Task Force**

Chaneline is a young Beninese activist committed to girls; rights and gender equality. As a communicator and blogger, she raises her voice against violence against girls and campaigns online and offline through various projects to empower girls and create spaces for girls to speak out, take action and participate. She is very committed to working with and mobilizing youth networks, organizations and movements because she believes in the power of young people as a force for positive change in societies. At the age of 23, she is the Beninese winner of the #Blog4Dev 2020 contest on solutions to end girls' marriages. Chaneline is currently working as the Moderator of the Girls Out Loud project at Plan International Benin.



## **Sylvain Obedi**

**Disabilities Activist; Country Coordinator, Enable the Disable Action; DRC;**  
**Member of the GEF Youth Task Force**

Sylvain holds a degree in Public International Law from the University of Peace of the Democratic Republic of Congo (UNIP-DRC). He lived in Walikale in the North Kivu Province in the East of the Democratic Republic of Congo. His experiences in this part of the country include activism in the fight against sexual violence, protection, the fight against the recruitment and exploitation of children in armed groups, the defence of the human rights of people living with disabilities and their participation in decision-making processes. When he was 16 years old, he began his work in defence of children rights and inclusion in the Children Parliament as President and member of MONUSCO Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict. He is a 2020 CT University Foundation USA Fellow pursuing certification studies in Public Policy and Leadership and YALI Regional Leadership Centre East Africa 2020 in Public Management and improvement of skills. Today, he coordinates a founding structure called "Enable the Disable Action, EDA ONG" by raising marginalized voices in the struggle for human rights for all.



## **Teslanik Gbèdonou Houndegnon**

**Coordinator, Nos Voix Comptent Initiative**

Project manager and media & communication professional, Teslanik is the Coordinator of Batonga's Initiative "Nos Voix Comptent". Her main responsibility in this function is to lead the implementation and roll out the program's communication and advocacy strategy. Teslanik graduated in journalism in 2015. She has worked as a journalist, reporter, host and radio-TV presenter in various Beninese media; with experience in digital, live presentation and marketing media services. She also holds a professional master's degree in Organization Management and Project Management. Teslanik is an alumni of the "Young Leaders of Benin" program of the German Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Foundation. It was in 2017 that she discovered the world of activism and committed to becoming an actor of change and development. She is particularly interested in the rights of girls and women, sustainable development, health (including female cancers), education, youth engagement and citizenship. As an activist, she truly wants to grow in activism and engage her work and voice more actively in the service of gender equality.



## **Natacha Agbahoungba**

**Beninese Entrepreneur, Program Manger, Young Women's Economic Empowerment at the Batonga Foundation**

Natacha is a dynamic young professional from Benin who is passionate about the financial empowerment of women. As Batonga's Program Manager for Women's Economic Empowerment, Natacha works to enhance the income generating activities of the SONAFA Clubs, manage the Young Women Business Circles program in Benin, and promote financial inclusion throughout the communities Batonga supports. Prior to her role at Batonga, Natacha worked as CEO of Moringa Social Venture where she promoted Moringa farming and nutrition education on the use of Moringa and other food items to enrich children foods She was previously the Director of the SHE'S GREAT project, a project financed by State Department/Global Women Initiative (GWI) through IREX. She was also a consultant at IREX, a U.S nonprofit.



## **Diane Ndarbawa**

**Cameroonian activist, President of AMIS Cameroon, Nos Voix Comptent Ambassador**

Ndarbawa Diane is a Cameroonian activist, and a "Nos Voix Comptent" initiative Ambassador. She is President of the grassroots organisation "Association pour une Meilleure Insertion Socio-professionnelle des filles et femmes du Cameroun" (AMIS Cameroun), that works on supporting women and girls to develop their economic independence. Diane is also active within the Generation Equality Action Coalition on Economic Justice and Rights.



# What comes next

## Continuing Conversations For Africa

**01**

### **Integrating it to other GEF initiatives and activities at Batonga**

We want to see the Nos Voix Comptent initiative members benefit from the spirit and mission of CFA, by hosting conversations with groups of activists and champions who are committed to the GEF but lack spaces and resources to fully engage in the process. By joining forces with Nos Voix Comptent, CFA can gain new francophone audiences and stay connected to the energy of youth and intergenerational activism around the #GenerationEquality process.

**02**

### **Making it activist-led**

While there is no doubt that the public figures in Conversations 1 and 2 helped bring new audiences to the topic of gender equality, it has also been incredible to see the peak in audiences for Conversation 3 and 4 that were activist-focused. We would like to see some of our incredible local partners organise their own conversations and debates, especially around issues like the GEF's accountability process, linguistic inclusion, and representation.

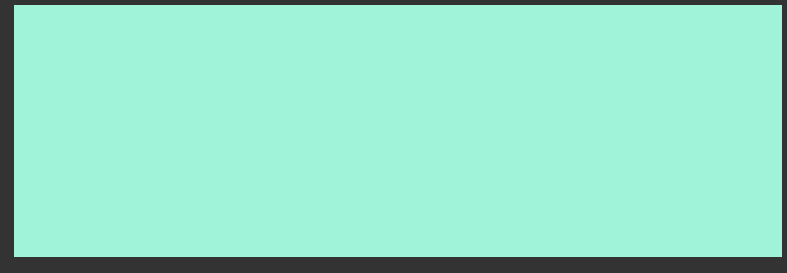
**03**

### **Sharing resources to host #conversationsforafrica on the continent**

Piloting virtual conversations from a far was fun, but we'd love to see our partners get the resources they need to host in person conversations and events around these topics in their communities, organisations and with their national media. We'd love to be able to then connect them with high level figures who can join in to support them in their country, amplifying their voices and helping them advance their GEF advocacy goals.







The Batonga Foundation would like to thank the  
for supporting this work.



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**Contact Us**



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