



INSPIRING WOMEN OF SOUTH SUDAN

International Women's Day 2020



CROWN THE WOMAN

March 2020

As part of our contribution towards celebrating International Women's Day in March 2020, Crown the Woman decided to spend the month profiling notable South Sudanese Women who have contributed to the positive development of the country and the rights of women and girls.

It is our hope that as people read it, they learn about some of the powerful women that are forces of positive change in South Sudan.

We wanted to recognize these women and their contributions and also inspire a new generation of young women and girls to join the struggle of empowerment of women in South Sudan.

Happy Women's Day !

Riya Williams Yuyada

Executive Director,
Crown the Woman

Juba, South Sudan

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Prof. Pauline Elaine Riak

Professor, Peacebuilder & Mentor

- A graduate of Stanford University, she is the first of only two female full professors at the university level in South Sudan.
- The founder of the Sudanese Women's Association in Nairobi (SWAN), where she mentored the growth and empowerment of over 800 women in exile.
- She is the co-founder of the South Sudanese Women's Coalition for Peace and Development (SSWCPD).
- Former Chairperson of the South Sudan Anti-corruption Commission
- The Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Sudd Institute
- The Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Research at the Rumbek University of Science and Technology,
- She is a signatory to the (R-ARCSS) peace agreement & a member (JMEC).
- Serves as a member of the High-level Panel on Internal Displacement
- Professor Riak is a trained and experienced mediator in gendered and inclusive techniques for sustainable peace building. She nurtured the establishment and development of the National Transformational Leadership Institute (NTLI) at the University of Juba (UJ).



Betty Sunday Ben

Medical Doctor, Activist for Women & Peace

- Status of Women Initiative Manager, CEPO
- Was a member of the South Sudanese Women Political Party Network (WPPNP)
- Coordinator of the Women's Monthly Forum. WMF has 42 membership from different women groups at the national and state level and 90 women leaders who actively participate in peace advocacy and women's political empowerment.
- Has participated in many regional and international for represented South Sudan. She presented a paper at the UN Human Rights Commission held in Addis on the Hybrid Court for South Sudan. Betty focused her presentation on Women and Transitional Justice with focus on South Sudanese women and challenges to Access to Justice at the AU summit in 2017.
- She briefed the UNSC in 2020 on behalf of the Women's Monthly Forum.



Kiden Sawala

Program Manager, Eve Organization

- She holds Master's Degree in Economic Development and Growth from the University of Gazi in Turkey.
- She is passionate about women economic and social development as well as addressing structural challenges that hinders equality.
- Lecturer at the University of Juba School of Economics and Social Studies
- One of the leaders of the #MaMaraSakit Campaign which translate to she is not just a woman to empower South Sudanese women old and young to take part in decision making and peace building and to fight GVB in the community.
- Manages the young women leadership program, an initiative of EVE Organization that inspire and empowers young women to learn, lead and make change in their communities.



Rita M. Lopidia

Executive Director, EVE Organization

- Executive Director and Co-founder of EVE Organization, Rita has been influential in developing the South Sudan UNSCR 1325 National Action Plan and has vocally advocated for policies that support women in South Sudan
- She represented South Sudanese women in the revitalization process and was a signatory to the R-ARCSS on behalf of the South Sudan Women's Coalition.
- Some of the tangible achievements of the Coalition was the inclusion of provisions to allocate a minimum of 35% women representation at all levels of government including one vice president position for a woman in the R-ARCSS.
- Briefed the UN Security Council in 2016 and 2018 raising the voices of those women and girls affected by the conflict.
- She is the RJMEC representative for the Women's Coalition.



Esther Soma

Program Officer, Women Peace & Security, UN Women

- Bachelor of Arts in Global Affairs - International Security track, Yale University.
- Was a member of the Technical Support Team to the South Sudan Women's Coalition where she supported women delegates in the High- Level Revitalization Forum (HLRF) on the (ARCSS).
- In her current position at UN Women, Esther continues to support South Sudanese women in the implementation of the signed peace agreement.
- She is a researcher and author of the report "Our Search for peace: Women in South Sudan's National peace processes 2005-2018" published by Oxfam and UN Women in January 2020.
- She attended the African Leadership Academy in Johannesburg South Africa.
- Esther has a keen interest in peace-building, gender equality, conflict resolution, governance, leadership and human rights.



AMER MAYOK DENG

Chairperson of the Women's Bloc

- Chairperson of Women's Bloc of South Sudan (WBSS)
- The National Women Bloc of South Sudan is an Umbrella Network of different women groups and women leaders from Civil Society, Political Parties, Diaspora, Private and Public Sector that came together to form the 'Women Bloc' purposely to advocate for the inclusion of women in the negotiations led by IGAD Peace Process .
- She has been a strong advocate for peace in the country since 2013 and fully participated in the IGAD led Peace process in 2014.
- Participated in the Revitalized Peace Agreement (R-ARCSS) where she signed on behalf of Women of South Sudan in her capacity to represent all women in South Sudan as stakeholders to the peace agreement.
- Representative of Duk Padiet County of Jonglei state to the SPLM National Convention up to date.



Zabib Musa Loro

Peacebuilder, Gender Activist & Human Rights Defender

- Holds a Masters in Human Rights and Governance, and a Bachelor in Human Resource Management, Diploma in business administration
- Coordinator, South Sudan Human Rights Defenders Network
- Executive Director of Islamic Development and Relief Agency,
- Member of Faith to Action Network
- Deputy Chairperson for the Network of Aids Service Organizations for South Sudan
- First female director for the Bureau of Standards at Nimule Border in 2015.
- A board member of Eastern Africa National Networks of Aids Service Organizations.
- A certified and qualified HIV & Aids counselor.



Eva Lopa

Media Personality, Influencer

- Served as Student Ambassador to both Sudan and South Sudan at Limkokwing University connecting students through creativity and culture.
- Miss Tourism Queen Sudan in 2010, she became the first international Beauty Queen under the country Sudan.
- Worked as a reporter for Juba Monitor
- Is a well-known social media personality. She showcases the cultural beauty of South Sudan through fashion, beauty pageants and photography, advocacy for women's and youth rights.
- In 2018 she became a voice on Eye Radio presenting "Our Archives" program.
- Today, Eva Lopa is referred to as a creative advocate for women, youth and peace in both visual and vocal forms in South Sudan.



Mama Rose

Businesswoman & Restaurant Owner

Kicked out of her tea stand in Rumbek by the owner of the restaurant where she was working, she defiantly set up her own place and turned it into a restaurant, and ended up taking all of his customers!

They now jokingly call her Mama IO - the rebel.

Moral of the story: well behaved women do not make history! ✨

TATA DIKO

Poet & Advocate for Women in Sports

- As a spoken word artist, she focuses on strengthening the voice and power of women and girls through documentation of their untold stories and letting known their journey.
- Member of Khalimat Poetry and #Anataban
- Founded the Initiative, Lady in Action (LIA) a community safe space for young girls.
- Women's coordinator, South Sudan Women Basketball Association.
- Small-size entrepreneur specializing on Sportswear in Juba, Sportswear 211 is her boutique.
- She was nominated for Sout al Salaam 2019 Awards, People's Choice Category.
- She is also an alumni of three feminist leadership programs; Young Women Leadership Program, Feminist Leadership on Women, Peace and Security and Sister to Sister Mentorship Program

Nicole Nyakong (AKA - Nicole Mariam)

The Activist Actress who defends the rights of girls through film!

- Through her acting, Nicole has become an activist advocating for ending early child marriage and campaigning for girl child education, including the following films:
- Lala by Crown The Woman on wife Inheritance - Blood movie by Anataban - Zawaj A Gali which won an award in 2017 in California and Defy a film that won an award in 2018 Juba Festival
- She is an award winner of 2018 Best Supporting actress of the year 2018/2019.
- She has represented her country in 3 different forums in Addis Ababa Ethiopia in 2019 (GIMAC 33 in Jan, Pan African Youth Forum (IMBy2021) in May and Beijing +25 review in Oct in Addis Ababa Ethiopia respectively.)
- A member of: #Anataban, Gender is My Agenda Campaign (GIMAC) and the Global Youth Peace Committee.

Caroline Kibos

Lawyer, and civil society activist.

- A lawyer with a passion for peace building, governance, gender and the law, transitional justice and security sector reforms.
- Actively supported civil society during the High Level Revitalization Forum (HLRF) in Addis.
- Attended the African Youth Transitional Justice Academy in Rwanda.
- Youth representative at the Reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission (RJMEC).
- Member of the South Sudan Civil Society Forum, Women Coalition and Youth Coalition.
- Member of the Technical Working Group on Federalism.
- Committed to women empowerment and emancipation from cultural and societal barriers that hinder full participation of women in public life.

Catherine Charles Modi Vitaliano.

Lawyer and Programme Officer

- Law Degree from Catholic University of Eastern Africa.
- She is passionate on advocating for civic and human rights.
- Programmer Officer for South Sudan Democratic Engagement, Monitoring and Observation Programme (SSuDEMOP)
- A member of several civil society networks such as Peace Implementation Monitoring Initiative (PIMI), South Sudan Civil Society Forum (SSCSF) and the South Sudan Human Right Defenders Network.
- Part of the "Born To Lead" Campaign
- Was a consultant Legal Researcher, to guide women at different level in gathering their view on issues pertaining legislative review and reform processes as provided for in the R-ARCSS agreement.

Agum Joseph Kuch

Chairlady, Women's Association of Lakes State

- Led a dialogue for peace and reconciliation between Kok Awach and Kok Ker cattle keepers and communities
- Focal point for Lakes state for South Sudan Women's Network
- Trains in peacebuilding in 8 countries (Western Lakes, Yirol, Nyang, Awerial, Eastern Yirol, Rumbek North and Rumbek East and Chubet).
- Small business owner – gardening and farming.
- Trains women in business administration and management.

Alith Cyer Mayar

Writer, Poet, Activist.

- Founder of Writers Writing Fellowship
- She is a poet who recently started performing her writings in platforms for women, youth and policy makers.
- Authored two books - The Cry of the South Sudanese Children and The Battle Within Me.
- A trained Mediator.
- She is an Alumnus of The British Council- Active Citizens -Social Enterprise.
- Works for different organizations as the Communication and Mobilization officer.
- Deputy Director External Relations –Starford International University
- An active member of civil society efforts including #Anataban and the SSCSF



Rebecca Yar Dhoor

Entrepreneur & Women's Rights Activist

- She established a school in Rumbek after supporting women to farm vegetables and realizing their children were not going to school.



Atim Caroline O. Atanga

Director, South Sudan Women with Disability Network

- Strong advocate for the rights of people with disabilities in South Sudan.
- Degree in Special Needs Education at Kyambogo University in Uganda
- Worked with South Sudan Deaf Development Concern formerly SSNAD as a Human Right Advocate for Deaf people to include sign language in the constitution as a transitional language for the Deaf.
- Met the former UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon in Istanbul at the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016 and brief him about the situation of PWDs in Africa.
- Attended the CSW68 in 2019 and advocated for the inclusion of women with disabilities most especially deaf girls in Africa.
- Recipient of the Voice of Courage Award in 2013 New York by Women's Refugee Commission.
- Received the Women's Leadership Award in 2015 – Juba, South Sudan by EU Commission



Viola Riak

Social Scientist & Gender Activist

- Holds a Master of Social Sciences in Social Development from University of Cape Town (UCT) and Bachelor of Arts in Community Development from Daystar University.
- Viola has over 8 years' experience in peacebuilding, conflict resolution/transformation and gender equality.
- She is currently a Gender Analyst with UNFPA.
- Ms. Riak is a champion on prevention and response to gender based violence including child marriage in South Sudan. She is a strong advocate on issues of sexual reproductive health services including right to access family planning.



Dr. Ayak Chol Deng Alak

Peace Activist, Medical Doctor, Poet, Mediator

- Bachelors of Medicine/Bachelors of Surgery and a Masters of Public Health (MPH) specialization in Epidemiology.
- Practicing and published clinical epidemiologist.
- Co-founder of #Anataban
- Head of Research at the Strategic Defense and Security Review Board
- Former Deputy Coordinator at the South Sudan Civil Society Forum
- Active member of the South Sudan's Women Coalition
- Certified grassroots mediation expert and contributed to the mediation module for African Women.
- A spoken word artist and published poet.
- Former radio journalist



Arek Francis Malek Rual

Acting EP, Breaking Female Silence National Organization

- Coordinator for young women leading for peace as a country's coordinator initiated by Women's International Peace Center formally (ISIS WICCE) in partnership with Center for Inclusive Governance Peace and Justice (CIGPJ)
- Member of council in South Sudan National Youth Union Second Convention
- On the Board of Directors for Miss & Mr. Universities South Sudan Beauty Pageant Initiative.
- Represented South Sudan during the 35th "Gender is My Agenda Campaign" (GIMAC) Pre- Consultative Summit under the theme: "Recognizing and Amplifying "the Women and Girls Voice to Silencing the Guns in Africa 2020 in Addis Ababa - Ethiopia where her recommendations were among those top adopted and seconded to the table of the African Union Heads of States 33rd Ordinary Summit.



Jackline Nasiwa

Lawyer, Women Rights & Peace Activist.

- Experienced international law lawyer, rule of law specialist and peacebuilding expert.
- Bachelors of Laws from Makerere University and a Masters in International Law from Oxford Brookes University.
- Passionate in promoting human rights, specifically the rights of women and children.
- Actively supported women's participation in political spaces including the R-ARCISS peace process and constitutional development.
- Founder of the Centre for Inclusive Governance, Peace and Justice (CIGPJ)
- Chairperson of the Board of the South Sudan National Alliance of Women Lawyers
- She has briefed the UN Security Council on the South Sudan & participated in African Commission on Human Rights Sessions.
- PILPG Senior Peace Fellow.

**THIS BOOKLET PROFILES A NUMBER OF
SOUTH SUDANESE WOMEN WHO HAVE
DEMONSTRATED THEIR EXCELLENCE AND
COMMITMENT TO CONTRIBUTING TO
THE DEVELOPMENT SOUTH SUDAN.**



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