# International Youth Day 2024

INNOVATION COLLABORATORY



Global Youth
Advancement Network
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

# Group 1
## Youth Group Coordinator

## Dani Vincent



My name is Dani Vincent, and I am a fourth-year student at Michigan State University and my pronouns are she/her/hers. I will be graduating this December with a Bachelor of Science degree in Environmental Studies and Sustainability as well as two minors in both business and Environment and Health. I work in the Student Life & Engagement Sustainability Department as a Student Assistant and Student Eco-Rep Fellowship Coordinator. I am also apart of the SLE Student Council, Student Sustainability Leadership Council, and the ASMSU ad HOC Committee. I have a deep passion for sustainable initiatives and have always enjoyed learning more about how the Sustainable Development Goals apply to our campus community. In my own time, I enjoy bouldering, reading, Pilates, and running while spending time discovering different hobbies. I love answering any questions regarding campus as I spent two years working in the MSU Tours Office and I always look forward to meeting new people!

# Group 1 Expert

## Mike Lindhout

- Mike is a proud Spartan who graduated from the MSU Broad College of Business in 1995. After college, he served as a Small Business Development Volunteer with the Peace Corps in rural Nicaragua and worked for the American Cancer Society in various executive positions. Mike eventually returned to the Peace Corps as the Director of Programming and Training for Peace Corps Nicaragua, a position he held for 9 years before joining MSU. He served as acting director of the Peace Corps in Kyrgyzstan, Belize, Panama, Mexico, Peru, the Dominican Republic, and the Eastern Caribbean.
- Mike is the Senior Director of International Advancement, supporting MSU's International Studies & Programs. He leads fundraising for MSU's international research projects, development initiatives, and scholarship through engagement with individuals, corporate, and foundation partners. He also leads international alumni engagement for the university.



# Ngwa Patrick Shu
## Cameroon

- Ngwa Patrick Shu is a Cameroonian human rights defender and social facilitator living in Douala. He works with the NGO UN MONDE, based mainly in Akwa-Douala, conducting research on gender and children's rights, identifying street children and the problems faced by certain communities. He has drawn up an emergency preparedness, peace-building and gender equality plan for the problems faced by certain communities. Identifying human rights violations, gathering information and facts. Ngwa is also an ambassador for peace and social cohesion.



# Ngwa's Project

## Gender-based Violence in School

Violence against children (VAC) is a global problem and manifests in every society. While many forms of VAC take place in children's homes and communities, children also experience violence in and around schools. The kinds of violence seen at school include corporal punishment, sexual abuse and assault, bullying, denigrating sexual comments, physical fighting and psychological violence by peers or adults such as harmful taunting, insults, exclusion or denial of resources, bullying with words or images or property damage. Cyberbullying is often an extension of offline bullying in the material world as the internet expands the venues available for reaching targeted students. Based on global survey estimations, we know that around one in three students report experiencing physical violence at or around school when asked about the previous month. There are similar prevalence rates for bullying, on one hand, and psychological violence, on the other hand, with each affecting around one in three students. The global prevalence of sexual violence in schools has been more difficult to capture because of the sensitivity of the topic, inconsistencies in the definition of sexual violence and potential risks of disclosure. However, global data shows that one in four young women has already experienced violence by an intimate partner (sexual or other) by the time they are 24 years old, indicating the presence of gender-based, or sexual violence among school-aged children.

# **Tjedu Moyo**
# Zimbabwe

- Tjedu Moyo is a young leader passionate about empowering underserved populations with public health, gender equality and climate justice information. Over the past five years, she has been a fervent advocate for young people's access to health services, serving as a peer educator and mentor. Moyo plays a significant national role as the Youth Representative for the Global Financing Facility (GFF) in Zimbabwe, where she works to improve access to Sexual Reproductive Maternal Neonatal Child and Adolescent Health plus Nutrition for women, children and adolescents. With a strong academic background in Geography, Moyo is deeply interested in the intersection of climate change and public health. She recognizes that climate change profoundly affects the foundations of human health and poses a significant threat to global efforts to eradicate TB, malaria, and HIV. This understanding drives her current pursuit of a Master's degree in Environmental Sciences, where she aims to further explore and address these critical issues. In 2020, Moyo founded the Lunia Centre for Youths, an organisation dedicated to promoting climate justice, gender equality, and equitable health service delivery across Zimbabwe. Through her leadership, the Lunia Centre for Youths works tirelessly to create a future where every individual, regardless of their background, has access to the health services and information they need to lead healthy, fulfilling lives. Moyo's dedication to her community and her visionary approach to tackling health and environmental challenges make her a remarkable and inspiring figure in the fight for a more just and equitable world.



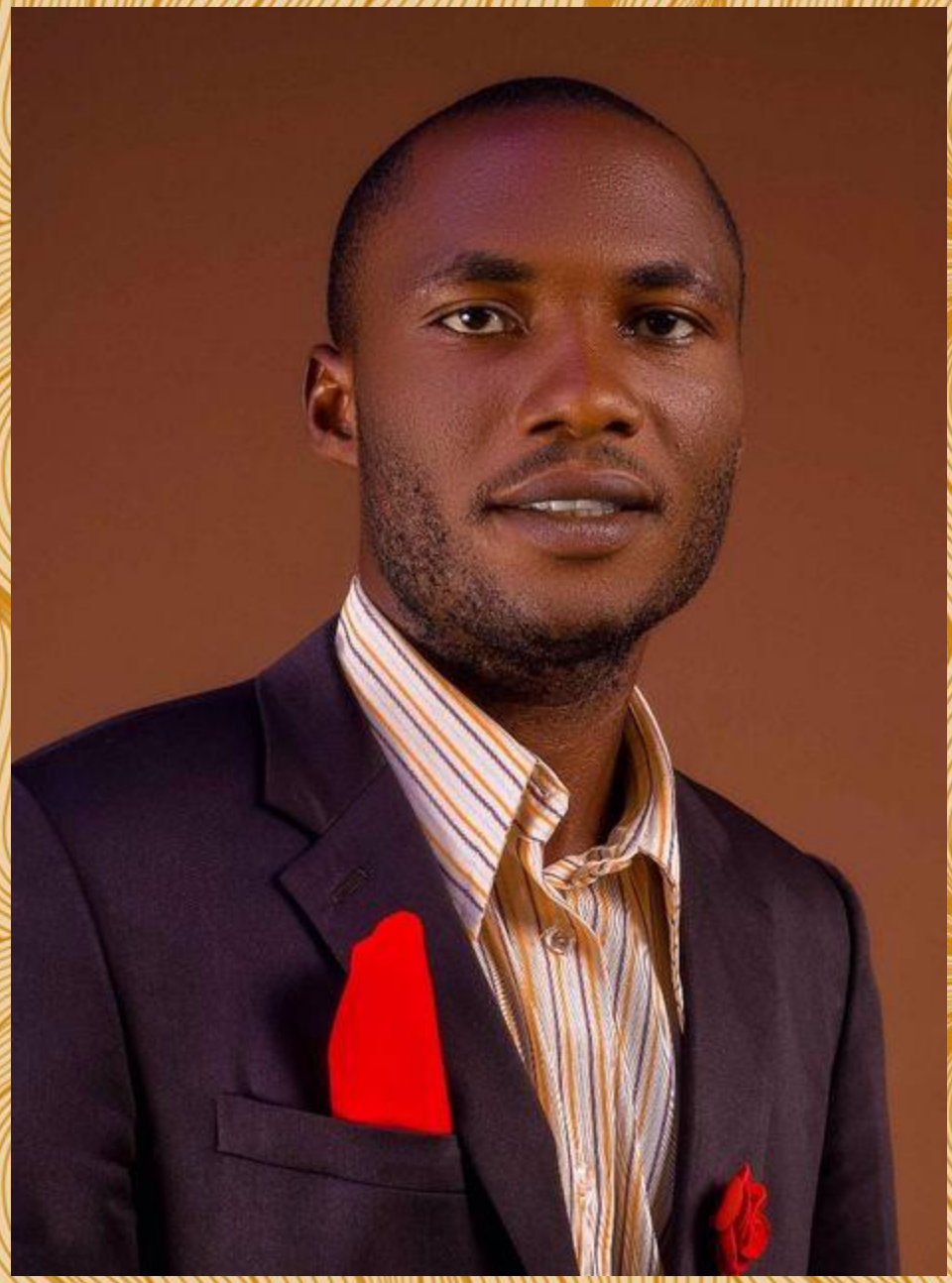
# Tjedu's Project

## Starting the journey: Youth-Led urgency for the SDGs

- In this presentation, we explore the pivotal role of youth in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), emphasizing a community-led approach for sustainable results. We delve into actionable strategies and initiatives that empower young people from within their communities, highlighting the effectiveness and sustainability of engagements rooted in local action. By investing in youth at the grassroots level, we aim to foster impactful change driven by and for the community. This approach is critical, particularly in addressing challenges such as poor healthcare infrastructure exacerbated by climate change. Initiating change from within communities enables ownership of processes and facilitates the adoption of initiatives tailored to local needs. For instance, in addressing waste management challenges in Africa, community-led approaches can implement effective waste management systems, reducing landfill waste and minimising health hazards like cholera caused by waste on the streets.

# David Kor
## Nigeria

- David Kor is a dedicated change-maker and green entrepreneur, founding Blue Wings Nigeria Limited, a company transforming organic waste into animal feed to empower smallholder farmers and protect the environment. With over six years of experience in agriculture and climate change, David actively advocates with Global Citizen and participates in UN SDSN Youth and the Queen's Charitable Trust. Passionate about creating lasting solutions for underserved communities, David aspires to broaden his global network, collaborating with individuals and organizations to drive a more equitable and food-secure world.



# David's Project

## Black Soldier Fly Larvae: Transforming Organic Waste into Protein for a Greener, Food-Secure Nigeria

In our rapidly changing world, innovative solutions are essential for addressing pressing challenges. Blue Wings Nigeria, founded by David Kor, exemplifies this spirit. Our mission? To transform organic waste into valuable resources, fostering a greener planet and a food-secure future for Nigeria. 1. Fresh Approaches: a. Blue Wings leverages the voracious appetite of the Black Soldier Fly larvae to convert organic waste into protein-rich animal feed. This novel approach disrupts high cost of conventional feed, traditional waste management and contributes to circular economy practices. b. Our agribusiness model integrates technology, sustainability, and youth-driven creativity. By tapping into the power of insects, we reimagine waste as an asset. 2. Effective Solutions: Blue Wings addresses multiple challenges simultaneously: a. Food Security: We produce high-quality animal feed, reducing reliance on conventional feeds. b. Resource Efficiency: Organic waste becomes a valuable resource, minimizing landfill impact. c. Climate Mitigation: By diverting waste from decomposition, we reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Our scalable model can be replicated across communities, promoting local resilience. 3. Youth Innovation Matters: Blue Wings embodies the spirit of the event's theme: "Youth Towards Sustainable Development Goals. Kor David's journey exemplifies how young change makers can drive impactful change, as our venture showcases the power of youth-led innovation. Join us on this transformative flight with Blue Wings Nigeria!

# Group 2
# Youth Group Coordinator

## Kate Blaszkiewicz

- Kate is a 5th year student at MSU, pursuing dual degrees in both Business Management and Apparel and Textile Design. She currently serves as the Creative Director of Vim Magazine, President of MSU's Fashion Design Student Association, and is a member of the MSU Honors College. In her free time, Kate enjoys designing for various fashion shows, and is fortunate to have experience with New York Fashion Week, Chicago Fashion Week, Michigan Fashion Week, and several others. Her designs have been featured on the local Channel 4 News, the cover of Dreamy Magazine, and the HOUR Detroit Magazine.



# Group 2
## Expert

**Bryce Carlton**

Bryce joined the OISS team in 2019 and oversees OISS engagement initiatives and advises students. Bryce obtained his Masters degree from Grand Valley State University where he completed a graduate assistantship at the Writing Center, working with international students to perfect their writing craft and has been working in International Education since 2016. He feels fortunate to have the world at his fingertips each day at MSU as he meets students and scholars from all over the globe.



# **Stepan Svestka**
# Czech Republic

- Stepan Svestka is a 19-year-old student from Prague, Czech Republic. He has placed among the TOP100 high school students in the nation for the second time in a row. Stepan spent a year in the US thanks to the FLEX scholarship funded by the US government. His future plans are to attend a university abroad, possibly in the USA. He spent 10 months volunteering for an NGO. At the moment, he is focusing on starting his own social media business - helping entrepreneurs kickstart their social media presence through video making. In his free time, he loves to workout or run.



# Stepan's Project

**It all starts with you.**

- I would like to center my presentation mostly about projects me or my friends have done. I would focus primarily on projects that aim towards SDG. The goal of my presentation would be to inspire other leaders worldwide to do great things. I would like to provide them with real-life examples AND their results - how they have helped other people to grow and develop. Some of the projects would include: Political panel discussions with EU candidates under the age of 30 before the recent elections. This project played a big role in spreading awareness among the youth, which resulted in an almost 10% election participation increase in our country. It was led by a close friend of mine and I had been to most of the discussion panels. Group mentoring for type I diabetics. My own project, that we, unfortunately, had to cut. However, we learned a lot from it. I would like to explain the whole process of creating this project and then discussing why we decided to end it. As an alumnus of the Future Leader's Exchange scholarship, our alumni community is presented with a lot of grant opportunities that allow us to organize clean-ups, plant trees or create dog beds for a local dog shelter. I believe that these examples could inspire people to get out of their comfort zones and go change the world.

# Calvin Manika
## Zimbabwe

- Calvin Manika is the Chief Executive Officer of Besana Media, the publisher of The Besana Mail. A Mandela Washington Fellow (Michigan State University - US) and Chevening Scholar (Nottingham Trent University -UK), Calvin founded the organisation in 2022 to cover children's underreported issues in borderline marginalized communities of Zimbabwe. Besana means means children in the Zimbabwe's Nambya language. In 2023 Calvin introduced the Ubuntu Circle and in 2024, Interactive Spaces - the two are non - journalism projects. A multi-award winning international journalist, Calvin, has used his experience to strengthen the journalism of his organisation and influence his newsroom.



# Calvin's Project

## Building Collaboration, Partnerships and Consultancy Among Youths in Marginalised Communities Through Media to Achieve SDGs

The presentation showcases the vision and mission of The Besana Mail Flagship Program, Weekly Guest at Besana. The show which is an interview with an expert guest followed by a plenary session uses a round table approach to discuss pertinent issues affecting children and youths. The show hosted by a multi-lingual host is hosted on whatsapp platform to allow interaction across the world despite geographical location. The show was established to compliment the SDG on education to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. This is on the backdrop of the United Nations saying, without additional measures, an estimated 84 million children and young people will stay out of school and approximately 300 million students will lack the basic numeracy and literacy skills necessary for success in life. The show is bringing experts on different issues in marginalised communities. The platform has created a network of different individuals excelling in their respective fields to collaborate and partner in common projects which help improve the lives of children and youths while fulfilling SDGs. The collaborations are assisting youths in achieving other SDGs goals such as urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts, and strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development. Education is the key that will allow many other Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to be achieved. The platform has enabled youths to meet and transform virtual connection into tangible results on SDGs.

# **Elvis Kadhama**
# Uganda

- Hailing from the Mayuge district, Elvis Kadhama is a 31-year-old Ugandan social entrepreneur passionate about empowering farmers through use of technology in farming. The rising young leader holds an advanced diploma in Business Administration and has served as a peer mentor and an active community based trainer in Village Microfinance institutions. Elvis is committed to and passionate about agriculture, technology and changing people's lives, income and increasing food security through improved farming practices in rural Uganda. He's committed to changing the mindset that most people are having towards the agriculture value chain.



# Elvis' Project

## Enhancing Agricultural Yields and Improving Farmers' Income through Agritech

- We propose an agricultural development project aimed at increasing agricultural yields and improving the income of smallholder farmers. This project will focus on implementing sustainable farming practices, providing advanced training and resources to farmers, and establishing market linkages to ensure fair prices for their produce. By enhancing agricultural productivity and income, we aim to uplift the livelihoods of smallholder farmers and contribute to food security in Uganda. Essymart Africa is an agricultural technology enterprise that is focused on providing smallholder farmers with access to quality farm inputs at competitive prices such as stress tolerant seeds, organic fertilizers and pesticides, input financing to ease farmers cash flow, development & training in regenerative farming techniques, Technology-based services and communication, post-harvest services to reduce spoilage, access to premium markets for better crop income. By using Web Application, common SMS technologies and telephone calls, Essymart is considered a low-cost solution facilitating large-scale implementation. Essymart plans to leverage USSD technology to enable farmer's access to data without internet connection, and voice technology in local languages to provide essential information for illiterate farmers and Mobile App enabled with Artificial Intelligence to provide real-time information on weather, market prices, soil conditions, pest and disease control and farming advice via mobile phones.

# Group 3
# Youth Group Coordinator

**Tianyi Kou-Herrema**

- Tianyi (Titi) Kou-Herrema is a dedicated educator and researcher with a strong background in language instruction and computational humanities. As she completes her dissertation on German media narratives about football, Titi also engages in projects involving natural language processing and machine learning. Having taught German at various levels, Titi's multicultural experiences in Germany, China, and the United States enrich her approach. Selected as a youth group coordinator for the International Youth Day 2024: Innovation Collaboratory organized by GYAN, Titi will facilitate discussions, coordinate experts, and highlight youth contributions towards sustainable development, enhancing global youth empowerment.



# Group 3

## Expert

## **Christina Dokter**



Dr. Dokter earned a PhD in Higher Adult and Lifelong Education with an emphasis on distance learning, and is skilled and knowledgeable in online instruction, higher education, and education technology. She has experience in instructional design, curriculum planning and education program development.

Dokter was a speaker and consultant in health advocacy and the opioid crisis in 2018-2020, and served as the President of the National Association of Local Boards of Health (2017-2019). Currently she teaches graduate-level courses about research integrity and science team/lab leadership, as well as a popular undergraduate course about leadership and teams for scientists and health professionals, which I hope to use in partnership with COIL.

Dr. Dokter is currently forming a non-profit Wisdom Science to create radical foods to end hunger. She has also been podcasting with scientists about the fourth industrial revolution, including CRISPR-cas9, synthetic biology, metabolic engineering, artificial intelligence, transgenic engineering, and quantum dots. The goal is to form a science team to solve hunger once and for all.

# **Michael Diala**
# Nigeria

- Michael Diala is an ambitious social innovator from Nigeria. His passion for creating impactful solutions has honed his well-rounded problem-solving abilities and first-rate project management skills. He is the founder of Offload.ng, Nigeria's pioneering sewage tech disposal and recycling system, Michael is leading a revolution sustainable waste management practices in the sewerage industry. He strongly belief in harnessing the power of the youth, by advocating for their pivotal role in achieving the global goals.



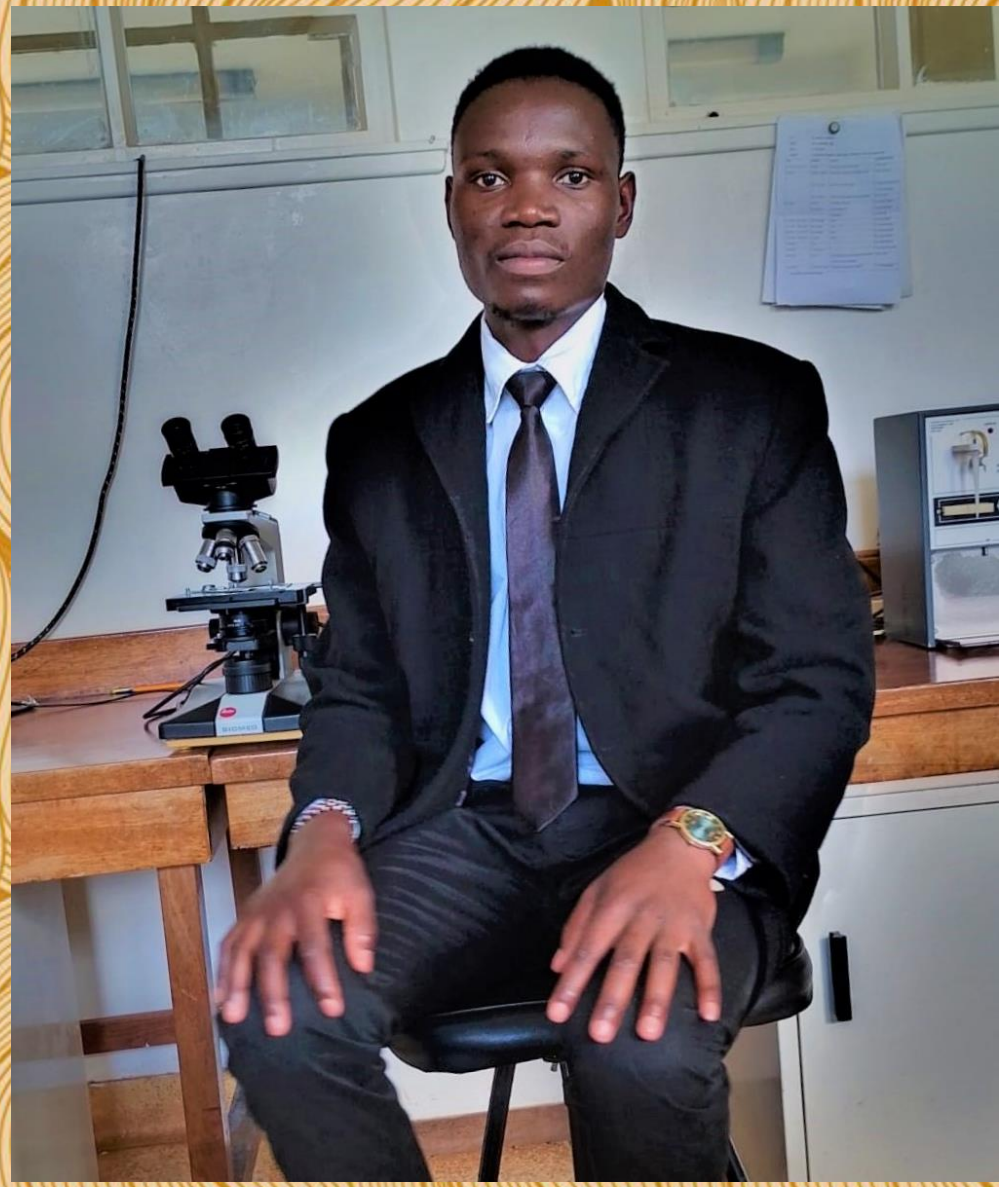
# Michael's Project

## Youth Innovation for Urban Systems

- Offload.ng Sewage Tech Disposal and Recycling Systems is an innovative start-up founded in 2020 in response to the pressing need for effective sewage management during the pandemic. Our mission is to revolutionize the sewage management industry by leveraging digital technology to provide a more effective, coordinated, and hygienic system. Offload.ng connects sewage disposal operators with clients through a user-friendly platform, ensuring timely and efficient service delivery. Our comprehensive approach addresses key urban development issues such as open defecation and recycling, contributing to better environmental health and sanitation standards. The sewage management industry is crucial for urban health and sanitation. With increasing urbanization and heightened environmental awareness, demand for reliable and efficient sewage services is growing. Establishing and managing relationships with local sewage disposal operators and businesses to satisfy the rising need of homes, hotels, estates, offices etc at a very cost effective and competitive sum.

# **Vincent Jemovo**
# Kenya

- Vincent Jemovo is a medical researcher with a background in Biotechnology. He has a passion for advancing human and animal health, now pursuing MSc. Medical microbiology at Kenyatta University. He has undertaken trainings in: Good Clinical Practice, biomedical research basic and biomedical responsible conduct of research. Jemovo's research focuses on developing rapid diagnostic tests for diagnosis of human and animal diseases. He is a Research Technologist at Veterinary Science Research Institute (VSRI-KALRO), and previously worked as quality assurance and quality control officer at Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI).



# Vincent's Project

## Awareness Campaign to Improve Integration of Climate Smart Livestock System and Indigenous Knowledge in Africa

- Climate change poses serious challenges to African agriculture, endangering food security, livelihoods, and ecosystems. Livestock farming, a vital component of African agriculture, is under threat from unpredictable weather patterns, damaged pastures, and rising disease frequency. Despite the importance of climate-smart technologies and indigenous knowledge in enhancing the resilience of agriculture to climate change, there exists a notable gap in the uptake and integration of these strategies into practice. Climate smart technologies like biogas digesters and use of indigenous knowledge including breed selection, medicinal plants, forage and water management, are poorly absorbed. Livestock, especially ruminants, produce methane as part of their normal digestive processes through enteric fermentation, and it represents over a quarter of the greenhouse gas emissions from the agriculture sector (IPCC, 2022). Limited awareness and socio-economic constraints hinder the widespread adoption of these approaches. There is a need for Comprehensive awareness campaign including workshops and capacity building on the appropriateness and integration of these climate smart indigenous knowledge among livestock farmers. This will promote uptake of these technologies into practice contributing towards achieving standard development goal 1 (No Poverty), SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), and SDG 13 (Climate Action). The objective of this research study will be achieved by mobilizing the youth of all genders to take frontline in conducting campaigns within their locality as well as utilizing social media platforms.

# Murtala Abdullahi
## Nigeria

- Murtala Abdullahi is interested in climate change, peace, and security in Nigeria and the Lake Chad region. He founded the Goro Initiative, a non-profit that promotes environmental peacebuilding, climate security, and resilience. He is currently a climate security associate with Surge Africa Organisation and volunteers with the World Economic Forum's Abuja Global Shapers Hub, where he serves as climate and environment lead. He is a recipient of the Active Citizen Award by BudgIT, a major civic-tech organization in Nigeria that promotes openness and accountability. In 2024, he was selected to participate in the Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders.



# Murtala's Project

## Goro Initiative: Harnessing Geospatial Information in Peace and Climate Action

- The Goro Initiative is a youth-based non-profit organisation in Nigeria that adopts innovative strategies to facilitate peace, environment conservation and climate security. The Initiative produces evidence-based research and collaborates with stakeholders to provide conditions for sustainable peace and environmental management. The project promotes the role of ecosystem management and natural resource governance in moving fragile communities on the pathway of resilience and sustainable peace. It also enhances the understanding of climate and environmental risks and integrates them into humanitarian responses, climate and sustainable peace. The project also pushes for measures to reduce the effect of conflict and security operations on the environment. An integral part of Goro Initiative is harnessing the potential of Geospatial information, particularly Satellite imagery provided by Google Earth to document the devastating impact of a brutal conflict involving armed groups raiding communities and displacing the local population in northwestern Nigeria. The Initiative is also documenting and reporting the destruction of mangrove vegetation and river bodies by oil spills associated with illegal oil refineries in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. The role of geospatial technologies in achieving key sustainable development goals (SDGs) such as climate action is significant. For example, the advancement in drone technologies improves access to sensors for mapping green cover, planting seeds and maintenance of trees. This helps reduce carbon footprint and supports the efforts to slow global warming. Objectives of the Presentation To spotlight the application of geospatial information in fostering peace and justice. To analyze their impact on climate action and environmental sustainability. To discuss case studies and real-world applications. To inspire new ideas and collaborations for utilizing these technologies.

# Group 4
# Youth Group Coordinator

**Aliya Bizhanova**

- Aliya is a doctoral candidate and graduate research assistant in the Education Policy program. Her research interests are international and comparative education, global research partnerships, youth issues, and teachers' policies. Prior to joining MSU, Aliya worked at the World Bank country office in Kazakhstan and consulted the OECD for the Kazakhstan Skills Strategy project working with the Ministries of Education, and Labor and Social Protection. She has a master's degree in international education policy and management from Vanderbilt University and higher education diploma from Samara State University, Russia. She worked at Chemonics International and Academy for Educational Development in Washington, DC.



# Group 4 Expert

## Angela Boldrey



- Angie started at Education Abroad as the Financial Services Coordinator in January of 2023. She works securing payment to vendors and with the program coordinators and directors, making sure course financial needs are met before, during and after their program's completion. Additionally, she works on budgeting and reconciliation of the Education Abroad budgets and curriculum.
- Prior to arriving at the university, Angie worked in Business Management at a local law firm, Data Management at a political consulting firm, and many varied areas in the Michigan Legislature.
- She lives in Okemos with her husband and two teenage daughters.

# Laura Skenderas
## Albania

- Laura Skenderas is a highly skilled legal professional based in Korce, Albania. With a comprehensive background in law, Laura holds a Bachelor Degree in Law from the University of Tirana and a Master of Science in Criminal Law from the same institution. Currently, she is furthering her expertise at the Albania School of Advocacy. Her career spans various roles, including her current position as an Audit Expert for the Municipality of Erseka and previous experience as a Public Notary Expert and Legal Assistant. She has also worked as a Journalist/Reporter for "Konica", showcasing her versatility and strong communication skills. Laura's proficiency extends to multiple legal disciplines, including civil, criminal, and corporate law. She is adept at providing legal advice, drafting documents, conducting research, and representing clients in court. Additionally, Laura is fluent in French, and her skill set includes advanced knowledge of MS Office and other presentation software. Active in academic and professional communities, Laura has participated in numerous conferences, projects, and competitions, demonstrating her commitment to continual learning and excellence in her field.

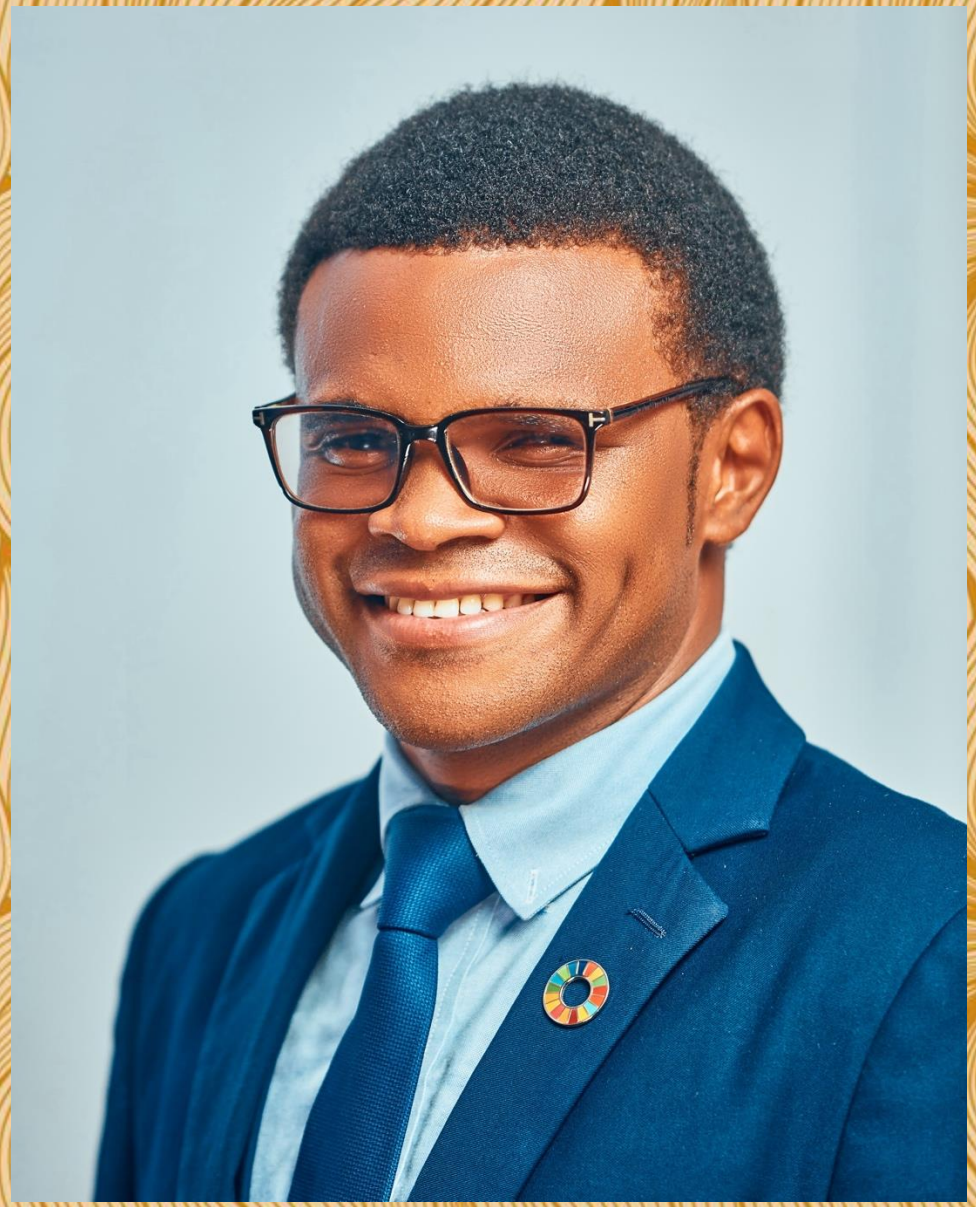


# Laura's Project

## My "Feminine" Diploma

"You look like you came from the forest " this was the first phrase with which my high school teacher welcomed me on the first day. Why? Because in one way or another, my face and hair did not fit the standards set by her for a girl to look feminine. For some time I suffered and hated myself so much that I wanted to be someone else, then, years later, I realized what utopian and not at all realistic standards society sets for women, and why? Simply and only to call you feminine, as if being feminine was some kind of title. Here I realized how much the women and girls out there really suffered from their appearance, the shame that comes from society that has no logical basis, and if it is addressed, I really think that can help girls and women feel accepted and walk with more, since everything beautiful starts with self-esteem and self-confidence! And that's my mission- a world where no woman has to strugle to win a diploma of being a "woman".

# Joseph Malekala
## United Republic of Tanzania



- Joseph Brighton Malekela (28) is a leader hailing from Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Currently He is pursuing Masters of Arts in Strategic and Peace Studies at the University of Dar es salaam. Joseph is highly passionate about selfless leadership, good governance, peace and security. With a strong background in organization development and management, speech writing, corporate communication, project planning and management, events coordination, and public speaking, Joseph has consistently demonstrated his skills and expertise in various endeavors in the community. Joseph holds the esteemed certification of a Youth Champion for SDGs from the United Nations Tanzania (2016). He has also earned the title of Global Peace Ambassador under the Global Peace Foundation International.

- Joseph is a Founder and Executive Director of The African Leadership Initiatives for Impact - A.L.I.I and he is also a member of the 1st Youth Sounding Board of European Union Commission to Tanzania and East Africa.. Joseph is a Mandela Washington Fellow (2024) in USA, Alumni of the Young African Leadership Initiative (YALI) EAC Regional Leadership Centre Cohort 48 (2023) in Nairobi, Kenya; Alumni of Gamal Abdel-Nasser Fellowship for International Leadership, Cohort 2 (2021) in Cairo, Egypt; And alumni of the 12th UNESCO Youth Forum in 2021 as youth representative from Tanzania. Joseph's exceptional contributions have been duly recognized by renowned institutions and organizations. He was honored as the Outstanding Youth in Peace and Security during the Tanzania Emerging Youth Awards Provided by African Youth Transformation and Prime Minister's Office in Tanzania; Best Volunteer of the Year 2021 by the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) Tanzania through his works at the Global Peace Foundation Tanzania, and also acknowledged as a Distinguished Human Rights Defender of the month for January 2020 by Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Coalition (THRDC).

# Youth Actions for Peace, bringing Sustainable Development

Joseph's Project

- Advancement of youth in peace and sustainable development requires long term participation of youth in planning and decision making on the issues that affect their lives. Youth, who represent a majority of the population in most developing countries, are today visibly contributing as political actors, innovators, entrepreneurs and peace builders. At the same time, youth face disproportionate social, economic and political barriers which prevents them from unleashing their full potential.
- Youth are still a largely unacknowledged and untapped force for peace. United Nations Security Council Resolution 2250 on youth, peace and security (2015), which for the first time recognizes the contribution that young people make to peace building, is a historic milestone. It refers Youth, Peace and Security to "conscious actions and processes to protect young people from participation in, and the ill effects of, violent conflicts and insecurity, and to promote and support their contributions to peace efforts in conflict and post-conflict situations'.
- So far, the rationale for intervening in the prevention of violence by the international community has often been based on the assumption that youth - and young men in particular - pose a threat to peace or that, as the victims of violence, they should only be protected. The growing trends of misinformation, lack of decent work opportunities, the lack of sense of belonging and identity, can be factors increasing the attraction of some young men and young women towards groups associated with radical movements or even violent extremism. However, the vast majority of young people have no interest in and do not engage in violence, and already are – or should be – engaged as powerful agents of peace. Unfortunately, the positive and constructive contribution of youth to peace building and development is often underestimated by their societies.
- In order to utilize young people's potential as agents of change, requires involving and empowering them in development, policies and supporting their participation in peace building at all levels. The African Continental Framework on Youth, Peace and Security of 2020 and The East African Plan of Action on Youth, Peace and Security 2021 emphasizes member states to improve status of youth in participation to peace building processes, prevention of violent acts, and protection against conflicts, partnerships to bring changes and disengagement to violent groups. This include putting in place a mechanism to facilitate dialogues, idea exchanges and information sharing on matters affecting peace and security.
- This presentation will introduce the Youth, Peace and Security agenda; highlighting what are possible actions which can be taken by young people to promote peace and sustainable development in their countries; and As a case study, I will be sharing my experience of promoting peace under a project called #Youth4PeaceCaravan which engages over 10,000 youth in eastern coast regions of Tanzania.

# Ian Kigen
## Kenya

- Ian Kigen is a student at Dedan Kimathi University of Technology (DeKUT) in Kenya, pursuing an undergraduate degree in Telecommunication and Information engineering. He proudly serves as one of the leaders at the Club, International Association for the Exchange of Students with Technical Experience (IAESTE) DeKUT Chapter, to facilitate global exchange opportunities for students. Ian's passion is centered around exploring innovative ways for youths to enhance internationalization in their institutions. Additionally, he is interested in how technology plays a significant role in enhancing internationalization through various means such and Education, Cultural Exchange, Communication and Collaboration.



# Ian's Project

## Children's Centred News and Solutions Journalism in Marginalised Communities

- This presentation will explore the role of youth in enhancing internationalization in institutions, thus reducing inequality within and among countries. It will provide an explanation of the SDGs with a main focus on: "Reducing inequality within and among countries." Addressing inequalities is fundamentally important for achieving sustainable development globally because it ensures that progress is inclusive, equitable, and long-lasting. INTERNATIONALIZATION: Internationalization fosters global citizenship, cross-cultural understanding and collaboration. ROLE OF INTERNATIONALIZATION IN REDUCING INEQUALITIES: curriculum integration Student exchange programs Community engagement Leadership Development Partnerships and collaborations ROLES OF THE YOUTHS IN ENHANCING INTERNATIONALIZATION IN THEIR INSTITUTIONS: Cultural Exchange and Diversity Promoting Global Citizenship Serving as Ambassadors for Global Engagement Developing Intercultural Competence Showcasing examples of youth-led initiatives that have successfully fostered international cooperation and understanding. Will be presenting on how Dedan Kimathi University of Technology students and their leaders enhance internationalization with the help of the International office and the International Association for Exchange of Students with Technical Experience, DeKUT Chapter.

# Group 5
## Youth Group Coordinator

**Aanchal Gidra**

Aanchal Gidra (she/her) is a third-year doctoral student in the Education Policy Department. Originally from Siliguri, India, she has been a teacher in public and private schools in India for over 4 years and worked as a project manager and researcher. As a Ph.D. student at MSU, Aanchal's area of specialization lies in International and Comparative Education. Her current research focuses on the relevance of schooling for youth in India, Colombia, and Malawi. In her free time, Aanchal is usually seen crocheting, cooking with her husband, reading, or catching up with her niece in India via video calls.



# Group 5 Expert

## Debra Thornton

- Debra Thornton-Fitzpatrick is the Associate Director of University Advising at MSU. She began her work at MSU as a student advisor/learning specialist, responsible for overseeing a certain amount of varsity sports teams, and providing one-on-one supplemental instruction to specific student-athletes that had additional challenges and needed more support. She then expanded her professional work to all MSU students, working in the University Undergraduate Division (UUD). Throughout her 22 years as an administrator/leader, she has contributed toward student success at Michigan State University through the following: Academic Standing of Undergraduate Students (ASUS); teachings, such as BUS 101 and freshman seminar; outreach to Pre-College program, Integrative Studies, and Early alert systems (such as EASE reports, MAPWorks, and EAB). In addition, she has been actively involved with academic coaching initiatives; parallel planning, training of new advisors; and national projects such as UIA First in The World Grant.



# Uket Friday
## Nigeria

- Uket Friday is a dynamic Civil Servant and Social Entrepreneur dedicated to youth development and education. As a Non-Academic staff member at the University of Calabar, he leverages over five years of experience in the development sector. Despite having ADHD, Uket excels in Program Management and Community Engagement. He has received numerous accolades, including the "30 Outstanding Young Entrepreneurs Award." As the State Coordinator for YALI Network Cross River State Hub, Uket mobilizes young changemakers for social impact, fostering sustainable development and social progress.



# Uket's Project

## Empowering Youths for Collaborative Sustainable Development; Showcasing Impact-Driven Initiatives by YALI Network Cross River

- The presentation shall bring to light some of the innovative works executed by YALI Network Cross River. In this, youth-driven projects shall be presented as major contributors toward achieving the UN SDGs. Our network provides young leaders with an innovative spirit for community-driven solutions. This session will deliberate on how these projects solve the core issues around waste management, gender equality, education, and digital literacy. Key Projects to Be Highlighted: Plastic Guy: He converts plastic and rubber waste into sustainable building materials; hence, SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities. Alolo 365: This is a sustainable fashion brand that makes clothes from fabric wastes, hence promoting SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production. Alora Reusable Pads: Eradicating poverty in periods with reusable pads addresses SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being, and SDG 5: Gender Equality. Ore Innovations Alternate University: Trains and certifies people in marketable, soft skills that are unavailable through conventional education, hence helping SDG 4 Quality Education. Eco Mentors Academy: Educate young adults and school-going children to waste less and recycle more, focusing on both goals: SDG 13 Climate Action and SDG 15 Life on Land. Educate-Right Project: Enhancing the digital literacy of children attending public schools by being taught the basic applications of computers, thus promoting SDG 4: Quality Education. Go Learner: Provides online preparatory lessons to secondary school students to help improve their performance in major exams, supporting SDG 4: Quality Education. Her Voice Foundation: Empowers trainee teenage mothers in their contribution towards the achievement of Goal 5: Gender Equality and SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth. Expected Outcomes: Demonstrate solutions created through the members of the YALI Network Cross River. Display the measurable impact and success stories created from these initiatives. Highlight strategic partnerships and collaborations that multiply our reach. Inspire other young leaders to initiate and scale their projects for sustainable development. Sharing the journey and successes should, in itself, motivate more youth to make bold strides toward sustainable development.

# Irene David-Arinze
## Nigeria

- Irene David-Arinze is a multimedia journalist and founder of LIDA Network Development Foundation, focused on story telling and project implementation which profers solutions across economic justice, energy access, social justice and climate change. She is a 2024 Mandela Washington Fellow in Michigan State University. Her work has been recognized and nominated by leading institutions such as PriceWaterhouse Journalist of the year for 2020 and 2023, Gatefield Journalist of the year 2021 to list a few. She was also recognized as a 2021 changemaker by Thomson Reuters Foundation. Irene has been interviewed and her work has been featured on prominent media platforms across Africa such as Kenyan TV Network, BBC Africa, Arise TV, Channels TV, TVC, The Guardian Nigeria, The Independence Ireland, Businessday, The Cable, Premium Times among others. Irene is a graduate of the prestigious Covenant University and an Alumni of Harvard Business School where she took a course on Global Business. She is currently on an Oxford University program on Sustainable Finance. In her bid to continously be a leading voice in the areas of sustainability and achieving SDG 7, 8,12, 16 and 17, she is also a sought after moderator and event host for discussions on the above mentioned SDGs. She has been honored to provide her services as a speaker, moderator and event host for brands such as HP, IRENA, UNESCO, UN, Nigerian Economic Summit Group among others.



# Irene's Project

## Rural Women In Green Jobs - Skilling and Promoting Clean Cooking for Rural Women in Nigeria

Reliable, affordable and clean energy access is key to accelerate progress towards the SDGs. Universal clean cooking is a key target under the (SDG) 7, with implications for several other SDGs, such as good health, gender equality and climate. Currently, 2.4 billion people globally still lack access to clean cooking. The situation is especially dire in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), where only 17% use clean options. LIDA Network is facilitating the penetration of the use of clean cook stoves in rural communities targeted at women, through training, employment and economic empowerment for previously "stay at home women". Our model is directly preferring a solution to SDG 3,4,5,7,8,10,11 And 17. We partner with manufacturing organizations who have the capacity to offtake these women, committing to train them on skills such as solar pv manufacturing and clean cook stove production and sales. We also collaborate with local financial institutions who facilitate the bank account opening for these woman who were previously unbanked. The aim of this project is to ensure that these selected women gradually adopt the use of clean cook stoves, develop the skill set in the production of these stoves, learn project management, financial planning as well as marketing and sales of these products. My presentation will show my organizations technical capabilities in driving transformative change through clean cooking alternatives for women.

# **Mthabisi Ndlovu**
# South Africa

- Mthabisi, aka **BlvckRoot,** is a multi-faceted changemaker bridging the worlds of technology, music, and social impact. He is a Software Engineer student at ALX, who also founded InfinitLoop Developers to bring new voices into tech. He is a versatile rapper and songwriter, who founded the Velamfundo Community Learning Center in his village, Mbambesi in Zimbabwe. In 2018, Mthabisi won the 2018 Global Voices Essay Contest and presented at the Global Youth Advancement Summit 2019. He also launched The Noisemakers, a youth-led initiative empowering emerging artists through workshops, songwriting camps, and a flagship music festival. Mthabisi is committed to building thriving communities, youth empowerment, and creating a more equitable world.



# Mthabisi's Project

## The Symphony of Sustainability: How Music Ignites Change for the SDGs

Imagine if the world was silent... no concerts, no music streaming. Music is more than entertainment; it's a powerful force for good, a universal language uniting us all. Yet, the value of music in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) remains largely untapped. This presentation explores the transformative potential of music: - Empowering Youth: Music equips young people with skills, fosters self-esteem, and provides a platform to advocate for change. - Raising Awareness & Inspiring Action: Music can ignite social movements, encouraging action on critical issues. - Building Bridges: Music transcends borders and cultures, promoting tolerance, peace, and solidarity. Real-World Impact: Bridges for Music (South Africa) This case study showcases how music education empowers youth. Bridges for Music equips young creatives with skills to break the poverty cycle, fostering: - Quality Education (SDG 4): Equipping youth with valuable music production skills. - Decent Work & Economic Growth (SDG 8): Opening doors to income generation and creative careers. - Reduced Inequalities (SDG 10): Empowering youth from underserved communities to reach their full potential. Join the Symphony of Sustainability! The Noisemakers organization empowers young musicians to build sustainable music careers. Our annual songwriting camp connects emerging artists with industry experts to create music and learn about the music business and brand development. The Noisemakers Fest provides a platform for these artists to showcase their talent, propelling them towards successful careers. Together, let's harness the power of music to create a more just, sustainable, and harmonious world.