

CHI ADANNA MGBAKO

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ACADEMIC BIOGRAPHY

Chi Adanna Mgbako is clinical professor of law and director of the Walter Leitner International Human Rights Clinic in the Leitner Center for International Law and Justice at Fordham Law School. She and her students work on projects in partnership with social justice organizations that have focused primarily on anti-carceral human rights advocacy, access to justice, gender equity, racial justice, sex workers rights, and queer rights. She has conducted human rights fieldwork in many countries, including Botswana, Cambodia, Ethiopia, India, Japan, Kenya, Lebanon, Liberia, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Uganda, and the United States.

Mgbako is the author of *To Live Freely in This World: Sex Worker Activism in Africa* (New York University Press). Her scholarship has also appeared or is forthcoming in the University of Pennsylvania Journal of Law and Social Change, Harvard Journal of Law & Gender, Oxford Research Encyclopedia of African History, Georgetown Journal of International Law, Harvard Human Rights Journal, and the Yale Journal of International Affairs, among other publications. Her writing for the popular press and scholar-activism have been featured in the New York Times International Edition, BBC News Focus on Africa, the Guardian, HuffPost, and the Washington Post: Monkey Cage.

Mgbako is a graduate of Harvard Law School and Columbia University and a former fellow with the International Crisis Group. She has been honored as a New York Law Journal Rising Star, National Law Journal Top 40 Lawyer of Color Under 40, Fordham Law School's Public Interest Professor of the Year, and a recipient of the Police Reform Organizing Project's Citizen of the City Award. In 2017, she received the Association of American Law Schools Section on Clinical Legal Education's M. Shanara Gilbert Award, one of the highest honors in clinical legal education.

EDUCATION

HARVARD LAW SCHOOL, J.D., 2005

Honors: Gary Bellow Public Service Award
Dean's Award for Community Leadership
Henigson Human Rights Fellowship
Kaufman Public Service Fellowship
Reginald F. Lewis Human Rights Grant
Human Rights Program Grants

Activities: HLS Advocates for Human Rights, Co-Founder and President
International Human Rights Clinic
Immigration and Refugee Clinic
Human Rights Program, Student Advisor
Harvard Human Rights Journal, Editor

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY, B.A. in History, *magna cum laude*, 2001

Honors: King Crown's Leadership Award
John F. Kluge Scholar

PROFESSIONAL HONORS

M. Shanara Gilbert "Emerging Clinician" Award, AALS Clinical Section (2017)
Rising Star Award, New York Law Journal (2015)
Citizen of the City Award, Police Reform Organizing Project (2013)
Public Interest Professor of the Year, Fordham Law School (2012)
Top 40 Minority Lawyers Under 40, National Law Journal (2011)

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS**FORDHAM UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW**

Clinical Professor of Law

Clinical Associate Professor of Law

Founding Director, Walter Leitner International Human Rights Clinic

New York, NY

2014 – present

2007 – 2014

2007 – present

Research interests: sex workers' rights, anti-carceral human rights advocacy, gender justice

BOOKS

TO LIVE FREELY IN THIS WORLD: SEX WORKER ACTIVISM IN AFRICA (New York University Press 2016)

Reviewed in *Affilia: Journal of Women and Social Work*, *African Affairs*, *DiGeST: Journal of Diversity and Gender Studies*, *Feminist Collections*, *Feminist Review*, *Human Rights Review*, *Human Rights Quarterly*, *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, *Make/Shift Magazine*, *Perspectives on Politics*, and *Tits and Sass*. Assigned in university courses at Brandeis, Butler, California Institute of Integral Studies, Emory, Howard, McGill, NYU, Spelman, University of New Hampshire, University of Toronto, and Washington University in St. Louis, among others.

ARTICLES, CHAPTERS, POLICY REPORTS, & REVIEWS

Anti-Carceral Human Rights Advocacy, *University of Pennsylvania Journal of Law and Social Change* (with Johnson et al)(forthcoming 2023)

The Mainstreaming of Sex Workers' Rights as Human Rights, 43 *Harvard Journal of Law & Gender* 92 (2020) (solicited)

Sex Work/Prostitution in Africa, *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of African History* (2019) & OXFORD ENCYCLOPEDIA OF AFRICAN WOMEN'S HISTORY, Oxford University Press, Hodgson et al, eds. (2020) (solicited)

The Case for Decriminalization of Sex Work in South Africa, 44 *Georgetown Journal of International Law* 1423 (with Bass et al) (2013)

U.S. Global AIDS Funding and Its Discontents: Why the Supreme Court Must Strike Down the Anti-Prostitution Pledge, 8 *Yale Journal of International Affairs* 133 (2013)

Book Review, *Out in Africa: LGBT Organizing in Namibia and South Africa* by Ashley Currier 2012, 35 (2) *Human Rights Quarterly* 517 (2013)

Witchcraft Accusations and Human Rights: Case Studies from Malawi, 43 *George Washington International Law Review* 389 (with Katherine Glenn) (2012)

Engaging Legal Dualism: Paralegal Organizations and Customary Law in Sierra Leone and Liberia in *THE FUTURE OF AFRICAN CUSTOMARY LAW*, Cambridge University Press, Fenrich et al, eds. (with Kristina Scurry Baehr) (2011)

Sex Work and Human Rights in Africa, 33 *Fordham International Law Journal* 1178 (with Laura A. Smith) (2010)

Penetrating the Silence in Sierra Leone: A Blueprint for the Eradication of Female Genital Mutilation, 23 *Harvard Human Rights Journal* 11 (with Cave et al) (2010)

Forced Eviction and Resettlement in Cambodia: Case Studies from Phnom Penh, 9 *Washington University Global Studies Law Review* 39 (with Cave et al) (2010)

Exporting Confusion: U.S. Foreign Policy as an Obstacle to the Implementation of Ethiopia's Liberalized Abortion Law, Leitner Center for International Law and Justice (with Degol et al) (2010)

Silencing the Ethiopian Courts: Non-Judicial Constitutional Review and its Impact on Human Rights, 32 Fordham International Law Journal 259 (with Degol et al) (2008)

We Will Still Live: Confronting Stigma and Discrimination against Women Living with HIV/AIDS in Malawi, 31 Fordham International Law Journal 528 (with Fenrich and Higgins) (2008)

Rights-Based Sex Worker Empowerment Guidelines: An Alternative HIV/AIDS Intervention Approach to the 100% Condom Use Programme, Sampada Gramin Mahila Sanstha (SANGRAM) (with Smith et al) (2008)

Nigeria's Faltering Federal Experiment, International Crisis Group (2006)

Liberia: Resurrecting the Justice System, International Crisis Group (2006)

Frontline Rwanda: Disappearances, Arrests, Threats, Intimidation and Co-option of Human Rights Defenders 2001-2004, Front Line, the International Foundation for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders (with Toy-Cronin and Waldorf) (2005)

"Ingando" Solidarity Camps: Reconciliation and Political Indoctrination in Post-Genocide Rwanda, 18 Harvard Human Rights Journal 201 (2005)

COMMENTARY

Sex worker activism has exploded throughout Africa, The Washington Post: Monkey Cage (with Kim Yi Dionne) (July 8, 2016)

The Global Labor Rights Movement You've Likely Never Heard Of, HuffPost (May 26, 2016)

Overturn US anti-prostitution pledge to support sex workers and combat HIV, The Guardian (April 22, 2013)

African Voices of Legal Empowerment, HuffPost (January 10, 2013)

There Are No 'Perfect Victims,' HuffPost (August 14, 2012)

Police Confiscation of Condoms from Sex Workers Compromises Public Health, HuffPost (July 20, 2012)

New York Lawmakers Compromise Public Health by Failing to Pass 'No Condoms as Evidence' Bill, Rewire (July 3, 2012)

Greek Sex Workers Face Forced HIV Tests; Malawi Workers Fight Back, Ms. Magazine Blog (June 11, 2012)

Why the Women's Rights Movement Must Listen to Sex Workers, Rewire (May 22, 2012)

Why Economic Justice Is Central to LGBT Rights, HuffPost (May 7, 2012)

Criminalization of prostitution as a violation of sex workers' right to health, IntlLawGrrls (December 17, 2011)

Police Abuse of Sex Workers: A Global Reality, Widely Ignored, Rewire (December 15, 2011)

Africa's LGBT Rights Movement, HuffPost (May 3, 2011)

The Architecture of Maternal Death, Rewire (with Tarek Meguid) (April 4, 2011)

Aiding Children Accused of Witchcraft, HuffPost (March 14, 2011)

Witchcraft Legal Aid in Africa, The New York Times International Edition (February 17, 2011)

Honoring the International Day to End Violence against Sex Workers, HuffPost (December 14, 2010)

Sierra Leone Youth Call for an End to Female Genital Mutilation, HuffPost (November 26, 2010)

Three African Vignettes: Nigeria, Benin, Rwanda, Afrik-News (September 15, 2010)

Africa's Women Turn 50, HuffPost (August 20, 2010)

Rwanda: Media Censorship Will Breed Resentment, allAfrica.com (August 11, 2010)

Ethiopia: U.S. foreign policy and unsafe abortion in Africa, openDemocracy (August 3, 2010)

Rwanda: Gov't 'Manipulates' Genocide Memory, allAfrica.com (July 21, 2010)

A call for sex workers' rights in Africa, Pambazuka News (June 24, 2010)

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS

Presentations at academic institutions, governmental institutions, non-governmental and inter-governmental organizations, and private organizations, including the Institute for Human Rights Studies, Columbia University (“*Sex Work and Human Rights in Africa*”); Columbia University Women in Law and Politics (“*Let's Talk Public Interest Law*”); Falcon Management (“*Female Genital Cutting in Sierra Leone*”); Leitner Center for International Law and Justice, Fordham Law School (“*To Live Freely in This World: Sex Worker Activism in Africa*”); Maloney Library, Fordham Law School (“*Against Criminalization: Gender, Activism, and the Pursuit of Justice*”); International Law Association (“*LGBT Rights in Africa*”); Harvard College, Harvard University (“*The Future of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda*”); Human Rights Program and Harvard African Law Students Association, Harvard Law School (“*To Live Freely in This World: Sex Worker Activism in Africa*”); HLS Celebration 65, Harvard Law School (“*Training Women's Rights Advocates through the International Human Rights Clinic*”); House of Councillors and Ministry of Justice, Tokyo, Japan (“*Proposals for the Treatment of Prisoners Sentenced to Death in Japan*”); Department of African History, Howard University (“*To Live Freely in This World: Sex Worker Activism in Africa*”); Montclair Literary Festival (“*Fighting for Truth, Safety, and Freedom*”); Department of Cultural and Social Analysis, New York University (Guest Lecturer, *Intersections: Race, Gender and Sexuality in Global Perspective*); Sex Workers Project, Urban Justice Center (“*To Live Freely in This World: Sex Worker Activism in Africa*”); United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (“*Which Policies Best Respect Sex Workers' Rights? A Conversation with Sex Workers' Rights Defenders*”); Center for the Study of Public Life, Wesleyan University (Guest Lecturer, *Human Rights Advocacy: Critical Assessment and Practical Engagement in Global Social Justice*); University Network of Human Rights, Wesleyan University (“*The Mainstreaming of Sex Workers' Rights as Human Rights*”).

MEDIA COMMENTARY

BBC News Focus on Africa, HuffPost, IRIN News, The Nation, Malawian radio and newspaper outlets

SELECTED CASEWORK

GENDER JUSTICE

Lebanon (in partnership with the A Project): 175-page handbook detailing best practices of national and local advocacy campaigns for the decriminalization of abortion, sexual orientation and gender identity, and sex workers' rights. (2022)

Japan, Kenya, and the U.S. (in partnership with Amnesty International Japan, Center for Rights Education Awareness, and Strathmore Law School Clinic): Gender equality and human rights workshops for hundreds of community-based activists, high school students, teachers, and university students in Japan and Kenya. Online instructor's manual and student workbook on gender justice and human rights in the U.S. (2017 – 2020)

U.S. (in partnership with CHANGE): Research support to legal working group against the Trump administration's reinstatement of the Global Gag Rule. (2017)

South Africa (in partnership with PASSOP): Report documenting employment and housing discrimination against LGBT refugees in South Africa. Human rights workshop for LGBT refugee rights activists on the use of national, regional, and international human rights mechanisms. (2013 – 2014)

Ethiopia (in partnership with Addis Ababa Law School): Report on effect of U.S. foreign policy on Ethiopian women's access to safe abortion services. (2010)

Sierra Leone (in partnership with Centre for Safe Motherhood Youth and Child Outreach): Human rights anti-female genital cutting workshops in schools in northern Sierra Leone with thousands of students participating. (2010)

Lebanon (in partnership with Helem): Needs assessment report outlining employment discrimination faced by Lebanese transgender community. (2010)

South Dakota (in partnership with ACLU of South Dakota): On-site surveys assessing level of reproductive healthcare being provided to Native American women through government-run Indian Health Services in South Dakota. (2009)

Malawi (in partnership with Coalition of Women Living with HIV/AIDS): Human rights workshops for 200 HIV-positive women in four towns/cities in Malawi. (2007)

SEX WORKERS' RIGHTS

Global (in partnership with Global Network of Sex Work Projects): Research and publication of guide on human rights mechanisms and follow-up advocacy for sex workers' rights advocates. (2018 – 2020)

Africa-wide (in partnership with Crested Crane Lighters, Voices of Hope Trust, and WONETHA): Submissions to international human rights bodies (Human Rights Committee, Universal Periodic Review, and Committee Against Torture) documenting abuses against Namibian and Ugandan sex workers. (2016)

Africa-wide (in partnership with African Sex Worker Alliance): Human rights workshop in Mauritius for activists from Botswana, Kenya, Mauritius, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa, and Uganda on the use of national, regional, and international human rights mechanisms to advance sex workers' rights in Africa. (2015)

Zimbabwe (in partnership with Sexual Rights Centre): Policy paper on decriminalization of sex work in Zimbabwe. Comparative memo on models of sex worker legal empowerment. (2013)

United States (in partnership with Sex Workers Project): Advocacy paper submitted to Association of Attorneys General critiquing "end demand" approach to sex work. (2012)

South Africa (in partnership with SWEAT and Sisonke): Policy papers on behalf of sex worker-led national campaign to decriminalize sex work in South Africa. (2011)

Malawi (in partnership with Center for Development of People): International and comparative constitutional law research for successful public interest lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of forced HIV testing of sex workers. (2011)

India (in partnership with SANGRAM and VAMP): Policy document crafting rights-based alternative guidelines for HIV/AIDS interventions targeting sex workers. (2008)

ANTI-CARCERAL ADVOCACY

United States: Human rights report documenting local efforts throughout the United States to defund the police and invest in social and economic resources for low-income communities of color. (2020)

Kenya (in partnership with Strathmore Law School Clinic and Clean Start): Advocacy paper documenting the experiences of incarcerated girls and calling for abolition and reforms of the juvenile punishment system in Kenya. (2019 – 2020)

Washington DC (in partnership with HIPS): Public health and human rights-based policy report calling for the decriminalization of all drugs for personal use in Washington D.C. (2017)

New York City (in partnership with Police Reform Organizing Project): Policy reports critiquing NYPD broken windows policing and NYPD harassment of Black and Latinx communities, Muslim-American communities, sex workers, queer youth of color, street vendors, and homeless people. (2012 – 2017)

New York City: Submission to Office of the Inspector General–NYPD documenting racially discriminatory effects of NYPD’s broken windows policing policy. (2015)

New York City: Consultancy work for Black Lives Matter activists regarding recommendations for legal, policy, and human rights interventions targeting police brutality in New York City. (2015)

Malawi (in partnership with Center for Human Rights Education Advice and Assistance): Submissions of individual claims on behalf of Malawian people in prison to United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention in Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights. International and comparative constitutional law research for public interest lawsuit on the right to trial within a reasonable time. (2008 – 2010)

ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Africa-wide (in partnership with REDRESS): victim-centered strategic litigation guide focusing on enforced disappearances prepared for distribution to activists in Algeria, Libya, Sudan, and Zimbabwe and the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights (2020)

Global: 100-page handbook detailing best practices for community-based paralegal programs handling sexual violence cases. (2015)

Malawi (in partnership with Center for Human Rights Education Advice and Assistance): Mobile legal aid clinics in three villages in rural Malawi providing individuals in 110 cases with legal assistance on witchcraft accusations, property grabbing, domestic violence, and child maintenance. (2009 – 2011)

Liberia (in partnership with Carter Center and Justice and Peace Commission): 200-page handbook to improve design of community-based paralegal program. (2008)

PREVIOUS TEACHING AND PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

FORDHAM UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW **New York, NY**
Crowley Fellow in International Human Rights **2006 – 2007**

Taught seminar on feminization of HIV/AIDS epidemic in Ethiopia and Malawi. Authored report on feminization of HIV/AIDS in Malawi. Co-produced documentary entitled “The Face of AIDS: The Feminization of HIV/AIDS in Malawi” (documentary broadcast on Malawi TV for World AIDS Day, International AIDS Conference in Mexico City, and featured in university courses).

INTERNATIONAL CRISIS GROUP, WEST AFRICA PROJECT **Dakar, Senegal**
Harvard Henigson Human Rights Fellow **2005 – 2006**

Authored Crisis Group policy reports on justice sector reform in Liberia and constitutional and legal reform in Nigeria. Drafted daily briefings and monthly internal reports on security situation in Sierra Leone and Liberia. Conducted advocacy meetings with international donors and interviews with international press.

ACLU WOMEN’S RIGHTS PROJECT **New York, NY**
Law Clerk **Summer 2004**

UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL TRIBUNAL FOR RWANDA **Arusha, Tanzania**
Law Clerk **Summer 2003**

TEACHING AND PROJECTS ABROAD **Accra, Ghana**
African Women’s History Instructor **Spring 2002**

FIELD RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Kenya on gender and juvenile punishment system (2019)
 Botswana, Kenya, Mauritius, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa and Uganda on sex worker activism (2010 – 2014)
 South Africa on employment and housing discrimination against LGBT refugees (2013)
 South Africa on decriminalization of sex work (2011)
 Malawi on access to justice and community-based paralegal programs (2011)
 Ethiopia on Global Gag Rule and access to safe abortion (2010)
 Lebanon on employment discrimination against transgender people (2010)
 Cambodia on Cambodian-American deportees (2010)
 South Dakota Lakota reservations on Native American women’s access to reproductive health services (2009)
 Cambodia on forced eviction (2008)
 Malawi on arbitrary detention (2008)
 Liberia on access to justice and community-based paralegal programs (2008)
 India on HIV/AIDS programs targeting sex workers (2008)
 Sierra Leone on female genital cutting and child-care maintenance (2008)
 New Zealand on intimate partner violence (2008)
 Ethiopia on non-judicial constitutional review (2008)
 Malawi on feminization of HIV/AIDS (2007)
 Ethiopia on feminization of HIV/AIDS (2006)
 Nigeria on federalism and constitutional reform (2006)
 Sierra Leone and Liberia on judicial reform, customary law, access to justice, gender justice and community based paralegal programs (2005)
 Rwanda and Uganda on abuses against human rights defenders and journalists (2004)
 Rwanda on *ingando* solidary camps and post-conflict reconciliation (2004)

PEER REVIEWER

Cambridge University Press
Health and Human Rights Journal
Journal of African Law
Meridians: Feminism, Race, Transnationalism (Duke University Press)
Religion and Gender
Sexual and Reproductive Health Matters

FACULTY SERVICE

Public Interest and Service Committee (2007 – present), Chair (2015 – 2017)
Special Committee on the Status of Clinicians and Clinical Hiring, Co-Chair (2019 – 2020)
Teaching Committee (2014 – 2015; 2017 – 2019)
Diversity and Inclusion Committee (2016 – 2018)
Long Range Planning Committee (2015 – 2016)
Women Law Students Committee (2013 – 2014)
Clinical Status Committee (2011 – 2012)
Student Faculty Public Interest Committee (2010 – 2011)
Ad-Hoc Clinical Hiring Committee (2010)
SJD Candidates, Faculty Advisor (2019 – present), Dissertation Committee Member (2016 – 2018)
Fordham Law Student Advocates for Sexual Health and Rights, Faculty Adviser (2013 – present)
Stein Scholars for Public Interest, Faculty Mentor (2010 – present)

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Columbia University Odyssey Mentorship Program, Alumni Mentor (2019 – present)
Namati: Innovations in Legal Empowerment, Board of Directors (2012 – 2020), Secretary (2015 – 2019), Chair (2019 – 2020)
Association of Women's Rights in Development (AWID)(2012 – 2021)
African Studies Association (Women's Caucus)(2017 – 2020)
African Studies Association (2015 – 2018)
National Women's Studies Association (2015 – 2018)
Timap for Justice USA, Board Member (2007 – 2011)
Bar Admission: New York