

CREATIVES 4 PEACE

[illegible]



The Story Behind Creatives4Peace

UNDP Africa launched in June 2026 the Creatives4Peace Youth Online Innovation Challenge – this catalogue showcases the work of the 15 finalists, selected from over 730 applications across 44 African countries. Their work demonstrates the potential of Africa's cultural and creative industries as powerful spaces for peacebuilding, dialogue, and social cohesion. Through music, visual and digital arts, storytelling, gaming and performance, these 15 stories highlight how young Africans are transforming lived experiences into creative solutions that connect communities, challenge harmful narratives, and contribute to more peaceful and inclusive societies.

Africa is home to a vibrant generation of young creatives, innovators and changemakers whose ideas and talents are shaping communities and inspiring new possibilities across the continent. In contexts marked by fragility, conflict, division and other social challenges, creativity can become a powerful tool for expression, connection and economic transformation.



Ana Matambo

Ana Amelia Matambo is a Mozambican entrepreneur, fashion designer, creative director, and professional makeup artist. She is the Founder and Creative Director of Bwinos Fashion, a brand that blends elegance, African identity, and innovation.

Through fashion and beauty, Ana Amelia aims to inspire, celebrate African culture, and create positive impact, believing in creativity as a powerful tool for transformation and empowerment.



Mozambique

Bwinos Fashion

I work in fashion and beauty, combining creativity, elegance, and African identity.

As the Founder and Creative Director of Bwinos Fashion, I create contemporary and sophisticated designs while using fashion as a platform for cultural expression, empowerment, and positive social impact.



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PT | ENG



Anass Mttamer

Anass Mttamer is an activist, dancer, actor, and workshop moderator using creative expression to advance social change. As co-founder of the Sarab project, he combines dance, theatre, and social therapy to challenge body and gender stereotypes and address trauma affecting LGBTQ+ and minority communities.

His work uses art to foster meaningful dialogue, inclusion, connection, and empowerment, while creating spaces where diverse voices and experiences can be seen, heard, and represented through creative expression.



Morocco

DART

Collective Sarab is a grassroots activism platform founded in Rabat in 2022, using dance, theatre, exhibitions, and participatory workshops to create inclusive spaces for dialogue and expression.

Through art, participants explore issues including body stigma, identity, and mental health while becoming active

contributors rather than passive audiences.

Sarab creates safe, open spaces where marginalized voices can be seen and heard, using creativity to foster empathy, mutual respect, and greater understanding across communities.



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AR | FR | ENG | SP



Augusto M'bim

Augusto Na M'bim, artistically known as Pequeno Águas, is a Guinean visual artist, sociologist, teacher, illustrator, set designer, and social activist using art to advance education and social change. He is the founder of the Pequeno Águas Art Academy and creator of Cores de Esperança – Meninas nas Artes Plásticas, promoting artistic opportunities for children, young people, and girls. He has held leadership roles across several cultural initiatives and continues to contribute to Guinea-Bissau's creative sector through arts education, advocacy, and community engagement.

Pequeno Águas Art Academy

Pequeno Águas Art Academy is a cultural and educational initiative that uses visual arts to promote creativity, identity, and social transformation in Guinea-Bissau.

Through painting, drawing, and visual storytelling, the Academy provides children and young people, particularly girls, with opportunities to develop their artistic skills while exploring themes including cultural heritage, human rights, gender, and social realities.



Guinea-Bissau



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PT



Aza Nsabimana

Aza Nsabimana, professionally known as Mlay, is a Burundian singer, songwriter, and cultural peacebuilder based in Kakuma Refugee Camp, Kenya. A founding member of Exile Key Artists, she uses music to promote peace, cultural exchange, and social cohesion across displaced communities. Her work explores hope, resilience, identity, and unity. She notably collaborated with 20-time Grammy Award winner Yo-Yo Ma on the song Yelele Mama, celebrating culture and music as tools for connection and peace.



Burundi

Mlay



Power Culture – Voices of Unity Festival is a peacebuilding initiative using music and cultural expression to strengthen social cohesion among refugees and host communities.

Through art, participants explore issues including body stigma, identity,

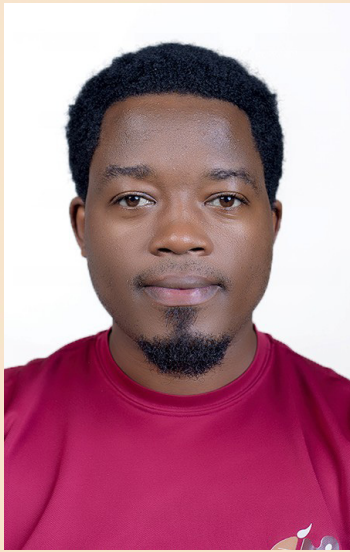
and mental health while becoming active contributors rather than passive audiences. Sarab creates safe, open spaces where marginalized voices can be seen and heard, using creativity to foster empathy, mutual respect, and greater understanding across communities.



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Kirundi | Kiswahili
ENG



Biseruka Joshua

Joshua Biseruka is a Rwandan painter, illustrator, and visual storyteller passionate about using art to promote cultural heritage, education, and social cohesion. With over a decade of experience in the creative sector, he combines painting, observational drawing, and graphic storytelling to preserve local narratives, encourage dialogue, and empower young people through community-based art initiatives. He is the founder of USK Kigali, an initiative that connects people through sketching and shared stories.



Rwanda

Draw Your World

Draw Your World is a visual storytelling initiative using painting, illustration, and public art to explore people, place, and cultural memory.

Inspired by everyday life, heritage, and lived experiences, the initiative documents stories that are

often overlooked while creating opportunities for connection and dialogue. Through art, it seeks to preserve local cultures, amplify community stories, and encourage people to engage with their identities and shared experiences.



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Kinyarwanda
ENG | FR | TR



Cris Douty

Cris Douty (Poegnan Jean-Christian Fortune Douty) is a multidisciplinary Ivorian artist working at the intersection of art, immersive technology, and African culture.

A pioneer of VR and AR in Francophone Africa, he founded Poegnan Club and Poegnan Studio, creating immersive games and experiences showcased internationally.

Winner of the Best Illustrator Award at the African Creative Awards 2024, he represented Ivorian cultural youth at UNESCO MONDIACULT 2025 and works to advance African culture through innovation and technology.



Ivory Coast

Initiation Côte d'Ivoire

Initiation Côte d'Ivoire is an immersive VR game that uses technology and entertainment to reconnect young people with Ivorian cultural heritage.

Through interactive exploration, challenges, and mini-games, players discover traditions, music, dance, architecture, landscapes, and local stories.

The initiative promotes cultural pride and social cohesion by connecting diverse identities through shared heritage. With mobile and PC versions planned, it aims to make cultural education engaging and accessible to wider audiences.



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FR | ENG



Etienne Kasereka

Etienne Kasereka is a musician, activist, and humanitarian from Goma, Democratic Republic of Congo, using music at the intersection of art, therapy, and activism.

His work harnesses creativity as a tool for healing, awareness, and social change, addressing social, political, and environmental challenges. Through his music, he seeks to inspire dialogue and collective action while promoting justice, peace, resilience, and the rebuilding of communities affected by crisis.



Democratic Republic of Congo

Mobile Art for Well-Being

This initiative transforms music and culture into inclusive spaces for dialogue and peacebuilding in Goma. Through performances in streets, markets, and displacement camps, it brings diverse communities together while promoting civic participation, countering hate speech,

and encouraging tolerance. The initiative also integrates music therapy to address the psychological impacts of conflict, supporting healing and resilience while strengthening the foundations for social cohesion and lasting peace.



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FR



Lasu Manasi

Lasu Manasi is a refugee youth advocate and Founder and Executive Director of Rise For Success, a nonprofit organization launched in 2024.

Inspired by his own experience of displacement and the power of storytelling, he works to empower young women and girls from South Sudanese refugee communities to find their voices, share their stories, and become agents of change within their communities.



South Sudan

Bidibidi Media Lab

Bidibidi Media Lab is a community-led creative initiative in Uganda's Bidibidi Refugee Settlement that uses film, photography, and storytelling to empower refugee women, girls, and youth.

Through practical training in camera work, editing, ethical storytelling, and digital content creation, participants gain the skills to tell their own stories and counter misinformation.

The initiative also creates cultural spaces for healing and dialogue, using creativity to strengthen identity, and promote peace between refugee and host communities.



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Luganda | ENG



Njiouwouo Michèle

Ndeudji Michele is a Cameroonian public health professional, entrepreneur, and founder of MIMZ Luxury Beauty, a natural and sustainable beauty brand for people of African descent.

Combining her healthcare background with over eight years of beauty industry experience, she promotes healthier beauty practices rooted in African traditions and cosmetic science.

Through her work, Michele also advances entrepreneurship and economic empowerment for women and young people.



Cameroon

Beyond Beauty

Beyond Beauty uses beauty, public health, and entrepreneurship to promote healthier and more sustainable hair and skincare practices within African communities.

Through education, workshops, mentorship, and natural beauty products, the initiative encourages informed beauty choices and greater confidence.

It also creates economic opportunities for women and young people through training, entrepreneurship, and participation in the beauty value chain, combining health, empowerment, and sustainable African enterprise.



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ENG | DEU



Norah Kimathi

Norah Kimathi is a robotics engineer and peacebuilder, and co-founder of Zerobionic, where she is developing autonomous humanoid robots that deliver creative learning and storytelling in sign language for deaf communities.

Her work combines assistive robotics, inclusion and peacebuilding. She is a recipient of the Presidential Award of Kenya, the Commonwealth Trust Honorary Award, and the first African to win the Young Engineering Award at Hannover Messe 2026.



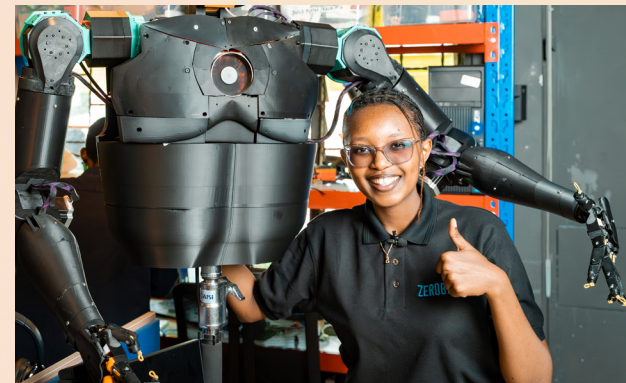
Kenya

Zerobionic

Zerobionic is Africa's first autonomous sign-language humanoid robot, pioneering a new category of assistive robotics built from ocean-bound plastic waste and powered by the sun.

They translate cultural educational narratives into sign language in real time, making culture accessible to deaf audiences across Africa.

They have reached over 510,000 deaf people across five African countries. They are proving that African robotics can lead the world in sustainable, inclusive innovation.



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SWAHILI
ENG | FR



Raymond Steven

Raymond Steven is a Sierra Leonean researcher and nonprofit founder. He is the Founder and Executive Director of Ray Foundation Inc., addressing educational infrastructure gaps in Sierra Leone, and co-founder of Sierra Leone Youth Decide, which promotes youth participation in policymaking.

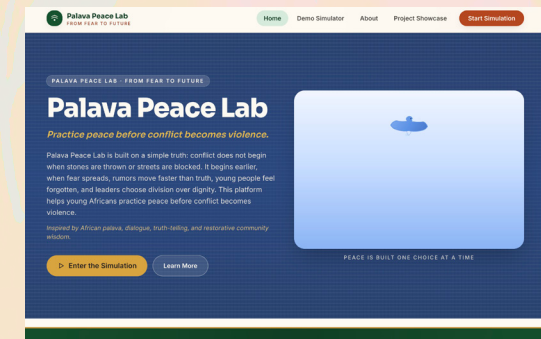
His work connects education, youth empowerment, and peacebuilding, including the Palava Peace Lab, which reimagines traditional West African conflict-resolution practices to help young people navigate conflict through dialogue.

Palava Peace Lab

Palava Peace Lab is a digital peacebuilding initiative inspired by Sierra Leone's Court Barray and Fambul Tok traditions of community dialogue and reconciliation.

Through interactive conflict scenarios, digital learning modules, and dialogue circles, the platform equips young people to navigate disagreement constructively.

A proposed 12-week pilot will reach 150 young people across schools, campuses, and youth hubs, promoting a culture where conflict is addressed through dialogue rather than silence or violence.



Sierra Leone



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Mende | Krio | ENG



Ruth Eskender

Ruth Eskender is an Ethiopian visual artist and graduate of the Alle School of Fine Arts and Design whose practice spans painting, animation, and mixed media.

Her work has been exhibited across Ethiopia and internationally, including in Nigeria, Taiwan, New York, Colombia, and Australia. She participated in the African Female Artist Mentorship Program and has received recognition from the Government of Ethiopia and Ministry of Education, as well as first place in the 2025 Art for Advocacy contest in Colombia.



Ethiopia

Art For Advocacy

Art for Advocacy uses visual art to promote dialogue, inclusion, and social change, particularly among women and young people.

Through painting, animation, participatory murals, exhibitions, and workshops, the initiative explores gender equality, identity, resilience, and social justice.

By creating accessible spaces for creative expression and exchange, it encourages diverse communities to share perspectives, build empathy, and use creativity as a tool for awareness, connection, and collective action.



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Amhraric | ENG



Siphelele Mabaso

Siphelele Mabaso is a South African UI/UX product designer, game creator, and youth climate activist working at the intersection of design, climate justice, and social impact.

Holding a degree in Politics, Economics and Technology from the University of Johannesburg, Siphelele merges systemic analysis with human-centered design to craft intuitive, engaging interactive digital experiences and tools for social change.



South Africa

Power to the People

Power to the People is an interactive game that uses storytelling and play to engage youth in climate justice and the transition to renewable energy.

By placing young people at the centre of decision-making, the game makes complex issues around energy access, environmental policy,

and community resilience more accessible.

Combining human-centred design, research, and interactive storytelling, it encourages civic participation and demonstrates how digital creativity can support youth-led climate action and community empowerment.



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isiZulu | ENG



Tiisetso Mathole

Tiisetso Mathole is a Botswana-based communications professional, creative strategist, hip-hop artist, and Co-Founder and CEO of The Perfect Noise Sessions, a platform championing emerging artists through music and community-led initiatives.

Through his Creatives4Peace initiative, Peace Makes Perfect Noise, he uses creative spaces to advance peacebuilding, inclusion, and youth participation. Performing as TiiMaaney, his work combines music, storytelling, and cultural innovation to empower young people and strengthen Africa's creative ecosystem.



Botswana

The Perfect Noise Sessions

The Perfect Noise Sessions is a creative platform that uses music, storytelling, and community engagement to create opportunities for young people and emerging artists.

Through live music experiences, collaborations, and social impact initiatives, it creates inclusive spaces for creative expression while promoting dialogue, youth development, peacebuilding, and social cohesion, contributing to a stronger creative ecosystem in Botswana and beyond.



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ENG | Setswana



Zachari Emmanuel

Zakari Emmanuel is a Nigerian spoken-word poet, peace educator, and creative advocate using storytelling to strengthen social cohesion.

He leads the ARTvocracy Movement, which uses spoken word, storytelling, and performance to foster dialogue among young people across ethnic and religious backgrounds.

He also leads Udama 4 Africa and hosts the Beyond The Ballot podcast. Across his work, Zakari uses creativity to counter misinformation, amplify unheard voices, and transform conflict into constructive conversation.



Nigeria

ARTvocracy Movement

ARTvocracy Movement: Voices Beyond Divides uses spoken word, storytelling, and creative dialogue to connect young people across ethnic, religious, and social backgrounds.

Through performances, workshops, and digital storytelling, the initiative challenges stereotypes, counters misinformation,

and explores peace, identity, and active citizenship. By turning differences into opportunities for dialogue, ARTvocracy builds empathy, trust, and more peaceful, connected communities.



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ENG



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