



# 2024 End of Year Report: Activity Highlights & Updates



**“It is you O Lord who have accomplished all we have done.” (Isaiah 26:12)**



# Our Mission

Inspired by the Gospel and informed by Catholic Social Teaching, the Africa Faith and Justice Network (AFJN) seeks to educate and advocate for just Africa-US relations that empower Africans to be agents of their own destiny, thriving in a just and equitable society.

## A Note from Our Executive Director



As we celebrate this Jubilee Year of renewal, we reflect on our significant progress in 2024. I'm grateful for our sustained advocacy efforts, expanded partnerships, and growth in Africa on critical issues. We supported the empowerment of women and girls in Ghana and Nigeria, promoted just governance in Liberia, DRC, Cameroon, and Sierra Leone, and we shared our stories on the world stage at the United Nations and World Bank. However, 2025 brings new challenges, including reduced support for vital life-saving programs and increasing conflicts in DRC and Sudan. The cut in US funding exacerbates the funding squeeze for our partners, making the situation dire for marginalized communities and our work even more critical. Despite these challenges, AFJN remains committed to promoting justice, peace, and transformative change for and with Africa. We believe that tackling systemic issues is key to addressing poverty. My friends, as you read this report, I urge you to continue to stand with us in promoting transformative change. Together, we can make a lasting impact and build a more just and equitable society for all. God Bless.

## Thanks for Your Service

On behalf of our partners on the continent, AFJN thanks Fr. Bill Christy CSSp (Board Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer), and Sr. Florence Deacon, OSF (Board Chair) for their years serving on AFJN's Board of Directors.



## Board of Directors, Executive Committee

Nkechi Iwuoha, PHJC - Chair  
Maura Browne, SNDdeN - Vice Chair  
Bill Christy, CSSp - Secretary  
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## Staff and Volunteers

Steven Nabieu Rogers, PhD Executive Director	Jean Marie Mvumbi, CICM Accountant Volunteer and Board Member	Project Consultant Patrick Egwu AFJN Senior Fellow
Eucharika Madueke, SNDdeN Women Empowerment Project Coordinator	Kelly Maltagliati Office Manager (Ignatian Volunteer Corps Volunteer)	Rev. Barwende Sane, SJ Former AFJN Senior Fellow
Ntama Bahati Policy Analyst	David Mahoney, CFX Editorial Consultant	Interns: Jolade Oshinkanlu Jasmina Storen Oluwakemi Adedoyin
Lydia Andrews Communications and Operations Manager	Aniedi Okure, OP Women Empowerment	



# US-Africa Policy



## Advocating for Africa on the Global Stage

In 2024, AFJN participated in several high-level events, educating influential representatives from governments, the private sector, civil society, academia, and the public about critical issues affecting Africa.

### Key Events and Initiatives:



- **Combating Corruption:** AFJN co-sponsored a Civil Society Policy Forum side event, “Governance Reform Through Transparency: The Role of Civil Society in Combating Corruption” during the International Monetary Fund and World Bank 2024 Spring Meetings in Washington, DC.



- **Land Grabbing and Sustainable Development:** AFJN Executive Director addressed the Ministerial Plenary at the 2024 United Nations (UN) Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) High-Level Segment in New York, highlighting the impact of land grabbing on global food production targets and the importance of an integrated approach to the Sustainable Development Goals.



- **Food Security and Faith:** AFJN Executive Director spoke as panelist during the “Pan African Future, Faith and the Vision of Food Security for All” presentation at the UN Future’s Summit Black Futures Summit side event.



- **Empowering Women and Children:** AFJN’s Women’s Empowerment Coordinator participated in the “An Intergenerational Panel: Confronting Poverty Through Diverse Lenses” UN parallel event at the UN Conference on the Status of Women 68.



## Impactful Campaigns

AFJN has been at the forefront of promoting justice, peace, community and faith-based engagement, and governance reform through various impactful campaigns. Key areas of US-Africa policy engagements include:



- **US-Kenya Strategic Trade and Investment Partnership Negotiations:** AFJN participated in public hearings and ‘Stakeholder Listening’ sessions organized by the US Trade Representative, the White House National Security Council’s Office of African Affairs, and the President’s Advisory Council on African Diaspora Engagement, raising concerns about transparency, regional economic integration, sustainable economic growth, and civil society inclusion.



- **Capitol Hill Advocacy Efforts:** AFJN collaborated with Congressional Offices, the Administration, key African Embassies, and civil society to address the volatile situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), including war crimes, humanitarian crises, and regional stability.



- **Sanctions Against Rwanda:** AFJN called the US to issue sanctions against Rwanda and other nations backing the M23 rebel group, as well as supporting the H.R. 8310: Bipartisan Building Relationships and Increasing Democratic Governance through Engagement to DRC Act of 2024.



- **Refugee Resettlement Advocacy:** AFJN engaged with the White House National Security Council’s Welcome Corps program to promote the resettlement of Africa refugees from conflict zones.



- **Humanitarian Assistance and Elections Reform:** AFJN met with the US Department of State to advocate for increased humanitarian assistance to Sudan, and with the US Ambassador to Sierra Leone, Bryan David Hunt to discuss election reform efforts in Sierra Leone.

## Impactful Networks and Issue Areas

Africa Advocacy Network for Africa  
 African Conference of Catholic Clergy and Religious in the US  
 Catholic Task Force on Africa  
 Congressional Black Caucus Prayer Breakfast  
 Ecumenical Advocacy Days  
 Financial Accountability & Corporate Transparency Coalition  
 Friends of the Congo  
 Jubilee USA Network  
 Leadership Conference of Women Religious  
 Public Private Partnerships for Responsible Minerals Sourcing

Accountability and Transparency  
 Catholic Social Teaching  
 Debt Relief and Forgiveness  
 Ending Illicit Financial Flows  
 Human Rights  
 Peace in the DRC  
 Reforming the UN Security Council  
 Responsible Minerals Sourcing  
 Stopping the Persecution of Christians

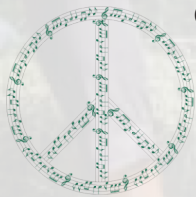


# Projects in Africa

“Anyone who raises a hand [...] because of their ethnicity [does not act] on behalf of their ethnic group, [...] and **do[es] not** have the mandate to kill in their name.”<sup>1</sup>

## Promoting Peace through Music in the Democratic Republic of Congo

Despite facing a severe humanitarian crisis fueled by intensified conflict and heavy civilian casualties, citizens of the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo are leveraging their rich musical heritage to promote peace and unity. In 2024, AFJN launched the "[Unity Through Diversity](#)" program, encouraging youth to choose love, peace, and unity over division and conflict by leveraging their artistic expression to promote inclusive actions, and to celebrate and cultivate interculturality. Through this initiative, 30 musicians from nine ethnic groups came together for a seminar discovering how they may utilize their talent in spreading the message of peace and coexistence. The culmination of this collaboration was the multilingual song "Let Us Live Together" ("TUISHI PAMOJA BY AMP"), that urged listeners to reject tribalism and embrace unity. Building on this momentum, AFJN and Amahoro Youth (Peace Youth) co-hosted a concert promoting peaceful coexistence among diverse ethnic groups in eastern DRC, featuring a statement calling for peace.



Carrying forward this energy, the Peace Caravan, organized by Artistes Musicien for Paix (AMP) and AFJN traveled throughout Goma, North Kivu, spreading a powerful message of unity and coexistence. The caravan brought together nine ethnic groups, who visited displaced camps and debuted the “TUISHI PAMOJA BY AMP” in celebration of their shared heritage through music and dance.

<sup>1</sup>AFJN’s message read by Justin Bizimana, Conseil pour la Protection et la Promotion de la Femme et de l’Enfant, Program Coordinator



**“1 in 3 children [...] is deprived of a legal identity”<sup>2</sup>**

## **Enhancing Birth Registration and Certification in Cameroon**

UNICEF estimates that 1 of 3 children in Cameroon remain unregistered, posing significant risk of statelessness and limited access to education. AFJN is working to change this story. To address this issue, [AFJN forged several local partnerships](#) since 2019. In 2024, AFJN collaborated with the Cameroonian Catholic Ecclesiastical Province of Garoua and the Mayor of Foubot to streamline the birth registration process, reducing the bureaucracy and extortion risks, in mainly Muslim communities where this problem is predominant. This partnership facilitated experience-sharing, challenge-identification, and process improvements. AFJN's newly formed Strategic Monitoring Committees ensure sustainability, and mobile courts have registered hundreds of children in Foubot City and Kpouptamou. To promote awareness, AFJN brought the process closer to the people by distributing certificates at schools, engaging over 100 public school students and fostering a culture of inclusivity. These efforts align with Cameroon's broader initiative to improve civil registration and minimize statelessness among children.



<sup>2</sup>[“The universal birth registration challenge in Cameroon,”](#) UNICEF West and Central Africa website.



**THE**

**NEXT**

**GEN**



## Youth Empowerment: Preparing the Next Generation of Leaders

AFJN actively engaged youth across multiple countries through advocacy initiatives, educational programs, and empowerment projects. By sharing AFJN's expertise and experience, the organization aims to equip the next generation of leaders with the knowledge and skills necessary to combat social injustices and promote community development. In the US, AFJN staff shared their field expertise with university students, promoting a deeper understanding of African perspectives and women and youth empowerment. Meanwhile, in Africa, AFJN has expanded its advocacy awareness programs to new countries and regions, addressing critical issues such as corruption, child marriage, domestic servitude, and land grabbing.



## Empowering Youth-Led Change in Nigeria

Young people are the driving force behind AFJN's mission to combat early marriage and domestic servitude in Nigeria. In 2024, AFJN and AFJN-Nigeria, led by women religious, collaborated to empower youth through advocacy training and awareness programs, in various states throughout Nigeria. This initiative sparked a ripple effect, as youth leaders took ownership of their newfound advocacy skills, sensitizing communities, advocating for change, and raising awareness on pressing local issues. Key highlights of this initiative

include training larger groups of youth leaders in cities like Akwa Ibom, engaging 723 youth and students, and equipping 231 youth in Ikwo LGA, Ebonyi State, to combat domestic servitude and child marriage. Other training activities focused on digital advocacy skills for the youth in Abuja. AFJN workshops in Enugu and Plateau educated 299 students on domestic servitude and empowerment culminating in advocacy visits to local leaders, including a local chief in Enugu and four Chiefs of the Gomai nation in Plateau. Through these efforts, AFJN remains committed to fostering youth advocacy, promoting social justice, and addressing critical issues nationwide.





## Bringing AFJN Youth Advocacy Workshops to Sierra Leone and Burkina Faso

In 2024 AFJN successfully launched its inaugural youth advocacy workshops in Sierra Leone and Burkina Faso. In Sierra Leone, AFJN collaborated with CARITAS Freetown, the Spiritan Development Office Ghana, and the Archdioceses of Freetown Catholic Youth Organization InterUnit to host “Building a Culture of Practical Advocacy: A Workshop for Catholic Youths in Sierra Leone.” This workshop, rooted in Catholic social teaching, empowered 64 young Catholics from 29 parishes to become effective advocates for their communities, focusing on social justice issues such as land grabbing. Also in Burkina Faso, AFJN held the “Contribution a la consolidation de la paix durable par l’emploi des jeunes dans l’agriculture [Contribution to the consolidation of lasting peace through the employment of young people in agriculture]” youth-focused workshop which focused on agriculture as a catalyst for employment, peacebuilding, and sustainable development. Both workshops were well received and marked the beginning of AFJN’s Just Governance youth advocacy programs in these countries.

“To promote social justice in the church  
**advocacy** must be a  
**crucial mission**  
of the youth.”

- Fr. Daniel Osei Yeboah,  
Advocacy Training  
Workshop, Sierra Leone







**“[W]e cannot eradicate poverty  
by dispossessing people of their land  
in the name of global food production [.]”**

**- Dr. Steven Nabieu Rogers, oral statement, Ministerial Plenary,  
2024 UN ECOSOC High-Level Segment**

President, the Africa faith  
justice network believes





## Scaling Up Anti-Corruption Efforts: AFJN's Experience-Sharing Initiative in Liberia

At the invitation of the Bishop of Gbarnga, AFJN shared successful grassroots-led anti-corruption strategies with the Diocese of Gbarnga in Liberia. In 2024, AFJN partnered with AFJN-Cameroon to conduct workshops and a comprehensive survey of five selected Catholic high schools, examining the impact of corruption on Liberia's education system. The survey, that engaged 250 stakeholders, revealed the education sector's vulnerability to patronage, bribery, and sexual exploitation. AFJN-Cameroon coordinator, Ms. Massa Ferancide shared valuable insights from Cameroon's grassroots-led anti-corruption strategy, adapting and replicating them in Liberia. Participants expressed interest in learning more about the project's success and grassroots approaches to combating corruption. The preliminary report, to be launched in April 2025, highlights corruption's significant impact on education outcomes. A diocese-wide engagement will follow later in 2025, aiming to spark meaningful change and promote just governance.

“[I]ntegrity begins with **self** reflection and **self** correction.”

- Dr. Steven Nabieu Rogers, Training Workshop, Liberia





## Combating Land Grabbing and Promoting Sustainable Agriculture in Ghana and Sierra Leone

In 2024, AFJN intensified its efforts to combat land grabbing and promote sustainable agriculture in Ghana and Sierra Leone.

### Ghana: Empowering Communities Against Land Grabbing



In Ghana's Volta Region where AFJN visited seven villages, community leaders are taking the lead to protect their communities from predatory land deals. After several community town halls that attracted 340 community members, Paramount Togbega Lawluvi Bimah IV of Ziokpe, announced the formation of a committee to oversee foreign investment and prevent land grabbing. AFJN promoted regenerative agriculture as a better alternative, when considering food security, climate change, and small farm holders' economic well-being. Radio jingles that played in the neighboring countries sparked interest in AFJN's advocacy work.

### Sierra Leone: Assessing the Impact of Multinational Land Acquisition

AFJN and its partners assessed the devastating impact of multinational land acquisition on rural communities in southern Sierra Leone. Through town hall meetings, AFJN listened to concerns about the operations of Socfin Agricultural Company Ltd. and FG Gold mining, that included toxic dumping, environmental degradation, and the loss of the local's livelihoods. Communities expressed a strong desire for advocacy training and collaboration opportunities, which AFJN plans to provide.





## Empowering Catholic Religious Leaders in Social Justice Advocacy in the DRC, Kenya, Nigeria and Malawi

AFJN engaged Catholic religious communities in Nigeria, DRC, Kenya, and Malawi through advocacy training and empowerment initiatives. These included speaking at the Nigerian Major Superiors of Women Religious meeting, and meeting with seventy sisters in Benue State. These efforts focused on addressing social injustices, promoting governance accountability, and empowering religious leaders to drive systemic change. Key initiatives included training sessions, workshops, and direct engagements with government officials, community leaders, chiefs and faith leaders (including Imams).

Through these initiatives, AFJN has strengthened the role of Catholic religious leaders in social justice advocacy. In 2024, over 200 religious leaders have been empowered to advocate for stronger policies against gender-based violence, child marriage, and exploitation in mining. AFJN's efforts have promoted sustainable community development and pushed for systemic change, leveraging the influence of Catholic religious leaders to create a more just and equitable society in these countries.





## Sensitization Efforts to Combat Early and Child Marriage and Domestic Servitude in Nigeria

AFJN-Nigeria, in collaboration with various partners, conducted extensive community sensitization programs across Nigeria to combat early and child marriage and domestic servitude. In Ebonyi State, events at the Bishop Thomas Mcgethric Pastoral Center and remote villages brought together hundreds of participants, including government officials, traditional rulers, and community leaders. These efforts highlighted the severe impact of these harmful practices, calling for government action and stronger community collaboration.

Similar initiatives were carried out in Jos, River State, and Port Harcourt, engaging religious leaders, human rights lawyers, and youth groups to raise awareness on women's and children's rights. The "Action Against Early Marriage, Domestic Servitude, and Domestic Violence" workshop in Port Harcourt educated the community on legal protections and social interventions. Through these programs, AFJN-Nigeria reinforced its commitment to eradicating these injustices through education, advocacy, and strategic partnerships. AFJN held similar efforts in Ghana in collaboration with AFJN-Ghana to tackle these issues.





## Grants

Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace

Conrad N. Hilton Foundation

Dominican Sisters of Peace, Shalom Fund

Missionaries of Africa

Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ

Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, Base Communities

Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, Congregational Mission Office

Society of the Holy Child Jesus, WOTA Fund

The Raskob Foundation for Catholic Activities

## Member Organizations

*Adorers of the Blood of Christ (ASC)*

*Archdiocese of Cincinnati Mission Office*

*Comboni Missionaries (MCCJ)*

*Congregation of Holy Cross Sisters (CSC)*

*Congregation of the Holy Spirit (CSSp)*

*Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (CICM)*

*Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace (CSJP)*

*Dominican Sisters of Peace (OP)*

*Dominican Sisters of Sinsinawa (OP)*

*Good Shepherd Parish (Wayland, MA)\**

*Holy Cross Fathers (CSC)*

*Knights of Saint John\**

*Marianist Province of the United States (SM)*

*Maryknoll Society (MM)*

*Medical Mission Sisters (MMS)*

*Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate (OMI)*

*Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Africa (MSOLA)*

*Missionary Sisters Servants of the Holy Spirit (SSpS)*

*Missionhurst (CICM)*

*Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ (PHJC)*

*Priests of the Sacred Heart (SCJ)*

*Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary (RSHM)*

*School Sisters of Notre Dame: Central Pacific Province (SSND)*

*Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati\* (CS)*

*Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth (CS)*

*Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi (Dubuque, IA) \**

*Sisters of the Holy Child Jesus (SHCJ)*

*Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary (SNJM)*

*Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur (SNDdeN)*

*Sisters Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (IHM)*

*Society of the Divine Word (SVD)*

*Society of the Missionaries of Africa (MAfr)*

*Xaverian Brothers (CFX)*

*Xaverian Missionaries (SX)*

***The Africa Faith and Justice Network is so grateful to our organizational and individual members, grantors, and donors for your prayers and financial support over these years. With God's grace, together we are working towards more just US - Africa relations.***