



## GREENSPRING DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **REPORT OF THE ACTIVITIES OF GREENSPRING DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE DURING THE 2025 UNITED NATIONS HIGH LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM (HLPF) HELD AT THE UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS IN NEW YORK FROM MONDAY 14<sup>TH</sup> TO WEDNESDAY 23<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2025**

The High Level Political Forum (HLPF) 2025 was an engaging two weeks with Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) at the United Nations Headquarters in New York with physical and virtual attendance. Many CSOs were not able to attend physically due to several reasons. Despite the challenges, CSOs were undeterred to demand for system change. CSOs have been participating in all spaces which has made it possible to bring about great impact.

The Executive Director of Greenspring Development Initiative, Dr. Mekwuye Margaret Olabisi was registered to attend the HLPF by His Marvelous Grace Support Foundation, an organisation with Economic And Social Council (ECOSOC) Status with the United Nations Headquarters, through the assistance of Dr. Oluwadamisi Tayo-Ladega.

The theme of 2025 HLPF is “Advancing Sustainable, Inclusive, Science And Evidence-Based Solutions For The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development And Its Sustainable Development Goals For Leaving No One Behind” The Forum conducted an in-depth review of SDGs 3, 5, 8, 14, and 17.

The motivation to apply and engage actively to the success of HLPF 2025 is due to its importance to the organisation’s advocacy goals. Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) play a pivotal role in driving Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) progress at the local, national and international levels. It is important to engage in order to identify what is included, missing and misrepresented in statements of Governments and juxtapose it with CSO statements as well as engage officials with what marginalised citizens in various communities are facing.

Prior to the HLPF, we were involved in several preparatory meetings, especially, actively engaged in writing CSO Voluntary National Report (VNR) Statement for Nigeria and contributing to joint statements of some Major Groups and Other Stakeholders (MGOS) such as Women Major Group (WMG) and Education Academia and Stakeholder Group (EASG)

## HIGHLIGHTS

### ORIENTATION MEETINGS

Orientation meetings were held on the eve of the HLPF, Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> July, 2025 with participation in the Women Major Group (WMG) orientation at 12 noon and the Major Group and Other Stakeholders (MGOS) orientation from 2 – 5pm at the Scandinavian House.



### Women Major Group (WMG) Engagement

We participated in some Women Major Group organised morning caucuses to strategize for collective feminist advocacy. The WMG supported various interventions during the HLPF including the intervention by APRCEM on 15<sup>th</sup> July, 2025, being part of the HLPF 2025 opening statement as well as other interventions. There was a debrief meeting on Tuesday 22 July 2025 to share success stories, challenges and planning for 2026 HLPF.



### Greenspring Development Initiative Engagement

Our Organisation, Greenspring Development Initiative, in the margins of the HLPF, precisely on Thursday 17th July 2025, organised an online event with the “THEME: Amplify Grassroot Voices And Priorities At The Global Stage To Leave No One Behind” The webinar which had one hundred and eight (108) Participants, discussed the significant role of SDG 5 in achieving gender equality and empower all women and girls with the first target of ending all forms of discrimination against all females everywhere. Whether or not legal frameworks are in place to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex were explored.

**COLLABORATION TOWARDS 2025 UN HIGH LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM (HLPF)**  
**INVITATION TO VIRTUAL PANEL DISCUSSION IN THE MARGINS OF THE 2025 HLPF**  
**OUR THEME:**  
**AMPLIFY GRASSROOT VOICES GLOBALLY TO LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND**

This event will explore SDG 5 role which is being reviewed this year, in achieving gender equality and empower all women and girls with the first target of ending all forms of discrimination against all females everywhere. Exploring whether legal frameworks are in place to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex.

**DATE:** THURSDAY 17TH JULY, 2025 **TIME:** 11:00 AM WAT

		
<b>GUEST SPEAKER</b> Abiola Akiyode-Afolabi (Dr) Founding Director, Women Advocates Research and Documentation Center (WARDC)	<b>HOST</b> Mekwuye Margaret Olabisi (PhD) Executive Director, Greenspring Development Initiative	<b>KEYNOTE SPEAKER</b> Felicia Iyore Onibon (PhD) National Coordinator 100 Women Lobby Group

JOIN VIA ZOOM  <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81366741126?pwd=c4WjaRcU30wdPRaybaFl7oPF1nAu2E1>



The Keynote Speaker, Felicia Iyore Onibon (PhD), Coordinator, 100 Women Lobby Group, spoke on “Achieving Gender Equality By Exploring Legal Frameworks To Promote Women Political Participation and Leadership” while the Guest Speaker, Dr. Abiola Akiyode-Afolabi, Founding Director of Women Advocate Research And Documentation Center (WARDC) gave an insight on ‘Partnering With Traditional Leaders in Addressing Gender Based Violence. There were twelve (12) Panelists who shared experiences about their organisations, especially the success stories on the Solidarity Accountability Commitment - Violence Against Women And Girls (SAC-VAWG) Project of WARDC-FORD Foundation, under-taken by

the twelve Sub-Grantees of WARDC in six South West Nigerian States from 2022 to 2023, to reduce violence against women and girls.

### **Academia Engagement**

Academia intervention was held on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> July, 2025, to ruminate on achieving SDG 8 which requires transformation within the educational sector by fostering interdisciplinary collaboration. The side event also discussed the SDG 8 targets, maps and research and the academia's role in shaping policies and partnerships that create decent work opportunities for all. One of the Speakers was Her Excellency, Princess Adejoke Orelope-Adefulire, Senior A Panelist, Special Adviser to the President on SDGs, Nigeria.

### **Education And Stakeholders Group (EASG) Members Meeting**

Participation at the EASG meeting on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2025 was at the Vienna Café, UN Headquarters, at 10am. The meeting was an opportunity for members to update each other on networking efforts during the HLPF and strategize towards HLPF 2026 and other EASG efforts. It was an experience sharing meeting with input of way forward towards better future engagements.



### **Transparency Accountability And Participation (TAP) Network**

TAP Network was involved in providing input and recommendations for the VNR they presented at the HLPF. They hosted and participated in side events, including virtual events. Their engagement at the HLPF is about promoting accountability, transparency and participation.

### **Voluntary National Reviews**



There were Voluntary National Reviews from 21st to 23rd July, with presentations from 35 VNR countries. On Wednesday, 23rd July, 2025, Nigeria, represented by The Special Adviser To Nigerian President on the SDGs, Princess Orelope Adefulire, presented Nigeria's Third VNR Report on the SDGs, having presented in 2017 and 2020, sharing Nigeria's experiences, successes, challenges, and lessons learned. Thereafter, Mr. Ephraim Ogu, CSO representative presented the VNR Statement collectively drafted by CSOs.



## MINISTERIAL DECLARATION

The Ministerial Declaration issued at the conclusion of the Forum was adopted by a majority vote rather than by consensus. Controversial issues included sexual health and reproductive rights, non-discrimination, and universal principles and rights at work. Notwithstanding the tense negotiations, the co-facilitators managed to ensure that an ambitious text was adopted, with many welcome commitments that can serve as strong levers for the international labour movement. HLPF Declaration Reaffirms SDGs as Blueprint for Accelerating Action. The 2025 session of the HLPF concluded with the adoption of a Ministerial Declaration that strongly reaffirms commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its SDGs leaving no one behind.

## APPRECIATION FOR SUPPORT

We acknowledge the accommodation support that was provided by the Kabiawu Family over the years. We thank them for providing accommodation for our Executive Director during her stay throughout the 2025 HLPF.

## CHALLENGES

The HLPF presented its own challenges in ensuring effective stakeholder engagement and the essence for improved coordination. There were issues of limited funding, low youth

delegates attendance, difficulties in securing meaningful participation for civil society and the need for greater political will to implement the SDGs.

## **WAY FORWARD**

The HLPF process is the key to the review and monitoring of progress on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 SDGs. A suggested key aspect of the way forward is the strengthening of its roles in the aspect of political leadership, guidance and recommendations on sustainable development through partnership in addressing implementations gaps and swift response to emerging challenges, focusing on science-policy boundary to leave no one behind.

## **APPEAL FOR FUNDING TO ATTEND SUBSEQUENT HLPF**

The difficulty of participation was heightened by funding challenges, which made it difficult for many CSOs to physically attend. Our organisation's ability to attend the 2025 HLPF was due to resilience, while our attendance was possible through self funding. We appeal for funding support to enable our organisation attend subsequent HLPF.

## **OUTCOME**

The HLPF (High-Level Political Forum) provided us the opportunities to engage with other CSOs in the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as well as participate in Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) and side events. We will continue to advocate for greater inclusion in decision-making processes and call for stronger accountability mechanisms at the local, sub-national and at the global level, calling for good governance, peace, and multilateralism as critical enablers of sustainable development.

## **CONCLUSION**

We thank all networks, coalitions, allies and organisations we belong to for their fierce advocacy. We need to work together to bring about accountability and an effective Agenda 2030, leading to a peaceful and sustainable future for all. CSOs are doing their part, it is expected that Governments should reciprocate with commitments to guard against the failure of the Global goals. There is much work to be done towards a more accountable and effective Agenda 2030, for a peaceful, sustainable and equitable future for everyone.



**MEKWUYE, Margaret Olabisi (PhD)**

**Executive Director, Greenspring Development Initiative**

**Website: <https://greenspringdevinitiative.org>**

**30th July, 2025**

**APPENDIX**

**PHOTO GALLERY**



## COLLABORATION TOWARDS 2025 UN HIGH LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM (HLPF)

### INVITATION TO VIRTUAL PANEL DISCUSSION IN THE MARGINS OF THE 2025 HLPF

**OUR THEME:**

### AMPLIFY GRASSROOT VOICES GLOBALLY TO LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

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GUEST SPEAKER

Abiola Akiyode-Afolabi (Dr)  
Founding Director, Women  
Advocates Research and  
Documentation Center (WARDC)



HOST

Mekwuye Margaret Olabisi (PhD)  
Executive Director, Greenspring  
Development Initiative



KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Felicia Iyore Onibon (PhD)  
National Coordinator  
100 Women Lobby Group

JOIN VIA ZOOM <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81366741126?pwd=c4WjalcU3owdPflaybaF17oPF1nAu2E.1>












Flyer produced for sensitisation towards Goal 5 webinar

PICTURES DEPICTING NIGERIAN TEAMS AND INTERVENTIONS





**Mr Oyebisi flagged by Drs Mekwuye and Adetula during his intervention for NGOs**



**Dr Mekwuye and Prof. Chinelo supporting Lola Ibrahim during her intervention for Women**



**WEP, Greenspring Development Initiative and KAZUL at WMG caucus meeting**



**Nigerian team**





**Lola Ibrahim flagged by Dr Mekwuye and Professor Chinelo**



**Dr Mekwuye flagged by Dr. Adetula and Grace during Ghana's Side Event**

**BELOW PICTURES AT THE ACADEMIA SIDE EVENT**



**Below picture of Education and Academia Stakeholders Group (EASG) at the end of their meeting**



**KABIAWU FAMILY: GREENSPRING DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE SUPPORTERS**



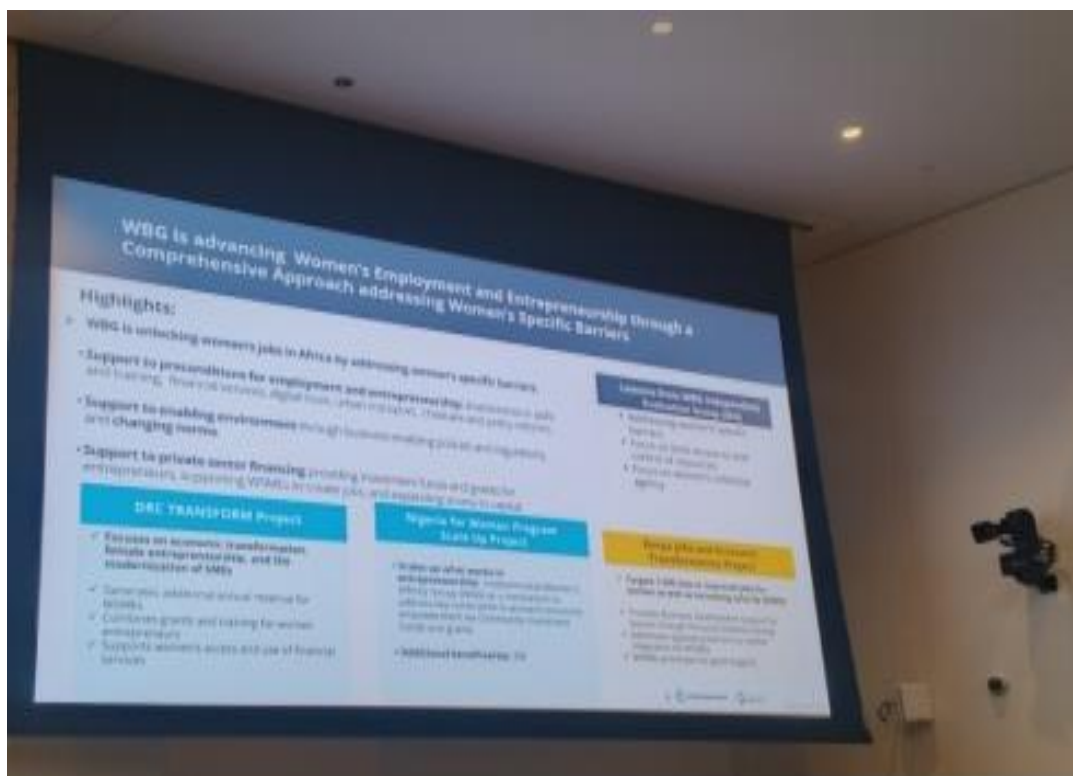
**Mrs Adejoke Kabiawu with Dr Mekwuye front of their home Trenton, USA**



**Dr. Mekwuye with Mr. Azeez Kabiawu in his office in New Jersey**



## PICTURES DEPICTING ARICAN DAY SIDE EVENT ORGANISED BY ECA



## NIGERIAN VNR PRESENTATION 23<sup>RD</sup> JULY 2025 PICTURES



HE Princess Orelope-Adefulire, Special Adviser to the Nigerian President of SDGs presenting Nigeria's VNR Statement



Mr. Ephraim Ogu, CSO representative presenting CSO VNR Statement



**Nigerian NGOs at UN Headquarters lobby after Nigerian VNR Statement**

## Side Event: Demanding Accountability And Defending Civic Space





## 2025 HLPF ORIENTATION MEETINGS



Women Major Group Orientation on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> July 2025 at 12 noon



Major Group and Others Stakeholders Orientation Sunday 13th July 2025 from 2-5pm at the Scandinavian House