

Claire Fallender



Claire has a deep sense of justice and fairness which has led her towards a career in building systems that support social entrepreneurs and young changemakers driving positive impact in the world.

Claire's trajectory was highly influenced by supportive parents: A mathematician mother who challenged inflexible gender norms until she chose to pivot all her acumen into community leadership in public education and a business executive father whose work trips abroad taught Claire a sincere respect for a diversity of cultures not her own. They purposefully instilled in her a deep sense of fairness and a sense that she could do anything.

Claire's changemaking journey started in high school where she became a leader in her school's social change organization, overseeing a dozen student-led initiatives from housing to health to social justice. This

work and early experiences volunteering with a community organization in Honduras exposed Claire first-hand to how well-intentioned people from outside a community could unintentionally do more harm than good.

In college Claire led a number of social justice initiatives. For instance, after witnessing labor violations so close to home as an intern with a leading garment worker's union in New York, she launched the Students Against Sweatshops campaign at Yale, resulting in the administration approving a Code of Conduct to ensure the university's ethical sourcing of its licensed goods. While studying in Chile, Claire was inspired by an Ashoka Fellow who demonstrated the kind of systems change impact only possible for someone who lives with the social problem and can skillfully put others into powerful roles. She graduated college and joined Ashoka's team.

At Ashoka, Claire worked at every level of Venture, starting in D.C. and quickly moving to Brazil where she led the Venture/Fellowship program. She co-designed with a Fellow and launched Ashoka Brazil's first youth changemaking program. Led by her passion for connecting the impact of social entrepreneurs and public policy change, she left Ashoka in 2004 to pursue a degree in Public Affairs at the Princeton School of Public and International Affairs where she eventually worked with UNICEF to develop the first inter-agency guidelines for supporting adolescent girls across 7 UN agencies.

After Princeton Claire joined the Oikos-Cooperation and Development, a social entrepreneur-led Portuguese organization in Mozambique, as a country leader in 2006. Her work catalyzed innovative approaches to support farmer and fishing cooperatives in their mitigation of the impacts of climate change and the HIV epidemic. Unsettled by the lack of support to Mozambican social entrepreneurs and changemakers, Claire returned to Ashoka to lead the Global Venture Program.

In the last decade, Claire has entrepreneurd Ashoka's LeadYoung initiative to help young people and now *everyone* to tell their Everyone a Changemaker story. She works across our global team of colleagues to develop tools and systems to align our global youth strategy and bring resources to support our core strategy. For example, she intrapreneured the four super key EACH dashboards.

In Claire's free time, she loves to hike, make Halloween costumes and windchimes. She is grateful for the support of her husband and two young sons.

Tope Fajingbesi



Tope is a social entrepreneur with 20 years of senior financial leadership experience, and has credentials as CPA, Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria. She finished 2nd best student in the professional exam level 1 (May 1999). She has served in multiple financial leadership roles, including with the American Federation of Teachers, a developing US jujitsu partner. She has Big 5 accounting experience starting with 5 years as an auditor for Arthur Anderson and later for four years with PWC, Price Waterhouse Coopers.

Tope founded several social impact ventures such as She-EO, a global network of women of African descent. She also co-founded a regenerative farming company Dodo Farms, as a voice of racial equity in ag, land and food access. At 25, she launched United for Kids Foundation (UKF) Inc., an organization, which has been serving children from low-income families in Nigeria since 2002.

At 10 years old, she represented her school in a Nigeria state-wide debate competition, where she discovered her powerful voice. She started a musical group at 13 and produced artists who were paid from “admission fees” for the shows she produced out of her parents’ garage.

When she was 19 years old and in college, she read about a young man who lived hundreds of miles away from Lagos (her home state). He had been playing football when he got seriously injured. He needed to raise a significant amount of money for his treatment. She decided to use her “voice” to do what the world now calls “crowd-funding.” There were no mobile phones or internet at the time, so she cut out the page with his photo from the magazine, and she recruited one of her best friends to go door knocking with her. They knocked on hundreds of doors on the large University of Lagos campus. They got bits and pieces, and within days they had raised an unbelievable amount of funds. She recalls taking the cash to the magazine editor’s office, and everyone stared at her in disbelief.

Her childhood experiences led her to build United for Kids Foundation up from a group of 10 friends to a network of almost 500 donors with annual receipts of over Two Hundred and Fifty Million Naira. She handed over the reins of UKF to a group of young changemakers on August 1st, and she is already seeing signs that they will take the organization to places even she never imagined.

United for Kids, u4kids.org, is beyond direct service. It’s a whole child approach with impact on parents, health, mentorship, financial inclusion, and foster care. They created a new free library system supporting 10 schools, and due to youth empowerment purpose, improved reading levels 300%, increased student participation, and provided scholarships to children to attend prestigious institutions. In response to the COVID pandemic, they pivoted to building a mobile library system, ensuring reading remained accessible for every child. Moreover, they have a program to support mothers to achieve financial independence, Mummy and me, with 8 microbusinesses generated. They also have a Donors Choose-like initiative for school supplies impacting 50,000 children.

Lisa Davis



Lisa has deep values, has achieved truly major social entrepreneurial impact and is skilled both as a lawyer and manager. Here are a few highlights.

Her values have deep family roots. She grew up in the American rural south where her mother was the sole white teacher in an area black college. In law school she was never drawn like almost all her classmates to the security and riches of the fancy Atlanta law firms.

Instead, her path quickly took her to Albania supported by the American Bar Association (ABA) to fight on democracy's front line. After that ABA year, she stayed for another four years to continue and deepen her work's impact.

While there she saw time and time again that human rights defenders were at risk -- and that society did not defend them.

Lisa changed that during her long service at Freedom House, historically one of the world's best known and most respected centers for researching and then ranking and publicizing how countries were performing on the main dimensions of freedom.

She changed the world's perceptual framework by making human rights defenders visible, indeed an important category of giving that the world needs, should honor, and must protect. Such framework change is quiet, but is there anything more powerful?

Lisa's leadership and values-based drive has transformed Freedom House. It now has offices across the world, especially in its south. Its budget has multiplied -- as has its impact.

After Freedom House, Lisa led the International Association of Women Judges, a special group of pioneers that quietly brings change for the good.

Lisa is also a skilled lawyer. A member of the D.C. and Virginia bars, she has over a decade's experience with all dimensions of corporate governance, contracts, licenses, internal controls, affiliate agreements, branding rules -- and, as a confident member of this confident profession, much more.