

Dr. Maxi USSAR

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SUMMARY PROFILE

- ⇒ **Gender and Organizational Development Specialist** with over twenty years international development work experience including for the UN (UNICEF, UN Women, WFP, UNESCO, ILO); bilateral aid donors (e.g. USAID, GIZ, FCDO/DFID), international development NGOs (Oxfam GB, Oxfam Netherlands, ActionAid), and private sector companies in Eastern, Southern, and Central Africa, Central Asia, Central and Eastern Europe.
- ⇒ **Competencies:**
 - Gender-focused research, including gender analyses and multi-method approaches;
 - Gender policy and strategy development;
 - Inclusive leadership of technical teams and on gender integration in development programmes and organisations;
 - Impact evaluations;
 - Organisational development, with a focus on cross-sectoral collaboration and human-centred design methods.
- ⇒ Fluent in **English and German, good Portuguese.**
- ⇒ **PhD** in International Relations, London School of Economics; **Masters** graduate, SOAS, University of London.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- ⇒ Lead Consultant to draft the **Gender and Social Inclusion in the Agriculture Sector Strategy** for the Government of Mozambique
- ⇒ **Technical Advisor** for the restructuring of **WFP's** Global Gender Office
- ⇒ Team Leader for the development of gender equality-focused codes of conduct and orientation materials for technical training (TEVET) colleges in Malawi (UNESCO)
- ⇒ Senior **Gender and Agriculture Technical Lead** for multi-country research on women's empowerment in cotton production for the Better Cotton Initiative
- ⇒ Lead Consultant to develop the **UNICEF Malawi Gender Strategy**
- ⇒ **Gender and Youth Advisor** for the **USAID**-funded Supporting the Policy Environment for Economic Development in Mozambique Task Order (SPEED) (3 years)
- ⇒ **Gender Specialist** for the '**Millennium Challenge Corporation**' (MCC) Mozambique (3 years).
- ⇒ **Gender and Social Inclusion Advisor** for a **DFID**-funded MSA/M4P project on oilseeds in Malawi (2 years).
- ⇒ **Programme Strategy Specialist** for the setting-up of a Multi-Country Office for **UNICEF** (Botswana, Namibia, Lesotho and Eswatini)
- ⇒ **Programme Strategy Specialist** for the development of **UNICEF Sudan's** Country Office Management Plan
- ⇒ Strategic co-lead of the **Mid-term Evaluation of UNICEF Malawi's** Country Programme with a focus on cross-sectoral collaboration, human-centred design and gender equality
- ⇒ Lead Consultant to develop **UNICEF Malawi's Country Programme Document**
- ⇒ Lead Consultant for the **Impact Assessment** of the **USAID**-funded Integrated Land Resource Governance Task Order (ILRG) in Mozambique
- ⇒ Team Lead for the **Impact Assessment** of the **USAID**-funded project on Countering Wildlife Crimes in Mozambique
- ⇒ Team Leader for the **Mid-Term Evaluation** of the 6-country **ILO** project on child labour in global supply chains

COUNTRY EXPERIENCE

South Africa	06/2025 - current
Mozambique:	03/2020 – 05/2025
Malawi:	06/2014 – 02/2020
Tanzania:	10/2007 – 07/2010

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

07/10 – to date (excluding a break to take-up a position (P4) for UNICEF Malawi from 07/19 to 02/20)	Director - Gender and Organisational Development Specialist <i>JustImpact Consulting</i>	Cape Town, South Africa
Responsibilities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Desk-based and field research using quantitative and qualitative methods, including:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ <u>Technical Team Lead to review and improve GIZ measurement frameworks for gender transformation in agriculture projects globally</u><ul style="list-style-type: none">- Client: GIZ- Project description: Quantitative and qualitative assessment of GIZ projects working in the agriculture sector to assess the extent to which gender transformative approaches are implemented and measured and development of practical recommendations for improvement.- Date of assignment: 07/2025 – ongoing○ <u>Senior Gender and Agriculture Specialist to develop the Mozambican Government Strategy on Gender and Social Inclusion in the Agriculture Sector</u><ul style="list-style-type: none">- Donor: Embassy of Sweden- Client: Tetra Tech- Project description: Desk review of primary and secondary data on gender and social inclusion in the agriculture sector in Mozambique, drafting of the Gender and Social Inclusion Strategy in the Agriculture Sector, including a detailed action plan, budget and monitoring and evaluation framework	

- Date of assignment: 01/2025 – 08/2025
- Team Lead for the gender-responsive Strategic Planning Assessment of ‘Moments that Matter’
 - Donor: Hilton Foundation
 - Client: Episcopal Relief and Development
 - Project description: Leading a team of three to design and roll-out qualitative data collection in Nampula province in Mozambique, data analysis and report production. for a project on Early Childhood Development with a focus on assessing its work on gender-based violence, adolescent engagement and livelihood promotion to feed into a 4-year strategic plan.
 - Date of assignment: 04/2025 – 06/2025
- Team Lead for the Impact Assessment of the USAID-funded project on Countering Wildlife Crimes in Mozambique
 - Donor: USAID
 - Client: SPEED USAID
 - Project description: Design and roll-out of qualitative data collection across three provinces in Mozambique; data analysis and report production.
 - Date of assignment: 07/2024 – 01/2025
- Lead Consultant for the gender-responsive Impact Assessment of the USAID-funded Integrated Land Resource Governance Task Order (ILRG) in Mozambique
 - Donor: USAID
 - Client: Tetra Tech
 - Project description: Design and roll-out of qualitative data collection across three provinces in Mozambique; data analysis and report production of the 5-year ILRG Task Order.
 - Date of assignment: 04/2023 – 06/2023
- Senior Gender Technical Lead for multi-country research on women’s empowerment in cotton production
 - Donor: Better Cotton Initiative
 - Client: Includovate
 - Project description: Provision of technical leadership on gender equality, including data collection tool development, analysis and report writing, in a research project on women’s empowerment in the cotton industry in India, Pakistan and Mali.
 - Date of assignment: 08/2022 – 02/2023
- Production of a multi-method gender analysis of the impact of deforestation and COVID-19 on communities in rural Malawi
 - Donor: Embassy of Ireland
 - Client: United Purpose Malawi
 - Project description: Literature review, designing qualitative and quantitative research tools, data analysis and report production.
 - Date of assignment: 12/2021 – 03/2022 (4 months)
- Principle Gender and Agricultural Value Chains Research Analyst
 - Client: Equilo
 - Task: Desk-based qualitative and quantitative research on gender equality and inclusion issues across four agri-systems (roots and tubers, maize, dairy, coffee) across low and middle-income countries and development of a global database of open-source gender responsive indicators for a web-based application on gender equality and social inclusion (Equilo)
 - Date of assignment: 10/2020 – 03/2021 (6 months)
- Team Lead for the production of the CEDAW Shadow Report for Malawi
 - Donor: UN Women
 - Client: Oxfam Malawi
 - Project description: The Government of Malawi has produced its 7th State Party report on CEDAW, which will be discussed by the CEDAW committee in October 2015. To support the review process, CSOs have produced a joint Shadow Report.
 - Tasks: Desk-based and field research on the implementation of CEDAW in Malawi; coordination of CSOs to solicit their views on the level of implementation of CEDAW; co-authoring of the final Shadow Report
 - Date of assignment: 03/2015 – 07/2015 (1 year, 5 months)
- Individual Consultant for the development of Gender analysis report of FISP, FIDP, SAPP in Malawi
 - Client: UN Women
 - Tasks: Desk-based and field research on the level of gender responsiveness of three multi-annual agricultural programmes in Malawi (Farm Input Subsidy Programme, Farm Income Diversification Programme, Sustainable Agricultural Productivity Programme)
 - Date of assignment: 09/2015 – 02/2016 (6 months)
- Individual Consultant to carry out a rapid assessment of gender dynamics in sesame and cotton contract farming
 - Client: Adam Smith International/Malawi Oilseed Sector Transformation Programme
 - Tasks: Desk-based and qualitative field research on the impact of the introduction of sesame contract farming on household and farm-level gender dynamics of farming households in Chikwawa, Malawi
 - Date of assignment: 11/2016 – 12/2016 (2 months)

- Individual Consultant to carry out a gender baseline assessment for Malawi Livestock for Resilience Programme
 - Client: Land O'Lakes
 - Task: Desk-based and multi-method field research in Malawi (Dowa and Ntchisi districts) on gender dynamism in livestock keeping and selling; including questionnaires, Focus Group Discussions, and Key Informant Interviews; development of recommendations for the integration of gender issues in programme implementation
 - Date of assignment: 06/2014 – 10/2014 (5 months)
- Team Lead for the development of a Violence Against Women Legal Literacy Manual for Malawi
 - Client: Action Aid Malawi
 - Task: Led a 2-persons team to carry out desk-based research on violence against women and girls in Malawi, including legal frameworks and actual access to judicial remedies; technical gender support for the development of a legal literacy manual for the use in Training of Trainer seminars on violence against women and girls in Malawi
 - Date of assignment: 06/2014 – 01/2015 (8 months)
- **Gender analysis & gender strategy/policy/ training material development**
 - Gender and Youth Adviser for the 'Supporting the Enabling Environment for Economic Development (SPEED)
 - Donor: USAID
 - Client: Nathan Consulting
 - Project description: This project works across five portfolio areas (trade, agriculture, health, biodiversity, and economic governance) to promote a conducive environment for inclusive private-sector led economic growth in Mozambique. The project includes a specific workstream on financial inclusion of women and youth.
 - Tasks: Development of gender mainstreaming strategies across all portfolio areas and review of the project's MEL and reporting frameworks; ongoing technical support to facilitate gender strategy roll-out with strong focus on the setting-up and roll-out of a microfinance loan facility targeting women- and youth-led MSMS in rural Mozambique.
 - Date of assignment: 07/2021 – 01/2025
 - Gender and Agriculture Senior Specialist for the 'Millennium Challenge Corporation' (MCC)
 - Donor: USAID
 - Client: Nathan Consulting
 - Project description: MCC works to promote income generation and poverty reduction by improving water and sanitation, roads, land tenure and agriculture.
 - Tasks: Leading agriculture-focused gender research relating to MCC's work with a particular focus on the transport sector and the transport-agriculture nexus.
 - Date of assignment: 07/2021 – 01/2025
 - Gender Adviser for the 'Malawi Oilseed Sector Transformation Programme' (MOST)
 - Donor: DFID
 - Client: Adam Smith International
 - Project description: This programme formed part of DFID Malawi's Private Sector Development programme and aims to increase incomes of poor people through the M4P approach. The programme worked in four sectors (sunflowers, cotton, groundnuts, soybeans), and included a strong focus on financial inclusion, including of women and youth in Malawi.
 - Tasks: Participatory development of concrete gender mainstreaming strategies in all four sectors and technical oversight of roll-out.
 - Date of assignment: 03/2015 – 10/2017 (2 years, 1 month)
 - Gender Adviser for United Purpose Malawi
 - Client: United Purpose
 - Tasks: Strategic guidance on the development on the gender responsive programming across United Purpose's work
 - Date of assignment: 09/2016 – 06/2019 (2 years, 10 months)
 - Individual Consultant to develop a Gender Equality Policy for UNICEF Malawi
 - Client: UNICEF Malawi
 - Project description: Development of a Gender Equality-equality Assessment Report and the Gender Equality Policy 2019 – 2023 for UNICEF Malawi
 - Date of assignment: 10/2018 – 02/2019 (5 months)
 - Individual Consultant to develop a Gender Strategy and Gender Equality Toolkit for United Purpose Malawi
 - Client: United Purpose
 - Project description: Development of a Gender Strategy and a Gender Equality Toolkit for gender-responsive programming
 - Date of assignment: 03/2018 – 12/2018 (10 months)
 - Individual Consultant to develop a Gender Strategy of Community-based Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM)
 - Client: UNICEF Malawi
 - Tasks: Development of a CMAM gender strategy, including field- and desk-based research.
 - Date of assignment: 03/2015 – 06/2015 (3 months)

- Individual Consultant to develop training materials on women’s empowerment and gender norm transformation
 - Client: Tetra Tech
 - Task: Development of a training manual on women’s empowerment and a training manual on household-level gender norm transformation for USAID-funded projects on land rights in rural Mozambique.
 - Date of assignment: 03/2021 – 05/2021 (3 months)
- Individual Consultant to develop a Gender Policy Issues Paper for LUANAR University Malawi
 - Client: LUANAR University Malawi
 - Task: Field-and desk-based research and writing of the LUANAR Gender Policy Issues Paper
 - Date of assignment: 09/2015 – 11/2015 (3 months)
- Team Leader for the development of gender equality-focused codes of conduct and orientation materials for technical training (TEVET) colleges in Malawi
 - Donor: European Union
 - Client: UNESCO (STEP Programme)
 - Project description: Team Leader of a 3-person team to develop gender equality-focused codes of conduct for students, teachers and administrators and orientation materials for technical training colleges in Malawi. Development of communication materials on sexual violence at technical colleges; the importance of equality and respect; and motivational materials to encourage female students to enrol and complete technical education, including in male-dominated professions.
 - Date of assignment: 03/2018 – 06/2019 (18 months)
- Individual consultant to develop a research paper and a policy guide on integrating a human-rights-based approach in development policies
 - Client: Minority Rights Group Europe
 - Task: Desk-based and field research, including Focus Group Discussions and Key Informant Interviews in Poland, Hungary, Cyprus and Belgium; data analysis; and writing of policy paper and policy guide
 - Date of assignment: 04/2011– 09/2011
- **Report writing**
 - Writer for UNICEF New York: Ending Online Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation
 - Client: UNICEF New York
 - Project description: Data analysis and report writing of a global publication on “Ending Online Child Exploitation and Abuse”
 - Date of assignment: 03/2021 – 12/2021)
 - Writer for UNICEF Mozambique: Strategic “Memoria” Report of the UNICEF Mozambique Country Programme 2017 - 2021
 - Client: UNICEF Mozambique
 - Project description: Literature review and writing of a strategic ‘Memoria’ report for UNICEF Mozambique, summarising key results and achievements made over the 5-year country programme cycle.
 - Date of assignment: 03/2022 – 05/2022
- **Strategic planning and organisational development / facilitation**
 - Programme Strategy Specialist for the setting-up of a Multi-Country Office for UNICEF (Botswana, Namibia, Lesotho and Eswatini)
 - Client: UNICEF ESARO/Fitch Consulting
 - Project description: Co-leadership to support the setting up of a Multi-Country Office for UNICEF covering Botswana, Namibia, Lesotho and Eswatini and Comoros, including in-depth focus group discussions with staff and partners and the development and drafting of supporting documentation for submission to the decision-making body.
 - Date of assignment: 05/2025 - ongoing
 - Programme Strategy Specialist for a Management Review of UNICEF’s operations in Botswana, Namibia, Lesotho, Eswatini and Comoros
 - Client: UNICEF ESARO/Fitch Consulting
 - Project description: Co-leadership of a programme and management review of UNICEF’s operations in five middle-income countries in eastern and southern Africa (Botswana, Namibia, Lesotho, ESwatini and Comoros, including in-depth focus group discussions with staff and partners and the development of a review report and recommendations.
 - Date of assignment: 10/2024 – 05/2025
 - Technical Advisor (Gender Lead) for the restructuring of WFP’s Global Gender Office
 - Client: WFP/Fitch Consulting
 - Project description: Technical Advisor (Gender Lead) in a 4-person team responsible for reviewing and restructuring WFP’s Global Gender Office to strengthen horizontal management and alignment with the Office’s new gender policy.
 - Date of assignment: 02/2022 – 06/2022)
 - Development of UNICEF Sudan’s CPMP
 - Client: Fitch Consulting/UNICEF Sudan
 - Tasks: Participatory development of UNICEF Sudan’s Country Programme Management Plan
 - Date of assignment: August 2022 – March 2023

- Facilitation of UNICEF Mozambique’s Annual Review
 - Client: UNICEF Mozambique
 - Tasks: Facilitation of a 2-day strategic planning Annual Review Meeting for UNICEF Mozambique.
 - Date of assignment: March 2022
- Facilitation of UNICEF Mozambique Social Policy Section Strategic Retreat
 - Client: UNICEF Mozambique (Social Policy Section)
 - Tasks: Facilitation of a 3-day strategic planning and team building retreat for the Social Policy Section of UNICEF Mozambique.
 - Date of assignment: June 2021
- Facilitation of UNICEF Mozambique Child Protection Section Strategic Retreat
 - Client: UNICEF Mozambique (Child Protection Section)
 - Tasks: Facilitation of a 2-day strategic planning and team building retreat for the Child Protection Section of UNICEF Mozambique.
 - Date of assignment: May 2021
- Promotion of gender-responsive integrated programming and matrix management in UNICEF Malawi
 - Client: UNICEF Malawi
 - Project description: Supported the drafting of a UNICEF Malawi integrated Country Programme and the subsequent restructuring of the office to bring the new structure to life, adopting new management styles and performance management tools, including matrix management.
 - Date of assignment: 10/2017 – 04/2019
- Systems development on labour standards in agricultural value chains
 - Client: The Reassurance Network (TRN)
 - Project description: Development and refinement of the Agricultural Labour Practice (ALP) Code Program (JTI) globally, with focus on Malawi, Tanzania, Zambia. ALP focuses on monitoring of labour standards on tobacco farms in supplier countries.
 - Tasks: Development and refinement of the ALP system, strategic guidance and technical support on systems development and partnerships, data analysis.
 - Date of assignment: 10/2015 – 06/2018

07/19 – 02/20

Integrated Programming Manager (P4)

UNICEF Malawi

Lilongwe, MALAWI

Responsibilities:

- Strategic leadership of cross-sectoral collaboration and integrated programming across UNICEF Malawi, including:
 - Overseeing the roll-out of matrix management across the office
 - Spearheading capacity building of staff on collaborative project leadership and leading without authority, including matrix management
 - Leading the application of human-centred design thinking and other interactive and collaborative facilitation methods across the office
 - Providing strategic guidance on the setting-up and running of 8 multi-sectoral Task Teams across the office, including on Adolescents
 - Leading multi-sectoral proposal development teams, including for a USD 50 million programme on health-system strengthening

10/07 - 06/10

Programme Analyst (P2)

International Labour Organization, United Nations

Dar es Salaam, TANZANIA

Responsibilities:

- Development of **gender mainstreaming strategies** and provision of **technical assistance on gender equality promotion** with focus on social protection and women’s economic empowerment, including the development of research methodologies, training materials;
- **Programme design and implementation** of a USD 625,000 programme on social protection for women and improvement of working conditions of health care workers in Tanzania as part of a joint UN programme entitled Maternal and Newborn Mortality Reduction;
- **Focal Point for Evaluations** responsible for coordinating programme and project evaluations of ILO programmes/projects in Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania, including for:
- **Programme development** of ILO country programmes in Tanzania, Uganda, Somalia, and the East African Community including results-based planning / logical framework development and development of monitoring and evaluation plans
- **Chairperson** of UN Tanzania Human Rights Group

04/07 – 09/07

Consultant - International Development, Gender, Human Rights

Clients included: Cordaid, International Cocoa Initiative.

Brussels, BELGIUM

Responsibilities

- **Research, analysis, evaluations, writing** on developments in EU development and human rights policy with focus on women’s and children’s rights and anti-terrorism legislation
- Development and implementation of resource mobilisation and **policy advocacy strategies** towards all EU Institutions, other OEC/DAC donors and non-traditional funding sources (private sector) on gender equality promotion, child labour elimination, and safeguarding civil liberties in anti-terrorism legislation
- Trainer / Facilitator **on EU resource mobilisation and advocacy strategies including for the Dalit Solidarity Fund**

10/04 – 03/07

Project and Programme Manager - Women's and Children's Rights

Europe External Policy Advisors (non-profit consultancy)

Brussels, BELGIUM

Responsibilities:

- **Research, analysis, writing** on current developments in EU development and human rights policy (including OECD/DAC donors' policies) with focus on women's and children's rights and aid effectiveness
- Conduct organisational **gender audits** including for:
 - Client: Oxfam Netherlands
 - Task: Desk-based research, interviews and focus group discussion with Oxfam Netherlands staff; data analysis and writing of gender audit report
 - Date of assignment: 04/2005 – 06/2005
- **Trainer/Facilitator** on EU gender and development policies; resource mobilisation; and advocacy strategies for NGOs and UN Agencies; including for:
 - Client: Karat Coalition of Women's Rights NGOs and INGOs in New EU Member States
 - Tasks: Development of training materials and delivery of training on EU development policy influencing and resource mobilisation
 - Date of assignment: 06/2006
- **EU proposal development on gender equality** on behalf of NGOs and UN Agencies, including for:
 - **Client: UNIFEM**
 - Donor and budget: European Commission; 3,000,000 EUR
 - Task: Development of full proposal on the promotion of gender equality in the context of new aid modalities such as general budget support and sector-wide approaches
 - Date of assignment: 10/2004 – 03/2007

EDUCATION

2011 - 2015	PhD International Relations <i>London School of Economics and Political Science</i> <u>Title:</u> Are multilateral aid organisations more likely to be driven by ethical considerations than their bilateral counterparts?	London, UK
2003 - 2004	MA International and Comparative Legal Studies (Human Rights) DISTINCTION School of Oriental and African Studies	London, UK
1999 - 2003	BA International Relations and French 1st CLASS (Hons) University of Kent at Canterbury	Canterbury, UK
2001 - 2002	Diplôme d'Administration de Politique Internationale (Erasmus Year) DISTINCTION <i>Université Pierre Mendès-France</i>	Grenoble, FRANCE
1997-1999	International Baccalaureate <i>United World College of the Adriatic</i>	Duino, ITALY