

Talents in Justice Innovation

# Persons to Watch

2018





## Introduction by Wilfried De Wever



In the last two years, the HiiL Justice Accelerator has focused more on justice startups than on justice innovators in the broad sense of the word. These startups are complementary teams with the skills to deliver access to justice while building a sustainable venture. But startups are not enough. They are certainly not alone. Millions of individuals and a wide array of institutions are working hard towards making a difference for justice every day.

We decided to give a small group of extraordinary individuals some well deserved recognition this year and launched a Call for Talent for justice innovation. After all, the individual change makers are just as crucial as the startups we have come to serve. We assessed more than 200 individuals from more than 40 countries and believe these 10 selected individuals may become the new Justice Leaders. We need individual bridge builders to carry justice forward, into new spaces and into the new realities of tomorrow. We need people who inspire action and in return, they need us. This diverse list contains people from diverse backgrounds with a legal, communication, education, technology or research focus. It contains people tackling new challenges triggered by climate change, migration and political, technological and cultural changes. It has become a shortlist of people approaching the same problem from very different angles, and we are honored to have come to know them. We hope that by giving you access to them, you will have the courage to reach out.

Sometimes building access to justice starts as simple as that, one hello at a time.

Wilfried

Head Justice Accelerator - HiiL

# Talents in Justice Innovation



Dave McMahon



Bituen Hidalgo



Christina Moreno



Dmytro Koval



Deena Newaz



Pheona Wall



Victor Mwago



Kanan Dhru



Erica Emdon



Yvonne Mumbua



Where do you fit in?

A black and white portrait of Kanan Dhru, a woman with long, wavy hair, smiling. She is wearing a white top. The background consists of dense foliage.

“In a gentle way, you shake the world” said Gandhi.  
Kanan believes that in her own way, she is changing  
the society around her – one step at a time!

**Kanan Dhru**

Kanan has been active in **judicial reform in India** for the past 8 years and has vast experience with legal technology and innovation. She has been exposed to **justice inequalities** that are, unfortunately, all too present. Her recent initiatives in the field of accessible justice and innovation have included the founding of LawToons, a cartoon series illustrating the law and legal rights of individuals through graphics in order to make them easier to understand, and LawForMe, a software solution and mobile app to help guide common legal queries. Kanan is excited to scale both LawToons and LawForMe, as well as to continue to use **innovative legal technology design** to help access to justice. She has also become much more active as a **teacher** recently and is excited to support the eco-system of younger, legal startups. By mentoring them she may be able to ensure a smoother trajectory to growth.

**Laws must be made simple for people to understand them and for legal empowerment to truly take form.**

Reach out to me if you...

- are interested in making comics on laws!
- want to create design tools for legal awareness.
- build stories and narratives for legal empowerment.
- want to use technology and design in disseminating legal information.

 @kanandhru

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# Erica Emdon

Nelson Mandela said .... “to be free is not merely to cast off one’s chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others.” I hope that I can live up to these words, and that all my work makes a contribution.

From South Africa, Erica has worked in the justice arena all her working life. She is now the national Director of ProBono.Org - a South African not-for-profit online platform dedicated to creating access to justice for the disadvantaged. She has worked with a vast array of professionals and people in the justice sector, including legal academics, legal professionals, legal NGO’s, law students, civil society groups, governmental agencies and donors. Her ability to **build relationships** with various societal figures fuels her drive to improve access to justice for the many. Erica now wants to extend and innovate the model of **ProBono.Org** by digitising it. Creating a sustainable model would allow for it to extend beyond the boundaries of one organisation. Erica confidently envisions its use in fellow countries with few legal resources and vast unmet legal needs. Her vast experience and networks will certainly prove valuable in further innovating and enabling the journey to access to justice across Africa.

I hope to investigate a wide variety of technological mechanisms to make access to justice and lawyers real to poor, vulnerable and impoverished people; and to find ways to implement the best, most cost efficient and accessible option.

Reach out to me if you believe technology can be used in a creative and innovative way to make impoverished, vulnerable and poor people gain access to justice.

 @EricaEmdon

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# Bituen Hidalgo



Originally from the Philippines, Bituen is motivated by her first-hand experience of an inaccessible justice system. Now based in the Netherlands for numerous years, she is very much aware of what is lacking in her home country's system, and is committed to using her network and expertise for improving justice issues. Blending her **financial, technology and law knowledge**, Bituen is a highly motivated individual who draws inspiration from both her personal and professional background for solving social justice problems. She has extensive **consultancy experience** from advising numerous startups on their business models and financial opportunities, which merges conductively with her active work on justice and **sustainable development projects**. Bituen is keen to put her banking background to good use by supporting investment readiness for justice innovations or by helping to set up justice investment funds where needed.

Connecting justice innovators to the right financing means and the right investors to create a more inclusive and accessible means to attaining justice.

Reach out to me for advice on getting investor ready, brainstorm your business model and finetune your financial model.

 @BituenH

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# Dmytro Koval

Dedicated to the idea of strengthening the capability of national justice systems in dealing with international crimes.

Dmytro firmly believes that where justice is not impartial or fair, **democracy and peace** are threatened. For Dmytro, since embarking on his legal studies, **justice symbolises the last resort** to protect democratic values, peaceful transition and human rights. Working as a legal professional in Ukraine, he has actively pursued avenues leading to the improvement of the justice system around the country. He worked for various stakeholders in the **Ukrainian justice system**, including private and national institutions, as well as for various NGO's. Dmytro's professional experience focuses on how the justice system could be improved and how the knowledge about the international criminal law could be disseminated. His academic research, his practical experiences as an entrepreneur and his legal professional know-how mean that he understands the challenges faced when pursuing an efficient, accessible justice system. Dmytro is very much aware of the international standards, networks and connections necessary to achieve it. Equipped with the sociological tools that allow him to understand how justice ideas work on the ground, he strives relentlessly towards building more peaceful corners in the world one step at a time.

**The proper communication of the courts decisions to the public is no less important than the impartiality and fairness during their adoption. Courts are very important mechanisms of the collective memory formation.**

Reach out to me if you also think that no peace is possible without justice and that only innovative educational technologies, including in teaching of international criminal law, may improve national and international justice systems.

>>> [in](#)



# Dave McMahon

As co-executive director of Dismas House, Dave has spearheaded multiple innovative housing and legal initiatives for homeless **former prisoners** in the USA to ensure their healthy re-entry into society. Public institutions working with offenders generally only focus on public safety and prison upkeep. This means that **positive re-entry strategies** are often left to communities to develop. Working with a devoted and innovative team, Dave's initiatives range from a residential 35 acre organic farm where resident former prisoners operate a farm business while working on recovery to BAR None, a legal service for prisoners and their families serving New England second largest city, to a Brandeis evaluated reentry modality (WISR) funded by the Health Foundation. Dave helped lead his state's effort for the Restorative Justice Act and served as part of a steering committee for better societal re-entry policy. He continues to **campaign for policy changes**, aiming to improve the equity of the US justice system, and hopes to spread his model of building community with former inmates across the world.

We face challenges in the United States as we deal with a regressive national approach to criminal justice and a return to the failed "War on Drugs." We must work together to challenge disproven criminal justice methodology, focus instead on moving forward by building healthy environments for prisoner reentry, on advocating for a policy approach to sentencing for youth that moves away from incarceration, and on building an infrastructure that allows for innovation in housing, treatment, and employment for offenders.

**I believe in the power of redemption, and that we have a duty as a society to restore broken communities by embracing people in need of help on their journey home.**

Reach out to me to support our work of housing, prisoner reentry, building green and sustainable low-income housing, and developing new policy approaches to reverse the war on drugs.

 @DavMcMahon

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A black and white portrait of Christina Moreno, a woman with long, wavy hair, looking slightly to the right. An orange geometric shape is overlaid on the top left of the image, containing her name in white text.

# Christina Moreno

What we do for ourselves dies with us, but what we do for others remains forever. Before it's too late, let's innovate.

Based in the Netherlands but originally from the U.S., Christina is working towards justice for **refugee and migrant women and girls**.

Part of Christina's motivation derives from her experience as a limited license attorney during her final year of law school. Through that experience, she saw how the inequality of accessibility to justice in the face of income sparsity demonstrated the failings of justice systems.

Her research into the **legal inequalities** experienced by refugees and migrants propels her current work, but her own experiences in the U.S. as a young teen mother facing the justice system also contribute to her drive. Her strong platform for her future work stem from her professional experience as a communication and legal professional. Once part of HiIL, her network of professionals focused on innovation grew.

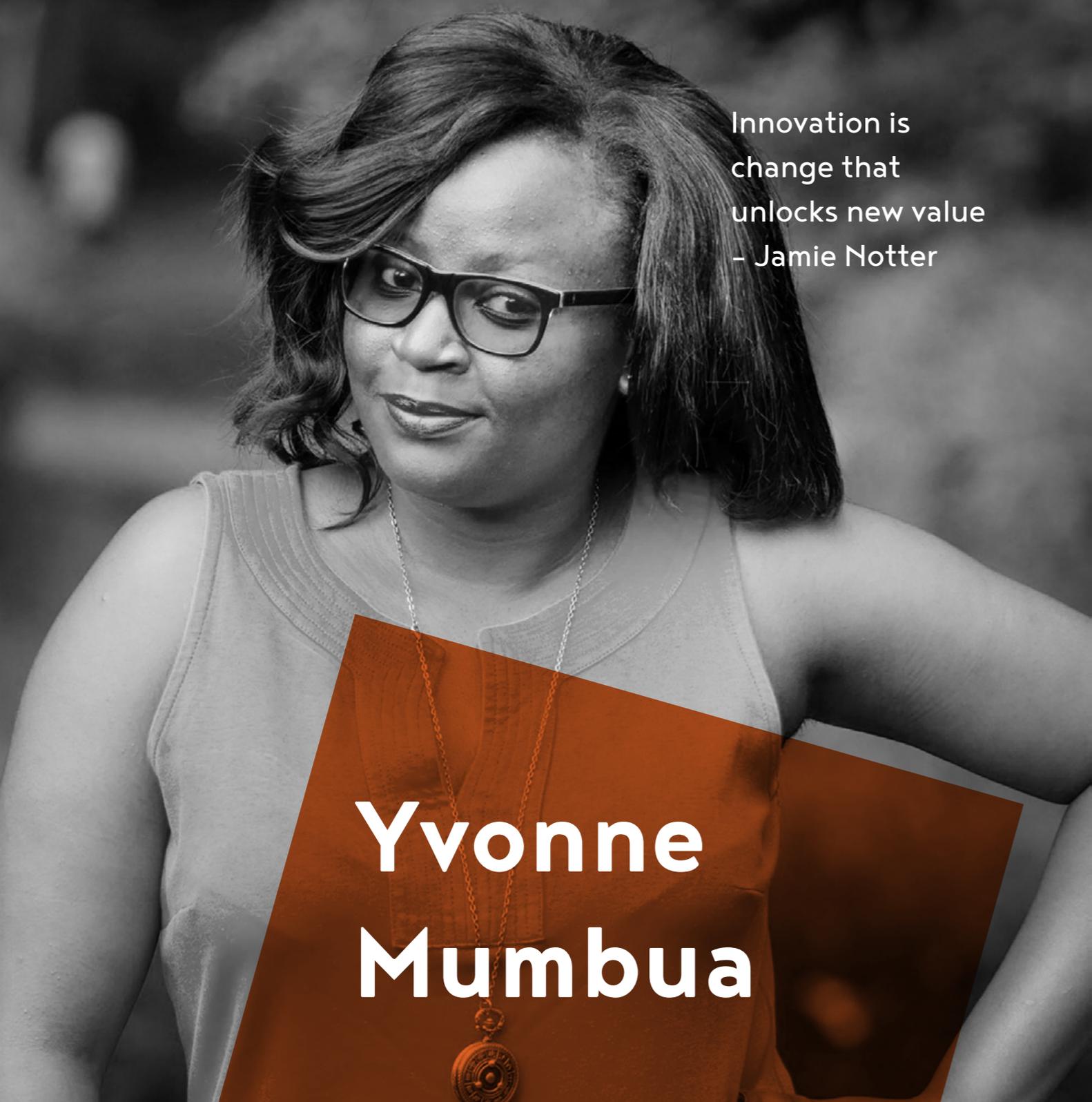
In 2017, Christina founded She Matters, a registered foundation working towards the **socio-economic empowerment** of refugee and migrant women and girls. This is just one example of the exciting work Christina is accomplishing for inclusive access to justice through the use of her network, as well as her professional and personal experiences.

In moving towards 2020, let's start rethinking what we always held to be true. Let's dare to ask, "What if?". Today, we know that women and girls make up about half of the refugee and migrant population worldwide. Their empowerment is the key to economic growth, political stability and social transformation. But this is not possible without justice innovation.

Reach out to me if you want to join us on our journey to empower refugee and migrant women and girls to build their social and economic capital, boost their self-confidence, and ultimately become leaders in their homes, businesses and communities.

 @christin\_moreno

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Innovation is  
change that  
unlocks new value  
- Jamie Notter

# Yvonne Mumbua

Yvonne is an up-and-coming **Software Engineer** professional from Kenya. For her, justice is a fundamental concern in all social organizations and is deeply rooted in human nature. As a design thinker, Yvonne is motivated by **empathy**. Her mindset is human-centered; collaborative; experimental - essential to bring justice forward. With these skills, she is able to understand the existing justice system and opportunities for innovations. Deep empathy helps her as a **design thinker** to customize access to justice with regards to the stakeholders involved. Entering the field of **paralegal work** to help people in the justice system is her future aspiration. She's hoping to improve lives, one line of code at a time.

Spread love as thick as you would nutella.  
Throw kindness around like confetti.

Reach out to me if you see what everyone sees  
but thinks what nobody does to innovate inclusive  
solutions that will improve access to justice.

 @MsMumbua

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# Victor Mwago

With the maturity in current technology solutions and artificial intelligence comes better access to justice.

Entrepreneur, legal professional and Masters student Victor is motivated to **bridge the gap between law and technology**. He shapes Africa's tech-innovation landscape from Nairobi, Kenya, by introducing the advantages of technology to law firms, the Law Society and citizens alike. For Victor, access to justice is a critical pillar of poverty reduction and sustainable development. The main challenge to overcome is **Kenya's justice system**. It can be strapped for cash, chronically bureaucratic and in some cases even breed inefficiency. Victor launched Sheria-Soft LPM, an award winning cloud-based **law practice management platform** to help law firms, legal departments, and independent law practitioners integrate their day to day administrivia into an intuitive, user-friendly, and affordable solution. Built with simplicity and ease of use in mind, Sheriasoft LPM helps users eliminate instances of human errors in all aspects of law practice, and improve collaboration.

For Victor, building a successful business is key but he also wants to give back to his community. That is what keeps him going. As John Paul DeJoria said, "Success unshared is failure". He has dedicated a certain percentage of profits to the Advocates Benevolent Fund, an initiative under the Law Society of Kenya that seeks to help the dependants of deceased lawyers.. Victor wants to make sure that technology becomes integrated into our lives as a useful tool for justice rather than another problem to deal with.

**Innovation starts when you understand that no matter how advanced you are, you still need to learn.**

Partner with me to bring an affordable solution towards better law practice management and to contribute towards nurturing the next crop of tech lawyers.

 @Sheria\_Soft

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Creating a multisectoral and multistakeholder platform to build the resilience and capacity of climate change vulnerable communities to better plan and adapt.

Deena  
Newaz



Considering the lack of justice for vulnerable groups worldwide, Deena cites enforced silence and lack of political will as the greatest barriers to access to justice. After field research on injustices worldwide, with a particular focus on **sexual violence** in Bangladesh, Deena is currently Program Manager at WISE (World Innovation Summit for Education) in Qatar. This experience enables a nexus to develop between her academic knowledge, fieldwork research and contacts in governments and NGOs, a great basis to drive positive change for justice. She has also worked on the forced migration challenge with a focus on Greece. Deena can build effective justice initiatives through her practical experience of both **leveraging refugee's skills** as well as creating an **engaged community of stakeholders** who have access to information and resources. As environmental shifts and migration become ever growing challenges for humankind, we will need ever more innovative solutions and we will need to **educate for justice**. Deena's experience and expertise will be needed.

Climate change action must take an inclusive turn by recognizing the innovations that are already out there, in particular those led by women. By building their capacity and providing resources, we can ensure the scalability of local solutions to yield similar results across other regions.

Reach out to me if you want to collaborate to research, raise awareness and/or build solutions to address climate change migration and advocate for gender justice in this context.

 @Dan29deena

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# Pheona Wall

There should be no injustice that you come across that should stand its ground in the wake of your passion and creativity. Be a voice for the voiceless and a valiant advocate for the oppressed. Proverbs 31:9-10

Pheona is one of the beating hearts of Uganda's legal practice. She started her career developing games to educate children and women about their legal rights and responsibilities as part of Legal Aid. As Secretary to the **Law Society**, she has championed the formation of rule of law clubs in schools all over Uganda to promote Juvenile Justice and Constitutionalism. She is also active in the Uganda Christian Lawyers Fraternity which run legal aid clinics all over the country. As a young advocate, she worked with the National Association of Broadcasters to fight for media freedoms and justice reforms in the broadcasting sector.

Pheona is the Head Legal in a utility that employs over 3000 employees and requires different ways of accessing justice everyday. Currently, she is involved in lobbying for **legal aid** law reform and the creation of a legal aid fund from Government and other stakeholders.

As a former head of PR in Airtel, she sponsored the launch of several smart applications and promoted Internet penetration among the youth. She excels in idea development, problem identification and sponsor acquisition. In addition, she has great lobbying skills and a good relationship with the ICT Community as a member of the ICT Association of Uganda. Thanks to a former role as PR Director of the PR Association of Uganda, she is in a **pivotal position** with most brands in the country.

Pheona's dream is to use her influence and lobbying skills to see **Law Societies** all over the developing world providing legal aid as a key CSR program in partnership with their governments starting with her own country Uganda.

Reach out to me if you ache to be the change you want to see. Join me if you are FAT (Faithful Available and Teachable) and you want to walk the talk of justice.

 @PheonaWall

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