

Ms. Lakshmi Puri

Acting Head of UN WOMEN since 26 March 2013

Ms. Lakshmi Puri, a former diplomat from India was appointed as Assistant Secretary-General for UN Women in March 2011. In this position Ms. Puri is responsible for the leadership and management of the Bureau supporting intergovernmental bodies, United Nations coordination and external relations. She also serves as one of the two Deputies to UN Women Executive Director Michelle Bachelet.

Ms. Lakshmi Puri has more than 37 years experience in economic and development policy-making as well as in political, peace and security, humanitarian and human rights–related diplomacy. More than twenty years of these have been in relation to the United Nations system. She has been actively involved in pioneering efforts to analyse and advocate positive linkages between economic development and gender equality. She has worked on ensuring inclusion of a gender perspective in trade investment, migration and labour mobility, financial flows, environment and climate change, energy, agriculture and food security, and access to essential services, among other issues. Ms. Puri held the rank of Permanent Secretary of the Government of India, was Ambassador of India to Hungary and accredited to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

FLAVIA PANSIERI

United Nations Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights

Flavia Pansieri was appointed United Nations Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights on 15 March 2013.

In the past 30 years she has held a number of increasingly responsible positions in a number of UN system agencies and in various countries and headquarters locations. Most recently, Ms. Pansieri served as the Executive Coordinator of the UN Volunteers (UNV) Programme, from February 2008 to December 2012. Prior to joining UNV, she served as the United Nations Resident Coordinator and Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Yemen (September 2004 – January 2008).

Ms. Pansieri started her UN career in 1983 with UNDP in China, where she was responsible for the UNV and TOKTEN (Transfer of Knowledge Through Expatriate Nationals) programmes, as well as for projects in the energy sector. She continued with UNDP in Bangladesh (1987 – 1990) and Myanmar (1990 – 1993), followed by a posting to Laos as Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), and thereafter from 1995 to 1998 at UNODC Headquarters in Vienna directing, planning and evaluating activities.

As the Deputy Executive Director of the United Nations Fund for Women (UNIFEM) in New York (1998 – 2001), she engaged in promoting women’s economic, social and political participation and in raising awareness about gender equality issues. Before taking up the Resident Coordinator / Resident Representative position in Yemen, she was in charge of the Country Division of the Regional Bureau for Arab States at UNDP, providing guidance and support to programme activities in the various countries of the Arab region.

Ms. Pansieri is an Italian national with a doctoral degree in Philosophy from Milan University, and one in Chinese Language and Literature from Venice University. She is a fluent speaker of English, German, French, Spanish, Chinese and Italian.

Amanda Khozi Mukwashi - Profile

Chief, of the Volunteer Knowledge and Innovation Section

Amanda Mukwashi joined the United Nations Volunteer (UNV) programme in December of 2012 where she currently works as Chief, of the Volunteer Knowledge and Innovation Section (VKIS). She holds a first degree in law from the University of Zambia and a postgraduate master's degree in International Economic Law from the University of Warwick, UK.

Ms. Mukwashi has pursued a career in International Development, working towards the eradication of poverty and combating inequalities and injustices, in both the public and voluntary sector. As Women in Business Coordinator, she worked for the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), leading the work on women's rights and trade in the region.

She was instrumental in setting up the department in COMESA that now works to further economic empowerment for women in trade in Eastern and Southern Africa region and the Federation of Women in Business in Eastern and Southern Africa which is now based in Malawi.

Having gained significant experience on the policy level and on the need to develop women's capacity in decision making, Ms. Mukwashi joined a UNFPA supported programme in Zambia on Gender, Population and Development. Moving to the United Kingdom in 1998, she continued her work on women's rights addressing issues of relative poverty and the marginalization of women from ethnic minorities in the UK. This was important in building her understanding of inequalities and exclusion within communities and countries that are developed.

In 2002, she joined Skillshare International, an international NGO working in Africa and South Asia on issues relating to social, economic and political justice. In her role as a member of the senior leadership team, Ms. Mukwashi championed the organization's social change agenda leading on re-positioning the organization to engage with social transformation beyond individual and organizational capacity development. There she advocated for gender issues, which led to the adoption of gender as a key thematic area for all the work of the organization.

In 2011, Ms. Mukwashi joined VSO as Director of Policy where she took on the responsibilities for (i) monitoring and evaluation; (ii) research and global advocacy; and (iii) programme effectiveness and innovation as well as partnerships for development.

She has been an active member of the Akina Mama wa Afrika Board, a pan-African women's rights organization that was set up by young African women in the diaspora, to be led by African women and for African women to advocate for and improve women's capacities for leadership and decision. Ms. Mukwashi has in the past also contributed her time as a board member of Bond (British Overseas NGOs in Development Network) and several other boards that further the cause of gender justice. Lastly, it is worth mentioning that outside of her work life, Amanda has also contributed to training and building the capacity of young African women in leadership.

Raphael Crowe

Senior Gender Specialist with the Gender, Equality and Diversity Branch, Working Conditions and Equality Department, International Labour Office, Geneva, Switzerland.

Raphael Crowe is Senior Gender Specialist with the Gender, Equality and Diversity Branch, Working Conditions and Equality Department, International Labour Office, Geneva, Switzerland.

His responsibilities include liaison with ILO constituents (governments, employers' and workers' organizations) and their representatives on the ILO Governing Body and at the International Labour Conference. Mr. Crowe provides support to the Office with UN relations, UN Inter-agency activities, working with UN Women and is the focal point for UN SWAP, UN Global Compact.

Mr. Crowe provides technical support for ILO Offices in Europe, Central Asia and Asia Pacific. He is the contact person in the Branch on International Labour Standards, the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work as well as with employers' and workers' activities. He is the focal point on Corporate Social Responsibility, Multinational enterprises, ILO Better Work programme, labour relations issues, women's economic empowerment and women's entrepreneurship development.

Before his assignment in Geneva, Mr. Crowe worked for the ILO Bureau for Employers' Activities in Asia for ten years. He was posted in New Delhi and in Manila and was responsible for providing advisory services and support to employer constituents in South Asia, and in South East Asia and the Pacific.

Prior to joining the ILO, Mr. Crowe was Chief Executive of the Northern Territory Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Darwin, Australia, providing policy and technical and advocacy support to the business community. He represented Australian employers at regional, national and international levels. Mr Crowe is married with three children.