

Maryam Uwais, MFR is the current Special Advisor to President Muhammadu Buhari on Social Investments. She is a legal practitioner and human rights activist with over 36 years cognate law practice experience including the Kano State Ministry of Justice, the Nigerian Law Reform Commission and the Central Bank of Nigeria.

In her function, Mrs. Uwais is also the initiator and coordinator of the At-Risk-Children Programme, a new presidential initiative aimed to bring basic social services and care to the approximately 13 Million out-of-school children across Nigeria. In the context of this work and as part of the package of services we have been working with Mrs Uwais and her team towards integrating the Line Up Live Up sports-based life skill programme into this package of services with a view to making children less susceptible to drug use, violent behavior and crime.

Mrs Uwais studied at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, was admitted to the Nigerian Bar in 1981 and obtained an LLM in 1985. She was awarded a certificate in Advanced Practice and Procedure in 1985 and Legal Drafting in 1989, from the Nigeria Institute for Advanced Legal Studies.

Mrs Maryam Uwais, MFR served as a Principal Partner of Wali Uwais & Co, an Abuja-based law firm. Before then, she had served on the Council of the National Human Rights Commission, where she also worked as Special Rapporteur on Child Rights; the Board of the Justice Research Institute, the Kukah Centre as well as the Coalition Against Tobacco, amongst others. She also served on state, federal and continental committees such as The Kano State Almajiri Committee, President Goodluck Johnathan's Presidential Advisory Council, The Northern Nigeria Governor's Committee on Reconciliation, Security Healing, as well as the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child for five years.

She founded the Isa Wali Empowerment Initiative in December 2009, which targets the conditions of women and children in education, healthcare and empowerment.

Maryam Uwais has also worked as a consultant to the Open Society Initiative for West Africa, UNICEF, the World Bank, and DfID. She has written and published several articles on economic and social rights, interfaith dialogue, child justice administration and good governance.

She was before her appointment a Non-Executive Director and Member of Board of Directors of Stanbic IBTC Holdings PLC. She was also a member of the Editorial Board of Thisday newspapers.

Awards and Recognitions

National Honour of Member of the Order of the Federal Republic (MFR) by President Goodluck Johnathan GCFR (2011)

The Outstanding Leadership Award for contributions to equity, justice and human rights in Nigeria, by the Business and Professional Women in Nigeria Association (2012)

An award by The Nigerian Human Rights Community in appreciation of contributions as Member of The African Union Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (2013).

One of the five McNulty Prize Laureates at the Aspen Institute, Colorado, following the activities of the Isa Wali Empowerment Initiative (2014)

National Human Rights Commission Awardee for 'Outstanding Contributions in the Advancement of the Rights of Women and Children in Nigeria (2015)

Thisday Awards for women who have distinguished themselves in the service of Nigeria (2012)

Humanitarian of the Year Award from the International Women's Society (2011)

Publications/Papers/Presentations

Prepared the working paper on Justice Sector Reform, (September 2001) circulated to stakeholders nation-wide, (for support and responses) as the initiative of the civil society and the NBA

Supervised the preparation of a handbook on the CRC and CEDAW, for the utilisation of law enforcement agencies, and in particular, the training of police and prison officers on how to treat children and women in their custody, which effort was supported by UNICEF

Education:

- Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Kaduna State – LL. B Hons, (1980)
- Nigerian Law School, V.I Lagos – BL (1981)
- Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Kaduna State – LL.M (1985)
- Nigerian Institute for Advanced Legal Studies – Certificate in Legal Drafting, (1989)
- Nigerian Institute for Advanced Legal Studies- Certificate in Advanced Practice and Procedure, (1995)
- College of Law, England and Wales – International Practice Diploma (IBA) in International Business Organisations, (2003)
- Associate, Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (UK) (2006)
- Postgraduate Diploma in Islamic Banking and Insurance (2009)