

Dr. Annemarie Middelburg

Change Accelerator for Women's Rights

annemarie@right-to-rise.com

www.right-to-rise.com



I am an independent consultant and lecturer with a background in human rights law and 15+ years of experience in women's rights, particularly Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting. My purpose is to ensure that all girls and women have equal opportunities to make the most of their lives and talents.

I am a recognized global expert with a vast and diverse network, known for delivering work that stands out for its consistency, high quality, and thoroughness. I work for the United Nations, European Union, consultancy firms, universities, and many international and local NGOs.

The combination of my academic background, international field experience, and interdisciplinary approach allows me to deliver solutions that work on paper and in practice. It has also made me develop the skills necessary to connect with almost anyone: from goal-oriented CEOs to shy youth activists.



Work *Experience*

2015 - Present

Founder & Director - Right to Rise (formerly Middelburg Human Rights Law Consultancy), the Netherlands.

Right to Rise is an independent consultancy firm specializing in gender-based violence, particularly Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting. We deliver solutions and ideas that are evidence-based, realistic, pragmatic, and actionable. All the services we provide seek to assist girls and women to rise above hardship and lead better lives.

Right to Rise is a member of the following networks:



RESEARCH: I conduct qualitative and quantitative interdisciplinary research for UN agencies, consultancy firms, research institutes, international and local NGOs. Innovative data-collection methods combined with creative vision allow me to deliver high-quality reports, policy papers, evaluations, and academic publications. I have participated as lead researcher and core team member of several large projects. I have also been appointed a national researcher (the Netherlands) for gender equality studies by the European Commission.

EDUCATION: I design and lecture courses (Bachelor & Master level) in international public law, human rights law, legal philosophy, research methods, and critical thinking at the University of Amsterdam, VU University, and PPLE College. I also supervise students with their thesis and give guest lectures at universities worldwide.

PROGRAM DESIGN: I develop program strategies and Theories of Change to promote gender equality and prevent violence against women and girls. We assist UN agencies, the European Union, governments, international and local NGOs in defining long-term goals and use backward mapping to identify necessary preconditions and activities to affect change. As part of this process, we conduct baseline studies, mid-term reviews, and M&E to measure progress towards outcomes.

PUBLIC SPEAKING: I present Right to Rise's work at national & international conferences, where I'm often invited to deliver keynote speeches, participate in panel discussions, present at UN expert meetings, and moderate & facilitate sessions.

EXPERT STATEMENTS: I develop expert statements and act as an expert witness to support girls and women seeking asylum on FGM/C-related grounds.



2011 – 2016

Ph.D. Researcher - International Victimology
Institute Tilburg (INTERVICT), Tilburg University,
the Netherlands.

My Ph.D. research addressed the practice Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting from a human rights law perspective. My work intended to assess whether states comply with the international human rights framework designed to eliminate the practice or not. My interdisciplinary research (including law, political science, anthropology) involved a 5-month empirical study in Senegal.

I conducted interviews with over 50 respondents at the government level, international organizations, and NGOs during my time there.

The result of this work was my dissertation '*Empty Promises? Compliance with the Human Rights Framework in relation to Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting in Senegal.*'

Education



Languages

Mother tongue: Dutch

Other languages: English, French and German

Self-assessment	Understanding		Speaking		Writing
	Listening	Reading	Spoken interaction	Spoken production	
<i>European level</i>					
Dutch	C2	C2	C2	C2	C2
English	C2	C2	C2	C2	C2
French	C1	C1	B2	B2	B2
German	B2	B2	B2	B2	B2

Board *Memberships*

2024 – present

Chair, Supervisory Board VSO
Netherlands & Board Member, VSO
International, Utrecht, The Netherlands.

2017 – 2024

Member, Pax Christi Council, Utrecht,
The Netherlands.

2016 – 2024

Member, Advisory Board Hope for Girls &
Women, Serengeti, Tanzania.

2012 – 2014

Chair, PhD Council Tilburg Law School,
Tilburg, The Netherlands.

2010 – 2015

Board Member Mukomeze Foundation,
Kigali, Rwanda.

2010 – 2011

Executive Production Editor, Tilburg
Law Review, Tilburg, The Netherlands.

2007 – 2008

Board Member, Students Tilburg
Amnesty International, The Netherlands.

Early Career *Experience*

2013 – 2014

In-house researcher, Netherlands
Embassy in Dakar, Senegal.

2008 – 2011

Research Assistant, Tilburg Law
School, the Netherlands.

2009 – 2011

Founder, School 4 Kenya,
Mpeketoni, Kenya.

2008 – 2009

Intern, Netherlands Embassy in
Tel Aviv, Israel.

2007 – 2008

Volunteer, World Servants,
Sidakatte, India.



Selected *Publications*

- End FGM European Network (2021). Support services for survivors of Female Genital Mutilation in Europe. Position Paper, available [here](#) and infographic available [here](#).
- Orchid Project (2021). A gender-transformative approach to ending female genital cutting: Changing harmful gender and power imbalances. Policy Discussion Paper, available [here](#).
- Kawous R., van den Muijsenbergh M.E.T.C., Geraci D., van der Kwaak A., Leye E., Middelburg M.J., et al. (2020). The prevalence and risk of Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting among migrant women and girls in the Netherlands: An extrapolation method. *PLoS ONE* 15(4): e0230919, available [here](#).
- Middelburg M.J. (2018). Case Note, UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC), I.A.M. (on behalf of K.Y.M.) v Denmark, communication No. 3/2016, CRC/C/77/D/3/2016, *Jurisprudentie Vreemdelingenrecht*, 2018/70, ve18000247, available [here](#).
- United Nations Population Fund (2018). Analysis of Legal Frameworks on Female Genital Mutilation in Selected Countries in West Africa. UNFPA Regional Office for West and Central Africa, available [here](#).
- Middelburg M.J., & Balta A.D (2016). Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting as a Ground for Asylum in Europe. *International Journal of Refugee Law* 28(3), 416-452, available [here](#).

For the full list of publications, click [here](#).

