

## 2018 Women PeaceMaker Peace Researchers



**Elizabeth Lacey**  
**(San Diego, United States)**

Elizabeth has contributed to the building of social cohesion and to the development of transitional justice and reconciliation processes with policy-makers, civil society leaders and artists in South Sudan, and to gender justice and reconciliation across Africa. She believes that a truly noble existence comprises of living for the sheer thrill of living; maintaining an objective honesty with oneself, and upholding an unconditional positive regard—illuminated by understanding and love—for all. Elizabeth has recently worked with local community-based organizations in South Sudan,

including managing Sawa Shabab peacebuilding radio drama for youth, Sama FM Community Radio, and Junub Games. Prior to that, she worked for the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation, where she assisted in developing and facilitating the work of the South Sudan Committee for National Healing, Peace and Reconciliation (CNHPR), as well as contributed to various other restorative justice processes, and assisted with the Transitional Justice Fellowship. She has also worked for the International Center for Transitional Justice, for the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the CNHPR as web developer, and as a teaching assistant at the African Gender Institute. Elizabeth holds a Masters Degree in Justice and Transformation from the University of Cape Town (UCT), where she conducted her research, "It Takes Two Hands to Clap: Conflict, Peacebuilding, and Gender Justice in Jonglei, South Sudan.



**Lela Akiashvili**  
**(Tbilisi, Republic of Georgia)**

Lela is a Global Development Specialist from Georgia. She comes to the U.S. with a decade of experience in programs (including in emergency setting), policy and advocacy, research, and non-formal education. Her work focuses on peacebuilding, conflict resolution, gender in development, human rights, SDGs, and community outreach.

Through years, Lela served at UNICEF, the Permanent Mission of Georgia to the UN, Save the Children US, the Prosecutor's Office, and several local not-for-profit organizations in the south Caucasus and Eastern Europe. She led programs

supporting internally displaced women leaders to rebuild war-torn communities through civic activism and economic empowerment; participated in peace negotiations; worked with the victims and witnesses of war, domestic violence and other violent crimes; promoted issues related to maternal and child health; was among champions researching women's property rights in Georgia; advocated for the pre-school education reform; and served as a trainer for local and internally displaced youth living in rural areas. Lela also served as a first-responder during the 2008 war between her home country of Georgia and Russia.

Lela has participated in numerous high-level peace negotiations. She represented Georgia at the OSCE regional conference on "Enhancing role of women mediators in OSCE region," served as a delegate at the UN High-level Political Forum, etc. Lela is a Fulbright and Muskie Scholar, holds a Master of Public Administration (MPA) from Texas A&M University, a Bachelor of Law (LLB) from Tbilisi State University and the University of Superior-Wisconsin (LLB).