

# Health Electrification Champions



This profile is part of a series sponsored by the Power Africa Health Electrification and Telecommunications Alliance (HETA) on inclusive champions for health facility electrification (HFE) in sub-Saharan Africa. In sharing these profiles, HETA aims to highlight health, electrification, and digital connectivity or telecommunications professionals in HETA countries who have helped accelerate electricity and digital access in healthcare facilities while also supporting the inclusion of women and youth.



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## Miquelina Menezes Julien

Miquelina Menezes Julien helped establish Mozambique's first renewable energy public institution in 1997, at time when renewables were not commonplace and neither private nor state companies were operating in the industry. She played a crucial role in training Mozambique's first generation of renewable energy specialists. Throughout her career, she has been a staunch advocate for the empowerment of women and young people. A former president of Fundo de Energia (FUNAE), Miquelina now works as an advisor at FDE.



### How did you come to work in the energy sector?

Previously, my experience centered around hydrocarbons and the mining sector. Transitioning to the energy sector represented more than just a career change; it symbolized my determination to explore new opportunities and break with established traditions. Women's presence in the sector was atypical, making my journey challenging yet incredibly rewarding. By accepting the challenge, I not only pursued my own professional growth, but also contributed to challenging stereotypes and promoting diversity in this dynamic environment.

My trajectory underscores the importance of embracing challenging opportunities, even when the landscape may seem less welcoming to certain professional profiles. In doing so, we broaden our own horizons and play an active role in building more inclusive and diversified work environments.



### What led you to focus on health facility electrification?

The decision to focus on electrifying healthcare facilities was driven by direct experiences while visiting communities in different regions of the country. Interacting with healthcare professionals and closely observing the conditions of health facilities illuminated the myriad challenges, ranging from the preservation of vaccines and medications to the seamless execution of daily activities, particularly during critical periods such as newborn nighttime deliveries. Ensuring that communities have reliable access to both electricity and water are fundamental elements for promoting health and sustainable development.

An achievement I am proud of is the successful electrification of Muxungwe Hospital. Lack of electricity was directly impacting essential services such as nighttime deliveries and other critical treatments, often conducted under the precariousness of candles or oil lamps. We prioritized electrifying vital areas, including the maternity ward, vaccine storage facilities, and emergency areas. This intervention significantly improved the quality of healthcare services provided to the community and had a direct impact on the safety and efficacy of procedures performed at night.

We also implemented a clean cooking process at the hospital, introducing improved stoves that enabled the conservation of wood and charcoal. This initiative contributed to energy efficiency while promoting sustainable practices, aligning with the commitment to enhance the overall health and well-being of the communities the hospital serves.



### What motivates you in your work?

Since I began dedicating myself to the renewable energy sector, I have developed a profound passion for the transformative possibilities that this field offers. The ability to positively impact communities by providing sustainable solutions—without constant concerns about maintenance costs—has been a significant catalyst for my commitment. I believe that by actively engaging in this sector, I am contributing not only to the transition to cleaner energy sources, but also to the improvement of people's well-being. This inspiring vision and the opportunity to make a difference every day are the elements that continue to drive my passion for this work.



### Do you have any advice for younger individuals pursuing a career in energy, health, or digital innovation?

My advice for early career professionals seeking to enter one of these sectors is to recognize the crucial role of young individuals in local development. Be willing to return to your communities, applying your knowledge and skills to bring about positive changes. Remember that commitment, passion, and a continual pursuit of learning are valuable characteristics for success in any of these fields.

I want to emphasize that each of us has a vital role and responsibility to contribute to the development of our country. Our individual experiences and perceptions shape how we approach the challenges and seize opportunities we face. I constantly remind myself that progress is not the sole responsibility of governments or large entities, but a collective journey we all must embark on. Each contribution, irrespective of its scale, holds the potential for significant influence. By collaborating and aligning our efforts towards common goals, we can truly drive positive change and build a more prosperous future for our communities.

**About HETA** | The Health Electrification and Telecommunications Alliance (HETA) is a USAID Global Development Alliance and Power Africa's flagship initiative for health facility electrification and digital connectivity in sub-Saharan Africa. Our mission is to catalyze public-private partnerships and sustainable business models that increase access to reliable, renewable energy and digital connections for 10,000 health facilities—vital improvements to support equitable access to life-saving care across the region. Together with diverse partners from the public, private, and social sectors, HETA is making it easier and less costly to invest in the systems that power healthcare and productive uses of energy. To learn more, please contact [HETA@abtglobal.com](mailto:HETA@abtglobal.com).