

**Biography of Irene Remi-Lekun Ogouma**  
**(updated November 15, 2011)**



Irene Remi-Lekun Ogouma is a Project Manager specialized in Peace and Security Community Development/Community Empowerment, Training and Capacity Building, Child Protection Issues and Gender initiatives in a post-conflict rehabilitation context. Her major interest is to deepen the linkages and dialogue between Field workers, Institutions (Universities and Educational organizations) and key Stakeholders toward community initiatives for a sustainable peace and development around the world.

Born on the 4<sup>th</sup> July 1966 in the Republic of Benin, a French speaking country in the west coast of Africa, Remi moved to the USA (Riverdale, New-York) the first time in July 1983 when her father served as the first Permanent Representative of Benin to the United Nations until (1982-1987). During that period she attended the Lycee Français de New York (equivalent of college) and obtained her Baccalaureat Français Serie A1 (option Philosophy & Mathematics) in June 1986. She proceeded to Ottawa-Ontario in Canada upon the return of her family to Benin in 1987 to complete her degrees in Business Administration (B.A) in 1990 and her Bachelor of Commerce with major in Marketing and minor in International Trade (B.Sc.) in 1991 both at the University of Ottawa Furthermore she completed in 1994, a Master Degree in Project Management (with emphasis on International Development) from the University of Quebec at Montreal in the province of Quebec.

Further to her graduate studies, Remi worked as Project Management Consultant at Hydro Quebec in Montreal –Canada for one year and moved back to Benin in 1995. For the next three years, Remi worked as a consultant in the context of a transitional government with both local organizations and international organizations working in Benin and other West Africa countries with focus on Business and Management skills development. In 1998 Remi moved from Benin to the United Kingdom to increase her immersion to the English language and culture in order to pursue her long lasting

International Development dream at world level and to expand her horizons. She spent 21 months in London prior to embarking on a new journey that took her to working in war zone in post conflict reconstruction and taking great interest in Civilian and Law enforcement ( Peacekeepers, police, Military observers, Borders controls, Intelligence etc..) collaboration initiatives toward Peace building in humanitarian context around the world.

Remi worked as Program Officer Monitoring-Analyst at the Early warning Department of the ECOWAS (Economic Community of the West African States) Commission from January 2007 to July 2008, served in Nairobi in 2003 as Capacity Building Coordinator within the United Nations Development Program Small Arms Reduction Program (UNDP/SARP) for the Great Lakes Region of Africa. She has also served in 2002 as Community Development and Community Service Officer for the United Nations High Commission for the Refugee in Sierra Leone where she focused on the developmental aspect of the reintegration of Child Soldiers and implementation of responses mechanisms toward the Gender-based-violence including sexual exploitation used as weapon of war. She has worked in 2000 as Development Project Manager and Gender Focal Point in the United Nations Transitional Authority for East Timor where she focused on monitoring the implementation of “Quick Impact Project” funded by the UN Trust Funds and Temporary Employment Projects funded by USAID.

Remi moved to Portland Oregon as a Legal Permanent Resident of USA in January 2002 and initiated several contacts with Universities and some non profit organizations and hope to avail her acquired experiences to benefit their activities in the Northwest Area of the USA. She has recently completed an educational short term assignment with the K-12 Portland Enrollment Office; she co-taught a Humanitarian Intervention Class with the International Affairs Department at Portland State University and is now working at collaborating with the Child and Family Studies Department also at PSU. While Remi is still exploring the various opportunities through which she could be employed in Portland, she strongly believes in getting involved in her neighborhood’s life. Remi is a well traveled citizen of the world; speaks French and English and some West African languages. She volunteered toward helping elders and toddlers through the Riverdale Neighborhood House in New York from 1985 to 1987, she has been a United Nations Volunteer, Volunteered at Match International in Canada 1989-1990 (Non-profit organizations dealing with domestic violence) and has also volunteered at Woodstock library in 2002 and Hollywood library in 2005. Furthermore she has been appointed by the Portland City Council to serve as Member of the Citizen Review Committee and Independent Police Review and was also selected by Mayor Porter as one of the 53 Citizen Ambassadors who engaged the city of Portland in the Vision PDX process. Remi is planning to provide few hours per month to assist elders and shelters dealing with Child abuse and domestic violence in Portland in the future. Remi like to walk, visit gardens, and spend time watching the waves of the sea in order to relax. She likes classical music, gourmet food and dance, visit to museums and spends extensive time keeping up with the state of the world and desiring Peace as needed. Remi is a generous compassionate human being in harmony with her environment. But she is not perfect also.