



# KEISHA EFFIOM

Author, Servant Leader, Global Development Expert

*Former USAID Mission Director, Rwanda & Burundi  
One of eight African American women globally to hold this role*

## BIOGRAPHY

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### 50-Word Bio

Keisha Effiom is a former USAID Mission Director for Rwanda and Burundi, one of only eight African American women globally to hold this position. Author of *I Said My Piece with Peace: Inside USAID's Final Days*, she is a servant leadership advocate, global development expert, and CEO of The Imara Advisory Group.

### 100-Word Bio

Keisha L. Effiom is a former United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Foreign Service Officer with 18 years of service across Sub-Saharan Africa. In July 2024, she was sworn in as USAID Mission Director for Rwanda and Burundi, one of only eight African American women to hold this position worldwide, overseeing a \$100M+ portfolio and more than 100 staff. When USAID was dismantled five months later, she led her teams through institutional collapse with grace, integrity, and servant leadership. Her debut memoir, *I Said My Piece with Peace*, tells that story. She is the CEO of The Imara Advisory Group, based in Johannesburg, South Africa.

### Full Bio

Keisha Lanai Effiom is a former United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Foreign Service Officer, international development expert, and servant leadership advocate with 18 years of service across Sub-Saharan Africa. In July 2024, she was sworn in by USAID Administrator Samantha Power as Mission Director for Rwanda and Burundi, the highest-ranking USAID positions overseas and one held by only eight African American women worldwide. She managed a \$100M+ portfolio across two nations, with more than 100 staff under her leadership and over \$2 billion in development funding stewarded across her career.

Five months after taking her oath, USAID was dismantled. Keisha led her teams through institutional collapse, advocating for staff, managing program transitions, and confronting an unprecedented human resources and policy crisis, while simultaneously navigating her own uncertain future. She did it with the servant leadership philosophy she had practiced for nearly two decades: lead with grace, fight for people, and choose integrity over survival.

Her debut memoir, *I Said My Piece with Peace: Inside USAID's Final Days, A Testament of Leadership When Everything Falls Apart* (Unmuted Press, March 2026), is a firsthand account of that experience. It has resonated globally with readers from South Africa to Dakar to Washington, DC.

A proud Howard University alumna, Keisha is now CEO and Co-Founder of The Imara Advisory Group, a strategic consulting firm based in Johannesburg, South Africa. She continues to build, advise, and lead, and to tell the truth about what leadership looks like when it's tested.

## AT A GLANCE

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<b>18 Years</b>	of USAID Foreign Service across Sub-Saharan Africa
<b>Mission Director</b>	Rwanda and Burundi, highest-ranking USAID position overseas
<b>1 of 8</b>	African American women globally to hold USAID Mission Director title

<b>\$2B+</b>	in development funding stewarded over career
<b>100+ Staff</b>	led through USAID institutional closure
<b>Howard University</b>	Distinguished alumna
<b>The Imara Advisory Group</b>	CEO and Co-Founder, Johannesburg, South Africa

## THE BOOK

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### ***I Said My Piece with Peace***

*Inside USAID's Final Days, A Testament of Leadership When Everything Falls Apart*

**Released:** March 2026 **Format:** Paperback & eBook

**Paperback:** [amazon.com/dp/B0GRR9V18X](https://amazon.com/dp/B0GRR9V18X) **eBook:** [books2read.com/u/bWD2X0](https://books2read.com/u/bWD2X0)

A firsthand account of leadership, loss, and resilience during the unprecedented dismantling of USAID. Not just a story about an institution, a story about what it costs to lead when everything is falling apart, and what it takes to rebuild when it does.

## SPEAKING TOPICS

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- Servant Leadership Under Fire: Leading Through Institutional Collapse
- When Giants Fall: Lessons in Resilience from USAID's Final Days
- Grace as a Leadership Strategy: How to Lead with Integrity When It Costs You
- The Human Cost of Policy: Public Service, Soft Power, and What We Lost
- Empowered Women Empower Women: Leadership, Legacy, and the People Who Hold Your Crown

## PODCAST APPEARANCES

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<b>SoftPower / FulStories Podcast</b>	<i>Christopher Wurst, host</i>
<b>Global Development Interrupted</b>	<i>Leah Petit, host recorded, airing soon</i>
<b>Kitchen Summits Podcast</b>	<i>Jeanine Munyeshuli, host</i>
<b>This May be a Bad Idea: Conversations on Bravery</b>	<i>Nicole Butts, host — April 2026</i>

## MEDIA AND BOOKING CONTACT

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