BIOGRAPHY

SHAKIRA CHOONARA

Dr Shakira Choonara is a multi award-winning public health practitioner, bold activist, and Operation Smile Ambassador for South Africa (SA). She currently serves as a Technical Support Specialist at the World Health Organization, supporting the development of the SRH-UHC Learning by Sharing Portal and the Working for Health Programme. She is a start-up entrepreneur and founder of a development consultancy firm.

At present, Dr Choonara is the incumbent Lancet Commissioner for Adolescent Health and Wellbeing and a NCD Child Young Leader. Dr Choonara previously served on the inaugural African Union Youth Council 2018-2020 and the AMREF Health Africa AHAIC Commission.

Dr Choonara is a recipient of a number of prestigious awards including being listed as the Mail and Guardian 50 Most Powerful Women in South Africa, Destiny Magazine's Most Powerful Woman under 40, 100 Influential Young Africans, Public Health Association of South Africa Emerging Practitioner, News 24' 100 Young Mandela's of the Future and the Woman of the Year in Health in SA. Dr Choonara attained her PhD (Public Health) at the age of 27 years, an Honours (Cum Laude) and Masters in Demography from the University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa.

> She is widely recognised for her work and experience as a researcher and advocacy specialist, focusing on health policy and systems research, specifically universal health coverage, gender equality, sexual and reproductive health rights, non-communicable diseases, HIV and youth development.

She is currently a Board Member of Youth Health Africa which focuses on youth, HIV and addressing unemployment in South Africa. As an all-rounder and dynamic individual, she is a yogi, also pursuing acting classes and recently launched her brand #TravelGuru on Instagram.

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