

RACHEL STROHM

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► Professional Summary

Social policy analyst with 15 years of experience managing large-scale policy evaluations in East, West, and Central Africa. Areas of interest: social assistance, social registries, urban poverty, evidence-informed policymaking.

Employment

Director, Social Policy Insights

Nairobi, Kenya and London, UK (2023-present)

- Founder of this research consultancy, which tracks the latest developments in social protection across East Africa (Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda)
- We produce accessible public-facing content on social protection, through platforms including policy briefs, newsletters, and social media

Associate Director of Social Protection, Innovations for Poverty Action

Nairobi, Kenya and London, UK (2020-2022)

- Managed a portfolio of 34 evaluations of social protection programmes in 18 countries, with a focus on cash transfers and the ultra-poor graduation model
- Led project development for new studies in Ghana, Rwanda, Uganda, and Zimbabwe
- Raised US\$5.5 million in committed funding for new evaluations
- Oversaw grant reporting and relationship management with donors including Wellspring Philanthropic Fund, the World Bank, and USAID

Board Chair, Mawazo Institute

Nairobi, Kenya and Kampala, Uganda (2018-2022)

- Recruited a diverse 9-person board with expertise in fundraising, financial and legal compliance, and higher education in East Africa
- Oversaw financial compliance in the US and Kenya, and backstopped finance operations
- Led strategic planning updates and CEO recruitment during a period of leadership transition

Chief Operating Officer, Mawazo Institute

Nairobi, Kenya (2017-2018)

- Co-founder (with Dr Rose Mutiso) of a non-profit which provides research funding and professional development to women doing PhDs at accredited African universities
- Raised US\$1.25 million in seed funding from individual donors and the Hewlett Foundation
- Designed Mawazo's PhD Scholars programme and oversaw its implementation, including the selection of the first cohort of grantees and management of the training programme
- Hired, on-boarded, and managed core program staff
- Managed the Institute's finances by creating annual budgets, implementing software backend for accounting and payroll, and developing financial controls for expenditures
- Liaised with external accountants and lawyers in the US and Kenya to ensure compliance with all tax and legal requirements in both countries, including annual audits

Research Manager, Innovations for Poverty Action

New Haven, CT, USA (2012-2013)

- Supervised more than 20 impact evaluations of financial inclusion and social protection programmes in the Dominican Republic, Ethiopia, Ghana, and Uganda
- Supported project staff on issues of research design, questionnaire development, survey software, data collection, statistical analysis, IRB compliance, and financial management

Research Intern, Innovations for Poverty Action

Tamale, Ghana (2010)

- Managed an evaluation of an index rainfall insurance policy for maize farmers
- Oversaw logistics and finances for a team of 40 surveyors interviewing 1100 respondents
- Audited surveyor performance and cleaned survey data in Stata

Client Assessment Fellow, FINCA International

Kinshasa, DR Congo (2009)

- Co-directed the baseline survey for an observational study examining whether Village Banking microloans raised clients' incomes, with a sample of 800 urban clients
- Translated questionnaire into French and conducted pilot interviews
- Hired, trained and managed surveyors in Kinshasa and Matadi

Project Manager, Rwanda Works

Kigali, Rwanda (2008-2009)

- Created a tourism promotion plan for one of Rwanda's poorest districts in collaboration with government officials and local community groups
- Developed informational signs for local historical sites

Education

MA in Political Science, University of California, Berkeley

Berkeley, CA, USA (2013-2017)

- Enrolled for the PhD, and earned the MA in 2014
- Advanced to candidacy in 2016, then left in 2017 to launch the Mawazo Institute
- Dissertation proposal: "The Politics of Welfare Expansion in Africa"
- "Outstanding Graduate Student Instructor" for African Politics (PS146A), Fall 2015
- Visiting fellow at the University of Ghana (2016-2017)

MA in International Relations, School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University

Washington, DC, USA (2010-2011)

- Thesis: "Consociationalism and Ethnic Détente in Burundi"
- Graduated with honors (top 10% of class)

BA in Geography and French, Dartmouth College

Hanover, NH, USA (2004-2008)

- Foreign study at Université de Toulouse II (2006) & Univerzita Karlova, Prague (2007)
- Honors: *magna cum laude*, Phi Beta Kappa, Guido Rahr '51 Award for Excellence in Geography

Writing & Teaching

Commentary Articles at *African Arguments*, *The Conversation Africa*, *Democracy in Africa*, *Nation*, *The New Humanitarian*, and *The Republic*. Available at rachelstrohm.com/writing

Presentations

- Centre for Social Protection, University of Sussex (2023)
- African Studies Association of Africa (2019)
- British Institute in Eastern Africa (2019)
- Effective States and Inclusive Development - UK (2019)
- African Studies Association - US (2016, 2017)
- Development Studies Association - UK (2016)
- American Political Science Association (2014, 2016, 2019)

Teaching

- Graduate Student Instructor, Gender & Human Rights PS 123S, UC Berkeley (Spring 2016)
- Graduate Student Instructor, African Politics PS 146A, UC Berkeley (Fall 2015)

Guest Lectures

- Doctoral Association of Eastern Africa, online seminar (2021)
- Graduate Application International Network, online seminars (2020, 2021, 2022)
- Global Policy Analysis BOEC0380, University of Zurich (2020)
- Global Minimum, research methods training for secondary school students, Nairobi (2019)
- Effective Altruism Global, UC Berkeley (2016)
- Introduction to International Development GEOG6, Dartmouth (2013, 2014, 2017)

✚ Other Information

Residency USA (citizen) • Kenya (resident)

Languages English (native) • French (advanced) • Latin (intermediate) • Spanish (basic) • Swahili (basic)

Pronouns She/her

Trainings

- Urban Theory Africa Workshop, Nairobi (2023)
- Adaptive Social Protection Course, Economic Policy Research Institute, South Africa (2022)
- On Think Tanks Winterschool, Geneva, Switzerland (2018)
- Social Protection Course, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex (2016)
- Mixed Methods Evaluation, Harvard Humanitarian Academy (2014)
- Great Lakes Course, Rift Valley Institute, Bujumbura, Burundi (2012)
- Summer Institute for Entrepreneurship, Stanford University (2008)

Volunteering

- Research and writing trainer, Social Justice Centres Working Group, Nairobi (2023)
- Strategic planning facilitator, Mothers of Victims & Survivors Network, Nairobi (2021–2022)
- Dartmouth admissions ambassador, East and West Africa (2017–present)
- AuthorAID mentor, remote collaboration with LMIC scholars (2015–2020)
- Mentor and judge, Big Ideas @ Berkeley (2014–2016)
- Africa Association co-president, Johns Hopkins SAIS (2011)
- WomensTrust Microfinance intern, Accra, Ghana and Hanover, NH (2007–2008)
- Students for Africa co-president, Dartmouth (2006–2008)