

# RACHEL STROHM

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🌐 [rachelstrohm.com](http://rachelstrohm.com)

## ► Professional Summary

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Evaluation and social protection specialist with over 15 years of experience implementing large-scale impact evaluations of social programmes in East, West, and Central Africa. Passionate about evidence-based policymaking and supporting researchers in the Global South. Based in London.

## 📁 Employment

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### **Director, Social Policy Insights**

*London, UK (2023-present)*

- Founder of this research consultancy, which tracks the latest developments in social protection policy, financing, and evaluation across East Africa
- Facilitated evaluation design workshop for Spark Microgrants (Malawi)
- Ongoing research: social insurance for the informal sector (Kenya), social registries and COVID-19 relief (Rwanda)

### **Associate Director of Social Protection, Innovations for Poverty Action**

*Nairobi, Kenya (2020-2022)*

- Managed a portfolio of 34 randomised controlled trials (RCTs) of social protection programmes in 18 low- and middle-income countries, with a focus on cash transfers and the ultra-poor graduation model in Ghana, Rwanda, Uganda, and Zimbabwe
- Led project development, including matchmaking between academic researchers and implementing organisations (such as governments and non-profits); providing guidance on research and survey design; fundraising; and hiring research associates
- Raised US\$5.5 million in committed funding for new evaluations
- Oversaw grant reporting for donors including Wellspring, the World Bank, and USAID
- Created policy briefs and seminar presentations for government, multilateral, and non-profit partners including CARE, World Vision, UNDP, UNWomen, and the US State Department
- Built relationships with principal investigators at leading universities including Northwestern, Dartmouth, Trinity College Dublin, and the University of Ghana

### **Board Chair, Mawazo Institute**

*Nairobi, Kenya (2018-2022)*

- Recruited a diverse 9-person board to lead on strategy, operations, and legal issues
- Led strategic planning updates and CEO recruitment

### **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
- Led landscape review of academic capacity building institutions and funders in Africa
- Designed Mawazo's PhD Scholars training programme and selected first cohort of Scholars
- Managed all finances, including US\$250,000 budget and tax compliance in the US & Kenya
- Hired, on-boarded, and managed core program staff

### **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
- Led interviews and hiring for over 20 staff members from entry level to associate directors

### **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

## Education

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### **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

### **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 honours (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)
- Honours: *magna cum laude*, Phi Beta Kappa, Guido Rahr '51 Award for Excellence in Geography

## Writing & Teaching

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**Commentary** Articles at *African Arguments*, *The Conversation Africa*, *Democracy in Africa*, *Nation*, *The New Humanitarian*, and *The Republic*. Available at [rachelstrohm.com/writing](http://rachelstrohm.com/writing)

### **Teaching**

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

## 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)

## Guest Lectures

- Harris School of Public Policy, University of Chicago (2024)
- 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

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**Residency** USA (citizen) • UK (resident)

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

**Pronouns** She/her

### Trainings

- Digital Transformation in Social Protection, International Training Centre of the ILO (2024)
- 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

- Advisor, Mothers of Victims & Survivors Network, Nairobi (2021–present)
- Research methods trainer, Social Justice Centres Working Group, Nairobi (2020-2023)
- Dartmouth admissions ambassador, East and West Africa (2017–2022)
- 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)
- Homelessness Policy Week, Washington, DC (2005)