

Department of Political Science
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Mawazo Institute
 P.O. Box 1093-00606
 Sarit Centre
 Nairobi, Kenya
rachel.strohm@mawazoinstitute.org

Education

- 2013 – pres. PhD in Political Science • University of California, Berkeley • Berkeley, CA
- Subfields: comparative politics and African studies
 - Dissertation: “Three Papers on Elite Cohesion and Institutional Development in Weak States, Cross-Regional Comparisons, and Generalizability in the Social Sciences”
 - Committee: Leo Arriola, Jennifer Bussell, Alison Post, Ann Swidler
 - “Outstanding Graduate Student Instructor” for African Politics, Fall 2015
- 2010 - 2012 MA in International Relations • School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University • Washington, DC
- Concentrations: international development and international economics
 - Thesis: “Consociationalism and Ethnic Détente in Burundi”
 - Graduated with honors (top 10% of class)
- 2004 - 2008 BA in Geography and French • Dartmouth College • Hanover, NH
- Spring 2007: Univerzita Karlova, Prague, Czechia
 - Winter 2006: Université de Toulouse II - Le Mirail, Toulouse, France
 - Graduated *magna cum laude* and Phi Beta Kappa
 - Guido Rahr '51 Award for Excellence in Geography

Professional Experience

Employment

- 2016 - 2018 Chief Operating Officer • The Mawazo Institute • Nairobi, Kenya
- Co-founder of a non-profit which provides research funding and professional development services to women doing PhDs at Kenyan universities
 - Secured \$1 million in seed funding for operations from 2016 - 2019
 - Developed a strategic plan by researching the state of doctoral education in East Africa, mapping the ecosystem of universities and non-profit organizations providing support to PhD students, and identifying key gaps which Mawazo was in a position to fill
 - Designed Mawazo’s flagship PhD Scholars program, including setting policies for eligibility, selecting the value and acceptable uses of research grants, creating procedures for grant disbursement and financial tracking, and writing the curriculum for the year-long professional development program offered to accepted Scholars
 - Oversaw every aspect of the inaugural year of program implementation, including application design, selection of the first cohort of 10 Scholars, grant disbursement, and training events
 - 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 overseeing all expenditures

- Liaised with external accountants and lawyers in the US and Kenya to ensure compliance with all tax and legal requirements in both countries
- 2012 - 2013 Research Manager • Innovations for Poverty Action • New Haven, CT
 - Research manager for Dr. Dean Karlan (Yale University), whose work assesses the impact of pro-poor financial interventions such as microcredit, agricultural insurance, and business training in low income countries
 - Supervised more than 20 randomized controlled trials (RCTs) in the Dominican Republic, Ethiopia, Ghana, Mexico, and Uganda
 - Supported project staff on issues of research design, questionnaire development, survey software implementation, data collection, statistical analysis, IRB compliance, and financial management
 - Disseminated research results by creating policy reports for implementing partners and preparing academic papers for publication
- 2010 Intern • Innovations for Poverty Action • Tamale, Ghana
 - Managed an RCT of an agricultural insurance policy for subsistence farmers for Drs. Dean Karlan and Chris Udry (Yale University)
 - Organized logistics and finances for a team of 40 enumerators carrying out a survey with 1100 respondents
 - Audited enumerator performance and cleaned survey data in Stata
- 2009 Client Assessment Fellow • FINCA International • Kinshasa, DR Congo
 - Directed the baseline survey for an observational study examining whether Village Banking microloans raised clients' incomes
 - Constructed sample of 800 urban clients
 - Translated questionnaire into French and conducted pilot interviews
 - Hired, trained and managed six surveyors in Kinshasa and Matadi
- 2008 - 2009 Project Manager • Rwanda Works • Kigali, Rwanda
 - 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
- 2007 - 2008 Intern • WomensTrust Microfinance • Pokuase, Ghana
 - Wrote reports on best practices in microloan product design
 - Led computer literacy classes for secondary school students receiving scholarships through the bank

Consulting & Advisory Work

- 2018 – pres. Chair of the Board • Mawazo Institute • Nairobi, Kenya
 - Led fundraising efforts for 2020 and beyond
 - Chaired an annual board meeting and quarterly board calls
- 2017 Evaluation Consultant • Twaweza • Nairobi, Kenya
 - Advised on questionnaire development and research design for an evaluation of a volunteer-led literacy assessment program in Tanzania
- 2014 Evaluation Consultant • International Rescue Committee • New York, NY
 - Evaluation design and questionnaire development for a community-driven post-conflict reconstruction program in eastern DR Congo

- 2010 - 2011 Evaluation Consultant • The World Bank • Washington, DC
 - Questionnaire development for a behavior change program aimed at reducing violence in schools in Guatemala City

Research & Writing

Working Papers

- 2019 “Elite Cohesion and Institutional Development in Weak States”
 2019 “What Do We Learn from Cross-Regional Comparisons?”
 2019 “Generalizability in the Social Sciences”
 2019 “How American Scholars can Support Their African Colleagues”

Commentary

- 2019 “The DRC: An Unexpected Transfer of Power, but Was It the Right One?”
Democracy in Africa. democracyin africa.org/drcelections/
 2018 “30% of Trips in Nairobi Are Made by Minibus. Why Were They Banned?”
African Arguments. africanarguments.org/2018/12/06/30-percent-trips-nairobi-matatu-banned/
 2017 “Ways to Improve Your Academic Writing and Editing.” *AuthorAID*.
authoraid.info/en/news/details/1217 & authoraid.info/en/news/details/1218
 2017 – pres. “Africa Update” newsletter at tinyletter.com/africaupdate (1000 subscribers)
 2009 – pres. Tweeting about African affairs at twitter.com/rachelstrohm (12,500 followers)
 2008 – pres. Blogging on politics & economics at rachelstrohm.com/blog (3500 subscribers)

Presentations

- 2019 Panelist • British Institute in Eastern Africa PhD Forum • Nairobi
 2019 Panelist • Comparative Historical Social Sciences • Evanston, IL
 2017 Panel Chair • African Studies Association • Chicago, IL
 2016 Panel Chair • African Studies Association • Washington, DC
 2016 Panelist • Development Studies Association • Oxford, UK
 2016 Panelist • Effective Altruism Global • Berkeley, CA
 2016 Poster • American Political Science Association • Philadelphia, PA
 2015 Poster • Berkeley Center for Economics and Politics • Berkeley, CA
 2015 Discussant (2x) • Comparative Politics Colloquium • Berkeley, CA
 2014 Panelist • American Political Science Association • Washington, DC

Teaching & Service

Teaching

- 2017 Guest Lecturer • Summer Undergraduate Research Program • Berkeley
 2016 Graduate Student Instructor • Gender & Human Rights (PS 123S) • Berkeley
 2015 Graduate Student Instructor • African Politics (PS 146A) • Berkeley
 2010 - 2016 Guest Lecturer (4x) • International Development (Geog 6) • Dartmouth

Service

- 2018 – pres. Volunteer • Mathare Social Justice Centre • Nairobi
 2017 - pres. Alumni Interviewer • Dartmouth
 2015 - pres. Mentor • AuthorAID • Oxford, UK
 2015 - 2016 Coordinator • Research in Practice Working Group • Berkeley
 2015 - 2016 Coordinator • Women in Political Science • Berkeley

2015 Human Rights Event Organizer • Center for African Studies • Berkeley
2014 - 2015 Mentor & Judge • Big Ideas @ Berkeley
2011 President • Africa Association • SAIS
2006 - 2008 Co-president • Students for Africa • Dartmouth
2005 - 2008 Moderator • World Affairs Council • Dartmouth

Fellowships

2016 - 2017 Andrew and Mary Thompson Rocca Fellowship in African Studies • Berkeley
2016 - 2017 Kujachich Fellowship for Graduate Study • Berkeley
2013 - 2016 Student Opportunity Fund Travel Awards • Berkeley
2013 - 2015 Berkeley Fellowship for Graduate Study • Berkeley
2013 - 2014 George and Yvette Breslauer Fellowship • Berkeley
2011 Elenor and C.P. Matthieson Fellowship • SAIS
2011 Second Year Fellowship • SAIS
2011 Summer Fellowship • SAIS
2010 - 2011 First Year Fellowship • SAIS
2010 - 2011 International Development Fellowship • SAIS
2004 - 2008 National Merit Scholarship • Dartmouth

Other Information

Residency USA (citizen) • Kenya (resident)

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

Trainings

2018 Winterschool • On Think Tanks • Geneva, Switzerland
2016 Social Protection Course • Institute of Development Studies • Sussex, UK
2014 Mixed Methods Evaluation for Humanitarian Programs • Harvard Humanitarian Academy • Cambridge, MA
2012 Great Lakes Course • Rift Valley Institute • Bujumbura, Burundi