CURRICULUM VITAE – Dr Michael Watts
Expert

PERSONAL DETAILS

Dr Michael Watts
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Resident in France
Languages: English (native), French (B2)

QUALIFICATIONS

2011 PhD, Education, University of East Anglia, UK
1999 MA, Education and Professional Development, University of East Anglia, UK
1991 BA, English, University of Oxford, UK

PROFESSIONAL BIODATA

Dr Michael Watts specialises in education in the low- and middle-income countries of the Global South, education for human development, political economy analysis and qualitative and mixed methods evaluation and research. He has over 25 years' experience working across all educational sectors as evaluator, researcher, teacher and supervisor. Much of his work focuses on educational equity and the role of education in promoting human well-being. EDI is therefore central to his work. He has worked extensively on MEL programmes in Sub Saharan Africa (SSA) and Southeast Asia as well as the UK. In SSA, this has included single- and multi-country studies and process, summative and impact evaluations as well as Theory of Change development and evidence reviews. He has experience in the following thematic areas: primary and secondary education (3.1), including education in emergencies (3.1.2); higher education (3.2 and 3.3); English (4); and non-formal education (5). He is concerned with individual experiences of education and their relationships with the wider economic and socio-cultural factors that generate educational problems. He is especially interested in the adaptive preference problem and the conditions that lead people to downgrade their educational aspirations and has published widely on this topic.

SELECTED MEL PROJECTS

Four MEL projects are summarised below to support the TCE bid for inclusion in Lot 1 of the *SSA Regional Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Procurement Framework*. They have been selected to highlight Dr Watts' ability to conduct impact, process and summative evaluations and to indicate the breadth of his experience working across different education sectors, from primary to higher education and including non-formal education and education in emergencies.

Education Research in Conflict and Protracted Crisis (ERICC): 2022 – 2025

ERICC is an FCDO programme addressing Education in Emergencies (EiE) across six countries. Following his extensive work with EDOREN (below) Dr Watts was appointed Principal Investigator for the Nigerian team. He was responsible for supporting the ERICC-Nigeria team in developing the *impact evaluation* focusing on the implementation of the Nigerian Universal Basic Education (UBE) Act in Adamawa State throughout the Boko Haram insurgency. His work included project design, evidence and policy reviews, research instrument design, training and support for team members, data analysis, reporting, preparation of conference and journal papers and quality assurance at all stages of the research on policy implementation in crisis and conflict-affected areas of Nigeria. Although focused on Nigeria, he also contributed to the quality mechanisms of research undertaken in the other ERICC countries. Outputs included evidence-based reports on the provision of UBE in Adamawa and the data systems that are assumed to support it. They also include presentations at international conferences highlighting the significance of community resilience in delivering EiE and papers submitted for publication (currently under review) addressing the political economy of basic

education in Adamawa. Currently, the main impact of this work is the evidence-based policy shift encouraging greater community involvement in the development and delivery of UBE policies and practices.

English Connects: 2019 – 2021

The British Council's English Connects programme aims to: (i) connect the UK to beneficiaries in 12 francophone and lusophone African countries through English; (ii) improve the employability, resilience and networks of young people; and (iii) support senior policy makers in this endeavour. Led by Dr Nicky Hockly, mixed methods *impact evaluations* were provided by TCE during two consecutive iterations of the programme. Dr Watts supported the development of the evaluation framework, research instruments and logframe. In the first evaluation, he was responsible for preparing country reports and conducting in-country fieldwork in Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire and Gabon. In the second evaluation he prepared country reports and conducted remote fieldwork in Benin, Mali and Niger. In both years, he also conducted remote fieldwork across the region focusing on cross-cutting themes. Following the data analysis, he prepared reports on each of these countries that contributed to the overall reports and their recommendations. The outputs of these impact evaluations included a new theory of change and multi-strand programme logframe, interim and final evaluation reports and presentations to key stakeholders to further promote the programme and highlight its benefits to francophone and lusophone Africa.

Evaluation of Jönköping International Business School's collaboration with Sida partner universities in Ethiopia, Rwanda and Mozambique: 2019

The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency supports transnational higher education partnerships between Swedish universities and universities across SSA. African universities identify their needs and then work with their Swedish partners to address them. Following concerns about JIBS' capacity to deliver appropriate support, Sida commissioned a *process evaluation* with Dr Watts (who had recently led a review of Sida's support for Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia) appointed as a higher education expert. In this role, he supported the development of the evaluation framework and research instruments and conducted the in-country fieldwork at the Universidade Eduardo Mondlane, Mozambique and the University of Rwanda. The outputs of this process evaluation included separate reports on JIBS' support for the three African universities that were then synthesised into an overall final report. This led to Sida reassessing JIBS' capacity to support its African partners and to slimmed down, more focused programmes at all three African universities.

Evaluation of the EDOREN Research Capacity Strengthening Strategy: 2016 – 2018

EDOREN (Education Data, Research and Evaluation in Nigeria) was a four-year programme funded by DFID to support evidence-based and policy-relevant educational research in Nigeria. One of its many projects was the Research Capacity Strengthening Strategy (RCSS) which was intended to bring different stakeholders together to develop intra-sectoral collaboration. This was piloted through a two-year project aimed at revising policies on primary teacher recruitment and retention in northern Nigeria. Teams of academics and government officers (eventually) worked together to propose policy changes. Dr Watts, who had already worked extensively with EDOREN, was team leader for the evaluation of the RCSS. A *formative evaluation* was conducted in Year One and a *summative evaluation* in Year Two. As team leader, Dr Watts was responsible for the overall project designs, the management of and support for the research team, fieldwork, data analysis and interpretation and the reporting of findings and recommendations. The outputs included the evaluation reports and presentations to key Nigerian stakeholders and at international conferences. The conference papers were then rewritten for publication in academic journals and edited books. The project on which the RCSS was piloted generated policy change in several Nigerian states and is currently informing change in Adamawa as part of the ERICC-Nigeria programme. The RCSS itself continues to shape educational research and has, for example, contributed to the research being conducted through ERICC in Nigeria and South Sudan.