

**Using Research to Advance International Development:  
Women's Empowerment as a Case Study**

**Biographies of Writers, Speakers, and Facilitators**

**December 2, 2019**

**Audra Grant, Senior Research Scientist, NORC at University of Chicago**



**Dr. Audra Grant** has over 20 years of experience conducting analysis in Africa. She brings subject matter expertise in the intersection of gender with the following issues: 1) democratization and reform; 2) human trafficking and illicit trade; 3) youth activism; 4) political Islam; and 5) religious militancy. She has worked in over 30 low-income and conflict affected countries, and has conducted research on women refugees and displaced persons in Iraq; women in political parties in Morocco; and the role of gender in structuring attitudes towards political Islam in Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco. Dr. Grant has recently published on criminal networks in the Sahel and also on trafficking in sub-Saharan Africa.

Dr. Grant is currently at NORC at the University of Chicago. At NORC, she recently led women's empowerment studies in Liberia and Sierra Leone and a USAID project on research in gender-based violence. As part of this project, she authored two papers on gender-based violence as an impediment to women's economic and political participation.

Prior to joining NORC, Dr. Grant was a resident program manager in Juba, South Sudan, for the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and NDI senior program manager for East and Southern Africa. She is a former senior political scientist at the RAND Corporation focusing on North Africa, and a former North Africa/Middle East analyst with the U.S. Department of State. A long-time educator and Arabic speaker, Dr. Grant is also an adjunct professor and has taught at New York University-DC and the George Washington University where she has focused on the politics of the Middle East and North Africa. She was a visiting professor at al-Akhawayn University, in Morocco, where she taught U.S. policy in the Middle East and U.S. policy toward the Maghreb. Dr. Grant earned a PhD in Political Science from University of Wisconsin and as BSc degree from Northwestern University.

**Faheem Hussain, Clinical Assistant Professor, Arizona State University**



**Dr. Faheem Hussain** has over 15 years of experience conducting socio-economic development and technological interventions related research in Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, and North America. Dr. Hussain brings subject matter expertise in the intersection of information and communication technology (ICT) with: 1) women's empowerment; 2) refugees; 3) digital afterlife; and 4) public policy.

Dr. Hussain is currently working as a Clinical Assistant Professor in the School for the Future of Innovation in Society (SFIS) at Arizona State University (ASU). Dr. Hussain has also been involved as a Technology Policy Specialist in various research projects with United Nations, international development agencies (e.g., International Development Research Centre, U.K. Department for International Development, and the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations), and international think tanks (e.g., Freedom House, LIRNEasia, and Ideacorps) in the fields of technology, public policy, and development.

## RESEARCH TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER

Prior to joining ASU, Dr. Hussain worked as one of the key resource persons for United Nations ESCAP-APCICT's (Asia Pacific Training Centre for ICT for Development) Women and ICT Frontier Initiative (WIFI) for marginalized young women entrepreneurs of the Asia Pacific countries. As an APCICT expert in women's empowerment, digital technologies, and entrepreneurship, Dr. Hussain closely worked with the Governments of Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Myanmar, Philippines, Sri Lanka, and the Central Asian countries, and helped them in designing gender inclusive socio-economic policy infrastructure.

As an educator, Dr. Faheem Hussain contributed in multiple global education initiatives. He started his teaching career as a faculty in Carnegie Mellon University's Qatar Campus in the Department of Information Systems. Later he joined Asian University for Women (AUW), a liberal arts university for Asian women, as a founding faculty and led its ICT program. After AUW, Dr. Hussain taught as an assistant professor in the Department of Technology and Society at Stony Brook University's Korea campus. He holds a Ph.D. and an M.S. degree in engineering and public policy from Carnegie Mellon University.

### **Ticora V. Jones, Director, Center for Development Research, U.S. Global Development Lab, USAID**



**Dr. Ticora V. Jones** is the Director of the Center for Development Research in the U.S. Global Development Lab at USAID. Dr. Jones manages a portfolio of university engagement programs designed to build bridges between development professionals and universities through a multidisciplinary lens on science, technology, innovation and entrepreneurship. Beginning in 2009 as an American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) Diplomacy, Security, and Development Fellow, she helped manage the establishment of an Agency-wide agenda for science and technology through policy and programming designed to elevate USAID's presence in this area.

Prior to joining USAID, Dr. Jones served as the 2008-2009 Materials Societies Congressional Fellow for Senator Russell D. Feingold (D-WI) where she worked on energy and environment issues. Before beginning her congressional fellowship, Dr. Jones conducted post-doctoral research focused on creating and characterizing nanoparticle/composite-based functional materials at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory. Dr. Jones earned her BS degree in Materials Science and Engineering from MIT and her PhD in Polymer Science and Engineering from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

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### **Dani Poole, Postdoctoral Fellow, Harvard University**



**Dr. Dani Poole** is a Postdoctoral Fellow and Lecturer at the Neukom Institute for Computational Science, and in the Departments of Epidemiology and Geography, at Dartmouth College. Dr. Poole's research generates evidence to improve health in humanitarian emergencies using epidemiologic, spatial, and rights-based approaches in partnership with affected populations and implementing organizations. She collaborates with colleagues in Greece, Italy, Kenya, the Netherlands, South Africa, Turkey, and the United States, among other countries.

Her work is in three areas: 1) developing methods for health research in complex settings; 2) applied global bioethics; and 3) quantifying the climate-conflict-migration nexus. She has led survey studies of the prevalence and driving factors of mental health status among forced migrants, validation studies of screening instruments for mental health, and developed novel sampling approaches for epidemiologic surveillance.

Dr. Poole translates academic investigations into practice via a network of partnerships including with intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations. She has held posts at the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and is a member of the International Organization for Migration's Migration Health and Development Research Initiative. She holds a ScD from Harvard University and an MPH from Brown University.

### **Revi Sterling, Project Director, USAID WomenConnect Challenge**



**Dr. Revi Sterling** currently directs USAID's WomenConnect Challenge, a global program that aims to bridge the gender digital divide through addressing the social norms that keep women and girls offline and under-empowered. Previously, Dr. Sterling was Chief of Party at NetHope and directed the Women and Web Alliance, a partnership with USAID, Intel, World Vision, World Pulse, and United Nations Women.

At the University of Colorado Boulder, she founded and directed the first Information and Communications Technology for Development (ICT4D) master's program in the United States. Prior to academia, Dr. Sterling spearheaded gender equity in computer science programs at Microsoft Research, conducted ICT4D research out of the India lab, and led several efforts in the Emerging Technologies division.

Dr. Sterling has a Ph.D. in Media, Technology, and Society from the University of Colorado Boulder. She consults widely with governments, corporations, and foundations on using ICT4D to empower women and marginalized populations. Dr. Sterling is recognized for her gender activism, received the Anita Borg Institute Women of Vision Award for Social Impact, and the 2019 Engineering for Change technology award. She has worked in over 40 countries in development and humanitarian contexts.

**Angela Walker, Vice President of Communications, WEConnect International**



**Ms. Angela Walker** started as the new Vice President of Communications and Marketing at WEConnect International on November 11, 2019. WEConnect International is a corporate-led global non-profit that helps women-owned businesses access and succeed in global value chains.

WEConnect International has since 2009 provided business education, certification, and business connections to companies based outside the United States that are at least 51 percent owned, managed, and controlled by one or more women. The organization's corporate members represent over \$1 trillion in annual purchasing power and are true pioneers in inclusive sourcing and global supplier development.

Ms. Walker joins WEConnect International from the World Bank where she served as a Communications Advisor to the 25-member Board of Executive Directors and the Managing Director CFO. Her first position at the Bank was as Communications Manager for the South Asia Region.

Ms. Walker previously served as a United Nations spokesperson and regional communications advisor in countries experiencing conflict and humanitarian crisis in Asia, Africa and the Balkans. Before returning to Washington, DC, she served as the Chief of Advocacy and Partnerships in UNICEF's New Delhi Office, where she developed national and international partnership networks of media, parliamentarians, celebrities, and civil society on policy advocacy and campaigns. Ms. Walker has also worked as a journalist in both print and broadcast media at The Washington Post and The Associated Press.

She has a Masters in international economics, Conflict Resolution and International Law from Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) and received her BA from Georgetown University.

**Facilitation Team**

The event's facilitation team is provided by the **Training Resources Group, Inc. (TRG)**. TRG is an employee-owned management consulting and training firm located in Arlington, Virginia. Since its founding in 1973, TRG has worked in over one hundred countries providing training and organizational development services to clients in large and small corporations, international organizations, federal and state government agencies and non-profit organizations.



**Aurora Deuss** is a trainer, facilitator and organizational development specialist with 15 years of experience working with private sector clients, government, and inter-governmental organizations. She is the lead TRG facilitator for the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and has led retreats and management events for a wide range of departments and teams there. Ms. Deuss' portfolio of clients at TRG also includes USAID, the World Bank, Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC), the U.S. Botanic Garden and American University. Ms. Deuss holds an MA in Organizational/Industrial Psychology and a MEd in

International Educational Development from Columbia University. Ms. Deuss is also a native French speaker.

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**Kim Koroma-Tommy** has been with TRG for four years, during which time she has facilitated retreats and meetings for the World Bank Group, Novartis Social Business, and non-profit organizations. Prior to joining TRG, Kim raised funds for a Ugandan pediatric HIV/AIDS NGO, provided communications and knowledge management support to the child health team at USAID's Maternal & Child Survival Program (MCSP) and developed global activism curricula at Plan International USA. She is a Project Management Professional (PMP) and holds an M.A. in International Development from Clark University.



**Andrea Scott** is an organizational development training consultant with over 20 years of experience. Since joining TRG in July 2018, she has provided training, facilitation, and coaching support to a variety of clients including World Bank Group, Georgia Legal Services, Enterprise Community Partners, Resilience Food Security (USAID), and the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA). She holds a Doctorate in Human and Organizational Learning from George Washington University and a Masters of Business Administration from University of Georgia.



Lead facilitator **Steve Yank** has been an Organization Development and Learning Consultant at TRG for the past twelve years. Immediately prior to that, he managed leadership and organization development for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. His areas of interest include change management, organizational learning, and system strengthening. His principal clients for TRG have been USAID (including the Education Office, Global Health, Office of Transition Initiatives, and Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance), the State Department, MCC, OPIC, the International Trade Administration (Commerce Department) and the IMF. He studied Organization Development at Georgetown, and is a certified professional coach