

RAKSHA VASUDEVAN

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Bugolobi, Kampala, Uganda

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Market Development Strategist, Pollen Group

September 2014 –

Uganda/Kenya

Present

- Led a six month market systems mapping of the livestock sector in northern Kenya and Uganda for Practical Action (PA) Eastern Africa, focused on identifying opportunities for market systems facilitation aligned with PA's mandate of "using technology to challenge poverty". Activities included:
 - A literature review, 40+ key informant interviews and field research in northern Kenya
 - training of key staff in the M4P approach
 - development of concept notes outlining promising interventions, theories of change and funding opportunities
- Supported mixed-method diagnostic studies to inform the design of GOAL Uganda's WASH and Sustainable Livelihoods programmes in eastern Uganda. The studies identify root causes of the WASH and agricultural sectors' under-performance and potential entry points for intervention by GOAL.
- Conducted an assessment of the financial services market system in central Uganda, focusing on products and institutions (formal and informal) used by small-holder farmers. The assessment was used to both improve Pollen Group's knowledge of the financial services sector in east Africa, and to develop a series of case studies for subsequent work with Financial Services Deepening (FSD) Africa.
- Designed and co-facilitated a market systems development training for Financial Services Deepening (FSD) Uganda.

Emergency Education Technical Advisor, Handicap International

September 2013 –

northern Syria & Mali

June 2014

- Coached Emergency Education teams and partners, including community leaders and local NGO staff, on integrating behaviour change principles into their work.
- Audited the Information Management, M&E and reporting systems of the Emergency Education programmes in both Mali and northern Syria, and advised project managers on ways to improve.
- Led a mixed-method impact assessment of Emergency Education programming in Mali, including design of surveys and questionnaires, hiring of enumerators, management of external company conducting the data input, data analysis, and drafting of final report.
- Led development of project proposals and reporting to international donors including collection of inputs from field staff, data verification, liaison with national office and international headquarters.

Junior Programme Officer, Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian

August 2012 –

Demining – Switzerland

August 2013

- Supported multiple Project Managers in executing technical assistance projects and evaluations in countries affected by mines and other explosive remnants of war.
- Co-led a mixed-method evaluation of an INGO's armed violence reduction programme in Libya, including a literature review, survey data analysis, focus groups and key informant interviews. The results were used by the INGO and donor to structure their funding for the next programming phase.
- Supported qualitative evaluations of the impact of mine action operations on land rights in South Sudan and the international humanitarian response to the 2012 munitions explosion in Brazzaville, Congo.

Analyst, Framework Management Consultants – Canada

September 2009 – June 2010

- Worked with clients in a range of sectors to conduct organisational evaluations, strategic reviews, and

optimise operational excellence. Some assignments included:

- Facilitated the strategic review process for a philanthropic foundation, resulting in a new focus for the foundation on supporting social entrepreneurship through direct grants, mentorship and policy research.
- Conducted mixed-method market research and a strategic review for a major homebuilder, resulting in a new five-year strategic plan and customer marketing strategy.
- Developed foster parent 'acquisition' strategies and forecasted alternative funding models for several foster care agencies.
- Co-facilitated several business segment specific (Operations, Marketing, Engineering, Environmental) strategic planning processes for a major integrated oil and gas company.

Project Associate, Bangladesh Association for Social Advancement (BASA)

May – August 2009

Bangladesh

- Led a mixed-method review of BASA's poverty reduction programme, which spanned the microfinance, WASH and agricultural livelihoods sectors. Methodology included a literature review, interviews and focus groups with a variety of stakeholders, and surveys. Recommendations were used to inform the development of new programmes in each of the three sectors.
- Supported the identification of funding opportunities, strategy design and proposal writing for rural aquaculture value chain development and women's legal education projects. Multi-year funding was successfully obtained from USAID and CIDA. Subsequently supported the activity design, recruitment and training of staff for these projects.

Small Business Centre Manager, Service Canada Centre for Youth (part of Canada's Youth Employment Strategy)

June – August 2006

Calgary, Canada

- Provided coaching to youth entrepreneurs at all stages of the start-up spectrum, from start-up to already operating businesses.
- Assisted clients in developing business plans and financial forecasts.
- Linked clients with financing institutions and other organisations supporting young entrepreneurs.

EDUCATION

Master's in Development Studies (MDEV)

2010–2012

The Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva, Switzerland

Bachelor of Commerce (BComm) with Honours, University of Calgary, Canada

2005–2009

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

- **Project Management**, Handicap International, Lyon, France, 16-24 September 2013.
- **Design, Monitoring and Evaluation for Peacebuilding, Security and Development**, International Program for Development Evaluation Training (IPDET), Geneva, 24-28 September 2012

LANGUAGES AND IT SKILLS

- English: mother tongue
- French: professional fluency
- Expert in MS Office applications, STATA and SPSS
- Tamil: excellent spoken skills
- Luganda: basic understanding