Curriculum Vitae

NAME

Alina Rocha Menocal
Associate, The Policy Practice
Expert on Politics and Governance

NATIONALITY

Mexican / British

LANGUAGES

English and Spanish: Fluent
Portuguese and French: Working understanding

SUMMARY OF EXPERIENCE

Accomplished expert, thought leader and researcher with over 20 years of experience working to bridge the gap between research and policy in thinking about how change happens and the politics of reform.

Extensive experience in policy engagement and advice and in analysing, assessing and evaluating international development policies in all these areas. Have written multiple reports and produced formative research and substantial publications on all these areas, as well as provided evidence in high-level government including the EU, Swedish and UK Parliaments.

COUNTRY EXPERIENCE

Nigeria, Ghana, Pakistan, Uganda, Mexico, Colombia, Guatemala, Lebanon, United Kingdom, United States

EXPERTISE

- Democracy/democratisation
- Governance and institutional transformation
- Corruption; transparency, participation & accountability
- Conflict and fragility
- State- and peacebuilding processes and (post-)conflict trajectories
- Political settlements and the politics of inclusion
- Corruption and anti-corruption efforts
- Political economy analysis/Thinking and Working Politically

QUALIFICATIONS

2000 - 2001 MPhil Political Science (Comparative Politics), Columbia University, New York
1997 - 1998 Master of International Affairs (Economic and Political development), Columbia University, New York
1994 - 1997 BA Political Science, Yale University, New Haven (Distinction

EMPLOYMENT / SELECTED ASSIGNMENTS

Areas of expertise

Accomplished expert, thought leader and researcher with over 20 years of experience working to bridge the gap between research and policy in thinking about how change happens and the politics of reform. Areas of expertise include: Democracy/democratisation; governance and institutional transformation; corruption; transparency, participation & accountability; conflict and fragility; state- and peacebuilding processes and (post-)conflict trajectories; political settlements and the politics of inclusion; corruption and anti-corruption efforts; political economy analysis/Thinking and Working Politically..

Professional experience

Director, Thinking and Working Politically Community of Practice, University of Birmingham (November 2020-Present)
The TWP CoP is an influential international network funded by the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) that brings together a diverse set of individual members with extensive experience working with/in national government agencies, intergovernmental organisations, NGOs, private sector organisations, think tanks and academic organisations to promote ways of thinking and working that are politically smart and adaptive. As Director, I am responsible for all aspects of managing and developing the CoP, including setting the CoP's multi-year strategic vision and managing the budget; providing strategic advice and guidance to the UK government based on direct requests for support; and overseeing the development and delivery of a portfolio of advisory, research, convening and communications activities.

Independent Expert on Politics and Governance (July 2022-Present)
As an independent expert on Politics and Governance affiliated with TPP, ODI, WFD and others, I draw on an extensive network of professional relationships to lead, manage and provide critical policy-oriented research, strategic consultancy and advisory services to leading international organisations to inform more innovative, adaptive and context-specific ways of working among international actors.
Key relevant assignments that I have undertaken include:

- Co-leading development of guidance for how the UK can provide support to democratic governance more effectively (FCDO, September 2023-present)
- Leading research, advisory, and training project with the UNDP Crisis Bureau to assess traction of TWP principles at UNDP and Global Affairs Canada and provide recommendations for greater uptake (UNDP, July 2021-present)
- Developing, leading and facilitating a module on Inclusion for a course on "Inclusive and Accountable Politics" (FCDO, September 2024-present)
- Led learning and evaluation team to accompany and assess the OSF-funded UK Anti-Money Laundering Campaign (Open Societies Foundation, July 2022-December 2024)
- Led team to undertake a study on the political economy of climate action in Mexico in the run-up of the 2024 general elections and develop a strategy for engagement for Iniciativa Climática de México, (Pathways, Our Common Home and ICM, September 2023-May 2024)
- Developed, led and facilitated interactive virtual course on fragile and conflict afflicted settings (Global Affairs Canada, January-June 2024)
- Provided strategic advice to FCDO to update guidance for policymakers and practitioners on the UK approach to stabilisation (FCDO, November 2023-July 2024)
- Developed guidance note on how to support participation and accountability efforts more effectively through thinking and working politically (Folke Bernadotte Academy, November 2022-November 2023)
- Led learning review on uptake of political economy analysis and TWP on the work they undertake with other key partners on democracy support and human rights for USAID (Pact, October 2022-April 2023)

Principal Research Fellow, Politics and Governance Programme, ODI (June 2020-June 2022)
This is the highest research position at ODI, awarded through highly demanding and rigorous internal process requiring demonstrated achievement and international recognition in three core areas: research-based

publications; evidence of influence and leadership of policy design and implementation; evidence of high level public profile.
As Principal Research Fellow, I was:

- Acting Director for the FCDO-funded Learning, Evidence and Advocacy Partnership (LEAP), which was a four-year programme that aimed to strengthen the evidence base for governance reform in Nigeria (June 2021-Ocotber 2022). LEAP was one of three pillars that make up the Partnership to Engage, Reform and Learn (PERL), a governance program that brings together governments and citizens groups to collectively address governance challenges associated with the delivery of pro-poor public goods and services in Nigeria. LEAP led on learning across PERL. As LEAP Acting Director, I managed a team of experts and practitioners based both in Nigeria and in the UK and oversaw the conceptualisation, development and delivery of LEAP's work related to both i) enabling processes of internal learning, testing, and adaptation; and ii) generating a body of research and evidence emerging from PERL's work to assess how effective PERL was as a programme supporting citizen voice and state accountability and why and lessons for future programming.
- Lead researcher on an FCDO-funded research project on "From elite bargains to inclusive politics" to help FCDO understand how it could more effectively seek to foster more open and inclusive political systems in the aftermath of violent conflict (October 2020-May 2022). The research was used to inform the development of the UK Government's policy on conflict and instability in the aftermath of the Integrated Review and the FCDO merger.
- Leader and manager of Research and Analysis on a multi-country, five-year project on how to increase the use of evidence in policymaking processes (SEDI) involving a variety of consortium partners and research teams in Ghana, Pakistan and Uganda (FCDO, June 2019-June 2021)

Founding member, Inclusive Narratives Practice Group, Institute for Inclusive Transitions Group (August 2017-present)
Comprised of a select group of leading international experts on the subject, the Inclusive Narratives Practice Group provides comparative advice and strategic support to local leaders on creative and realistic options for transforming narratives so as to foster more inclusive dialogue and pathways from conflict and to combat polarisation.

Previous employment
Senior Research Fellow, Politics and Governance Programme, ODI (Sept 2010-July 2020)
Senior Democracy Fellow on Applied Political Economy Analysis, Democracy, Rights and Governance Center, USAID (March 2016-July 2020)
Senior Research Fellow, Developmental Leadership Program, University of Birmingham (on secondment from ODI) (May 2014-March 2016)

SELECTED REPORTS AND PUBLICATIONS

Academic publications

"The Role of Identity in Shaping Prospects for More Inclusive Politics", in KIPA Public Policy Review, vol. 2, no. 2 (December 2021)

"Digital technologies and the new public square: revitalising democracy?", in N. Cheeseman and L. Garbe (eds.) Decoding Digital Democracy in Africa. Democracy in Africa and Stanford Center on Philanthropy and Civil Society

"Why inequality is democracy's catch-22", in G. Crawford and A.G. Abdulai (eds.) Handbook on Democracy and Development. London: Edward Elgar Publishing (2021)

"Democracy and Development: Moving beyond the Conundrum", in G. Crawford and A.G. Abdulai (eds.) Handbook on Democracy and Development. London: Edward Elgar Publishing (2021)

(with G Power and O Kaye) "Promoting Inclusive Governance More Effectively: Lessons From the Dialogue for Stability Programme", Journal of Peacebuilding and Development, vol. 14, no. 1 (2019)

Co-editor, Special Issue of the Journal of International Development on "Political Settlements and Prospects for Institutional Transformation: Re-thinking State- and Peace-building in Situations of Fragility" (August 2017)

"Political Settlements and the politics of transformation: Where do 'inclusive institutions' come from?", Journal of International Development (August 2017)

"Aid and Fragility: The Challenges of Building Peaceful and Effective States", in D. Chandler and T. Sisk (eds.) The Routledge Handbook of International Statebuilding. London: Routledge (2013)

"'State-building for peace' – a new paradigm for international engagement in post-conflict fragile states?", Third World Quarterly (November 2011)

"Analysing the relationship between democracy and development: Defining key concepts and assessing key linkages", Commonwealth Good Governance 2011/12 (November 2011)

(with V. Fritz) "Developmental States in the New Millennium: Concepts and Challenges for a New Aid Agenda", Development Policy Review vol. 25, no. 5 (September 2007):531-552.

Policy publications

(with C. Heaven, S. van von Billerbeck, and D. Zaum) "From Elite Bargains to (More) Open and (More) Inclusive Politics", Research Project prepared for the Conflict, Stabilisation and Mediation Directorate, FCDO, Reading: University of Reading. (March 2022)

(with T. Aston) "Understanding how Plumbing and Architecture Shape the Programme's Ability to Think and Work Politically", Internal Learning Paper, Partnership to Engage, Reform and Learn (PERL), Nigeria (September 2021)

(with Ed Laws et al.) "LearnAdapt: A synthesis of our work on adaptive programming with DFID/FCDO". ODI: London (March 2021)

"Why does inclusion matter? Assessing the links between inclusive processes and inclusive outcomes", Evidence Paper. Paris: OECD DAC (Network on Governance) (March 2020)

"What does 'inclusive governance' mean? Clarifying policy and practice". Policy Paper. Paris: OECD DAC (Network on Governance) (March 2020)

(with M. Cassidy et al.) "Thinking and working politically through applied political economy analysis: A guide for practitioners". USAID: Washington DC (April 2018).

"Promoting Social Stability and Legitimacy in Lebanon: Can Service Delivery Make a Difference? Exploring the contributions of the Lebanese Host Communities Support Programme". Birmingham: Developmental Leadership Program (2017)

"Can democracy counter inequality?", in International IDEA (ed.), Global State of Democracy 2017. Stockholm, International IDEA (2017)

(with Nils Taxell) "Why corruption matters: understanding causes, effects, and how to address them", DFID Evidence Paper. London: DFID (February 2015)

"Political Settlements and the Politics of Inclusion", State of the Art Paper, DLP, Birmingham, University of Birmingham (October 2015)

"Inclusive Political Settlements: Evidence, Gaps, and Challenges of Institutional Transformation", DLP, Birmingham, University of Birmingham (June 2015)

(with Gina Berg and Laura Rodríguez Takeuchi) "What's behind the demand for governance? An assessment of people's views", ODI Report, London, ODI (March 2014)

"Getting Real about Politics: From Thinking Politically to Working Differently", ODI Think Piece, London, ODI (March 2014)

"What is political voice, why does it matter, and how can it bring about change?", Development Progress Discussion Paper and Infographics, London, ODI (April 2014)

"Emerging Democracies: Rising to the Challenge", ODI Briefing, London, ODI (October 2013)

"10 Things to know about elections and democracy", Infographics. London, ODI (10 July 2013)

(with Tammy O'Neil) "Mind the gap: lessons learnt and remaining challenges in parliamentary development assistance", Donor Report and Briefing Paper. Stockholm: Sida (2012)

"'State-Building for Peace': navigating an arena of contradictions", ODI Briefing Paper no. 52 (August 2009)

(lead author) "Punching above its weight: An evaluation of DFID's PSPS, LAMIT and ENLACE programmes in Latin America", London, ODI.

(with B. Sharma) "Joint Evaluation on Citizens' Voice and Accountability: Synthesis Report", London, DFID (November 2008)

(lead author) "Guatemala: Power and Change Analysis", paper prepared as part of the SGACA project (September 2008)

"Human rights and state-building: a new paradigm for assistance in fragile settings?", Concept Note for a joint ODI-Danish MFA workshop on the linkages between HR and SB, Copenhagen (April 2008)

(lead author) "Colombia: Power and Change Analysis", paper prepared as part of the SGACA project (January 2008)

(with V. Fritz and L. Rakner) "Assessing international democracy assistance and lessons learned: how can donors better support democratic processes?", Background note prepared for the Wilton Park Conference on Democracy and Development (Oct 2007)

(with V. Fritz) "Understanding State-building from a Political Economy Perspective: An Analytical and Conceptual Paper on Processes, Embedded Tensions and Lessons for International Engagement", Paper prepared for DFID's Fragile and Effective States Teams (September 2007)

(with V. Fritz and L. Rakner) "Democratisation's Third Wave and the Challenges of Democratic Deepening: Assessing International Democracy Assistance and Lessons Learned", Report submitted to Irish Aid (Aug 2007)

(with D. Cammack, D. McLeod, and K. Christiansen) "Donors and the 'Fragile States' Agenda: A survey of current thinking and practice", Report submitted to the Japan International Cooperation Agency (May 2006)

Opinions

(with Tom Aston) "Working politically in practice: Lessons from an Innovative Programme in Nigeria", ODI Blog (29 November 2021)

(with T. Kelsall and P. Domingo) "How the G7 can champion a more contextually grounded vision for democracy and human rights", ODI Blog (1 June 2021)

"International aid is crucial to the UK's 'Global Britain' ambitions", openDemocracy Blog (11 May 2021)

"Six global trends to watch in 2020", ODI Multi-Blog (9 January 2020)

"Two priorities to overcome polarization and revitalise democracy", ODI Blog (19 December 2019)

"Dear Prime Minister: Five Priorities for the UK Government", ODI Multi-Blog (23 July 2019)

'Can democracy alone deliver prosperity and stability?' openDemocracy (21 September 2017)

"Colombia's women, tried by war, find new power", Foreign Policy (15 October 2015)

Political settlements and inclusion: who, what, how?", DLP blog (13 June 2015)

"Citizens + engagement: moving beyond slogans", World Bank, Governance for Development blog (19 March 2015)

"Ghana's democracy is driving great progress in health and education", The Guardian, Global Development blog (18 March 2015)

"Time for a grown up conversation about corruption", DLP blog (14 December 2014)

"History is so not over", Foreign Policy (17 September 2014)

'"Parlez-vous politics?' Or why working politically is like learning a language", From Poverty to Power blog, Oxfam (8 April 2014)

"Squaring the circle?" Contribution to a debate on governance post-2015, The Broker (7 August 2013)

'The Chasm between Elections and Democracy", Interview with the Dhaka Tribune (23 July 2013)

"Transition in Egypt", Prospect (8 July 2013)

"Transparency and accountability: Bringing the politics back in", Governance and Development blog, World Bank (21 May 2013)

"Kenya's peaceful elections doesn't make it a healthy democracy", Foreign Policy (22 March 2013)

"Institutions, yes, but which ones?", ODI Blog (19 November 2012)

"The PRI's telegenetic comeback kid", Financial Times –beyondbrics blog (9 July 2012)

"A requiem for Calderón", Foreign Policy (18 June 2012)

"Inequality won't take care of itself", Foreign Policy (27 April 2012)

'The Birth of a New Libya?", ODI Blog (2 February 2012)

"Transition in Egypt: the challenges of going beyond a democratic facade", ODI Blog (17 March 2010)