

Prof Andrea Rigon, SFHEA, Professor of Participatory Development Planning The Bartlett Development Planning Unit, University College London

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Areas of expertise

Inclusive urban development, urban planning, participatory planning, public participation, participatory methods, social diversity, urban resilience, poverty and inequalities, slum-upgrading, informal settlements, urban land tenure, urban conflict, intersectional inequalities, inequalities and climate change, social innovation and policy, mass displacement/forced migration in cities, higher education.

Skills

- **facilitate** and **mentor collaborative processes** to **design** and establish **new sustainable institutions, programmes, and frameworks** to address intractable challenges in complex contexts, with a diverse and large number of stakeholders
- bring together **different stakeholders**, including local communities, local and central governments, elected politicians, built environment professionals, NGOs, academia, media and private sector.
- active listener able to **quickly identify client's needs** and develop appropriate tailored solutions
- design and facilitate creative and **participatory development of organisational and programme strategies**, theories of change, evaluation frameworks, learning processes
- **policy-oriented research** and advocacy, **evidence gathering** for policy making
- design and deliver **participatory research, participatory learning** and **participatory decision-making** processes

Country Experience

Kenya, Sierra Leone, Lebanon, Uganda, Colombia, Brazil, Indonesia, Nigeria, Bolivia, Liberia, Philippines, Zimbabwe, , UK, Ireland, Italy.

Regional expertise of **Sub-Saharan Africa** and **Latin America**.

Selected Clients

DFID, UN-Habitat, ICF International, Comic Relief, CAFOD, Caritas Africa, IPSIA (ACLI Institute for Peace, Development, Innovation), Alphasights.

Languages

English, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese (spoken, read only), French (spoken, read only)

Profile Summary

- 19 years of research and consultancy experience in urban development working for academia, international NGOs, and consulting for the United Nations, international donors and government.
- Driven by a passion for impact and knowledge co-production, setting up new sustainable processes, programmes, institutions by focusing on effective project management:
 - founded and established an urban research centre in Sierra Leone in the post-Ebola context
 - first chair of the board of innovative UK charity and design studio CatalyticAction working with refugee and host populations in the Middle East; helped to set up internal processes and strategy.
 - opened the Kenya office of the IPSIA NGO
 - developed a new professional training course for African professionals with 6,900 participants
 - managed all teaching in the department, including approval of new MSc, a new programme of dissertation fellowships where students do their dissertation in partnership with external organisations, including development NGOs, foundations, consultancies.
- 12 years at the Bartlett Development Planning Unit, #1 faculty globally according to QS World University Ranking, within one of the universities consistently in the top 10 worldwide.
- Regular high impact publications in top-ranking journals.
- 15 years of teaching experience in higher education in 5 countries.
- Invited to deliver talks in four languages in six different countries.

Education / Qualifications

- 2018 Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (SFHEA).
2013 PhD in Sociology, Trinity College, Dublin. Institute for International Integration Studies.
2008 MSc in Globalisation & Development, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.
2005 BA in Development Studies, University of Pavia (Italy), 110/110 cum laude

Selected Professional History

- Current position **Professor of Participatory Development Planning**, the Bartlett Development Planning Unit, University College London (UCL); Leader, MSc Social Development Practice; Associate Professor (2019-23); Programme Director of Studies (2017-19); Lecturer (2014-19); Teaching Fellow (2012-14)
2012-14 Research Coordinator/Participate Policy and Advocacy Manager, CAFOD and Beyond 2015; Consultant, CAFOD
2010-11 Consultant, United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), Safer Cities Programme, Nairobi, Kenya
2009-11 Research Associate, Institute of Development Studies, University of Nairobi
2005-07 Kenya Country Coordinator; Project Manager (2005-6); IPSIA NGO, Nairobi

Selected Grants/Projects

- 2023-26 *Co-producing Digital Platforms for Youth Inclusive Urban Governance*. **Principal Investigator** (with Julian Walker). Funder (External): Botnar. Budget: **€1,000,030 (Indonesia, Lebanon)**.
2022-23 *Participatory Analysis of Co-designed Public Spaces In Beirut Post-blast Reconstruction*. **Principal Investigator**. Funder (External): AHRC. Budget: **€17,563 (Lebanon)**.
2019-20 *Empowering communities through participatory design of social infrastructures in areas affected by mass displacement*. **Principal Investigator**. Funder: Grand Challenges Research Fund. Budget: **£97,459 (Lebanon)**.
2018-19 *Bringing Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to Life*. **Principal Investigator**. Funder: CAFOD. Budget: **£125,000 (Liberia, Zambia, Kenya, Sierra Leone)**. This project involves supporting civil society and governments in African countries to reflect on the national implementation of the global Agenda 2030.
2017-19 *Public services and vulnerability in the Lebanese context of large-scale displacement*. **Co-Investigator**. Grand Challenges Research Fund, British Academy. Budget: **£300,000. (Lebanon)**.
2017-22 *RELIEF: Refugees, Education, Learning, Information Technology, and Entrepreneurship for the Future*. **Named Collaborator**. Funder: GCRF, ESRC. Budget: **£4,959,260. (Lebanon)**.
2015-18 *Sierra Leone Urban Research Centre (SLURC)*. **Co-Project Director, Co-Principal Investigator and Co-Founder**. Funder: DFID/Comic Relief. Budget: **£933,638 (Sierra Leone)**. The project involves a partnership with Njala University for the setting up of a research centre bringing together all major urban stakeholders in Freetown in order to develop research capacity and conduct world leading research, leading to equitable urban development in Sierra Leone.
2016-17 *Refugee self-reliance and humanitarian action in urban markets*. **Co-Principal Investigator**. Funder: Save the Children & DPU. Budget: **£114,500. (Lebanon, India, Greece)**.
2016 *Knowledge production in urban infrastructure: lessons from and to Sierra Leonean informal settlements*. **Principal Investigator**. Funder: EPSRC. Budget: **£7,400. (UK)**.
2014 *Wellbeing and citizenship in Urban Nigeria*. **Principal Investigator**. Funder: UK Department for International Development (DFID). Budget: **£57,500. (Nigeria)**. Research Programme: Urbanisation Research Nigeria (URN), led by ICF International.
2012-13 *COMPASS 2015*. **Principal Investigator**. Funder: CAFOD & DFID through Participate Programme. Budget: **£150,000** (multi-country: **Bolivia, Philippines, Uganda, Zimbabwe**). The final report was the outcome of a one-year participatory research project to get the views of communities living in extreme poverty about their priorities. The project involved leading 43 researchers and launched at the 2013 UN General Assembly to contribute to the SDGs.

Prizes, Awards and Other Appointments

- 2016-now **Chair of Board of Catalytic Action**, a UK Charity www.catalyticaction.org
2017-now **Board member, Sierra Leone Urban Research Centre (SLURC), Freetown**. Besides founding and building this centre, I am now supporting it as board member.
2019 **UCL Team Education Award**
2018 **Provost's Award for Public Engagement**, UCL, for my work in Sierra Leone
2018 **UCL Education Award**, to recognise my work in education at UCL.

Publications available here: <https://profiles.ucl.ac.uk/36450>