

# CURRICULUM VITAE

Dr Kirsti Samuels

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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I am a leader driven to achieve sustainable impact in the field of state and peace building with 14 years of experience. I am dedicated to building high performing organizations committed to social change.

I have a creative problem-solving orientation, informed by complex systems thinking, strategic planning methodologies, and impact measurement.

I have designed, developed and implemented multi-year, multi-state, multi-million dollar programs in close collaboration (and forming relationships of trust) with top country leadership involving both government and rebel actors. I have successfully managed cross-cultural teams in high stress environments to deliver politically sensitive programs.

I have over 10 years of experience working with countries in conflict, including Somalia, East Timor, Ecuador, Afghanistan, Haiti, Iraq and Sudan.

## EDUCATION

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### **Harvard University, John F Kennedy School of Government** **Masters in Public Administration**

(Cambridge MA, 2012)

*Fellow, Presidential Public Service Fellowship*

Coursework: Exercising Leadership: The Politics of Change (Ron Heifetz, Kennedy School), Leading and Governing High Performing Not for Profits (Allen Grosman, Business School), Politics and American Public Policy (Elaine Kaymark, Kennedy School), Making a Politician (Steve Jarding, Kennedy School), Systems Dynamics (Mark Paich, MIT), Social Institutions and Economic Development (Michael Woolcock, Kennedy School)

Teaching Fellow: Exercising Leadership, Kennedy School

Facilitator: Scenario Exercise on "The Future of Democracy in Libya"

Selected for "From Harvard Square to the Oval Office" (women's political training program)

Co-Chair Mid Career Women Caucus

### **Global Business Network** **Scenario Planning Training**

(1 week, San Francisco, 2010)

### **Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs** **Peace Mediation Training Course** (3 weeks, Switzerland, 2008)

### **Oxford University** **Dphil in Law**

(Magdalen College, Oxford UK, 2005)

My thesis was supervised by Sir Frank Berman and considers the legality of civil conflicts. It is entitled "Prohibited Civil Conflicts? Towards Norms of *Jus ad Bellum Internum*"

### **Sydney University** **Bachelor of Laws, First Class Honours** **Bachelor of Science, Genetics and Chemistry Majors**

(Sydney Australia, 1992 - 1996)

(Sydney Australia, 1991 - 1994)

**Centurion Hostile Environments and Emergency First Aid Course** (Washington DC, February 2004)

## **P R O F E S S I O N A L   E X P E R I E N C E**

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### **Conflict Dynamics International Senior Advisor, Governance and Peacebuilding**

(Khartoum, Sudan, Nairobi, Kenya, Boston, MA October 2010 - )

Conflict Dynamics International is a think tank that undertakes mediation support in ongoing peace processes. I led our Somalia portfolio, and was the Senior Advisor on the Sudan portfolio. I undertook dialogues with parties through an iterative consultative process, and developed strategic and substantive options with them for moving the peace process forward. As part of the Senior Leadership team in a rapidly growing organization (budget and staffing doubled in two years) I contributed to fundraising, working with the Board, building relationships with donors, mentoring staff, building a vision for the future of the organization, and working collaboratively with the Founder and partner organizations.

### **USAID/AECOM Sudan Project Political Transitions Specialist**

(Khartoum, Sudan April 2010-July 2010)

The project aim was to undertake an inclusive and participatory popular consultation to determine whether the Comprehensive Peace Agreement satisfied the aspirations of the people in Blue Nile and Southern Kordofan States. In partnership with the leadership in both States (ruling and opposition parties, rebel leaders, key members of the international community, and influential advisors to the President), I built consensus around the values, benefits and need for the process and helped create momentum to roll it out. I supported, coached, and guided AECOM joint national/international teams located in three geographic locations to deliver the ambitious program, while ensuring political buy-in from our national counterparts and AECOM Country leadership as well as USAID leadership. I oversaw the design of the multi-million dollar budgets and grant making by the State, I undertook the recruitment of new staff, led conferences of 200 - 1000 national actors, and provided technical and strategic advice to the Governors and Leaders of Parliament of both states.

### **Global Justice Project: Iraq/ US Department of State Legislative Advisor**

(Baghdad, Iraq, June - December 2009)

As a member of a high level expert team providing support to the Iraqi Parliament, and Iraqi Government as part of US Department of State initiatives, I advised on priority areas for action to stabilize the country and its democracy, and helped build capacity in the Office of the Speaker of Parliament, a number of parliamentary committees, the Commission Integrity, and Advisory Commission to the Prime Minister. I collaborated closely with the Department of State, and helped navigate the political environment, managing multiple priorities and projects, within a cross cultural, multi disciplinary team.

### **International IDEA Senior Program Manager, Constitution Building Program**

(Stockholm Sweden, March 2007 – September 2008)

As the head of the Constitution-Building Program, I designed and developed a 4 million Euro project that grew to a multi-country project involving a core team of 6 collaborating closely with an expert team of over 20 people. The team that I recruited and led created ConstitutionNet, the online resource and network, developed a training program, and advised in the constitutional process in Ecuador.

**UNDP Somalia**

**Lead Legal Advisor**

(Nairobi, Kenya and Baidoa Somalia, February 2006 – September 2006)

I worked as the lead legal advisor to UNDP Somalia in developing and managing a consortium project to support a peace building and constitution-making process in Somalia (est. budget USD 15 million).

I collaborated with the Somali transitional government to develop and pass legislation setting up a constitutional commission and constitution making process. I advised on the format of the commission, including regarding the importance of ethnic, religious and gender representation. I then undertook capacity building with the commission once it was nominated and assisted them to develop a support project that UNDP and its partners could undertake to assist them to gain the skills and knowledge required for them to undertake the peace-building and constitution building process.

**International Peace Academy**

**Head of State-Building Program**

(New York, January 2004-November 2005)

As head of the State-Building Program I conceptualized and implemented a two year \$900 000 research program exploring the legitimacy, effectiveness, and sustainability of international attempts at post conflict state-building. The focus was on institutional strengthening and capacity building in the various elements of post-conflict state building.

**Policy Consultant**

I have also consulted at various times between 2006 and 2012 to the Clinton Global Initiative, World Bank, DFID, Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre, UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention & Recovery, Women for Women International and others.

**University of Oxford**

**Lecturer in Law**

(University College, January 2001- December 2002)

**Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australian Government**

**Member of Australian Permanent Delegation to UNESCO**

(Paris, January 1999 – December 1999)

**High Court of Australia**

**Clerk to High Court Justice**

(Chambers of Justice McHugh, January 1998 – December 1998)

The Australian High Court is the constitutional court and court of final appeal. As Clerk to Justice McHugh, my responsibilities included researching and writing draft judgments, debating legal issues with the Judge, preparing advisory memos on special leave applications, and assisting during court hearings.

## SELECT PUBLICATIONS

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I have published widely in the fields of peacebuilding, state building, constitution building and rule of law reform. I list some examples below:

“Somalia’s constitution making process” in *Accord 21: Whose peace is it anyway? Connecting Somali and international peacemaking*, edited by Mark Bradbury and Sally Healy (Conciliation Resources, 2010)

“Justice Sector Development Assistance in Post-Conflict Countries: In Search of Strategy” in *The Future of SSR* Edited by Mark Sedra (Centre for International Governance Innovation, 2010)

“Constitutional Choices and Statebuilding in Postconflict Countries” in *The Dilemmas of Statebuilding: Confronting the Contradictions of Postwar Peace Operations* edited by Roland Paris and Timothy Sisk (Routledge, 2008)

*Political Violence and the International Community: Developments in International Law and Policy* (Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2007)

Rule of Law Reform in Post-Conflict Countries: Operational Initiatives and Lessons Learnt (World Bank Social Development Papers series Oct 2006)

Sustainability and peace-building: A key challenge (Journal of Development in Practice, Volume 15, Number 6 (November, 2005))

State-building and the Political Transition after Conflict (Proceedings of the American Society of International Law Annual Conference, 2005)