

Senior Consultant

PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

Laura Hopkins is an experienced evaluator working in Itad's organisation effectiveness theme group. Laura's recent experience includes evaluating the effectiveness of a network of advocacy organisations in the global health sector and conducting external reviews of DFID's work in the extractives sector in Ghana. She is also highly experienced in designing and managing MEL frameworks and guidance and has previously managed a portfolio of Economic Reform projects in Afghanistan.

Prior to joining Itad Laura worked as an independent consultant, focusing on M&E assignments, and acting as Project Manager for Smart CSOs Lab, an international partnership of more than 1000 activists, civil society leaders, researchers and funders aiming to fundamentally rethink and redesign how activists and change agents in civil society can effectively work towards a systemic change.

Laura has a Masters in Economics of Public Policy from the Barcelona Graduate School of Economics and is fluent in Spanish.

NATIONALITY British

LANGUAGES English (Mother Tongue); Spanish (Professional Capability); Dutch (Beginner)

COUNTRY EXPERIENCE Afghanistan; Bolivia; Ethiopia; Ghana; Kenya; Mongolia; Peru; Rwanda; Tanzania; Uganda; United Kingdom

EDUCATION

2013 - 2014 **MSc Specialized Economic Analysis (Public Policy)**
Barcelona Graduate School of Economics

2006 - 2010 **BSc Economics and Politics**
University of Bath

EMPLOYMENT

2017 – Present **Consultant**
Itad

2014 – 2017 **Independent MEL and Strategy Consultant**
Extractives Hub, Global, MEL Lead

- Designed a MEL Framework for an online portal designed to provide best-practice guidance on the management of the extractives sector for public officials in resource rich countries in the global South
- Facilitated inputs on the design of MEL from team members working on the various aspects of the development of the online portal, including in-country champions and focal points across a number of African countries
- Supported team members to understand their role in MEL

Smart CSOs Lab

- Investigated insights from pluralist economic approaches, behavioural and cognitive science, and movement building theory, to support global development.
- Identified and applied to funders; wrote and sent proposals. Wrote successful proposals to secure 25% of the operating budget for 2017.

Coordinated closely with the Lab's strategic lead on the Lab's strategy, including review of Lab structure and governance.

East Africa Geothermal Energy Facility

- Designed MEL Framework for this multi-year, multi-country project to support the

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development of the policy environment for the geothermal sector in the East Africa region

- Developed a handbook of guidance to support the use of the framework by a geographically disparate team
- Facilitated learning sessions for the team to understand the role of MEL in their work

2011 – 2013, Project Manager

2008 - 2009 Adam Smith International, Afghanistan

- Programme delivery, business development, and technical advisory responsibilities for a global leading development consultancy. Sole responsibility for the Economic Reform group in ASI's second largest market. Identified new leads and wrote winning proposals for more than £7 million worth of new business whilst in the role.

Examples of project work:

- Ministry of Mines, Afghanistan: Multi-year reform programme to support the good governance of the extractives sector, expected to form the major part of the country's future economic development. Phase 1 focused on building a Business Plan for the ministry; Phase 2 focused on capacity development for implementing this business plan and investment promotion activities and bid evaluation for tendered deposits.
- Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Afghanistan: Three-year, multimillion pound project to support the MOCI in its objectives of promoting private sector development. In addition to developing the administrative functions of the ministry, worked alongside ministry counterparts to design interventions to create an enabling environment for business, focusing on key sectors and regions for policy reform.

2010 - 2011

Business Analyst

White Space Strategy

- Technical consulting and market research for a niche business strategy consultancy, providing advice to a client portfolio that included FTSE 100 companies, leading charitable organisations and business start-ups.

Examples of project work:

- Development of data analysis proposition: developed a company capability for data-intensive projects; produced advanced Excel and SPSS models to take to sales meetings and trained staff on techniques used.

RELEVANT PROJECT EXPERIENCE

2018 – Present MEL Capacity Development for the Global Fund Advocacy Portfolio

(BMGF) *MEL Consultant and Project Manager*

Building capacity for Measurement, Learning and Evaluation across a portfolio of Global Fund advocacy grantees

- Designing a bespoke framework for understanding the role of MEL for advocacy across organisations of varying sizes and foci
- Designing an approach to MEL capacity development that integrates with existing processes and culture to support long-term adoption of new practices

2017 – Present Raising Data Capability – Learning Journey Facilitation

(DFID HQ) *Coordinator and Researcher*

Supporting DFID to explore how to raise their data capability for better decision making

- Designing and delivering a workshop to develop a shared understanding of the role of data, evidence, and research within DFID
- Researching best practice in understanding the role of data, evidence and knowledge to support to DFID conversations

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- 2017 – 2018** **Global Health Research and Development Advocacy Evaluation**
(BMGF, Brussels and Berlin) *Evaluator*
Portfolio evaluation of grantees working on global health research and development (GHRD) advocacy in the EU and German markets
- Primary and secondary data collection through key informant interviews and focus group discussions with stakeholders in the GHRD space in both geographies
 - Data processing and analysis based on an adapted evaluation method of Contribution Analysis to understand grantee influence on GHRD outcomes vis-à-vis their advocacy partners and other factors
 - Developing written inputs for evaluation final report
- 2016 – 2016** **Ghana Oil and Gas for Inclusive Growth**
(DFID, Ghana) *Evaluator, Annual Review*
Mid-term evaluation of this five-year, £15million DFID-funded project;
- Two week in-country trip, conducting interviews with DFID responsible staff, project managers, Ghana government clients and project team members to build a 360-degree picture of project delivery.
 - Final report delivered on time and to client satisfaction.
- 2016 – 2016** **Western Regional Coastal Fund**
(DFID, Ghana) *Evaluator, Annual Review*
- Mid-term evaluation of this five-year, £10million DFID-funded project to develop a vehicle for oil and gas corporate social responsibility spending in the western region of Ghana.
 - Interviewed team members, fund recipients, oil and gas players, and donor counterparts to understand the project context and progress.
 - Final report delivered on time and to client satisfaction.
- 2015 – 2016** **Geothermal Enabling Environment, East Africa**
(DFID, East Africa) *Results Monitoring Adviser*
- Results Monitoring Adviser for a £6million, three-year DFID project across five East African countries, designed to improve the regulatory environment for geothermal energy and increase investment in the sector.
 - Designed Theory of Change, log frame indicators, baselines, and targets.
 - Designed monitoring tools and process, including a client feedback survey, and developed a comprehensive Results Monitoring Handbook.
 - Designed and delivered training sessions for relevant team members on their role in the monitoring, evaluation and learning processes.
- 2015 – 2016** **Extractive Industries Resource Hub**
(DFID, Global) *Monitoring and Evaluation Adviser*
- Designed the approach and wrote the winning proposal for this £4.5million, five year DFID programme for the development of an extractive industry best-practice signposting website.
 - Subsequently hired on to the team as the Monitoring and Evaluation Adviser, where she designed and delivered the Monitoring and Evaluation, Framework, and Handbook, including Theory of Change and Log frame.
- 2011 – 2013** **Ministry of Mines Institutional Reform**
(DFID, Afghanistan) *Project Manager*
Long-term technical assistance to the Ministry of Mines, Afghanistan to develop and implement a business plan that supported a greater degree of private sector involvement in the mining

sector

- Managed staff and other resource inputs for the £3million project budget
- Developed a successful proposal for a three-year follow-on phase of work to the existing support
- Developed productive working relationships with donor and ministry clients
- Technical inputs into project reporting and other monitoring and evaluation