



CSC Evaluation and Monitoring Programme

Impact on gender

Ingrid Palmary



Professor Ingrid Palmary is an Associate Professor at the University of Witwatersrand, based in Johannesburg, South Africa. She completed a PhD in Psychology from Manchester Metropolitan University in 2005. Ingrid's main research areas include gender and violence, a topic which dates back to her PhD. She also coordinates Master's and PhD programmes on Forced Migration within the University of Witwatersrand, as well as having general teaching responsibilities.

PhD research

Before undertaking a PhD, Ingrid worked for the Centre for the Study of Violence (CSV) and Reconciliation, a non-profit organisation based in Johannesburg, which throughout the 1990s played a central role in South Africa's Truth Commission. Ingrid centred her PhD research on a project conducted by the CSV and still continues to do research work for them today. Ingrid's PhD research topic investigated women's engagement with political change and its relation to violence and conflict across the African region, with particular focus on the DRC and Rwanda. Ingrid was able to publish her PhD and produce a report for the CSV which they continue to use as a fundraising tool for their work and also as a means of reflecting on their own practices.

Returning to work

Ingrid credits having a PhD for helping her to find employment easily upon her return to South Africa. She noted, "There aren't many people with PhDs in South Africa, so it does matter a lot." Ingrid expressed that the PhD enabled her to transition from the NGO sector into academia.

As an Associate Professor at the University of Witwatersrand, Ingrid conducts research on gender violence and migration. She also coordinates the department's Master's and PhD programme in Forced Migration, where she both teaches and supervises post graduate students. Ingrid's research centre is inter-

disciplinary and conducts various works in the areas of the South African asylum system, the intersections of domestic and political violence, alternative perspectives on trauma, post conflict reconstruction and reconciliation, among other relevant themes.

Ingrid played a significant role in shaping the department's Forced Migration studies programme. She designed two out of three courses when the programme first began running. She was able to structure the degree in a way that she believed would be effective. She noted, "I think I was really lucky in that when I joined the programme, although it had been officially running since 1998, it hadn't done very much. And so I had an enormous amount of freedom to do things as I wanted. Because I was also playing the role of coordinating teaching programmes, in many ways I've had a lot of flexibility to do things my way."

Knowledge and skills

Ingrid credits her PhD for providing her with in-depth knowledge in the field of work that she continues to use in her current work. She also stated that she was able to greatly improve her writing skills through strong supervision that in the long run, has helped her to publish work.

Links to the UK

Ingrid chose to undertake a PhD at Manchester Metropolitan University because many experts in her field worked there. She asserted that it was a very warm and

supportive environment and continues to work with her supervisor, Erica Burman. In 2010, they co-edited a book called *Gender and Migration*, which also involved other colleagues from her department in Manchester. Ingrid noted that Erica has been nominated as an honorary researcher in their centre in South Africa, and that she is an affiliate of their programme, indicating a continued close working relationship. Ingrid also continues to collaborate on projects with other people who were students at the time she undertook her award, including co-authoring journal articles with some of them.

Through her links to the UK, Ingrid has been able to secure around 3 million South African rand (approximately £300,000) for research projects not only in monetary terms, but also through co-publications which bring in money from indirect means. Ingrid credits the Commonwealth award to leading to at least six joint projects, some which were short exchanges or workshops, and others that lasted up to three years.

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Development impact

Socioeconomic impact

In addition to conducting research on gender and violence and coordinating Master’s and PhD programmes on Forced Migration at the University of Witwatersrand, Ingrid supervises postgraduate students and teaches courses on research methods. Her research centre is involved in a lot of applied research, all of which she asserted is policy-relevant. One such example is of her involvement on a project surrounding access to anti-retro viral medication (ARVs) for treatment of HIV/AIDS that purported the public health benefits of not implementing an immigration policy that could potentially deny people from accessing ARVs. The research and recommendations she conducted argued that people accessing ARVs should not need to identify themselves in South Africa. This particular project came alongside a whole range of policy dialogues with key government officials.

Ingrid has been heavily involved in research and policy dialogues surrounding gender-based violence in the asylum system in South Africa. She continues to engage with the Department of Home Affairs helping to design training programmes for refugee status determination officers on how to cope with gender-based persecution. She is currently doing work on LGBT claims that have been brought to the South African asylum system which Lawyers for Human Rights are using both in resettlement claims and for broader litigation purposes.

Ingrid has worked with a number of donor organisations on key issues. She’s advised Atlantic Philanthropies, an organisation that provides grants to a number of different development projects, on who to fund in the migrants right sector in South Africa. She also worked with UNICEF and Save the Children on migrant children programming.

Government policy

In regard to impacting government policy, Ingrid has participated in a number of government and NGO forums managing the humanitarian crisis on the Zimbabwe/South African border, specifically work on human trafficking legislation. Her research centre was particularly vocal on the conflation of trafficking and sex work around the World Cup in South Africa in 2010. Through making submissions to the policy process, she was able to disconnect various aspects of sex work from trafficking in a more sensible way. Alongside that, she has been involved with a series of work for the International Organisation of Migration (IOM) helping to develop their training programmes and reviewing curriculum for them. Through all of her work, Ingrid has been able to not only shape the implementation of government policy, but also help to make changes in actual policy stance.

Ingrid’s Commonwealth award

In regard to the Commonwealth Awards, Ingrid believes it provides an experience that would have otherwise been impossible to undertake. She credits the academic training she received to her professional development but felt the opportunity to study outside of her own environment, thus enabling her to broaden her horizons, was of equal importance. She also recognises the Commonwealth award for being well-known internationally and very generous in regard to its grants. Ingrid noted, “On a personal level, I would have never met the people I met and continue to work with if it hadn’t been for the Commonwealth award.”

Commonwealth Scholarship Commission in the UK

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