

Curriculum Vitae of Selina Palm

1. Personal information

Nationality: South African/English. British citizen. Permanent resident status in South Africa.

Languages: English (fluent); German (basic)

Expertise and Interests: Religion, development and human rights; child protection participation and rights; Gender-based and Child violence; LGBTIQ activism; Creative theological pedagogies for social justice and peace; youth work.

Academic qualifications:

- Ph.D. in Theology & Development: Reimagining the Human? The role of the churches in building a liberating human rights culture in South Africa today. 2016. University of Kwa-Zulu Natal, South Africa
- M.Th in Systematic Theology and Ethics. *Cum Laude*; 2012; Stellenbosch University, South Africa. Thesis: The role of hope in social transformation.
- Postgraduate Diploma in Theology. *Cum Laude*; 2009; Stellenbosch University, South Africa.
- MA in Interdisciplinary Human Rights (Law, Philosophy, Politics, Sociology). Thesis. A holistic gender-based human rights approach to sex-work. 2002; University of Essex, UK.
- Post-Graduate Certificate in Development Management. *Cum Laude*. 2005. Open University, United Kingdom.
- BSc Business *Cum Laude*: 1998; Manchester Metropolitan University, United Kingdom.

2 Professional career

January 2017 – ongoing.

Senior Researcher, Unit for Religion & Development Research, Stellenbosch University.

The Unit for Religion and Development Research (URDR) is an interdisciplinary, interfaith research unit at Stellenbosch University in South Africa. It has carried out projects in over 20 countries, across 5 continents with organisations, governments, networks and foundations. It focuses on engaged scholarship, building an evidence base for change, developing theory from below and providing evaluations, technical support, training and capacity building to organisations to bridge gaps between theory and practice. The URDR has expertise in intersections between religion, culture and social violences and their wider social norms. Some research projects I worked on are included below:

Tackling Religious Resistance to Ending Child Marriage for GirlsNotBrides (April – November 2018). Empirical study exploring the social norms and beliefs behind religious leader resistance to ending child marriage (ECM). Informed GNB's large members network of 1000 organisations. Carried out KIIs across Hindu, Muslim and Christian faith traditions in Asia, South America and Africa with multiple NGOs and extensive document review.

Ending Child Violence and Faith Communities (2018 ongoing), for the Consortium of the Joint Learning Initiative on Faith and Local Communities. Delivered an interfaith Scoping Study for the End Child Violence Hub to assess current evidence, identify emerging issues and trends and provide insights for hub members, policy makers and practitioners for future research needs in relation to the involvement and underlying beliefs of faith communities in EVAC. Consultation with experts via KIIs and a case study/literature review process. External Report & briefs forthcoming.

Safeguarding Children in Church Settings for Rondebosch United Church (2019). Developing policy and staff training modules for child protection in collaboration with the World Council of Churches new global initiative and a local NGO to develop locally tailored and relevant materials and training around child protection/participation in church settings

Violence against Women and Children and the Mother Union for Episcopal Relief and Development (2018-ongoing). Research project utilising creative Photovoice methodologies to explore gendered and social norms held by women in the Anglican Mother Union in Zambia. Delivered face to face training for Zambian research assistants and ongoing mentoring support as well as KIIs and feedback to senior church leaders. This project will be piloted in Burundi in 2019.

Violence against women and women's inclusion in grassroots reconciliation processes, for the UN Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers (2018). Relying on literature review, the study conducted research on women's roles in peace processes. Including case studies from different regions of the world, it argued for a gender-relational approach to conflict transformation and the importance of capacity building religious leaders. This was further developed by me with regard to nurturing new theologies for peace at a conference in June 2018.

Engaging with Faith Groups to Prevent Violence Against Women and Girls in Conflict-affected Communities, for Tearfund (as part of a UK DFID grant) (2015-2019). This three-year intervention focuses on primary prevention of violence against women and girls in 15 conflict-affected communities in Ituri Province, Democratic Republic of Congo. The research project tracks its implementation and impact which focuses on transforming masculinities, and includes baseline and endline KABP surveys, 6 monthly cohort studies with key beneficiary groups, and endline data collection.

Working effectively with faith leaders to challenge harmful traditional practices, for UK DFID (2017). As part of the Consortium of the Joint Learning Initiative on Faith and Local Communities, the URDR investigated the role of faith leaders in addressing harmful traditional practices, doing case studies of five international faith-based organisations. The project included a literature review, case studies of five international faith-based organisations and their activities on harmful traditional practices, and an on-line survey.

Evaluation of the Channels of Hope Gender Scale Up Project, for World Vision International (2018)

Studying the international scale-up of World Vision's Channels of Hope Gender programming, the study conducted a survey and key informant interviews, as well as document and literature review. It also reflected on the adaptation of the model to new religious contexts, to provide recommendations for World Vision's future use of the program.

Youth spiritual formation for intersectional social justice, for Rondebosch United Church (2017-2020). This research project works with a local church in Cape Town using a semi-structured interview design on youth spirituality and social justice. It emphasises the importance of creative pedagogy and youth participation in new ways of understanding church together, re-interpreting theological themes to resonate with contemporary contexts. It draws on Dr Palm's 12 years of experience here designing grassroots pedagogies for change on religious social norms

Lessons learned from LGBTIQ-inclusive congregations in Cape Town, for The Other Foundation (2018). This research project employs a mixed methodology including a literature review and 18 KIIs with five church denominations in Cape Town, South Africa. It builds on recent quantitative data regarding shifts in social attitudes to homosexuality to offer a smaller qualitative study on changes within religious spaces that prioritises the voices of LGBTIQ people themselves. A research report entitled "From Exclusion to Embrace" was externally published by me in April 2019.

2. Previous job roles

Aug 2017-Jan 2018, Senior Lecturer in Gender Health and Theology, Stellenbosch University.

Responsible for part-time coordination, teaching, supervision and examination of an adult-learning MTh program on Gender, Health and Theology, funded by the Church of Sweden. Topics engaged included harmful traditional practices, intimate partner violence, sexual and reproductive health, LGBTIQ rights, engaging critically with religious and social norms around gender and sexuality, transforming masculinities in sacred texts and interrogating problematic patterns of faith and healing. This program included collaboration between academia and community partners in the fields of LGBTIQ, Gender and HIV/AIDS and used creative methodologies to enable student change and growth.

Oct 2010 – Jan 2013, Africa Director, HOPEHIV, Cape Town

Responsible for strategic direction, hosting donor exposure visits, driving business development, approving grant allocation and staff performance, financial, strategic and organisational management of all three Africa offices working with a diverse range of community partners, both faith and non-faith, across 10 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. Drove innovations and documented and shared lessons learned in community-owned responses to children and youth orphaned or made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS in four areas: child rights, education, emotional & social support and sustainable livelihoods. A sample of the specific projects and initiatives that I drove are listed below.

- **Rights-based Curriculum Development.** Gold Peer Education Agency, South Africa (2008). Design of behaviour change practical toolkit curriculum sessions on human rights and youth advocacy to mainstream a rights-based approach into a values-based behaviour change model on HIV/AIDS. Carried out field visits, interviews and FGD discussions to evaluate and improve the program in South Africa, Botswana and Zambia.
- **Creative Arts Therapies Model.** 2006-12. Helped establish a play-based methodology and develop it into Zakheni Arts Therapy Foundation. Supported the design, roll out and accreditation of a TOT model in two countries with NGO partners focused on changing the experiences of vulnerable children and caregivers.
- **Psycho-social support church-based program roll out.** 2006-10. Technical support to develop a Zimbabwe-camp model into a flexible weekly kids clubs program in partnership with the Salvation Army through its local congregations. Roll out into Zimbabwe, Zambia, Kenya, Tanzania, Malawi, Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland.
- **Child Rights School and Community Clubs.** 2008-12. Technical support to design, pilot and roll out a new model in Kenya including child staffed help desks and locally designed toolkits to tackle child abuse and support local child protection systems in partnership with the African Network against the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (ANPCAN). Rolled out and adapted into Tanzania and Zanzibar.
- **Children Affected by Conflict.** 2006-12. Design of models for rehabilitation of former child soldiers, children affected by war and by HIV/AIDS living in internally displaced people's camps in Northern Uganda in partnership with faith-based organisations including Oasis, World Vision, Salvation Army and ACET. Identified, adapted and piloted new models of conflict sensitive child centred interaction including training and youth participation in orphan affairs councils. Roll out and adaption of these models within post-conflict contexts.
- **Street-Child Engagement.** 1999-2012. Technical support and program design/evaluation for street-child programs in Nairobi, Durban, Harare & Manila. Focus on reducing violence and abuse, socio-economic transformation, peer and gang-related structures, social reintegration, aftercare, prevention, child participation in program design. I was also a board trustee for 5 years for an Asian project (2000-2005).
- **Stigma and Discrimination Project. Kenya.** 2001-5. Conceptualised, designed and managed a large 2-year Community Reach (PACT Kenya/USAID) Stigma & Discrimination Reduction Project in Nyanza Province, developing 15 new community-based initiatives. Impact assessed/documentated by me for PACT and recognised as a best practice model. Provided field-based training in M&E and financial reporting.

Oct 2005 – Aug 2010 Africa Projects Manager, HOPEHIV, Cape Town. Co-founded the Africa office of HOPEHIV (now WeSeeHope), a faith-inspired NGO. Managed local partners across 11 countries with responsibility for proposal design, evaluation, monitoring, impact assessment, technical support and community field visits. This portfolio doubled over my time from 20 to 44 projects and developed a child rights-based strategic approach.

April 2002 - Dec 2005. Business Development Officer, Mildmay International, UK. International faith-based organisation with a focus on pioneering HIV care, training and technical support in partnership with Ministries of Health, academic institutions and community-based organisations in East and Southern Africa. Held responsibility for technical bid design, donor reporting, M&E, designing stories of change databases, project management and public representation to DFID, World Bank and AIDS Consortium, USAID, EU, CDC, CRS.

Oct 2001-Apr 2002. Research and Training Administrator, Mildmay International, UK. Set up and developed new staff learning spaces, communication tools and library materials as well as systems for project management. Undertook research to identify good practice resources and to share these within the organisation

Independent Consulting

Part-time Theological educator & Curriculum Consultant. July 2016-ongoing. Cornerstone Institute, Cape Town. Involving the design and development of new blended learning approaches including online course design and weekly lessons and assignments, using videos and quizzes, experiential methodologies and innovative theological pedagogies drawing on Southern scholarship to shape course design. Designed, developed and ran two 4-month undergraduate student courses in Human Identity and Christology (with a specific focus on gender), and on Churches, Power and Spirituality. Guest lecturer at Stellenbosch University, University of Kwa-Zulu Natal and Whitley Baptist College on theology, development & human rights topics.

Accredited Gender Reconciliation Facilitator (2018) with Gender Equity and Reconciliation International (GERI) tackling social and gender norms. Trained as a trainer through a one-year modular program www.genderreconciliationinternational.org/. This model has also been adapted for multiple contexts.

2016. ACTIVATE Youth Leadership Network, South Africa. Researcher on key themes including power, human rights, shame and citizenship for bottom up social mobilisation across their nation-wide network of 2000 young leaders.

Sexualities Research 2016. Researched and co-wrote LGBTIQ sexualities report for the Presbyterian Church Synod of Southern Africa General Assembly. Liaison person with Inclusive & Affirming Ministries, South Africa.

Child Justice Program Process Evaluation. Jan – March 2014. Carried out a 3-month process evaluation on the Child Witness Program for RAPCAN (Resources Against Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect), Cape Town. This involved design, collection and analysis of qualitative data, in-depth interviews with government and NGO workers and a focus group with 20 female community stakeholders running the program. The 28-page evaluation report was commissioned by and submitted to the Dept of Social Development South Africa.

Rondebosch United Church Lay-leader. (2006-ongoing) Design and run alternative church events using creative methodologies that link faith and social issues; designing new social justice liturgies; develop curricula for youth programs that nurture spiritualities for the child; run a social justice forum. Analysed “teach & engage” model for 100 children and youth. Collected data on attendance, engagement and age-appropriate curriculum and liaised with child development specialists. Consolidated and mentored a new pedagogical model and team.

Consultant and Cofacilitator with South Africa’s National Planning Commission (NPC) project for Child Rights and Participation. (2018-ongoing) Cofacilitator on sexuality issues in Eastern Cape Workshop. Carried out Atlas.ti analysis of child-generated qualitative research data from all nine provinces and made contribution to report from the NPC.

3. Academic Research outputs

Recent Journal Publications

- Palm, S. 2018. “Religion, Gender Norms and Campus Rape Culture: Building Resistance from Below”. *Politeia* Vol 37(92).
- Palm, S. 2018. “Always Reforming? Nurturing a Church for Human Rights”. *Stellenbosch Theological Journal*. Vol 4(1):321-246.
- Palm, S. 2016. “Reimagining the Human? Disrupting Injustice? Towards a liberating hermeneutic for human rights in South Africa today”. *Journal of Gender and Religion in Africa* 23(1): 83-104.
- Palm, S. 2014. “Liberating Human Rights? Insights from Abdullahi An-Na’im for present day South Africa”. *Acta Academia* 46(4):93-116.

- Palm, S. and Le Bruyns, C. 2013. "Transforming Hope? A Theological-Ethical Vision, Virtue and Practice for the Common Good". *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*. 146:104-121.

Recent book chapters

- Palm, S. (2019). "Re-imagining Sin: Nurturing Youth Spiritualities for Social Justice". In *Cultivating Change Agents* eds. J Claassens and C Van der Walt. Stellenbosch: Sun Media.
- Palm, S. (forthcoming in 2019). "Building Bridges or Walls? Human Rights and Religious Freedom - A South African history". In *Many Modernities - Freedom of Religion in Different Settings* eds. Goran Gunther, Dion Forster. Pickwick Publishers, Eugene OR, US.
- Palm, S & Le Roux, E. (2018). "Households of Freedom? Faith's role in challenging gendered geographies of violence in our cities". In *Just faith: Glocal responses to planetary urbanization*. ed. Stephan De Beer. AOSIS Online.

Recent policy briefs

- Palm, S., Le Roux, E., Bezzolato, E., Deepan, P. O'Sullivan, V., Lele, U. (2019). *Rethinking Relationships: From Violence to Peace*. DFID Policy Brief. Online: <https://www.whatworks.co.za/documents/publications/290-what-works-rethinking-relationships-final-march-2019/file>
- Palm, S., Le Roux, E., & Bartelink, B.E. 2017. *Amplifying Development: Partnering with Faith*. Policy Brief. Joint Learning Initiative on Faith and Local Communities.
- Bartelink, B.E., Le Roux, E. & Palm, S. 2017. *Sleeping Giants: Mobilising Faith Leaders as Agents of Change*. Policy Brief. Joint Learning Initiative on Faith and Local Communities.
- Le Roux, E. & Bartelink, B.E. & Palm, S. 2017. *What is the harm in 'harmful traditional practices'* Policy Brief. Joint Learning Initiative on Faith and Local Communities.

Recent research reports

- Palm, S. (2019). *From Exclusion to Embrace: Towards LGBTIQ belonging in local churches*. The Other Foundation, South Africa. Online: <http://blogs.sun.ac.za/urdr/files/2019/03/FromExclusiontoEmbraceResearchReport.April2019.pdf>
- Palm, S., Le Roux, E., Bezzolato, E., Deepan, P., Corboz, J. Lele, U., O'Sullivan, V & Jewkes, R. (forthcoming in 2019) *Rethinking Relationships: Moving from Violence to Equality. What works to prevent violence against women and girls in the DRC*. Endline findings report for DFID.
- Le Roux, E. & Palm, S. 2017. *What lies beneath? Tackling the roots of religious resistance to ending child marriage*. Published Research Report. GirlsNotBrides. Access at: <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/resource-centre/what-lies-beneath-tackling-the-roots-of-religious-resistance-to-ending-child-marriage/>
- Palm, S. & Le Roux, E. 2018. *Women, religion and violence: The need for a gender-relational approach to conflict transformation*. Internal Research Report for the Network on Traditional and Religious Peacekeepers. 2018
- Palm, S., Le Roux, E., & Bartelink, B.E. 2017. Case study with Christian Aid as part of the UK Government-funded 'Working effectively with faith leaders to challenge harmful traditional practices'. Online:
- Le Roux, E., and Palm, S. 2017. Tearfund UK Internal report: *Analysis of Faith Leader Community Members and Gender Champion Panel Visit 3 in Rethi, Congo*.
- Palm, S. 2014. *External Process Evaluation of the Child Witness Program Handover from Rapcan to Childline*. Internal Evaluation Report for Department of Social Development, South Africa.

Selected media publications and presentations

- Palm, S. 2019. *How South African churches can make LGBTIQ people feel safer*. Press article published in The Conversation. Online: <https://theconversation.com/how-south-african-churches-can-make-lgbtqi-people-feel-safer-114303> 31 March 2019.
- Palm, S. 2018. SU builds bridges through research into faith and gender justice. Division for Social Impact. Website article. 11 December 2018. Access at <http://www.sun.ac.za/english/Lists/news/DispForm.aspx?ID=6093>
- Palm, S. 2018. *Church outrage against smacking aids violence against South Africa's children*. Press article published in The Conversation. Online: <https://theconversation.com/church-outrage-over-spanking-ban-aids-violence-against-south-africas-children-88098>. 14 Jan 2018.
- Palm, S. & Le Roux, E. 2017. *Taking note of the gendered implications of reconciliation*. Paper presented at Exploring the Role of Religion and Reconciliation in Political Transition Workshop 22-23 May 2017.
- Palm, S. United Nations Commission of the Status of Women Presentation and Panel. *Building Bridges: Engaging Faith Communities around ending harmful traditional practices*. Sponsored by Danish Embassy and Act Alliance.
- Palm, S. 2018. *Religious Leader Engagement in Ending Child Marriage*. Delivered Interactive workshop with GNB members at GNB Global Conference, Malaysia.
- Reproductive Justice Conference, Grahamstown, South Africa. Panel Discussion on Abortion & Religion.
- Palm, S. *"Blessed are the Peacemakers? Are peace and reconciliation processes bad for women?"* Paper Presentation at The Theological Society of Southern Africa Conference, South Africa. June 2018
- G20 InterFaith Conference in Berlin. Germany. 2017. Panel presentation on Africa, Religion and Development.
- Palm, S. 'Relinquishing the Imperial Impulse? Reclaiming the rights of the poor. Lessons from South Africa.' Presented at International Conference on Global Poverty, 25-27th Oct 2016, Istanbul, Turkey.
- Palm, S. 'Embodying Justice? Building a human rights culture in South Africa'. Paper presented at 2016 Global Network for Public Theology Conference, 24-26th October 2016. Stellenbosch University.
- Palm, S. "Practicing Hope: Bridging the Gap? The role of churches in building a human rights culture: Interdisciplinary lessons from South Africa." Paper presented Sept 2016 at 6th ReDi Diakonia Conference, Finland.

4. Recognitions, memberships and awards

- 2018. Academic Expert on End Child Violence Hub, Joint Learning Initiative for Faith and Local Communities
- 2018. Gender Reconciliation Facilitator (2018). www.genderreconciliationinternational.org/
- 2011 ongoing. Member of Southern Africa Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians
- 2010-2018. Child Sector Synergos Fellow with Leadership & Innovation Network for Collaboration
- 2015-2018. Social Justice Chair and Lay-Leader at Rondebosch United Church (2006-2018).
- 2012. Rector's Award for best theological Masters Thesis, Stellenbosch University.
- 2004. Founding Member - Orphans & Vulnerable Children (OVC) Working Group. UK AIDS Consortium.
- 2000. Selected as 4-month volunteer living at Philippines street child education and care project
- 1995. Awarded 3-month Erasmus academic exchange to University of Ulm, Germany.

References available on request.