

Nicholas J. Wilson

[version date 2025.5]

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njwsn.github.io

Economist and research consultant: development and political economy in East Africa, focus on fragility and state capacity. Extensive research experience and several years working in Kenya and South Sudan.

EDUCATION

Nova School of Business and Economics

PhD, Economics

Lisbon, PT

2024-Present

- *Fields: Political Economy, Development Economics*
- *Advisor: Prof. Alex Armand*
- *Affiliation: NOVAFRICA knowledge center*

Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München

MSc, Economics

Grade: 1.14, *Sehr Gut* (Top ranked student)

Munich, DE

2020-23

- *Advisor: Prof. Mathias Bühler*
- *Visiting student: Higher School of Economics - Moscow (2021-22)*

University of Warwick

BSc, Economics

Grade: 70, *First Class Honours*

Coventry, GB

2013-17

- *Visiting student: University of Amsterdam (2015-16)*

EXPERIENCE

OTHERwise Research

Technical Advisor

Remote

2024-Present

- Consult for a development research firm, advising on analysis, outreach, sampling, and study design.

Forcier Consulting

Research Manager

Juba, SS

2022-24

- Managed an office of 20 full-time staff conducting data collection and research across South Sudan.

University of Massachusetts (UMass) Amherst

Research Assistant - Prof. Lucy Xiaolu Wang

Remote

2021-22

Max Planck Institute for Innovation and Competition

Research Assistant - Lucy Xiaolu Wang, PhD

Munich, DE

2020-21

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Communications Consultant - Governance Unit

Nairobi, KE

2019-20

OC&C Strategy Consultants

Associate Consultant

London, GB

2018-19

Magic Panda International 熊猫国际集团

International E-Commerce Intern

Shanghai, CN

2017-18

SELECTED CONSULTANCIES

IRC: Education Research in Conflict and Protracted Crises (ERICC) (2023-25) [Info]

- Coordinating large multi-year mixed methods research initiative into education policy in South Sudan.

Landell Mills: Evaluation of EU Cooperation in South Sudan, 2011-13 (2024)

- Technical advice and data collection for major evaluation of European Union development assistance.

World Bank Group: 2024 Country Opinion Survey – South Sudan (2024) [Info]

- Telephonic survey of WBG stakeholders in South Sudan to assess engagement, attitudes, outlook.

Norwegian Church Aid: Scoping Study on Agriculture Value Chains in South Sudan (2024)

- Qualitative analysis of opportunities for agriculture value chain addition in 5 states of South Sudan.

IRC-EQUAL: Maternal and Child Health Baseline Study in Aweil East (2023-4) [Info]

- Designed experimental methodology and conducted baseline study for a maternal health programme.

Against Malaria Foundation: TPM of South Sudan 2022/23 LLIN Distribution (2022-23) [Info]

- Coordinated third-party monitoring in 7 states (5.4m nets) for a national LLIN distribution campaign.

UNHCR: Forced Displaced Survey (FDS) - South Sudan 2023 (2022-23) [Info]

- Quality assured a major quantitative survey initiative assessing living conditions of displaced persons.

JICA: Baseline Survey on Media in South Sudan (2022)

- Market study of the media landscape in South Sudan with a focus on national broadcaster SSBC.

UNDP: Support to Devolved Governance in Kenya - Transformational Stories (2020) [Info]

- Contributed analyses and edited a narrative review of UNDP's support to Kenya's devolution process.

PUBLICATIONS

U.S. State Approaches to Cannabis Licensing (with Lucy Xiaolu Wang) [2022] *International Journal of Drug Policy (IJDP)*, 106, 103755 [IJDP]; *MPI Research Paper* [SSRN]

- Analysis of variation in state-level licensing and taxation policies for the US legal cannabis market.

WORKING PAPERS

Education Data Systems in South Sudan: Exploring Challenges in Collection and Connection (with Orelia Jonathan, Eric Ekembe, and Artur Borkowski) [2025] *ERICC Working Paper* [Full Paper]

- Analysis of completeness, fragmentation, and management of education data systems in South Sudan.

Political Economy of Education System (In)coherence in South Sudan (with Olha Homonchuk, Alexandra Fortacz, and Tim Kelsall) [2024] *ERICC Working Paper* [Full Paper]

- Education sector political economy analysis for South Sudan, conducted in collaboration with ODI Global.

ERICC Research Agenda for South Sudan (with Ioanna Wagner Tsoni, Oladele Akogun, Elifrida Twalihi, Maartje Schots, and Kur Kur Dut) [2024] *ERICC Working Paper* [Full Paper] [Brief]

- Synthesis and description of education in emergencies research priorities and plans for South Sudan.

Conflict's Long Shadow: Evidence on Education in Emergencies in South Sudan (with Ioanna Wagner Tsoni, Maartje Schots, and Ceaser Taban) [2024] *ERICC Working Paper* [Full Paper]

- Scoping review identifying evidence gaps in the education in emergencies literature on South Sudan.

Conflict, Fear, and Mistrust in Kenya's 'White Highlands' [2023] [SSRN]

- Quantitative study of long-run effects of exposure to clientelist land reforms on social discord in Kenya.
Presented at: University of Edinburgh CAS/CeSeR 2024 Conference, ASAUK 2024 Conference.

WORKS IN PROGRESS

Uncharted Waters: Climate Crisis, Floods, and Education System Resilience in South Sudan (with Lokiri Moses, Ioanna Wagner Tsoni, Kur Kur Dut, Elifrida Twalihi, Thomas Hussein, and Oladele Akogun)

- Case study of education system resilience in South Sudan focusing on mitigation and response to floods.

The Animal and the Pen: South Sudan's Pastoralist Education Program as Alternative Education in a Crisis Context (with Mohammad Faisal, Ioanna Wagner Tsoni, Kur Kur Dut, and Oladele Akogun)

- Qualitative study analyzing alternative education provision for pastoralist communities in South Sudan.

Reflections on Participatory Research Approaches with Pastoralists and Policymakers in South Sudan (with Lokiri Moses, Ismael Hammoudi, Elifrida Twalihi, and Oladele Akogun)

- Field note distilling lessons learned from engaging pastoralists and policymakers in South Sudan.

AWARDS, FUNDING, AND SCHOLARSHIPS

Institute for Humane Studies: Travel funding for summer school presentations 2025

Nova SBE: Nova SBE Research Fellowship 2024-28

IRC: Travel funding for conference presentations 2024

LMU VAC: Alumni Prize for Young Economists 2023

DAAD: Scholarship for Master Studies 2020-22

Erasmus+: Erasmus Study Abroad Grant 2015-16

MEMBERSHIPS AND SERVICE

Member: British Association for International and Comparative Education (BAICE) 2024-Present

Mentor: Malengo, Uganda-Germany Program & Uganda-Germany Refugee Program 2024-Present

PRESENTATIONS

2025: Max Planck Summer School on the Political Economy of Conflict and Redistribution (forthcoming)

2024: Comparative and International Education Society (CIES), University of Edinburgh CAS/CeSeR, ERICC/FCDO Consortium Meeting, ASAUk-Oxford Brookes, BAICE-University of Sussex

SKILLS

Computing: Stata (advanced), QGIS (advanced), Python (intermediate), R (intermediate)

Data analysis: Data cleaning, regression analysis, GIS mapping/analysis, NLP (NLTK/Quanteda)

Field research: sample design, tool design and programming, enumerator training, budgeting, reporting

Languages: English (native), French (intermediate), German (intermediate), Turkish (intermediate)

PERSONAL

Citizenship: dual citizen of Ireland and the UK.

REFERENCES

Prof. Alex Armand

Professor

Nova School of Business and Economics

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Prof. Lucy Xiaolu Wang

Assistant Professor

University of Massachusetts Amherst

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Dr. Ioanna Wagner Tsoni

Executive Director

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