

<p><b>Institution: University of East London</b></p> <hr/> <p><b>Unit of Assessment: 23</b></p> <hr/> <p><b>a. Context</b></p> <p>The research approaches used and themes explored within UoA23 at UEL are diverse, but share a common interest in and emphasis on social change. As such, our research outputs are used by and have impacts on a wide range of research users, particularly informing both governmental and broader societal awareness of and responses to problems requiring social change. The diverse spectrum of users to whom our work delivers benefits include: <b>community organisations and NGOs</b> (De Angelis, Squire, Yuval Davis, Hall, Taumbouku, Tsilimpoundi); <b>policy makers</b> operating at municipal (De Angelis), regional (Poynter); state or national (Dona, Tiwari) and international (Dona, De Angelis) levels; and the <b>general public</b> (Bernstock Harper). As such, the reach of our impacts extends from <b>local communities in East London</b> (Yuval-Davis) to <b>international beneficiaries in India</b> (Tiwari), <b>Italy</b> (De Angelis), <b>Rwanda</b> (Dona), and <b>South Africa</b> (Squire), among others. The international dimensions of our impact arise partly from the fact that our research both informs and is itself a product of close connections between UEL staff and protagonists in contemporary social movements across the world, from the Egyptian “spring” (Marfleet) and movements in East Germany (Andrews), to the “occupy” movement in the United States (De Angelis). Research undertaken both on and alongside these various communities and social actors has impacted on awareness, behaviour, opportunity, practice, and understanding.</p> <p>Our analysis and evaluation of policy and practice at citywide, local, national and international levels has informed and influenced policy-making processes and decisions both in the UK and abroad. We have also worked hard to engage as wide a public audience as possible with key themes of and insights arising from our research, particularly to enhance public awareness of and engagement with important social issues such as the unequal distribution of Olympic legacy benefits in London (Bernstock). Our work has contributed directly to the development of new cultural and artistic resources (Tsilimpoundi) and allowed us to deliver educational benefits extending well beyond UEL, predominantly through our development and delivery of reusable teaching and learning resources. Commissioned research sponsored by external bodies is not only of direct use to those bodies, but often also delivers follow-on impacts including changes to and improvements in professional standards and best practices within commissioning organisations. Our collaborative, multiparty approach to research itself often delivers non-academic benefits by facilitating the development of mutually beneficial networks between our external partners.</p> <hr/> <p><b>b. Approach to impact</b></p> <p>The Unit’s approach to impact is particularly underpinned by the following two principles:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maintaining a tradition of diversity and pluralism within the research community as a means of <b>encouraging and supporting multi-party and cross-organisational research collaborations</b>, and the development of broad new research networks extending beyond academia and beyond the UK. This multiparty, collaborative approach to research has, moreover, also facilitated the development of synergetic partnerships <i>between</i>, as well as with, our external partners. Yates’ Media and the Inner World project, for example, has fostered the development of new networks of media professionals, psychologists and social scientists.</li> <li>2. Encouraging the use of <b>participatory research methods</b> in which the subjects of our research are also research partners. This is especially in evidence within our Centre for Research on Migration, Refugees, and Belonging, the heterogeneity of whose methodologies is specifically intended to facilitate non-academic research-user involvement, both in research and in the dissemination of results. This approach likewise supports our capacity to ensure that our work is both relevant and responsive to changes in the priorities of our key user groups.</li> </ol> <p>Beyond involving them in the research process itself, the Unit takes a multiform approach to forging and maintaining external relationships intended to deliver benefits beyond academic. Given the relevance of much of our research to governmental and other policy-making bodies and organisations, our <b>transfer of specialist knowledge and expertise</b> to them is a cornerstone of our approach to effecting beneficial change, and various routes are taken to achieving this. These include our production of <b>commissioned research</b> responding directly to clients’ priorities as, for</p>
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instance, in our delivery in 2012 of a report on the implementation of the living wage, commissioned by London Citizens and Unison (Hall). Knowledge is also transferred via our **provision of expert advice to policy- and other decision-making organisations**. Examples include De Angelis' contribution to the shared vision working table of the Bolivian government-sponsored World People's Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth (2010). In 2011, large sections of the shared vision document appeared in the government's Negotiation Text within the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in Durban. Key findings from Tiwari's 2009 PSIA study of the Bihar Rural Livelihoods Programme for the JeeVika Trust have been incorporated since 2010/11 into the state-supported project Bihar Rural Livelihoods Promotion. The programme informed by those findings, which included identifying the importance of teaching illiterate women to sign their name instead of using the thumb mark as one of the highest indicators of empowerment, has now reached 25 million rural women. Tiwari was also an invited participant in and panel speaker at the drafting in Brussels of the European Report on Development 2012-13.

Alongside contributions to policy-making with a very wide international reach, Unit staff have worked with policy-makers and community planners both in the UK and elsewhere on the development of plans to action change with significant (albeit more local) impacts. The results of these sorts of interaction with policy-making organisations have included changes to professional standards and practice: Tamboukou's work on narratives, for instance, have inspired significant changes since 2009 in the research perspectives and methodologies employed by the Centre for Children in Vulnerable Situation in Bolivia.

The Unit also approaches knowledge transfer via its provision of **specialist training** for a range of extra-academic organisations, including governmental policy-makers and NGOs. To that end, Squire collaborated on the development and delivery of training in narrative methods with Etafeni, a South Africa NGO working with young people to tackle drug use and gender-based violence. **Community-based teaching and learning** has likewise allowed staff to develop productive relationships with local community organisations in South Africa (Tsilimpounidi) and Northern Italy (De Angelis). In 2011 De Angelis delivered 6 workshops on globalisation and 'commoning' to local activists of Montagna Viva, a community association near Modena; the workshops helped shape projects including a community garden and a theatre lab. Closer to home, we have used our delivery of teaching and training events to develop relationships and share our expertise with London-based political groups (Robbins), high schools governors (Robbins), and migrant communities (Yuval-Davis: see UEL23-02).

We seek to maximise the benefits of our research through various forms of **public engagement activity** intended to communicate research insights to as wide a non-academic audience as possible. These include **media engagement**, and the Unit takes every opportunity to use popular press, radio and television media to share its findings with the public by contributing to media discourse about topics relating to our work. Over the course of 2012, for example, Bernstock's work on the unequal distribution of Olympic legacy benefits supported discussion of that topic in the *Financial Times* (16<sup>th</sup> April 2012); *Guardian* (30<sup>th</sup> July); *Lessons for London* (29<sup>th</sup> June); *Inside Housing* (June); and on *Newsnight* and BBC World Service (July). Where appropriate, we also make use of new and multi-media tools: thus a report on the implementation of the living wage and an associated public event intended to raise public awareness of the issues it addressed were promoted on Facebook and twitter, as well as being covered by BBC London (November, 2010).

We also **work with cultural and artistic organisations** as a means both of engaging wider audiences among their existing network, and enhancing the benefits they deliver to their audiences and users, as well as delivering artistic benefits ourselves. Examples include the development of photographic exhibitions based on Tsilimpounidi's work on street art in crisis-ridden Athens in collaboration with organisations within and beyond the UK. These organisations included: North Edinburgh Arts in Partnership with Amnesty International (September -October 2011); the University of Bielefeld (Germany, 9-10 March 2012); and the Ministry of 'Untold Stories' (London, 19 May 2012).

The Unit encourages and supports staff engagement in impact-generating activity by facilitating flexible working; providing grants to establish and sustain networks and community engagement activity and to support external training as necessary; incorporating research impact into annual

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personal development reviews; running impact-related training; and providing a peer-to-peer mentoring programme to share best-practice examples and impact-related expertise. We also make use of centralised institutional support including sabbatical schemes, relevant training workshops, and consultancy with UEL's Research Impact Coordinators (2x0.2FTE appointments in November 2011), on strategies for maximising research impact, including by sharing current best practice examples across the institution.

**c. Strategy and plans**

In the coming years we plan to develop and embed a more comprehensive and far-reaching 'impact culture' across the Unit. Besides consolidating, maintaining and (wherever possible) expanding the approaches described above, this goal will be supported by:

1. The further development of a culture of **cross-fertilization and synergetic collaboration** across the methodological and epistemological landscapes of the discipline to ensure the continuing relevance and responsiveness of our work to our principal non-academic user groups. In part this will involve continued **support for and greater showcasing and promotion of participatory research methods** such as those employed by Yuval-Davis and Dona.
2. Incorporating established links with non-academic research users into the Unit's **recruitment and promotions criteria**.
3. Workshops and symposia offering both training in and opportunities for networking with non-academics such as NGO, community organizations and professional organizations. These events will allow staff to share good practice examples and provide a forum for their discussion of strategies to more fully realise research impacts through external partnerships.
4. Improving processes for collating and monitoring information about impact activities within the Unit. From 2014, this will include the development of impact database summarising information obtained through an annual impact form that all staff will be required to complete together with their Staff Development Plan. These improved records will be used both to promote examples of good practice within the Unit via a new, dedicated section of our website, and to recognise and reward staff involved in those examples.
5. Working with central UEL support services to develop creative methods for identifying and sharing examples of best practice in impact enhancement from other Units of Assessment.

**d. Relationship to case studies**

All three of the impact case studies submitted here reflect the Unit's emphasis on – and success in – **transferring specialist knowledge and expert advice** based on our research **to policy makers** at levels from the local and regional to the international. This has, in turn, allowed us to achieved **significant impact on London-wide, UK and international policies**. Research underpinning UEL23-03 contributed to international (OECD), national, city-wide and local government analysis and evaluation of urban regeneration policy and practice. UEL23-01 has had wide-ranging impacts on national policies for orphans and vulnerable children in Rwanda, professional standards and 'best practice' related to learning and advocacy resources for development and social work professionals in Africa, Asia and the UK, and legal asylum in the USA. UEL23-01 also demonstrates our commitment to **inter- and cross-disciplinarity**, and emphasis **on facilitating the development of new, multi-organisational international networks** of both academic and non-academic partners as a means of delivering extra-academic impact and the development of new occasions and forums for knowledge exchange. In terms of **community work** both our work on Migration, Refugees and Belonging (UEL23-02) and on child protection, participation and social welfare (UEL23-01) highlights the significance of **participatory research methodologies** in ensuring the impacts of our research. Indeed, the dialogic relationship between researcher and subject upon which the participatory methods described in these case studies are predicated is a recurrent feature of our case studies, as well as a central facet of our approach. The research underpinning and subsequent activities described in UEL23-02, in particular, pushes the methodological boundaries of community involvement in research by employing participatory theatre techniques to expose the dialogical nature of the construction and politics of identities and belonging, whilst UEL23-01 includes impacts on the increased use around of the world of methodologies allowing children to participate in research.