



The Global Standard in Public Service Education

NASPAA Alumni Spotlight Series

Q1

Name of Alumnus

Jennifer Waidler, PhD

Q4

What school did you graduate from? (Please write out the full name)

MSc in Public Policy and Human Development

Q5

MPP

What type of program was it?

Q6

10-15 years

How many years have you had your MPP/MPA

Q7

NGO

What sector are you working in?

Q8

Where are you currently working? What is your job title?

Company / Association / Bureau:

UN World Food Programme

Job Title:

Evaluation Officer

Q9

What is your proudest accomplishment in your public service career?

My proudest achievement is influencing policy through rigorous research. I work on impact evaluations of programs implemented by governments or UN organizations, where we assess the effects of these programs. These initiatives aim to support the most vulnerable populations in the Global South, as well as countries in conflict and in need of humanitarian aid. My organization uses the evidence I produce with my team to improve these programs, ultimately benefiting the people.

I am also proud to contribute to academic thinking and develop innovative research with colleagues from different organizations. I promote the results to increase the impact of scholarly research, allowing others to use the empirical evidence and policy recommendations.

Q10

What do you love about what you do as a public servant?

My work is fulfilling because I find purpose in what I do, and I have the chance to travel and meet people from around the world. I enjoy sharing what I do and learning from those I meet. The people working in the field are very inspiring because they convey passion and dedication for human development, even when they face very tough conditions.

Q11

What are you excited for about your future as a public servant?

Over the years, I have developed strong skills to contribute to evidence-based policy, and I am eager to continue making an impact in the field while growing and supporting the UN's goals and mission.

Q12

How has your education been vital to your career and in your accomplishments?

My education was foundational. What I studied in my master's and Ph.D. closely aligns with my current work. Specifically, the strong skills, analytical thinking, and network with international organizations I developed through UNU-MERIT during my studies helped me enter the international organization sector. Soft skills are also very important, and the diverse, international environment I was exposed to during my master's program prepared me to work with an open mind.

Q13

What advice would you give to persons interested in a career in public service?

I will advise people interested in a career in public service to keep a clear objective in mind and focus on developing the skills needed for the tasks they want to perform. My work is very research-oriented, so the master's program gave me the fundamental skills to carry out thorough policy evaluations. I was able to further strengthen these skills with my PhD, and currently, I am conducting research within the UN, which was my goal. This work contributes to improving policy programs that support people around the world and advancing the SDG agenda.
