



AERC | eNewsletter | JULY 2020

Dear Network Members,

Welcome to our eNewsletter Issue of July 2020!

The AERC eNewsletter offers a unique opportunity to showcase our achievements and our flagship convenings that contribute greatly to building the capacity of researchers across the continent.

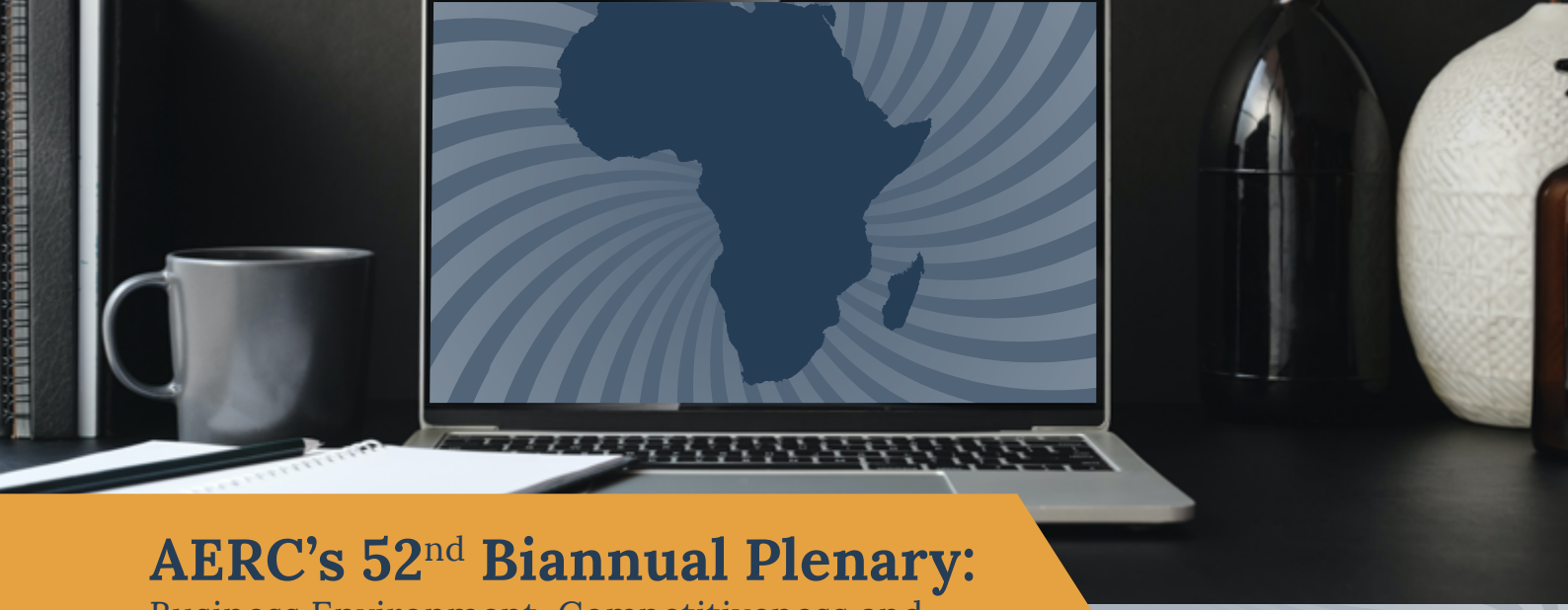
This edition features highlights from our 52nd Virtual Biannual Plenary and Special Session on Covid-19, The Virtual Joint Facility for Electives (JFE), New Publications including the AERC Strategic Plan 2020-2025, which was published recently in both English and French. AERC featured in the Global Think Tanks Rating Insight, Network Testimonials, upcoming events and alumni profiles.

We hope you enjoy this new edition and also welcome your feedback at communications@aercafrica.org. We encourage you to share this edition with your network or on your social media channels.

Thank you for your continued support.

Kind Regards,
Njuguna Ndung'u
Executive Director





AERC's 52nd Biannual Plenary: Business Environment, Competitiveness and Economic Growth in Africa

The AERC 52nd Biannual Research Workshop Plenary Session with the theme “**Business Environment, Competitiveness and Economic Growth in Africa**” was held virtually on 29 June 2020. The session attracted 558 registrants, out of which 364 attended the webinar. It brought together economists, researchers, policy makers and private sector participants from around the continent and globe.

The Plenary Session of the workshop sought to unpack why Africa continues to be less competitive despite progress in the areas of doing business, investment climate, and infrastructure. The focus was on how misalignments in economic policy management create distortions that impede the performance of firms, thereby reducing the growth of decent jobs.

“Competitive economies are most likely able to provide an environment conducive to business, market development, policy clarity, strong institutions that define the rules/incentives mechanism and effective coordination, and hence will grow more sustainably and inclusively. This means that there is a likelihood that everyone in

that particular society, market segment or physical location, will benefit from the fruits of economic growth,” said Professor Njuguna Ndung’u, AERC’s Executive Director during the official opening session of the plenary.

A range of diverse papers were presented looking at different aspects. Dr Shantayanan Devarajan, Georgetown of University, started off the proceedings with a look at *African Competitiveness: What do Natural Resources have to do with it?* Next was *The Changing Context for African Competitiveness: What will happen to Manufacturing?* by Prof Ernest Aryeetey, Secretary General of the African Research Universities Alliance (ARUA) and former Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ghana.

The third presentation by Prof Pramila Krishan, University of Oxford was on *Exchange Rate Regimes and Firm Competitiveness* and the last paper on *Employment Transformation in sub-Saharan Africa – What does Competitiveness have to do with it?* was presented by Prof Louise Fox, former Chief Economist, USAID.

A Special Session was held on the 30 June 2020 themed “**African Economies amid COVID-19: Impacts and the Road Ahead**”. This was a virtual meeting as well to reflect on pertinent issues related to Covid-19 and identify policy and administrative responses by drawing lessons from global experiences. The session had 352 registrants and 237 attendees.

Faced with a novel and fast-moving pandemic, and with limited avenues to slow the spread of infections and so far no comprehensively and sustainable medical treatment options for those infected to combat it, most countries have resorted to administrative measures such as lockdown: mandatory restrictions on economic and other activity meant to minimize social interactions to slow the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

This session shed light on the appropriate course of actions that African governments can pursue to manage the pandemic, while putting in place recovery strategies parallel to managing the pandemic. The session also provided new emerging evidence on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Africa for a range of diverse policy makers.

Prof. Erik Thorbecke, Cornell University, USA, chaired the session, while Mr. Abebe Selassie, Director of Africa Region, International Monetary Fund (IMF), delivered the Keynote Address. Other presenters included: Prof. Benno Ndulu,

Pathways for Prosperity Commission on Technology and Inclusive Development and former Governor Bank of Tanzania; Stephen N. Karingi, Director, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and Hanan Morsy, Director, African Development Bank (AfDB) who spoke on *Macroeconomic Consequences*.

The presentations were followed by general discussions and contributions on *Impact on Poverty and Inequality* chaired by Prof. Finn Tarp, Copenhagen University, Denmark. Panelists included: Prof. David Sahn, Cornell University; Nicole Ntungire, International Growth Centre (IGC), Uganda; Ahmadou Aly Mbaye, Université Cheikh Anta Diop (UCAD), Senegal; Alemayehu Seyoum Taffesse, International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI); Rose Ngugi, Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research & Analysis (KIPPRA); Matthieu Teachout, Research Director, IGC; Abdoulaye Seck, Cheikh Anta Diop (UCAD), Senegal and Harun Issahaku, Ghana University of Development Studies.

Watch a recording of the Sessions

PLENARY



SPECIAL SESSION



FEEDBACK

This is a note to the Secretariat to congratulate everyone for a most effective and productive virtual June 2020 biannual. Before we started this biannual, I was a little uncertain of how this was going to work, especially given the fact that this was the first time that this format was being used.

Running a workshop with so many people is challenging enough. Doing so virtually and successfully, is an even

greater challenge. I thought that it was necessary to let you know that you did an excellent job!!

Congratulations for a successful, enlightening, and very informative June 2020 biannual.

Stay well. Stay safe.

John Mukum MBAKU, ESQ, Nonresident Senior Fellow, The Brookings Institution, Professor of Economics & John S. Hinckley Fellow, Weber State University, USA

Research Delivery Mechanisms

Thematic research is a learning-by-doing research modality that is fundamental to AERC's capacity building activities, with the biannual research workshops remaining key to the peer review process intended to maintain and yield high quality research output on topical African economic development issues. A thematic research grant is awarded to a researcher whose proposal has been peer reviewed at a Biannual Research Workshop, and vetted by external resource persons, and then approved for funding

by the AERC Programme Committee. Researchers are required to present an interim report at a subsequent Biannual Research Workshop for further peer review among researchers and monitoring by the resource persons. Satisfactory final reports progress to publication stage during which the report is externally reviewed and are published upon recommendations by two external reviewers.

Faculty Research is conducted by faculty members of network universities of the AERC Training Programme on themes of current interest in the field of Agriculture and Applied Economics. Research proposals received following calls are reviewed and the best selected for grant awards. The faculty then does research and present their findings in AERC Biannual Research Workshops as side events. The higher quality papers are published in the *AERC Research Paper Series*.



AERC's New Op-ed

As part of our efforts to provide more insight into relevant economic and policy related topics in Africa, we are now promoting Op-eds on “Africa Insights”. The AERC Op-eds are written by our Executive Director, Prof. Njuguna Ndung’u.

The Op-eds titled: **The Fragility of Growth in Africa and Now Covid-19** and

The Impact of Covid-19 on Food Security in Africa were leveraged on to secure media opportunities and the following interviews were secured: CNBC Africa – Power Lunch; eNCA – SA Today; NewzRoom Afrika – Newzfeed PM; BizNews – Inside COVID-19 podcast; AMH Media – Mail & Guardian; Africa Business Radio (ABR) – Breakfast Show; and Channel Africa.

Links to some of the reports:

[GROWTH IN AFRICA IS FRAGILE AND...](#) >>

[AERC ON HOW FRAGILE AFRICAN ECONOMIES...](#) >>

[COVID-19 FOOD SECURITY AFRICA](#) >>



CMAP and CPP Joint Facility for Electives 2020

Under the prevailing circumstances, this year's African Economic Research Consortium's (AERC) Collaborative Master's Programme (CMAP) and the Collaborative PhD Programme (CPP) Joint Facility for Electives (JFE) and the Shared Facility for Specialization and Electives (SFSE) are not going to be hosted at a physical, centralized venue as has hitherto been the practice. Instead, the 2020 JFE and SFSE will be delivered online via a virtual communication platform from the month of August to December 2020.

A total of 69 students will participate in the virtual JFE 2020 master's programme, which is higher than the enrolments in the last four years. In terms of gender, 30 out of the 69 students are female, which represents 43.5% female participation. As for the PhD programme, a total of 8 students, belonging to the CPP Class of 2019, will participate. In the Collaborative Masters in Agricultural and Applied Economics (CMAAE) programme, 104 students will participate.

The COVID-19 pandemic has adversely impacted most sectors of economies, including education, with massive disruption to academic calendars and programmes following suspension of classes and indefinite closure of universities as a precautionary measure to minimize the spread and effects of the disease.

Our CMAP and CPP network institutions have been variously affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and the interventions that have been put in place in their respective countries.

Based on logistical, technical and resource requirements, and on the advice of Information Communications Technology (ICT) experts, the AERC is currently zeroing in on Zoom and Moodle as the preferred delivery platforms, either individually or jointly. These platforms are readily accessible to most people, including students, and are deemed to be low-tech and light in terms of bandwidth or internet/data bundle consumption and connectivity requirements. The CMAAE programme had already embarked on digitizing the delivery of SFSE courses through the Blended Learning Management System (BLMS) platform, which is anchored on Moodle.

The JFE is an intensive teaching environment that offers a full range of elective courses in the CMAP and CPP. Each year, eligible CMAP and CPP participating universities send their postgraduate students to a common facility known as the Joint Facility for Electives to be taught elective courses by a team of visiting lecturers competitively sourced internationally. However, this time round, all the courses will be offered virtually.



AERC among Top Think Tanks Internationally in the 2019 Global Index

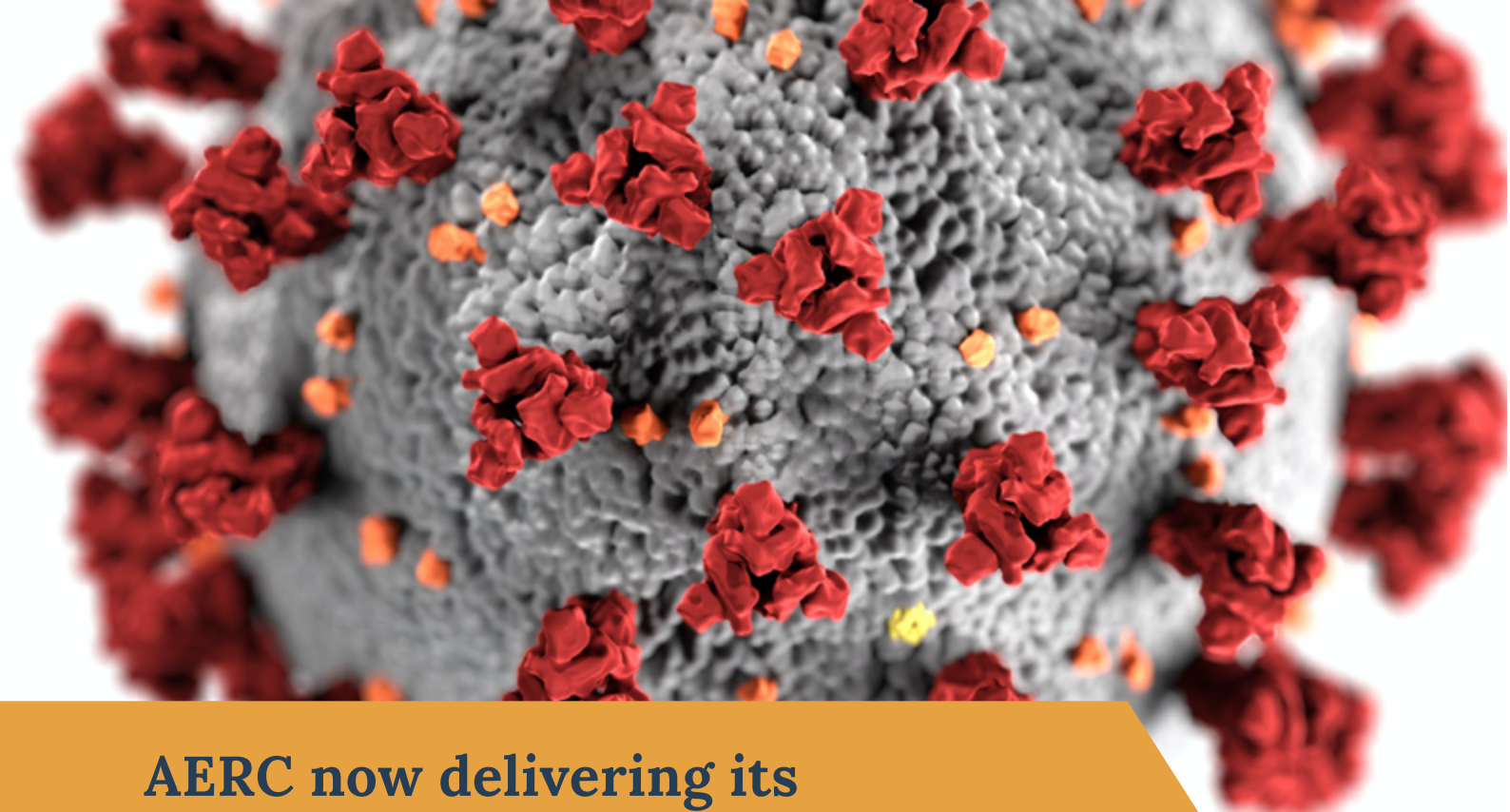
The African Economic Research Consortium (AERC) again emerged among the very top International Development Think Tanks in the 2019 Global Index. It is listed first in this category in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) but placed at position 27 globally. AERC is also separately listed among the top in other categories, including Top Think Tanks Worldwide (Non-US); Top Economics Think Tanks Worldwide; Best Independent Think Tanks Internationally; Best Regional Studies Center; and Think Tanks with the Most Significant Impact on Public Policy.

This programme involved over 6,500 think tanks and other civil society actors worldwide in various categories, and it was conducted by The Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program (TTCSP). The organization conducts research on the role policy institutes play in governments, and in civil societies around the world. Often referred to as the “think tanks’ think tank,” TTCSP examines the evolving role

and character of public policy research organizations.

“Over the last 26 years, the TTCSP has developed, and led a series of global initiatives that have helped bridge the gap between knowledge and policy in critical policy areas such as international economics, international peace and security, globalization and governance, environmental issues, information and society, poverty alleviation, and healthcare and global health”, said Dr. James G. McGann, Director, Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program during the presentation of the results.

These international collaborative efforts are designed to establish regional and international networks of policy institutes and communities that improve policy making while strengthening democratic institutions and civil societies around the world.



AERC now delivering its programmatic activities innovatively amid Covid-19 Pandemic

Following the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, the African Economic Research Consortium (AERC) has enhanced its adoption of technology beyond automation of administrative operations to digitize programme delivery.

The world is now faced with an unprecedented health emergency, the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), which has afflicted the globe and adversely impacting most sectors of African economies. Most countries in sub-Saharan Africa have been placed on partial or total lockdown, with limited or no domestic and/or international travel, while physical gatherings have been greatly curtailed or banned altogether.

With the enforcement of international health and safety measures to deal with

the COVID-19 outbreak, the AERC has developed innovative ways of delivering its programmatic activities. Virtual hosting of the flagship Biannual Research Workshop in June 2020, meetings of the Academic Advisory Boards of the Training Programme and other international consultative meetings are now the new reality.

The Training Programme is also preparing to deliver the Joint Facility for Electives and Shared Facility of Specialization and Electives virtually, accelerating the implementation of the nascent blended learning modality. This has provided an opportunity to not only develop online teaching materials but to also drastically revise the curricula in its totality.



The AERC 2020–2025 Strategic Plan

The African Economic Research Consortium’s (AERC) Strategic Plan 2020–2025 has been published. The document frameworks AERC’s visions and goals for the network to realize its full potential and fulfil its mission. AERC’s mission is to strengthen local capacity for conducting independent, rigorous inquiry into problems pertinent to the management of African economies.

Documented in this strategy are strategic themes which were developed to confirm AERC’s commitment to achieve excellence through the core networking functions of research, training, and policy engagement. A thematic focus on **improving quality**, **ensuring sustainability**, and **expanding influence** has been adopted for the planning period. These three themes are customized with their associated output pathways to provide a new and dynamic structure on how the AERC will address capacity-building in sub Saharan Africa (SSA) economies and institutional strengthening in the forthcoming strategic-planning cycle.

The Strategic Plan maps out the AERC’s new approach to capacity building: it takes a broader perspective that constitutes a fundamental change to the way AERC

operates, moving from an objectives-based to a theme-based approach, and focusing on outcomes and impact measurement. The plan also presents new ways to engage across the region through incubator projects for funders to consider throughout the five-year planning period.

One significant consideration of the AERC Strategic Plan 2020–2025 is that it will enhance AERC’s mark of improved quality, define its own momentum of sustainability, and create a new era of policy influence in African economies.

There is no doubt that the AERC has made significant progress in realizing what it first envisioned over 30 years ago. The continent has changed rapidly and the economic demands facing such a dynamic region require – and demand – that AERC modifies its approach to meet new opportunities and challenges that are emerging as Africa turns the corner into a new decade. A forward-looking approach is now needed, with a new set of challenges and opportunities to be met.

[AERC STRATEGIC PLAN](#) 

Annual report

The AERC Annual Report 2019/20 was produced and shared with stakeholders. The report contains a summary of the year's operations and pertinent financial

information. It covers the range of activities undertaken by the organization in the year under review. The AERC financial year runs from 1 April to 31 March.

AERC ANNUAL REPORT

LINK TO BE PROVIDED SOON



AERC eLibrary

The African Economic Research Consortium (AERC) has a collection of books for reading within the confines of the library, which provides users with all the necessary content and bibliographic information, largely of economics discipline. However, we have recently introduced an eLibrary. This a pure digital library which is virtual, where we comprehensively collect, manage, and preserve for the long-term rich digital content, as we offer user communities access to the collection.

AERC's eLibrary has been created to support the learning and research. Rapidly advancing web technologies have changed the expectations of students, researchers, and teaching staff in equal measure, while at the same time providing libraries with new ways to support research and training. Information resources are quickly moving from the traditional paper format to electronic format, creating a need for almost instantaneous access and retrieval. The library and information user clientele are more techno-savvy than ever before, demanding information service providers be pro-active.

A Digital library is an assemblage of digital computing, storage, and communications machinery together with content and software needed to reproduce, emulate, and extend the services provided by conventional library. A full-service digital library must accomplish all essential services of traditional libraries and exploit the well-known advantages of digital storage, searching and communication. The main aim of our digital library is to have a "one stop" shop for OPACs, electronic databases, e-journals, institutional repositories, web resources, local and remote resources.

AERC library continues to play the vital role of information access, retrieval, and dissemination to its broad client base in both research and academia. AERC has subscribed to over 50,000 e-resources through the Kenya Libraries and Information Services Consortium (KLISC) all of which are accessible to the AERC network remotely. The e-resources include peer reviewed e-journals and e-books from quality databases like EBSCO, Springer, Wiley, Jstor, Taylor and Francis, among others.

KNOWLEDGE RESOURCES CENTER





Upcoming Events

Announcement for PhD Fellowships 2020/2021

The African Economic Research Consortium (AERC) wishes to announce the 2020/2021 Ph.D. scholarships for applicants from Francophone and Anglophone sub-Saharan African countries admitted into any of the following AERC Collaborative PhD Programme (CPP) in Economics degree-awarding universities:

University of Cape Town, South Africa	University of Witwatersrand, South Africa
University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania	University of Nairobi, Kenya
University of Ibadan, Nigeria	University of Benin, Nigeria
University of Yaoundé II, Cameroon	Felix Houphouet-Boigny University, Cote d'Ivoire

Interested applicants must submit their applications for admission directly to the respective universities (application procedure can be obtained from the respective university's website). Upon receipt of an admission letter from a specific university, applicants shall send the following documents to AERC on **jfe@aercafrica.org** and copy **training@aercafrica.org**.

VISIT



Call for Research Proposals under the Faculty, Masters and PhD Thesis research programmes 2020/21

Program of Accompanying Research for Agricultural Innovation (PARI) has partnered with the African Economic Research Consortium to deliver a programme through AERC's three of its research delivery mechanisms, namely Faculty research, Master's thesis research and PhD thesis research. PARI collaborates with partners from Africa and Germany to contribute to sustainable agricultural growth, food, and nutrition security in Africa. PARI research seeks to identify investment opportunities in the agriculture sectors and rural areas of Africa with the aim of improving food security and creating employment and income opportunities.

The research themes relate to innovative approaches to stimulating the economic development of rural areas in Africa, with a focus on sustainable agricultural growth and food system development, including the following:

- » Mechanization, automation and skill development in agricultural production and food processing;
- » Digitalization in agriculture, food and nutrition;
- » Enhancing opportunities for the youth in the rural economy;
- » Employment opportunities in agricultural production and in post-production segments of the value chain;
- » Inputs use in agriculture (seed, fertilizer, pesticides, irrigation, other technologies);
- » Potentials for and innovations in livestock and livestock products development in Africa; and
- » Improving the policy context and contributing to evidence-based policy processes.

The geographic scope includes the countries that are already part of AERC's Training Programme (including fragile states) as well as priority countries in PARI (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Nigeria, Togo, Tunisia and Zambia), as well as other countries in Africa (Côte d'Ivoire, Uganda, Senegal, Tanzania and Rwanda).

VISIT



Announcement for Masters Fellowships 2020/2021

AERC wishes to announce the 2020/2021 Masters scholarships for applicants from Anglophone sub-Saharan African countries admitted into any of the following AERC Collaborative Masters Programme (CMAP) in Economics universities:

Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia	University of Botswana
University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania	University of Cape Coast, Ghana
University of Ghana, Legon	University of Nairobi, Kenya
University of Mauritius	University of Namibia
University of Malawi	University of Zimbabwe
Makerere University	

Interested applicants must submit their **applications for admission directly to the respective universities** (application procedure can be obtained from the respective university's website). Upon receipt of an admission letter from a specific university, applicants shall send the following documents to AERC on jfe@aercafrica.org and copy training@aercafrica.org.

VISIT 



New Testimonials

Here is material from our early career researchers on their experience at AERC events including the Biannual Plenary and Research Workshop:



ALUMNI

Sign up for our latest news and to mark your LinkedIn profiles with our logo.





Testimonial letter

Dear AERC,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the AERC for the scholarship you offered me to attend the Shared Facility for Specialization and Electives last year (2019) at the University of Pretoria, South Africa. It's from this scholarship where I managed to save part of the monthly stipends you gave us for our upkeep to invest in agribusiness, which has turned out to be a blessing to me even during this COVID-19 pandemic.

On the 1st of August 2020, I was privileged to share my success story in agribusiness on the Saturday Nation, Seeds of Gold section and I feel you are part of this great achievement in my life. This story can also inspire other students who may participate from the exchange program in the future.

God bless AERC

Here are the links to the story:

[DAILY NATION](#)



[AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS DEPARTMENT UON](#)



Kind regards,

Dennis Nguma Muoki

Msc. CMAAE student

University of Nairobi



AERC PUBLICATIONS

Research Papers

Farm Production Diversity: Is it Important for Food Security, Dietary Diversity and Nutrition? Panel Data Evidence from Uganda

Poor food security and nutrition continue to be global problems and areas for strategic importance, including objectives related to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Through research, we sought to understand linkages between farm production diversity (agriculture) within farm households in Uganda,

specifically focusing on household food and nutrition security. This research paper, titled: “*Farm Production Diversity: Is it Important for Food Security, Dietary Diversity and Nutrition? Panel Data Evidence from Uganda*” explains findings reflecting that farm production diversity is associated with both improved food and nutrition security. These findings are supported by national household panel survey data from Uganda.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)



Land Tenure Security, Credit Access and Agricultural Productivity in Cameroon

Farmers in Cameroon face two tenure systems: a modern regime and a customary regime. These two regimes perpetually confront each other, putting farmers in a state of total uncertainty when it comes to choosing which regime to adopt to support the sustainability of their ventures. This research paper on *Land Tenure Security, Credit Access and Agricultural Productivity*

in Cameroon assesses the influence of land tenure security on agricultural productivity through credit access. The results of the analysis reveal that land tenure security improves agricultural productivity through the credit access it allows. Overall results confirm that land tenure security positively and significantly influences agricultural productivity.

[READ HERE](#)



Policy Briefs

Estimating Ghana's Tax Capacity and Effort

The international development community acknowledges the central role played by an effective tax system in the economic development of nations worldwide. As a result, the international donor community, including multilateral institutions and the Group of Twenty (G-20) would want to ensure that the assistance they offer to developing countries to build and strengthen their tax systems achieve the intended purpose. In addition, low-income countries perceive higher tax revenue

mobilization as a means to reduce their overreliance on foreign aid and influence the decisions of international investors (United Nations, 2002; World Bank 2005 and 1997). Ghana has been experiencing persistent fiscal budget deficits since 1992. This study focused on estimating and analysing Ghana's tax potential and effort, and determining how much more tax the country could generate based on its desired expenditure needs.

[READ HERE](#) 

Household Economic Well-Being and Child Health in The Democratic Republic of Congo

Health is both a direct component of human well-being and a form of human capital that increases an individual's capabilities and opportunities to generate income, and reduces vulnerability. Therefore, investment in child health constitutes a potential mechanism to end the inter-generational transmission of poverty. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), improving children's health remains an important challenge. Although there has been some progress, the indicators

remain unsatisfactory. This paper on the "*Household Economic Well-Being and Child Health in The Democratic Republic of Congo*" examines the empirical impact of household economic well-being on child health, and gender differences in the DRC. Results suggest a significant positive effect of household economic well-being on child health. However, the magnitude of the effect varies by gender of household head - children from households headed by males appear healthier compared to those from female-headed households.

[READ HERE](#) 

Exercice des activités non agricoles dans les zones rurales du Soudan : modèles et déterminants

En raison des conditions économiques défavorables, la plupart des populations rurales des pays en développement ont tendance à tirer leurs moyens de subsistance de diverses sources de revenus et ne sont entièrement pas dépendantes de l'agriculture. En effet, une partie considérable des ménages ruraux des pays pauvres sont impliqués dans des activités non agricoles telles que le commerce et la production rurale. Comme d'autres pays en développement, l'agriculture au Soudan est un secteur dominant. Toutefois, le rôle de l'agriculture dans la génération de revenus ruraux a connu un net déclin au cours des dernières décennies, en raison

de l'effondrement du secteur agricole qui s'est considérablement détérioré au cours des deux dernières décennies. La présente étude intitulée : "Participation in Non-Farm Activities in Rural Sudan: Patterns and Determinants" («Exercice des activités non agricoles dans les zones rurales du Soudan : modèles et déterminants»), procède à l'examen des modèles et déterminants des décisions d'exercer des activités non agricoles dans le Soudan rural. Les conclusions font état de ce que le niveau d'éducation, le moyen de transport, le manque de terres et le manque d'accès au crédit formel constituent les facteurs les plus importants qui poussent les agriculteurs ruraux à exercer des activités non agricoles

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Working Papers

The Effect of Rising Food Prices and Policy on Children & Households' Nutritional Outcomes in Ethiopia

Inflation has been one of the major challenges of the Ethiopian economy, starting from 2007/2008. Following the rise in the global food prices and other domestic factors, food prices in Ethiopia followed an upward trend. The main determinants of long-run inflation in Ethiopia are exchange rates and international food and goods prices. The short-run determinants of inflation are agricultural supply shock, inflation inertia and money supply growth (Durevall et al., 2013). This study examined the effect of rising food prices and policy

on children and households' nutritional outcomes. The result suggests that a rise in the price of food negatively and significantly affects height-for-age, weight-for-age and weight-for-height measures of children's nutritional outcomes. The effect of food policy on households' and children's nutritional outcomes vary across food groups. It positively and significantly affects weight-for-height and weight-for-age measures of nutritional status indicators for cereal and tuber food groups. Read this Working Paper on "*The Effect of Rising Food Prices & Policy on Children and Households' Nutritional Outcomes in Ethiopia*":

[READ HERE](#)



Impact of Irrigation on Food Security and Nutrition Outcomes Among Rice Farmers in Benin

A report by the World Food Program in 2014 indicated that households that depend on agriculture are more vulnerable to food insecurity, with 21 % of them being food insecure and 48 % at risk of food insecurity in 2013. About 70% of the active population in Benin rely on agriculture for their livelihood, and food and nutrition insecurity are still the country's major development issues. Investing in irrigation development has been a priority of agricultural policy in Benin since 1960. This has resulted in the development of several irrigation schemes

in the country. This study aims to assess the impact of irrigation on food security and nutrition outcomes among rice producers in Benin. Access to credit, extension services, frequency of farmers-based organisation, access to media, market participation and distance to the irrigation scheme were the main determinants of participation in irrigation scheme. The results also showed positive impact of irrigation on dietary diversity, food consumption score and body mass index. Read more on the “*Irrigation on Food Security and Nutrition Outcomes Among Rice Farmers in Benin*” here:

[READ HERE](#)



Women Empowerment in Agriculture and Child Nutrition Evidence from Ethiopia

Women empowerment is vital given the role women play in poverty alleviation and nutrition outcomes. It is crucial, not only for their well-being, but also their potential contribution to the overall economic development and improvements of nutrition and education of kids (Quisumbing and Maluccio, 2003; Malhotra and Schuler, 2005). According to Kabeer (1999), women empowerment is a process of making strategic life choices based on resources, agency and achievements (wellbeing outcomes). This paper on *Women*

Empowerment in Agriculture and Child Nutrition Evidence from Ethiopia, examines the impact of women empowerment in agriculture on intra-gender nutritional outcomes of children below five years old. Our result confirms that women in the Feed the Future zone of intervention are more empowered than the ones in the non-Feed the Future intervention area. However, we find little evidence to suggest that the interaction between women empowerment in agriculture and gender dummy variables have a gender-biased effect on child nutrition outcomes. Find out more here:

[READ HERE](#)





AERC VIDEO CONTENT

Video Testimonials – AERC Events

Event: AERC 50th Biannual

Precious Zikhali, World Bank Economist based in South Africa, participated in AERC’s 50th Biannual Event held in Cape Town. With her area of expertise being in agricultural productivity, she found the papers

presented on agricultural development and climate change, and discussions on related poverty alleviation and food security particularly insightful and of a high quality:

[WATCH](#) 

AERC Event: Business Environment Competitiveness and Economic Growth in Africa

At a recent AERC event themed “Business Environment Competitiveness and Economic Growth in Africa”, East African Cabinet Secretary Adnan Mohammed commends AERC for getting some of the top minds in Africa together to discuss the various economic growth opportunities and

challenges facing the continent. Weighing in as well, Professor Shanta Devarajan of Georgetown University expresses that the hope provided by the convening panel is especially valuable at this critical time in Africa’s economic history. Hear more testimonials from researchers, experts, academics and other event delegates:

[WATCH](#) 

Event: AERC 21st Senior Policy Seminar

At the 21st Senior Policy Seminar, held in Harare (Zimbabwe), attendee Josephine from Cameroon thanks AERC for hosting the conference. She states that this event, which focused on economic fragility of

growth, has helped her to gain more knowledge on factors effecting growth and fragility within the financial sector, among others:

[WATCH](#) 

Video Testimonials – Senior Policy Seminar 2020 (Theme: Agriculture & Food Policies For Better Nutrition Outcomes In Africa):

S.E Osmond Hanciles - Digital Bank (Ltd)

Speaking at the AERC 2020 Senior Policy Seminar, Mr S.E. Osmond Hanciles of Digital Bank (Ltd) expresses his positive feedback on the papers presented on improving

agriculture in Africa, and shares his thoughts on the role of blockchain when it comes to the continent's economic goals.

WATCH 

Yusuf Adamu - The Central Bank of Nigeria

According to Yusuf Adamu, Deputy Manager of the Research Department at the Central Bank of Nigeria, AERC's Senior Policy Seminar is the type of gathering that Africa needs for economic and growth goals. Discussions around matters such

as poverty, nutrition, agriculture and food policies are vitally beneficial to the continent, as well as the world at large, and Mr Adamu commends AERC for bringing them to the fore:

WATCH 

Dr Esi. Colecraft - University of Ghana

Attending her first AERC Senior Policy Seminar (SPS), Nutritional Food Sciences Department of the University of Ghana Lecturer, Dr. Esi Colecraft, expresses that she found the event very enlightening. She explains that it is exciting to see economists from different spheres converge to discuss subjects such as malnutrition, as

these issues do not occur in isolation, but are impacted by many inter-related factors, many of which were tabled at the seminar. She stated that events like the SPS are an important platform to unpack challenges in a way that helps identify possible solutions:

WATCH 

AERC Senior Policy Seminar 2020 Showreel:


AERC hosted its 22nd Annual Senior Policy Seminar in March this year in Abuja (Nigeria), in collaboration with the Central Bank of Nigeria. The event, themed: “*Agriculture and Food Policies for Better Nutrition Outcomes in Africa*”, included participants from 37 countries across Africa, comprising high level policy-makers in the rank of ministers, permanent secretaries, members of parliament, executive directors, former ministers, governors of central banks, members of parliament


and managing directors of research institutions, among other dignitaries. The goal of the event was to support informed policy dialogue, and thus policy making, in relation to contributing to the recent interest in leveraging agricultural development for improving nutrition by exploring the link between agricultural policies and nutrition outcomes in Africa:

WATCH



Learn More

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 www.linkedin.com/school/aercafrica/

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