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March 4th, 2015

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IIEP's Monthly Newsletter: March 2015



Professor Alkire and the Multidimensional Poverty Index Featured at UN Statistical Commission Event



Professor Sabina Alkire and our partners at the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative hosted a side event at the UN Statistical Commission Meetings, taking place in New York. The UN Statistical Commission brings together the foremost Statisticians from around the world, as the "highest decision making body for international statistical activities." The Commission sets global standards in methodology that are implemented across nations. From March 3-6, the 46th Session meets to review special issues and challenges to coordination and integration of various

In the News

IIEP Director Jay Shambaugh's [IMF working paper](#) was cited in a recent [Financial Times blog post](#), "Intellectual Battles over Greece". Professor Shambaugh's paper highlighted the evolution of current account deficits in the euro area and the Baltics.

Following the Bureau of Labor Statistics' positive [monthly jobs report](#), Professor Tara Sinclair was featured in a number of major news pieces reflecting on the released data. [CBS](#), [USNews](#), and the [New York Times](#) published pieces citing Prof. Sinclair's insight into the numbers and

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The Commission uses data and statistics to improve standards of living, eliminate poverty, and promote peace in member nations. The Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), created by Professors Sabina Alkire and James Foster, is one such measure that actively seeks to target poverty effectively and holistically, helping economists find the communities that suffer most. Professor Alkire and other academics presented the ways in which the MPI goes beyond other methods of poverty measurement to examine rural areas, ethnic groups, and other specified areas.

The world faces a rising need to evaluate poverty in ways that surpass simple income measurement. Societies and nations are complex, and each community has unique challenges - like access to water, healthcare, or education - that factor into their standard of living. Countries such as Mexico, Colombia, Bhutan, Philippines, Chile, and more have already employed the Multidimensional Poverty Index - with more in the process of developing their use. To learn more about the Index, read about [work from the Oxford University Poverty and Human Development Initiative](#).

Professor Eric Kramon's Research in the Republic of Benin



In February, Professor Eric Kramon visited the Republic of Benin to conduct research on the link between information (or lack thereof) and political accountability and good

follow [@TaraSinc](#) on Twitter for her thoughts on the upcoming jobs report, to be released March 6th.

The Honorable Mark Kennedy [shared his insight in a NewsMax article](#) discussing President Obama's deference to German Chancellor Merkel on issues like Ukraine talks and the Greek economy. The President participated in an unusual joint news conference with the German Chancellor, and the NewsMax piece highlighted unsteady relations and trust issues that have followed certain NSA revelations by Edward Snowden.

IIEP Research Assistant Sophia Lin was profiled in the [GW Hatchet](#) in February for her ground-breaking work to make GW sustainable. Sophia and Student Association Sen. Frank Fritz have [proposed a composting program](#) in a university residence hall, insisting GW make a major leap in its current efforts to lessen the school's environmental impact. Through Sophia's plan - a Clinton Global Initiative project - student residences could become waste-free.

Do food policies in India need a modern review? Professor Ajay Chhibber wrote an [op-ed piece in the Indian Express](#)

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African states in measures of corruption, human rights, and other categories. In 1990, Benin established a multi-party democratic system, but barriers to good governance remain, especially in rural communities where most residents of this largely agricultural country reside.

Professor Kramon is working in Benin to get to the center of electoral accountability, focusing on a better understanding of how voter access to information affects accountability and the quality of elected representatives. For the most part, voters in Benin, especially in rural areas, have very little information about the activities of their elected representatives. This makes it difficult for them to reward good performance and punish bad performance when they vote, which is problematic for accountability.

To better understand how, why, and when information might enhance electoral accountability, Professor Kramon is collaborating with Claire Adida (UC San Diego), Jessica Gottlieb (Texas A&M), Gwyneth McClendon (Harvard University), and the Centre d'Etude et de Promotion de la Démocratique (CEPRODE), an NGO in Benin, to run a field experiment. CEPRODE has collected data on the performance of incumbent legislators in Benin and has put together civic information videos that inform voters about the activities of their incumbent. To identify the impact of this information, the study team will screen the videos in randomly selected villages across the country. They then will use surveys and official results from the upcoming legislative elections in April to discover the causal connections between information access and outcomes of the democratic process. We look forward to hearing from Professor Kramon, and reporting further on his findings.

Save the Date: **Upcoming Spring Conferences**

changed since the days of the Green Revolution, and how India should move forward.

In a [Washington Post piece](#), Professor Stephen Kaplan sought to answer the question, "Why is China investing \$250 billion into Latin America?" According to Kaplan, if China's investment fails, it could lead to a "default that would impede the flow of oil to China."

In addition to being quoted in pieces regarding the latest jobs report, Prof. Tara Sinclair was just cited in a [Financial Times piece on Walmart's wage bump](#) - and what it signals to businesses nationwide.

Recent Events



February 23rd, 2015:
"Overhead and Online: Technological Change and Gaps in Global Governance", an event featuring Professor Esther Brimmer, Former Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs. The event was part of a series, Distinguished Women in International

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Monday, April 13th: The first annual conference on India's economy, held at the George Washington University. This will be the inaugural event, to be hosted every year at the time of the IMF-World Bank meeting, featuring economists and policymakers. The conference will discuss topics including India's Multidimensional Poverty indicators, democracy in rural India, financial development, and general economic growth.

Thursday, April 23rd: Digital Payments / Currencies: Global Threat or Opportunity? Co-hosted by IIEP, the Elliott School of International Affairs, and the Bretton Woods Committee, this seminar will evaluate the changes digital currencies and payment systems have brought to the market and the disruptive potential of a future in which they may become more conventional.

Friday, April 24th: The Washington Area Development Economics Symposium ([WADES](#)), a forum that highlights cutting-edge development economics research at leading institutions in the D.C. area. In its third year, WADES gives academics and graduate students the opportunity to present their work to the area's wider economic community. This year's session will be hosted at Georgetown University. Economics Ph.D. student, Saher Asad, spoke at WADES last year. In the image above, she is carrying out field work for research on the impact of cellphones in rural Pakistan.

Thursday, May 7th: A Symposium with the International Monetary Fund on the Regional Economic Outlook (REO) for Africa.

Monday, May 11th: Surveillance Online Since Charlie Hebdo and What It Means for the Future of Global Internet, a

telecommunications has affected global governance, [watch the event here!](#)



Trade & Development Seminars:
Jose de Sousa (2/24) and Markus Goldstein (3/3) joined us for Trade and Development Workshop events highlighting the topics, "Export Decision Under Risk" and "Women's Empowerment in Action", respectively.



February 25th, 2015:
"Is There an Inverse Relationship Between Study Time and Final Scores? Evidence from Principles of Economics": a micro-workshop that featured Professor Irene Foster and Ph.D. students Qian Guo and Cheng Xu.

Our next Trade and Development Workshops will take place on March 17th featuring the World Bank's Xavier Gine, and on March 24th

12/2/2019		IIEP's March 2015 Newsletter: Research in Benin, Spring Conferences, and Other News	
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<p>Wednesday and Thursday, May 13-14th: A conference with the International Labour Organization and the European Union on Rethinking the Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP).</p> <p><i>Check your email for upcoming details about these spring events!</i></p>		<p>For information about upcoming Institute events, check your inbox for announcements, follow us on Twitter and Facebook, or check out our website!</p>	

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