

IARIW-TNBS Conference on “Measuring Income, Wealth and Well-being in Sub-Saharan Africa” Fall 2021, Arusha, Tanzania (August 20, 2020)

Background and Motivation

The International Association for Research in Income and Wealth (IARIW), established in 1947, organizes conferences on topics related to income and wealth throughout the world, generally in partnership with national statistical offices.¹ In addition to its biennial General Conference, the IARIW also organizes special or regional conferences in non-General Conference years.

The IARIW was planning a special conference on human capital in Beijing, China in December 2021. The host organization was to be the Central University of Economics and Finance (CUEF) and the local organizer Haizeng Li, an IARIW member based at Georgia Tech with close ties to CUEF. Because of the deterioration in relations between the West and China and possible travel restrictions, a decision has been made to postpone this conference. It is hoped that it can take place in 2023.

The IARIW has been very fortunate to have received an offer from the Tanzania National bureau of Statistics (TNBS) to host a special IARIW conference in Tanzania in the fall of 2021 as a substitute for the China conference. From the IARIW perspective, accepting this offer makes sense for at least at least six reasons, as highlighted below

- First, we have not had a conference in sub-Saharan Africa for a decade, the last conference taking place in 2011 in Cape Town hosted by Statistics South Africa.
- Second, the IARIW has never in its history held a conference in an East African country.
- Third, the number of IARIW members in Africa is very low so the conference will be an opportunity to raise the profile of the IARIW in the region and increase membership.

¹ For example, national statistical offices that have co-organized special conferences with the IARIW include the National Bureau of Statistics of China (2007), Statistics South Africa (2011), the Brazilian statistical office or IBGE (2013), and the Egyptian statistical office or CAPMAS (2015), and the Bank of Korea (2017). The IARIW has also co-organized two special conferences with the OECD (2011 and 2015) and with universities (University of New South Wales, 2013, National Research University Higher School of Economics, 2019) and one with the World Bank (2019) and one with a research institutes (Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations, 2017).. Since 2006, IARIW General Conferences have been co-organized with Statistics Finland (2006), Statistics Slovenia (2008), the Swiss Federal Statistical Office (2010), the US Bureau of Economic Analysis (2012), Statistics Netherlands (2014), the Federal Statistical Office of Germany (2016), Statistics Denmark (2018) and Statistics Norway (2020). In 2022, the General Conference will be co-organized with STATEC in Luxembourg.

- Fourth, we have a long-term IARIW member in the TNBS (Gabriel Simbila) who is keen to serve as local organizer and has been approved for this role by senior management.
- Fifth, as noted at the IARIW special conference on poverty at the World Bank in November 2019, the number of persons living in absolute poverty is expected to rise in Africa in coming years, while falling in other regions. The poverty issue is of great interest to IARIW members.
- Sixth, the African Development Bank has been an institutional member of the IARIW in the past, and in fact provided financial support for IARIW special conference in South Africa and Egypt. Unfortunately the ADB has not renewed its membership since 2015. This conference may represent an opportunity to re-engage them.

The objective of this special IARIW-TNBS conference will be to advance our understanding on issues related to measuring national accounts, prices, productivity, income and wealth distribution, poverty, and, economic well-being in the countries of sub-Saharan Africa through an examination of past experiences related to the measurement of trends in these variables and the identification of future measurement challenges. The Program Committee will develop a list of specific topics.

Papers may be on specific countries of the region, comparisons between two or more countries in the region, or comparisons between countries of the region and other parts of the world. Methodological papers on key economic measurement problems relevant to the region are also welcome.

Size, Date and Location

The conference will take place in the fall of 2021 in Arusha, Tanzania. The month preferred by the IARIW and the TNBS for the conference is October and the suggested dates are October 7-9,

The number of delegates attending IARIW special conferences in the past has been between 100 and 150. A similar number is expected for this conference.

Conference Program

The conference will take place over a three day period. The first two days will be devoted to the program and the third day will feature an excursion to places of interest to the international delegates. There will be a reception the evening of the first day of the conference and a farewell dinner the evening of the second day.

The conference program will include paper sessions, keynote addresses, panels and a farewell dinner. It is expected that there will be 20-30 papers presented in plenary sessions. If there are a large number of high quality submissions, parallel sessions or a poster session may be organized.

Program Committee

A program committee of 5 to 7 persons composed of experts in measurement issues, specific for the region will be put together to oversee the development of the conference program. Lars Osberg from Dalhousie University, a long-term and well known IARIW member, has agreed to chair the Program Committee. Lars has spent considerable time in Tanzania over the past five decades.

IARIW Council member Dean Joliffe from the World Bank has agreed to serve on the committee. Local organizer Gabriel Simbila will also be a committee member. Another possible member is Francisco Ferreira from the London School of Economics and former chief economist for Africa at the World Bank.

The key activity of the committee will be to evaluate submissions for the program.

A Local Arrangements Committee will also be created.

Organizational Responsibilities

The organization of the conference will be divided between the IARIW secretariat and TNBS. The IARIW secretariat will assume responsibility for communications with all conference paper givers and maintain the conference program on the IARIW website. The TNBS will assume responsibility for the conference website, conference registration, and local arrangements.

The conference expenses will be divided between the IARIW and HSE. The IARIW will cover expenses for paper givers on a needs basis and keynote speakers, the cost of the farewell dinner and special issue of the *Review of Income and Wealth* that will contain selected papers from the conference. The TNBS will cover expenses of the conference centre, audio-visual arrangements, and coffee/lunches. The TNBS will approach a number of organizations for sponsorship, including the World Bank, the African Development Bank, DFID, and the Economic Commission for Africa. The IARIW will facilitate contacts where possible.

IARIW special conferences normally do not have a registration fee, but conference attendees from all countries other than the host country must be or become a member of the IARIW. Delegates are responsible for their own travel and hotel costs and possibly the cost of the excursion depending on sponsorships.

The IARIW and HSE will provide some financial assistance to paper givers on a needs basis. The IARIW Financial Assistance Committee will consist of the Chair and Treasurer of the Association.

Selected papers from IARIW special conferences are normally published in special issues of the *Review of Income and Wealth*, edited by a sub-set (one or two persons) of the members of the program committee. Lars will serve as guest editor of the special issue.

Persons interested in presenting a paper at the conference are asked to submit a proposal of less than 1,000 words through the web tool posted on the IARIW website.

Timelines

October 1, 2020	Announcement of Call for Papers
January 31, 2021	Deadline for Receipts of Paper Proposals
February 28, 2021	Decisions on Proposals and Release of Preliminary Conference Program
March 15, 2021	Deadline for Applications for Financial Assistance
April 1, 2021	Decisions on Financial Assistance
September 15, 2021	Deadline for Receipt of Papers for Posting on IARIW Website
October 7-9, 2021	Conference
December 1, 2021	Deadline for Submission of Papers for RIW Special Issue
Spring 2023	Release of RIW Special Issue