



Institute of Statistical, Social
and Economic Research

Call for Papers and Organized Sessions

MIASA Policy Conference

“Policies for a sustainable rural transformation in Africa”

Organized by: Merian Institute for Advanced Studies in Africa (MIASA), at the University of Ghana, Legon/Accra, Ghana

In collaboration with: Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research (ISSER) at the University of Ghana; German Institute for Global and Area Studies (GIGA), Germany

Keynote speeches by:

Prof. Awudu Abdulai, University of Kiel, Germany
Prof. Eva-Marie Meemken, ETH-Zurich, Switzerland

Program Committee:

Dr. Fred Dzanku, ISSER
Prof. Jann Lay, GIGA and University of Goettingen
Prof. Robert Darko Osei, ISSER
Prof. Charlotte Wrigley-Asante, MIASA
Prof. Joseph Yaro, University of Ghana

Time and location

June 22-23, 2022; ISSER Conference Hall, University of Ghana

Concept and contents

This first MIASA policy conference on “Policies for a sustainable rural transformation in Africa” is meant to provide a space for **exchange between researchers, policy makers, development practitioners and other stakeholders in rural development** to present and discuss the most recent policy-relevant research findings.

Africa’s rural areas have been in a process of continuous change in particular since the economic reforms of the 1980s and 1990s. In a context of rapid population growth and rural-urban migration, rural livelihoods in many places have changed significantly. They have diversified and farming has become much more commercialized. Yet, smallholder agriculture remains the mainstay of the rural economy and, despite some progress, poverty remains widespread and food security is often not

guaranteed. With the population projected to double by 2050 demographic pressure will be reinforced and climate change will massively aggravate the pressure on natural resources, be it land, water or forests. Accelerated rural development, including increased agricultural productivity, that uses natural resources sustainably and protects the environment, in particular remaining forests, is needed. In other words, a sustainable rural transformation is required. Achieving such a transformation will require developing a vision of this transformation, setting the right priorities, and managing well the potential trade-offs between rural economic progress, on the one hand, and social progress and environmental objectives, on the other hand. It also requires inclusiveness and gender equality. Often, the policy-relevant evidence that research provides on key questions of rural development in Africa is fragmented and comes in bits and pieces. One aim of this conference is therefore to bring together bigger research projects and initiatives and put together a program that goes well beyond a series of paper presentations. We target in particular policy-makers and development practitioners.

We plan to have **coherent thematic sessions** that may include one or several contributions from larger research efforts/projects or be organized by one institution or project. We might then “fill” these sessions with contributed papers. Further, we plan to have keynotes, a high-level policy panel, and a poster session with designated discussants for each of the presented posters. Main issues include, but are not limited to

- Commercialization, large-scale (foreign) investments
- Agricultural Global Value Chains
- (Intra-) African trade and agriculture
- Contract farming schemes
- Demography, migration, rural-urban interactions
- Climate change and rural development

Contributions and submissions

Research projects or groups that work on topics relevant to the conference themes are invited to submit proposals for **organized sessions** (with up to 3 speakers). Organized session proposals should include a session title, a very brief description of the session (max. 100 words), and at least two papers/presentations (speaker names, title of papers, abstracts of not less 500 words).

We also accept submissions of **individual research papers**. Papers will be selected on the basis of papers or abstracts of not less than 500 words. Priority will be given to empirical research with clear implications for policy design and implementation. Individual papers can be selected for presentation in parallel sessions or for a poster session.

Please email your submissions to iaa.MIASA@giga-hamburg.de in a pdf or Word file and indicate ‘MIASA policy conference 2022’ in the subject heading. The **submission deadline is April 12, 2022**. Notification of acceptance will be sent out by April 20, 2022.

If you have queries on the content of the conference and your potential contribution please contact Jann Lay under jann.lay@giga-hamburg.de.

Support

We can provide **travel costs and accommodation** (no per diems!) to selected participants. Please indicate in your submission whether you need such support.

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