

Isaac M. Mbiti

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Academic Employment

Assistant Professor of Public Policy and Economics, Frank Batten School of Leadership and Public Policy, University of Virginia, 2014- Present

Assistant Professor, Department of Economics, Southern Methodist University, 2007- 2014

Affiliations, Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL) and IZA

Martin Luther King Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of Economics, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, September 2010 – December 2011

Education

Ph.D. in Economics, Brown University, Providence, RI, 2007

A.M. in Economics, Brown University, Providence, RI, 2002

B.Sc. in Economics (*Summa Cum Laude*), University of Wisconsin-River Falls, River Falls WI, 1999

Publications

“Mobile Phones and Economic Development in Africa” with Jenny C. Aker, *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, Summer 2010, Vol. 24, No. 3

“Is the Mobile Phone Africa’s ‘Green Revolution’” with Jenny C. Aker, *Boston Review*, March 2010

“The Determinants and Consequences of School Choice Errors in Kenya” with Adrienne M. Lucas. *American Economic Review, Papers and Proceedings*, May 2012, 102(3): 283-288.

“Access, Sorting, and Achievement: the Short-Run Effects of Free Primary Education in Kenya” with Adrienne M. Lucas. *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* 4(4): 226-253.

“Does Free Primary Education Narrow Gender Differences in Schooling Outcomes? Evidence from Kenya” with Adrienne M. Lucas. *Journal of African Economies* October, 2012: 1-32.

“The Home Economics of E-Money: Velocity, Cash Management, and Discount Rates of *M-Pesa* Users” With David Weil, *American Economic Review, Papers and Proceedings*, May 2013 103 (3), 369-374

“Effects of School Quality on Student Achievement: Discontinuity Evidence from Kenya” with Adrienne M. Lucas. *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* July 2014 6(3): 234-263

Publications (continued)

“Youth Unemployment in Ghana” with Kim Lehrer, in *Youth and Employment in Sub-Saharan Africa: Working but Poor* edited by Hiroyuki Hino and Gustav Rainis. Routledge Press (2014)

“Mobile Money: The Impact of M-Pesa in Kenya” with David Weil, in *NBER Volume on African Economic Successes*, edited by Sebastian Edwards, Simon Johnson and David Weil, University of Chicago Press (forthcoming)

Working Papers

“Monsoon Wedding? The Effect of Female Labor Demand on Marriage Markets in India”

“Vocational Education in Kenya: Evidence from a Randomized Evaluation Among Youth” with Joan Hicks, Michael Kremer, and Edward Miguel

Reports (with links)

“[Access and Quality: A Review of the Kenyan Education Sector](#)” with Rachel Glennester, Michael Kremer and Kudzai Takavarasha. Office of the Prime Minister of Kenya/ Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), 2011

“[Vocational Education Voucher Delivery and Labor Market Returns: A Randomized Evaluation among Kenyan Youth](#)” with Joan Hicks, Michael Kremer and Edward Miguel. Report for Spanish Impact Evaluation Fund (SIEF), World Bank, Washington, DC, 2011

“Youth and Livelihoods: A Review of Technical and Vocational Education and Training Programs for Youth” with Jamie McCasland and Holly Reed. International Rescue Committee, New York, 2011

“[The Implications of Innovations in the Financial Sector on the Conduct of Monetary Policy in East Africa](#)” with David Weil and Francis Mweya. International Growth Center Working Paper, 2012

Grants, Awards and Fellowships

International Impact Evaluation Initiative (3ie): “Training for success: targeting and incentives in apprenticeship training in Ghana” \$482,000 (Co-PI with Jamie McCasland)

International Impact Evaluation Initiative (3ie): “Vocational Education in Kenya,” \$194,810 (Co-PI with Jonas Hjort, Michael Kremer, and Edward Miguel)

International Growth Center: “Vocational Education in Kenya” \$107,000 (Co-PI with Jonas Hjort, Michael Kremer, and Edward Miguel)

International Growth Center: “Increasing the Development Impact of Migrant Remittances: A Field Experiment Among Kenyan Migrants in the USA,” \$47,700 (Co-PI with Dean Yang)

IZA Growth and Labor Markets In Low Income Countries Programme “Start-up capital for youth: Assessing the potential of small business grants and vocational training in Kenya” \$521,291 (PI with Joan Hicks, Edward Miguel and Michael Kremer)

Grants, Awards and Fellowships (continued)

J-PAL Youth Initiative “The Returns to Apprenticeship Training in Ghana” \$50,000

National Academy of Education/Spencer Foundation Fellowship, 2010-2011 \$55,000

NBER Africa Initiative: “Mobile-Banking: The Impact of M-Pesa in Kenya,” \$66,000, (Co-PI with David N. Weil)

National Science Foundation “Collaborative Research: Experimental Evidence on the Returns to Vocational Education in Kenya” \$150,023

National Institutes of Health “Estimating the Impacts of Health and Human Capital Investment on Long-Run Life Outcomes in Kenya: Evidence from Three Randomized Evaluations” (PI, Edward Miguel), Subcontract to SMU \$211,357)

University Research Council Grant, Southern Methodist University: “School Quality and Student Achievement in Kenya,” 2008

Twaweza Initiative “Improving Early Grade Learning in Tanzania” (with Karthik Muralidharan)
Total budget \$1,256,628

USAID Development Innovations Ventures: “Ghana National Apprenticeship Program Impact Evaluation: Effort, Incentives and Returns” \$474,000 (with Jamie McCasland)

World Bank Governance Trust Grant “Crowd-Sourcing Citizen Voices to Improve Public Service Delivery: A Pilot Study of the Huduma Platform in Kenya” \$49,000

Presentations

2014: American Economic Association Annual Meeting, CSAE Conference Oxford University, Society of Labor Economics Annual Meeting, University of Edinburgh, University of Oregon, Université de Sherbrooke, University of Texas at Dallas

2013: American Economic Association Annual Meeting, Baylor Global Business Forum, World Bank, IZA/ World Bank Employment and Development Conference, Georgia Tech, Clemson, Notre Dame, Vanderbilt, Texas Empirical Conference, Johns Hopkins University, UVA, IZA Growth and Labor Markets in Developing Countries Conference.

2012: Society of Labor Economics, NOVA School of Business

2011: Boston University, Dartmouth College, Fordham University, International Growth Centre, International Rescue Committee, MIT/Harvard Joint Seminar, NBER Africa Project Conference, Paris School of Economics, Texas Empirical Conference, Toulouse University, Tufts University, University of Michigan, University of Minnesota, World Bank

2010: University of Oxford, University of Connecticut, Econometric Society World Congress, Edinburgh University, Graduate Institute Economic Seminar, NBER Africa Project Conference, NYU, Society of Labor Economics World Congress, Tulane University

Presentations (continued)

2009: Brookings Institute, UC-Berkeley, World Bank, Baylor University, NBER Africa Project Conference

2008: University of Washington, University of Michigan, NBER Africa Project Meeting, Northeast Universities Development Consortium Conference (NEUDC), Population Association of America (PAA) Annual Meeting, Society of Labor Economics (SOLE), Annual Meeting

2007: Southern Methodist University, University of Minnesota, Hubert H. Humphrey School of Public Affairs, Latin American Econometric Society (LAMES) Annual Meeting, Northeast Universities Development Consortium Conference (NEUDC), Population Association of America (PAA) Annual Meeting

Teaching Experience

University of Virginia: Research Methods and Data Analysis in Public Policy

Southern Methodist University:

Labor Economics (Undergraduate), Economic Development: Microeconomic Perspectives (Undergraduate), Economic Development (Graduate)

Professional Service

Referee for *American Economic Review*, *American Economic Journal: Applied*, *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*, *Economics of Education Review*, *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, *Economic Journal*, *Education Economics*, *Empirical Economics*, *Journal of Development Economics*, *Journal of Economic Growth*, *Journal of Human Resources*, *Journal of Public Economics*, *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, *Review of Economics and Statistics*, *Review of Economic Studies*, *Southern Economic Journal*, *World Bank Economic Review* and *World Development*

Grant proposal review for Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie), IZA Growth and Labor Markets Review and the National Science Foundation.

Conference Organizing: IZA Growth and Labor Markets Conference and Training program, December 2013, Nairobi, Kenya.

Impact Evaluation Trainings: J-PAL Executive Education, IZA Growth and Labor Markets Evaluation Short Course, International Rescue Committee Youth and Livelihoods

University Service

Economics Department Information Technology Representative

Endowed Chair Recruiting Committee 2009-2010, 2011-2012, 2012-2013