Interview with Miriam Ongala, a visiting scholar from the University of Nairobi, Kenya, to the Centre for the Study of African Economies.

Q: Why did you want to spend time at the CSAE to sharpen your research skills and gain exposure to the academic life in a different university?
A: I wanted to spend time at the CSAE to get access to the academic environment and resources.

Q: What did you enjoy most from your time at the CSAE?
A: The environment at the CSAE was very conducive for undertaking research.

Q: What was the key insight that you took back with you?
A: After spending a semester at the CSAE, I realized that to be a good researcher, you must invest time and resources in order to produce good work. Networking is also very important in research as this is a form of disseminating information.

Q: What did you find most different or strange?
A: I did not find anything strange while at the CSAE. I enjoyed discovering new places and then finding out why certain things are the way they are or why people live in a certain way.

Working Papers


Bridging the gender divide: An experimental analysis of group formation in African villages by Abigail Barr, Marleen Dikkers and Marcel Fafchamps. WPS/2009-017.


Taboos, agriculture and poverty by David Stiffl, Marcel Fafchamps and Bari window. WPS/2009-015.


Testing Unilateral and Bilateral Link Formation by Margherita Colomba and Marcel Fafchamps. WPS/2009-013.


Vulnerability, Risk Management, and Agricultural development by Marcel Fafchamps. WPS/2009-11.

Referral and Job Performance: Evidence from the Ghana Colonial Arm by Marcel Fafchamps and Alexander Maroof. WPS/2009-10.

Determinants of the Choice of Migration Destination by Marcel Fafchamps and Forhad Gidwani. WPS/2009-09.

Democracy’s Achilles Heel or, How to Win an Election without Really Trying by Paul Collier and Arka Hoefele. WPS/2009-08.


Guns and Roses: The Impact of the Kenyan Post-Election Violence on Flower Exporting Firms by Christopher Rooth, Rocco Macchiavello and Annette Marjoribanks. WPS/2009-06.


Structural Policies for Shock-Prone Developing Countries by Paul Collier and Benedict Goodrich. WPS/2009-03.


Nigerian and international scholars discuss the policy decisions that Nigeria’s politicians will have to make to put Nigeria on the path to long-term prosperity.

Books


The CSAE carries out economic research with a particular focus on Africa. Its aim is to improve economic and social conditions in the poorest societies.

The Centre for the Study of African Economies (CSAE) at Oxford University is a world-renowned research institute. Founded in 1986, the CSAE aims to improve economic and social conditions in the poorest societies.

Funding

CSAE research is funded by UNIDO, the World Bank, the ESRC, the Department for International Development (DFID), and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The views expressed are not necessarily those of the funding bodies.

First Edition

Welcome to the first edition of the newsletter produced by the Centre for the Study of African Economies (CSAE) at Oxford University. This two-yearly newsletter is intended to give you a quick and accessible overview of the policy relevant research work undertaken by this respected economic research institute. Founded in 1986, the CSAE aims to improve economic and social conditions in the poorest societies using statistical analysis to assess what measures might help improve these living conditions. This means the research currently carried out at the CSAE looks at issues to do with elections, central banks’ policy, educational and agricultural policies and the effects of conflict on elections and industrial output.

Researchers here at the CSAE want to ensure that their research produces tangible benefits in the countries that they are working in. As a result, the current research focuses strongly on producing assessments of the effectiveness of particular projects. One example of this kind of work features in this edition: a preliminary assessment on whether Ghanaian cocoa farmers have increased their cocoa output after receiving fertiliser and training on credit. Typically the researchers work very closely with relevant governmental departments or non-governmental organisations at the planning stage of a project and then collect statistical data for analysis. This analysis can then be used by the local organisations to guide them in their further work.

The other pieces of work featured in this newsletter deal with the effects of conflict on the economy, as illustrated in the piece on the Kenyan flower industry, and whether a Nigerian campaign against violence in elections was successful.

Clearly, with around 15 researchers working at the CSAE, there will never be enough space in the newsletter to give you a detailed description of all research work being carried out. To give you an overview, we list working papers and books on the back page.

We hope you enjoy reading this newsletter.

The Editor, Karin Loudon

If you are interested in more in-depth briefings on particular topics please go to our websites - www.csae.ox.ac.uk/output and www.tig.ox.ac.uk/output where you will find our briefing papers. We are keen to hear whether our information materials meet your needs, so if you have any comments or queries please contact us: csae.media@economics.ox.ac.uk

• Boosting Cocoa production 2
• Subscription details 3
• Kenyan flower export industry 4
• Nigerian votes and violence 6
• Working Papers and Books 8
• Interview 8
Fertile Ground: Boosting Cocoa Production among Ghanaian Smallholders

Summary and policy-relevant findings
A scheme in Ghana that combines training with fertilisers, insecticides and pesticides on credit to groups of Ghanaian cocoa farmers has shown remarkable success in increasing production and incomes for farmers:

• Average farm production increased by 20% as a result of the programme
• The increase in production was worth nearly three times the value of the loan

One of the key parts of the programme is that farmers are grouped and are jointly liable for the repayment of all the loans within their group.

Policy conclusion:
The initial design of the programme was successful. There were high average increases in production and only 10% of the farmers in the study experienced difficulties in repaying the loans. However there is a nearly 40% drop-out rate from the programme. Inconsistent use of fertiliser and difficulties in repaying the loans.

GHANA’S COCOA SECTOR
In 2007, 35% of Ghana’s GDP and 60% of total employment were in agriculture.

The cocoa industry is the single largest contributor to agricultural GDP (4.5%).

In 2007, only 6% of all total credit went to the agricultural sector.

This indicates that lack of access to credit is only one of the barriers to increasing cocoa output in Ghana.

Further work is underway in 2009 to identify these other barriers to increasing cocoa output.

Policy context
Cocoa production is one of the cornerstones of Ghana’s economy. However, cocoa yields per hectare of land in the country are among the lowest in the world. Low use of fertiliser has been identified as one of the likely causes of such low yields. Farmers are often unable to pay for the fertiliser before the harvest.

Project description
The Cocoa Abrabopa Association (CAA) is a not-for-profit organisation offering fertiliser and pesticides on credit to groups of Ghanaian cocoa farmers. This is coupled with a training program to improve their farming and business skills.


The research team assessed the programme by comparing the yields from participating farmers to comparable non-participating farmers. On average, members of the 2007/08 programme have higher cocoa output than those who joined for the 2008/09 programme. This is shown in figure 1 below.

Despite apparent successes in increasing income and achieving high loan recovery rates, the drop-out rate remains high at 38%.

Future research
Future research will look at why over one third of newly-participating farmers leave the programme. This is of particular interest not only because the target membership of 50,000 for this programme requires a higher re-enrolment rate. It is also important because previous work on the cocoa sector in Ghana shows that farmers often stop using technologies such as fertiliser, even when these appear to be profitable on average (as discussed in Zeitlin 2009).

TO FIND OUT MORE
ABOUT THE RESEARCHERS
Richard Dzene is a Lecturer at the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration.

Emmanuel Opoku is a Senior Research Manager in the Research, Monitoring and Evaluation Department of the Ghana Cocoa Board.

Stefano Caria completed the MPh in Economics at Oxford in 2009. He joins the London-based Overseas Development Institute in September 2009.

Francis Teal is the deputy director of the CSAE and his research concentrates on performance of labour markets, wage determination and firm growth in Africa.

Andrew Zeitlin is a Research Officer at the CSAE and a Junior Research Fellow at St Antony’s College Oxford. His research focuses on social interactions in technology adoption, and his DPhil studied the cocoa industry in Ghana.

ABOUT THE COCOA ABRABOPA PROGRAMME
http://www.wienco.com/cocoa.htm

ABOUT THE EVALUATION OF THE CAA PROGRAMME
http://www.csae.ox.ac.uk/~asaprogs/cocoa


Available at: www.csae.ox.ac.uk/conferences/2009/EA/A/papafzfu.html

ABOUT SIMILAR STUDIES

Available at: www.apac.umn.edu/faculty/gklevine/Winconf/papers_by_researchers_last_name/Zeitlin%2004-30-09.pdf

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EMAIL our editor Karin Loudon on ccao_media@economics.ox.ac.uk or WRITE to: Editor CSAE, University of Oxford, Manor Road, Oxford OX1 3QU
Fertile Ground: Boosting Cocoa Production among Ghanian Smallholders

Summary and policy-relevant findings

A scheme in Ghana that combines training with fertilisers, insecticides and pesticides on credit to groups of Ghanaian cocoa farmers has shown remarkable success in increasing production and incomes for farmers:

- Average farm production increased by 20% as a result of the programme.
- The increase in production was worth nearly three times the value of the loan.

One of the key parts of the programme is that farmers are grouped and are jointly liable for the repayment of all the loans within their group.

Policy conclusion:

The initial design of the programme was successful. There were high average increases in production and only 10% of the farmers in the study experienced difficulties in repaying the loans. However, there is a nearly 40% drop-out rate from the programme. Inconsistent use of fertiliser and other inputs remains a common problem in the cocoa sector in Ghana.

GHANA’S COCOA SECTOR

In 2007, 35% of Ghana’s GDP and 60% of total employment were in agriculture.

The cocoa industry is the single largest contributor to agricultural GDP (4.5%).

In 2007, only 6% of all total credit went to the agricultural sector.

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Further work is underway in 2009 to identify these other barriers to increasing cocoa output.

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ABOUT THE COCOA ABRABO-PA PROGRAMME:

http://www.wienco.com/cocoa.htm

ABOUT THE EVALUATION OF THE CAA PROGRAMME:

http://www.csae.ox.ac.uk/resprogs/cocoa

Available at: www.csae.ox.ac.uk/conferences/2009-ESA/papersfinal.html

ABOUT SIMILAR STUDIES:

Available at: www.apac.umn.edu/faculty/pglewwe/Minnconf/papers_by_presenters_last_name/Zeitlin%204.30.09.pdf

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EMAIL our editor Karin Loudon on ccae_media@economics.ox.ac.uk, or WRITE to:
Editor CSAE | University of Oxford | Manor Road | Oxford | OX1 3UQ
The Impact of the Kenyan Post-election Violence on the Kenyan Flower Export Industry

Summary and policy-relevant findings

An analysis of Kenyan flower exports by the Centre for the Study of African Economies (CSAE) at Oxford University quantifies the impact of the post-election violence in 2007/8 on the Kenyan flower industry. This industry was Kenya’s largest foreign exchange earner in 2007 and it is an exclusively export-oriented industry.

The key results are that:

• the violence reduced the exports of Kenyan flower exporters by nearly one quarter on average, and by nearly 40% for firms located in conflict areas; and

• diversification of export opportunities provides some protection against loss of income.

Based on these results, government policies should encourage flower exporters to export their flowers via a variety of export channels. This would provide an effective insurance strategy for firms working in risky environments.

Policy context

Kenya’s post-election violence

There were two outbreaks of violence following Kenya’s general elections in December 2007. One started on the 27th of December 2007 following the unexpected declaration of President Mwai Kibaki, a Kikuyu, as the winner ahead of his Luo rival Raila Odinga. Within minutes of Kibaki being sworn in, ethnic violence broke out which was mainly seen as a Kikuyu revenge attack on the ethnic groups which were mainly perceived as Odinga’s supporters.

The flower industry in Kenya

In slightly more than a decade Kenya has become one of the leading exporters of flowers in the world, overtaking Israel, Colombia and Ecuador. Figure 1 displays the dramatic increase in the exports of cut flowers from Kenya. The flower industry is also an important part of GDP, being one of the three largest sectors of Kenya’s economy. Data from the Horticultural Crop Development Authority (HCDA) on all Kenyan flower exporters, the study shows that the conflict reduced Kenyan flower exports by 24% overall. For firms located in conflict areas exports were reduced by 38%. This was mainly because workers were displaced. The effects of the five week violence are shown in figure 2. These effects lasted for three months.

Figure 1: Floriculture Export Value (1995-2007)
Source: HCDA Annual Statistics

Project findings in more detail

Using export information from the Horticultural Crop Development Authority (HCDA) on all Kenyan flower exporters, the study shows that the conflict reduced Kenyan flower exports by 24% overall. For firms located in conflict areas exports were reduced by 38%. This was mainly because workers were displaced. The effects of the five week violence are shown in figure 2. These effects lasted for three months.

However, not all flower exporting firms were affected in the same way. Those that used only flower auctions to sell their produce were worst affected and saw a drop in exports of 41%. Those that exported only via direct buyers saw a drop in exports of 26%. Flower exporters that used both flower auctions and direct buyers only saw their exports drop by 11%.

In the last four years most firms have concentrated their export efforts via direct buyers. This is because sales through direct relationships offer a stable demand with generally higher returns. However, direct relationships also mean greater dependency on the buyer as flower exporters tailor their products to the client.

Exporting via auctions reduces this dependency but prices vary substantially throughout the season. In addition, as auction houses are intermediaries, the returns to the flower exporters tend to be lower.

Maintaining both types of export channels appears to be an effective insurance strategy when operating in a risky environment. That is why government policies should encourage flower exporters to see these channels as complements rather than substitutes. Flower exporters using both types of export channels will have to decide whether the revenue protection of using both export channels outweighs the indirect costs they may incur.

Future research

Future work will include an evaluation of the Ethiopian government’s support to develop an Ethiopian flower industry. Data from other flower auctions in East Africa will add to a broader picture.

TO FIND OUT MORE

ABOUT THE RESEARCHERS

Christopher Kassi is a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Department of Economics, Oxford and a Research Affiliate of the CSAE. His research interests are in the microeconomics of development, in particular in insurance and information networks, conflict and information technology in Africa.

Rocco Macchiavello is a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Department of Economics, Oxford and a Research Affiliate of the Centre for Economic Policy Research. His work studies the industrial organisation of developing countries, with particular emphasis on the organisation of exports and the consequences of credit market imperfections.

Ameet Morjaria is a PhD student at the London School of Economics and the Suntory and Toyota International Centres for Economics and Related Disciplines. His research focuses on the political economy of development in Africa, in particular issues of conflict and natural resource utilisation.

DETAILED INFORMATION

Christopher Kassi, Rocco Macchiavello and Ameet Morjaria: Guns and Roses: The Impact of the Kenyan Post-Election Violence on Flower Exporting Firms. CSAE WP’s/2009/06, 2009.


Both available: www.csae.ox.ac.uk/workingpapers/wps-list.html
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A second dramatic outbreak of violence occurred between the 25th and the 30th of January 2008, which was mainly seen as a Kikuyu attack on the Kikuyus who had attacked Luo-Kikuyu conflict in various parts of the country, with Odinga’s supporters targeting the Kikuyus to show their discontent. Within minutes of Odinga being sworn in, ethnic violence broke out which was mainly seen as a Luo-Kikuyu conflict.

The flower industry in Kenya

In slightly more than a decade Kenya has become one of the leading exporters of flowers in the world, overtaking Israel, Colombia and Ecuador. Figure 1 displays the dramatic increase in the exports of cut flowers from Kenya. The flower industry is also an important part of GDP, being one of the three largest foreign exchange earners in the last year (with tourism and tea), and taking the top spot in 2007.

Project findings in more detail

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DETAILED INFORMATION

VOTES AND VIOLENCE

SUMMARY AND POLICY CONCLUSIONS

Results from a nationwide field experiment during the 2007 elections in Nigeria reveal that a range of dirty tactics, some illegal, were used by both government and opposition politicians. The tactics used differed depending on the situation of the politicians. Using violence to intimidate voters was the strategy used by the opposition politicians. Incumbent politicians tended to use vote buying and fraud.

In the first study of its kind, the Centre for the Study of African Economies (CSAE) evaluated strategies developed by ActionAid International Nigeria (AAIN) to counteract the use of violence to intimidate voters. The evaluation showed that these strategies were effective. The strategies had an effect on the voters’ directly approached by the campaign. The research showed that AAIN campaign had also an effect on those voters’ perceptions who lived in the campaign area but were not directly approached by the campaign. The campaign was most effective for the poorer sections of Nigerian society.

Policy conclusions:
- Effective campaigns to counteract voter intimidation can be mounted.
- A campaign can have an effect even on people who are not directly targeted.
- Providing such campaigns are appropriately designed, their effectiveness can be measured using modern statistical techniques. Measurement is likely to make it easier to attract outside funding for such campaigns from international and governmental donors.

POLICY CONTEXT

The 2007 elections in Nigeria were significant because they marked the first transfer of presidential power from one civilian to another. Given this background AAIN wanted to counteract the use of violence with its contribution to election violence campaign. The prevalence of the use of violence in Nigeria’s 2007 elections is demonstrated by the fact that over 300 people were killed during those elections.

Other, more recent, African elections, ranging from the grotesque in Zimbabwe, through the dirty in Kenya, to a clean change of regime in Ghana demonstrate that electoral violence is also a significant problem in other African countries.

Why are dirty tactics, such as vote buying, voter intimidation and ballot fraud used by African politicians? Earlier research seems to indicate that such tactics may be effective to get into or stay in power. For example, statistical analysis of the São Tomé and Principe 2007 elections undertaken by the CSAE showed that vote buying was an effective tactic in that instance.

Dirty elections may not only lead to deaths, they also appear to affect how well a country is governed after the elections. Previous CSAE research has found that properly conducted elections lead to an improvement in economic policies. Elections that are badly conducted have at best no effect. So to reduce the number of deaths and to encourage the development of good economic policies, it is important to facilitate clean elections.

The challenge for policymakers therefore is to find effective ways of countering the use of dirty tactics.

OVERVIEW OF THE ‘NO TO ELECTION VIOLENCE’ CAMPAIGN

The CSAE partnered with AAIN to undertake the first systematic empirical evaluation of a campaign to counteract the use of violence in the run up to the April 2007 elections in Nigeria. The campaign ran in January and February 2007.

AAIN is specialized in community improvement and capacity building. Its campaign consisted of holding town meetings, street theatre productions and the distribution of leaflets. The aim was to encourage citizens to go out and vote and in so doing punish violent politicians at the polls. The campaign covered the six states of Nigeria which represent the main socio-economic regions of the country: Delta, Kaduna, Lagos, Oyo, Plateau, and Rivers.

The CSAE collected information from all locations covered by AAIN’s campaign. It also ran representative household surveys, and contracted local journalists in each observed location to keep diaries of local violent events. To allow a clear attribution of the results to the AAIN campaign, comparisons were made with similar locations that were not part of the anti-violence campaign.

Surveys also indicate that the reason violent politicians received fewer votes was because more of their former supporters abstained.

Comparisons of the numbers of people who voted in campaign areas relative to other areas show a distinct 10% increase in voter turnout in the targeted areas.

The campaign was especially effective with those people who were less locally integrated because they were poor or working outside the district. The group were less likely to benefit from local political deals and were therefore more receptive to the campaign messages.

The campaign had an effect on voters who were directly approached as well as those who lived in the campaign area but were not directly approached.

ONGOING AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The CSAE will be evaluating the effectiveness of using election monitors and mobile phone monitoring to ensure clean elections during the national elections in Mozambique in October 2009.

TO FIND OUT MORE

ABOUT THE RESEARCHERS

Paul Collier is a Professor of Economics and the Director of the Centre for the Study of African Economies (CSAE), University of Oxford. His research interests are the causes and consequences of civil war, the effects of aid, and the problems of democracy in low-income and rich in natural resources societies.

Marcel Feldchamp is a Professor of Economics and a Deputy Director of the CSAE, University of Oxford. His work studies the risk coping strategies of the poor, market institutions, intra-household issues, and the spatial division of labour.

Pedro C. Vicente is a Lecturer in Economics at Trinity College Dublin and a Research Officer at the CSAE, University of Oxford. His researches on the political economy of development, including in particular, vote buying, and conflict, with a special interest in Africa.

DETAILED INFORMATION

Fieldwork including ActionAid’s campaign: http://www.iig.ox.ac.uk/research/08/political-violence-nigeria/default.htm.


Summary and policy conclusions

The 2007 elections in Nigeria were significant because they marked the first transfer of presidential power from one civilian to another. This background made the 2007 elections particularly difficult for the Centre for the Study of African Economies (CSAE) and its partners. The Centre’s team, which included researchers from ActionAid International Nigeria, wanted to counteract the effects of violence on voters and campaigns. The team aimed to measure the impact of campaigns and to improve voter turnout and participation. The campaign was considered successful, as it reduced the number of deaths and had an effect on the voters’ perceptions of the candidates. The campaign also had an effect on the voters’ perceptions of the candidates, as it reduced the number of deaths and had an effect on the voters’ perceptions of the candidates.

Policy context

The key differences in areas targeted by the campaign were that relative to non-targeted areas:
- Violent politicians got fewer votes;
- Voter turnout increased by 10%.

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The campaign achievements in more detail

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- Violent politicians got fewer votes;
- Voter turnout increased by 10%.


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Ongoing and Future research

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SUMMER 2009

Interview with Miriam Omoalo, a visiting scholar from the University of Nairobi, Kenya, to the Centre for the Study of African Economies.

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The CSAE carries out economic research with a particular focus on Africa. Its aim is to improve economic and social conditions in the poorest societies.

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