

# Summer School on Wealth Inequality Concludes at Makerere University

**KAMPALA, UGANDA — September 22, 2024** — The one-week Summer School titled "Wealth Inequality Research: Capacity Building in Higher Institutions in Africa" wrapped up on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2024 at Makerere University, gathering approximately 70 participants from 20 universities across East Africa and beyond.

The training was organized by the [University](#) of Duisburg-Essen (Germany), the [University](#) of Michigan (USA), [Makerere University](#) (Uganda), and with funding from the Volkswagen Foundation. Dr. Resty Naiga from Makerere University Department of Development Studies was the Lead convener.

Participants were tasked with drafting blog posts that will serve as foundational pieces for research proposals on wealth inequality. The blog entries are set to be published on a University of Pittsburgh-affiliated website and will be reviewed by the event's speakers for feedback. Attendees were encouraged to maintain connections forged during the workshop to facilitate ongoing discussions on the topic.

Professor Helen Nkabala, Principal of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, expressed her mixed feelings about the conclusion of the program. "It is always a pleasure to return to such spaces," she said. "When we began, we were uncertain about how this journey would unfold, but here we are today, smiling together."

Nkabala emphasized the importance of collaboration and networking, encouraging participants to continue sharing knowledge gained during the summer school. "This is just the beginning," she stated. "The best is yet to come."

Howard Stein, a professor at the University of Michigan, highlighted the importance of the workshop's focus. "Wealth inequality is a topic that is both under-researched and under-taught," he noted. "The subjects of interest in development are often dictated by international donors rather than the core issues affecting society. This summer school was an opportunity to bring together diverse perspectives on this crucial topic."

Participants also shared their gratitude. Jakob Kapeller from the University of Duisburg-Essen expressed his appreciation for the insights gained, stating, "I felt like a student myself and learned a lot. This experience has been invaluable in understanding wealth inequality in Africa."

Representing national Universities Constantine from Gulu University Uganda reinforced the importance of continued collaboration. "This summer school is just the beginning," he said. "Let us keep networking and build something larger from this experience."

International students also praised the warm hospitality and rich discussions. "We felt welcomed from the moment we arrived," one participant remarked. "This was a unique opportunity to engage with peers and experts from various backgrounds."

The Summer School featured a robust agenda that included lectures on wealth dynamics, methodologies for data collection, and discussions on policy implications. This was aimed at enhancing research capacity across East Africa. Each day centered around distinct themes, fostering critical discussions on wealth dynamics.

The programme kicked off on Monday, September 16, with Jörg Wiegratz from the University of Leeds discussing "I cannot be nobody for life: New dynamics of wealth and social mobility in Africa in the time of platform capitalism." Following this, Jakob Kapeller from the Institute for Socioeconomics at the University of Duisburg-Essen Germany presented an introduction to orthodox versus heterodox economics.

On Tuesday, September 17, the focus shifted to conceptualizing wealth and its trends. Prof. Helen Nambalirwa Nkabala, Principal of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, opened the day with welcome remarks. Keynote speaker Fred Muhumuza, a development economist from Makerere University Business School, addressed the audience. Jakob Kapeller from the University of Duisburg-Essen Germany and Howard Stein from the University of Michigan led discussions on different economic understandings of wealth inequality and its trends.

The third day, Wednesday, September 18, explored sources of wealth and drivers of inequality. Dr. Resty Naiga, the lead convener and Head of the Department of Development Studies at Makerere University, presented on land acquisition and arising inequalities in Uganda. Howard Stein from the University of Michigan and Faustin Maganga from St. John's University Tanzania discussed methodologies for collecting rural wealth data based on their fieldwork in Tanzania. Additionally, a blog composition workshop was led by Jakob Kapeller and Paul Kliesch, both from the Institute for Socioeconomics.

On Thursday, September 19, discussions focused on the consequences of wealth inequality. Doreen Kobusingye from the Land and Equity Movement in Uganda and Clare Bangirana from the AfriChild Centre addressed the implications for gender and children. Emmanuel Sulle, Director at the Arusha Climate and Environmental Research Centre, explored the impact of rural investment schemes on employment and wealth. Howard Stein examined the relationship between wealth inequality and health disparities, followed by another blog composition workshop facilitated by Kapeller and Kliesch.

The programme continued on Friday, September 20, with a focus on policy and political economy. Theresa Auma Eilu, Executive Director of the Land and Equity Movement, discussed the Ugandan drivers of wealth inequality. William John Walwa from the University of Dar es Salaam presented on land deals and alienation, while Jörg Wiegratz from the School of Politics and International Studies, University of Leeds, UK analyzed the political economy of wealth inequality in Africa. The day concluded with another blog composition workshop led by Kapeller and Kliesch.

The final day, Saturday, September 21, involved mapping out future research directions. Emmanuel Sulle revisited the impact of rural investment schemes on employment and wealth, and participants collaboratively identified key themes for joint projects and research applications. Godfrey Asiimwe from Mountains of the Moon University discussed the effects of neoliberal policies on wealth inequality.

On Sunday, September 22, an interactive networking session allowed participants to share insights and bid farewells before departing. Prof. Helen Nambalirwa Nkabala provided closing remarks to wrap up the programme with partners and facilitators awarded tokens and participants recognized with Certificates of attendance.

This summer school promised to foster collaborative research efforts and informed discussions aimed at addressing wealth inequality throughout Africa.

**By Jane Anyango**

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