# Merima Ali

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Department of Economics

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## Position

April 2012-present: Senior Researcher, Chr. Michelsen Institute, Bergen, Norway

## Education

* Ph.D. Development Economics, Wageningen University, the Netherlands: 2012.
* Master of Science: Economics, University of Gothenburg, Sweden: 2006
* BA, Economics, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia: 2004

## Teaching Experience at Syracuse University, Department of Economics

* ECN 203: Economic Ideas and Issues
* ECN 365: World Economy
* ECN 610: International Trade and Development
* ECN 310: Economic Development of Africa
* ECN 301: Intermediate Micro

## Research Interests

Development, State Capacity and Taxation Policy

## Grants Awarded

2019: C0-principal Investigator: Public Goods, Security and the Legacy of Pre-colonial States in Uganda, funded by the Norwegian Research Council (672,550.80 USD)

2016: Principal Investigator:Mapping Tax Compliance Costs for Businesses in Africa, funded by International Centre for Taxation and Development (50,000 USD)

2016: Taxing the urban boom in Tanzania: Interests, incentives and real estate in Dar es Salaam, funded by Norwegian Embassy in Dar es Salaam

2015: Principal Investigator: Electronic sales register machines, tax enforcement and tax outcomes, funded by International Centre for Taxation and Development (112,000 USD)

2013: Principal Investigator: Impact evaluation on the role of IT on tax compliance in Ethiopia, funded by International Centre for Taxation and Development (52,136 USD)

2013: Co-principal Investigator: A fair path towards universal coverage: National case study for Ethiopia, Uganda and Zambia, funded by International Development Research Centre (52,607 USD)

2013: End review of UNIDO, Entrepreneurship development for the youth in Mozambique, funded by NORAD

2013: Evaluation of the Norwegian aid administration's systems & practices, funded by NORAD

2013: Edible oil value-chain enhancement and clustering in Ethiopia, funded by UNIDO

## Research

### Publications in Peer Reviewed Journal Articles

* Pre-colonial centralization and tax compliance norms in contemporary Uganda, Forthcoming in *Journal of Institutional Economics,* (With Odd-Helge Fieldstad).
* European colonization and the corruption of local elites: the case of chiefs in Africa, 2020. Forthcoming in, *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization, vol 179, p. 80-100*, (With Abdulaziz Shifa, and Odd-Helge Fieldstad).
* Colonial Legacy, State-building and the Salience of Ethnicity in Sub-Saharan Africa, 2019.*The Economic Journal*, vol. 129, p. 1048–1081***.*** (With Abdulaziz Shifa, Boqian Jiang and Odd-Helge Fieldstad).
* Building Fiscal Capacity in Developing Countries: Evidence on the Role of Information Technology. 2019. Revise and resubmit: *National Tax Journal* (With Shifa,A., Woldeyes, F., and Shimeles, A).
* To Pay or Not to Pay? Citizens’ Attitudes toward Taxation in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, and South Africa, 2014. *World Development*, vol*.* [64](http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/journal/0305750X/64/supp/C), p. 828-842. (With [Odd-Helge Fjeldstad](http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0305750X14002083) and [Ingrid Hoem Sjursen](http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0305750X14002083)).
* Value Added of Cluster Membership for Micro Enterprises of the Handloom Sector in Ethiopia, 2011. *World Development*, vol. 39, p. 363-374. (With J. Peerlings).
* Ethnic Ties in Trade Relationships and the Impact on Economic Performance: The Case of Small-Scale Producers in Ethiopia, 2011. *Journal of Development Studies*, vol. 47, p. 1241-1260. (With J.Peerlings).
* Clustering as an Organizational Response to Capital Market Inefficiency: Evidence from Microenterprises in Ethiopia, 2014. *Small Business Economics*, vol. 43, p. 697-709. (With X. Zhang and J. Peerlings).
* Farm households and non-farm activities in Ethiopia: does clustering influence entry and exit, 2012. *Agricultural Economics*, vol. 43, p. 253-266. (With J.Peerlings).
* Policy implementation under stress: Central-local government relations in property tax collection in Tanzania, 2019. *Journal of Financial Management of Property and Construction,* [vol. 26, p. 129-147](https://doi.org/10.1108/JFMPC-10-2018-0057). (With [Odd-Helge Fjeldstad](http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0305750X14002083) and Lucas Katera).
* Why can we not demonstrate the difference that Norwegian aid makes? An evaluation of the results measurement system and practice, 2016. *Journal of Development Effectiveness,* vol. 8, p. 171-195. (With Espen Villanger , Rob Lloyd and Derek Poate).
* Understanding Inequalities in Child Health in Ethiopia: Health Achievements Are Improving in the Period 2000–2011, 2014. *PLoS ONE*, vol. 9, e106460. (With Eirin Kruger Skaftun and Ole Frithjof Norheim).
* Health inequalities in Ethiopia: modelling within-group and between-group inequalities, 2013. *International Journal for Equity in Health*, vol. 12:52. https://doi.org/10.1186/1475-9276-12-52 (With Eirik Joakim Tranvåg and Ole Frithjof Norheim).

## *Working Papers and Ongoing Projects*

* Pre-colonial Ethnic Institutions and Accountability of Local Government Officials in Africa.
* Pre-colonial Centralization, Tax-compliance Norms and Local Government Accountability in Uganda.
* Regulatory Burdens in Tax Administration and Firms’ Compliance Cost in Africa. ICTD Working Paper.
* Policy implementation under stress: Central-local government relations in property tax collection in Tanzania. CMI Working Paper WP 1: 2018. Bergen: Chr. Michelsen Institute. Also published as ATI Working Paper 1: 2018. Pretoria: African Tax Institute, University of Pretoria (With Fjeldstad, O-H and Lucas Katera).
* Cluster Development Programs in Ethiopia: Evidence and Policy Implications, Kiel Institute for the World Economy, 2016. (With Godart, O., Görg, H., and Seric. A).
* Diffusion of labor standards from origin to host countries: Cross-country evidence from FDI in Africa, EUI Working Paper RSCAS, 2014. (With Seric. A.)

### Policy Briefs and Blogs

* [Did British rule in Africa foster a legacy of corruption among local elites?](https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/africaatlse/2020/10/28/what-is-british-colonial-rule-in-africa-foster-a-legacy-corruption-local-elites/), [Africa at LSE at the London School of Economics 2021](https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/africaatlse/2020/10/28/what-is-british-colonial-rule-in-africa-foster-a-legacy-corruption-local-elites/). (With [Odd-Helge Fjeldstad](https://www.cmi.no/staff/odd-fjeldstad) and [Abdulaziz Shifa](https://www.cmi.no/publications/7928-did-british-rule-in-africa-foster-a-legacy-of-corruption-among-local-elites#author-details))

# [The colonial legacy of corruption among local elites in Africa](https://www.aehnetwork.org/blog/), Frontiers in African Economic History, 2021 (with [Odd-Helge Fjeldstad](https://www.cmi.no/staff/odd-fjeldstad) and Abdulaziz Shifa (2021)

* Property owners’ knowledge and attitudes towards property taxation in Tanzania, CMI policy insight, 2018. (With Fjeldstad, O-H., and Ketera, L.)
* Taxing the urban boom: property taxation in Africa: , CMI policy insight, 2017. (With Fjeldstad, O-H., and Goodfellow, T.)
* Property Taxation in Developing Countries. CMI policy brief, 2017. (With Fjeldstad, O-H., and Ketera,L.)
* [Industrial Clusters Promotion as a tool for private sector development: The UNIDO experience in Ethiopia](http://www.cmi.no/publications/publication/?4973=industrial-clusters-promotion-as-a-tool-for). CMI policy brief, 2013. (With Coniglio, N., and Seric , A.)
* [Government's role in cluster development for MSEs: Lessons from Ethiopia](http://www.cmi.no/publications/publication/?4538=governments-role-in-cluster-development-for-mses) Merima Ali. CMI policy brief.

## Conference Papers and Presentations

# 2021: [Pre-colonial centralization and tax compliance norm in contemporary Uganda](https://www.wider.unu.edu/sites/default/files/Events/PDF/Programme/Fiscal%20States%20workshop%20programme%20final.pdf):

#  [Presented at: UNU-Wider conference: Fiscal states - the origins and development implications](https://www.wider.unu.edu/sites/default/files/Events/PDF/Programme/Fiscal%20States%20workshop%20programme%20final.pdf).

##  2019: The Corruption of Chiefs in Anglophone and Francophone Africa, at Sustainability and Development Conference (SDC) from October 11-14, 2019, the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

# 2018: Pre-colonial centralization, fragility and state capacity in sub-Saharan Africa, at TaxCapDev-

 Network, Oslo, Norway.

2017: Regulatory Burdens in Tax Administration and Firms’ Compliance Cost in Africa, at ICTD’s Annual Research Conference, Entebbe, Uganda.

2015: Information technology and fiscal capacity in a developing country: Micro- evidence from Ethiopia, at the Econometric Society World Congress, Montreal, Canada.

2015: Economic Development and Efficient Tax Policy, as part of The Obama Administration’s Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI), Syracuse University.

2015: Colonial legacy, state building and the salience of ethnicity in Sub-Saharan Africa: Presented at the Maxwell African Scholars Union, Syracuse University.

2014: Information technology and fiscal capacity in a developing country: Micro- evidence from Ethiopia: Presented at: ICTD Annual Research Conference, Arusha, Tanzania.

2014: Taxation and Development: Presented as part of The Obama Administration’s Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI), July, Syracuse University.

2013: Understanding spatial heterogeneity in entrepreneurship across cities in Ethiopia: Presented at World Bank meeting at Norwegian School of Economics.

2013: [Factors affecting tax compliant attitude in Africa: Evidence from Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and South Africa](http://www.cmi.no/publications/publication/?4727=factors-affecting-tax-compliant-attitude-in-africa) Presented at: Centre for the Study of African Economies Conference at Oxford University.

2013: Clustering as an Organizational Response to Capital Market Inefficiency: Evidence from Microenterprises in Ethiopia: Presented at Fourth Annual Conference on “Business and Entrepreneurship in Africa”, Makerere University Business School.

2012: [The new Afrobarometer survey of taxpayer perceptions: Some preliminary results](http://www.cmi.no/publications/publication/?4828=the-new-afrobarometer-survey-of-taxpayer): Presented at: ICTD Annual Research Conference, Cape Town.

2012: Clustering as an Organizational Response to Capital Market Inefficiency: Evidence from Microenterprises in Ethiopia: Presented at Northeast Universities Development Conference (NEUDC), Dartmouth University.

2011: [Farm Households Entry and Exit Into and From Non-farm Enterprises in Rural Ethiopia: Does Clustering Play a Role?](http://econpapers.repec.org/paper/agseaae11/114220.htm) Presented at International Congress of the European Association of Agricultural Economists, Zurich.

## Professional Membership

 Ethiopian Economic Association, European Economic Association, Econometric Society,

 American Economic Association