



**UNIVERSITY
OF GHANA**



ANNUAL 2023 **REPORT** 2024

**INSTITUTE OF STATISTICAL, SOCIAL AND
ECONOMIC RESEARCH (ISSER)**

College of Humanities, University of Ghana

THE INSTITUTE FOR POLICY STUDIES

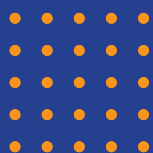


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Prof. Peter Quartey
Director, ISSER

Director's Welcome



It is with immense pride and enthusiasm that I welcome you to the 2023-2024 annual report of the Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research (ISSER). This year, we have once again upheld our mandate of promoting knowledge for development through impactful research, training, and policy advocacy.

Research remains at the core of our activities, providing essential insights to drive the socio-economic development of Ghana and beyond. A significant milestone this year was the launch of ISSER's second grant-awarding research initiative, the Future of Work Research Initiative West and Central Africa Hub. This achievement highlights our dedication to fostering high quality, evidence-based research in partnership with regional researchers and institutions.

Disseminating research findings to key stakeholders remains a vital part of our work. This year, we published the 32nd edition of the State of the Ghanaian Economy Report (SGER) 2022, alongside numerous project reports and contributions from individual researchers. These publications were complemented by approximately 20 policy engagement activities and several collaborative events. Notable among these was the Development Dialogue on Ghana's Public Debt Management, which provided a platform for experts and policymakers to address the pressing challenge of the country's severe debt situation, a crisis that ultimately necessitated seeking an IMF bailout.

Additionally, we organised three Budget Review activities, detailed in subsequent pages of this report. Our efforts underscore our understanding of the critical role science communication and dissemination play in bridging research and society. By ensuring that evidence-based insights inform decision-making, we aim to contribute to shaping policy and fostering sustainable development.

A standout event was the 2024 Evidence to Action (E2A) Conference, which brought together over 300 participants from more than 40 countries. Serving as co-organiser and host, ISSER played a pivotal role in advancing discussions on resilience, climate change adaptation, and sustainable development, further enhancing our global influence and leadership. Another key milestone was the launch of the Quarterly Economic Roundtable (QER), a

collaborative platform between the University of Ghana and the Ministry of Finance. This initiative bridges academic research and policymaking, with ISSER contributing its expertise to inform critical economic decisions.

Our MA and PhD programmes continue to deliver world-class training, attracting students from across Ghana and the African continent. Furthermore, this year's ISSER Short Courses Programme set a new record, training approximately 100 participants. We also reinforced our commitment to building research capacity through two editions of the Research School on Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction, which provided advanced interdisciplinary training to some 40 doctoral students from across Ghana.

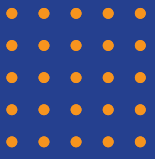
Underpinning all our activities is a steadfast commitment to engagement and collaboration with policymakers, industry stakeholders, and

the media, ensuring that our advocacy translates into actionable insights that drive sustainable development. Additionally, the strategic priorities of the University of Ghana continue to guide our work, helping us align our activities to maximise their impact.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to our team, collaborators, and stakeholders for their invaluable support and collaboration. As we look to the future, ISSER remains steadfast in its mission to advance knowledge and influence policy, driving Ghana's socio-economic development and extending our impact across Africa and beyond.

Thank you for your continued support. I invite you to explore this report, which highlights our achievements and outlines the path forward for ISSER.





OUR NUMBERS





Our People

29 distinguished scholars, working alongside 65 dedicated professionals in research support, communications, and administration who provide essential expertise to advance our mission.



29 Scholars



65 Staff

23

full-time
research fellows

05

visiting
scholars

01

emeritus
professor

20

Support
Staff

28

Project &
Contract Staff

17

Research
Assistants



Research & Publications

More than 25 ongoing research projects that inform policy and development. For publications, we issued the State of the Ghanaian Economy Report (SGER) 2022, the 32nd edition, six policy briefs and numerous peer-reviewed papers from our researchers.



Engagement & Impact

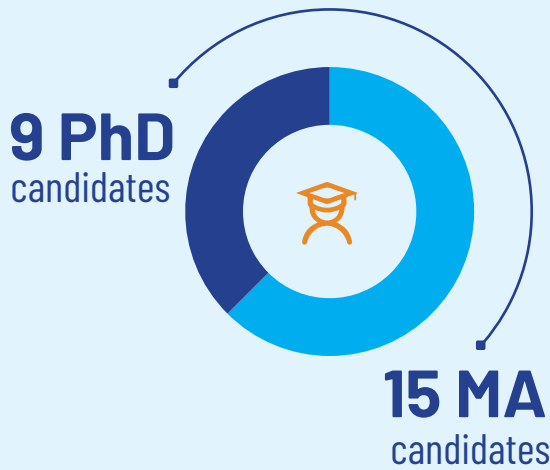
Over 20 policy dialogues and more than 15 research seminars, fostering meaningful exchanges between academia, policymakers and stakeholders.





Capacity Building

Through our graduate programme, we supported 24 scholars at various stages of their research journey. Our Professional Short Courses Programme equipped 96 professionals with specialised research and analytical skills, strengthening research and policy development capacity across sectors.



96 Short Course Participants



14

Monitoring & Evaluation



16

Research Methodology & Report Writing



48

Data Management & Analysis



18

Project Cycle Management



RESEARCH ACTIVITY **HIGHLIGHTS**



ISSER continued its tradition of conducting multidisciplinary research, reinforcing its position as a leading centre for socio-economic inquiry and policy-relevant studies. With a portfolio of over 20 new and ongoing projects, the Institute addressed critical issues across themes such as social protection, trade sustainability, climate change, gender equity, and education.

From exploring the future of work and promoting sustainable agriculture to advancing early childhood education and tackling the care economy, these initiatives reflect ISSER's comprehensive approach to addressing development challenges at the intersection of economics, social development, and environmental sustainability. The following sections present project spotlights that highlight the breadth and scope of ISSER's research focus, demonstrating its capacity for multidisciplinary exploration.



Future of Work Research Initiative (West and Central Africa Hub)

The Future of Work Research Initiative is a grants-awarding programme aimed at advancing research on the rapidly changing nature of work in the region. As part of the IDRC-funded FutureWORKS Collective, a five-year initiative focused on the Global South, the hub fosters high-quality research, evidence-based policymaking, and regional capacity-building. Led by ISSER in partnership with the Bureau d'Analyses Macro-Économiques of the Institut Sénégalais de Recherches Agricoles (ISRA-BAME), the West and Central Africa Hub will award sub-grants to institutions across both regions to support research prioritising social protection for marginalised groups and strategies to mitigate climate change.

Project website: www.issler.ug.edu.gh/fow

Principal Investigator: Prof. Peter Quartey

Location: West and Central Africa

Duration: 5 years (2024–2029)



Fostering the positive linkages between trade and sustainable development (TRADE4SD)

This project is based on the premise that trade can drive positive outcomes when policies governing it are designed to promote market access, fair prices, improved living standards for farmers, rural poverty alleviation, and sustainable farming practices. The TRADE4SD project aims to create new opportunities to enhance the sustainability impacts of trade by improving the design and coherence of trade policies at national, European Union, and global levels. This includes aligning trade policy with agricultural, energy, climate, environmental, and nutritional policies. ISSER is part of an international consortium of 13 institutions working collaboratively to achieve these objectives.

Principal Investigators: Prof. Peter Quartey and Dr. Ralph Armah

Location: Ghana

Duration: 4 years (June 2021 – May 2025)



Reducing Poverty among Women by Strengthening the Shea Value Chain in Northern Ghana

This three-year USAID-funded project examines the constraints to increasing returns for women producers in the shea value chain. Specifically, it involves a randomised controlled trial (RCT) in northern Ghana to test whether credit contracts—a loan to be repaid using shea kernels—enable shea farmers to store their harvest for longer, selling it when market prices are higher and thus increasing their revenue. Results from the trial will be published in the coming months, but initial analysis suggests that the credit contracts have had a positive impact.

Principal Investigator: Prof. Fred Dzanku

Location: Northern Ghana

Duration: 3 years (2021 – 2024)



Using Digital Communication to Reinforce Nutrition and Household Resilience in Northern Ghana

Funded under ICED's ALL-IN Project, this study examines whether digital communication can improve health behaviours and child nutrition outcomes in Northern Ghana. Using a randomised evaluation approach, the research targeted 1,801 low-income households with children under 10 years old, located in 232 communities across four administrative regions (Northern, North East, Upper East, and Savannah). Participating households received bi-weekly interactive voice response (IVR) messages on water, sanitation, hygiene (WASH), and nutrition over a period of seven months (January–July 2023). The findings could offer valuable insights into how low-cost digital technologies can improve behaviour change related to environmental quality, health, and nutrition outcomes in Northern Ghana.

Principal Investigator: Prof. Robert Darko Osei

Location: Northern Ghana

Duration: 4 years (2021–2025)



Teacher Capacity Building for Play-based Early Learning in Ghana and Sierra Leone

This project aimed to generate evidence on effective strategies to improve classroom practices in play-based learning for early childhood education in Ghana and Sierra Leone. Jointly implemented by ISSER at the University of Ghana, Associates for Change (AFC), and the Division of Education Studies at the University of Sierra Leone, the initiative focused on evidence-based approaches to enhance teaching methodologies, foster improved learning outcomes, and support the overall development of early childhood education in both countries.

Principal Investigators: Prof. Peter Quartey, Dr Leslie Casely-Hayford and Dr. Nana Amma Asante-Poku

Location: Eastern and Northern Regions, Ghana

Duration: 2 years (February 2022 – May 2024)



Policy Prioritization through Value Chain Analysis (PPVC II)

This initiative uses a combination of tools (Computable General Equilibrium, Partial Equilibrium, Geographic Information Systems and Deep Dives) to analyse agricultural value chains. These tools support evidence-based policymaking through ranking, identification of value chain weaknesses and the policy levers that will deliver the most efficient impacts when applied. Funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF), it involves ISSER, the Bureau for Food and Agricultural Policy (BFAP), the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), and the Modelling Services Center (MSC) of the African Network of Agricultural Policy Research Institutes (ANAPRI).

Principal Investigators: Dr. Andrew Agyei-Holmes, Dr. Nana Amma Asante-Poku, Dr. Richmond Atta-Ankomah and Prof. Daniel Adu-Ankrah

Duration: 2024 to 2026

Location: Ghana



Developing Ghana's Care Economy: Case and Potential

In Ghana, care for children and the elderly is primarily provided by unpaid carers, mostly women, within families. Limited organised care services place a burden on women, restricting their labour market participation and impacting the quality of care for recipients. Unregulated private-sector growth in long-term care (LTC) services highlights significant unmet needs and inequities. The Care Economy project aims to address the demand for LTC services, enhancing women's well-being, labour participation, and care quality while fostering inclusive private-sector growth. It also prioritises building local research capacity to ensure sustainable innovation in the LTC economy.

Co-Principal Investigator: Prof. Charles Godfred Ackah

Location: Ghana

Duration: 5 years



Green Jobs and Youth Employment

This project investigates opportunities for youth employment in Ghana's emerging green economy. Employing a mixed methods approach, it identifies barriers and enablers to youth participation, aiming to inform policies that promote both youth employment and sustainable development. A collaborative effort between ISSER and CAMFED Ghana, the project forms part of a broader consortium involving partners from Ethiopia, South Africa, Uganda, and the UK.

Principal Investigators: Prof. Peter Quartey, Prof. Nana Akua Anyidoho and Dr. Kofi Takyi Asante

Location: Ghana

Duration: 3 years (2023–2025)



Modern Energy Cooking Services (MECS)

The MECS project supports the transition of households from polluted traditional cooking fuels to modern cooking fuels, for the accrual of the inherent financial, health, and environmental benefits. Phase I (2020–2021), funded by the UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), built local knowledge on the existing cooking fuel landscape of urban Ghana, while Phase II (2022–2023), funded by The World Bank Group, enabled the gathering and demonstration of empirical evidence on the inherent financial, health, and environmental benefits of modern energy cooking services.

Principal Investigator: Prof. Simon Bawakyillenuo

Location: Accra, Ghana

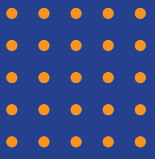
Duration: 3 years (2020 - 2021 & 2022 - 2023)

PUBLICATIONS

During the reporting period, ISSER issued the State of the Ghanaian Economy Report (SGER) 2022, the 32nd edition of this flagship publication, which continues to provide comprehensive insights into the state of Ghana’s economy. In addition to this key release, ISSER’s projects generated several notable publications, including more than five policy briefs addressing pressing issues. These were complemented by individual publications from researchers, further enriching the Institute’s extensive body of academic and policy-relevant work.

All publications, including individual researchers’ works, are accessible through the ISSER website at www.issr.edu.gh





POLICY EVENTS





Development Dialogue on Ghana’s Public Debt Management: ISSER enriches public debate with expert insights

The Development Dialogue on Ghana’s Public Debt Management was one of ISSER’s major events in 2023, serving as an independent platform to examine the pressing issue of Ghana’s debt crisis. The crisis prompted the Government of Ghana to request a US\$3 billion bailout from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in June 2022 -- marking the 17th time Ghana has sought financial assistance from the IMF. The request was subsequently approved on 17 May 2023.

Themed, Ghana’s Public Debt Management: Facts, Impact, and the Way Forward, the event brought together a distinguished panel of experts to provide a comprehensive, evidence-based analysis of the subject.

The five panelists were Prof. Augustin Fosu and Prof. Peter Quartey, both from ISSER; Dr. Sam Mensah, Financial Economist and Investment Banking Consultant; Mrs. R. Teiko Sabah, National Director, Development and Social Services, Presbyterian Church of Ghana; and Dr. Theo Acheampong, University of Aberdeen, UK. The discussion was moderated by Dr. Priscilla Twumasi Baffour, a Senior Lecturer at the Department of Economics at the University of Ghana.





ISSER co-hosts strategic consultation on data science

Thought leaders from West African academia, research and policy agencies, and industry convened at ISSER for a strategic consultation on data science, artificial intelligence, and decision-making in West Africa. The forum, titled Advancing Data and AI Competency for Effective and Trustworthy Decision Making in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), was a joint effort between ISSER and Policy for Data CIC. The event’s primary objectives were to gather knowledge and perspectives, while fostering an inclusive platform to develop a sustainable model that enhances Africa’s connectivity and global contribution to the global policy-data sphere.

Prof. Peter Quartey, Director of ISSER, co-hosted the event alongside Dr. Zeynep Engin, Founding Director of Data for Policy CIC. In his remarks, he emphasized how the initiative aligns with ISSER’s vision of advancing evidence-based decision-making through innovation and collaboration.





SGER 2022 launched

ISSER hosted a launch event for the 32nd edition of its annual State of the Ghanaian Economy Report (SGER) 2022, bringing together key stakeholders from across the country. The event not only highlighted the key findings of the report but also served as a forum to discuss Ghana's third-quarter economic performance for 2023 and other urgent economic issues. Dr James Asare-Adjei, 19th President of the Association of Ghana Industries (AGI) and Founder/CEO of Asadtek Group Limited, chaired the event. Prof Peter Quartey provided an overview of the SGER 2022 and a review of the country's third quarter economic performance. The event concluded with an engaging question and answer session, during which participants had the opportunity to discuss the report's findings with its authors.





NOVEMBER 2023

GGCDS Annual Workshop 2023 marks 15 years of collaboration, celebrates success stories

The Ghanaian-German Centre for Development Studies (GGCDS) hosted the final edition of its annual meeting, celebrating the successful 15-year partnership between ISSER and the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). The event brought together alumni, students, programme coordinators, and partners, fostering meaningful connections and reflection on the centre's impact on careers and personal development. It also marked the conclusion of a transformative era, during which 46 PhD candidates in Development Studies were trained at ISSER with support from DAAD funding.

Building capacity and strategies to address commodity-related illicit financial flows

As part of the Curbing Illicit Financial Flows to Finance Development project, two key workshops were held to address the critical issue of commodity-trade-related illicit financial flows (IFFs) in Ghana. These events underscored the vital role of media and stakeholders in tackling IFFs and fostering sustainable development.

A training workshop at ISSER aimed at journalists enhanced their ability to report on trade mispricing and IFFs. Participants gained essential tools and knowledge to identify and cover complex financial issues in commodity trade, promoting transparency and accountability. This workshop strengthened the media's role in combating IFFs by fostering an informed landscape capable of delivering accurate, impactful coverage.

Following this, a dissemination workshop at the AH Hotel in Accra convened stakeholders from the commodity trade, media, and policy sectors to discuss strategies to address IFFs. The workshop presented findings from six years of multidisciplinary research, emphasising the need for accurate data, robust enforcement, and increased citizen engagement in reducing IFFs to increase revenue for development.





Promoting clean cooking: workshop highlights advantages of e-cooking technologies

A workshop on the Modern Energy Cooking Services (MECS) Phase II project emphasized the benefits of electric cooking (e-cooking), particularly the Electric Pressure Cooker (EPC), as a cost-effective, safe, and healthy alternative to traditional cooking fuels. Timed to coincide with COP28, the event offered a platform to promote e-cooking as a key solution for advancing progress toward achieving SDG 7 (access to affordable, reliable, and clean energy) and other development goals.



Workshop explores AfCFTA's potential to strengthen Ghana's agri-food sectors and food security

A workshop on the potential impacts of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) on Ghana's agri-food sectors and food security brought together key stakeholders to review initial findings and gather feedback. The event prompted meaningful discussions on AfCFTA's implications for Ghana's agriculture and food security, addressing misconceptions and identifying opportunities for collaboration. Participants appreciated the research findings, which helped clarify concerns about the agreement's potential benefits. Dr. Andrew Agyei-Holmes, ISSER Senior Research Fellow and Principal Investigator of the project, emphasised the critical role of agriculture in ensuring Ghana maximises the benefits of AfCFTA and regional economic integration.

ISSER launches initiative to optimise agricultural investment impact

ISSER is one of five African institutions selected to implement the Policy Prioritisation through Value Chain Analysis (PPVC) initiative, aimed at optimising the impact of agricultural investments. Building on successes in Kenya, Tanzania, Malawi, and Ethiopia, the three-year initiative focuses on analysing national commodity value chains to inform strategic public and private investment decisions. Recognising the importance of stakeholder engagement for the project's success, ISSER organised a workshop to introduce the PPVC framework to both local and international stakeholders. The event outlined the implementation roadmap in Ghana and discussed the support required for its successful execution.





Study on Ghana's care economy reveals urgent long-term care needs

At a workshop in Accra, researchers from the University of Ghana and Aarhus University shared preliminary findings from the project *Developing Ghana's Care Economy: Case and Potential*, highlighting critical gaps in Ghana's long-term care (LTC) system. These included a lack of caregivers and insufficient support for care recipients. Led by Principal Investigator Prof. Charles Ackah (ISSER, University of Ghana) and Co-Principal Investigator Prof. Ulrika Enemark (Aarhus University), the Danida Fellowship Centre-funded study emphasised the urgent need for policy interventions. Stakeholders at the workshop highlighted the importance of sustainable, collaborative solutions to address the challenges faced by the country's ageing population and their caregivers.





New initiative targets sustainable development and youth employment in Ghana

ISSER hosted an inception workshop for the Green Jobs and Youth Employment project, a collaborative initiative with the Campaign for Female Education (CAMFED) designed to tackle youth unemployment and promote sustainable development. Led by Principal Investigator Prof. Peter Quartey and CAMFED Ghana Director Madam Fairuza Safian, the project integrates youth into its design and implementation. The workshop brought together key stakeholders, including youth advocates and policy leaders, to discuss green job opportunities and the roles of various stakeholders. Youth members of the research team actively contributed by presenting the project overview and leading breakout sessions, fostering a collaborative approach for the initiative's rollout.





Forum advances evidence-based solutions for Ghana's agrifood systems

The Data Repository and Advocacy for Policy (DARAP) project's policy forum brought together stakeholders from academia, government, civil society, and the media to explore strategies for strengthening Ghana's agrifood systems. Chaired by Prof. Charles Tortoe, Director of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), the well-attended event marked the conclusion of DARAP's first phase (2021–2023) and highlighted its contributions to evidence-based policymaking for food security and sustainable development.

The forum showcased the diverse expertise of the project team, with researchers from various universities sharing valuable insights on agrifood challenges. Prof. Fred Dzanku, DARAP Coordinator, emphasised the importance of a centralized data hub for policy advocacy. ISSER's Dr. Kofi Asante and Dr. Dzifa Torvikey analysed political economy dynamics, Prof. Michael Adu (University of Cape Coast) discussed shifts in food consumption, Prof. Saa Dittoh (University for Development Studies) shared food safety recommendations, and Dr. Freda Asem (University of Ghana) called for behavioural changes to reduce food loss and waste. The event reinforced the value of collaborative research and stakeholder engagement in shaping sustainable agrifood systems in Ghana, drawing significant interest from key agricultural stakeholders and media representatives.





APRIL 2024

Advancing Early Childhood Education: workshops share solutions for Ghana’s Northern and Eastern Regions

ISSER engaged Early Childhood Education (ECE) stakeholders in Ghana’s Northern and Eastern regions through workshops on the Teacher Capacity Building for Play-Based Early Learning project, a collaboration with the University of Ghana, Associates for Change (AFC), and the University of Sierra Leone. The project aimed to address key challenges and offer solutions to advance ECE in Ghana.



Held in Tamale (Northern Region) in April 2024 and Aburi (Eastern Region) in May 2024, the workshops featured presentations by Prof. Peter Quartey, Dr. Leslie Casely-Hayford, and Dr. Clement Adamba, with Dr. Adamba presenting at the Tamale workshop. Over 70 stakeholders in Tamale discussed gaps in teacher training, school infrastructure, and curriculum adaptation. In Aburi, Dr. Nana Amma Asante-Poku (ISSER) and Jennifer Quaicoe (AFC) shared insights on regional differences, reinforcing the need for tailored strategies. The workshops emphasised the importance of play-based learning and collaborative, research-driven approaches to improve ECE outcomes and build sustainable education systems.



MAY 2024

ISSER launches sub-grants for future of work research in West and Central Africa

ISSER, in partnership with Bureau d'Analyses Macro-Économiques of the Institut Sénégalais de Recherches Agricoles (ISRA-BAME), launched the Future of Work research initiative for West and Central Africa (WCA), supported by the International Development Research Center (IDRC). Part of the broader FutureWORKS Collective — a five-year effort focused on the evolving work landscape in the Global South—this initiative aims to address challenges posed by the digital economy and climate change. ISSER will provide sub-grants to support research and policy development, prioritizing workforce resilience and inclusivity, particularly for marginalized groups.

The launch featured remarks from key speakers, including Dr. Marie-Gloriose Ingabire, IDRC Regional Director for West and Central Africa, and Dr. Flaubert Mbiekop, IDRC Senior Programme Specialist. Both highlighted IDRC's longstanding partnership with ISSER and its pivotal role in advancing research on critical regional issues. The initiative was formally launched by Prof. Peter Quartey, Director of ISSER, and Dr. Astou Camara, Director of ISRA-BAME.

The event included insightful presentations and discussions on the future of work. Prof. Quartey delivered a theme-setting statement on leveraging digital technologies to transform agriculture and foster inclusivity in WCA. A panel discussion, moderated by Dr. Priscilla Twumasi-Baffour, Senior Lecturer at the University of Ghana, featured contributions from experts such as Prof. Charles Ackah (ISSER) and Mr. Gideon Mankralo (National Project Coordinator, International Labour Organisation, ILO), who explored policy interventions for green and digitally-enabled jobs. A fireside chat further examined opportunities and challenges in the green digital economy.



ISSER national policy forum explores Special Economic Zones as catalysts for industrialisation

ISSER, in collaboration with the Kiel Institute for the World Economy, hosted a national policy forum on **Special Economic Zones (SEZs): A Force for Industrialisation?** Over 100 stakeholders from industry, government, and academia gathered to discuss findings from a four-year study led by ISSER's Prof. Charles Ackah, funded by Riksbankens Jubileumsfond and the Volkswagen Foundation.

A highlight of the event was a panel discussion moderated by leading journalist Mr. Bernard Avle, which explored how SEZs can drive Ghana's economic transformation. Panelists included Dr. Frank Adu (Africa Centre for Economic Transformation), Dr. John Hawkins-Asiedu (Ministry of Trade and Industry), Mrs. Kosi Yankey Ayeh (Ghana Enterprises Agency), Dr. Humphrey Ayim-Darke (Ghana

Association of Industries), Ambassador Mike Ocquaye Jnr (Ghana Free Zones Authority), Prof. Holger Görg (Kiel Institute), and Mr. Alex Dadzawa (Ghana Free Zones Authority).

Dean of the School of Graduate Studies at the University of Ghana, Prof. Robert Darko Osei, speaking on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor, highlighted the project's alignment with the University's strategic priorities, particularly in capacity building, engagement, and partnerships. Prof. Holger Görg shared global and African insights, while Prof. Charles Ackah presented findings specific to Ghana. The forum concluded with strategies to harness Special Economic Zones (SEZs) for value addition, job creation, and inclusive development.





Research School on Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction trains tens of doctoral students

ISSER, in collaboration with the University of Ghana's School of Research and Graduate Studies and international partners from Lund, Gothenburg, and Uppsala universities, hosted nearly 40 doctoral students from across Ghana for two editions of the Research School on Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction. The first session, held from 12th to 15th September 2023, brought together 18 early-stage doctoral students from the University of Ghana, SD Dumbo University of Business and Integrated Development Studies, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, and the University of Cape Coast. The second session, which took place from 18th to 21st June 2024, trained 21 students, including participants from the Millar Institute for Transdisciplinary and Development Studies.

Both masterclasses, held at ISSER, focused on enhancing participants' qualitative and quantitative research skills, essential for sustainable development and poverty reduction. The sessions, facilitated by distinguished academics such as Prof. Fred Dzanku, Prof. Akosua Darkwa, Dr. Dzifa Torvikey, and Dr. Kofi Asante, received positive feedback for their impact on refining students' academic approaches and research methodologies.





Ministry of Finance and University of Ghana launch Economic Roundtable at ISSER

The Ministry of Finance (MoF) and the University of Ghana (UG) launched the Quarterly Economic Roundtable (QER), a collaborative platform aimed at fostering evidence-based policymaking and bridging the gap between academia and society. Prof. Peter Quartey, Chair of the QER Technical Committee, described the initiative as a groundbreaking opportunity for academia to contribute directly to policy formulation. Dr. Nii Kwaku Sowa, Country Director of the International Growth Centre (IGC), delivered the keynote address, while Hon. Abena Osei Asare, Minister of State at MoF, emphasised the importance of data-driven decision-making.



Prof. Gordon Awandare, Pro Vice-Chancellor of UG, praised the partnership between MoF and UG in advancing national economic discourse. The event featured panel discussions moderated by journalist Bernard Avle, with expert contributions from Prof. Peter Quartey, Prof. Justice Bawole (Dean, UG Business School), Prof. William Baah-Boateng (Head, Department of Economics, UG), Prof. Ebo Turkson (Department of Economics, UG) and Prof. Agyapomaa Gyeke-Dako (UG Business School). Key government officials, including Dr. Alhassan Iddrisu (Director of Economic Research, MoF), and Mr. Samuel Arkhurst (Director of Treasury and Debt Management, MoF) and representatives from civil society and the private sector also participated.



ISSER hosts delegates from over 40 countries for E2A Conference 2024

The 2024 Evidence to Action (E2A2024) Conference, hosted at ISSER under the theme Resilience and Climate Change Adaptation, attracted over 300 participants from more than 40 countries. Co-organized by ISSER, the International Centre for Evaluation and Development (ICED), and other partners, the conference opened with keynote addresses by Hon. Ophelia Mensah Hayford, Minister for Environment, Science, Technology, and Innovation, and a welcome address by Prof. Nana Aba Appiah Amfo, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ghana.

Over five days -- comprising two days of pre-conference activities and three days of main sessions -- attendees engaged in panel discussions, roundtable dialogues, and training sessions focused on building resilience in the face of climate change. The conference also featured an exhibition of innovative climate research and solutions. Notable speakers included Prof. Peter Quartey (Director, ISSER, University of Ghana), Prof. Kwaku Appiah-Adu (Special Advisor to the Vice President's Secretariat, Ghana), Dr. Namanga Ngongi (Board Chair, ICED), Prof. Felix Asante (Pro-Vice Chancellor for Research, Innovation, and Development, University of Ghana), and Dr. David S. Ameyaw (President and CEO, ICED).

Speaking at the closing event, Hon. Lydia Seyram Alhassan, Minister for Sanitation and Water Resources, highlighted the importance of sustained collaboration for effective climate adaptation. This collaboration underscores ISSER's growing influence in advancing climate research and fostering international partnerships.



ISSER Seminar Series

The ISSER Seminar Series provides a vibrant platform for researchers from Ghana and across the globe to share insights and engage in intellectual discourse.

Primarily held virtually, these seminars connect researchers, students, and stakeholders worldwide, fostering intellectual growth, collaboration, and skill development. As a powerful tool for advancing knowledge and broadening perspectives, the series continued its impactful run over the past year, featuring more than 15 seminars.

Below is a selection of topics discussed during the sessions.

| SERMINAR/PROGRAM | FACILITATOR / RESOURCE PERSON |
|--|---|
| Introduction to UG Library System | Ms. Olivia A. Kpodoe, University of Ghana |
| The Kaldor-Verdoorn law at the age of robots and AI | Andrea Borsato, University of Strasbourg |
| The Effects of Local Economic Development on Female Obesity in Sub-Saharan Africa | Sylvanus Kwaku Afesorgbor, University of Guelph, Canada |
| How (Not) to Choose a Dissertation Topic | Prof. William Steel, ISSER |
| Climate Change Beliefs, Payment for Ecosystem Services, & Adaptation: Evidence of Cocoa Farmers in Ghana | Yunyu Shu, Brown University, USA |
| Armed Robbery and Sociohistorical Origin of Ethnic Stereotypes in Colonial Asante, 1935-45 | Manuel Jojo Manu-Osafo, KNUST, Ghana |





SPOTLIGHT



ISSER Budget Reviews: Fostering informed dialogue on fiscal policy

In fulfilment of the advocacy and outreach arm of its three-pronged mandate, ISSER regularly convenes stakeholders to provide a platform for discussions on pressing development issues. These fora also serve as an opportunity for the Institute to illuminate public discourse with independent, evidence-based insights. A key initiative in this regard is the ISSER Post-Budget Reviews.

Led by the Economics Division of ISSER, with media professionals as the primary participants, the budget review fora provide an open platform for direct engagement, facilitating analysis of the government's budget statement, fostering meaningful dialogue, and offering recommendations to enhance fiscal, social, and economic outcomes.

Strategically held after the Minister of Finance's presentation of the national budget to Parliament, these reviews provide a timely avenue for ISSER to deliver objective, evidence-based analyses of the government's fiscal performance. The sessions educate the public, promote informed media reportage, and strengthen collaboration with the media, who the Institute recognises as key partners in advancing its mission to influence policy through research and advocacy.

Designed with journalists' tight schedules in mind, the fora are concise yet impactful events. Each session typically features an in-depth analysis of the budget statement, often delivered by the Director of ISSER or a representative from the Economics Division. The analysis is presented using accessible and visually supportive PowerPoint slides, simplifying complex economic concepts for non-specialist audiences. Following the presentation, open and interactive discussions enable participants to engage directly with ISSER experts, fostering a deeper understanding of the budget and broader economic issues.

In the year under review, ISSER organised three budget review activities:

- The first, held in August 2023, examined the 2023 Mid-Year Budget Statement.
- The second forum, held in November 2023, focused on Ghana's 2024 Budget Statement and Economic Policy. This session allowed ISSER to share evidence-based recommendations for achieving fiscal responsibility and improving socio-economic outcomes in the coming year.
- In August 2024, ISSER delivered the 2024 Mid-Year Budget Review in the form of a detailed report rather than an in-person forum. This decision was necessitated by scheduling constraints due to ISSER's involvement in co-organising and hosting an international conference. Despite the shift in format, the 9-page 2024 Mid-Year Budget Review was well received by media outlets across Ghana, garnering extensive coverage and reinforcing ISSER's reputation as a trusted source of economic analysis.

These fora underscore ISSER's unwavering commitment to fostering informed public dialogue on fiscal policy and promoting accountability and socio-economic development.

Scenes from 2023 budget review



From left: Journalists from Daily Graphic, Ghana News Agency, Radio Unvers and Metro TV participate in the forum, followed by interviews with Prof. Peter Quartey.



From left: Prof. Augustin Fosu and Dr. Nana Amma Asante-Poku (Economics Division) and Dr. Dzifa Torvikey (Social Division) engage in discussions, demonstrating cross-divisional participation.

Scenes from 2024 budget review



From left: Journalists from Ghanaian Times and TV3 participate in the 2024 budget review.



From left: Prof. Ama Fenny, Dr. Andrew Agyei-Holmes and Prof. Charles Ackah participate in the discussions.



ISSER released its 2024 Mid-Year Budget Review on 6th August 2024, a report that received extensive media coverage nationwide. Over 12 articles were published across four leading outlets—Ghana News Agency, Citi FM Online, MyJoy FM Online, and Ghanaweb. Notably, the report was prominently featured on the front page of the Daily Graphic's 7th August edition.



A word cloud of headlines showcasing the extensive and diverse media coverage of the report.



APPENDICES



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Professor



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Research Fellow



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Dr. Michael Kodom
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Dr. Gertrude Dzifa Torvikey
Research Fellow



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(Post-Retirement Contract)



Prof. Augustin A. K. Fosu
Professor (Part-time Contract)



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Prof. William Steel
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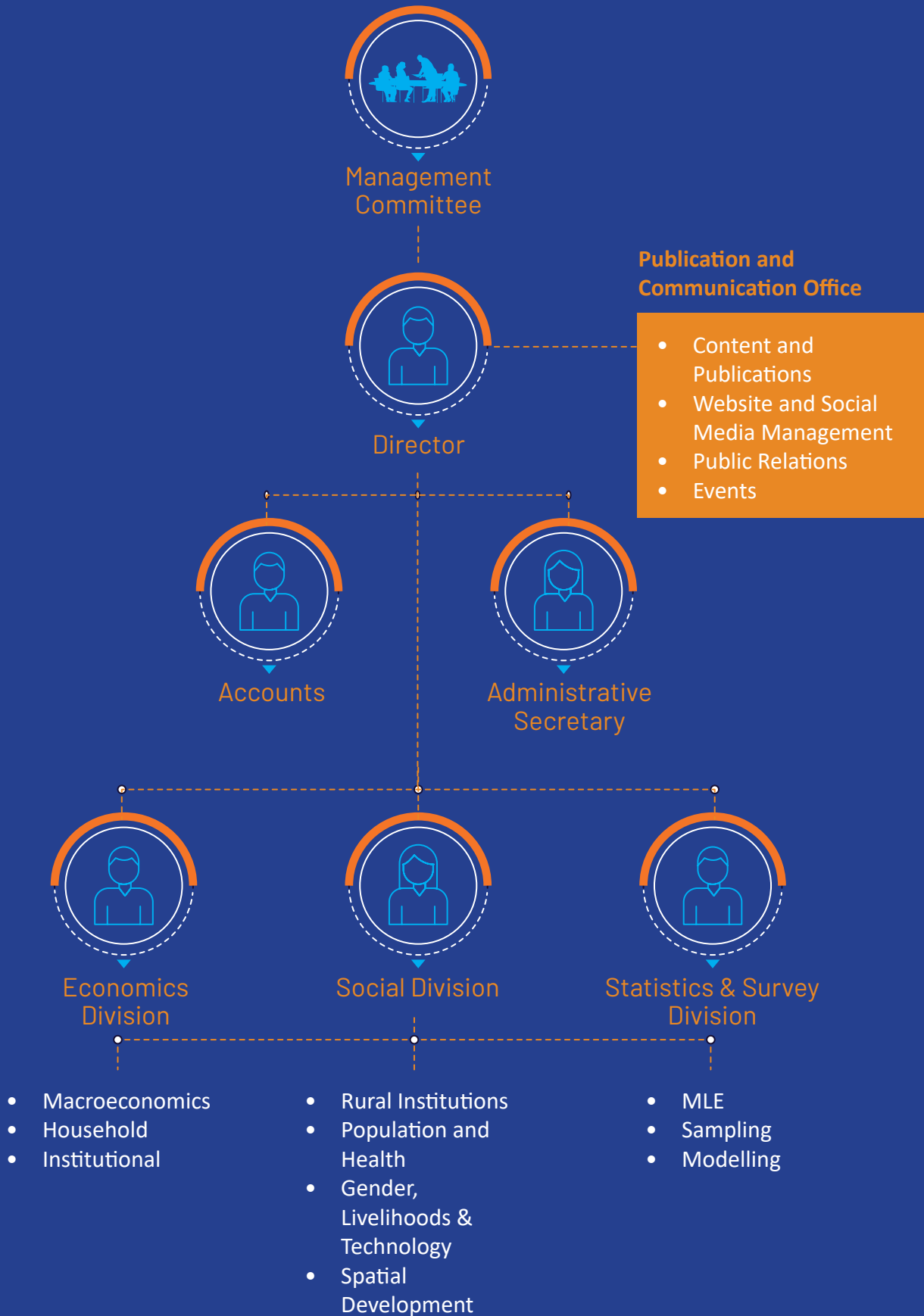
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| Mr. Derek Walt-Collins | Retail Finance Distribution (ReFinD) Research Initiative |

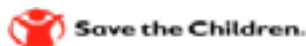
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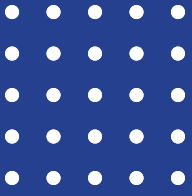
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ABOUT ISSER

The Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research (ISSER) is a semi-autonomous institute within the College of Humanities at the University of Ghana. Recognized as one of the leading social science research institutions in Sub-Saharan Africa, our primary focus is conducting research, providing training, and engaging in outreach and dissemination activities to promote the socio-economic development of Ghana and Africa. With a distinguished faculty of over 27 PhD-holding members and a network of local and international collaborators, ISSER is at the forefront of shaping policies and driving positive change in and beyond Ghana.

Values



TEAMWORK - We will leverage each individual's unique expertise to achieve the best results and respect the contributions of all.



CREDIBILITY - We will be thorough and sincere in all our work to ensure the accuracy and integrity of our outputs.



RESOURCEFULNESS - We will push ourselves to develop solutions in our work and continuously seek new opportunities.



RESPONSIVENESS - We will respond proactively to the changing dynamics and needs of our environment.



COMMITMENT - We will act in the best interest of the Institute, holding ourselves accountable for our roles.

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Prof. Peter Quartey, Director

Prof. Ama Pokuaa Fenny, Head, Economics Division

Dr. Martha Awo, Head, Social Division

Prof. Charles Ackah, Head, Statistics and Survey Division

Programme Coordinators

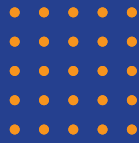
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