

Exchange to change **Alumni** magazine #46

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IOB

Institute of Development Policy
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E2C

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E2C team: Greet Annaert, Ivan Ashaba, Veronica Brown, Hans De Backer, Sara Dewachter, Joëlle Dhondt, Mark Kadigo, Sarah Vancluysen, Juan Sebastian Velez Triana

‘Greet’ –ings



Dear alumni,

I truly hope that you and your family are in good health and doing well.

I was asked to write an editorial for this Exchange to Change issue. Let me start by providing you some facts and figures: over the past 22 years – that’s how long I have been working at IOB – I’ve handled about 16,000 applications and welcomed more than 1,300 students of over a hundred nationalities. I have served under five different IOB chairmen, I saw many new colleagues arrive and said goodbye to dozens who left, although some of them have returned to IOB.

I’ve experienced several changes in the Master programmes: from 2 year programmes to 15 month programmes to the current programmes of 12 months. From an alternating French/English programme to the current programmes taught purely in English.

I’ve witnessed how students change during their studies at IOB and their stay in Belgium.

Often, students struggle to settle down and face stress and anxiety in the beginning; not only because they need to get used to a new environment and cope with academic challenges, but also because many of them have left their job, their partner, their children behind. I admire their strength, their perseverance, their courage. I have seen students struggle with the demands of the course, often resulting in disappointing exam results in January. However, they never gave up and at the end of the journey, they were so proud of themselves when they received their diploma! During these graduation ceremonies, a student representative would give a graduation speech which were often emotional.

I am grateful for their words of appreciation.

I went to numerous Christmas markets, I accompanied students to Paris several times, I joined the Poland study trip, I went to The Hague. I was invited to several intercultural dinners, graduation parties, student activities. I remember those with great nostalgia! How I enjoyed the kick-off weekends where I got to know the students and danced the night away!

We had several students who gave birth during their year at IOB; hats off to these students who managed to combine motherhood with academic challenges! Let me not forget to mention that romance is never far away: there are several IOB couples still together today!

Unfortunately, it wasn’t all to be glamour and sunshine; several students lost their identity documents upon arrival or even got robbed; various students lost a family member during their stay in Antwerp; and back in 2004, three students were even falsely accused of terrorism!

In early 2000, we also discovered a student who was pretending to be the person we selected; he had been using someone else’s identity documents.

One last factoid: did you know that I named my daughter after an applicant from Indonesia, even before she was born? When assessing that particular application, I came across her name and immediately knew: if I ever have a daughter, that’s going to be her name!

Five years later, Yonah was born.

Enjoy reading this alumni magazine.

Stay safe, stay healthy, stay connected.

Greet

Alumni applause



Alumna **Myranda Lutempo (Zambia - 2008)**, Senior Policy Officer at the African Union Southern Africa Regional Office (AU-SARO), co-organized the JOINT AU-EU-Malawi Government Conference on youth employment. The event took place successfully on 9 December under the patronage of the Vice President of Malawi. Myranda (photo) delivered a few remarks on behalf of the AU-SARO.

<https://linktr.ee/IOB>



Alumnus **Samuel Samson Omwa (Uganda - 2008)**, Director of the National Population Council in Uganda, was live on NBS Television, dissecting issues of population and development in light of COVID-19 and 'Harnessing the Demographic Dividend'.

It was a fruitful discussion!

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The Peruvian Trust Fund for National Parks and Protected Areas (Profonanpe) is an environmental fund aiming to provide stable and long-term funding as well as develop and implement innovative strategies for conservation and management of protected areas. Alumnus **Anton Willems (Belgium)**, as Director of Profonanpe, invites us to get to know the work of the organisation and to join forces working together for the conservation of nature.

More info on:

<https://profonanpe.org.pe/>



Nicholas Jacobs (UK - 2013), Director at IPES-Food, participated in the virtual event 'Sustainability on the farm: shared ambition in Canada and the EU' on 26 November. Have a look at his 3 key messages on sustainable agriculture:

1. Agroecology is not just a solution for developing countries: it is highly relevant to the challenges facing food systems in Europe and North America.
2. Farmers who are changing their production models are often doing it because it delivers cost savings, more autonomy, and higher incomes.
3. Food security relies on sustainability. It relies on healthy ecosystems, efficient use of land and resources, resilience to shocks, and the ability of farmers to stay in business and keep farming. This is why agroecology is the key to food security.



Alumna **Laureen Montes (Nicaragua - 2015)** co-authored an interesting blog post on the relation between gender, security and transport in Mexico. Laureen works in the transport division of the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) and is also an active member of the Transport Gender Lab at IADB. Read more about their work on gender and transport:

<https://linktr.ee/IOB>



On 28 November 2020, alumnus **Awuor Ponge (Kenya - 2018)** presented his work in an online seminar on the Indigenous African Ethical Protocol for Evaluations, organised by IOCE, EvalPartners and the Eval Indigenous Global Network. In his presentation, Awuor shared the findings of the survey that was conducted to determine what Africans feel about the need for, as well as content of, the Indigenous African Ethical Protocol for Evaluations.

Interested in the role and need for ethics in evaluation? Read more about this webinar:

<https://linktr.ee/IOB>



Alumnus **Belayeth Hussain (Bangladesh - 2007)** published an article in the journal Contexts, in which he presents and analyses exploratory graphs to show the relationships among different governments' initiatives during the coronavirus pandemic and people's responses to measures to keep them at home. Interested? Find out more in 'State policies decrease movement during COVID-19'.

<https://linktr.ee/IOB>



Alumnus **Firoz Ahmed (Bangladesh - 2015)**, currently working at Khulna University in Bangladesh, is delighted to share the paper 'Does migration matter for household welfare in Bangladesh?', based on his IOB dissertation and published in the journal Migration and Development. The results presented in this article indicate that households with a migrant member have a significantly higher asset score, a lower expenditure share on food and a higher calorie intake per capita compared to the non-migrant. Besides, families having a migrant member in a lucrative destination are better-off than those with a migrant in a less desirable destination. Firoz would like to thank Prof. Germán Calfat for his guidance throughout this process, as well as all the other teachers for their academic support.

<https://linktr.ee/IOB>



Check out the guest article on IISD's SDG Knowledge Hub, by alumnus **Jorden de Haan (The Netherlands - 2014)**, who works at the international development organization Pact as Program Officer Artisanal Gold. In this article, he discusses how we can reverse conflict minerals to contribute to peaceful, just and inclusive societies as per SDG 16.

<https://linktr.ee/IOB>



Firoz also reported the results of a project on raising awareness campaign on COVID-19, published by the Behavioral Evidence Hub. Firoz and his colleagues found that effective health information campaigns play an important role in raising public awareness and encouraging preventive and health-promoting behavior. Receiving personal phone calls, with or without text messages, increased self-reported compliance with a prescribed set of health guidelines.

<https://linktr.ee/IOB>

From geocoded to entangled landscape: forests, REDD+ environmental rule and everyday practices in DR Congo

PhD by Catherine Windey

On 7 September, Catherine Windey successfully defended her doctoral thesis entitled 'From geocoded to entangled landscape: forests, REDD+ environmental rule and everyday practices in DR Congo'. For this article, the E2C team asked Catherine to reflect on her successful PhD trajectory and her future (research) plans.

E2C: Can you give a short summary of your doctoral dissertation?

CW: My dissertation looks at forest landscapes in DR Congo, more specifically in the hinterland of Kisangani. Simply put, it compares a top-down view of landscape, i.e. spatial planning, to a bottom-up one, i.e. a place-based perspective. I first focus on the Reducing Emissions

from Deforestation and Degradation policy framework (known as REDD+) and on its use of maps and geospatial analyses for diagnosing problems and designing the transformation of landscapes into demarcated zones of production and conservation, i.e. the 'geocoded landscape'. My analysis deconstructs the entrenched, linear causal explanations of deforestation as caused by smallholder farmers' inefficient practices of slashing and burning vegetation and other 'informal' activities. These framings, I show, call into question communities' authority over local resources in favour of more powerful actors such as private conservation organizations or logging and agribusiness companies. The thesis then engages with more complex understandings of the making

of these same forested landscapes and their changes. I show that land tenure and land use practices are co-produced dynamically in relation with the ecological materiality of natural resources (forests, land and crops), the physical and built environment, and an array of social-cultural and economic forces across time and space. It is the temporary expression of these practices and relations that constitute the landscape, i.e. what I call the 'entangled landscape'. For instance, the fast pace of farming and regular weeding maintenance required by most short-cycle cash food crops introduced in colonial times – in comparison to the slow pace farming that defines the cultivation of more traditional crops such as manioc and bananas – implies that only better-off farmers are able

to adapt, such as households within groups endowed with more land and with (relatively) good market access, or urban elites. Land intensification and cash food crops allow this more 'privileged' class of farmers to further expand their lands, usually away from the village, in forest areas.

Deforestation, as a result, is constituted socially and historically through land tenure decisions and various land use practices ranging from land grabbing by some groups and resource use intensification in specific places, to past and recent resettlement, urbanization, development and road infrastructure building. Throughout the thesis, the analysis demonstrates that prevailing expert representations of Congolese forests and their inhabitants carry Western notions of value and productivity that not only render illegitimate a plurality of human-environment relationships and practices, but also promote the very same (colonial) mechanisms that contribute to deforestation and uneven development in the first place.

E2C: What was your motivation to start your research on this topic and in this geographic area? What triggered your interest?

CW: For my master thesis in anthropology, I worked on community forestry in Cameroon and I became fascinated by people's relationships with forests. Strangely, I have an irrational fear of spiders, so I still don't understand why I decided to work in tropical forests where they abound... Anyway, when I came back to academia after having worked for some years as a consultant, it happened quite naturally that I chose to work on forest policies, the gaps between policies and people's everyday ways of relating to forests, and how these policies impact them. REDD+ was and still is one of the major forest conservation policies. It followed that, step by step, I started to be more and more interested in the conceptual lens of 'landscape' because the REDD+ policy understanding of landscape was so different from the conceptualizations in human geography and anthropology ('my' two disciplinary inspirations) and what was happening on the ground. The choice of DR Congo was both pragmatic and personal. Pragmatic because it is one of the countries where there have been major investments for REDD+ and it is, on paper, 'the most advanced' in the process. Personal, because my grandparents lived there for the last six years of Belgian colonial rule and the stories they told me have stayed with me and introduced me, albeit not in academic terms, to some of the violent logics of colonialism and contradictions of the workings of modernization that I expose throughout my analysis in the thesis.

E2C: What is, according to you, the most important contribution of your doctoral thesis?

CW: First, I think my thesis makes an important empirical contribution. There is really not that much critical social analysis of forest politics in DR Congo. So I expose some of the hegemonic dynamics that erase other ways of knowing and being, and deny people's sovereignty over forests



and lands, in addition to their ability to depict their lives with their own ambitions at heart. I think it is really important to show empirically how such 'epistemic' violence –which decolonial scholars such as Mbembe or Mignolo have emphasized– further results in material dispossession by corporate forces and elites through processes of land grabbing or the subjection of agroecological systems to capitalist law. I also think that such analysis is very important in a country like DR Congo because its common (external) portrayal as a place of failure and dysfunction too often legitimizes the top-down economic interventions and control that perpetuate injustices. Also, while there is growing attention paid to commodity-driven deforestation in the Amazon and Southeast Asia, the risks of displacement of commodity production in these (for now) more discrete landscapes are real. As a result of this, I have already been contacted by several organizations, e.g. The Land Matrix, who read my work and who have requested interviews in order to get more detailed information about



processes of land grabbing or the reality of the REDD+ process on the ground.

I am also proud of the theoretical contributions I make in my thesis. For instance I bridge the gap between political ecology and what is called posthumanist/'more-than-representational' approaches, and develop a relational understanding of landscape that engages with other ways of knowing, to show complex and political interdependencies between human and nonhuman entities. But I am going to stop here, before people get bored with conceptual discussions!

E2C: During your PhD trajectory, you did substantial fieldwork in DR Congo. How do you look back on your time spent there?

CW: With a lot of positive feelings and a willingness to continue research and long-term engagement with local partners in DR Congo. Even if there were lots of challenges and frustrations sometimes, I really loved conducting fieldwork and interviews with so-called 'local communities' in particular, but also with practitioners, policy-makers, government actors, etc. I generally felt sincerely welcome in people's yards, houses and offices, and people were by and large very willing to talk openly with me. My fieldwork in DR Congo has also provoked lots of disconcertment and self-reflection about the violent, abiding forces of 'whiteness' and, as the anthropologist James Ferguson would say, about 'my privilege in the world order'. I reflect quite extensively on this in my thesis. In short, though, my encounters and collaborations in DR Congo have pushed me to reflect more deeply on racial and socio-economic privilege and how this might work to permit and enable some of my 'strong' critiques of (eco)modernization, as well as on my own complicity within a system I criticize.

E2C: What were the most important challenge(s) of your personal PhD trajectory?

CW: I generally really enjoyed the PhD process. It went by so fast. But of course, there were some challenges.

Combining fieldwork, educational activities as an academic assistant, and writing was really challenging. It's a lot of work. There were also some moments during the process when I genuinely doubted the quality and usefulness of my research and why I was doing all of this. In moments

like that, a PhD is a true intellectual challenge. It's very difficult to leave your thoughts behind when you leave the office. So it can put a strain on your mental wellbeing and work-life balance. This was definitely the most true during the last year of my PhD. I worked constantly but also enjoyed

writing. What became clear at the end of this trajectory – if you compare a PhD to an intimate relationship – is that I had a very passionate relationship with my PhD, which was made of strong emotions of love but also some hate, feelings of distress and dependency too! (laughing)



E2C: Is there any suggestion you have for current or future PhD students?

CW: Start to write and publish as soon as possible. I really learned a lot by co-authoring pieces with much more experienced scholars. Yet I was not always confident in the beginning to really start writing about my own data. But you should! Another important thing: go to conferences, get to know the people who work on similar topics in your field. It really keeps you in the loop of important debates, you get to share and discuss your work and do the important 'networking'. But you can also create some invaluable friendships with people who think alike! And last but not least, try doing a research stay at another institution abroad. It can really open you to new insights and collaborations. And another perk: living in another city!

E2C: This current academic year, you are continuing your postdoctoral work at IOB. What are your future (research) plans?

CW: My current postdoc project focuses on the agriculture-conservation nexus in the Congo Basin and the multiple socio-ecological lifeways of native and non-native tree (mono)crops, i.e. oil palm and cocoa, across space and time. I will conduct fieldwork in DR Congo and in the Netherlands and Belgium where Congolese cocoa is more and more appreciated by specialty chocolate makers. I am interested in knowing more about how policies and private initiatives related to agricultural commodities taken in 'the North' impact ecological and social lives in 'the South'. I will also continue to co-lead the VLIR-UOS collaboration we have developed with the University of Kisangani and ISDR-Bukavu.



In the meantime ...

Missed Debating Development? Watch the recorded sessions online...

Over the past years, Tuesday evenings in October and November have become the moment to listen to new ideas, reflect on diverging opinions and contribute to a debate on current development topics. This year, the overall theme of the Debating Development series was 'Reflecting on decolonial perspectives'. The first session was an immediate success, with Achille Mbembe (University of the Witwatersrand & Duke University) and Els Hertogen's (NGO platform 11.11.11) discussion on post-development and decolonial perspectives attracting a record number of online participants. The other sessions also attracted a wide audience of students and university staff, as well as civil society actors interested in development topics. The subsequent debates focused on decolonizing ecological

relations (Diana Raquel Vela Almeida & Daniel Ribeiro), a decolonial turn for development studies (Sabelo J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni & Johan Bastiaensen), feminist ecologies and coloniality of the body (Brigitte Baptiste & Iris Verschaeve), colonial spatialities and contestation in the city (Christina M. Jimenez & Aaron Vansintjan), a decolonial critique of state building interventions (Philip Lottholz & Abiosseh Davis) and decolonization and military interventions (Yannick Quéau & Jean Eudes Biem) and the closing debate on the role of the diaspora in memory of the colonial past (Nadia Nsai & Seckou Ouologuem).

All debates were recorded and are accessible online. Worth watching!

<https://linktr.ee/IOB>

One step for (wo)mankind ...

The University of Antwerp recently launched the One Million Step Challenge, a competition among staff and students to reach one million steps before Christmas with a team of up to five UAntwerp members.

Of course, IOB had to join in! Two IOB teams, under the very original names of IOB 1 and IOB 2, participated in the competition. The IOB 2 team consisted of three iron ladies – one IOB staff member Marjan Vermeiren, and two IOB students Mahar Musleh and Catherine Amenya – and one PhD student, Filippo Grisolia.

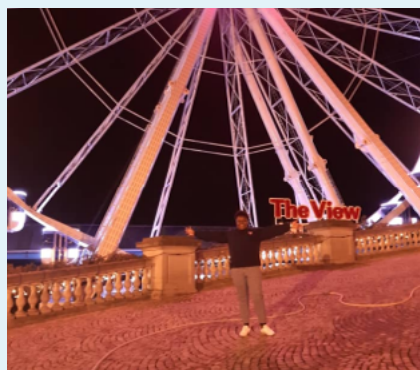
In total, all of the UAntwerp participants accumulated 192 322 465 steps, enough to burn off the calories of 12.000 pizzas! Our very own IOB2 team easily passed the one million mark, with a total of 1 168 873 steps!

Their recipe for success?

Marjan walked and cycled wherever she needed to go (with or without kids), while Filippo – having only arrived in Antwerp for a few days – already walked the 'UAntwerp campus tour' from the city centre to Middelheim and back again. The magic duo, Mahar and Cathy, walked early mornings by the river Scheldt and even took some time

out to enjoy the swings... and a nice Belgian waffle as a 'reward'.

Their experience? Cathy was enthusiastic: "It was an exhilarating experience, since I was forced to discover the beautiful city of Antwerp. Navigating my way through the shopping district, the riverside and enviously admiring the boats I need to own, I rediscovered my love for nature and lights." Her partner in crime Mahar agrees: "It's my first time in Antwerp. The One Million Step Challenge was the perfect excuse to get to know the city, explore the beautiful architecture and the narrow neighbourhood roads."



From classmates to quarantinemates: IOB under the new normal

The COVID-19 pandemic persists across the globe and its accompanying lockdowns continue to challenge our conceptions of normalcy. The IOB 2020-21 cohort has faced a variety of lockdown levels since its start in September.

The academic year 2020-21 created massive uncertainty for new IOB students. As the first semester took off, the mechanics of lockdown placed heavy demands on students and staff alike. Many of us started the semester from home and both students and professors juggled lectures and interactions across multiple time zones and internet connections of variable quality. Even when the internet cooperated, trying to follow lectures and complete assignments while at home proved to be challenging. Some students, like Fien Swaanen, remarked on the difficulties of concentrating amid family and home distractions. Nevertheless, students also spoke about

developing discipline and resilience while adapting to ever-changing restrictions and the online campus.

Eventually, students started arriving and settling in Belgium. Some, like Daniel Mwesigwa and Marlon Howking, faced almost insurmountable barriers in order to travel to Belgium, often finding that they traded one lockdown for another. The absence of activities has been a blow: no outings, cultural events or sports. Face-to-face classes were a welcome arrival and, despite physical distancing measures, they provided a sense of normalcy and togetherness. Still, students have adapted bravely and reluctantly embraced the 'new normal', from lively interactions in the cohort WhatsApp groups, online parties, distanced walks and outings for hot chocolate. As Tantoh Neh Sheila remarked: "We successfully walked through the semester. It was tough, but we made it."



Coronaproof get together of our IOB students

STOP CORONAVIRUS

alumni panel



Sagita Adesyi
GLOB 2017 | Indonesia

Where do you work?

I work at the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) as

Business and Human Rights Specialist for the Business and Human Rights Asia (B+HR Asia) program in Indonesia. I am responsible for the program implementation, which involves primarily awareness raising, capacity building, partnership-building and advocacy, including for and/or with government, businesses, business associations and civil society organizations.

Tell us more about one of the exciting projects/ programmes/ ideas you are currently working?

In my current work at UNDP Indonesia, through the Business and Human Rights Asia (B+HR Asia) program, we work in partnership with the private sector and the Government of Indonesia to champion the implementation of United Nations Guiding Principles (UNGPs) on Business and Human Rights. Businesses – private and state-owned enterprises; small, medium, and large companies – generate economic growth and contribute to a reduction of poverty.

However, businesses have also been associated with a number of adverse social and environmental impacts. The B+HR Asia program aims to address these business-related risks and adverse impacts while levelling the playing field to allow responsible businesses to remain competitive, within the Protect, Respect and Remedy framework of the UNGPs.

How has the IOB experience affected your life/ career?

Just in one day, back in September 2017, I suddenly had new friends from more than 30 countries: my classmates at IOB! I feel that I was just so lucky to have the experience of studying at IOB, as not only did it give me a fascinating, well-rounded and cultured educational experience, but it also helped me greatly to specialize more in development work. Thank you IOB!

Sebastian Paalo
GOV 2015 | Ghana

Where do you work?

I am a doctoral fellow (2019-2021/22) in the School of Political Science and International Studies, University of Queensland, Australia. I also double as a research fellow at the Department of History and Political Studies, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) in Ghana.

My doctoral research focuses on how local ownership is conceptualized and operationalized through NGO-led peacebuilding in sub-Saharan Africa.

Tell us more about one of the exciting projects/ programmes/ ideas you are currently working?

Since leaving IOB in 2016, I have taken part in some interesting projects, but my current PhD project offers the most exciting and intriguing subject matter in the pursuit of my academic career. For instance, one of the empirical chapters on the NGO-led mobilization and operationalization of local ownership in peacebuilding in West Africa reveals how women are 'caught' or constituted and constrained in swirling networks of family, religion, clan/house, marriage, patriarchy, and gerontocracy; with all this being engaged with and mobilized by NGOs in ways that empower women to some extent (e.g. finding ways for them to have some greater influence in local governance) without fundamentally transforming the durability of the entrenched local relations

How has the IOB experience affected your life/ career? IOB is outstanding in the way the institution's teaching philosophy is rooted in a strict balance of theory and industry practice. This is captured in three dimensions: the simulation games usually organized both in and out of the classroom, policy-relevant research that the staff guide students to undertake, and student industrial placements that are usually strongly supported by the institute.



Giorgi Shubitidze
DEM 2014 | Georgia

Where do you work? I am a co-founder of the consulting company DEPA and I also teach Sociology and Social Theory at the Georgian Institute of Public Affairs.

How has the IOB experience affected your life/ career? The experience I gained on the IOB program significantly shaped my future career. With my friend and colleague Rusudan Kardava, whom I met at IOB, we have founded a consulting company Development Evaluation and Progress Assessment (DEPA) (Also see Rusudan's contribution). The theoretical and practical knowledge we acquired at IOB made a solid base for the successful development and achievements of our company.

What do you wish IOB and IOB students in the new year 2021?

I celebrated one of the best and most unforgettable New Year's Eves at IOB, with my classmates. Though 2020 was a tough year for the whole world, I hope you will overcome all the challenges and have a healthy, peaceful, amazing 2021! You are privileged to be IOB students and the knowledge you gain there will be overwhelmingly important for your further personal and professional growth.



Rusudan Kardava
DEM 2014 | Georgia

Where do you work? I am currently working as a Director of the consulting company which I set up together with my friend and colleague, Giorgi Shubitidze, whom I met at IOB.

Tell us more about one of the exciting projects/ programmes/ ideas you are currently working?

In January 2018, together with Giorgi, we founded the consulting company called Development Evaluation and Progress Assessment (DEPA), which is focused on providing consultation, studies and capacity building in the field of monitoring and evaluation. Specifically, our company provides services in the area of program/project evaluation, performance monitoring, M&E system design, needs assessment, sector assessment, etc. Our company aims to use all available knowledge and tools to guide evidence-based decision-making. In addition to the projects in Georgia, where we are based, we have worked on large scale complex studies in 27 countries of Africa, and conducted project impact evaluations both in India and neighboring Azerbaijan.

<http://depa-consulting.com/>



The IOB publication record from 2010 to 2020

A geographic distribution description

Last October, Prof. Obie Porteous of the Department of Economics at Middlebury College published a paper entitled ‘[Research deserts and oases](#)’, in which he analyses the geographic distribution of 27,000 economics journal articles on Africa published in the last two decades. With this appealing title he opens the floor for some of his interesting findings: 65% of the articles about Africa in the top five economics journals are focused on only five of the 54 countries (Kenya, South Africa, Ghana, Uganda and Malawi), while there are other countries, which he calls the ‘scarce seven’ (Sudan, DR Congo, Angola, Somalia, Guinea, Chad and South Sudan) that represent just 4.7% of the publications in the top five economics journals.

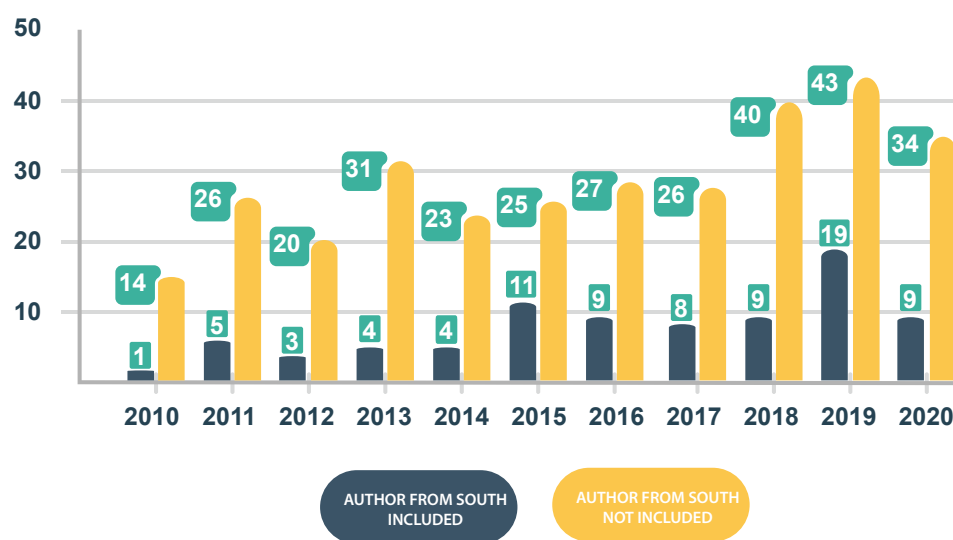
This categorization of some countries as ‘oases’ and others as ‘deserts’, reflecting the well-known contrast of the Saharan landscapes, can be considered problematic because the author declares them as such based only on publications in a specific field of research, namely economics. Nevertheless, this paper sparked the interest of the Exchange to Change team in the geographic distribution of IOB publications on Africa and other regions of the world. The IOB disciplinary research scope is certainly much broader than purely economics, and thus the data about IOB publications is not comparable with that of Porteous’ paper. But comparison is not the purpose of this paper; inspired by the statistical effort of Porteous to understand the distribution of publications on economics in Africa,

we consulted our librarian, Hans De Backer, and processed the available data on IOB publications of the last eleven years in order to understand their geographic distribution around the world, taking into account the proportion of publications including authors from the South as an extra element.¹

It is important to stress that we do not have comparative intentions in

Taking the available data for IOB CERES A and B publications² from 2010 to 2020³, we first of all observe a progressive increase in the number of publications, rising from 15 in 2010 to 43 in 2020, with an average of 39 publications per year and a significant peak of 62 publications in 2019. More interesting for future analysis within IOB, however, is the disaggregation of this annual distribution of publications among publications

Figure 1: Annual distribution of IOB CERES A & B publications (showing contribution of Southern authors).

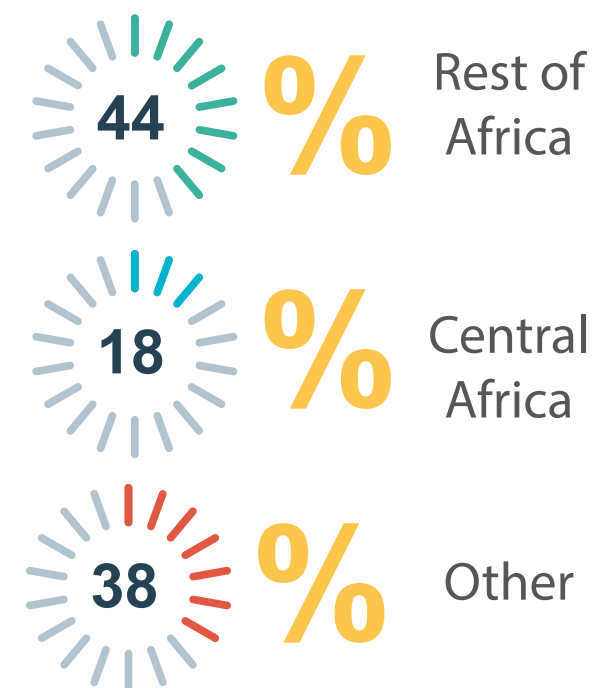


relation to Porteous’ research, nor is there an analytical purpose to this piece. It rather has a descriptive approach. However, we believe that the information described below could trigger constructive discussions and analysis within the IOB community.

including at least one author from the ‘South’ and publications without ‘Southern’ authors.

Notably, in the period 2010–2020, one fifth of IOB’s total A & B publications include at least one author from the South, that is, 82 publications of a total

Figure 2: Geographic distribution of IOB publications



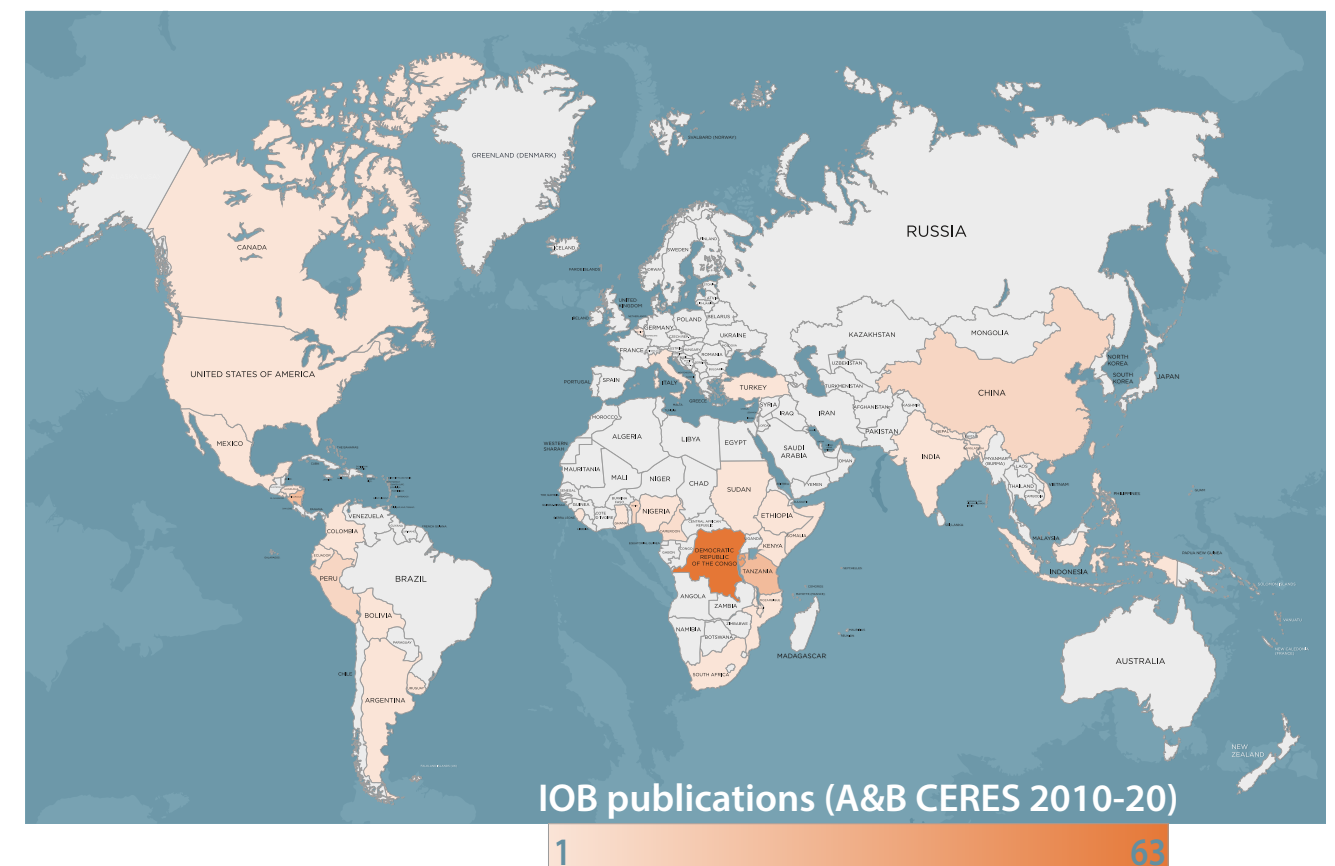
of 391 publications. One remarkable fact worth highlighting is that many of the so-called ‘Southern authors’ are IOB alumni, alongside the staff and PhD students.

The largest proportion of IOB CERES A and B publications are on Africa (Figure 2). A total of 264 publications (62%)⁴ are focused on Africa.

A more detailed disaggregation of the data within the African scope reveals that IOB’s most frequent five are Democratic Republic of Congo (65 publications – 24.6%) followed by Uganda (39 – 14.8%), publications with no specific national focus within Africa (38 – 14.4%), Rwanda (32 – 12.1%), Burundi (30 – 11.4%) and Tanzania (18 – 6.8%).

The publications in the category ‘Other’ (38% of 425) are categorized as follows: those with no specific geographical focus 21% (i.e. 88 of 425 publications), and those in countries or regions outside of Africa 17% (i.e. 73 of 425 publications). Of this latter categorization, the most significant corpus of publications focusses on Nicaragua (18 publications – 25%), followed by China (9 publications – 12%), Peru (6 publications – 8%) and Belgium (4 publications – 5%). We do not present a specific disaggregation among all the countries in Latin-

The following map shows the countries that have been covered by at least one publication:



America and Asia due to the fact that only Nicaragua (18 publications), China (9) and Peru (6) have more than two published pieces.

Indeed, IOB’s geographical focus is not limited to Africa. The specific regions/ countries covered by at least one IOB CERES A or B publication (2010-2020) are: Africa, Angola, Argentina, Asia, BRICS, Bangladesh, Belgium, Benin, Bolivia, Burundi, Cameroon, Canada, Central Africa, China, Colombia, Comoros, DR Congo, East Africa, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Europe, Germany, Ghana, Great Lakes Region, India, Indonesia, Italy, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Malawi, Mexico, Middle East, Nepal, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Nigeria, North Africa, Pacific, Peru, Philippines, Rwanda, Somalia, Somaliland, South Africa, South Sudan, Spain, Tanzania, Togo, Turkey, USA, Uganda, Uruguay, Vietnam, and those

with no geographic focus.

Figure 3 displays the annual totals of IOB CERES A and B publications for the countries with at least 5% of the total number of publications in the period between 2010 and 2020. The graphs show, among other things, that the number of publications on these countries has been erratic with no stable trend for any of the countries. However, countries such as DR Congo and Rwanda have had at least one publication in each of the 11 years, while the rest of the countries have had at least one year with no publication. Nevertheless, this fluctuation has been more pronounced among the non-African countries.

The graphs also show that for the top-ranking African countries, the highest number of publications in a single year is around 18 publications whereas the

highest number of publications for the top-ranking non-African countries in 2010 to 2020 is four publications.

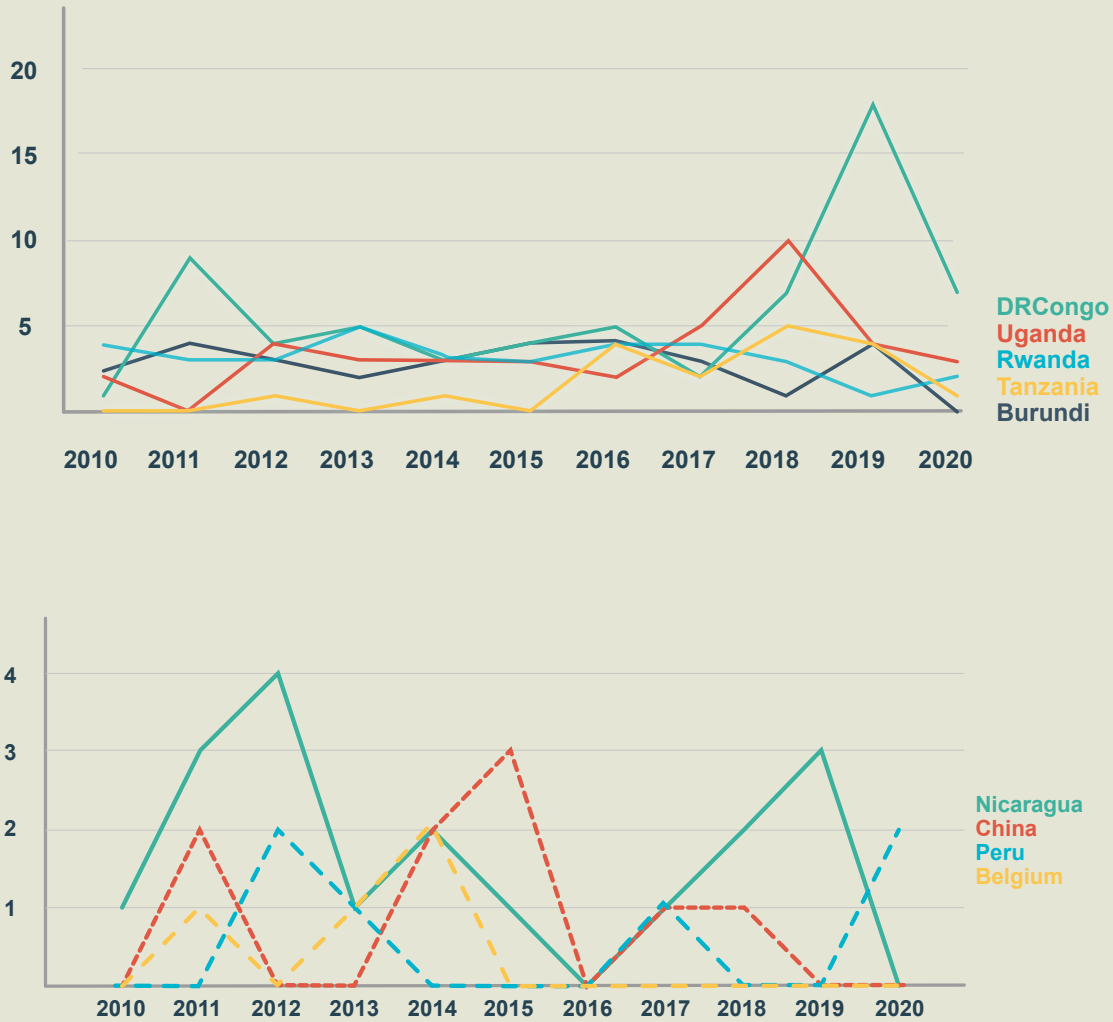
The majority (71%) of the IOB CERES A and B publications in the period 2010-2020 are journal articles (277 publications of 391), followed by book chapters (91 publications – 23%), edited books (15 publications – 4%) and books (8 publications – 2%). Regarding journal articles, IOB published in 156 different journals and the top journals as shown in Figure 4.

We hope this information proves to be useful for the IOB community, both to be analyzed and as a tool for decision making.⁵ This information opens doors for further discussion about the research focus and scope of IOB research and the collaboration with partners and alumni in the creation of research output.

Figure 4: Top journals by number of publications in the period 2010-2020



Figure 3: Annual totals for the countries with at least 5% of the total IOB publications in the decade.



1 Data for this piece was compiled using EndNote and processed in STATA and Excel. For the purpose of this data organization, the definition of an author from the South refers to someone who got their bachelor degree from a university in the South. This study includes all CERES A & B publications written by IOB staff and associated researchers.

2 CERES is a Dutch institute that created a valuation system for publications in the field of development studies. The CERES ratings A and B are used for journal articles included in Web of Science and book publications by high ranking publishers.

3 The publications for 2020 do not represent the complete year but only the publications available at the time the data were collected, early November.

4 The proportions of publications by geographical focus are determined after disentangling the number of publications by geographic focus or country. That is, publications focused on more than one country are separated by the country names. This is done such that a count of publications by mention of country/region can be made and therefore, the proportions are determined from a total of 425 not 391.

5 The processed data is available with the Exchange to Change team and the databases are available with our librarian, Hans De Backer, whom we thank for making this piece possible.



Why not become our next colleague?

IOB currently has three openings for academic assistants

<https://linktr.ee/IOB>

Global Governance and Inclusive Development

Environment and Sustainable Development

Green City Bonds and Sustainable Development

First IOB alumni seminar in DR Congo: 6 November 2021

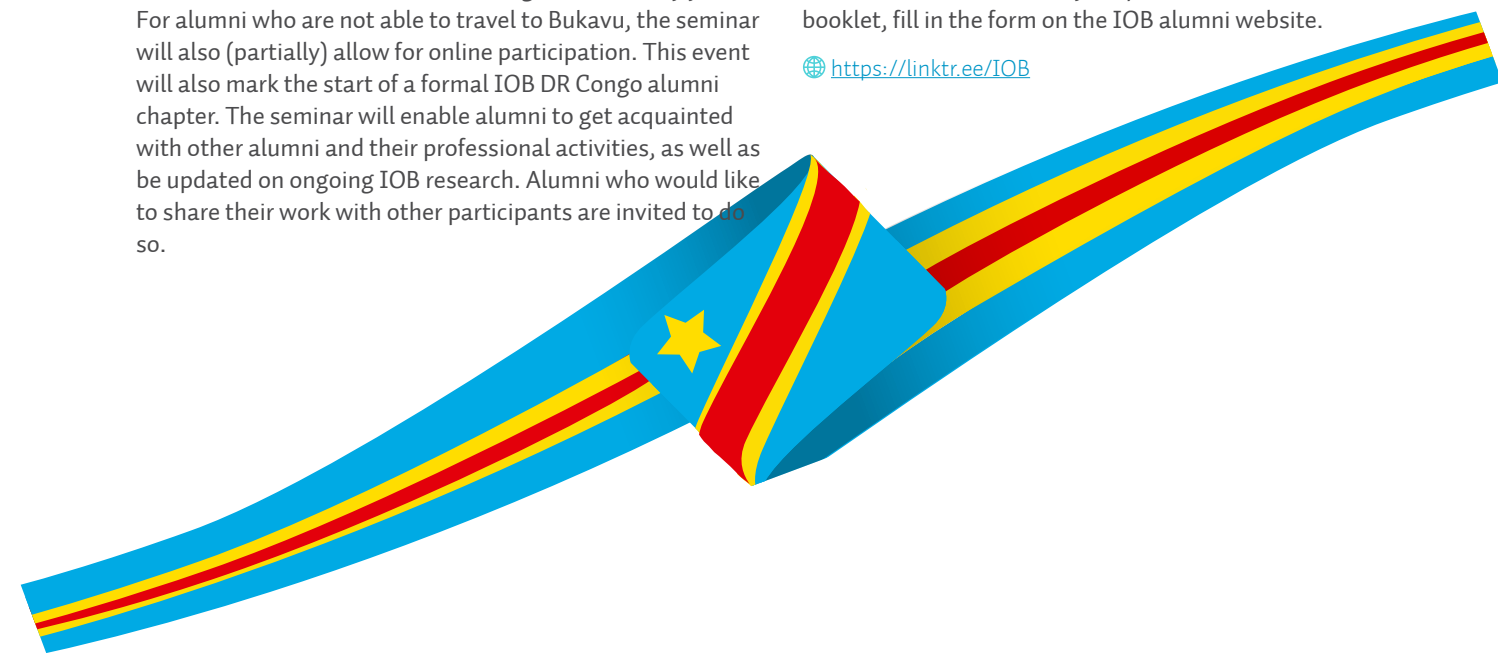
On 6 November 2021, the Université Catholique de Bukavu and IOB cordially invite you to the first edition of the IOB alumni seminar in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The event will bring together IOB alumni from DR Congo, IOB staff and Belgian development actors to either get to know one another or see each other again after many years. For alumni who are not able to travel to Bukavu, the seminar will also (partially) allow for online participation. This event will also mark the start of a formal IOB DR Congo alumni chapter. The seminar will enable alumni to get acquainted with other alumni and their professional activities, as well as be updated on ongoing IOB research. Alumni who would like to share their work with other participants are invited to do so.

Afterwards, all participants are invited to a network reception and walking dinner.

All DR Congo (nationality or based) alumni are invited to have their profile included in the DR Congo IOB alumni booklet. If you're interested in being part of the DR Congo IOB alumni chapter, presenting your work at the seminar and/ or would like to have your profile included in the alumni booklet, fill in the form on the IOB alumni website.

<https://linktr.ee/IOB>



This year, IOB has the honour of hosting the annual conference of the Human Development and Capability Association (HDCA), under the theme of 'Capabilities and Transformative Institutions'.

How can we organize for the world of tomorrow? COVID-19 has taught us that we are not ready. We have re-discovered our common vulnerability – not only to a virus, but also to policy mismatch, institutional hiccups and authoritarian backlash. Divided we stood, unable to act in unison, lacking real opportunities for deliberation. How can we improve the structures in which we live together and face the challenges ahead in order to build a more just and sustainable world?

The HDCA Conference 2021 puts this question center stage.

Calls for proposals are currently open (deadline 15 February 2021).

The conference will also be a meeting place for the HDCA's thematic groups and regional networks. During the days preceding the conference (10-11 September 2021), the HDCA will be holding a two-day summer school for graduate students working with the capability approach.

The full call for proposals and more information is available on the conference webpage:

www.hdca2021.org

Launch of IOB North Chapter: save the date - 1 June 2021

On 1 June 2021 (if the corona situation allows), an IOB alumni-student-staff network event will be organised at IOB in Antwerp. The event aims to bring together current IOB students, staff and IOB graduates who are living or working in Belgium or Europe, to get to know each other's professional work and either link up with old friends or get to know new members of the IOB community. More senior alumni could give some advice and tips to the IOB students to help them on their professional path. At the same time, we will also officially start the IOB alumni North Chapter, designed for more structural cooperation among IOB graduates in the Belgium/Europe region.

So bookmark the date in your calendar! And enjoy becoming part of new networks, linking up again and having a good conversation.



