

CHINEMELU OKAFOR

Harvard University Government Department
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138

Email: cokafor@g.harvard.edu
Website: www.chinemeluokafor.com

Research Interests	Comparative politics; political economy; public economics; economic development; economic history; narrative economics; MSME development in emerging markets; international economics and trade	
Education	Harvard University	Cambridge, MA
	Ph.D. Government	2028 (<i>expected</i>)
	<i>Committee:</i> Melani Cammett (chair), Nathan Nunn, Mashail Malik, Pia Raffler, Awa Ambra Seck	
	Princeton University	Princeton, NJ
	Emerging Scholars in Political Science Program	August 2021
Research Experience	The George Washington University	Washington, DC
	M.A. Applied Economics, <i>Dean's Award</i>	May 2018
	The University of Michigan	Ann Arbor, MI
	B.A. Economics, B.A. International Studies	May 2015
	White House Council of Economic Advisers (<i>took leave from PhD</i>)	Washington, DC
	Staff Economist	August 2023 - August 2024
	Advisors: Dr. Sandile Hlatshwayo	
	Areas of focus: International Economics and Trade; Section 201 & 301 Tariffs	
	Selected Projects: Economic Report of the President, <i>Council of Economic Advisers</i> 2024	
	Emerging Scholars in Political Science Program	Princeton, NJ
	Predoctoral Research Specialist	August 2019 - August 2021
	Advisors: Prof. Leonard Wantchekon	
	Area of focus: Historical applied microeconomics;	
	Digitized historical maps of Nigeria in QGIS to support ongoing research on the long-run effects of colonial missionary education on present-day living standards, occupation, and political participation	
	Empirical Studies of Conflict Project	Princeton, NJ
	Research Specialist II	September 2018 - August 2019
	Advisors: Prof. Tarek Ghani and Prof. Jake Shapiro	
	Areas of focus: Natural resource extraction and conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa;	
	Preprocessed spatial data and created interactive map of Africa by merging firm-level ownership identifiers of extractive sites in oil, gas, and mining, to instances of violent conflict	
	Selected Projects: Mining Competition and Violent Conflict in Africa: Pitting Against Each Other	
	The International Finance Corporation (IFC)	Washington, DC
	Research Assistant	February - October 2018
	Advisors: Dr. Tristan Reed and Dr. Alexandros Ragoussis	
	Areas of focus: Private sector firm development in Sub-Saharan Africa;	
	Created indicators of infrastructure access and ran synthetic panel fixed effects regressions to measure inclusiveness and equality of markets to electric power and water for households	
	Selected Projects: Making It Big: Why Developing Countries Need More Large Firms, <i>IFC</i> 2020;	
	Creating Impact: The Promise of Impact Investing, <i>IFC</i> 2019;	
	Beyond Capital: Monitoring Development Outcomes of Multinational Enterprises, <i>World Bank</i> 2018	

	The World Bank Consultant Advisors: Kinley Salmon and Nabila Assaf Areas of focus: Major challenges to firm operations in post-conflict settings; Conducted statistical hypothesis testing to investigate challenges to Syrian firms including access to economic infrastructure, supply disruptions, and loss of skilled workers Selected Projects: Surviving Firms of the Syrian Arab Republic, <i>World Bank</i> 2018	Washington, DC June - August 2017
Works in Progress	Protest Matters: The Effects of Protests on Economic Redistribution [abstract] [working paper] When Women March: The Effects of Women-Led Protests on Gender Gaps in Political Participation	
Teaching Fellow	Harvard: Fall ‘24 ‘25 - Public Economics (ECON 1410), Stan Veuger Harvard: Spring ‘25 - Evaluating the Impact of Public Policies (GOV 1737), Prof. Michael Hiscox Harvard: Spring ‘25 ‘26 - Business & Entrepreneurship in Africa (HBSMBA 1555), Hakeem Belo-Osagie	
Academic Affiliations	Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Graduate Student Associate, (<i>renewed</i>) Harvard Center for International Development, PhD Affiliate Harvard Institute for Quantitative Social Science, Graduate Student Affiliate London Business School’s Wheeler Institute – African Research Councillors Programme Collaborator w/ Prof. Nathan Nunn, Prof. Elias Papaioannou, and Prof. Stelios Michalopoulos	August 2025 January 2025 October 2022 May 2022
Selected and Invited Talks	Harvard Center for African Studies Contested Realities Workshop (<i>2025</i>) London Business School, Wheeler Institute - African History Through the Lens of Economics (<i>2022</i>)	
Professional Distinctions	Association for Comparative Economic Studies (ACES) Summer School (<i>fully funded</i>) American Political Science Association Member Spotlight Harvard Department of Government Karl Deutsch Fellowship Harvard Graduate School of Arts and Sciences Graduate Prize Fellowship American Political Science Association Diversity Fellowship	July 2025 July 2025 August 2021 August 2021 December 2020
Selected Awards	Harvard Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, GSA Grant (<i>x2</i>) Harvard Center for African Studies, Travel Grant Harvard Government Department, Women and Politics Research Grant Harvard Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Pre-dissertation Grant (<i>x2</i>) Harvard Jens Aubrey Westengard Scholarship Forbes 30 Under 30: Education - Founder, the Research in Color Foundation Harvard Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Summer Language Grant Best Overall Performance in the Applied Economics Master’s Program, <i>Dean’s Award</i>	October 2025 May 2025 April 2025 April 2025 May 2024 November 2022 April 2022 May 2018
Professional Service	Reviewer for <i>The Annual Review of Economics</i> Harvard Concentration Advisor and Non-Resident Tutor Harvard Resident Tutor, <i>Winthrop House</i> Specialities: French Language, Public Service, First-gen Low-income, Economics, and Government The Research In Color Foundation <u>Founder and President</u> Founded and lead <u>Research In Color</u> a 501(c)(3) non-profit which seeks to increase the number and improve retention of historically excluded scholars in economics and economics-adjacent disciplines.	August 2024 - Present August 2021 - August 2023 May 2019 - Present
Technical Skills	RStudio, R Shiny, STATA, L ^A T _E X, QGIS, SPSS, Tableau, Thomson Reuters Datastream, Thomson Reuters Eikon, Excel, PowerPoint, Word, Overleaf, GitHub, Qualtrics, JavaScript	
Languages	English (Native proficiency), French (Upper-intermediate proficiency), Igbo (Passive proficiency)	
Citizenship	United States; Nigeria	