



National and Global Affairs



About TIME: Intro to the Trinity Impact Evaluation Research Centre

Global impact investment

In an age when policymakers and aid agencies are under increasing pressure to demonstrate impact, the work of academics who can bridge rigorous research and practical implementation is invaluable.

At Trinity College Dublin, Dr Tara Mitchell has proved to be someone whose scholarship can translate to timely policy and investment interventions. Rigorously designed experiments are not just published in journals but embedded in real-world programmes with measurable consequences. From working with the World Bank's Development Impact Evaluation (DIME) team to shaping Ireland's

own data access infrastructure and being one of the co-founders of Trinity's Impact Evaluation Unit (TIME), her portfolio illustrates the importance of evaluation in tackling some of the most pressing challenges of our time: displacement, education, civic participation, and assuring evidence-informed policymaking.

The impact evaluation skills and collaboration that drive Dr Mitchell's work demonstrate how applied economics, when appropriately tested, can make both national and international systems work for those most in need of the supports and infrastructures that can strengthen their communities.

This work showcases how Trinity is using rigorous impact assessment to improve investment in international investment, supporting communities most in need.

Prepared by Trinity Civic Engagement for Societal Impact, September 2025

Dr Tara Mitchell

SCHOOL

Economics, School of Social Sciences and Philosophy

PARTNER AGENCIES

World Bank 🌀 Government of Senegal 🌀 Government of Niger 🌀 Economic and Social Research Institute

FUNDERS:

World Bank 🌀 Bank-Netherlands Partnership Program 🌀 Nordic Development Fund 🌀 i2i Trust Fund

SUBJECT AREAS

Development Economics 🌀 Agricultural Economics 🌀 Economics of Information 🌀 Poverty and Inequality



World Bank Involvement

The UN World Refugee Report puts the numbers of displaced people at over 123million. While it is vital to support people who are living through this, those supports must be proven to be effective.

Dr Mitchell, along with colleagues from the World Bank's Development Impact Evaluation (DIME) and the University of Milan-Bicocca, carried out an Impact Evaluation of the Niger Refugees and Host Communities Support Project. Understanding the effectiveness of interventions which can help people to support themselves is vital to assuring the continuation of those interventions.

This is not the only work Dr Mitchell has done for the World Bank. She has also co-authored a paper for the World Bank Economic Review on 'Group Incentives for the Public Good', taking a practical view on how to incentivise civic activity in Dakar, Senegal, based on an evaluation she and others did.

In both cases, the work has a practical purpose: it tests a plausible intervention under real-world conditions. In the development world, that matters. As budgets tighten due to demand and a lack of support from certain wealthy nations, programme managers need results, and community organisers require strategies that recognise social dynamics within communities and neighbourhoods.

By embedding the work inside the World Bank's Development Impact Evaluation (DIME) ecosystem, where trials are designed with implementing partners, Dr Mitchell and her collaborators and co-authors are ensuring that findings are primed for policy uptake.

Irish Economic Association

Since July 2024, Dr Mitchell she has served as a member of the Irish Economic Association Data Access Working Group, a joint forum that grapples with issue of how to expand secure, ethical access to high-value administrative and survey microdata for research while protecting privacy and public trust.

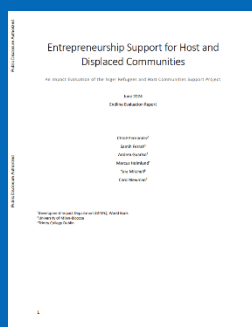
Ireland's desire to increase evidence-informed policy on housing, health, labour markets, climate transitions is partly predicated on the availability of timely, well-documented data and predictable access routes. The working group is part of the architecture which makes that possible.

Dr Mitchell's combination of field-experiment experience and hands-on data practice makes her an effective broker between the needs of academics and the constraints of official statistics.

Trinity Impact Evaluation Research Centre

Within Trinity, Dr Mitchell is a founding member of TIME (Trinity Impact Evaluation Unit) which has become a productive hub of development economists. TIME's model is partnership: link researchers with practitioners and policymakers, co-design evaluations, and feed results back into decision cycles. Ireland, a nation proud of its development efforts, now also punches above its weight in the international evaluation community, and TIME's network is part of the reason. Its method is one of rigorous causal identification to answer questions that governments and international NGOs actually ask. Dr Mitchell's role in TIME anchors her World Bank collaborations at home and gives Trinity students a front-row seat to state-of-the-art evaluation practice.

Outputs



Entrepreneurship Support for Host and Displaced Communities (2024)

This report provides initial results from an impact evaluation of an Entrepreneurship Support Program intended to improve the livelihoods of host communities and displaced households in Niger. The program was delivered to households by the Niger Refugees and Host Communities Support Project (PARCA, Projet d'Appui aux Réfugiés et aux Communautés d'Accueil).

Group Incentives for the Public Good: A Field Experiment on Improving the Urban Environment (2024)

What strategies can help communities to overcome the 'public good' problem in the maintenance of communal spaces and infrastructure in urban environments? This paper investigates the World Bank-assisted Stormwater Management and Climate Change Adaptation Project (PROGEP) in Dakar and whether community-based organisations can motivate them to make increased contributions to the public good.



“Even when farmers’ options of who to trade with during a given period are constrained, informing farmers about market prices can lead to an increase in the offer that the farmer receives from the middleman.”

*Dr Tara Mitchell,
Is Knowledge Power? Information and
Switching Costs in Agricultural Markets
2017*

Poverty, income inequality and living standards in Ireland: Fifth annual report (2025)

This report is the fifth from an Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) research programme in partnership with Community Foundation Ireland, which seeks to address gaps in our knowledge and understanding of poverty, income inequality and living standards in Ireland.

Dr Mitchell’s contribution focused on Income Growth and Inequality, and on Poverty and Material Deprivation.





Dr Tara Mitchell is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Economics at Trinity College Dublin. Her research focuses on applied microeconomics, with an emphasis in the area of developing countries, agricultural work and information economics. She has published in the American Journal of Agricultural Economics, Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics and in The World Bank Economic Review.

Additionally, Dr Mitchell is a founding member of the Trinity Impact Evaluation Unit (TIME) and is a member of the Central Statistics Office and Irish Economic Association Data Access Working Group. In 2019, she was awarded the Provost's Teaching Award for her teaching excellence.

For More Information

Dr Tara Mitchell

Assistant Professor at the Department of Economics, School of Social Sciences and Philosophy

mitchet@tcd.ie

<https://www.tcd.ie/research/profiles/?profile=mitchet>



Trinity College Dublin
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath
The University of Dublin