Training Event: An introduction to MicroZAMOD, a Zambian Tax-Benefit Microsimulation Model

Dates: 3rd – 5th December 2019
(2nd December 2019: Software installation and set-up)

Venue: Legacy Lodge & Conference Centre,
Meanwood Ibex Hill
Lusaka, Zambia

Background

United Nations University World Institute for Development Economics Research (UNU-WIDER), the University of Essex in the UK, and Southern African Social Policy Research Insights (SASPRI) have embarked on a collaboration called SOUTHMOD, to promote tax-benefit microsimulation modelling in developing countries using the EUROMOD tax-benefit microsimulation software.

EUROMOD has been developed by Prof Holly Sutherland and colleagues over many years with funding from the European Commission, and Zambia is one of the first developing countries to use the EUROMOD software. Zambia's model - the MicroZAMOD - is a stand-alone tax-benefit microsimulation model which was developed using the EUROMOD software, and was built in collaboration with colleagues at ZIPAR.

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the Ministry of National Development Planning (MNDP) are working with the SOUTHMOD team in Zambia to promote MicroZAMOD across government.

As part of the SOUTHMOD collaboration, the ILO, MNDP, UNU-WIDER, ZIPAR and SASPRI are organising an introductory training event about MicroZAMOD for members of the Zambian Government.

Purpose and objectives

The purpose of this event is to introduce participants to MicroZAMOD, with a view to promoting its use within Government for evidence-based policy making. As well as providing an overview of the model, the event will include a number of case studies. Attendees will leave with an appreciation of how to navigate and interpret the MicroZAMOD user interface; how to run MicroZAMOD; and how to build and implement a basic policy reform.

Timetable

Evening prior to course commencement (Monday 2nd December 2019)		
Loading software and data onto attendees' laptops		18:00 – 20:00

Day 1 (Tuesday 3rd December 2019)	Speaker	Time
Welcome and Introductions Keynote Address: Technical Officer, Social Security and Disability Inclusion, ILO	James Canonge	09:00 – 09:30
An introduction to MicroZAMOD What is tax-benefit microsimulation and how can it help inform policy-making? What is MicroZAMOD? The SOUTHMOD collaboration (Ref: PPT1)	Mbewe Kalikeka	09:30 – 10:30
Break		10:30 – 11:00
Getting started. Navigating the MicroZAMOD user interface. Introducing the definitional policies and tax-benefit policies. (Ref: PPT2)	Jabulani Jele	11:00 – 13:00
Lunch		13:00 – 14:00
Opening Address and launch of MicroZAMOD i) Director, Development Planning, Ministry of National Development Planning	Mr. Mulele Maketo	14:30 – 14:45
Unpacking the tax-benefit policies in MicroZAMOD i) The concept of functions and parameters (Ref: PPT3) ii) The conversion of tax and benefit rules for inclusion within MicroZAMOD (Ref: Country Report)	Christine Byaruhanga	14:45-16:30
End		16:30

Day 2 (Wednesday 4th November 2019)		
Recap	Jabulani	09:00 – 09:15
Running the model and accessing the output (Ref: PPT3 continued)	Christine	09:15 – 10:30
Break		10:30 – 11:00
Practical – familiarisation with MicroZAMOD (input dataset, running the model, accessing the output at individual case level)	Christine	11:00 – 13:00
Lunch		13:00 – 14:00
Creating a new system. (Ref: PPT4) Amending a policy Practical – familiarisation with amending a policy	Florence Banda-Muleya	14:00 – 16:30
End		16:30

Day 3 (Thursday 5th December 2019)		
Recap	Christine	09:00 – 09:15
Adding a new policy (Ref: PPT4 continued) Practical – familiarisation with adding a new policy	Florence	09:00 – 10:30
Break		10:30 – 11:00
Practical Exercises – Group work	All	11:00 – 13:00
Lunch		13:00 – 14:00
Practical Exercises - Continues		14:00 – 15:30
Next steps for MicroZAMOD: maintenance, updates, ongoing training, use. Update on the technical working group and objectives		15:30 – 16:00

Closing discussion		
Closing Remarks: Acting Executive Director, ZIPAR	Mr. Caesar Cheelo	16:00 – 16:15
End		16:30

Dependencies for attendees
- *Course attendees will need to attend from the start.*
- *Participants will be contacted by email running up to the course with information regarding the user license agreement and download of the necessary software.*
- *Participants to bring their work laptops (needed each day)*
- *Kindly be advised that the software taught at the training runs on Windows and requires the Microsoft .NET framework. We thus strongly advise using a Windows machine. In case you prefer to use Apple, you have to make sure to install Windows on your machine, using, for example, Boot Camp.*
- *The event has been designed on the assumption that attendees have no prior knowledge of MicroZAMOD but have some prior experience of quantitative analysis of survey data.*