Kamran L. Hakiman

Pittsburgh, PA USA

Email: kah411@pitt.edu — Phone: +1 615.713.8220

Education

– **University of Pittsburgh** Ph.D. Candidate, Public and International Affairs., 2022-present.
Fellowship: Agora Fellow, Center for Governance and Markets, 2024-present.
Concentration: Comparative politics, Field methods, Southeast Asia.

– **Harvard University**, Master in Public Policy, 2016-2018.
Concentration: Political and Economic Development.
Thesis: "School Management Committees in Sierra Leone: Understanding Motivation and Effectiveness in Decentralized School Management," with Christie Lowe.

– **Maryville College**, Bachelor of Arts, 2007-2011.
Major: Philosophy.

Publications

Academic

– Hakiman, Kamran and Ryan Sheely (2023). "Unlocking the Potential of Participatory Planning: How Flexible and Adaptive Governance Interventions Can Work in Practice." *Studies in Comparative International Development*, 1-38. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12116-023-09415-x.

Policy

– Hakiman, Kamran and Ryan Sheely (2023). "The Evolution of Devolution: Considerations for Scaling Local Participatory Planning in Kenya." Research Report. Washington, DC: Mercy Corps

– Hakiman, Kamran and Chloe Stull-Lane (2023). "Unravelling the Knot: Addressing Wicked Problems Through Stakeholder Engagement." Research Brief. SPARC-Knowledge.

– Bedelian, Claire, Kamran Hakiman, Ryan Sheely, and Chloe Stull-Lane (2023). "Participatory Planning in Kenya's Drylands: The Ward Development Planning Model." Research Brief. SPARC-Knowledge.

– Hakiman, Kamran, Chloe Stull-Lane (2022). "Innovation in Governance: Integrating Technical and Contextual Perspectives to Address Fragility." Research Brief. SPARC-Knowledge.

– Hakiman, Kamran and Ryan Sheely (2021). "'Living with Two Worrisome Pandemics': How the COVID-19 Pandemic is Shaping Conflict in Nigeria." Chapter 2 in *A Clash of Contagions: The Impact of COVID-19 on Conflict in Nigeria, Colombia, and Afghanistan.* Ed. Ryan Sheely, Mayesha Alam, and Adam Lichtenheld. Washington, DC: Mercy Corps.

– Hakiman, Kamran (2021). "Local Governance Amidst a Pandemic: The Role of Ward and Village Tract Administrators in Myanmar's COVID-19 Response." Research Report. Yangon, Myanmar: Mercy Corps-Myanmar. *(No longer publicly available, contact for copy).*

– Hakiman, Kamran and Ryan Sheely (2020)."Pathways to Good Governance: Supporting Changes in Norms and Behaviors Among Local Decisionmakers in Myanmar." Research Report. Mercy Corps, Washington, DC.

– Hakiman, Kamran, Kimberly Howe, and Ryan Sheely (2020)."Building Civil Society Through Humanitarian Assistance: Evidence from Investing in Syrian Humanitarian Action." Research Brief. Mercy Corps, Washington, DC.

Working Papers

– Hakiman, Kamran. (2025). "Losing Hearts and Minds: Empirical Evidence on Ethnicity and Civilian Targeting in Myanmar's Civil War." Working Paper.

– Hakiman, Kamran and Ryan Sheely. (2025). "Engineering Development: Why Physicists Shouldn't Design Cars and Social Scientists Shouldn't Design Policies." Working Paper.

Research Experience

– **Research Associate**, University of Pittsburgh, Center for Governance and Markets.
Research participatory governance interventions and democratization in Southeast Asia.

– **Researcher - Governance**, Mercy Corps, 2019-2023.
Led and designed qualitative and quantitative studies in in Myanmar, Kenya, Afghanistan, and Ethiopia. Focus on participatory planning, local governance, and democratic norms.

– **Research Assistant - Quantitative Analysis**, with Abbey Steele at University of Amsterdam, 2019-2020.
Conducted quantitative analysis of IDP migration in Colombia.

– **Graduate Researcher**, Innovations for Poverty Action, September 2017-May 2018.
Conducted a mixed-method study of school management committees in Sierra Leone. Field research including behavioral survey experiment and long-form interviews.

– **Graduate Internship**, Harvard University, Evidence for Policy Design July-August 2017.
Research aimed to address barriers to female labor participation in Saudi Arabia.

Awards and Scholarships

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– **Graduate Internship**, Harvard University, Evidence for Policy Design July-August 2017.
Research aimed to address barriers to female labor participation in Saudi Arabia.

Awards and Scholarships

– 2024-25 Agora Fellow, Center for Governance and Markets, University of Pittsburgh

– $5,000, University of Pittsburgh, Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, PhD Student Dissertation Grant, 2024-2025.

– $2,500, University of Pittsburgh, Center for Governance and Markets, pre-dissertation fieldwork, 2023.

– $8,000, Harvard University, Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation, survey experiment and fieldwork on decentralized school management in Sierra Leone, 2018.

Presentations

– *"Engineering Development: Why Physicists Shouldn't Design Cars and Social Scientists Shouldn't Design Policies."* Presented with Ryan Sheely at The Future of Development Assistance Workshop, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA, June 6, 2025.

– *"Where Is the Backlash? Quotas and Legitimacy in Age-Biased, Patriarchal Settings."* Paper presented at the American Political Science Association (APSA) Annual Meeting, 5 September 2024, with Ryan Sheely.

– "Revisiting the Fiction of Decentralization: Why and When 'Decentralization' Fails". Paper presented at Public Choice Society Conference, Dallas, TX, 15 March 2024.

– "Unlocking the Potential of Participatory Planning: How Participatory Interventions Can Work in Practice". Paper presented at International Workshop on Sustainability of Development Assistance: Problems, Prospects and Perspectives, 14 September 2023, University of Fribourg, Fribourg, Switzerland.

– "Losing Hearts and Minds: Empirical Evidence on Ethnicity and Civilian Targeting in Myanmar's Civil War". Paper presented at 3rd Penn State-University of Pittsburgh International Relations Workshop, 2 May 2024.

Organizing

– Co-organizer, *"The Future of Development Assistance"*, Center for Governance and Markets, University of Pittsburgh, June 5-6, 2025.

– Co-organizer, *"Myanmar and Southeast Asia: Challenges and Opportunities in Regional Relations"*, The Hollings Center and Center for Governance and Markets at University of Pittsburgh, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, February 9-12, 2025.

– Organizer, *"The Future of Myanmar: Local Governance and Pathways to Peace"*, Center for Governance and Markets at University of Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburgh, September 12-13, 2024.

Service

– Referee, *Journal of Institutional Economics*, 2025-Present

Professional Affiliations

– American Political Science Association

– Burmese Study Group

Skills

– Econometrics, Experimental Design, Survey Methods, Comparative Case Studies, Causal Process Tracing, Mixed Method Research

Languages and Programs

– *Advanced*: R, STATA, NVivo, Markdown
Proficient: Python, HTML, Zsh, LaTeX, Git, make

– *Native*: English
Basic: French, Myanmar Language (Burmese), Thai

Field Experience

– Saudi Arabia (Summer 2017); Sierra Leone (Winter 2017-2018); Myanmar (Summer 2019); Afghanistan (Winter 2020-2021); Kenya (Fall 2021, Spring 2023); Ethiopia (Summer 2022); Thai, Myanmar Border (Summer 2024, Winter 2024-2025)

References

– **Dr. Jennifer Murtazashvili**
  Professor and Founding Director, Center for Governance and Markets
  Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, University of Pittsburgh

– **Dr. Luke Condra**
  Professor and Associate Dean
  Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, University of Pittsburgh

– **Dr. Ryan Sheely**
  Senior Director, Evidence Use
  Mercy Corps

Reference contact information available on request.