

Development Economics Special Lecture Hosted by TIME and TIDI

"Too Poor to Save? Banking the Poor via Savings Accounts: Evidence and Challenges"

Prof. Silvia Prina

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Date: Tuesday 20 March 2018

Time: 18:00

Location: TRISS Seminar Room, 6th Floor, Arts Building, Trinity College Dublin



Abstract: Savings may provide an important pathway out of poverty, as they promote asset accumulation, and help creating a buffer against shocks and relaxing credit constraints. Increasing evidence shows that the poor are willing and able to save, but they do so largely through informal mechanisms, which have high risk, high cost, and limited functionality. The majority of the world's poor generally lack access to formal savings accounts. What are the barriers to saving in a bank account? How can they be overcome? What is the current evidence on expanding savings access to the poor? What can we learn from it to develop innovative savings products?

Speaker: Prof. Silvia Prina is Associate Professor at the Department of Economics, Case Western Reserve University. Silvia is a development economist who investigates how financial inclusion, particularly savings accounts (mobile and not) and digital credit, can affect saving and investment behaviour, networks, preferences, cognitive ability, mental health, and aspirations of the poor. She also investigates the determinants of investments in human capital and health. She works on several field experiments in Mexico and Latin America, Nepal, Tanzania, and the U.S.