

What's the Latest Research in Development Economics? A Roundup from NEUDC 2021

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This blog post is available on CGD's website, sorted by research area. This is an alternate version, sorted by geography.

Last weekend was the [North East Universities Development Consortium annual conference](#). Researchers—mostly economists—presented nearly 200 papers on topics from agriculture to COVID to marriage to microfinance. It's a great introduction to a wide range of current development economics research.

As a crash course for you (and for us), we've produced a brief takeaway from each paper. In this document, we sort those takeaways by region and country. Follow the links to jump to your region of interest: [East Asia and the Pacific](#), [Europe and Central Asia](#), [Latin America and the Caribbean](#), [Middle East and North Africa](#), [North America](#), [South Asia](#), [sub-Saharan Africa](#), and [cross-regional studies](#).

Most summaries have a hashtag indicating the method that was used (#DID = Difference-in-differences; #FE = Fixed effects; #IV = Instrumental variables; #LIF = Lab in the field; #PSM = Propensity score matching; #RCT = Randomized controlled trial; #RD = Regression discontinuity).

East Asia and the Pacific

Cambodia

- After Cambodia's World Trade Organization (WTO) accession, men in districts facing larger tariff reductions experienced a significant decline in paid employment, whereas women increased their entry into the labor force. This increased intimate partner violence, without changes in marriage, fertility, psychological distress, or household consumption. ([Erten and Keskin](#)) #FE

China

- Poorer college applicants in China are less strategic in their college priority ranking, potentially exacerbating educational inequality. ([Wang, Wang, and Ye](#))
- Rural pensions in China boosted child weight, "largely driven by grandfathers' pension receipt on grandsons." ([Yang and Chen](#)) #FE
- In China, early marriage reduces women's progressive gender role attitudes. ([Wu](#)) #IV
- Access to microcredit in rural China reduced informal borrowing and raised the value of autarky (i.e., economic self-reliance). "Program members relied less on informal financial networks for insuring against shocks when they anticipated having access to credit from the village banks." ([Cai](#)) #RCT
- The New Rural Pension Scheme (NRPS) in rural China "reduces labor supply, and the receipt of NRPS benefits lowers labor force participation by 9 percent." ([Nikolov and Wang](#)) #RD

- In China, “individuals with higher college entrance exam scores ... are less likely to create firms; however, when they do, their firms are more successful than those of their lower-score counterparts.” ([Bai et al.](#)) #FE
- In China, “historical family culture, as measured by genealogy density, is positively correlated with the share of family firms in counties.” ([Xie and Yuan](#)) #IV
- Local labor unrest in China increases allocation of Chinese foreign aid projects to large state-owned firms in the area, and employment by these firms increases. Overall, Chinese aid has positive effects on GDP, capital formation, consumption, and employment in the aid receiving country. ([Mueller](#)) #FE
- In areas with high malaria exposure, there are fewer Chinese aid projects and Chinese workers. ([Cervellati et al.](#)) #DID
- Buildings constructed when the county officials had connections to their superiors at the prefecture level (in terms of having the same hometown) were 83 percent more likely to collapse during the 2008 Sichuan earthquake relative to the no-connection benchmark. ([Cao](#)) #DID
- In China, appealing a firm’s violations of pollution standards through social media increased both regulatory oversight and firm compliance, which reduced subsequent violations by 40 percent and air and water pollution emissions by 13 percent and 4 percent, respectively. Appealing to the regulator through private channels only caused a marginal improvement in environmental outcomes. ([Buntaine et al.](#))
- Air pollution in Beijing reduces local traffic which in turn decreases restaurant revenue. ([Liu, Rahman, and Wang](#)) #IV
- Ratifying an international trademark agreement led to welfare gains in Africa (from Chinese exports). ([Kuroishi](#)) #DID
- China’s accession to the WTO (and implementation of import tariff cuts) improved female labor market conditions relative to males. It changed assortative mating patterns, improved education, and reduced women’s number of children, especially among high-skilled women. ([Luo and Zou](#)) #FE
- Following China’s accession to the World Trade Organization, Chinese cities more exposed to trade liberalization sent more students to US universities. Educational exports dampened trends in regional inequality. “Recent trade wars could cost US universities about \$1.6 bn in tuition revenue.” ([Khanna et al.](#)) #IV

Indonesia

- On a COVID-19 mutual aid platform in Indonesia, donors are more likely to give a donation when given a smaller choice set of potential beneficiaries, and they prefer to donate to self-reported breadwinners and females. ([Hilmy, Lim, and Riyanto](#)) #FE
- Unconditional cash transfers in Indonesia led recipients to be “2 to 3 percent less likely to be employed and, among those employed, 3 to 6 percent less likely to be in formal work following receipt of the transfer.” ([Pritadrajati](#)) #DID

- Despite large post-disaster reconstruction programs after the 2004 tsunami in Aceh, Indonesia, the economic status of those living in heavily damaged areas did not keep up. This is partly driven by much higher inflation rates in those areas. ([Lawton et al.](#)) #FE
- What information do community members have and use for social benefits targeting? In Purworejo, Central Java, community members use longer-term wealth information to predict dynamic welfare and to target social benefits. This may be useful in identifying long-term poverty but less so to identify short-term distress. ([Trachtman, Permana, and Sahadewo](#)) #LIF
- In Indonesia, performance appraisals of teachers reduce generosity (as proxied by willingness to make a donation to their own school) at the workplace and increase dishonest behavior, especially when appraisals are linked to financial sanctions. ([Ibanez et al.](#)) #FE
- In Mexico and Indonesia, as average heat and precipitation rise, people's aversion to risk falls. But as variation in heat and precipitation rise, aversion to risk rises. (Higher risk aversion correlates with fewer risky behaviors like smoking or migrating.) ([Howden and Levin](#)) #FE

Philippines

- A cash transfer program in the Philippines reduced non-partner domestic violence (e.g., husband's relatives), with no effect on intimate partner violence or violence outside home. Suggested mediating channels include stress reduction, increase in empowerment and bargaining power, and strengthening of social networks. ([Dervisevic, Perova, and Sahay](#)) #RD

Republic of Korea

- "Providing a free lunch to all students leads to improvements in academic achievement on average" in South Korea. ([Kim](#)) #DID
- Korea's promotion of heavy and chemical industries in the 1970s led to significant growth among targeted industries/regions. However, their total factor productivity did not grow faster because of resource misallocation across plants. ([Kim, Lee, and Shin](#)) #DID

Thailand

- In the absence of the 1997 financial crisis, "there would have been 20 percent more [bank] branches and 9.3 percent more markets [in Thailand] with at least one branch after ten years." Access to loans would have increased by 13.7 percentage points ([Rysman, Townsend, and Walsh](#)) #FE

Vietnam

- In Vietnam, "US tariff reductions led to a decrease in the likelihood of being self-employed or working in an informal business and increased employment in foreign owned firms." ([Asghar and McCaig](#)) #FE

Europe and Central Asia

France

- State-sponsored education in 19th-century France led to most people speaking the same language, with persistent impacts on national identity and preferences for political centralization. ([Blanc and Kubo](#)) #RD

Germany

- “Spanish firms have lower productivity growth...than German firms.... financial frictions account for 11% of the aggregate productivity growth difference.” ([Sui](#)) #IV

Grenada

- “Towns that shortly after the conquest” of the former Kingdom of Granada by the Catholic monarchs “were granted to nobles are relatively poorer today.” ([Oto-Peralías](#)) #FE

Russian Federation

- During 2018 election in Russia, “video monitoring reduces reported voter turnout by 5.2 percent and votes for the incumbent (autocrat) by 8.3 percent, suggesting a decrease in fraud.” ([Faikina](#)) #RD

Spain

- “Spanish firms have lower productivity growth...than German firms.... financial frictions account for 11% of the aggregate productivity growth difference.” ([Sui](#)) #IV

Latin America and the Caribbean

Argentina

- Providing students starting their senior year of high school in Argentina with information on their chances of graduating (given their current academic performance) increases timely graduation, especially for the worst performing students. ([Lopez](#)) #RCT

Brazil

- “An extra friend aspiring to go to college [in Brazil] increases the likelihood that the average student will also aspire to it by 11.39 percent.” ([Gagete-Miranda](#)) #IV
- Affirmative action for undergraduate law studies in Brazil more than doubled the chance that beneficiaries went on to become certified lawyers and employed, with no apparent negative impacts on outcomes for “applicants displaced by the policy.” ([Ribeiro and Estevan](#)) #RD
- The introduction of mobile broadband internet had no impact on children's test scores in Brazil. ([Bessone, Dahis, and Ho](#))
- A one standard deviation (SD) increase in temperature during exams in Brazil decreases the average exam score by 0.036 SD. The higher the stakes, the smaller the effects because exam takers exert more effort. ([Melo and Suzuki](#)) #FE
- In Brazil, agricultural “technological change that eliminates female jobs also increases fertility.” ([Moorthy](#)) #DID
- Slavery-intensive districts opposed emancipation in 19th century Brazil. There was “more support for emancipation where immigrants provided an alternative source of labor” and “where enslaved persons could more easily escape.” ([Seyler and Silve](#)) #IV

- In Brazil, privatized branches reduce their lending supply alongside branch closure that adversely impacts bank access, especially in less developed locations. ([Mariani](#)) #FE
- After a commodity price boom in Brazil, labor was reallocated away from agriculture towards the manufacturing sector in locations more exposed to the commodities boom. ([Laskievic](#)) #IV
- In Brazil, “municipalities more exposed to illegal mining experienced extra 8 homicides per 100,000 people” (an increase of about 20 percent) after government capacity to monitor gold laundering was reduced. ([Pereira and Pucci](#)) #DID
- In Brazil, audits increase the number of public employee hires, especially among municipalities in which audits uncovered higher corruption. Mayors hire additional employees as a form of patronage to compensate for audit-related electoral support loss. Additional hires do not positively affect public good and services provision. ([Gonzales](#)) #DID
- Candidates during 2012 and 2016 Brazilian municipal elections with an electoral advantage (i.e., frontrunners) are substantially more likely to receive a campaign attack than candidates with lower electoral ranking. ([Nakaguma and Souza](#)) #RD
- One SD increase in RecordTV, a church-affiliated TV channel in Brazil, signal strength leads to an increase of 0.9 percentage points in the share of Pentecostals. This religious adherence leads to higher fertility rates, lower female labor force participation, lower homicide rates, and more votes for Pentecostal candidates. ([Buccione and Mello](#)) #FE
- A zoning reform in urban Brazil that increased the amount of construction allowed led to a 1.4 percent increase in housing stock and a reduction in housing prices. "College educated and higher income households gain the most from the reform." ([Anagol, Ferreira, and Rexer](#)) #RD
- Reducing cost of formalizing a firm in Brazil increased the number of active formal firms by 60 percent and formal firm registration in eligible industries by 161 percent. Overall formality rate of micro entrepreneurs increased from 17 percent to 32 percent. ([De Farias and Rocha](#)) #FE
- In railroad towns in Brazil, a long historical time as a railroad endpoint predicts a large city size today. ([Barsanetti](#)) #FE #IV
- Municipalities in Brazil that fail to receive the revenues they expected from a resource discovery “suffer significant declines in per capita investment and public goods spending after ten years. In contrast, municipalities where discoveries are realized enjoy significant growth in per capita revenues and spending.” ([Katovich](#)) #DID
- After Brazil’s tariff reform in the 1990, “regions specialized in adult-specific industries had lower growth in schooling and higher increases in child labor, especially in paid works.” Results translated into persistent effects on human capital formation and a structural transformation in employment composition. ([Viaro and Nakaguma](#)) #FE

Chile

- A voucher reform that increased government subsidies for disadvantaged students in Chile actually resulted in increased fees for those students at private schools. ([Cañedo-Riedel and Sánchez](#))
- Public schools in Chile appoint more effective principals after increasing competitiveness and transparency of their selection process. ([Muñoz and Prem](#)) #DID

Colombia

- When men in Colombia “just miss the cutoff to enroll in their” preferred university major, they’re likely to retake the exam. Women, on the other hand, are more likely to “enroll in a less preferred major” right away. This difference can explain “about half of the gender-earnings gap among college-educated workers in Colombia.” ([Franco and Hawkins](#)) #RD
- When the proportion of low-income students at a Colombian university tripled, the social networks of wealthy students changed, but only a little. ([Velasco](#)) #DID
- Reparations for survivors of human rights violations in Colombia improve their lives with positive gains in wage earnings, health, and consumption. Survivors also “invest in their children’s human capital, improving college attendance and test scores.” ([Guarin Galeano](#))
- “Do agricultural producers forgo otherwise profitable investments due to civil conflict?” In Colombia, the answer is yes. Credit disbursement increases after a peace agreement due to changes in returns to investment. ([de Roux and Martínez](#)) #DID
- “Campaign contributions buy forbearance from enforcement of environmental regulations.” Deforestation in Colombia is significantly higher in municipalities that elect donor-funded as opposed to self-funded politicians. ([Harding et al.](#)) #RD

Dominican Republic

- In the Dominican Republic, 20 percent of workers who change firms move to a buyer or supplier of their original employer. Hiring firms experience strong sales and productivity growth. ([Cardoza et al.](#)) #FE

El Salvador

- An after-school curriculum to strengthen teenagers' character in three countries of Central America reduced misbehavior at school. ([Dinarte, Egana-delSol, and Martinez A.](#)) #RCT
- A 2016 non-aggression pact between gangs in El Salvador led to a large reduction in violence, but increased extortion rates by 15 percent to 20 percent. Much of the increase was passed on to retailers and consumers with observed increases in prices for pharmaceutical drugs and hospital visits for chronic illnesses. ([Brown et al.](#)) #DID

Guatemala

- An after-school curriculum to strengthen teenagers' character in three countries of Central America reduced misbehavior at school. ([Dinarte, Egana-delSol, and Martinez A.](#)) #RCT

Haiti

- Limitations of big data: Call Detail Records in Haiti fail as an alternative basis for either targeting or evaluation. Predicted outcomes are too noisy to differentiate between targeted cash transfer beneficiaries or to detect changes in food security. ([Barriga Cabanillas et al.](#)) #RD

Honduras

- An after-school curriculum to strengthen teenagers' character in three countries of Central America reduced misbehavior at school. ([Dinarte, Egana-delSol, and Martinez A.](#)) #RCT

Mexico

- In areas of Mexico with more manufacturing jobs, conditional cash transfers had less of a positive impact on education, particularly for youth old enough to work in the factories. ([Molina and Vidiella-Martin](#)) #RCT
- "A sizeable one-time-only emergency cash transfer (\$526 PPP) targeted at self-employed, sub-employed, and informal sector workers [in Mexico] during the COVID-19 pandemic" increased mental health and food security but did not increase individuals' likelihood of staying home or otherwise supporting public health policies. ([Cañedo, Fabregas, and Gupta](#)) #RD
- "Participation in Oportunidades [in Mexico] increased mothers' bargaining power by almost 24%, associated with a 20% increase in their individual welfare." ([Flores](#)) #DID
- An increase in community violence in Mexico led to a decrease in women's decision-making power. ([Hernandez-de-Benito](#))
- Adolescents in the households of return migrants in Mexico have a higher probability to attend school, and a lower probability to work or to work and attend school at the same time. ([Chakraborty](#)) #IV
- The entry of chain stores (like 7-11 or Circle-K) into Mexican neighborhoods reduced the number of neighborhood shops, but mostly from fewer newer neighborhood shops opening than usual rather than a bunch going out of business. ([Talamas Marcos](#)) #IV
- A six-month wage incentive for secondary school graduates in Mexico gets youth into the labor market sooner than they'd enter otherwise (without pulling them away from education). ([Abel et al.](#)) #RCT
- In Mexico, "combining survey and sub-area level satellite data using household-level empirical best models, while not always preferable to older census-based poverty estimates, significantly improves the accuracy and precision of survey-based estimates of monetary poverty." ([Newhouse et al.](#))
- In Mexico, partisan alignment between the municipal and federal government increased allocation of an infrastructure program, and increased misuse of federal funds only in municipalities receiving the program. ([Garfias, Lopez-Videla, and Sandholtz](#)) #RD
- In Mexico and Indonesia, as average heat and precipitation rise, people's aversion to risk falls. But as variation in heat and precipitation rise, aversion to risk rises. (Higher risk

aversion correlates with fewer risky behaviors like smoking or migrating.) ([Howden and Levin](#)) #FE

- In colonial Mexico, when the Spanish crown improved its ability to observe local economic production, the transition to direct rule increased in mining districts, leading to greater investments to improve fiscal legibility (“the ability of a central government to observe local economic conditions for the purposes of taxation, shapes political centralization”) over the long term. ([Garfias and Sellars](#)) #DID

Paraguay

- Post-war sex ratios (with fewer men) in Paraguay are “associated with higher out-of-wedlock births, more female-headed households, better female educational outcomes, higher female labor force participation, and more gender-equal gender norms.” ([Alix-Garcia et al.](#)) #FE

Peru

- An experiment in boarding schools in Peru showed that similarity increases the likelihood of friendships and proximity fosters more diverse friendships. ([Gitmez and Zárate](#)) #FE
- Districts in Peru affected by the Mining Mita (a colonial labor-coercion institution) experience more social unrest and violent conflict today. ([Huaroto and Gallego](#)) #RD

Venezuela

- Regularization of Venezuelan migrants in Colombia (with the PEP visa) led to 18 percent and 24.5 percent higher consumption and income per capita compared to other migrants. They also have access to safety nets and financial services, better labor conditions, less food insecurity and better integration in the Colombian society. ([Ibáñez et al.](#)) #RD

Middle East and North Africa

Iran

- Economic sanctions in Iran led to an overall decline in manufacturing employment growth rate by 16.4 percentage points. Effects are driven by labor-intensive industries and those that depend on imported inputs. ([Moghaddasi Kelishomi and Nisticò](#))

Lebanon

- "Living in a household experiencing food insecurity is associated with lower levels of psychological well-being" in Lebanon. ([Alloush and Bloem](#)) #IV

North America

United States

- Individuals growing up in parts of the United States with more robots “are more likely to have a Bachelor’s degree and tend to major in subjects where the prevalence of routine-related occupations is lower.” ([Carrillo and Iglesias](#)) #DID
- In the US, “unemployment among low-skilled natives and local welfare expenditure per capita increase in the short-run with low-skilled immigration, but those effects fade

through time, while voting is shifted towards republicans in the short run, but only partially attenuate.” ([Oliveira](#)) #IV

- Fast-food chains in the US may intentionally target areas with higher obesity rates: "every 1% increase in obesity rate results in 3.8-4.3 additional branch openings." ([Chopra](#)) #PSM
- A new model to simulate the “the potential impacts of automation” finds big inequality impacts: Automation “raises 2050 wages of high-skilled American workers by 28.8 percent and lowers 2050 wages of low-skilled American workers by 22.8.” ([Benzell et al.](#))
- “A decrease by one percent of the US family planning aid induces a decrease by 0.101 percent from the other donors on average.” ([Ferrière](#)) #IV
- If you start the bidding at a higher level in auctions among "commercial agricultural producers in the US," final bids end up higher. (It's what behavioral economists call "anchoring.") ([Ferraro et al.](#)) #RCT
- In US counties with historically heterogenous soil, community ties are weaker, implying that “social learning is an important determinant of social structure.” ([Raz](#)) #DID

South Asia

- Inequality between households within the same community is an important driver of inequality in women and children’s nutritional status. Sanitation infrastructure and health facility quality in South Asia matter for nutritional outcomes—but wealthier women can travel to receive better care. ([Brown et al.](#)) #FE

Bangladesh

- A large-scale home visiting intervention in Bangladesh was integrated into the national nutrition program. While service providers partly substituted away from nutrition counseling and towards early childhood development counseling, both cognitive and nutritional outcomes improved. ([Bos et al.](#)) #RCT
- Scheduling the school calendar such that exams fall during harvest season inflated dropouts among rural youth by between 6.5 and 8.4 percent in Bangladesh. ([Ito and Shonchoy](#)) #DID
- Free after-school tutoring to primary school students in rural Bangladesh boosts test scores of their peers. Targeting tutoring to students who are more socially central leads to bigger effects. ([Islam et al.](#)) #RCT
- “Over-the-phone mentoring and homeschooling support delivered by volunteers” in Bangladesh “improved the learning outcomes of treated children by 0.75 SD and increased homeschooling involvement of treated mothers by 0.64 SD.” ([Hassan et al.](#)) #RCT
- COVID-19 lockdowns in Bangladesh led to more chores for girls, and job loss among parents increased the likelihood of "marriage-related discussions" for daughters. ([Makino, Shonchoy, and Wahhaj](#))
- Among Rohingya refugees living in Bangladesh, providing counseling, psychological education, and play activities for children reduced depression, increased happiness, and boosted child development. ([Islam et al.](#)) #RCT

- Encouraging smokers in rural Bangladesh to record their tobacco expenditures led them to buy cheaper, smokeless tobacco. Showing graphic posters of the effects of tobacco reduced expenditure for more educated smokers. ([Fakir and Bharati](#)) #RCT
- Hand-hygiene ‘edutainment’ within popular dramas in Bangladesh improved handwashing and child health. ([Hussam et al.](#)) #RCT
- Do “rickshaw-pullers from Bangladesh exert more effort in their work when they have more family dependents to support?” Yes. ([Aziz](#))

India

- Attending a high-quality public “model” school in India boosts test scores in math, science, and social science. ([Kumar](#)) #RD
- Children in rural India attended school less when their families faced greater risk to their incomes, but the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGA) may offset those impacts. ([Foster and Gehrke](#)) #FE
- Exposure to arsenic-contaminated water is bad for children's health, but in India, it's especially bad for younger sisters, potentially because of pre-existing malnutrition. ([Aggarwal and Barua](#)) #IV
- Pharmacotherapy for adults in India increases investment in their children's education. ([Angelucci and Bennett](#)) #RCT
- “Within a government health insurance program that entitles 46 million poor individuals to free hospital care in Rajasthan, India ... females account for only 33% of hospital visits among children and 43% among the elderly.... In the presence of gender bias, increasing access to and subsidizing social services may increase levels of female utilization but fail to address gender inequalities without actions that specifically target females.” ([Dupas and Jain](#))
- “The current vaccination completion rate is low in states [of India] where forced sterilization was high” in the 1970s. “Places more exposed to forced sterilization in 1976-77 have higher child mortality today.” ([Sur](#)) #IV
- Providing vouchers in rural India for women to seek subsidized family planning services, either just for themselves or for them and their friends, boosted use of modern contraceptive methods. ([Anukriti, Herrera-Almanza, and Karra](#)) #RCT
- In India’s marriage market, women prefer men who have completed primary school, while men are not looking for highly educated women. ([Beauchamp, Calvi, and Fulford](#))
- Does it matter whether we discover information by ourselves or hear it from our spouse? For women in India, it’s the same. Men’s beliefs respond less than half as much to information that was discovered by their wife. Husbands put less weight on their wife’s signals even when it is “perfectly shared with them.” ([Conlon et al.](#)) #FE
- In India, mineral deposits—when it comes with sharing of mining royalties with local groups to support investment in vulnerable populations—improve women’s outcomes: “there is reduced acceptance of physical violence and women report fewer barriers to accessing healthcare.”([Guimbeau et al.](#)) #IV

- "Substantial credit creation and destruction exist at all phases of the business cycle" in India. "The annual average of gross and excess credit reallocation in India is even higher than the prior work on the U.S." ([Saini](#))
- In the 2000s in India, "banks with stronger deposit franchises significantly increased exposure to sectors characterized by long-term advances and rigid rates, whereas banks with weaker franchise increased exposure to sectors with flexible interest rates. Subsequently, banks with lower sensitivity to market interest rates have higher nonperforming loans." ([Kulkarni and Singh](#)) #DID
- Using data from India's largest job website, growing demand for machine learning skills—a proxy for the adoption of artificial intelligence—"has a direct negative impact on the total number of vacancies posted by" firms. It also reduces wages for most jobs. ([Copestake, Pople, and Stapleton](#)) #FE
- The improvement of the quality of legal courts in India has a disproportionately large impact on investment decisions of individuals from disadvantaged castes. ([Chakraborty et al.](#)) #FE
- In India, managers of firms with the same group identity (family lineage, native language, place of origin, and caste) as the board earn higher compensation. ([Aswani](#))
- While rural communities in India can solve internal collective action problems to improve production quality, they are not free from internal market frictions. ([Rao and Shenoy](#)) #DID
- A women's self-help group lending program in rural Bihar, India, reduced participation in agricultural wage labor for women from disadvantaged caste groups, while those from privileged caste groups increased their participation in self-employment. ([Surendra](#)) #DID
- In India, a mother-in-law's death reduces her daughter-in-law's labor force participation by 10 percent. ([Khanna and Pandey](#)) #FE
- In India, "job ads with a high female association use words in the job text that reflect gender stereotypes in job attributes, offer lower wages, and attract a high share of female applications." ([Chaturvedi, Mahajan, Siddique](#)) #FE
- In Pakistan and India, public officials use personal funds to complement official funding for public services, and part of these funds come from bribes. ([Aman-Rana, Minaudier, and Sukhtankar](#))
- In West Bengal, India, "areas controlled by the state's ruling party receive systematically higher welfare allocations, both in election and non-election years, and yield more votes for the ruling party in the next national election." ([Shenoy and Zimmermann](#)) #RD
- In India, "the state government channels disproportionate funds to politically-aligned jurisdictions in water-stressed areas and consequently gains votes in subsequent elections." ([Mahadevan and Shenoy](#)) #RD
- Joining a WhatsApp group organized by political parties in Tamil Nadu, India, increases political knowledge and affects political preferences towards the party affiliated by the WhatsApp group. Effects are stronger when horizontal communication between group members is enabled. ([Carney](#)) #RCT

- Providing information about criminal cases and charges of legislative candidates in India increases votes for candidates with no criminal charges and reduces votes for candidates charged for crimes. ([George, Gupta, and Neggers](#)) #FE
- In India, term-limited village presidents provide relatively fewer public goods to heavily populated streets (with many potential votes), and instead allocate more public goods to the streets of the landed elite. ([Brown, Genicot, and Kochhar](#)) #FE
- After India switched from sales tax to a value-added tax, gross sales increase by 45 percent. ([Agrawal and Zimmermann](#)) #DID #FE
- Incentives for caretakers to maintain community toilets in Indian slums led to improved quality of the facilities and more people paying the contributory fee, but also demanding even better operation and maintenance. ([Armand, Augsburg, and Bancalari](#)) #RCT
- Building a bunch of latrines in India actually made the quality of river water worse, but only in states with less sewage treatment plant capacity. ([Motohashi](#)) #DID
- A mixed team of Hindu and Muslim workers in India is less productive in high-dependency tasks, but this effect vanishes in four months. In low-dependency tasks, diversity does not affect productivity. Mixing improves out-group attitudes for Hindu workers in high-dependency tasks. ([Ghosh](#)) #RCT
- “Fuel standards and gasoline content regulations are widely adopted by policymakers to reduce urban pollution and emission.” Are consumers willing to pay for it? In China, consumers will pay 3.9 percent of the gas price for higher standards. Premium gas consumers will pay more. ([Wang, Zhou, and Zhang](#)) #DID #RD
- Entry deregulations reforms in Guangdong, China, increased firm entry by 25 percent and firm exit by 8.7 percent. Productivity of post-reform entrants is higher likely due to easing of financial constraints and more intense market competition. ([Barwick et al.](#)) #DID
- "Increased access to irrigation" in India "significantly boosts agricultural land production." ([Boudot-Reddy and Butler](#)) #RD
- In the long run, labor and capital being mobile, agricultural gains may not “generate structural change in the exact locations in which [agricultural gains] occur.” Agricultural productivity gains improve consumption and education, but there are no gains to nonfarm employment or consumption for landless households in India. ([Asher et al.](#)) #RD
- In India: “1) rural land holding concentration is higher close to urban areas and decreases with distance from urban centers, 2) the increase in land concentration near urban areas is due to fewer medium sized farmers (i.e., more small and large farmers near urban areas), and 3) the distance to urban area-land holding concentration relationship depends positively on the size of the urban area.” ([Rao, Eberhard, and Bharadwaj](#)) #FE
- Projected increases in the frequency of droughts over the next 30 years in India “will induce landowning households to allocate 2 percent more labor to agriculture and induce landless households to reduce their agricultural labor. The net effect is a 1 percent to 2 percent reduction in agricultural labor.” ([Basu](#)) #FE
- “A 10 percent decline in inter-state border frictions in India leads to welfare gains ranging between 1 percent and 8 percent across districts.” ([Panigrahi](#)) #FE

Nepal

- In Nepal, government expenditures on a year of primary or secondary school are roughly equal to the average increased taxes that someone with an additional year of schooling later pays (i.e., the fiscal externality). For tertiary education, the gains outweigh the costs. ([Bleakley and Gupta](#))
- Rural banks in Indian villages decrease informal borrowing and increase formal loans, insurance, and savings products. This reduces poverty rates and stress, and increases non-agriculture self-employment, business income, and wage income. ([Barboni, Field, and Pande](#))

Pakistan

- Cash grants to public school councils in rural Pakistan increased learning in both public and private schools. ([Andrabi et al.](#)) #RCT
- In Pakistan and India, public officials use personal funds to complement official funding for public services, and part of these funds come from bribes. ([Aman-Rana, Minaudier, and Sukhtankar](#))
- Do cotton farmers in Pakistan “learn from cultivation experience about the pest resistance of their seeds”? Not so much. It turns out that “parsing out and processing information from cultivation experience alone” is difficult. ([Ahmad](#))

Sub-Saharan Africa

- Across 28 sub-Saharan African countries over the last 30 years, "at any given time more than 10% of children ages 5-16, the majority of them girls, were living with no parent present." ([McGavock](#))
- In sub-Saharan Africa, the effect of droughts on child marriage is weaker where polygyny is more commonly practiced. ([Tapsoba](#)) #FE
- In Africa, droughts in the territory of seasonally migrant populations that herd livestock lead to conflict in neighboring areas, especially in agricultural areas and during the wet season. “Effects are muted in the presence of irrigation aid projects, but not in the presence of other forms of foreign aid.” ([McGuirk and Nunn](#)) #FE
- “The poorest districts in Africa are more likely to have better (not worse) soil quality and ... land fertility is higher in districts with worse roads.... Transportation costs are the main drivers of poverty in Africa... Isolation might turn soil quality into a curse.” ([Wantchekon et al.](#)) #IV
- By 2080, “climate change is estimated to displace 12 percent” of the population of sub-Saharan Africa and “reduce real GDP by 4 percent.” ([Conte](#)) #FE
- In the early 2000s, basic internet availability led "to about two percentage points higher economic growth" in towns across sub-Saharan Africa. ([Goldbeck and Lindlacher](#)) #DID
- Ratifying an international trademark agreement led to welfare gains in Africa (from Chinese exports). ([Kuroishi](#)) #DID

Botswana

- Phone calls and SMS messages to parents, encouraging them to support their children while schools were closed for COVID, increased learning in Botswana. ([Angrist, Bergman, and Matsheng](#)) #RCT

Burkina Faso

- A family planning campaign in Burkina Faso increased contraceptive use by 5.9 percentage points and births fell by 10 percent. ([Glennerster, Murray, and Pouliquen](#)) #RCT

Cameroon

- Can improved counseling increase willingness to pay for modern contraceptives? In Cameroon, discounts increased uptake by 50 percent while shared decision-making (i.e., better information tailored to individual needs) tripled the share of clients adopting a contraceptive at full price. ([Athey et al.](#)) #RCT

Côte d'Ivoire

- Including women in agricultural extension training for growing rubber in Côte d'Ivoire dramatically boosted investment in new crops and made it possible to maintain previous productivity on older crops. ([Donald, Goldstein, and Rouanet](#)) #RCT

Democratic Republic of the Congo

- In the DRC, high-ability tax collectors exert greater effort when matched with other high-ability collectors. Implementing the optimal assignment in terms of ability of tax collectors with (i) teams, and (ii) neighborhoods, would increase tax compliance by 37 percent relative to the status quo (random) assignment. But: governments would have to replace 62 percent of low-ability tax collectors or increase performance wages by 69 percent. ([Bergeron et al.](#)) #FE

Ethiopia

- Livestock insurance for pastoral communities in northern Kenya and southern Ethiopia decreased children's work and increased their schooling. ([Son](#)) #RCT
- A nutritional support program in Ethiopia boosted beneficiaries' emotional state and stability, although labor productivity remained unaffected. ([Park and Kim](#)) #LIF
- In Ethiopia, a legal reform that provides for more equal division of property between wives and husbands in the case of divorce leads to higher consumption levels, particularly where non-land assets are divided more equally than land assets. ([Kieran](#)) #FE
- In the Tigray region of Ethiopia, interaction with a migrant significantly improves attitudes towards them. ([Bezabih et al.](#)) #RCT
- Most firms in Ethiopia use social networks to find new employees. Subsidizing the formalization of their search (through online and physical posting of job ads) had no effect on the total vacancies that firms created, but it did lead to more “white collar, professional positions.” ([Hensel, Tekleselassie, and Witte](#)) #RCT
- “Offering part-time employment opportunities” in Ethiopia, compared to full-time employment, “attracts less able applicants, who exhibit lower productivity as measured by data entry speed and accuracy during an internship.” ([Kim, Kim, and Zhu](#)) #RCT

- Some measures of wheat quality are easily observed; others aren't. In Ethiopia, large markets only reward easily observed quality, but markets that have grain millers or farmer cooperatives on site reward hard-to-observe quality measures. ([Do Nascimento Miguel](#))

Ghana

- In Ghana, increases in staple crop price variability led to forest loss because of increased cultivation of cocoa. ([Krah](#)) #FE

Guinea Bissau

- Cashew producers in Guinea Bissau who received text messages with up-to-date market news and advice earned 21 percent more than other farmers. ([Pereira et al.](#)) #RCT

Kenya

- Livestock insurance for pastoral communities in northern Kenya and southern Ethiopia decreased children's work and increased their schooling. ([Son](#)) #RCT
- Automated, "interactive phone calls intended to encourage parents of first-graders in Kenya to read at home with their children" increased oral reading fluency by between 1.5-2 words per minute over 5 weeks. ([Esposito and Sautmann](#)) #RCT
- Performance-contingent contracts in Kenya have positive impacts on micro-distributor profits. ([Cordaro et al.](#)) #RCT

Liberia

- A female empowerment program—with psychosocial therapy and vocational skills training—in Monrovia, Liberia, reduced the share of women who experienced emotional, physical, and sexual intimate partner violence. One channel: the business training was highly effective, increasing labor supply by 37 percent. ([Sungho Park and Kumar](#)) #RCT

Malawi

- Farmers in Malawi contribute more to a soil test of someone else's land if they perceive the land to be similar to their own. ([Berazneva et al.](#)) #RCT
- A comprehensive family planning package in urban Malawi ("counseling, free transport to a clinic, and financial reimbursement for family planning services" over two years) decreased stunting by about 7 percent. Cognitive development also rose. ([Maggio, Karra, and Canning](#)) #RCT
- In Malawi, women who received targeted counseling were 15.6 percent less likely to use their stated ideal contraceptive method. With husbands present at the counselling session, women were 13.5 percent less likely to change their stated ideal method. ([Karra and Zhang](#)) #RCT
- Farmers in Malawi contribute more to a soil test of someone else's land if they perceive the land to be similar to their own. ([Berazneva et al.](#)) #RCT

Mozambique

- Mobility restrictions in colonial Mozambique led young men to marry earlier and to women of similar age. "Because smaller age disparities reduce HIV risk", "it is nearly 50 percent lower in those regions." ([Denton-Schneider](#)) #RD

- In Mozambique, while female telephone sales representatives working with M-Pesa, a leading mobile money provider in Sub-Saharan Africa, registered fewer clients with new SIM cards, they were more likely to convert these new mobile phone clients to M-Pesa, resulting in similar overall enrollments of new M-Pesa clients. ([Karra et al.](#)) #RCT
- In Tanzania and Mozambique, drought-tolerant maize seeds combined with insurance mitigated the impact of midseason drought. Farmers learned from this experience and increased future investments. ([Boucher et al.](#)) #RCT

Nigeria

- Among “maternity care workers in primary health clinics in Nigeria... both rewards and penalties increase time on task by 11 percent, overall performance by six-to-eight percent, and directly incentivized performance by twenty percent.” Performance on tasks without incentives also improved. ([Bauhoff and Kandpal](#)) #RCT
- Increasing access to digital loans in Nigeria improves subjective well-being but does not significantly impact other measures of welfare. ([Björkegren et al.](#)) #RCT

Rwanda

- Reliability matters for firm-level trading patterns. In Rwanda, ‘good firms’—exporters, multinational companies, large firms, and suppliers to exporters and other multinational companies—are considered more reliable. Reliability matters for the supply chain and supplying a multinational company increases overall seller reliability. ([Nigam and Tan](#)) #FE

Somalia

- In Somalia, female role models impact boys’ and girls’ attitudes on gender equality but not students’ aspirations to attend colleges. ([Kipchumba et al.](#)) #RCT

South Africa

- Girls receiving the Child Support Grant in South Africa were less likely to be underweight and also less likely to be obese. ([Sen and Villa](#)) #RD

Tanzania

- In Tanzania and Mozambique, drought-tolerant maize seeds combined with insurance mitigated the impact of midseason drought. Farmers learned from this experience and increased future investments. ([Boucher et al.](#)) #RCT
- Fertilizer in Tanzania is rarely adulterated. An information campaign telling farmers that the fertilizer was high quality increased fertilizer use a lot. ([Michelson, Magomba, and Maertens](#)) #RCT

Uganda

- The Ugandan COVID-19 “lockdown, one of Africa’s strictest, impacted female workers more severely than male workers by disproportionately reducing their employment rate, shifting them to economic sectors in which they are less productive, and widening the gender pay gap.” ([Alfonsi, Namubiru, and Spaziani](#))
- After a five-hour financial literacy program in rural Uganda, small business owners were more likely to have savings in their mobile money account or formal savings, and smaller outstanding loans. ([Hamdan et al.](#)) #RCT

- Household exposure to Uganda’s social pension program improves child nutrition and increases educational investment in kin-based societies. There is no impact on children in societies organized by social groups based on age, where intergenerational ties are weak. ([Moscona and Seck](#)) #DID
- A three-week mini-masters of business administration (MBA) program for Ugandan high school students had positive impacts on earnings and business profits 3.5 years later, regardless of whether the training focused on hard skills or soft skills. ([Chioda et al.](#)) #RCT
- Uber is used by drivers to buffer against adverse weather shocks: a one SD increase in the intensity of an agricultural shock in Uganda increases time online by 5.1 hours in the month of the adverse weather event (a 6 percent increase over average hours). ([Michuda](#)) #FE
- In Uganda, “higher ability managers do not avoid polluted areas, but better adapt to pollution by protecting their workers through both provision of equipment and flexibility in work schedules.” ([Bassi et al.](#)) #FE

Zambia

- A bicycle can transform a girl’s life: in Zambia, bicycle provision reduced average commuting time to school by 35 percent, late arrival by 66 percent, and decreased absenteeism by 27 percent. It also had positive effects on grade transition, math test scores, girls’ self-reported feelings of control over their lives and, “for those who received bicycles with a small cost to her family, higher levels of aspirations, self-image, and a desire to delay marriage and pregnancy.” ([Fiala et al.](#)) #RCT

Cross-regional studies

- A one SD decrease in soil moisture leads to a 2 percentage point drop in the probability of international migration from West Africa to Europe, equivalent to a 25 percent decrease in the number of international migrants. ([Martínez Flores, Milusheva, and Reichert](#)) #FE
- Evidence from 140 countries show that “epidemic exposure in an individual’s “impressionable years” (ages 18 to 25) has a persistent negative effect on confidence in political institutions and leaders, and on the public health system.” ([Eichengreen, Saka, and Aksoy](#)) #FE
- How do drug procurement processes affect price, delivery, and shipment time? Across 100+ countries, “pooling internationally is most effective for small buyers and more concentrated markets, and pooling within-country is most effective for large buyers and less concentrated markets.” ([Wang and Zahur](#)) #IV
- “Aggregate reallocation is procyclical,” which is “puzzling given the documented fact that the benefits to reallocation are countercyclical.” But “this procyclicality is entirely driven by reallocation of bundled capital.” ([Yang](#))
- A new model to simulate the “the potential impacts of automation” finds big inequality impacts: Automation “raises 2050 wages of high-skilled American workers by 28.8 percent and lowers 2050 wages of low-skilled American workers by 22.8.” ([Benzell et al.](#))

- Differences between men and women in occupational and sectoral choices and in wages are largest in poor countries and converge over the development process. ([Chiplunkar and Kleineberg](#)) #FE
- Contracts between the largest oil companies and petro-rich economies with weak institutions go through more changes later in the process (i.e., are backloaded) relative to countries with strong institutions. ([Paltseva, Toews, and Troya-Martinez](#)) #FE
- Inappropriateness of technology adapted as proxied by crop pests and pathogens mismatch reduces global agricultural productivity by 40 to 55 percent, and increases global disparities in the same by 10 to 15 percent ([Moscona and Sastry](#)) #FE
- The extinction of “megaherbivores” (i.e., really big plant-eating animals) brought on the Neolithic Revolution, when a society shifted from forging to agricultural. ([Kumagai](#)) #IV
- “The geographic prevalence of domesticable transport animals, but not of other domesticable animals, strongly predicts the emergence of early long-distance trade routes.” Much later, “at the onset of the industrial era, ethnic groups living in regions historically also home to domesticable transport animals were more involved in trade and had built more complex hierarchical structures.” ([Link](#)) #FE

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