Working Papers by Human Development Research Staff (2009 - present)

The Policy Research Working Paper Series disseminates findings of work in progress to encourage the exchange of ideas about development issues. These papers were produced by the staff and consultants of the Human Development Research Program, Development Research Group of the World Bank.

2020

Invitations, Incentives, and Conditions: A Randomized Evaluation of Demand-Side Interventions for Health Screenings in Armenia

*July 2020* – The study is a randomized controlled trial that investigates the impact of four demand-side interventions on health screening for diabetes and hypertension among Armenian adults ages 35-68 who had not been tested in the last 12 months. The interventions are personal invitations from a physician (intervention group 1), personal invitations with information about peer screening behavior (intervention group 2), a labeled but unconditional cash transfer in the form of a pharmacy voucher (intervention group 3), and a conditional cash transfer in the form of a pharmacy voucher (intervention group 4). Compared with the control group in which only 3.5 percent of participants went for both screenings during the study period, interventions 1 to 3 led to a significant increase in the screening rate of about 15 percentage points among participants. The highest intervention impact was measured among recipients in intervention group 4, whose uptake of screening on both tests increased by 31.2 percentage points. The levels of cost-effectiveness of intervention groups 1, 2, and 4 are similar while for intervention group 3 it is about twice more expensive per additional person screened.

[Working Paper 9346](#)


*July 2020* – This paper develops and estimates a dynamic model of individuals’ and couples’ labor supply, savings, and retirement decisions to analyze how the design of a privatized pension system affects gender pension gaps. Chile has one of the longest running nationwide private retirement accounts systems in the world, operating since 1980. It has served as a model for many countries and was reformed in 2008 to alleviate old-age poverty and reduce gender pension gaps. The paper estimates the dynamic model using pre-reform data and compares the model’s short-term predictions with available evidence on the reform’s causal impacts. The analysis finds that household structure is an important determinant of the behavioral and distributional impacts of the reform. The paper evaluates how actual and counterfactual changes in the pension system design affect men’s and women’s economic decisions, pension receipts, and program costs over a longer time horizon. Three design features significantly reduce gender pension gaps: expanding minimum pension benefit eligibility, providing a per-child pension bonus, and increasing women’s retirement age to be equal to men’s.

[Working Paper 9322](#)

Women in the Pipeline: A Dynamic Decomposition of Firm Pay Gaps

*June 2020* – This paper proposes a new decomposition method to understand how gender pay gaps arise within firms. The method accounts for pipeline effects, nonstationary environments, and dynamic interactions between pay gap components. This paper assembles a new data set covering all employees at the World Bank Group between 1987 and 2015 and shows that historical differences in the positions for which men and women were hired account for 77 percent of today’s average salary difference, dwarfing the roles of entry salaries, salary growth, or retention. Forward
simulations show that 20 percent of the total gap can be assigned to pipeline effects that would resolve mechanically with time.

**Working Paper 9295**

**Peer Effects on Violence: Experimental Evidence from El Salvador**

*March 2020 –* This paper provides experimental evidence of the effect of having peers with different propensities for violence in the context of an afterschool program. By randomly assigning students to participate in the program with a set of similar or diverse peers in terms of violence, the study measures the effects of segregation or integration on students' behavioral, neurophysiological, and academic outcomes. The paper also exploits a discontinuity around the median of the propensity for violence distribution, to measure the impacts of segregation on marginal students. The results indicate that integrating students with different propensities for violence is better for highly and less violent children than segregating them. In particular, the intervention can have unintended effects on misbehavior and stress, if highly violent students are segregated and treated separately from their less violent peers.

**Working Paper 9187**

**Toward Successful Development Policies: Insights from Research in Development Economics**

*January 2020 –* What major insights have emerged from development economics in the past decade, and how do they matter for the World Bank? This challenging question was recently posed by World Bank Group President David Malpass to the staff of the Development Research Group. This paper assembles a set of 13 short, nontechnical briefing notes prepared in response to this request, summarizing a selection of major insights in development economics in the past decade. The notes synthesize evidence from recent research on how policies should be designed, implemented, and evaluated, and provide illustrations of what works and what does not in selected policy areas.

**Working Paper 9133**

**2019**

**Improving Preschool Provision and Encouraging Demand: Heterogeneous Impacts of a Large-Scale Program**

*December 2019 -* This paper experimentally examines the impacts of a large-scale government program that increased the supply and quality of community preschools in rural Cambodia. The construction of new preschool facilities was paired with two demand-side interventions designed to stimulate additional enrollment into preschools. The newly constructed preschools caused an increase in enrollment rates but the demand-side interventions did not. One year after the program started, the paper finds small and significant impacts on cognitive (0.04 standard deviations) and socio-emotional development (0.09 standard deviations). The analysis shows that the cognitive impacts are driven by children from the wealthiest quartile, while the program had limited impacts on children from the poorest families. The effects on cognitive development increased after two years for the wealthiest (the cognitive gap widened) while the effects on socio-emotional development faded out across the board. Using detailed classroom surveys and in-class observations, the paper shows that the program had large impacts on the quality of preschool infrastructure and materials but only limited impacts the quality of educational processes -- the results therefore suggest that further improvement of those processes might be needed to foster the development of disadvantaged children.

**Working Paper 9070**

**Multilingual Assessment of Early Child Development: Analyses from Repeated Observations of Children in Kenya**

*September 2019 -* In many low- and middle-income countries, young children learn a mother tongue or indigenous language at home before entering the formal education system where they will need to
understand and speak a country’s official language(s). Thus, assessments of children before school age, conducted in a nation’s official language, may not fully reflect a child’s development, underscoring the importance of test translation and adaptation. To examine differences in vocabulary development by language of assessment, this study adapted and validated instruments to measure developmental outcomes, including expressive and receptive vocabulary. This study assessed 505 children ages 2 to 6 in rural communities in Western Kenya with comparable vocabulary tests in three languages: Luo (the local language or mother tongue), Swahili, and English (official languages) at two time points, five to six weeks apart, between September 2015 and October 2016. Younger children responded to the expressive vocabulary measure exclusively in Luo much more frequently than did older children: 44–59 percent of those ages 2 to 4, compared to 20–21 percent of those ages 5 to 6. Baseline receptive vocabulary scores in Luo and Swahili were strongly associated with receptive vocabulary in English at follow-up, even after controlling for English vocabulary at baseline: a multivariate regression of follow-up English vocabulary on standardized measures of receptive vocabulary in all three languages yields an estimate, for Luo, of $\beta = 0.26$, $SE = 0.05$, $p < 0.001$; and for Swahili, $\beta = 0.10$, $SE = 0.05$, $p = 0.032$. The study also found that parental Luo literacy at baseline was associated with child English vocabulary at follow-up, while parental English literacy at baseline was not: a multivariate regression on both measures, along with household controls, yielded, for Luo, $\beta = 0.11$, $SE = 0.05$, $p = 0.045$; the coefficient on English was not statistically significantly distinguishable from zero ($p=0.18$). The findings suggest that multilingual testing is essential to understanding the developmental environment and cognitive growth of multilingual children.

**Incentivizing Quantity and Quality of Care: Evidence from an Impact Evaluation of Performance-Based Financing in the Health Sector in Tajikistan**

*July 2019* - This paper presents the results of an impact evaluation of a performance-based financing pilot in rural areas of two regions of Tajikistan. Primary care facilities were given financial incentives conditional on general quality and the quantity provided of selected services related to reproductive, maternal and child health, and hypertension-related services. The study relies on a difference-in-difference design and large-scale household and facility-based surveys conducted before the launch of the pilot in 2015 and after three years of implementation. The performance-based financing pilot had positive impacts on quality of care. Significant impacts are measured on facility infrastructure, infection prevention and control standards, availability of equipment and medical supplies, provider competency, provider satisfaction, and even some elements of the content of care, measured through direct observations of provider-patient interactions. While the communities in the performance-based financing districts reported higher satisfaction with the local primary care facilities, and despite the improvements in quality, the findings suggest moderate effects on utilization: among the incentivized utilization indicators, only timely postnatal care and blood pressure measurements for adults were significantly impacted.

**The 2019 Update of the Health Equity and Financial Protection Indicators Database: An Overview**

*June 2019* - This paper outlines changes that have been made in the 2019 version of the Health Equity and Financial Protection Indicators database. On the financial protection side, the changes include an increase in the number of indicators from five to 14; revisions to several previous data points, reflecting the analysis of new surveys (or adaptations thereof); and refinements to the estimation of out-of-pocket expenditures. On the health equity side, the 2019 database includes 198 more data points than the 9,733 in the 2018 database, reflecting the addition of 535 new datapoints,
and the dropping of 337 previously included data points now considered to be substandard.

**Preventing Violence in the Most Violent Contexts: Behavioral and Neurophysiological Evidence**

*May 2019* - This paper provides experimental evidence of the impact of an after-school program on vulnerable public-school students in El Salvador. The program combined a behavioral intervention with ludic activities for students aged 10-16 years old. The authors hypothesize that it affects violence, misbehaviors, and academic outcomes by modulating emotional regulation or automatic reactions to external stimuli. Results indicate the program reduced reports of bad behavior and school absenteeism while increasing students’ grades. Neurophysiological results suggest that the impacts on behavior and academic performance are driven by the positive effects of the program on emotional regulation. Finally, the study finds positive spillover effects for untreated children.

**The Lost Human Capital: Teacher Knowledge and Student Achievement in Africa**

*May 2019* - In many low-income countries, teachers do not master the subject they are teaching, and children learn little while attending school. Using unique data from nationally representative surveys of schools in seven Sub-Saharan African countries, this paper proposes a methodology to assess the effect of teacher subject content knowledge on student learning when panel data on students are not available. The paper shows that data on test scores of the student's current and the previous year’s teachers, and knowledge of the correlation structure of teacher knowledge across time and grades, allow estimating two structural parameters of interest: the contemporaneous effect of teacher content knowledge, and the extent of fade out of teacher impacts in earlier grades. The paper uses these structural estimates to understand the magnitude of teacher effects and simulate the impacts of various policy reforms. Shortfalls in teachers’ content knowledge account for 30 percent of the shortfall in learning relative to the curriculum, and about 20 percent of the cross-country difference in learning in the sample. Assigning more students to better teachers would potentially lead to substantial cost-savings, even if there are negative class-size effects. Ensuring that all incoming teachers have the officially mandated effective years of education, along with increasing the time spent on teaching to the officially mandated schedule, could almost double student learning within the next 30 years.

**Replication Redux: The Reproducibility Crisis and the Case of Deworming**

*April 2019* - In 2004, a landmark study showed that an inexpensive medication to treat parasitic worms could improve health and school attendance for millions of children in many developing countries. Eleven years later, a headline in the Guardian reported that this treatment, deworming, had been "debunked." The pronouncement followed an effort to replicate and re-analyze the original study, as well as an update to a systematic review of the effects of deworming. This story made waves amidst discussion of a reproducibility crisis in some of the social sciences. This paper explores what it means to "replicate" and "reanalyze" a study, both in general and in the specific case of deworming. The paper reviews the broader replication efforts in economics, then examines the key findings of the original deworming paper in light of the "replication," "reanalysis," and "systematic review." The paper also discusses the nature of the link between this single paper’s findings, other papers’ findings, and any policy recommendations about deworming. This example provides a perspective on the ways replication and reanalysis work, the strengths and weaknesses of systematic reviews, and whether there is, in fact, a reproducibility crisis in economics.

**Inequality in the Quality of Health Services: Wealth, Content of Care, and Price of Antenatal Consultations in the Democratic Republic of Congo**
April 2019 - Using unique direct observations of patient-provider interactions linked to patient exit interviews and detailed household surveys, this paper assesses the relationship between patient wealth and the quality and price of antenatal care in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Overall, the analysis finds a significant wealth-quality gradient, with a standard deviation increase in wealth being associated with an increase of 4 percentage points in protocol compliance. This increase in compliance represents 8 percent of the average quality of care received by women in the lowest wealth quintile. Over half of the wealth-quality gradient is driven by lower facility quality in poorer areas. However, the analysis also finds statistically significant within-village and even within-facility wealth-quality relationships. Within villages, wealth-quality gradients are primarily driven by wealthier women seeking care at higher-quality even if more distant facilities. Within the same facilities, poorer women tend to receive worse care, but on average they also pay less for the same quality of care compared with wealthier women. The price gap increases in the local ratio of wealthy to poor households, suggesting that providers do not charge different prices only for redistributive reasons.

Working Paper 8818

Out-of-Pocket Expenditures on Health: A Global Stocktake

April 2019 - This paper provides an overview of research on out-of-pocket health expenditures, reviewing the various summary measures and the results of multi-country studies using these measures. The paper presents estimates for 146 countries from all World Bank income groups for all summary measures, along with correlations between the summary measures and macroeconomic and health system indicators. Large differences emerge across countries in per capita out-of-pocket expenditures in 2011 international dollars, driven in large part by differences in per capita income and the share of gross domestic product spent on health. The two measures of dispersion or risk -- the coefficient of variation and Q90/Q50 -- are only weakly correlated across countries and not explained by the macroeconomic and health system indicators. Considerable variation emerges in the out-of-pocket health expenditure budget share, which is highly correlated with the incidence of "catastrophic" expenditures. Out-of-pocket expenditures tend to be regressive and catastrophic expenditures tend to be concentrated among the poor when expenditures are assessed relative to income, while expenditures tend to be progressive and catastrophic expenditures tend to be concentrated among the rich when expenditures are assessed relative to consumption. At the extreme poverty line of $1.90-a-day, most impoverishment due to out-of-pocket expenditures occurs among low-income countries.

Working Paper 8808

Enhancing Young Children’s Language Acquisition through Parent-Child Book-Sharing: A Randomized Trial in Rural Kenya

February 2019 - Worldwide, 250 million children under five (43 percent) are not meeting their developmental potential because they lack adequate nutrition and cognitive stimulation in early childhood. Several parent support programs have shown significant benefits for children's development, but the programs are often expensive and resource intensive. The objective of this study was to test several variants of a potentially scalable, cost-effective intervention to increase cognitive stimulation by parents and improve emergent literacy skills in children. The intervention was a modified dialogic reading training program that used culturally, and linguistically appropriate books adapted for a low-literacy population. The study used a cluster randomized controlled trial with four intervention arms and one control arm in a sample of caregivers (n = 357) and their 24- to 83- month-old children ages 24 to 83 months (n = 510) in rural Kenya. The first treatment group received storybooks, while the other treatment arms received storybooks paired with varying quantities of modified dialogic reading training for parents. The main effects of each arm of the trial were examined, and tests of heterogeneity were conducted to examine differential effects among
children of illiterate versus literate caregivers. Parent training paired with the provision of culturally appropriate children’s books increased reading frequency and improved the quality of caregiver-child reading interactions among preschool-age children. Treatments involving training improved storybook-specific expressive vocabulary. The children of illiterate caregivers benefited at least as much as the children of literate caregivers. For some outcomes, the effects were comparable; for other outcomes, there were differentially larger effects for children of illiterate caregivers.

Working Paper 8733

2018

Encouraging Service Delivery to the Poor: Does Money Talk When Health Workers Are Pro-Poor?

December 2018 - Do service providers respond to pecuniary incentives to serve the poor? Service delivery to the poor is complicated by the extra effort required to deliver services to them and the intrinsic incentives of service providers to exert this effort. Incentive schemes typically fail to account for these complications. A lab-in-the-field experiment with nearly 400 health workers in rural Burkina Faso provides strong evidence that the interaction of effort costs, ability, and intrinsic and extrinsic incentives significantly influences service delivery to the poor. Health workers reviewed video vignettes of medical cases involving poor and nonpoor patients under a variety of bonus schemes. Bonuses to serve the poor have less impact on effort than bonuses to serve the nonpoor; health workers who receive equal bonuses to serve poor and nonpoor patients see fewer poor patients than workers who receive only a flat salary; and bonuses operate largely through their influence on the behavior of pro-poor workers. The paper also presents novel evidence on the selection effects of contract type: pro-poor workers prefer the flat salary contract to the variable salary contract.

Working Paper 8666

Can Information Influence the Social Insurance Participation Decision of China's Rural Migrants?

November 2018 - This paper uses a randomized information intervention to shed light on whether poor understanding of social insurance, both the process of enrolling and costs and benefits, drives the relatively low rates of participation in urban health insurance and pension programs among China’s rural-urban migrants. Among workers without a contract, the information intervention has a strong positive effect on participation in health insurance and, among younger age groups, in pension programs. Migrants are responsive to price: in cities where the premiums are low relative to earnings, information induces health insurance participation, while declines are observed in cities with high relative premiums.

Working Paper 8658

Catastrophic Medical Expenditures: Reflections on Three Issues

November 2018 - There is a large empirical literature analyzing 'catastrophic' medical expenses. The 'basic' approach defines expenses as catastrophic if they exceed a prespecified percentage of total consumption or income; the approach, in effect, tells us whether expenses cause a large percentage reduction in living standards. An alternative 'ability-to-pay approach' defines expenses as catastrophic if they exceed a prespecified percentage of consumption or income less actual expenses on nonmedical necessities or an allowance for them. This paper argues that this approach does not, contrary to what is sometimes claimed, tell us whether expenses are large enough to undermine a household's ability to purchase nonmedical necessities. The paper also compares the income- and
consumption-based variants of the 'basic' approach, showing that if the individual is a borrower after a health shock, the income-based ratio will exceed the consumption-based ratio, while the opposite is true when the individual continues to be a saver after a health shock. The paper also explores the relationship between the income- and consumption-based ratios and the more theoretically correct ratio proposed by Flores et al. It shows that if the individual is a borrower after a health shock, both the consumption- and income-based ratios will exceed the Flores et al. ratio, with the income-based ratio overestimating it by more, while in the case when the individual continues to be a saver after a health shock, the income-based ratio will overestimate Flores et al.'s ratio by less and may not overestimate it at all. Last, the paper proposes a lifetime money metric utility approach that defines medical expenses as catastrophic in terms of their lifetime (rather than single-period) consequences. It shows that under certain assumptions, the money-metric utility approach and the Flores et al. approaches are identical, and both are operationalizable without data on how households finance their medical expenses.

Working Paper 8651

The 2018 Health Equity and Financial Protection Indicators Database: Overview and Insights October 2018 - The 2018 database on Health Equity and Financial Protection indicators provides data on equity in the delivery of health service interventions and health outcomes, and on financial protection in health. This paper provides a brief history of the database, gives an overview of the contents of the 2018 version of the database, and then gets into the details of the construction of its two sides -- the health equity side and the financial protection side. The paper also provides illustrative uses of the database, including the extent of and trends in inequity in maternal and child health intervention coverage, the extent of inequities in women’s cancer screening and inpatient care utilization, and trends and inequalities in the incidence of catastrophic health expenditures.

Working Paper 8577

Does Exposure to Other Ethnic Regions Promote National Integration? Evidence from Nigeria October 2018 - This paper examines how temporary migration to a different ethnic region affects national integration. It uses original survey data from individuals who were randomly exposed to different ethnic regions of Nigeria during their mandatory national service, the largest program of its kind in Africa. Comparing participants who served in a state where they are the ethnic majority to those who served in a state where they are not indicates two concurrent effects. First, interethnic exposure creates a stronger connection to the country as a whole: exposed participants have greater national pride and more positive attitudes about Nigeria, they are more knowledgeable about other parts of the country, and they are four times as likely to be living outside their ethnic region seven years later. Second, consistent with social identity theory, immersion in a different ethnic region highlights distinctions between groups and reinforces participants’ connection to their ethnic group: exposed participants have more positive attitudes toward their own ethnic group, but not others, and are more likely to have all their closest friends from their ethnic group.

Working Paper 8606

Learning-Adjusted Years of Schooling (LAYS) : Defining A New Macro Measure of Education September 2018 - The standard summary metric of education-based human capital used in macro analyses—the average number of years of schooling in a population—is based only on quantity. But ignoring schooling quality turns out to be a major omission. As recent research shows, students in different countries who have completed the same number of years of school often have vastly different learning outcomes. This paper therefore proposes a new summary measure, Learning-Adjusted Years of Schooling (LAYS), that combines quantity and quality of schooling into a single easy-to-understand
metric of progress. The cross-country comparisons produced by this measure are robust to different ways of adjusting for learning (for example, by using different international assessments or different summary learning indicators), and the assumptions and implications of LAYS are consistent with other evidence, including other approaches to quality adjustment. The paper argues that (1) LAYS improves on the standard metric, because it is a better predictor of important outcomes, and it improves incentives for policymakers; and (2) its virtues of simplicity and transparency make it a good candidate summary measure of education.

Working Paper 8591

Long-term impacts of alternative approaches to increase schooling: evidence from a scholarship program in Cambodia

August 2018 - This paper reports on a randomized experiment to investigate the long-term effects of a primary school scholarship program in rural Cambodia. In 2008, fourth-grade students in 207 randomly assigned schools (103 treatment, 104 control) received scholarships... See More + This paper reports on a randomized experiment to investigate the long-term effects of a primary school scholarship program in rural Cambodia. In 2008, fourth-grade students in 207 randomly assigned schools (103 treatment, 104 control) received scholarships based on the students' academic performance in math and language or their level of poverty. Three years after the program's inception, an evaluation showed that both types of scholarship recipients had more schooling than nonrecipients; however, only merit-based scholarships led to improvements in cognitive skills. This new study reports impacts, nine years after program inception, on the educational attainment, cognitive skills, socioemotional outcomes, socioeconomic status and well-being, and labor market outcomes of individuals who are, on average, 21 years old. The results show that both types of scholarships led to higher long-term educational attainment (about 0.21-0.29 grade level), but only merit-based scholarships led to improvements in cognitive skills (0.11 standard deviation), greater self-reported well-being (0.18 standard deviation), and employment probability (3.4 percentage points). Neither type of scholarship increased socioemotional skills. The results also suggest that there are labeling effects: the impacts of the scholarship types differ even for individuals with similar characteristics.

Working Paper 8566

Upping the ante: the equilibrium effects of unconditional grants to private schools

August 2018 - This paper tests for financial constraints as a market failure in education in a low-income country. In an experimental setup, unconditional cash grants are allocated to one private school or all private schools in a village. Enrollment increases in both... See More + This paper tests for financial constraints as a market failure in education in a low-income country. In an experimental setup, unconditional cash grants are allocated to one private school or all private schools in a village. Enrollment increases in both treatments, accompanied by infrastructure investments. However, test scores and fees only increase in the setting of all private schools along with higher teacher wages. This differential impact follows from a canonical oligopoly model with capacity constraints and endogenous quality: greater financial saturation crowds-in quality investments. The findings of higher social surplus in the setting of all private schools, but greater private returns in the setting of one private school underscore the importance of leveraging market structure in designing educational subsidies.

Working Paper 8563

Nutrition, religion, and widowhood in Nigeria

August 2018 - It is known that Muslim women in Nigeria have significantly worse nutritional status than their Christian counterparts. The paper first shows that this difference is explained by covariates including geographic location, ethnicity, household wealth, and... See More + It is known
that Muslim women in Nigeria have significantly worse nutritional status than their Christian counterparts. The paper first shows that this difference is explained by covariates including geographic location, ethnicity, household wealth, and women’s education. However, on accounting for observable characteristics, Muslim widows enjoy a higher nutritional status than Christian widows, particularly in rural areas. The patterns are robust to including village fixed effects and are confirmed for mixed religion ethnic groups. The data are consistent with more favorable processes following widowhood among Muslims, namely inheritance practices and remarriage options. Data on inheritance and violence patterns by religion confirm that Muslim widows are significantly less likely to be dispossessed of their late husband’s property or to be mistreated upon widowhood by in-laws. Muslim women are more likely to be chronically undernourished but less nutritionally vulnerable to this marital shock.

**Working Paper 8549**

**The aggregate income losses from childhood stunting and the returns to a nutrition intervention aimed at reducing stunting**

*August 2018* - This paper undertakes two calculations, one for all developing countries, the other for 34 developing countries that together account for 90 percent of the world’s stunted children. The first calculation asks how much lower a country’s per capita income... See More + This paper undertakes two calculations, one for all developing countries, the other for 34 developing countries that together account for 90 percent of the world’s stunted children. The first calculation asks how much lower a country's per capita income is today as a result of some of its workers having been stunted in childhood. The analysis uses a development accounting framework, relying on microeconometric estimates of the effects of childhood stunting on adult wages, through the effects on years of schooling, cognitive skills, and height, parsing out the relative contribution of each set of returns to avoid double counting. The estimates show that, on average, the per capita income penalty from stunting is around 7 percent. The second calculation estimates the economic value and the costs associated with scaling up a package of nutrition interventions using the same methodology and set of assumptions used in the first calculation. The analysis considers a package of 10 nutrition interventions for which data are available on the effects and costs. The estimated rate-of-return from gradually introducing this program over a period of 10 years in the 34 countries is 17 percent, and the corresponding benefit-cost ratio is 15:1.

**Working Paper 8536**

**Joint Effects of Parenting and Nutrition Status on Child Development: Evidence from Rural Cambodia**

*July 2018* - Substantial work has demonstrated that early nutrition and home environments, including the degree to which children receive cognitive stimulation and emotional support from parents, play a profound role in influencing early childhood development. Yet, less work has documented the joint influences of parenting and nutrition status on child development among children in the preschool years living in low-income countries. Using panel data on parenting, nutrition status, and early developmental outcomes of about 7,000 Cambodian preschool-age children, this paper demonstrates that inequities in early development associated with family wealth are evident at the start of preschool and increase over time. A significant share of these inequalities can be explained by differences in parental stimulation and early nutrition status. Better educated parents engage in better parental activities that stimulate children’s development. However, the positive association between parental activities and child outcomes is particularly strong for non-stunted children, and parental activities can only explain about 8-14 percent of the cognitive gap between the lowest and highest wealth quintiles. The results highlight the need for integrated interventions that address both parenting and early nutrition, also suggesting that parenting interventions for the most disadvantaged families should be carefully designed and evaluated to ensure maximum effectiveness.
Incentivizing School Attendance in the Presence of Parent-Child Information Frictions

*June 2018* - Education conditional cash transfer programs may increase school attendance in part due to the information they transmit to parents about their child's attendance. This paper presents experimental evidence that the information content of an education conditional cash transfer program, when given to parents independently of any transfer, can have a substantial effect on school attendance. The effect is as large as 75 percent of the effect of a conditional cash transfer incentivizing parents, and not significantly different from it. In contrast, a conditional transfer program incentivizing children instead of parents is nearly twice as effective as an "information only” treatment providing the same information to parents about their child’s attendance. Taken together, these results suggest that children have substantial agency in their schooling decisions. The paper replicates the findings from most evaluations of conditional cash transfers that gains in attendance achieved by incentivizing parents financially do not translate into gains in test scores. But it finds that both the information only treatment and the alternative intervention incentivizing children substantially improve math test scores.

Motivating Bureaucrats through Social Recognition: Evidence from Simultaneous Field Experiments

*June 2018* - Bureaucratic performance is a crucial determinant of economic growth. Little is known about how to improve it in resource-constrained settings. This study describes a field trial of a social recognition intervention to improve record keeping in clinics in two Nigerian states, replicating the intervention -- implemented by a single organization -- on bureaucrats performing identical tasks in both states. Social recognition improved performance in one state but had no effect in the other, highlighting both the potential and the limitations of behavioral interventions. Differences in observables did not explain cross-state differences in impacts, however, illustrating the limitations of observable-based approaches to external validity.

Gendered Language

*June 2018* - Languages use different systems for classifying nouns. Gender languages assign many -- sometimes all -- nouns to distinct sex-based categories, masculine and feminine. Drawing on a broad range of historical and linguistic sources, this paper constructs a measure of the proportion of each country's population whose native language is a gender language. At the cross-country level, this paper documents a robust negative relationship between the prevalence of gender languages and women's labor force participation. It also shows that traditional views of gender roles are more common in countries with more native speakers of gender languages. In African countries where indigenous languages vary in terms of their gender structure, educational attainment and female labor force participation are lower among those whose native languages are gender languages. Cross-country and individual-level differences in labor force participation are large in both absolute and relative terms (when women are compared to men), suggesting that the observed patterns are not driven by development or some unobserved aspect of culture that affects men and women equally. Following the procedures proposed by Altonji, Elder, and Taber (2005) and Oster (2017), this paper shows that the observed correlations are unlikely to be driven by unobservables. Using a permutation test based on the structure of the language tree and the distribution of languages across countries, this paper demonstrate that the results are not driven by spurious correlations within
language families. Gender languages appear to reduce women's labor force participation and perpetuate support for unequal treatment of women.

**Technology, Taxation, and Corruption: Evidence from the Introduction of Electronic Tax Filing**

*May 2018* - Many e-government initiatives introduce technology to improve efficiency and avoid potential human bias. Electronic tax filing (e-filing) is an important example, as developing countries increasingly adopt online submission of tax declarations to replace in-person submission to tax officials. This paper examines the impact of e-filing on compliance costs, tax payments, and bribe payments using experimental variation and data from Tajikistan firms. Firms that e-file have lower compliance costs, spending five fewer hours each month on fulfilling tax obligations. There are no significant average effects of e-filing on tax or bribe payments, but significant heterogeneity exists across firms by their baseline likelihood of tax evasion. Among firms previously more likely to evade, e-filing doubles tax payments, likely by disrupting collusion with officials. Conversely, among firms less likely to have been evading, e-filing reduces tax payments, suggesting that officials had previously required them to pay more. These firms also pay fewer bribes, as e-filing reduces opportunity for extortion. In all, the results indicate that e-filing reduces compliance costs and makes the distribution of tax payments across firms arguably more equitable.

**The Use of Financial Incentives to Prevent Undesirable Behaviors**

*May 2018* - Behaviors that are putting people's health and well-being at risk are widespread in the developing world and some of them, like smoking and unhealthy diets, are on the rise. Some of these behaviors can be prohibited or prevented by taxation. But financial incentives such as conditional cash transfers are also increasingly proposed and tested to discourage such behaviors, in domains as varied as HIV/AIDS, drugs, alcohol, smoking, obesity, or early marriage prevention. This paper presents the theoretical justification for using such incentives, distinguishing between the price, income effects, and the nudge effects. The growing literature about the effectiveness of financial incentives to prevent undesirable behaviors is reviewed in detail for each type of harmful behavior. Finally, the paper discusses the long-term sustainability of such incentives, a key issue if they are to be scaled up beyond pilot programs and research projects. The current evidence on whether such incentives have an impact after they are discontinued is mixed. Some design features, like lotteries or commitment devices, could induce savings as well as increase effectiveness, therefore improving sustainability.

**Unemployment and Violent Extremism: Evidence from Daesh Foreign Recruits**

*March 2018* - Transnational terrorist organizations such as the Islamic State group (also known as ISIS/ISIL or Daesh) have shown an ability to attract radicalized individuals from many countries to join their ranks. Using a novel data set that reports countries of residence and educational levels of a large sample of Daesh's foreign recruits, this paper finds that a lack of economic opportunities -- measured by unemployment rates disaggregated by country and education level -- explains foreign enrollment in the terrorist organization, especially for countries that are geographically closer to the Syrian Arab Republic.
Children
March 2018 - Cash transfer programs may generate significant general equilibrium effects that can detract from the anti-poverty goals of the program. Data from a randomized evaluation of a Philippine cash transfer program targeted to poor households show that a 9 percent increase in village income significantly raised the prices of perishable protein-rich foods while leaving other food prices unaffected. The price changes are largest in areas with the highest program saturation, where the shock to village income is on the order of 15 percent and persists more than 2.5 years after program introduction. Although significantly improving nutrition related outcomes among beneficiary children, the cash transfer worsened those same indicators among non-beneficiary children. The stunting rate of young non-beneficiary children increased by eleven percentage points, with even greater increases in the most saturated areas. Another potentially related spillover arises in local health markets: formal health care utilization by mothers and children also declined among non-beneficiary households. Failing to consider such local general equilibrium effects can overstate the net benefit of targeted cash transfers. In areas where individual targeting of social programs covers the majority of households, offering the program on a universal basis should avoid such negative impacts at little additional cost.

Working Paper 8377

Love the Job... or the Patient? Task vs. Mission-Based Motivations in Health Care
February 2018 - A booming literature has argued that mission-based motives are a central feature of mission-oriented labor markets. This paper shifts the focus to task-based motivation and finds that it yields significantly more effort than mission-based motivation. Moreover, in the presence of significant task motivation, mission motivation has no additional effect on effort. The evidence emerges from experiments with nearly 250 medical and nursing students in Burkina Faso. The students exert effort in three tasks, from boring to interesting. In addition, for half of the students, mission motivation is present: their effort on the task generates benefits for a charity. Two strong results emerge. First, task motivation has an economically important effect on effort, more than doubling effort. Second, mission motivation increases effort, but only for mundane tasks and not when the task is interesting. Moreover, even for mundane tasks, the effects of mission motivation appear to be less than those of task motivation.

Working Paper 8338

Marital shocks and women’s welfare in Africa
January 2018 - Marital shocks are exceedingly common for women in Sub-Saharan Africa. The paper investigates whether women who have suffered a marital rupture experience lower welfare levels relative to married women in their first union. Conditional means for women’s nutritional status are compared by marital status across 20 countries. Overall, the results indicate significantly lower nutritional status for Africa’s widows and divorces between ages 15 and 49. With some exceptions, this is found to be the case with country and household fixed effects and controls for HIV status. However, looking at country-specific associations underlines that disadvantage is by no means universal.

Working Paper 8306

2017

The Effect of Height on Earnings: Is Stature Just a Proxy for Cognitive and Non-Cognitive Skills?
November 2017 - This study investigates the degree to which the association of height and earnings in Pakistan is independent of other cognitive and socioemotional skills. While taller workers are
regularly observed to earn more, they commonly have higher cognitive ability. Thus, there is debate concerning the independent contribution of stature. The study explores the relationship between height and earnings when a measure of cognitive ability -- performance on Raven's matrices -- and an index of socioemotional capacity are included. The study finds that there is only modest attenuation of the coefficient of height—treated as endogenous or exogenous—when these additional indicators of human capital are included.

Working Paper 8254

Marital Trajectories and Women's Well-Being in Senegal
October 2017 - Divorce and widowhood succeeded by remarriage are common for women in Africa. A key question is how such discontinuous marital trajectories affect women's well-being. Women's marital trajectories in Senegal are described and correlated with measures of voice, resource constraints, and consumption welfare. Considerable selection into divorce and widowhood as well as subsequent remarriage is documented. Poorer women are more vulnerable to dissolutions and remarriage and hence bear more of the costs while being nevertheless afforded a safety net in the form of a male protector. Marital breakdowns and their aftermaths have far from neutral effects on women's well-being.

Working Paper 8230

Looking into the performance-based financing black box: evidence from an impact evaluation in the health sector in Cameroon
August 2017 - Performance-based financing is a complex health system intervention aimed at improving coverage and quality of care. This paper presents the results of an impact evaluation in Cameroon that seeks to isolate the role of specific components of the performance-based financing approach on outcomes of interest, such as explicit financial incentives linked to results, additional resources available at the point of service delivery (not linked to performance), and enhanced supervision, coaching, and monitoring. Four evaluation groups were established to measure the effects of each component that was studied. In general, the results indicate that performance-based financing in Cameroon is an efficient mechanism to channel payments and funding to the provider level, leading to significant increases in utilization in the performance-based financing arm for several services (child and maternal vaccinations and use of modern family planning), but not for others, such as antenatal care visits and facility-based deliveries. However, for many of those outcomes, the differences between the performance-based financing group and the additional financing group are not significant. In terms of quality, performance-based financing was found to have a significant impact on the availability of essential inputs and equipment, qualified health workers, reduction in formal and informal user fees, and increased satisfaction among patients and providers. However, there was a clear effect of additional financing, irrespective of whether it was linked to incentives, in combination with reinforced supervision through performance-based financing. This result suggests that enhanced supervision and monitoring on their own are not sufficient to improve maternal and child health outcomes.

Working Paper 8162

Is consanguinity an impediment to improving human development outcomes?
May 2017 - This paper uses unique data collected in rural Pakistan to assess the extent to which consanguinity, which is widespread in North Africa, Central and West Asia, and most parts of South Asia, is linked to child cognitive ability and nutritional status. As economic benefits of marrying cousins may lead to upward bias in estimates of the effects of consanguinity on child outcomes, prior work likely underestimates the negative impacts of consanguinity on child outcomes. This paper finds that children born into consanguineous marriages have lower test scores, lower height-for-age,
and a higher likelihood of being severely stunted. After controlling for current household wealth and parent education, the effects of endogenous consanguinity on child cognitive ability and height-for-age are identified by (current and past) grandfather land ownership and maternal grandparent mortality as instruments for consanguineous marriage of parents.

Working Paper 8074

Effect of stress on later-life health: evidence from the Vietnam war draft
May 2017 - A substantial literature has examined the impact of stress during the early stages of life on later-life health. This paper contributes to that literature by examining the later-life health impact of stress during adolescence and early adulthood, using a novel proxy for stress: risk of military induction in the United States during the Vietnam War. The paper estimates that a 10 percentage point (2 standard deviation) increase in induction risk in young adulthood is associated with a 1.5 percentage point (8 percent) increase in the probability of being obese, and a 1 percentage point (10 percent) increase in the probability of being in fair or poor health later in life. These findings do not appear to be due to cohort effects; the associations exist only for men who did not serve in the war, and are not present for women or men who did serve. These findings add to the evidence on the lasting consequences of stress, and indicate that induction risk during the Vietnam War may, in certain contexts, be an invalid instrument for education or marriage, because it appears to have a direct impact on health.

Working Paper 8063

The effects of in-kind demand-side conditional transfers for improving uptake of maternal and child health services in Rwanda
May 2017 - To diagnose and treat preventable threats to maternal and neonatal health in Sub-Saharan Africa, a policy focus has been put on increasing coverage rates of targeted health services. Exploiting an experimental design, this study evaluates the impacts of an in-kind conditional transfer intervention in Rwanda that endowed women with gifts for receiving timely antenatal and postnatal care, as well as for delivering in health facilities. The analysis finds that although health centers experienced frequent stock outs of the gifts, the rate of women who initiated antenatal care within the first four months of their pregnancy increased by 7.7 percent, and that of women who received postnatal care in the 10 days following delivery increased by 8.6 percent. No impact was found on the rate of in-facility deliveries, which independently sharply increased during the years of the implementation of the program.

Working Paper 8060

Effects of performance incentives for community health worker cooperatives in Rwanda
May 2017 - This paper presents the results of a randomized controlled trial set to evaluate the effects of a pay-for-performance scheme that rewarded community health worker cooperatives for the utilization of five targeted maternal and child health services by their communities. The experiment took place in 19 districts in Rwanda between 2010 and 2014. The analysis finds no impact of the performance payments on coverage of the targeted services, attitudes and behaviors of community health workers, or outcomes at the cooperative level. No synergies are found between the scheme and a demand-side, in-kind transfer intervention that was independently effective in increasing coverage rates of targeted services.

Working Paper 8059

Compensation, diversity and inclusion at the World Bank Group
May 2017 - This paper examines salary gaps by gender and nationality at the World Bank Group between 1987 and 2015 using a unique panel of all employees over this period. The paper develops
and implements a dynamic simulation approach that models existing gaps as arising from differences in job composition at entry, entry salaries, salary growth and attrition. There are three main findings. First, 76 percent of the $27,400 salary gap across the average male and female staff at the World Bank Group can be attributed to composition effects, whereby men entered the World Bank Group at higher paid positions, particularly in the earlier half of the sample. Second, salary gaps 15 years after joining the World Bank Group can favor either men or women depending on their entry position. Third, for the most common entry-level professional position (known as Grade GF at the World Bank Group) there is a gender gap of 3.5 percent in favor of males 15 years after entry. The majority of this gap (84 percent) is due to differences in salary growth rather than differences in entry salaries or attrition. The pattern of these gaps is similar for staff from different nationalities. The dynamic decomposition method developed here thus identifies specific areas of concern and can be widely applied to the analysis of salary gaps within firms.

Working Paper 8058

The misallocation of pay and productivity in the public sector: evidence from the labor market for teachers

May 2017 - This paper uses a unique dataset of both public and private sector primary school teachers and their students to present among the first estimates in a low-income country of (a) teacher effectiveness; (b) teacher value added (TVA) and its correlates; and (c) the link between TVA and teacher wages. Teachers are highly effective in our setting: Moving a student from the 5th to the 95th percentile in the public school TVA distribution would increase mean student test scores by 0.54 standard deviations. Although the first two years of experience, as well as content knowledge, are associated with TVA, all observed teacher characteristics explain no more than 5 percent of the variation in TVA. Finally, there is no correlation between TVA and wages in the public sector (although there is in the private sector), and a policy change that shifted public hiring from permanent to temporary contracts, reducing wages by 35 percent, had no adverse impact on TVA, either immediately or after 4 years. The study confirms the importance of teachers in low income countries, extends previous experimental results on teacher contracts to a large-scale policy change, and provides striking evidence of significant misallocation between pay and productivity in the public sector.

Working Paper 8050

Are poor individuals mainly found in poor households? evidence using nutrition data for Africa

March 2017 - Antipoverty policies in developing countries often assume that targeting poor households will be reasonably effective in reaching poor individuals. This paper questions this assumption, using nutritional status as a proxy for individual poverty. The comprehensive assessment for Sub-Saharan Africa reveals that undernourished women and children are spread widely across the distribution of household wealth and consumption. Roughly three-quarters of underweight women and undernourished children are not found in the poorest 20 percent of households, and around half are not found in the poorest 40 percent. The mean joint probability of being an underweight woman and living in the poorest wealth quintile is only 0.03. Countries with higher overall rates of undernutrition tend to have a higher share of undernourished individuals in nonpoor households. The results are consistent with evidence of substantial intrahousehold inequality.

Working Paper 8001

A Firm of One’s Own: Experimental Evidence on Credit Constraints and Occupational Choice

February 2017 - This study presents results from a randomized evaluation of two labor market
interventions targeted to young women aged 18 to 19 years in three of Nairobi’s poorest neighborhoods. One treatment offered participants a bundled intervention designed to simultaneously relieve credit and human capital constraints; a second treatment provided women with an unrestricted cash grant, but no training or other support. Both interventions had economically large and statistically significant impacts on income over the medium term (7 to 10 months after the end of the interventions), but these impacts dissipated in the second year after treatment. The results are consistent with a model in which savings constraints prevent women from smoothing consumption after receiving large transfers -- even in the absence of credit constraints, and when participants have no intent of remaining in entrepreneurship. The study also shows that participants hold remarkably accurate beliefs about the impacts of the treatments on occupational choice.

What do teachers know and do? does it matter? evidence from primary schools in Africa
January 2017 - School enrollment has universally increased over the past 25 years in low-income countries. However, enrolling in school does not guarantee that children learn. A large share of children in low-income countries learn little, and they complete their primary education lacking even basic reading, writing, and arithmetic skills—the so-called "learning crisis." This paper uses data from nationally representative surveys from seven Sub-Saharan African countries, representing close to 40 percent of the region's total population, to investigate possible answers to this policy failure by quantifying teacher effort, knowledge, and skills. Averaging across countries, the paper finds that students receive two hours and fifty minutes of teaching per day—or just over half the scheduled time. In addition, large shares of teachers do not master the curricula of the students they are teaching; basic pedagogical knowledge is low; and the use of good teaching practices is rare. Exploiting within-student, within-teacher variation, the analysis finds significant and large positive effects of teacher content and pedagogical knowledge on student achievement. These findings point to an urgent need for improvements in education service delivery in Sub-Saharan Africa. They also provide a lens through which the growing experimental and quasi-experimental literature on education in low-income countries can be interpreted and understood, and point to important gaps in knowledge, with implications for future research and policy design.

A Poor Means Test? Econometric Targeting in Africa
December 2016 - Proxy-means testing is a popular method of poverty targeting with imperfect information. In a now widely-used version, a regression for log consumption calibrates a proxy-means test score based on chosen covariates, which is then implemented for targeting out-of-sample. In this paper, the performance of various proxy-means testing methods is assessed using data for nine African countries. Standard proxy-means testing helps filter out the nonpoor, but excludes many poor people, thus diminishing the impact on poverty. Some methodological changes perform better, with a poverty-quantile method dominating in most cases. Even so, either a basic-income scheme or transfers using a simple demographic scorecard are found to do as well, or almost as well, in reducing poverty. However, even with a budget sufficient to eliminate poverty with full information, none of these targeting methods brings the poverty rate below about three-quarters of its initial value. The prevailing methods are particularly deficient in reaching the poorest.

If Politics Is the Problem, How Can External Actors Be Part of the Solution?
July 2016 - Despite a large body of research and evidence on the policies and institutions needed to generate growth and reduce poverty, many governments fail to adopt these policies or establish the
institutions. Research advances since the 1990s have explained this syndrome, which this paper generically calls "government failure," in terms of the incentives facing politicians, and the underlying political institutions that lead to those incentives. Meanwhile, development assistance, which is intended to generate growth and reduce poverty, has hardly changed since the 1950s, when it was thought that the problem was one of market failure. Most assistance is still delivered to governments, in the form of finance and knowledge that are bundled together as a "project."

Drawing on recent research on the politics of government failure, the paper shows how traditional development assistance can contribute to the persistence of government failures. It proposes a new model of development assistance that can help societies transition to better institutions. Specifically, the paper suggests that knowledge be provided to citizens to build their capacity to select and sanction leaders who have the political will and legitimacy to deliver the public goods needed for development. As for the financial transfer, which for various reasons has to be delivered to governments, the paper proposes that this be provided in a lump sum manner (that is, not linked to individual projects), conditional on the government following broadly favorable policies and making information available to citizens.

**Working Paper 7761**

**A Randomized Control Trial of a Peer Adherence and Nutritional Support Program for Public Sector Antiretroviral Patients**

*July 2016* - Access to antiretroviral treatment has expanded rapidly in South Africa, making it the country in the world with the largest treatment program. As antiretroviral treatment coverage continues to rise in resource-constrained settings, effective community-based adherence support interventions are of central importance in ensuring the long-term sustainability of treatment. This paper reports the findings from a randomized control trial of a peer adherence and nutritional support program implemented in a public health care setting in South Africa's antiretroviral treatment program. The analysis assesses the impact of these peer adherence and nutritional support interventions on self-reported adherence, timeliness of clinic and hospital visits, and immunologic response to antiretroviral treatment. Peer adherence and nutritional support improved the timeliness of adults’ clinic and hospital visits for routine follow-up while on antiretroviral treatment. Peer adherence support impacted positively on immunologic response to antiretroviral treatment. Scale-up of effective and sustainable community-based, peer-driven adherence and nutritional support interventions should form part of the United Nations AIDS Treatment 2.0 strategy's community mobilization and health system strengthening pillar.

**Working Paper 7760**

**Poverty and Policy Selectivity of World Bank Trust Funds**

*June 2016* - Over the past decade, donors of foreign aid quadrupled their annual contributions to trust funds at the World Bank. This earmarking of contributions to donors' preferred recipient countries and issues has raised concerns about the alignment of trust funds with the performance-based allocations of aid by the International Development Association, the World Bank's concessional lending arm, and raises the question of the role of this new "multi-bi" aid channel. This study finds that the cross-country allocations of aggregate trust fund aid are poverty- and policy-selective. In this respect, they are much more similar to allocations from the International Development Association than from bilateral donors. The allocations of trust fund types that are more closely controlled by donor countries—recipient-executed and single-donor trust funds—are more strongly related to the strategic interests of donor countries than trust fund aid in general.

**Working Paper 7731**

**Evidence from a randomized evaluation of the household welfare impacts of conditional and unconditional cash transfers given to mothers or fathers**

*June 2016* - This study conducted a randomized control trial in rural Burkina Faso to estimate the impact of alternative cash transfer delivery mechanisms on education, health, and household welfare
outcomes. The two-year pilot program randomly distributed cash transfers that were either conditional or unconditional and were given to either mothers or fathers. Conditionality was linked to older children enrolling in school and attending regularly and younger children receiving preventive health check-ups. Compared with the control group, cash transfers improve children's education and health and household socioeconomic conditions. For school enrollment and most child health outcomes, conditional cash transfers outperform unconditional cash transfers.

Working Paper 7730

The fiscal cost of weak governance: evidence from teacher absence in India
February 2016 - The relative return to input-augmentation versus inefficiency-reduction strategies for improving education system performance is a key open question for education policy in low-income countries. Using a new nationally-representative panel dataset of schools across 1297 villages in India, this paper shows that the large investments over the past decade have led to substantial improvements in input-based measures of school quality, but only a modest reduction in inefficiency as measured by teacher absence. In the data, 23.6 percent of teachers were absent during unannounced visits with an associated fiscal cost of $1.5 billion/year. There are two robust correlations in the nationally-representative panel data that corroborate findings from smaller-scale experiments.

Working Paper 7579

2015

Measuring progress towards universal health coverage: with an application to 24 developing countries
November 2015 - The last few years have seen a growing commitment worldwide to universal health coverage (UHC). Yet there is a lack of clarity on how to measure progress towards UHC. This paper proposes a 'mashup' index that captures both aspects of UHC: that everyone—irrespective of their ability-to-pay—gets the health services they need; and that nobody suffers undue financial hardship as a result of receiving care. Service coverage is broken down into prevention and treatment, and financial protection into impoverishment and catastrophic spending; nationally representative household survey data are used to adjust population averages to capture inequalities between the poor and better off; nonlinear tradeoffs are allowed between and within the two dimensions of the UHC index; and all indicators are expressed such that scores run from 0 to 100, and higher scores are better. In a sample of 24 countries for which there are detailed information on UHC-inspired reforms, a cluster of high-performing countries emerges with UHC scores of between 79 and 84 (Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico and South Africa) and a cluster of low-performing countries emerges with UHC scores in the range 35–57 (Ethiopia, Guatemala, India, Indonesia and Vietnam).

Working Paper 7470

On the delegation of aid implementation to multilateral agencies
October 2015 - Some multilateral agencies implement aid projects in a broad range of sectors, with aid disbursements showing a strong overlap with those of bilateral donors. The question then arises of why do bilateral donors delegate sizable shares of their aid to non-specialized agencies for implementation? This paper develops a game theoretic model to explain this puzzle. Donors delegate aid implementation to the multilateral agency (ML) to strengthen the policy selectivity of aid, incentivizing policy improvements in recipient countries, in turn improving aid's development effectiveness. Bilateral donors are better off delegating aid to ML even when they are purely altruistic but disagree on how aid should be distributed across recipients. Key for our result to hold is that ML searches some middle ground among disagreeing donors. Aid selectivity—in terms of both policy and poverty—emerges endogenously and is credible, as it is the solution to ML's optimization problem. Moreover, the model shows that if one sufficiently large donor is policy selective in its aid allocations, there is no need for other donors to be policy selective.

Working Paper 7455
Which donors, which funds? the choice of multilateral funds by bilateral donors at the World Bank

October 2015 - The rapid growth of trust funds at multilateral development organizations has been widely neglected in the academic literature so far. Using a simple illustrative model, this paper examines the choice by sovereign donors among various trust fund options. The authors contend that the choice among the different trust funds involves a fundamental trade-off: larger funds provide donors with the benefit of burden sharing. Conversely, each donor can better assert its individual preferences in a fund with fewer other donors. The theoretical considerations yield testable implications on a range of factors affecting this fundamental tradeoff, most notably the area of intervention of the trust fund and competing domestic interests of donor countries. Using a sample of World Bank trust funds, the paper examines the participation decisions of Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development/Development Assistance Committee donors over the past decade.

Working Paper 7441

The impact of violence on individual risk preferences: evidence from a natural experiment

October 2015 - This study estimates the impact of Kenya’s post-election violence on individual risk preferences. Because the crisis interrupted a longitudinal survey of more than five thousand Kenyan youth, this timing creates plausibly exogenous variation in exposure to civil conflict by the time of the survey. The study measures individual risk preferences using hypothetical lottery choice questions, which are validated by showing that they predict migration and entrepreneurship in the cross-section. The results indicate that the post-election violence sharply increased individual risk aversion. Immediately after the crisis, the fraction of subjects who are classified as either risk neutral or risk loving dropped by roughly 26 percent. The findings remain robust to an IV estimation strategy that exploits random assignment of respondents to waves of surveying.

Working Paper 7440

The impact of secondary schooling in Kenya: a regression discontinuity analysis

August 2015 - This paper estimates the impacts of secondary school on human capital, occupational choice, and fertility for young adults in Kenya. The probability of admission to government secondary school rises sharply at a score close to the national mean on a standardized 8th grade examination, permitting the estimation of causal effects of schooling in a regression discontinuity framework. The analysis combines administrative test score data with a recent survey of young adults to estimate these impacts. The results show that secondary schooling increases human capital, as measured by performance on cognitive tests included in the survey. For men, there is a drop in the probability of low-skill self-employment, as well as suggestive evidence of a rise in the probability of formal employment. The opportunity to attend secondary school also reduces teen pregnancy among women.

Working Paper 7384

Quality and Accountability in Healthcare Delivery: Audit Evidence from Primary Care Providers in India

June 2015 - This paper presents direct evidence on the quality of health care in low-income settings using a unique and original set of audit studies, where standardized patients were presented to a nearly representative sample of rural public and private primary care providers in the Indian state of Madhya Pradesh. Three main findings are reported. First, private providers are mostly unqualified, but they spent more time with patients and completed more items on a checklist of essential history and examination items than public providers, while being no different in their diagnostic and treatment accuracy.

Working Paper 7334
Women Left Behind? Poverty and Headship in Africa
*June 2015* - This paper is motivated by two stylized facts about poverty in Africa: female-headed households tend to be poorer, and poverty has been falling in the aggregate since the 1990s. These facts raise two questions: How have female-headed households fared? And what role have they played in Africa's impressive recent aggregate growth and poverty reduction? Using data covering the entire region, the paper reexamines the current prevalence and characteristics of female-headed households, and asks whether their prevalence has been rising over time, what factors have been associated with such changes since the mid-1990s, and whether poverty has fallen equi-proportionately for male- and female-headed households. Rising gross domestic product has dampened rising female headship.

[Working Paper 7331](#)

Unbundling institutions for external finance: worldwide firm-level evidence
*June 2015* - The empirical literature on institutions and development has been challenged on grounds of reverse causality, measurement error in institutional indicators, and heterogeneity. This paper uses firm-level data across countries to confront these challenges. Instead of analyzing ultimate outcomes, such as income levels where institutional quality is likely endogenous, the focus is on firm-level external finance. Moreover, institutions are “unbundled” to explore how various types of institutions affect external finance differently. The paper documents that micro firms have significantly less access to external finance than small and medium firms.

[Working Paper 7287](#)

Delivering education: a pragmatic framework for improving education in low-income countries
*May 2015* - Even as primary-school enrollments have increased in most low-income countries, levels of learning remain low and highly unequal. Responding to greater parental demand for quality, low-cost private schools have emerged as one of the fastest growing schooling options, challenging the monopoly of state-provided education and broadening the set of educational providers. Historically, the rise of private schooling is always deeply intertwined with debates around who chooses what schooling is about and who represents the interests of children. This time is no different.

[Working Paper 7277](#)

World Bank policy lending and the quality of public sector governance
*May 2015* - This study investigates the impact of World Bank development policy lending for public sector governance on the quality of public sector management and institutions. The World Bank's Country Policy and Institutional Assessments (CPIA) are used to measure the latter, the study considers only policy conditions targeted at improvements in those areas. The analysis uses a comprehensive country-year panel data set of aid receiving-countries and finds a significant and inverse U-shaped effect of public sector conditions on the quality of public sector governance. For most observed values in the data, the impact is positive, but it turns negative beyond a value of 80 conditions. At that point, the predicted CPIA score is about 0.25 point (0.3 standard deviation) higher than with zero conditions.

[Working Paper 7267](#)

Information, knowledge and behavior: evaluating alternative methods of delivering school information to parents
*April 2015* - Improving education outcomes by disseminating information to parents and thereby encouraging them to become more actively engaged in school oversight is attractive, since it can be done relatively cheaply. This study evaluates the impact of alternative approaches to disseminating
information about a school grants program in Indonesia on parents' knowledge about the program in general, knowledge about the implementation of the program in their child's school, and participation in school activities related to the program as well as beyond it. Not all dissemination approaches yielded impacts, and different modes of dissemination conveyed different types of information best, resulting in different impacts on behavior.

**Working Paper 7233**

**Report cards: the impact of providing school and child test scores on educational markets**
_March 2015_ - This paper studies the impact of providing school and child test scores on subsequent test scores, prices, and enrollment in markets with multiple public and private providers. A randomly selected half of the sample villages (markets) received report cards. This increased test scores by 0.11 standard deviations, decreased private school fees by 17 percent, and increased primary enrollment by 4.5 percent. Heterogeneity in the treatment impact by initial school quality is consistent with canonical models of asymmetric information. Information provision facilitates better comparisons across providers, improves market efficiency and raises child welfare through higher test scores, higher enrollment, and lower fees.

**Working Paper 7226**

**Using lotteries to incentivize safer sexual behavior: evidence from a randomized controlled trial on HIV prevention**
_March 2015_ - Financial incentives are a promising HIV prevention strategy. This paper assesses the effect on HIV incidence of a lottery program in Lesotho with low expected payments but a chance to win a high prize conditional on negative test results for sexually transmitted infections. The intervention resulted in a 21.4 percent reduction in HIV incidence over two years. Lottery incentives appear to be particularly effective for individuals willing to take risks. This paper estimates a model linking sexual behavior to HIV incidence and finds that risk-loving individuals reduce the number of unprotected sexual acts by 0.3/month for every $1 increase in the expected prize.

**Working Paper 7215**

**2014**

**Rewarding safer sex: conditional cash transfers for HIV/STI prevention**
_November 2014_ - Incentive-based policies have been shown to be powerful in many areas of behavior, but have rarely been tested in the sexual domain. The Rewarding Sexually Transmitted Infection Prevention and Control in Tanzania (RESPECT) study is a randomized controlled trial testing the hypothesis that a system of rapid feedback and positive reinforcement that uses cash as the primary incentive can be used to reduce risky sexual activity among young people, male and female, who are at high risk of HIV infection. The study enrolled 2,399 participants in 10 villages in rural southwest Tanzania.

**Working Paper 7099**

**Village Political Economy, Land Tenure Insecurity, and the Rural to Urban Migration Decision: Evidence from China**
_November 2014_ - This paper investigates the impact of land tenure insecurity on the migration decisions of China's rural residents. A simple model first frames the relationship among these variables and the probability that a reallocation of land will occur in the following year. After first demonstrating that a village leader's support for administrative land reallocation carries with it the risk of losing a future election, the paper exploits election-timing and village heterogeneity in lineage
group composition and demographic change to identify the effect of land security.  

**Exploiting externalities to estimate the long-term effects of early childhood deworming**  
*October 2014* - This paper investigates whether a large-scale deworming intervention aimed at primary school pupils in western Kenya had long-term effects on young children in the region. The paper exploits positive externalities from the program to estimate the impact on younger children who did not receive treatment directly. Ten years after the intervention, large cognitive effects are found -- comparable to between 0.5 and 0.8 years of schooling -- for children who were less than one year old when their communities received mass deworming treatment. Because mass deworming was administered through schools, effects are estimated among children who were likely to have older siblings in schools receiving the treatment directly; in this subpopulation, effects are nearly twice as large.  

**Who Benefits from Government Health Spending and Why? A Global Assessment**  
*September 2014* - This paper uses a common household survey instrument and a common set of imputation assumptions to estimate the pro-poorness of government health expenditure across 69 countries at all levels of income. On average, government health expenditure emerges as significantly pro-rich, but there is heterogeneity across countries: in the majority, government health expenditure is neither pro-rich nor pro-poor, while in a small minority it is pro-rich, and in an even smaller minority it is pro-poor. Government health expenditure on contracted private facilities emerges as significantly pro-rich for all types of care, and in almost all Asian countries government health expenditure overall is significantly pro-rich.  

**Information is power: experimental evidence on the long-run impact of community based monitoring**  
*August 2014* - This paper presents the results of two field experiments on local accountability in primary health care in Uganda. Efforts to stimulate beneficiary control, coupled with the provision of report cards on staff performance, resulted in significant improvements in health care delivery and health outcomes in both the short and the longer run. Efforts to stimulate beneficiary control without providing information on performance had no impact on quality of care or health outcomes. The paper shows that informed users are more likely to identify and challenge (mis)behavior by providers and as a result turn their focus to issues that they can manage locally.  

**How useful is inequality of opportunity as a policy construct?**  
*July 2014* - The academic literature on equality of opportunity has burgeoned. The concepts and measures have begun to be used by policy institutions, including in specific sectors such as health and education. It is argued that one advantage of focusing on equality of opportunity is that policy makers are more responsive to that discourse than to equality of outcomes per se. This paper presents a critique of equality of opportunity in the policy context. Although the empirical analysis to which the literature has given rise is useful and is to be welcomed, current methods for quantifying and implementing the concept with a view to informing the policy discourse face a series of fundamental questions that remain unanswered. Without a full appreciation of these difficulties, the methods may prove to be misleading in the policy context.
Radio’s impact on preferences for patronage benefits
June 2014 - Citizens in developing countries support politicians who provide patronage or clientelist benefits, such as government jobs and gifts at the time of elections. Can access to mass media that broadcasts public interest messages shift citizens’ preferences for such benefits? This paper examines the impact of community radio on responses to novel survey vignettes that make an explicit trade-off between political promises of jobs for a few versus public services for all. The impact of community radio is identified through a natural experiment in the media market in northern Benin, which yields exogenous variation in access across villages. Respondents in villages with greater radio access are less likely to express support for patronage jobs that come at the expense of public health or education. Working Paper 6932

World Bank lending and the quality of economic policy
June 2014 - This study investigates the impact of World Bank development policy lending on the quality of economic policy. It finds that the quality of policy increases, but at a diminishing rate, with the cumulative number of policy loans. Similar results hold for the cumulative number of conditions attached to policy loans, although quadratic specifications indicate that additional conditions may even reduce the quality of policy beyond some point. The paper measures the quality of economic policy using the World Bank's Country Policy and Institutional Assessments of macro, debt, fiscal and structural policies, and considers only policy loans targeted at improvements in those areas. Working Paper 6924

Encouraging Health Insurance for the Informal Sector: A Cluster Randomized Trial
June 2014 - Subsidized voluntary enrollment in government-run health insurance schemes is often proposed as a way of increasing coverage among informal sector workers and their families. This paper reports the results of a cluster randomized control trial in which 3,000 households in 20 communes in Vietnam were randomly assigned at baseline to a control group or one of three treatments: an information leaflet about Vietnam’s government-run scheme and the benefits of health insurance; a voucher entitling eligible household members to 25 percent off their annual premium; and both. Working Paper 6910

Progress Toward the Health MDGs: Are the poor Being Left Behind?
May 2014 - This paper looks at differential progress on the health Millennium Development Goals between the poor and better-off within countries. The findings are based on original analysis of 235 Demographic and Health Surveys and Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys, spanning 64 developing countries over the period 1990-2011. Five health status indicators and seven intervention indicators are tracked for all the health Millennium Development Goals. In most countries, the poorest 40 percent have made faster progress than the richest 60 percent. Working Paper 6894

Effects of Interventions to Raise Voluntary Enrollment in a Social Health Insurance Scheme: A Cluster Randomized Trial
May 2014 - A cluster randomized controlled trial was undertaken, testing two sets of interventions to encourage enrollment in the Philippines’ Individual Payer Program. Of 243 municipalities, 179 were randomly assigned as intervention sites and 64 as controls. In early 2011, 2,950 families were interviewed; unenrolled Individual Payer Program-eligible families in intervention sites were given an information kit and a 50 percent premium subsidy until the end of 2011. Working Paper 6893
The Impact of a Pay-for-Performance Scheme on Prescription Quality in Rural China: An Impact Evaluation

May 2014 - In China, health care providers have traditionally been paid fee-for-service and overprescribing and high out-of-pocket spending are common. In this study, township health centers in two counties were assigned almost randomly to two groups: in one, fee-for-service was replaced by a global capitated budget; in the other, by a mix of global capitated budget and pay-for-performance.

Working Paper 6892

What a difference a state makes: health reform in Andhra Pradesh

May 2014 - In the mid-2000s, India began rolling out large-scale, publicly-financed health insurance schemes mostly targeting the poor. This paper describes and analyzes Andhra Pradesh's Aarogyasri scheme, which covers against the costs of around 900 high-cost procedures delivered in secondary and tertiary hospitals. Using a new household survey, the authors find that 80 percent of families are eligible, equal to about 68 million people, and 85 percent of these families know they are covered; only one-quarter, however, know that the benefit package is limited. The study finds that, contrary to the rules of the program, patients incur quite large out-of-pocket payments during inpatient episodes thought to be covered by Aarogyasri.

Working Paper 6883

Son preference, fertility and family structure: evidence from reproductive behavior among Nigerian women

May 2014 - Strong boy-bias and its consequences for young and unborn girls have been widely documented for Asia. This paper considers a country in Sub-Saharan Africa and finds that parental gender preferences do affect fertility behavior and shape traditional social institutions with negative effects on adult women's health and well-being. Using individual-level data for Nigeria, the paper shows that, compared to women with first-born sons, women with first-born daughters have (and desire) more children and are less likely to use contraceptives.

Working Paper 6869

The effect of aid on growth: evidence from a quasi-experiment

May 2014 - The literature on aid and growth has not found a convincing instrumental variable to identify the causal effects of aid. This paper exploits an instrumental variable based on the fact that since 1987, eligibility for aid from the International Development Association (IDA) has been based partly on whether or not a country is below a certain threshold of per capita income. The paper finds evidence that other donors tend to reinforce rather than compensate for reductions in IDA aid following threshold crossings.

Working Paper 6865

CATA Meets IMPOV: A Unified Approach to Measuring Financial Protection in Health

May 2014 - Up to now catastrophic and impoverishing payments have been seen as two alternative approaches to measuring financial protection in health. Building on the previous literature, the authors propose a unified methodology in which impoverishing and catastrophic payments are mutually exclusive outcomes. They achieve this by expressing out-of-pocket payments as a ratio of ‘discretionary’ consumption, defined as the amount by which total consumption (gross of out-of-pocket payments) exceeds the poverty line.

Working Paper 6861

Why are adult women missing? son preference and maternal survival in India

March 2014 - This paper is the first to show that excess mortality among adult women can be partly
explained by strong preference for male children, the same cultural norm widely known to cause excess mortality before birth or at young ages. Using pooled individual-level data for India, the paper compares the age structure and anemia status of women by the sex of their first-born and uncovers several new findings. First, the share of living women with a first-born girl is a decreasing function of the women’s age at the time of the survey. Second, while there are no systematic differences at the time of birth, women with a first-born girl are significantly more likely to develop anemia when young and these differences disappear for older women.

Working Paper 6802

HIV Testing, Behavior Change, and the Transition to Adulthood in Malawi

March 2014 - For young adults living in countries with AIDS epidemics, getting an HIV test may influence near-term decisions, such as when to leave school, when to marry, and when to have a first child. These behaviors, which define the transition from adolescence to adulthood, have long-term implications on well-being and directly affect a person's risk of contracting HIV. Using an experimental design embedded in a panel survey from Malawi, this study assesses the impact of voluntary counseling and testing of young adults for HIV on these decisions. The results show negligible intent-to-treat effect of HIV testing on behaviors. There is some suggestive evidence on differential response by wealth and by prior beliefs about one’s status.

Working Paper 6825

Academic Peer Effects with Different Group Assignment Policies: Residential Tracking versus Random Assignment

February 2014 - This paper studies the relative academic performance of students tracked or randomly assigned to South African university dormitories. Tracked or streamed assignment creates dormitories where all students obtained similar scores on high school graduation examinations. Random assignment creates dormitories that are approximately representative of the population of students. Tracking lowers students’ mean grades in their first year of university and increases the variance or inequality of grades. This result is driven by a large negative effect of tracking on low-scoring students’ grades and a near-zero effect on high-scoring students’ grades.

Working Paper 6787

Coping with Risk: The Effects of Shocks on Reproductive Health and Transactional Sex in Rural Tanzania

January 2014 - Transactional sex is believed to be an important risk-coping mechanism for women in Sub-Saharan Africa and a leading contributor to the HIV/AIDS epidemic. This paper uses data from a panel of women in rural Tanzania whose primary occupation is agriculture. The analysis finds that following a negative shock (such as food insecurity), unmarried women are about three times more likely to have been paid for sex. Regardless of marital status, after a shock women have more unprotected sex and are 36 percent more likely to have a sexually transmitted infection. These empirical findings support the claims that transactional sex is not confined to commercial sex workers and that frequently experienced shocks, such as food insecurity, may lead women to engage in transactional sex as a risk-coping behavior.

Working Paper 6751

2013

Incentives and teacher effort: further evidence from a developing country

November 2013 - Few would contest that teachers are a very important determinant of whether students learn in school. Yet, in the face of compelling evidence that many students are not learning what they are expected to learn, how to improve teacher performance has been the focus of much
policy debate in rich and poor countries. This paper examines how incentives, both pecuniary and non-pecuniary, influence teacher effort. Using school survey data from Lao PDR, it estimates new measures of teacher effort, including the number of hours that teachers spend preparing for classes and teacher provision of private tutoring classes outside class hours. The estimation results indicate that teachers increase effort in response to non-pecuniary incentives, such as greater teacher autonomy over teaching materials, and monitoring mechanism, such as the existence of an active parent-teacher association and the ability of school principals to dismiss teachers.

**Working Paper 6694**

Getting Incentives Right: An Impact Evaluation of District Hospital Capitation Payment in Vietnam

*November 2013* - This paper evaluates the impact of a shift by Vietnam's social health insurance agency from reimbursing hospitals on a fee-for-service basis to making a capitation payment to the district hospital where the enrollee lives. The analysis uses panel data on hospitals over the period 2005-2011 and multiple cross-section data sets from the Vietnam Household Living Standards Surveys to estimate impacts on efficiency, quality, and equity. The paper finds that capitation increases hospitals’ efficiency, as measured by recurrent expenditure and drug expenditure per case, but has no effect on surgery complication rates or in-hospital deaths. In response to the shift to capitation, hospitals scaled down service provision to the insured and increased provision to the uninsured (who continue to pay out-of-pocket on a fee-for-service basis).

**Working Paper 6709**

Admission is free only if your dad is rich! distributional effects of corruption in schools in developing countries

*October 2013* - In the standard model of corruption, the rich are more likely to pay bribes for their children’s education, reflecting higher ability to pay. This prediction is, however, driven by the assumption that the probability of punishment for bribe-taking is invariant across households. In many developing countries lacking in rule of law, this assumption is untenable, because the enforcement of law is not impersonal or unbiased and the poor have little bargaining power. In a more realistic model where the probability of punishment depends on the household’s economic status, bribes are likely to be regressive, both at the extensive and intensive margins. Using rainfall variations as an instrument for household income in rural Bangladesh, this paper finds strong evidence that corruption in schools is doubly regressive: (i) the poor are more likely to pay bribes, and (ii) among the bribe payers, the poor pay a higher share of their income.

**Working Paper 6671**

Is Workfare Cost-Effective against Poverty in a Poor Labor-Surplus Economy?

*October 2013* - Workfare schemes impose work requirements on beneficiaries. This has seemed an attractive idea for self-targeting transfers to poor people. This incentive argument does not imply, however, that workfare is more cost-effective against poverty than even poorly-targeted options, given hidden costs of participation. In particular, even poor workfare participants in a labor-surplus economy can be expected to have some forgone income when they take up such a scheme. A survey-based method is used to assess the cost-effectiveness of India's Employment Guarantee Scheme in Bihar. Participants are found to have forgone earnings, although these fall well short of market wages on average. Factoring in these hidden costs, the paper finds that for the same budget, workfare has less impact on poverty than either a basic-income scheme (providing the same transfer to all) or uniform transfers based on the government's below-poverty-line ration cards.

**Working Paper 6673**
Testing Information Constraints on India’s Largest Antipoverty Program

September 2013 - Public knowledge about India’s ambitious Employment Guarantee Scheme is low in one of India’s poorest states, Bihar, where participation is also unusually low. Is the solution simply to tell people their rights? Or does their lack of knowledge reflect deeper problems of poor people's agency and an unresponsive supply side? This paper reports on an information campaign that was designed and implemented in the form of an entertaining movie to inform people of their rights under the scheme. In randomly-assigned villages, the movie brought significant gains in knowledge and more positive perceptions about the impact of the scheme. But objectively measured employment showed no gain on average, suggesting that awareness generation needs to go hand-in-hand with supply-side changes.

Working Paper 6598

China’s 2008 labor contract law: implementation and implications for China’s workers

July 2013 - This paper presents empirical evidence from household and firm survey data collected during 2009-2010 on the implementation of the 2008 Labor Contract Law and its effects on China’s workers. The government and local labor bureaus have made substantial efforts to enforce the provisions of the new law, which has likely contributed to reversing a trend toward increasing informalization of the urban labor market. Enforcement of the law, however, varies substantially across cities. Education is positively correlated with satisfaction with the enforcement of the law, the likelihood of having a labor contract, awareness of the content of the law, and the likelihood of initiating a dispute.

Working Paper 6542

Incentivizing schooling for learning: evidence on the impact of alternative targeting approaches

July 2013 - This paper evaluates a primary school scholarship program in Cambodia with two different targeting mechanisms, one based on poverty level and the other on baseline test scores ("merit"). Both targeting mechanisms increased enrollment and attendance. However, only the merit-based targeting induced positive effects on test scores. The paper shows that the asymmetry of response is unlikely to have been driven by differences between recipients’ characteristics.

Working Paper 6541

Impact evaluation of three types of early childhood development interventions in Cambodia

July 2013 - Scaling up early childhood development services has the potential to increase children's cognitive and socio-emotional development and promote school readiness in a large segment of the population. This study used a randomized controlled trial approach to evaluate three scaled-up programs designed to widen access to early childhood development services: formal preschools, community preschools, and home-based services. The impacts of all three programs fell short of expectations because of two key flaws in how they were scaled up – weak implementation, and insufficient promotion.

Working Paper 6540

Long-term impacts of household electrification in rural India

June 2013 - India’s huge expansion in rural electrification in the 1980s and 1990s offers lessons for other countries today. The paper examines the long-term effects of household electrification on consumption, labor supply, and schooling in rural India over 1982-99. It finds that household electrification brought significant gains to consumption and earnings, the latter through changes in
market labor supply. It finds positive effects on schooling for girls but not for boys.

**Working Paper 6527**

**It's only words: validating the CPIA governance assessments**

*June 2013* - This study analyzes the validity of the World Bank’s Country Policy and Institutional Assessments governance ratings, an important factor in allocating the Bank’s concessionary International Development Association funds. It tests for certain biases in the ratings, and examines the quality of the written justifications that accompany the ratings. The study finds no evidence of bias in favor of International Development Association-eligible countries, despite a potential moral hazard problem inherent in the ratings process.

**Working Paper 6526**

**A public strategy for compliance monitoring**

*June 2013* - Theoretical accounts of compliance with court orders emphasize the importance of transparency. Most empirical studies of compliance center on high profile political cases, largely ignoring the high-volume, quotidian claims against the state for basic services that constitute the largest share of court dockets in many jurisdictions. This paper uses a unique dataset on compliance with orders from the Constitutional Chamber of the Supreme Court of Costa Rica to examine the determinants of compliance in low salience cases.

**Working Paper 6523**

**Expanding Social Insurance Coverage in Urban China**

*June 2013* - This paper first reviews the history of social insurance policy and coverage in urban China, documenting the evolution in the coverage of pensions and medical and unemployment insurance for both local residents and migrants, and highlighting obstacles to expanding coverage. The paper then uses two waves of the China Urban Labor Survey, conducted in 2005 and 2010, to examine the correlates of social insurance participation before and after implementation of the 2008 Labor Contract Law.

**Working Paper 6497**

**Conducting Ethical Economic Research: Complications from the Field**

*May 2013* - This essay discusses practical issues confronted when conducting surveys as well as designing appropriate field trials. First, it looks at the challenge of ensuring transparency while maintaining confidentiality. Second, it explores the role of trust in light of asymmetric information held by the surveyor and by the respondents as well as the latter's expectations as to what their participation will set in motion. The authors present case studies relevant to both of these issues. Finally, they discuss the role of ethical review from the perspective of research conducted through the World Bank.

**Working Paper 6446**

**Building or Bypassing Recipient Country Systems: Are Donors Defying the Paris Declaration?**

*April 2013* - The 2005 Paris Declaration committed donors to increased use by donors of recipient country systems for managing aid, particularly in recipient countries with higher-quality systems. This study investigates the degree to which donors' use of country systems is in fact positively related to their quality, using indicators explicitly endorsed for this purpose by the Paris Declaration and covering the 2005-2010 period. Tests confirm a positive and significant relationship that is robust to corrections for potential sample selection, omitted variables, and endogeneity bias. Findings suggest that donors have modified at least some of their aid practices in ways that build rather than
undermine administrative capacity and accountability mechanisms in recipient countries.

Using Provider Performance Incentives to Increase HIV Testing and Counseling Services in Rwanda
February 2013 - Paying for performance (P4P) provides financial rewards to medical care providers for improvements in performance measured by specific utilization and quality of care indicators. In 2006, Rwanda began a paying for performance scheme to improve health services delivery, including HIV/AIDS services. This study examines the scheme’s impact on individual and couples HIV testing and counseling, using data from a prospective quasi-experimental design. The study finds a positive impact of P4P with an increase of 6.1 percentage points in the probability of individuals having ever been tested. Larger impacts are found for married individuals. The P4P impact is also larger for the probability that both partners have ever been tested, especially among discordant couples in which only one of the partners is HIV positive.

How Subjective Beliefs about HIV Infection Affect Life-Cycle Fertility: Evidence from Rural Malawi
January 2013 - This paper uses simulation methods with a structural model to study the effect of subjective beliefs about HIV infection on fertility decisions in a context of high HIV prevalence and simulates the impact of different policy interventions, such as HIV testing programs and prevention of mother-to-child transmission, on fertility and child mortality. The model successfully fits the fertility patterns in the data, as well as the distribution of reported beliefs about own HIV status. The simulation results show that the presence of HIV reduces the average number of births a woman has during her life-cycle by 0.15, and that HIV testing can reduce the fertility of infected women, leading to a reduction of child mortality and orphanhood.

Cash Transfers and Child Schooling: Evidence from a Randomized Evaluation of the Role of Conditionality
January 2013 - A randomized experiment was conducted in rural Burkina Faso to estimate the impact of alternative cash transfer delivery mechanisms on education. The two-year pilot program randomly distributed cash transfers that were either conditional or unconditional. Families under the conditional schemes were required to have their children ages 7-15 enrolled in school and attending classes regularly. There were no such requirements under the unconditional programs. Conditional transfers were found to be significantly more effective than the unconditional transfers in improving the enrollment of "marginal children" who are initially less likely to go to school, such as girls, younger children, and lower-ability children.

Buying votes vs. supplying public services: political incentives to under-invest in pro-poor policies
January 2013 - Using unique survey data, this paper finds evidence that vote-buying in poor economies is associated with lower provision of public services that disproportionately benefit the poor and worse child health. Various features of the data and the institutional context allow the rejection of alternative hypotheses, such as poverty driving both vote buying and health outcomes. The data come from the Philippines, a country context that allows for measuring vote-buying during
elections and services delivered by the administrative unit controlled by winners of those elections.

**working paper 6339**

2012


*November 2012* - The Millennium Development Goals, which expire in 2015, were a global agreement to promote human development and reduce poverty. But they did not create a legalized institutional regime, in which precise obligations would be delegated to specific actors, nor were they, in many respects, compatible with the incentives of the countries whose heads of state endorsed them. They most resembled international human rights treaties, which are also not legally coercive, and which achieve their effects largely through their role in social and political mobilization. But unlike human rights treaties, the Millennium Development Goals' targets and goals were not psychologically, morally, and politically salient.

**Working Paper 6282**

**Perils of simulation: parallel streams and the case of stata's rnormal command**

*November 2012* - Large-scale simulation-based studies rely on at least three properties of pseudorandom number sequences: they behave in many ways like truly random numbers; they can be replicated; and they can be generated in parallel. There has been some divergence, however, between empirical techniques employing random numbers, and the standard battery of tests used to validate them. A random number generator that passes tests for any single stream of random numbers may fail the same tests when it is used to generate multiple streams in parallel. The lack of systematic testing of parallel streams leaves statistical software with important potential vulnerabilities. This paper shows one such vulnerability in Stata’s normal function that went unnoticed for almost four years, and how to detect it. It then shows practical implications for the use of parallel streams in existing software.

**Working Paper 6278**

**Evaluating Workfare When the Work Is Unpleasant: Evidence for India's National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme**

*November 2012* - Prevailing practices in evaluating workfare programs have ignored the disutility of the type of work done, with theoretically ambiguous implications for the impacts on poverty. In the case of India's National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, past assessments have relied solely on household consumption per person as the measure of economic welfare.

**Working Paper 6272**

**Handwashing Behavior Change at Scale: Evidence from a Randomized Evaluation in Vietnam**

*September 2012* - Handwashing with soap campaigns are de rigueur in developing countries, but little is known about their effectiveness. This paper evaluates a large-scale handwashing campaign in three provinces of Vietnam in 2010. Exposure to the campaign resulted in a slight increase in the availability of handwashing materials in the household, and caregivers in the treatment group were more likely to report washing hands at some of the times emphasized by the campaign. However, no differences were found between the treatment and control groups in actual handwashing with soap, the average level of which remains very low.

**Working Paper 6207**
Women’s Access to Labor Market Opportunities, Control of Household Resources, and Domestic Violence
July 2012 - While there are many positive societal implications of increased female labor force opportunities, some theoretical models and empirical evidence suggest that working can increase a woman’s risk of suffering domestic violence. Using a dataset collected in peri-urban Dhaka, this analysis documents a positive correlation between work and domestic violence. This correlation is only present among women with less education or who were younger at first marriage. These results are consistent with a theoretical model in which a woman with low bargaining power can face increased risk of domestic violence upon entering the labor force as a husband seeks to counteract her increased bargaining power, while a woman with higher baseline bargaining power is protected from domestic violence because she can leave a violent marriage. 
Working Paper 6149

The Impacts of Public Hospital Autonomization: Evidence from a Quasi-Natural Experiment
July 2012 - This paper exploits the staggered rollout of Vietnam’s hospital autonomization policy to estimate its impacts on several key health sector outcomes including hospital efficiency, use of hospital care, and out-of-pocket spending. The authors use six years of panel data covering all Vietnam’s public hospitals, and three stacked cross-sections of household data. Autonomization probably led to more hospital admissions and outpatient department visits, although the effects are not large. It did not, however, affect bed stocks or bed-occupancy rates. Nor did it increase hospital efficiency. Oddly, despite the volume effects and the unchanged cost structure, the analysis does not find any evidence of autonomization leading to higher total costs. It does, however, find some evidence that autonomization led to higher out-of-pocket spending on hospital care, higher spending per treatment episode, and more lab tests and imaging per case. 
Working Paper 6137

The health effects of universal health care: evidence from Thailand
July 2012 - This paper exploits the staggered rollout of Thailand’s universal health coverage scheme to estimate its impacts on whether individuals report themselves as being too ill to work. The analysis finds that universal coverage reduced the likelihood of people reporting themselves to be too sick to work: the authors estimate the effect to be -0.004 one year after universal coverage and -0.007 three years after. The estimated effects are much larger among those age 65 and over. Universal coverage had a much larger effect on health (about four times larger) than the Village Fund scheme, which provided free credit to rural households through a subsidized microcredit scheme and which was rolled out around the same time as universal coverage. 
Working Paper 6119

Universal health care and informal labor markets: the case of Thailand
July 2012 - This paper explores the possibility that universal health coverage may inadvertently result in distorted labor market choices, with workers preferring informal employment over formal employment, leading to negative effects on investment and growth, as well as reduced protection against non-health risks and the income risks associated with ill health. It explores this hypothesis in the context of the Thai universal coverage scheme, which was rolled out in four waves over a 12-month period starting in April 2001. It identifies the effects of universal coverage through the staggered rollout, and gains statistical power by using no less than 68 consecutive labor force surveys, each containing an average of 62,000 respondents. The analysis finds that universal coverage appears to have encouraged employment especially among married women, to have reduced formal-sector employment among married men but not among other groups, and to have increased informal-sector employment especially among married women. The largest positive
informal-sector employment effects are found in the agricultural sector. 

**Working Paper 6116**

**Does Africa Need a Rotten Kin Theorem? Experimental Evidence from Village Economies**

*June 2012* - This paper measures the economic impact of social pressure to share income with kin and neighbors in rural Kenyan villages. The authors conduct a lab experiment in which they randomly vary the observability of investment returns. The goal is to test whether subjects reduce their income in order to keep it hidden. The authors find that women adopt an investment strategy that conceals the size of their initial endowment in the experiment, although that strategy reduces their expected earnings. This effect is largest among women with relatives attending the experiment. Parameter estimates suggest that women behave as though they expect to be pressured to share four percent of their observable income with others, and substantially more when close kin can observe income directly.

**Working Paper 6085**

**Does It Pay to Be a Cadre? Estimating the Returns to Being a Local Official in Rural China**

*June 2012* - Recruiting and retaining leaders and public servants at the grass-roots level in developing countries creates a potential tension between providing sufficient returns to attract talent and limiting the scope for excessive rent-seeking behavior. In China, researchers have frequently argued that village cadres, who are the lowest level of administrators in rural areas, exploit personal political status for economic gain. Much of the existing research, however, simply compares the earnings of cadre and non-cadre households in rural China without controlling for unobserved dimensions of ability that are also correlated with success as entrepreneurs or in non-agricultural activities. This paper avoids this pitfall. It finds measurable – but not large – return to cadre status, but that they have been increasing over time. The latter is hardly surprising given that part of the return arises through returns earned in off-farm employment from businesses and economic activities managed by villages, and that returns to non-agricultural employment have been rising since China's economic reforms began.

**Working Paper 6082**

**Patterns and correlates of intergenerational non-time transfers: evidence from CHARLS**

*June 2012* - Using the China Health and Retirement Longitudinal Study 2008 pilot, this paper analyzes the patterns and correlates of intergenerational transfers between elderly parents and adult children in Zhejiang and Gansu Provinces. The pilot is a unique data source from China that provides information on the direction as well as amount of transfers between parents and each of their children, and clearly distinguishes transfers between parents and children from those among other relatives or friends. The paper shows that transfers flow predominantly from children to elderly parents, with transfers from children playing an important role in elderly support. Educated and married children have a higher tendency to provide transfers to their parents; and oldest sons are less likely to provide transfers than their younger brothers. In the absence of some other source of elderly support (such as a public pension or own savings), the dwindling number of children implies that the financial burden associated with supporting the elderly is likely to increase.

**Working Paper 6076**

**When Do Donors Trust Recipient Country Systems?**

*April 2012* - The 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness sets targets for increased use by donors of recipient country systems for managing aid. The target is premised on a view that country systems are strengthened when donors trust recipients to manage aid funds, but undermined when donors do not. This study provides an analytical framework for understanding donors’ decisions to trust or
bypass country systems, and conducts empirical tests using data from three OECD-DAC surveys. Results show that a donor’s use of the recipient country’s systems is positively related to the donor’s share of aid provided to the recipient, perceptions of corruption in the recipient country, and public support for aid in the donor country. Findings are robust to corrections for potential sample selection, omitted variables or endogeneity bias.

Does India’s Employment Guarantee Scheme Guarantee Employment?

*March 2012* - In 2005 India introduced an ambitious national anti-poverty program, now called the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme. The program aims to dramatically reduce poverty by offering up to 100 days of unskilled manual labor per year on public works projects for any rural resident paid at the stipulated minimum wage rate. Analysis of data from India’s National Sample Survey for 2009/10 reveals considerable unmet demand for work in all states. Poorer families tend to have more demand for work on the scheme, and (despite the unmet demand) the self-targeting mechanism allows it to reach relatively poor families and backward castes. The extent of the unmet demand is greater in the poorest states – ironically where the scheme is needed most.

The Law’s Majestic Equality? The Distributive Impact of Litigating Social and Economic Rights

*March 2012* - Optimism about the use of laws, constitutions, and rights to achieve social change has never been higher among practitioners. But the academic literature is skeptical that courts can direct resources toward the poor. Using data on social and economic rights cases in five countries, the authors examine whether the poor are over or under-represented among the beneficiaries of litigation, relative to their share of the population. They find that the impact of courts varies considerably across the cases, but is positive and pro-poor in two of the five countries (India and South Africa), distribution-neutral in two others (Indonesia and Brazil), and sharply anti-poor in Nigeria. Overall, the results of litigation are much more positive for the poor than conventional wisdom would suggest.

Sexual Behavior Change Intentions and Actions in the Context of a Randomized Trial of a Conditional Cash Transfer for HIV Prevention in Tanzania

*March 2012* - Information, education, communication and interventions based on behavioral-change communication have had success in increasing the awareness of HIV. But these strategies alone have been less successful in changing risky sexual behavior. This paper addresses this issue by exploring the link between action and the intention to change behaviors. Based on an incentives-based HIV prevention trial in Tanzania, the longitudinal dataset in this paper allows the exploration of intended strategies for changing sexual behaviors and their results. The authors find that gender, intervention groups and new positive diagnoses of sexually transmitted infections can significantly predict the link between intent and action. The paper examines potential mediators of these relationships.

Weathering a Storm: Survey-Based Perspectives on Employment in China in the Aftermath of the Global Financial Crisis

*March 2012* - Evidence from a range of different sources suggests that Chinese workers lost 20-36 million jobs because of the global financial crisis. Most of these layoffs affected migrant workers, who have typically lacked employment protection, tend to be concentrated in export-oriented sectors, and were among the easiest to dismiss when the crisis hit. Although it was severe, the employment
shock was short-lived. By mid-2009, the macroeconomic stimulus and other interventions had succeeded in boosting demand for migrant labor. By early 2010, abundant evidence pointed to scarcity in China’s labor market, as labor demand was once again leading to brisk growth in wages.

Working Paper 5984

Stimulating demand for AIDS prevention: lessons from the RESPECT trial

February 2012 - HIV-prevention strategies have yielded only limited success so far in slowing down the AIDS epidemic. This paper examines novel intervention strategies that use incentives to discourage risky sexual behaviors. Widely-adopted conditional cash transfer programs that offer payments conditioning on easily monitored behaviors, such as well-child health care visits, have shown positive impact on health outcomes. Similarly, contingency management approaches have successfully used outcome-based rewards to encourage behaviors that are not easily monitored, such as stopping drug abuse. These strategies have not been used in the sexual domain, so this paper assesses how incentives can be used to reduce risky sexual behavior. After discussing theoretical pathways, it discusses the use of sexual-behavior incentives in the Tanzanian RESPECT trial. There, participants who tested negative for sexually transmitted infections are eligible for outcome-based cash rewards.

Working Paper 5973

Mines, Migration and HIV/AIDS in Southern Africa

February 2012 - Swaziland and Lesotho have the highest HIV prevalence in the world. They also share another distinct feature: during the last century, they sent a large numbers of migrant workers to South African mines. A job in the mines means leaving for long periods away from their families and living in an area with an active sex industry. This creates potential incentives for multiple, concurrent partnerships. Using Demographic and Health Surveys, this paper shows that migrant miners ages 30-44 are 15 percentage points more likely to be HIV positive, and women whose partner is a migrant miner are 8 percentage points more likely to become infected. Miners are less likely to abstain or to use condoms, and female partners of miners are more likely to engage in extramarital sex.

Working Paper 5966

Child Labor, Schooling, and Child Ability

February 2012 - Using data collected in rural Burkina Faso, this paper examines how children’s cognitive abilities influence households’ decisions to invest in their education. Taking into account the endogeneity of child ability measures, the analysis finds that negative shocks in utero lead to 0.24 standard deviations lower ability z-scores, corresponding to a 38 percent enrollment drop and a 49 percent increase in child labor hours compared with their siblings. Negative education impacts are largest for in-utero shocks, smaller for shocks before age two, and negligible after age two.

Working Paper 5965

Alternative Cash Transfer Delivery Mechanisms: Impacts on Routine Preventative Health Clinic Visits in Burkina Faso

January 2012 - The authors conducted a unique randomized experiment to estimate the impact of two alternative cash transfer delivery mechanisms on household demand for routine preventative health services in rural Burkina Faso. The two-year pilot program randomly distributed cash transfers that were either conditional or unconditional, and the money was given to either mothers or fathers. Families enrolled in the conditional cash transfer schemes were required to obtain quarterly child-growth monitoring at local health clinics for all children under five years old. There was not such a requirement under the unconditional programs. Compared with control group
households, conditional cash transfers significantly increased the number of preventative health care visits during the previous year, while unconditional cash transfers did not have such an impact. For the conditional cash transfers, money given to mothers or fathers showed beneficial impacts of similar magnitude in increasing routine visits.

Working Paper 5958

Do Informed Citizens Receive More...or Pay More? The Impact of Radio on the Government Distribution of Public Health Benefits
January 2012 - The government provision of free or subsidized bed nets to combat malaria in Benin allows the identification of new channels through which mass media affect public policy outcomes. Prior research has concluded that governments provide greater private benefits to better-informed individuals. This paper shows, for the first time, that governments can also respond by exploiting informed individuals' greater willingness to pay for these benefits. Using a "natural experiment" in radio markets in northern Benin, the paper finds that media access increases the likelihood that households pay for the bed nets they receive from government, rather than getting them for free. Mass media appears to change the private behavior of citizens – in this case, to invest more of their own resources on a public health good (bed nets) – but not their ability to extract greater benefits from government.

Working Paper 5952

Human rights as demands for communicative action
January 2012 - A key issue with human rights is how to allocate duties correlative to rights claims. This paper addresses the issue by taking the practices of domestic courts in several countries as a normative benchmark. Upon reviewing how courts in Colombia, India, South Africa, Indonesia, and elsewhere have allocated duties associated with socio-economic rights, the paper finds that courts urge parties to move from an adversarial to an investigative mode, impose requirements that parties argue in good faith, and structure a public forum of communication. The conclusion argues that judicial practice involves requiring respondents to engage in communicative, instead of strategic, action, and explores the implications of this understanding of human rights.

Working Paper 5951

Human rights based approaches to development: concepts, evidence, and policy
January 2012 - This paper assesses the benefits, risks, and limitations of human rights-based approaches to development, which can be catalogued on the basis of the institutional mechanisms they rely on: global compliance based on international and regional treaties; the policies and programming of donors and executive agencies; rights talk; and legal mobilization. The paper briefly reviews the politics of the first three kinds of human rights based approaches before examining constitutionally-based legal mobilization for social and economic rights in greater detail. Litigation for social and economic rights is increasing in frequency and scope in several countries, and exhibits appealing attributes, such as inclusiveness and deliberative quality. Still, there are potential problems with this form of human rights based mobilization, including middle class capture, the potential counter-majoritarianism of courts, and difficulties in compliance. The conclusion summarizes what is known, and what remains to be studied, regarding human rights based approaches to development.

Working Paper 5938

Aid tying and donor fragmentation
January 2012 - This study tests two opposing hypotheses about the impact of aid fragmentation on the practice of aid tying. In one, when a small number of donors dominate the aid market in a
country, they may exploit their monopoly power by tying more aid to purchases from contractors based in their own countries. Alternatively, when donors have a larger share of the aid market, they may have stronger incentives to maximize the development impact of their aid by tying less of it. Empirical tests strongly and consistently support the latter hypothesis: higher donor aid shares are associated with less, not more, aid tying.

Working Paper 5934

2011

Average and Marginal Returns to Upper Secondary Schooling in Indonesia
November 2011 - This paper estimates average and marginal returns to schooling in Indonesia using a non-parametric selection model estimated by local instrumental variables, and data from the Indonesia Family Life Survey. The analysis finds that the return to upper secondary schooling varies widely across individual: it can be as high as 50 percent per year of schooling for those very likely to enroll in upper secondary schooling, or as low as -10 percent for those very unlikely to do so. Returns to the marginal student (14 percent) are well below those for the average student attending upper secondary schooling (27 percent).

Working Paper 5878

The Measurement of Educational Inequality: Achievement and Opportunity
November 2011 - This paper proposes two related measures of educational inequality: one for educational achievement and another for educational opportunity. The former is the variance in test scores. Its selection is informed by consideration of two measurement issues that have typically been overlooked in the literature: the implications of the standardization of test scores for inequality indices, and the possible sample selection biases arising from the Program of International Student Assessment (PISA) sampling frame. Inequality of educational opportunity is measured by the share of the variance in test scores that is explained by pre-determined circumstances. Both measures are computed for the 57 countries in which PISA surveys were conducted in 2006. Inequality of opportunity accounts for up to 35 percent of all disparities in educational achievement, and is larger in (most of) continental Europe and Latin America than in Asia, Scandinavia, and North America.

Working Paper 5873

The Labor Supply and Retirement Behavior of China’s Older Workers and Elderly in Comparative Perspective
October 2011 - As is common in many developing countries, China can be characterized as having two retirement systems: a formal system, under which urban employees receive generous pensions and face mandatory retirement by age 60, and an informal system, under which rural residents and individuals in the informal sector rely on family support in old age and have much longer working lives. Gender differences in age of exit from work are shown to be much greater in urban China than in rural areas, and are greater than observed in Korea and Indonesia. Pension-eligible workers are far more likely to cease productive activity at a relatively young age. A strong relationship between health status and labor supply in rural areas is also observed.

Working Paper 5853

Four Decades of Health Economics through a Bibliometric Lens
October 2011 - Adam Wagstaff and Anthony J Culyer take a bibliometric tour of the past 40 years of health economics using bibliographic "metadata" from EconLit supplemented by citation data from Google Scholar and the authors' topical classifications. They report the growth of health economics (33,000 publications since 1969), list the 300 most-cited publications broken down by topic, and the
changing topical and geographic focus of health economics. They also compare authors, countries, institutions, and journals in terms of the volume of publications and their influence as measured through various citation-based indices.

**Working Paper 5829**

**Does Expanding Health Insurance beyond Formal-Sector Workers Encourage Informality? Measuring the Impact of Mexico’s Seguro Popular**

*August 2011 -* Seguro Popular was introduced in 2002 to provide health insurance to the 50 million Mexicans without Social Security. This paper tests whether the program has had unintended consequences, distorting workers’ incentives to operate in the informal sector. The paper finds that Seguro Popular lowers formality by 0.4–0.7 percentage points, with adjustments largely occurring within a few years of the program's introduction. Rather than encouraging exit from the formal sector, Seguro Popular is associated with a 3.1 percentage point reduction (a 20 percent decline) in the inflow of workers into formality. The impact is larger for those with less education, in larger households, and with someone else in the household guaranteeing Social Security coverage.

**Working Paper 5785**

**The Impact of Recall Periods on Reported Morbidity and Health Seeking Behavior**

*August 2011 -* Between 2000 and 2002, the authors followed 1621 individuals in Delhi, India, using a combination of weekly and monthly-recall health questionnaires. In 2008, they augmented these data with another 8 weeks of surveys during which households were experimentally allocated to surveys with different recall periods in the second half of the survey. This paper shows that the length of the recall period had a large impact on reported morbidity, doctor visits, time spent sick, whether at least one day of work/school was lost due to sickness, and the reported use of self-medication. The effects are more pronounced among the poor than the rich. In one example, differential recall effects across income groups reverse the sign of the gradient between doctor visits and per-capita expenditures.

**Working Paper 5778**

**A Hybrid Approach to Efficiency Measurement with Empirical Illustrations from Education and Health**

*August 2011 -* Inefficiency is commonplace, yet exercises aimed at improving provider performance efforts to date to measure inefficiency and use it in benchmarking exercises have not been altogether satisfactory. This paper proposes a new approach that blends the themes of Data Envelopment Analysis and the Stochastic Frontier Approach to measure overall efficiency. The hybrid approach nonparametrically estimates inefficiency by comparing actual performance with comparable real-life "best practice" on the frontier and could be useful in exercises aimed at improving provider performance. Four applications in the education and health sectors are used to illustrate the features and strengths of this hybrid approach.

**Working Paper 5751**

**Crossing boundaries: gender, caste and schooling in rural Pakistan**

*June 2011 -* This paper analyzes social barriers to education attainment in rural Pakistan. It finds that low-caste children are deterred from enrolling when the school is dominated by high-caste households. In particular, low-caste girls, the most educationally disadvantaged group, benefit from improved school access only when the school is also caste-concordant.

**Working Paper 5710**
Lasting Welfare Effects of Widowhood in a Poor Country
July 2011 - Malian households headed by widows have significantly lower living standards on average than male- or other female-headed households; this holds even after controlling for household and individual characteristics such as age. Furthermore, the adverse welfare effects of widowhood appear to persist even after widows are absorbed into male headed households. Relative to other women, worse outcomes for ever-widowed women persist through remarriage. These detrimental effects are passed on to children, indicating an intergenerational transmission of poverty stemming from widowhood.

Working Paper 5734

Civil Society, Public Action and Accountability in Africa
July 2011 - This paper examines the potential role of civil society action in increasing state accountability for development in Sub-Saharan Africa. It further develops the analytical framework of the World Development Report 2004 on accountability relationships, to emphasize the underlying political economy drivers of accountability and implications for how civil society is constituted and functions. It argues on this basis that the most important domain for improving accountability is through the political relations between citizens, civil society, and state leadership.

Working Paper 5733

The correlation between human capital and morality and its effect on economic performance: theory and evidence
June 2011 - This paper incorporates morality into a simple static general equilibrium model in which agents choose whether to be producers or appropriators. The authors analyze the relationship between the correlation between morality and human capital on the one hand, and aggregate economic performance on the other. They show that there is a main effect that tends to cause this relationship to be positive, and secondary effects that may reinforce or oppose the main effect. Empirical tests find evidence that higher within-country correlation between morality and ability increases per-capita income levels. Results are robust to correcting for endogeneity and to changes in sample and specification.

Working Paper 5720

Population, poverty, and sustainable development: a review of the evidence
June 2011 - There is a very large but scattered literature debating the economic implications of high fertility. This paper reviews the literature on three themes: (a) Does high fertility affect low-income countries’ prospects for economic growth and poverty reduction? (b) Does population growth exacerbate pressure on natural resources? and (c) Are family planning programs effective at lowering fertility, and should they be publicly funded? The literature shows broad consensus that while policy and institutional settings are key in shaping the prospects of economic growth and poverty reduction, the rate of population growth also matters. Recent studies find that low dependency ratios (as fertility declines) create an opportunity for increasing productivity, savings and investment in future growth. They find that lower fertility is associated with better child health and schooling, and better health and greater labor-force participation for women.

Working Paper 5719

Trends and socioeconomic gradients in adult mortality around the developing world
June 2011 - Sibling histories from respondents to 84 DHS surveys from 46 countries yield four main findings. First, while under-5 mortality has fallen over time, adult mortality has not. Second, the increase in Sub-Saharan African was dramatic among those most affected by HIV/AIDS: mortality
rates in the highest HIV-prevalence countries exceed those in countries that experienced civil war. Third, mortality rates are stagnating—in some cases increasing—even where HIV-prevalence is lower. Finally, adult mortality rates in Sub-Saharan Africa have risen substantially faster for men than for women. The data do not show large gaps by urban/rural residence or by school attainment. Working Paper 5716

**Intersubjective meaning and collective action in 'fragile' societies: theory, evidence and policy implications**

*June 2011* - The capacity to act collectively is not just a matter of groups sharing interests, incentives and values (or being sufficiently small), as standard economic theory predicts, but a prior and shared understanding of the constituent elements of problem(s) and possible solutions. From this standpoint, the failure to act collectively can stem at least in part from relevant groups failing to ascribe a common intersubjective meaning to situations, processes and events. Though this is a general phenomenon, it is particularly salient in countries characterized by societal fragility and endemic conflict. We develop a conceptual account of intersubjective meanings, explain its relevance to development practice and research, and examine its implications for development work related to building the rule of law and managing common pool resources. Working Paper 5707

**Redressing grievances and complaints regarding basic service delivery**

*June 2011* - Redress procedures are important for basic fairness. In addition, they can help address principal-agent problems in the implementation of social policies and provide information to policy makers regarding policy design. To function effectively, a system of redress requires a well-designed and inter-linked supply of redress procedures as well as, especially if rights consciousness is not well-developed in a society, a set of organizations that stimulate and aggregate demand for redress. On the supply side, this paper identifies three kinds of redress procedures: administrative venues within government agencies, independent institutions outside government departments, and courts. On the demand side, the key institutions are nongovernmental organizations/civil society organizations and the news media, both of which require a receptive political and economic climate to function effectively. Overall, procedures for redressing grievances and complaints regarding basic service delivery are under-developed in many countries, and deserve further analysis, piloting, and support. Working Paper 5699

**Students Today, Teachers Tomorrow? Identifying Constraints on the Provision of Education**

*June 2011* - With an estimated 115 million children not attending primary school in the developing world, increasing access to education is critical. Resource constraints limit the effectiveness of demand-based subsidies, raising the question of how effective supply-side channels might be. This paper finds that the presence of a government girls' secondary school substantially increases the local supply of skilled women, lowers teacher wages locally, and increases by a factor of three the likelihood that an affordable private school will emerge. These findings highlight the prominent role of women as teachers in facilitating educational access. Working Paper 5674

**Is it what you inherited or what you learnt? Intergenerational linkage and interpersonal inequality in Senegal**

*May 2011* - Institutional features of the African setting -- large extended families and imperfect credit and land markets -- matter to the equity and efficiency roles played by intergenerational linkages. Using original survey data on Senegal that include an individualized measure of consumption, this
paper finds among other things that inheritance of non-land assets and the education and occupation of parents (especially the mother) and their choices about children's schooling are more important to adult welfare than property inheritance. Significant gender inequality in consumption is evident, although it is almost entirely explicable in terms of factors such as education and (non-land) inheritance.

Income Shocks and Adolescent Mental Health
April 2011 - The provision of monthly cash transfers in Malawi had a strong beneficial impact on the mental health of school-age girls during the two-year intervention. Among baseline schoolgirls who were offered unconditional cash transfers, the likelihood of suffering from psychological distress was 38 percent lower than the control group, while the same figure was 17 percent if the cash transfers offers were made conditional on regular school attendance. No impact is found on the mental health of girls who had already dropped out of school at baseline. The beneficial effects of cash transfers were limited to the intervention period and dissipated quickly after the program ended.

School Inputs, Household Substitution, and Test Scores
April 2011 - Empirical studies of the relationship between school inputs and test scores typically do not account for the fact that households will respond to changes in school inputs. This paper presents a dynamic household optimization model relating test scores to school and household inputs, and tests its predictions in two very different low-income country settings -- Zambia and India. The authors measure household spending changes and student test score gains in response to unanticipated as well as anticipated changes in school funding. Consistent with the optimization model, they find in both settings that households offset anticipated grants more than unanticipated grants. They also find that unanticipated school grants lead to significant improvements in student test scores but anticipated grants have no impact on test scores.

A Practical Comparison of the Bivariate Probit and Linear IV Estimators
March 2011 - This paper presents asymptotic theory and Monte-Carlo simulations comparing maximum-likelihood bivariate probit and linear instrumental variables estimators of treatment effects in models with a binary endogenous treatment and binary outcome. The three main contributions of the paper are (1) clarifying the relationship between the Average Treatment Effect obtained in the bivariate probit model and the Local Average Treatment Effect estimated through linear IV; (2) comparing the mean-square error and the actual size and power of tests based on these estimators across a wide range of parameter values relative to the existing literature; and (3) assessing the performance of misspecification tests for bivariate probit models. The authors recommend two changes to common practices: bootstrapped confidence intervals for both estimators, and a score test to check goodness of fit for the bivariate probit model.

Mass Media and Public Services: The Effects of Radio Access on Public Education in Benin
February 2011 - Does radio access improve public service provision? And if so, does it do so by increasing government accountability to citizens, or by persuading households to take advantage of publicly provided services? Using unique data from Benin, this paper finds that literacy rates among school children are higher in villages exposed to signals from a larger number of community radio stations. But in contrast to prior research, the authors find that this media effect does not operate through government accountability: government inputs into village schools and household
knowledge of government education policies are no different in villages with greater access to community radio. Instead, households with greater access are more likely to make financial investments in the education of their children.

**Crossing the threshold: an analysis of IBRD graduation policy**

*January 2011* - According to World Bank policy, countries remain eligible to borrow from the IBRD until they are able to sustain long-term development without further recourse to Bank financing. Graduation is not an automatic consequence of reaching a particular income level, but rather is supposed to be based on a determination of whether the country has reached a level of institutional development and capital-market access that enables it to sustain its own development process without recourse to IBRD funding. This paper finds that a number of variables have influenced graduation decisions in a manner that is generally consistent with the stated policy. Countries that are wealthier, more creditworthy, more institutionally developed, and less vulnerable to shocks are more likely to have graduated. Predicted probabilities generated by the model correspond closely to the actual graduation and de-graduation experiences of most countries (such as Korea and Trinidad and Tobago), and suggest that Hungary and Latvia may have graduated prematurely—a prediction that is consistent with their subsequent return to borrowing from the Bank in the wake of the global financial crisis.

**Shrinking classroom age variance raises student achievement: evidence from developing countries**

*January 2011* - This paper investigates whether increased classroom age variance adversely affects mathematics and science achievement. Using exogenous variation in the variance of student age in ability-mixing schools, the author finds robust negative effects of classroom age variance on fourth graders’ achievement in developing countries. A simulation demonstrates that re-grouping students by age in the sample can improve math and science test scores by roughly 0.1 standard deviations. According to past estimates for the United States, this effect size is similar to that of raising expenditures per student by 26 percent.

**Food Crisis, Household Welfare and HIV/AIDS Treatment: Evidence from Mozambique**

*January 2011* - Using panel data from Mozambique collected in 2007 and 2008, the authors explore the impact of the food crisis on the welfare of households living with HIV/AIDS. The analysis finds that there has been a real deterioration of welfare in terms of income, food consumption, and nutritional status in Mozambique between 2007 and 2008, among both HIV and comparison households. However, HIV households have not suffered more from the crisis than others. Results on the evolution of labor force participation suggest that initiation of treatment and better services in health facilities have counter-balanced the effect of the crisis by improving the health of patients and their labor force participation. The paper finds no effect of the change in welfare on the frequency of visits, but does find that people who experienced a negative income shock also experienced a reduction or a slower progression in treatment outcomes.

**Impact evaluation of school feeding programs in Lao PDR**

*January 2011* - Despite the popularity and widespread implementation of school feeding programs, evidence on the impact of school feeding on school participation and nutritional status is mixed. This study evaluates school feeding programs in three northern districts of the Lao PDR. Feeding
modalities included on-site feeding, take-home rations, and a combination. District-level implementation of the intervention sites and selective take-up present considerable evaluation challenges. To address these limitations, the authors use difference-in-difference estimators with propensity-score weighting to construct two plausible counterfactuals. They find minimal evidence that the school feeding schemes increased enrollment or improved children’s nutritional status. Several robustness checks and possible explanations for null findings are presented.

Working Paper 5518

2010

Can China’s rural elderly count on support from adult children? implications of rural-to-urban migration

December 2010 - This paper shows that support from the family continues to be an important source of support for the rural elderly, particularly the rural elderly over 70 years of age. Decline in likelihood of co-residence with, or in close proximity to, adult children raises the possibility that China’s rural elderly will receive less support in the forms of both income and in-kind instrumental care. In fact, on average net financial transfers look set to be similar for elderly households with and without migrant children, but the predicted variance for the latter group is higher suggesting a greater risk of poverty. Reducing this risk is an important motive for China’s new rural pension program scheduled to cover all rural counties by 2016.

Working Paper 5510

Antiretroviral therapy awareness and risky sexual behaviors: evidence from Mozambique

November 2010 - This paper studies the effect of increased access to antiretroviral therapy (ART) on risky sexual behavior, using data collected in Mozambique in 2007 and 2008. The survey sampled both households of randomly selected HIV positive individuals and households from the general population. Controlling for unobserved individual characteristics, the findings support the hypothesis of disinhibition behaviors, whereby risky sexual behaviors increase in response to the perceived changes in risk associated with increased access to ART. Furthermore, men and women respond differently to the perceived changes in risk: risky behaviors increase for men who believe, wrongly, that AIDS can be cured, while risky behaviors increase for women who believe, correctly, that ART can treat AIDS but cannot cure it. The findings suggest that scaling up access to ART needs to be accompanied by prevention programs that include educational messages about its effects.

Working Paper 5486

Did Higher Inequality Impede Growth in Rural China

November 2010 - This paper estimates the relationship between initial village inequality and subsequent household income growth for a large sample of households in rural China. Using a rich longitudinal survey spanning the years 1987-2002, and controlling for an array of household and village characteristics, the paper finds that households located in higher inequality villages experienced significantly lower income growth through the 1990s. The authors conclude that this relationship is due to unobserved village institutions at the time of economic reforms that were associated with household access to higher income activities. The paper also concludes that local inequality's predictive power and effects are significantly diminished by the end of the sample.

Working Paper 5483

Protecting Child Nutritional Status in the Aftermath of a Financial Crisis: Evidence from Indonesia

November 2010 - This paper evaluates the effectiveness of a supplementary feeding program
implemented in the wake of the 1997-1998 economic crises in Indonesia and geared to protecting the nutritional status of infants and young children from adverse effects of the crisis. The analysis exploits heterogeneity in program exposure to eliminate biases due to nonrandom program placement, and to relax the assumption that all targeted children experienced homogenous exposure to the program. The program is estimated to have improved the nutritional status of children aged 12-24 months, and apparently helped avoid problems of severe malnutrition among young children.

**In Aid We Trust: Hearts and Minds and the Pakistan Earthquake of 2005**

*October 2010* - Winning "hearts and minds" in the Muslim world is an explicitly acknowledged aim of U.S. foreign policy and increasingly, bilateral foreign aid is recognized as a vehicle towards this end. The authors examine the effect of aid from foreign organizations and on-the-ground presence of foreigners following the 2005 earthquake in Northern Pakistan on local attitudes. They show that four years after the earthquake, humanitarian assistance by foreigners and foreign organizations has left a lasting imprint on population attitudes. The results provide a compelling case that trust in foreigners is malleable, responds to humanitarian actions by foreigners and is not a deep-rooted function of local preferences.

**The impact of the global financial crisis on off-farm employment and earnings in rural China**

*October 2010* - This paper examines the effect of the financial crisis on off-farm employment of China’s rural labor force. Using a national representative data set collected from across China, the paper finds that there was a substantial impact. By April 2009 off-farm employment reached 6.8 percent of the rural labor force. Monthly earnings also declined. However, while it is estimated that 49 million were laid-off between October 2008 and April 2009, half of them were re-hired in off-farm work by April 2009. By August 2009, less than 2 percent of the rural labor force was unemployed due to the crisis. The robust recovery appears to have helped avoid instability.

**Political economy of infrastructure spending in India**

*September 2010* - This paper examines a puzzle in the political economy of infrastructure in India—the coexistence of relatively low shares of capital spending in public budgets alongside evidence of large demand for village infrastructure from poor voters. It argues that this pattern is due to infrastructure projects being used at the margin for political rent-seeking, while spending on employment and welfare transfers are the preferred vehicles to win votes for re-election. New suggestive evidence on the variation of public spending composition across states, and within states over time is offered that is consistent with this argument.

**The value of statistical life: a contingent investigation in China**

*September 2010* - This paper presents a study that estimates individuals' willingness to pay for cancer risk prevention in three provinces of China. The results imply that the mean value of willingness to pay for a cancer vaccine that is effective for one year is 759 yuan, with a much lower median value of 171 yuan. The estimated income-elasticity of willingness to pay is 0.42. Using data on the incidence of cancer illness and death in the population, these willingness-to-pay figures imply that the marginal value of reducing the anticipated incidence of cancer mortality by one in the population (i.e. the value of a statistical life) is 73,000 yuan, with an average value of 795,000 yuan;
these figures are about six and 60 times average household annual income, respectively.

**Explaining variation in child labor statistics**
*September 2010* - This paper presents the results from a randomized survey experiment in Tanzania focusing on two aspects of household surveys aimed at eliciting information on child labor: different questionnaire design to classify child work, and proxy response versus self-reporting. Use of a short module compared with a more detailed questionnaire has a statistically significant effect, especially on child labor force participation rates, and, to a lesser extent, on working hours. By contrast, proxy reports do not differ significantly from a child’s self-report.

**Economic freedom, human rights, and the returns to human capital: an evaluation of the Schultz hypothesis**
*August 2010* - According to T.W. Schultz, the returns to human capital are highest in economic environments experiencing unexpected price, productivity, and technology shocks that create "disequilibria." This paper tests the hypothesis that the returns to skills are highest in countries that allow individuals to respond to shocks. Using estimated returns to schooling and work experience from 122 household surveys in 86 developing countries, this paper demonstrates a strong positive correlation between the returns to human capital and economic freedom, an effect that is observed throughout the wage distribution. Economic freedom benefits those workers who have attained the most schooling as well as those who have accumulated the most work experience.

**A control function approach to estimating dynamic probit models with endogenous regressors, with an application to the study of poverty persistence in China**
*August 2010* - This paper proposes a parametric approach to estimating a dynamic binary response panel data model that allows for endogenous contemporaneous regressors. This approach is of particular value for settings in which one wants to estimate the effects of an endogenous treatment on a binary outcome. An application of the method shows that migration within China is important for reducing the likelihood that poor households remain in poverty and that non-poor households fall into poverty; failure to control for unobserved heterogeneity leads to an underestimation of these effects.

**Experimental approaches in migration studies**
*August 2010* - The decision of whether or not to migrate has far-reaching consequences for the lives of individuals and their families. But the very nature of this choice makes identifying the impacts of migration difficult, since it is hard to measure credibly what the person and their household would have been doing had migration not occurred. Migration experiments provide a clear and credible way for identifying this counterfactual, and thereby allowing causal estimation of the impacts of migration. The authors provide an overview and critical review of the three strands of this approach: policy experiments, natural experiments, and researcher-led field experiments.

**The economic consequences of "brain drain" of the best and brightest: microeconomic evidence from five countries**
*August 2010* - Brain drain has long been a concern for migrant-sending countries, particularly for small countries where high-skilled emigration rates are highest. But while economic theory suggests
both benefits and costs from skilled emigration, the evidence base on these is very limited. This paper presents the results of innovative surveys that tracked academic high-achievers from five countries to wherever they moved in the world. Thanks to these surveys, the paper is able to present detailed micro-level measurements of how high-skilled emigration affects both the migrants and the sending country—in terms of income, education, remittances, trade and FDI, knowledge-sharing, and fiscal costs.

**Working Paper 5394**

**On Measuring Scientific Influence**

*July 2010* - Bibliometric measures based on citations are widely used in assessing the scientific publication records of authors, institutions and journals. Yet currently favored measures lack a clear conceptual foundation and are known to have counter-intuitive properties. The authors propose a new approach grounded on a theoretical "influence function" that embodies explicit prior beliefs about how citations reflect influence. They provide conditions for robust qualitative comparisons of influence -- conditions that can be implemented using readily available data. An example is provided using the economics publication records of selected universities and the World Bank.

**Working Paper 5375**

**The World Bank’s Publication Record**

*July 2010* - The World Bank has produced a huge volume of books and papers on development -- 20,000 publications spanning decades. This paper finds evidence that many of these publications have influenced development thinking, as indicated by the citations found using Google Scholar and bibliographic data bases. However, a non-negligible share of the Bank’s publications have received no citations, though they may well have influenced non-academic audiences. Individually authored journal articles have been the main channel for scholarly influence. The Bank produces more research output on development than do other international agencies or top universities, while the quality and influence of these Bank publications equal or exceed those of most top universities.

**Working Paper 5374**

**Child ability and household human capital investment decisions in Burkina Faso**

*July 2010* - Using data they collected in rural Burkina Faso, the authors examine how children’s cognitive abilities influence resource-constrained households’ decisions to invest in their education. This paper uses a direct measure of child ability for all primary school-aged children (regardless of enrollment), and it also uses measures of siblings’ ability, to test how sibling rivalry affects parents’ decisions on investing in education of their child. The findings indicate that children with one standard deviation higher ability are 16 percent more likely to be currently enrolled, but that having a higher-ability sibling reduces the likelihood of enrollment by a similar amount.

**Working Paper 5370**

**Education, labor rights, and incentives: contract teacher cases in the Indian courts**

*July 2010* - Since the early 1990s, the Indian government has increasingly employed contract workers to perform state functions, including teaching. Yet little research has been done on how courts have reacted to this policy shift. This paper looks at all relevant cases in the Indian Supreme Court and four High Courts over the last thirty years, and finds that the judiciary has increasingly become less sympathetic to contract teachers’ demands. The paper argues that the Court could use judicial review to engage the government and guide the creation of a labor policy that achieves a better school system for students and teachers.

**Working Paper 5365**
The Global Financial Crisis and Development Thinking  
*June 2010* - The global financial crisis has not only dealt a major blow to the global economy, but also shaken confidence in economic management in the developed world and the economic models that guide it. The crisis has revealed major market failures, especially in the housing bubble and its transmission to the financial system, but also glaring state failures that propagated and exacerbated the crisis. Will the events of the past two years lead to major shifts in thinking about development economics, and should they? This paper assesses that question for several key domains of development thinking, including the market-state balance, macroeconomic management, globalization, development financing, and public spending.

[Working Paper 5353](#)

China's Marriage Market and Upcoming Challenges for Elderly Men  
*June 2010* - Fertility decline has fueled a sharp increase in the proportion of 'missing girls' in China, so an increasing share of males will fail to marry, and will face old age without the support normally provided by wives and children. This paper shows that historically, China has had nearly-universal marriage for women and a very competitive market for men. Lower-educated men experience higher rates of bachelorhood while women favor men with better prospects, migrating if needed from poorer to wealthier areas. The authors examine the anticipated effects of this combination of bride shortage and hypergamy, for different regions of China.

[Working Paper 5351](#)

Political Capture of Decentralization: Vote-Buying through Grants-Financed Local Jurisdictions  
*June 2010* - A recent trend in decentralization in several large and diverse countries is the creation of local jurisdictions below the regional level -- municipalities, towns, and villages -- whose spending is almost exclusively financed by grants from both regional and national governments. This paper argues that such grants-financed decentralization enables politicians to target benefits to pivotal voters and organized interest groups in exchange for political support. Decentralization, in this model, is subject to political capture, facilitating vote-buying, patronage, or pork-barrel projects, at the expense of effective provision of broad public goods. The paper explores the theory's implications for international development programs in support of decentralization.

[Working Paper 5350](#)

The Publicity "Defect" of Customary Law  
*June 2010* - This paper examines the extent to which dispute resolvers in customary law systems provide widely understandable justifications for their decisions. The paper first examines the liberal-democratic reasons for the importance of publicity, understood to be wide accessibility of legal justification, by reviewing the uses of publicity in Habermas’ and Rawls’ accounts of the rule of law. Taking examples from Sierra Leone, the paper then argues that customary law systems would benefit from making the reasons for local dispute resolution practices, such as "begging" from elders, witchcraft, and openness of hearings, more widely accessible. The paper concludes that although legal pluralism is usually taken to be an analytical concept, it may have a normative thrust as well, and that publicity standards would also apply to formal courts in developing countries, which are also typically "defective" along this dimension.

[Working Paper 5349](#)

Are health shocks different? evidence from a multi-shock survey in Laos  
*June 2010* - In Laos health shocks are more common than most other shocks and more concentrated
among the poor. They tend to be more idiosyncratic than non-health shocks, and are more costly, leading to high medical expenses and sizeable income losses. Health shocks also stand out from other shocks in the number of coping strategies they trigger, and in terms of households being forced to cut back consumption and affecting a family’s well-being “a lot.” Household members experiencing a health shock did not recover their former subjective health following the health shock, losing, on average, 0.6 points on a 5-point scale.

**Access to Water, Women's Work and Child Outcomes**

*May 2010* - Taking into account the nonrandom placement of water infrastructure, and using survey data from nine developing countries, this paper finds that access to water does not lead to increased off-farm work for women. However, in countries where substantial gender gaps in schooling exist, both boys’ and girls’ enrollments improve with better access to water. There are also some signs of impacts on child health as measured by anthropometric z-scores.

**Aid Quality and Donor Rankings**

*May 2010* - This paper presents an overall aid quality index and four coherently defined sub-indexes on aid selectivity, alignment, harmonization, and specialization. Compared with earlier indicators used in donor rankings, the indicator set developed is more comprehensive and representative of the range of donor practices addressed in the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, improving the validity, reliability, and robustness of rankings. One of the innovations is to increase the validity of the aid quality indicators by adjusting for recipient characteristics, donor aid volumes, and other factors. Despite these improvements in data and methodology, the authors caution against overinterpretation on overall indexes such as these.

**Cash or Condition? Evidence from a Randomized Cash Transfer Program**

*March 2010* - Are the large enrollment effects of Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) programs a result of the conditions or simply the cash? This paper presents the first experimental evidence on the effectiveness of conditionality in cash transfer programs for schooling. Using data from an intervention in Malawi that featured randomized conditional and unconditional treatment arms, the authors find that the program reduced the dropout rate by more than 40% and substantially increased regular school attendance among the target population of adolescent girls. However, the authors do not detect a higher impact in the conditional treatment group. This finding contrasts with previous non-experimental studies of CCT programs, which found negligible “income” effects and strong "price" effects on schooling. The authors argue that their findings are consistent with the very low level of incomes and the high prevalence of teen marriage in the region.

**Benefit Incidence Analysis: Are Government Health Expenditures More Pro-rich Than We Think?**

*March 2010* - It is generally accepted that government health expenditures should disproportionately benefit the poor. And yet in most developing countries the opposite is the case. This paper examines the implications of a central assumption of benefit incidence analysis, namely that the unit cost of a government-provided service bears no relation to the out-of-pocket payments paid by the patient. It argues that a more plausible assumption is that larger out-of-pocket payments for a given unit of utilization reflect more (or more costly) services being delivered. The paper shows that this second more realistic assumption is likely to make government spending on health appear
more pro-rich than the traditional constant-cost assumption.

Working Paper 5234

A New Approach to Producing Geographic Profiles of HIV Prevalence: An Application to Malawi
January 2010 - This paper proposes a new approach to the estimation of HIV prevalence for relatively small geographic areas in settings where national population-based surveys of prevalence are not available. The proposed approach, which uses small-area estimation (SAE) methods, aims to overcome some of the difficulties with prevailing methods of deriving HIV prevalence estimates (at both national and sub-national levels) directly from sentinel surveys. The paper illustrates the methods in the case of Malawi where the adult prevalence is estimated to be the eighth highest in the world. The paper is the first time that SAE methods have been applied to HIV prevalence data.

Working Paper 5207

Do Labor Statistics Depend on How and to Whom the Questions Are Asked? Results from a Survey Experiment in Tanzania
January 2010 - Labor market statistics are critical for assessing and understanding economic development. In practice, widespread variation exists in how labor statistics are measured in household surveys in low-income countries. Little is known whether these differences have an effect on the labor statistics they produce. This paper analyzes these effects by implementing a survey experiment in Tanzania that varied two key dimensions: the level of detail of the questions and the type of respondent. Significant differences are observed across survey designs with respect to different labor statistics.

Working Paper 5192

2009

International aid and financial crises in donor countries
December 2009 - The global financial crisis has already led to sharp downturns in the developing world. In the past, international aid has been able to offset partially the effects of crises that began in the developing world, but because this crisis began in the wealthy countries, donors may be less willing or able to increase aid in this crisis. Using panel data from 24 donor countries between 1977 and 2007, this paper finds that banking crises in donor countries have been associated with substantial additional reductions in aid flows, beyond any income-related effects, perhaps because of the high fiscal costs of crisis and the debt hangover in the post-crisis periods. The results also confirm that donor-country incomes are robustly related to per capita aid flows. Because donor countries are being hit hard by the current global recession and several have also suffered banking-sector crises, aid is likely to fall by a significant amount (relative to the counterfactual) in the coming years.

Working Paper 5162

U.S. and them: the geography of academic research
December 2009 - Using a database of 76,046 empirical economics papers published between 1985 and 2004 in the top 202 economics journals, the authors report two associations. First, controlling for the availability and quality of data in the country, and indicators of governance, per-capita research output on a given country increases with the country's per capita gross domestic product (the elasticity is around 0.4). Surprisingly, the United States (US) is not an outlier in this relationship. Second, papers written about the U.S. are around 2.5 percentage points more likely to be published in the top-five economics journals, even after partially controlling for the quality of research.

Working Paper 5152

Family systems, political systems, and Asia's 'missing girls': the construction of son preference and its unraveling
December 2009 - Son preference is known to be found in certain types of cultures, that is patrilineal cultures. But what explains the fact that China, South Korea, and Northwest India manifest such extreme child sex ratios compared with other patrilineal societies? This paper argues that what makes these societies unique is that their pre-modern political and administrative systems used patrilineages to organize and administer their citizens. The interplay of culture, state, and political processes generated uniquely rigid patriliney and son preference. The paper also argues that the advent of the modern state in these settings has unraveled the underpinnings of the rigid patrilineal rules, and unleashed a variety of forces that reduce son preference.

Working Paper 5148

What did you do all day? Maternal education and child outcomes
November 2009 - New research from Pakistan suggests that mothers with some education spend 75 minutes more on educational activities at home (including helping with schoolwork) than mothers with no education. Children whose mothers have some education achieve higher test scores in English, Urdu and mathematics than children whose mothers have no education. Mothers with some education do not, however, seem to have greater bargaining power within their household. Education therefore seems to affect how mothers value their children's education.

Working Paper 5143

How might India’s public health systems be strengthened?
November 2009 - India’s central government’s policies, though well-intentioned, have inadvertently de-emphasized environmental health and other preventive public health services since the 1950s, when it was decided to amalgamate the medical and public health services and to focus public health services largely on single-issue programs. This paper discusses how successive policy decisions have diminished the health ministry’s capacity for stewardship of the nation’s public health. It also discusses approaches to strengthening the public health system, including linking central government fiscal support to states to progress in four areas, such as having states establish of separate public health directorates.

Working Paper 5140

Mental Health in the Aftermath of Conflict
November 2009 - Assessments of the mental health consequences of conflict face a number of challenges: lack of validated mental health scales in a survey context; difficulties in measuring individual exposure to conflict; and issues related to making causal inferences from observed correlations. The authors illustrate how some of these issues can be overcome in a study of mental health in post-conflict Bosnia and Herzegovina. They measure mental health using a clinically validated scale, and exposure to conflict through administrative data on war casualties. They find no significant relationship between the two.

Working Paper 5132

Comparing condom use with different types of partners: evidence from national HIV surveys in Africa
November 2009 - Based on nationally representative samples from 13 Sub-Saharan African countries, this paper finds that condom use in general is low in this region. It also finds that in general men report using condoms more frequently than women, and that unmarried individuals report they use condoms more frequently than married individuals with their spouse. The paper discovers a gender difference in relation to condom use with extramarital partners: married men use condoms with extramarital partners about as frequently as unmarried men; however, married women use condoms with extramarital partners less frequently than unmarried women.

Working Paper 5130
The association between remarriage and HIV infection: new evidence from national HIV surveys in Africa

*November 2009* - It is known that divorced, separated, and widowed individuals in Africa are at significantly increased risk for HIV. This paper shows that remarried individuals are typically a larger group than the divorced, separated, or widowed, and furthermore also have higher-than-average HIV prevalence. This large number of high-risk remarried individuals is an important source of vulnerability and further infection that needs to be acknowledged and taken into account in prevention strategies.

*Working Paper 5118*

Public interest litigation in India: overreaching or underachieving?

*November 2009* - Public interest litigation has historically been an innovative judicial procedure for enhancing the social and economic rights of disadvantaged and marginalized groups in India. This paper finds that public interest litigation cases constitute less than 1 percent of the overall case load. It argues that complaints about public interest litigation related to concerns having to do with separation of powers are better understood as criticisms of the impact of judicial interventions on sector governance. The paper finds that win rates for fundamental rights claims are significantly higher when the claimant is from an advantaged social group than when he or she is from a marginalized group, which constitutes a social reversal, both from the original objective of public interest litigation and from the relative win rates in the 1980s.

*Working Paper 5109*

How do local-level legal institutions can promote development

*November 2009* - Local-level, informal legal institutions can support social substitutes for the enforcement of contracts, although these substitutes tend to be limited in range and scale. They are flexible and could be adapted to serve the interests of the poor and marginalized if supportive organizational and social resources could be brought to support the legal claims of the disempowered. They are, however, more likely to support personal integrity rights than the positive liberties that are also constitutive of development as freedom.

*Working Paper 5108*

Left behind to farm? women’s labor re-allocation in rural China

*October 2009* - Left-behind women find the extra hours of farm work either by reducing hours devoted to wage work and family businesses or (in the case of older women) by reducing their leisure time. In general, these time-allocation effects are associated primarily with the migration of offspring as opposed to husbands, and are not reversed when migrants return, with seemingly permanent consequences. No effects on health or empowerment were detected.

*Working Paper 5107*

Designing Cost-Effective Cash Transfer Programs to Boost Schooling among Young Women in Sub-Saharan Africa

*October 2009* - Little is known about how the design of cash transfer programs affects their impacts. This paper presents one-year schooling impacts from a conditional cash transfer experiment among teenage girls and young women in Malawi, and explores how impacts vary depending on the way the program was designed. Overall, the program had large impacts on school attendance: the re-enrollment rate among those who had already dropped out of school before the start of the program increased by two and a half times and the dropout rate among those in school at baseline decreased from 11 to 6 percent. The impacts were similar irrespective of whether cash transfers were conditional on enrollment. When cash sums were given to parents, schooling outcomes were not affected by the program, even for large when transfers. However, when the cash was given directly to the girls, higher transfers were associated with significantly improved school attendance and
progress, but only if the transfers were conditional on school attendance.

**Conditional cash transfers for school attendance can reduce teenage pregnancies and early marriage as well as increase enrollment**

*October 2009* - Malawi’s Zomba Cash Transfer Program is randomized and targets young women. It provides incentives (in the form of school fees and cash transfers, equivalent to US$10/month) to current schoolgirls and recent dropouts to stay in or return to school. The program has led to significant declines in early marriage, teenage pregnancy, and self-reported sexual activity among program beneficiaries after just one year of implementation. For program beneficiaries who were out of school at baseline, the probability of getting married and becoming pregnant declined by more than 40 percent and 30 percent, respectively. In addition, the incidence of the onset of sexual activity was 38 percent lower among all program beneficiaries than the control group.

**Demographic and socioeconomic patterns of HIV/AIDS prevalence in Africa**

*October 2009* - Understanding the demographic and socioeconomic patterns of the prevalence and incidence of HIV/AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa is crucial for developing programs and policies to combat HIV/AIDS. This paper shows how weak the evidence base is on the subject, reflecting problems surrounding definitions, samples, and empirical methods. The paper concludes that there are few consistent and significant patterns of prevalence by socioeconomic and demographic status.

**How to improve public health systems: lessons from Tamil Nadu**

*October 2009* - Public health systems in India have weakened since the 1950s, after central decisions to amalgamate the medical and public health services, and to focus public health work largely on single-issue programs. Tamil Nadu chose the opposite course. This paper describes its public health system, and argues that Tamil Nadu’s separate and strong public health system has helped it conduct long-term planning to avert outbreaks, manage endemic diseases, prevent disease resurgence, manage disasters and emergencies, and support local bodies to protect public health in rural and urban areas. Tamil Nadu’s health indicators are better than those of other states, despite its limited government health expenditure.

**Do value-added estimates add value? accounting for learning dynamics**

*September 2009* - Standard evaluation methods in education use so called "value-added" models, which assume perfect persistence across years. In contrast, new econometric methods show that only one-fifth to a half of a student’s achievement persisted from one grade to the next. The authors find no learning advantage of private over public schools using traditional value-added measures of learning but a large gain (equivalent to the test score gain between third and fourth grade) when persistence is accurately measured.

**How many more infants are likely to die in Africa as a result of the global financial crisis?**

*August 2009* - This is the main result of a new working paper by Jed Friedman and Norbert Schady, who also estimate that most of the additional deaths will be in rural areas and among households with limited education. Girls, they estimate, will be disproportionately affected. The authors urge policies to protect the incomes of poor households, the maintenance of critical health services, and interventions targeted at female infants and young girls.
Aid and trust in country systems
*July 2009* - In a new working paper, Stephen Knack and Nicholas Eubank conclude from their empirical cross-country analysis that donors’ trust in recipient country systems is positively related to: the trustworthiness or quality of those systems; tolerance for risk on the part of the donor’s constituents, as measured by public support for providing aid; and the donor’s ability to internalize more of the benefits of investing in country systems, as measured by the donor’s share of all aid provided to a recipient.

Working Paper 5005

Own and sibling effects of conditional cash transfer programs: theory and evidence from Cambodia
*July 2009* - Conditional cash transfers have been adopted by a large number of countries in the past decade. Although the impacts of these programs have been studied extensively, understanding of the economic mechanisms through which cash and conditions affect household decisions remains incomplete. This paper uses evidence from a program in Cambodia, where eligibility varied substantially among siblings in the same household, to illustrate these effects. A model of schooling decisions highlights three different effects of a child-specific conditional cash transfer: an income effect, a substitution effect, and a displacement effect. The model predicts that such a conditional cash transfer will increase enrollment for eligible children - due to all three effects - but have an ambiguous effect on ineligible siblings. The ambiguity arises from the interaction of a positive income effect with a negative displacement effect. These predictions are shown to be consistent with evidence from Cambodia, where the child-specific program makes modest transfers, conditional on school enrollment for children of middle-school age. Scholarship recipients were more than 20 percentage points more likely to be enrolled in school and 10 percentage points less likely to work for pay. However, the school enrollment and work of ineligible siblings was largely unaffected by the program.

Working Paper 5001

Are there diminishing returns to transfer size in conditional cash transfers?
*July 2009* - There is increasing evidence that conditional cash transfer programs can have large impacts on school enrollment, including in very poor countries. However, little is known about which features of program design -- including the amount of the cash that is transferred, how frequently conditions are monitored, whether non-complying households are penalized, and the identity or gender of the cash recipients -- account for the observed outcomes. This paper analyzes the impact of one feature of program design -- namely, the magnitude of the transfer. The analysis uses data from a program in Cambodia that deliberately altered the transfer amounts received by otherwise comparable households. The findings show clear evidence of diminishing marginal returns to transfer size despite the fact that even the larger transfers represented on average only 3 percent of the consumption of the median recipient households. If applicable to other settings, these results have important implications for other programs that transfer cash with the explicit aim of increasing school enrollment levels in developing countries.

Working Paper 4999

Programs that promote school enrollment may not result in learning: Cambodia’s experience with a scholarship program suggests why
*July 2009* - In a new working paper, Deon Filmer and Nobert Schady estimate a 25% increase in enrollment as the result of the program, but obtain negligible impacts —18 months after the scholarships were awarded—on mathematics and vocabulary test scores. They explain their findings in terms of self-selection by low-ability students into school as the result of the scholarship program, and suggest that such programs may need to make special efforts to address the learning difficulties
of low-ability students.

**Working Paper 4998**

**System-wide impacts of hospital payment reforms: evidence from central and eastern Europe and central Asia**

*July 2009* - Although there is broad agreement that the way that health care providers are paid affects their performance, the empirical literature on the impacts of provider payment reforms is surprisingly thin. During the 1990s and early 2000s, many European and Central Asian countries shifted from paying hospitals through historical budgets to fee-for-service or patient-based-payment methods (mostly variants of diagnosis-related groups). Using panel data on 28 countries over the period 1990-2004, the authors of this study exploit the phased shift from historical budgets to explore aggregate impacts on hospital throughput, national health spending, and mortality from causes amenable to medical care. They use a regression version of difference-in-differences and two variants that relax the difference-in-differences parallel trends assumption. The results show that fee-for-service and patient-based-payment methods both increased national health spending, including private (out-of-pocket) spending. However, they had different effects on inpatient admissions (fee-for-service increased them; patient-based-payment had no effect), and average length of stay (fee-for-service had no effect; patient-based-payment reduced it). Of the two methods, only patient-based-payment appears to have had any beneficial effect on "amenable mortality," but there were significant impacts for only a couple of causes of death, and not in all model specifications.

**Working Paper 4987**

**Educational and health impacts of two school feeding schemes: evidence from a randomized trial in rural Burkina Faso**

*June 2009* - This paper uses a prospective randomized trial to assess the impact of two school feeding schemes on health and education outcomes for children from low-income households in northern rural Burkina Faso. The two school feeding programs under consideration are, on the one hand, school meals where students are provided with lunch each school day, and, on the other hand, take-home rations that provide girls with 10 kg of cereal flour each month, conditional on 90 percent attendance rate. After running for one academic year, both programs increased girls' enrollment by 5 to 6 percentage points. While there was no observable significant impact on raw scores in mathematics, the time-adjusted scores in mathematics improved slightly for girls. The interventions caused absenteeism to increase in households that were low in child labor supply while absenteeism decreased for households that had a relatively large child labor supply, consistent with the labor constraints. Finally, for younger siblings of beneficiaries, aged between 12 and 60 months, take-home rations have increased weight-for-age by .38 standard deviations and weight-for-height by .33 standard deviations. In contrast, school meals did not have any significant impact on the nutrition of younger children.

**Working Paper 4976**

**Do international treaties promote development? the convention on the rights of the child and basic immunization**

*June 2009* - Little evidence is available on whether changing global rules so as to promote human rights can enhance development outcomes. The Convention on the Rights of the Child was almost universally ratified by the mid-1990s, but it is unclear whether treaty ratification was associated with better or wider protection of children's rights. This paper uses an instrumental variable approach to investigate whether treaty ratification was associated with stronger effort at the country level on child survival, and particularly with higher rates of immunization coverage. The paper finds that ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child was correlated with a subsequent increase in immunization rates, but only in upper middle and high-income countries. Treaties can
promote development outcomes, but require institutional support to do so.

**Working Paper 4964**

**How can donors help build global public goods in health?**

*April 2009* - Aid to developing countries has largely neglected the population-wide health services that are core to communicable disease control in the developed world. These mostly non-clinical services generate "pure public goods" by reducing everyone’s exposure to disease through measures such as implementing health and sanitary regulations. They complement the clinical preventive and treatment services which are the donors’ main focus. Their neglect is manifested, for example, in a lack of coherent public health regulations in countries where donors have long been active, facilitating the spread of diseases such as avian flu. These services can be inexpensive, and dramatically reduce health inequalities. Sri Lanka spends less than 0.2% of GDP on its well-designed population-wide services, which contribute to the country’s high levels of health equity and life expectancy despite low GDP per head and civil war. Evidence abounds on the negative externalities of weak population-wide health services. Global public health security cannot be assured without building strong national population-wide health systems to reduce the potential for communicable diseases to spread within and beyond their borders. Donors need greater clarity about what constitutes a strong public health system, and how to build them. The paper discusses gaps in donors’ approaches and first steps toward closing them.

**Working Paper 4907**

**Orphanhood and the living arrangements of children in sub-saharan Africa**

*March 2009* - Increasing adult mortality due to HIV/AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa raises considerable concerns about the welfare of surviving children. Studies have found substantial variability across countries in the negative impacts of orphanhood on child health and education. One hypothesis for this variability is the resilience of the extended family network in some countries to care for orphans-networks under increasing pressure by the sheer number of orphans in many settings. Using household survey data from 21 countries in Africa, this study examines trends in orphanhood and living arrangements, and the links between the two. The findings confirm that orphanhood is increasing, although not all countries are experiencing rapid rises. In many countries, there has been a shift toward grandparents taking on increased childcare responsibility—especially where orphan rates are growing rapidly. This suggests some merit to the claim that the extended network is narrowing, focusing on grandparents who are older and may be less able to financially support orphans than working-age adults. However there are also changes in childcare patterns in countries with stable orphan rates or low HIV prevalence. This suggests future work on living arrangements should not exclude low HIV/AIDS prevalence countries, and explanations for changes should include a broader set of factors.

**Working Paper 4889**

**The demographic and socio-economic distribution of excess mortality during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda**

*March 2009* - There is an extensive literature on violent conflicts such as the 1994 Rwandan genocide, but few papers examine the profiles of victims and perpetrators, or more broadly the micro-level dynamics of widespread violence. This paper studies the demographic consequences of the Rwandan genocide and how the excess mortality due to the conflict was distributed in the population. Data collected by the 2000 Demographic and Health Survey indicate that although there were more deaths across the entire population, adult males were the most likely to die. Using the characteristics of the survey respondent as a proxy for the socio-economic status of the family dead, the results also show that individuals with an urban or more educated background were more likely to die. Over and above the human tragedies, a long-term cost of the genocide is the country’s loss of
productive skills.

Working Paper 4850

No more cutting class? reducing teacher absence and providing incentives for performance
February 2009 - Expanding and improving basic education in developing countries requires, at a minimum, teachers who are present in the classroom and motivated to teach, but this essential input is often missing. This paper describes the findings of a series of recent World Bank and other studies on teacher absence and incentives for performance. Surprise school visits reveal that teachers are absent at high rates in countries such as India, Indonesia, Uganda, Ecuador, and Zambia, reducing the quality of schooling for children, especially in rural, remote, and poor areas. More broadly, poor teacher management and low levels of teacher accountability afflict many developing-country education systems. The paper presents evidence on these shortcomings, but also on the types of incentives, management, and support structures that can improve motivation and performance and reduce avoidable absenteeism. It concludes with policy options for developing countries to explore as they work to meet Education for All goals and improve quality.

Working Paper 4847

Is there an incipient turnaround in Asia's "missing girls" phenomenon?
February 2009 - The apparently inexorable rise in the proportion of "missing girls" in much of East and South Asia has attracted much attention amongst researchers and policy-makers. An encouraging trend was suggested by the case of South Korea, where child sex ratios were the highest in Asia but peaked in the mid-1990s and normalized thereafter. Using census data, we examine whether similar trends have begun to manifest themselves in the two large populous countries of this region, China and India. The data indicate that child sex ratios are peaking in these countries, and in many sub-national regions are beginning to trend towards less masculinization. This suggests that, with continuing vigorous efforts to reduce son preference, the "missing girls" phenomenon could be addressed in Asia.

Working Paper 4846

Social health insurance vs. tax-financed health systems - evidence from the OECD
January 2009 - This paper exploits the transitions between tax-financed health care and social health insurance in the OECD countries over the period 1960-2006 to assess the effects of adopting social health insurance over tax finance on per capita health spending, amenable mortality, and labor market outcomes. The paper uses regression-based generalizations of difference-in-differences and instrumental variables to address the possible endogeneity of a country's health system. It finds that adopting social health insurance in preference to tax financing increases per capita health spending by 3-4 percent, reduces the formal sector share of employment by 8-10 percent, and reduces total employment by as much as 6 percent. For the most part, social health insurance adoption has no significant impact on amenable mortality, but for one cause-breast cancer among women-social health insurance systems perform significantly worse, with 5-6 percent more potential years of life lost.

Working Paper 4821