



NYU

**ROBERT F. WAGNER GRADUATE
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC SERVICE**

PADM-GP-2203

Economics of International Development Fall 2022

Instructors

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Wednesday session: Wednesday 6:45-8:25pm

Location: 194 Mercer, Room 304 Loc: Washington Square

Tuesday session: Tuesday 5:30-6:30pm

Location: Online

Office hours time

Witse-Samson: By appointment

Macready: By appointment

Course overview

How can the economies of the world become richer? Fairer? More open to opportunity?

We will investigate economic growth, poverty, inequality, and the sources of economic change. The course begins by reviewing the relationships between poverty, inequality, and economic growth. Attention then turns to the role of markets, with a focus on finance. Then we turn to interventions designed to improve education, address demographic change, reduce the burden of disease, and confront corruption.

Learning objectives

Students will be able to...

Synthesize complex concepts and evidence to understand the context and mechanisms of international development and poverty.

Understand how economic principles and tools can be used to craft better solutions for individuals and communities.

Assess the quality and reliability of evidence presented by proponents of interventions and policy, including statistical evidence.

Tuesday sessions are not recitations. They complement and add to what can be covered during Wednesday sessions. Tuesdays include new material, assignments and participatory discussions. We often explore more deeply into issues and concepts raised during a Wednesday session. Other times they are to build skills, including the comprehension of the data analysis and statistics essential to evaluating the evidence offered as part of our course and in life.

In short, in addition to building your knowledge and understanding of development concerns, we hope our course gives you tools to evaluate and construct better programs, policies and interventions, whether these are to address development or to address other issues and policy areas in which you will work.

Books to purchase (also available through NYU library)

Abhijit Banerjee and Esther Duflo. 2011. [Poor Economics](#). PublicAffairs. (~USD12)

Daryl Collins, Jonathan Morduch, Stuart Rutherford, Orlanda Ruthven. 2009. [Portfolios of the Poor: How the World's Poor Live on \\$2 a Day](#). Princeton University Press. (~USD18)

The books to buy are available through the NYU Bookstore and many other bookstores

Course Requirements

Course requirements are a mid-term examination, a final examination, and three problem sets. Also required is full participation in course activities. Grades will be calculated according to:

Class Participation 20% (participating and contributing thoughtfully to discussions and assigned activities – See rubric below for expectations)

Problem Sets 20% (2 problem sets + policy memo)

Mid-Term Exam 25%

Final Examination 35%

Participation Rubric

Participation will count for 20% of the grade for the semester.

Participation happens in various ways.

- Prepare before class so you're ready to engage on Tuesdays and on Wednesdays. This includes completing assignments like "reflections," developing your answers to "When preparing" questions posted to Brightspace, and other activities. In class, we may "cold call" you, and we expect you to be ready to discuss the topics.
- Engage during class on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. We expect:

- Active engagement
- Listening to others
- Responding constructively
- Taking responsibility to teach others, share what you've learned, and raise pertinent questions.

Participation grades will reflect:

Do you meaningfully prepare for class?

Are you present—physically and intellectually—in class?

Do you actively contribute to discussion?

Do your comments actively engage with the material and discussion by others?

NYU Wagner Policies on Academic Honesty and Grading

We follow the NYU Wagner School general policy guidelines on academic honesty and grading (including incomplete grades).

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is a vital component of Wagner and NYU. All students enrolled in this class are required to read and abide by [Wagner's Academic Code](#). All Wagner students have already read and signed the [Wagner Academic Oath](#). Plagiarism of any form will not be tolerated and students in this class are expected to report violations to us. If any student in this class is unsure about what is expected of you and how to abide by the academic code, you should consult with us. **We ask each student to become familiar with these policies.**

The Moses Center for Student Accessibility (CSA)

Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities. Please visit the [Moses Center for Students with Disabilities \(CSD\) website](#) and click on the Reasonable Accommodations and How to Register tab or call or email CSD at (212-998-4980 or mosescsd@nyu.edu) for information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are strongly advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance.

NYU's Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays

[NYU's Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays](#) states that members of any religious group may, without penalty, absent themselves from classes when required in compliance with their religious obligations. Please notify us in advance of religious holidays that might coincide with class assignments to schedule mutually acceptable alternatives.

Important NYU Wagner policies

Please see the NYU Wagner website for information on academic policies and procedures, including the academic code and grading:

1. [Academic Policies and Procedures](#)
2. [Academic Code](#)

3. [Grading](#)
4. [Incomplete Grades](#)

Late Policy

Extensions on assignments will be granted only in case of emergency or special circumstances. This policy is adopted out of respect to those who abide by deadlines despite equally demanding schedules. Assignments handed in late without authorized extensions will be penalized one-third of a grade per day.

Overview of the semester

1. Wed 9/7: **Introduction to development economics. Development and inequality**

Tue 9/13: Evaluating evidence and the RCT debate (deeper dive). Reading economics papers

2. Wed 9/14: **Poverty and economic growth**

Tue 9/20: Poverty as measured compared to poverty as lived (deeper dive)

3. Wed 9/21: **Foreign aid, capital & theories of growth**

Tue 9/27: Theories of economic growth (deeper dive)

4. Wed 9/28: **Responses to market failure: Informal markets and access to finance**

Tue 10/4: Help with questions on problem sets (skill building, attendance optional)

5. Wed 10/5: **Responses to market failure: Microfinance.**

Problem set 1 due Friday, 7 October, 7am.

6. Wed 10/12: **Behavioral economics: Saving and asset accumulation**

Tue 10/18: How to read an economic paper part 2 (skill building) Fielding midterm prep questions

7. Wed 10/19: **Coping with risk: Micro-insurance**

Tue 10/25: Help with midterm preparation (skill building, attendance optional)

Wed 10/26: **Mid-term exam** (in class)

8. Wed 11/2: **Government failure and corruption**

Tue 11/8: Liberia case study: Are social enterprises the tool to fill in gaps in service delivery left by markets and government (deeper dive)

9. Wed 11/9: **Social business: band-aid or solution?**

Tue 11/15: Tackling the Liberia case study from a stakeholder perspective (deeper dive)

10. Wed 11/16: **Delivering education.**

Liberia Memo due Friday, 18 November, 7am

Tue 11/22: Population, context & generalizability (deeper dive)

11. Wed 11/30: **Gender and development**

Tue 12/6 Help with questions on problem set 2(skill building, attendance optional)

12. Wed 12/7: **Population, the demographic transition, and norms.**

Problem set 2 due Friday, 9 December, 7am

Tue 12/13 Can we identify impact without an experiment?: The role of data triangulation and natural experiments in building evidence (deeper dive)

13. Wed 12/14 **Delivering Healthcare. Retrospective and review**

Tue 12/20 Help with final preparation (skill building, attendance optional). NYU Reading Day.

Wed 12/21 **Final exam (in class)**

Detailed syllabus for the semester

NOTE: This syllabus provides only an outline of course content. Our NYU Brightspace site holds additional material, instructions and assignments. Any adjustments to content, assignments and timing will be posted there instead of in the syllabus. **Please use the Brightspace site** for the specific assignments and expectations tied to each session and to the course more broadly.

The following designations identify which readings and materials are required and which are recommended:

> Recommended reading (Resources listed with > in front of the citation indicates a recommended reading. Those without a > indicate a required reading.)

►**Watch:** Required videos

(recommended)►**Watch:** Recommended videos

PART I. Introduction to development and the big issues

How did we come to define the “development problem” the way we do? What drives economic growth? Does foreign aid work? Can global poverty be eradicated?

1. Introduction to development economics. Development and inequality.

The past few years have raised concerns with widening inequality – both within countries and globally. Inequalities matter in themselves, and they also tell us about how economies are evolving. We start with global inequalities and situate the course in that context. Development Economics is a relatively young field, arising just after World War II as many countries that had been colonized gained independence from Europe. Since the early 1970s, a focus has been on extreme poverty, but progress in reducing extreme poverty and widening inequalities are reshaping conversations.

Banerjee and Duflo, Poor Economics. Chapter 1, all.

►**Watch** Sabine Alkire. "[What is the capability approach to development?](#)"

(recommended)►**Listen** to [Banerjee on poverty and poor people](#) (3:06 minutes):

(recommended)►**Watch** [Thomas Piketty's TED Talk on increasing inequality](#)

Silver, Marc (January 4, 2015) "[If You Shouldn't Call It The Third World, What Should You Call It?](#)" Goats and Soda, National Public Radio. (After events in Washington DC on January 6, 2021, NPR's Goats and Soda re-sent this 2015 blog, linking to it with this phrase: "it's an insulting way to classify countries." We ask you for similar introspection regarding the designation

"developing countries.")

- > Silver, Marc (January 8, 2021) "[Memo to People of Earth: 'Third World' Is an Offensive Term!](#)" Goats & Soda, NPR (Updated conversation with the article above)
- > Deaton, Angus. "Introduction." The Great Escape. Princeton University Press, 2013.
- > Ideas of India: [Where Did Development Economics Go Wrong?](#)
- > Career choices in Development ([natarajan](#))

Tuesday session. Evaluating evidence and the RCT debate (deeper dive)

> Understanding Development and Poverty Alleviation, Scientific Background on the Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel 2019 [link](#)

> UNICEF Impact Evaluation Series [link](#)

►**Watch** ColumbiaLearn [How to Activate Your Reading](#) (10 minutes)

►**Listen** Esther Duflo. 2019, November 11. [NPR interview with Brian Lehrer](#). Please pay special attention to Esther Duflo's explanation of RCTs role in evidence and achieving change – their experimental mindset – and how she defines poverty (program minutes 3:30-10:45).

►**Watch** UNICEF Innocenti – [Randomized Controlled Design](#). (8 min).

Carroll, Aaron E. 2018, August 6. "[Workplace Wellness Programs Don't Work Well](#). Why Some Studies Show Otherwise. Randomized controlled trials, despite their flaws, remain a powerful tool." New York Times, 6 August 2018.

Drèze, Jean. 2018. "[Evidence, policy, and politics](#)." Ideas for India, 3 August 2018.

> Deaton, Angus and Nancy Cartwright. 2018. "[Understanding and misunderstanding randomized controlled trials](#)." *Social Science and Medicine* 210: 2-21.

> Jonathan Morduch. "[The disruptive power of RCTs](#)." (July 30, 2019).

(recommended)►**Watch** Esther Duflo: TED Talk "[Social experiments to fight poverty](#)." (17 minutes) (Required content for next week but useful here too.)

2. Poverty and economic growth

To fully understand the relationship between economic growth and poverty, we need to be clearer about measurement. There is no "perfect" way to measure poverty and inequality, but there is consensus about key principles. The most appropriate method will often depend on the

questions that we are asking, and different measures lead to very different policy implications.

Annie Lowrey. "[Poverty Is a Choice: Extreme poverty has declined, but the line is very low.](#)" The Atlantic, July, 2020.

Poverty and Economic Growth

Does broad-based economic growth help or hurt the poorest citizens? Both happen, but cross-country data show that most of the time poor households gain from economic growth. The gains have been particularly dramatic in India and China. But economic growth is not a guarantee of gains for all.

David Dollar, Tatjana Kleineberg, and Aart Kraay. 2016. "[Growth still is good for the poor.](#)" *European Economic Review* 81 (January): 68-85.

Ranis, Stewart & Ramirez: "[Economic Growth and Human Development.](#)" *World Development* vol. 28, no.2, 2000.

Poverty and well-being

Portfolios of the Poor yields quite different answers about what it means to be poor. Haushofer summarizes new work on poverty and psychology.

Daryl Collins, Jonathan Morduch, Stuart Rutherford, Orlanda Ruthven. *Portfolios of the Poor: How the World's Poor Live on \$2 a Day*. Chapter 1.

> Johannes Haushofer. 2014. "[The Price of Poverty: Psychology and the Cycle of Need,](#)" *Foreign Affairs*, July 15, 2014.

> Martin Kirk, Jason Hickel, and Joe Brewer. 2015. "[Using Design Thinking to Eradicate Poverty Creation.](#)" *Stanford Social Innovation Review* September.

Measuring poverty

The Economist. 2015. "[The tricky work of measuring falling global Poverty.](#)" October 12, 2015.

Jonathan Morduch, "[Concepts of Poverty,](#)" chapter 2 of United Nations Handbook of Poverty Statistics project. New York: United Nations.

Jonathan Morduch, "[Poverty Measures,](#)" chapter 3 of United Nations Handbook of Poverty Statistics project. New York: United Nations.

> Oxford Poverty and Human Development Institute. [Global Multidimensional Poverty Index 2019: Illuminating inequalities.](#)

> Ideas of India: [Reforming Development Economics](#)

Tuesday session. (deeper dive) Poverty as measured compared to poverty as lived. How we measure poverty affects where we focus development efforts. What is poverty? How is it measured? Why do the differences matter?

Amartya Sen. *Poverty & Famines*, pp 1-8

Amartya Sen. Development as Freedom, pp 85-93

Selections from

[Voices of the poor: Can anyone hear us?](#) pp 184-188, starting with "Police Activities"; p 98 "Corruption"; pp 51-56 "Humiliation & Shame"

[Voices of the poor: Crying out for change](#) p 27 "Self-Respect and Dignity"; p 189 "Respect"

Hickel, Jason & Charles Kenny. "[12 Things We Can Agree On about Poverty.](#)" Center for Global Development, 27 August 2018.

Portfolios of the poor, pp: 205 to 210, with special attention to Figure A1.1.

> Amartya Sen. Development as Freedom, additional readings (posted to Brightspace)

> Charles Kenny. "[Getting better in pictures.](#)" Center for Global Development Essays, February 2011.

3. Foreign aid, capital & theories of growth

Why do some countries grow richer while others don't? Historically, patterns of economic growth have been driven by much more than just levels of investments and human resources. Recent evidence shows the roles of legal systems, political institutions, trade and tax policy, and geography, among other forces. The question here is: what can governments do? Can foreign aid play a role?

William Easterly, 2003. "[Can Foreign Aid Buy Growth?](#)" Journal of Economic Perspectives 17 (3), Summer: 23–4.

Michael Clemens, Steven Radelet, Rikhil Bhavani, and Samuel Bazzi. 2012. "[Counting Chickens when they Hatch: Timing and the Effects of Aid on Growth.](#)" Economic Journal 122, June: 590–617.

Aart Kraay and David McKenzie. 2014. "[Do Poverty Traps Exist? Assessing the Evidence.](#)" Journal of Economic Perspectives 28 (3). Summer: 127–148.

> Archibong, Belinda, Brahim Coulibaly, and Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala. "[Washington Consensus Reforms and Lessons for Economic Performance in Sub-Saharan Africa.](#)" Journal of Economic Perspectives vol 35 no 3 (Summer 2021): 133-156.

Toro, Francisco. "[What if there was a miracle treatment for world poverty? It might already exist.](#)" Washington Post, August 19, 2019.

> Kremer, Michael. "[O-ring Theory of Economic Development.](#)" Quarterly Journal of Economics vol. 108 no. 3 (August 1993): 551-575. ([video](#))

► **Watch** [Esther Duflo's TED Talk on foreign aid and evaluation.](#)

> Tina Rosenberg. "[Ideas Help No One on a Shelf. Take Them to the World.](#)" New York Times. February 29, 2016.

(recommended) ▶**Watch** Economists on Zoom getting coffee ([link](#), ep 6 Bill Easterly on Aid and Development)

Tuesday session (deeper dive) Theories of economic growth underlie most development efforts since World War II. How did these theories shape past interventions and foreign aid strategies? Where do we stand today?

Sachs, Jeffrey et al (2004) "[Ending Africa's Poverty Trap.](#)" Brookings Papers on Economic Activity, pp. 117-240, in particular pp. 123-128 and 144-147.

Banerjee & Duflo, Poor Economics, Chapter 1.

Economic growth models:

> Lewis, Arthur. "[Economic Development with Unlimited Supplies of Labor.](#)" The Manchester School vol 22, no. 2 (1954), pp 139-181, especially pp 139-141; 146 paragraph 1; 157; 189-191.

> Solow, Robert M. "[A Contribution to the Theory of Economic Growth.](#)" Quarterly Journal of Economics vol. 70, no. 1. (Feb 1956), pp. 65-94, especially pp 65-66, 70-72.

Income & nutrition thresholds tied to "poverty traps":

> Banerjee & Duflo Poor Economics, pp 22-40

PART II. Households and markets

We focus on financial markets first. It gives a chance to explore the sources of market failure. Rather than stopping with diagnosis, we look at proposed solutions and how to evaluate them. The focus gives us an introduction to the following economic tools, an understanding of which can help us to craft better interventions:

- Market failure (moral hazard, adverse selection)
- Behavioral economics (present bias, commitment, salience)
- Risk and risk aversion
- Household decision-making
- Informal and formal institutions
- Impact evaluation and the use of randomized controlled trials
- Incentives, especially as they are shaped by contracts and prices

To explain further, volatility, risk and uncertainty are integral to the experience of poverty. Lack of insurance to mitigate risk and uncertainty is part of a broader lack of access to financial services. This section shows how informational problems limit the scope of credit and insurance markets and restrict the role that the price mechanism plays to ration demand. This provides a framework with which to reevaluate standard policy prescriptions.

4. Responses to market failure: Informal finance and access to financial services

Formalized markets are based on impersonal legal contracts. Informal markets, in contrast, are usually based on personal relationships and (often unwritten) understandings.

As formal markets expand, informal markets rarely disappear. Sometimes they even expand. Why? Part of the answer is that informal markets deliver qualities (speed? trust? reliability?) that formal markets lack. Rather than rejecting informal institutions as "backward", we can learn from them and build on them.

Daryl Collins, Jonathan Morduch, Stuart Rutherford, Orlanda Ruthven. *Portfolios of the Poor: How the World's Poor Live on \$2 a Day*, Chapter 2.

Banerjee and Duflo, *Poor Economics*. Chapter 7.

Morduch, Jonathan. "[Rethinking Poverty, Household Finance, and Microfinance](#)." August 2021 (unpublished).

Beatriz Armendáriz and Jonathan Morduch (2010), *The Economics of Microfinance*:

Chapter 1: "Rethinking banking"

Chapter 2: "Why intervene in credit markets?"

> Rutherford, Stuart (1998), *The Poor and their Money*. Delhi: Oxford University Press, Chapters 1 and 2. ([also](#))

>Jonathan Morduch (2017). "[Microfinance as a Credit Card](#)." *Limn* Issue 9

Tuesday session. (skill building) Help with questions on Problem set 1 (attendance optional)

5. Responses to market failure: Microfinance

The root of credit market failures is lack of collateral. But new institutions like Bangladesh's Grameen Bank and Bolivia's BancoSol have shown that it is possible to secure high rates of repayment while lending to poor households. The key is a series of new mechanisms, most famously "group-lending" with joint liability. Yunus describes the early experience with Grameen, and Morduch's papers describe a range of other programs, as well as emerging opportunities and tensions in the movement.

Muhammad Yunus. [Interview with NBR](#), March 9, 2005. Wharton Business School

[Or ►**Watch** [Muhammad Yunus documentary](#)]

[Or ►**Watch** [Muhammad Yunus on the Daily Show](#) (with Jon Stewart)...content starts at 2 minutes]

(recommended)►**Watch** [Stuart Rutherford on microfinance and talking to clients](#) (9 minutes):

Beatriz Armendáriz and Jonathan Morduch (2010), *The Economics of Microfinance*

Chapter 4: "Group lending"

Chapter 5: "Beyond group lending"

> Chapter 10: "Subsidy and sustainability"

Field, Erica, Rohini Pande, John Papp, and Natalia Rigol. 2013. "[Does the Classic Microfinance Model Discourage Entrepreneurship among the Poor? Experimental Evidence from India.](#)" *American Economic Review*, 103(6): 2196-2226

(recommended) ► **Watch** Rohini Pande describe [new ways of thinking about microcredit](#) (10 minutes):

CGAP, "[Microcredit Interest Rates](#)," Occasional Paper Number 1, August 1996 [Extract].

Robert Cull, Asli Demirgüç-Kunt, and Jonathan Morduch. 2009. "[Microfinance Meets the Market.](#)" *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 23(1), Winter: 167-192.

Daryl Collins, Jonathan Morduch, Stuart Rutherford, Orlanda Ruthven. *Portfolios of the Poor: How the World's Poor Live on \$2 a Day*. Chapter 6.

> Matt Mossman. 2015. "[Moving Beyond Microcredit.](#)" *The New Yorker*, November 2, 2015.

> Banerjee and Duflo, *Poor Economics*. Chapter 9.

> Jonathan Morduch (2000), "[The Microfinance Schism](#)," *World Development*, vol. 28, no. 4, (April): pp. 617-629.

6. Behavioral economics: Saving and asset-building

Households use a great variety of strategies to cope with misfortune and to build assets for the future. Some are very effective, while others are less so – and none are costless. We investigate what the data reveal on factors contributing to effectiveness, or the lack thereof.

Daryl Collins, Jonathan Morduch, Stuart Rutherford, Orlanda Ruthven. *Portfolios of the Poor: How the World's Poor Live on \$2 a Day*. Chapter 4.

► **Watch** Saving in groups and out – the animated videos! (3.5 minutes each)

[Intro to savings groups](#). [Why Savings Groups work](#). [Other ways to save](#)

Beatriz Armendáriz and Jonathan Morduch (2010), *The Economics of Microfinance*: Chapter 6: "Saving and insurance."

Pascaline Dupas and Jonathan Robinson. 2013. "[Why Don't the Poor Save More? Evidence from Health Savings Experiments.](#)" *American Economic Review* 103.4: pp. 1138-1171.

(recommended) ► **Watch** Pascaline Dupas describe her [research on saving](#)

(recommended) ▶ **Watch** Dean Karlan describe [why commitments matter to saving](#)

(recommended) ▶ **Watch** Nava Ashraf describe the [challenge of holding on to your money](#) (14 minutes)

(recommended) ▶ **Watch** LSE's Nava Ashraf describe [behavior change in saving](#) (9 minutes)

Banerjee and Duflo, Poor Economics. Chapter 8.

(recommended) For next steps: ▶ **Read/Listen/Watch** Aizeman, Nurith. "[Dial M For Money: Can Mobile Banking Lift People Out Of Poverty?](#)" NPR, 9 December 2016.

Tuesday session. (deeper dive). Proof of concept? Among whom? What are some limits to generalizability of RCT findings? How can we make use of what they do tell us? We explore these questions through evidence on microfinance interventions.

Banerjee, Abhijit, Dean Karlan, and Jonathan Zinman. "[Six Randomized Evaluations of Microcredit: Introduction and Further Steps](#)." *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, vol. 7, no. 1, 2015, pp. 1–21.

7. Coping with risk: Micro-insurance

How do households and communities protect themselves in the face of risk? Can private insurance be commercially-viable in poorer communities? How does vulnerability constrain development?

Daryl Collins, Jonathan Morduch, Stuart Rutherford, Orlanda Ruthven. *Portfolios of the Poor: How the World's Poor Live on \$2 a Day*. Chapter 3.

(recommended) ▶ **Listen** Adam Davidson interviews Daryl Collins and Jonathan Morduch about *Portfolios of the Poor*. [NPR Planet Money Podcast](#). (26 minutes)

Banerjee and Duflo, *Poor Economics*. Chapter 6.

▶ **Watch** [Moral Hazard](#) and [Adverse Selection](#) – the animated videos! (3.5 minutes each)

Shawn Cole, Xavier Giné, and James Vickery. 2017. "[How Does Risk Management Influence Production Decisions? Evidence from a Field Experiment](#)," *Review of Financial Studies* 30 (6): 1935–1970.

> Shawn Cole, Xavier Giné, Jeremy Tobacman, Petia Topalova, Robert Townsend, and James Vickery. 2013. "[Barriers to Household Risk Management: Evidence from India](#)." *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* 5 (1): 104-135.

> Shawn Cole and Wentao Xiong. 2017. "[Agricultural Insurance and Economic Development](#)." Annual Review of Economics 9: 235-262.

(recommended) ► **Watch** Shawn Cole describe the [research on rainfall insurance](#)

> Jonathan Morduch (1998), "[Between the State and the Market: Can Informal Insurance Patch the Safety Net?](#)" World Bank Research Observer 14(2), August, 187- 202.

> Jonathan Morduch, "[Microinsurance: The Next Revolution?](#)" in Understanding Poverty, edited by Abhijit Banerjee, Roland Benabou, and Dilip Mookherjee. Oxford University Press, 2006.

Tuesday session. (skill building) Help with midterm preparation (Attendance optional) Mid-term exam (In class)

PART III. Getting things done

With an understanding of financial markets, we push forward to explore the organizations that get things done, and challenges that can constrain action.

8. Government Failure and Corruption

Banerjee and Duflo, Poor Economics. Chapter 10.

Ben Olken and Rohini Pande. 2012. "[Corruption in Developing Countries](#)." Annual Review of Economics 4:479–509.

Bertrand, Marianne, Simeon Djankov, Rema Hanna and Sendhil Mullainathan. 2007. "[Obtaining a Driving License in India: An Experimental Approach to Studying Corruption](#)." Quarterly Journal of Economics, November, pp 1639-1676.

Olken, Ben, 2007. "[Monitoring Corruption: Evidence from a Field Experiment in Indonesia](#)," *Journal of Political Economy* 115 (2): 200-249.

(recommended) ► **Watch** [Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala's TED Talk](#)

Sandra Sequieria and Simeon Djankov. 2014. "[Corruption and Firm Behavior: Evidence from African Ports](#)" Journal of International Economics 94 (2): 277-329.

> Joana Naritomi. 2019. "[Consumers as Tax Auditors](#)." American Economic Review 109 (9): 3031-3072.

> Abhijit Banerjee, Rema Hanna, Jordan Kyle, Benjamin A. Olken, Sudarno Sumarto (2015). "[The Power of Transparency: Information, Identification Cards and Food Subsidy Programs in Indonesia](#)" NBER Working Paper 20923.

> Rose-Ackerman, Susan (1996). "[Viewpoint: The Political Economy of Corruption—Causes and Consequences](#)." World Bank, Note No. 74, April 1996.

Tuesday session. (deeper dive) Liberia case study. Are social enterprises the tool to fill in

gaps in service delivery left by markets and government. Are social enterprises a reliable choice in all settings, especially for essential services? We use delivery of education in Liberia as a case study of these questions. Pay attention to the details and constraints that are barriers to effective delivery of Liberia's education needs.

Werner, George K. "[Liberia has to work with international private school companies if we want to protect our children's future.](#)" Quartz Africa, 03 January, 2017.

Goldilocks [Toolkit](#), example Acumen [case study](#)

► **Watch** George Werner, Liberian Minister of Education, [explaining his support of Bridge International Academies](#) (14 mins)

Bold, Tessa, et al. "[Enrollment without Learning: Teacher Effort, Knowledge, and Skill in Primary Schools in Africa](#)". Journal of Economic Perspectives vol. 31, no. 4 (Fall 2017): pp 185–204.

FrontPageAfrica. [Liberia: Legislators Want LEAP Program Extended to All Public Schools at Education Officers Summit.](#) 18 September 2018.

9. Social business: Band-Aid or solution?

Many argue that the solution for service delivery is to tap the private sector, or at least to incorporate ideas from the market into nonprofit activities. Microfinance is a leading edge for that push, but the microfinance story is more complicated than it might seem at first. Two healthcare studies are discussed, in which the evidence for charging user fees is weak.

► **Watch** Acumen Fund's Jacqueline Novogratz talk: "[A third way to think about aid](#)" (TED Talk)

Jessica Cohen and Pascaline Dupas. 2010. "[Free Distribution or Cost-Sharing? Evidence from a Randomized Malaria Prevention Experiment.](#)" Quarterly Journal of Economics CXXV (1), February.

Kremer, Michael and Edward Miguel. 2007. "[The Illusion of Sustainability.](#)" Quarterly Journal of Economics, August: 1007-1065.

(recommended) ► **Watch** Berkeley's Ted Miguel on [Worms](#) (4 minutes)

(recommended) ► **Watch** [Deworm the World: A Call to Action](#) (9minutes)

> Werker, Eric, and Faisal Z. Ahmed. 2008. "[What Do Nongovernmental Organizations Do?](#)" Journal of Economic Perspectives, 22(2): 73–92.

> Jonathan Conning and Jonathan Morduch. 2011. "[Microfinance and Social Investment](#)" Annual Review of Financial Economics, vol. 3, ed. Robert Merton and Andrew Lo: 407-434.

(recommended) ► **Watch** Dan Palotta argue that [the way we think about charity is all wrong.](#)

(TED Talk)

> Michael Faye and Paul Niehaus on GiveDirectly ([econtalk](#))

> Martin, C., 2016, "The Reductive Seduction of Other People's Problems", [Bright magazine](#)

Tuesday session. (deeper dive) Liberia case study. Tackling the Bridge question from a stakeholder perspective.

PART IV. Central topics

We've been building an understanding of markets and organizations. Now we turn to some of the most important forces and debates within development: delivering education, gender, population, and delivering health and healthcare. To stay focused, we keep the attention on how to translate ideas into action, the use of evaluation methods, and new ideas that are both conceptually interesting and that work in practice.

10. Delivering Education

The readings focus on practical, concrete steps to improve the quantity and quality of schooling. Some of the papers are long and technical. Read them to understand the motivation and main results. We'll discuss the methodology & results in class.

Banerjee and Duflo, Poor Economics. Chapter 4.

Esther Duflo. 2011. "[Schooling and Labor Market Consequences of School Construction in Indonesia: Evidence from an Unusual Policy Experiment](#)," American Economic Review 91(4): 795-813.

> Richard Akresh, Daniel Halim, Marieke Kleemans. [Long-term and intergenerational effects of education](#). VoxEU. 18 May 2019.

> Monica Martinez-Bravo. "[The Local Political Economy Effects of School Construction in Indonesia](#)." American Economic Journal: Applied Economics 2017, 9(2): 256–289.

(recommended) ▶ **Watch** [Animation on education and local politics](#) in Indonesia (2:19 minutes)

Esther Duflo, Rema Hanna, and Stephen Ryan. 2012. "[Incentives Work: Getting Teachers to Come to School](#)." American Economic Review, 102(4): 1241–1278

Karthik Muralidharan and Nishith Prakash. 2017. "[Cycling to School: Increasing Secondary School Enrollment for Girls in India](#)." American Economic Journal: Applied Economics 9(3), pp. 321–350.

* interesting, another state, Tamil Nadu, had a [famous](#) bicycle distribution program in 1993

Jensen, Robert (2010). "The (Perceived) Returns to Education and the Demand for Schooling." Quarterly Journal of Economics, 125(2), p. 515-548. ([slides](#))

> Dizon-Ross, Rebecca. 2019. "[Parents' Belief about their Children's Academic Ability: Implications for Educational Investments](#)." American Economic Review 109(8): 2728-2765.

> Afridi, Farzana; Bidisha Barooah; Rohini Somanathan. 2020. "Improving learning outcomes through information provision: Experimental evidence from Indian villages." Journal of Development Economics, vol. 146, September, pp 1-11.

Research on a remedial education intervention that was progressively applied in new settings:

> Banerjee, Abhijit V., Shawn Cole, Esther Duflo, Leigh Linden. 2007. "[Remedying Education: Evidence from Two Randomized Experiments in India](#)." Quarterly Journal of Economics 122:3, 1235-1264.

> Duflo, Esther, Pascaline Dupas and Michael Kremer. 2015. "[School governance, teacher incentives, and pupil-teacher ratios: Experimental evidence from Kenyan primary schools](#)." Journal of Public Economics 123: 92-110.

> Bold, Tessa, Mwangi Kimenyi, Germano Mwabu, Alice Ng'ang'a, and Justin Sandefur. 2018. "[Experimental evidence on scaling up education reforms in Kenya](#)." Journal of Public Economics 168: 1-20.

Tuesday session. *Population, context and generalizability: Heterogeneity of impacts... What's really being measured?*

Deworming interventions

Kremer, Michael and Edward Miguel. (2007). "The Illusion of Sustainability." Quarterly Journal of Economics, 122(3) August: 1007-1065.

Baird, Sarah, Joan Hamory Hicks, Michael Kremer and Edward Miguel. (2016). "[Worms at Work: Long-Run Impacts of a Child Health Investment](#)." Quarterly Journal of Economics 131(4): 1637-1680.

Macartan Humphreys 08.2015 Post: [What has been learned from the deworming replications](#)

11. Gender and discrimination

Seema Jayachandran. 2015. "[The Roots of Gender Inequality in Developing Countries](#)." Annual Review of Economics 7:63-88.

Esther Duflo, "[Women Empowerment and Economic Development](#)." *Journal of Economic Literature*, vol 50, no 4, December 2012: 1051-1070.

> More on Duflo, from [The Atlantic](#).

Beatriz Armendáriz and Jonathan Morduch (2010), The Economics of Microfinance. Chapter 7: "Gender." Pages 219-227 only.

Jensen, Robert and Emily Oster (2009). "[The Power of TV: Cable Television and Women's Status in India](#)," Quarterly Journal of Economics, 124(3), p. 1057-1094.

Raghabendra Chattopadhyay and Esther Duflo. 2004. [Women as Policy Makers: Evidence from a Randomized Policy Experiment in India](#). Econometrica, Vol. 72, No. 5 (September, 2004), pp. 1409–1443.

> Cassan, Guilhem and Lore Vandewalle. "[Political reservations for women increase the policy influence of low castes in India](#)." VoxEu 09 December 2017. (This expands the Chattopadhyay and Duflo article, "Women as Policy Makers," to include women's caste in the assessments.)

> Friedson-Ridenour, Sophia & Rachael S. Pierotti. "[Competing priorities: Women's microenterprises and household relationships](#)." World Development vol 121 (September 2019): 53-62.

(recommended) ▶**Watch** Economists on Zoom getting coffee ([link](#), ep 9 Seema Jayachandran on Gender)

Tuesday session. (skill building) Help with questions on problem set 2 (attendance optional)

12. Population growth, the demographic transition, and social norms

Banerjee and Duflo, Poor Economics. Chapter 5.

William Easterly, "[Review: Going Beyond the Limits of the Earth With 'The Wizard and the Prophet'; The population catastrophe so often predicted never occurred, for a single reason: human ingenuity](#)." Wall Street Journal. January 19, 2018.

Grant Miller. 2010. "[Contraception as Development? New Evidence from Family Planning in Colombia](#)." Economic Journal, Volume 120, Issue 545, pages 709–736, June.

La Ferrara, Eliana, Alberto Chong, and Suzanne Duryea. 2012. "[Soap Operas and Fertility: Evidence from Brazil](#)." American Economic Journal: Applied Economics, 4(4): 1-31.

▶**Watch** [Hans Rosling's TED Talk](#) on Global Population (10 minutes)

(recommended)▶**Watch** [Eliana La Ferrara at TEDx](#) discussing TV and social norms (16:31 minutes).

Tuesday session. (deeper dive) Identifying impact without an experiment: The role of data triangulation and natural experiments in building evidence.

Jensen, Robert and Emily Oster (2009). "[The Power of TV: Cable Television and Women's Status in India](#)." Quarterly Journal of Economics, 124(3), p. 1057-1094.

La Ferrara, Eliana, Alberto Chong, and Suzanne Duryea. 2012. "[Soap Operas and Fertility: Evidence from Brazil](#)." American Economic Journal: Applied Economics, 4(4): 1-31.

Karthik Muralidharan and Nishith Prakash. 2017. "[Cycling to School: Increasing Secondary](#)

[School Enrollment for Girls in India.](#)" American Economic Journal: Applied Economics 9(3), pp. 321–350. (> Appendix Optional)

► **Watch** [Moving up a gear: Update.](#) Muralidharan & Prakash discuss the mechanisms that lead to change and how apply their findings to other contexts (generalizable)

Esther Duflo. 2011. "[Schooling and Labor Market Consequences of School Construction in Indonesia: Evidence from an Unusual Policy Experiment](#)," American Economic Review 91(4), pp. 795-813. (This paper is assigned reading for Week 10, Delivering Education.)

13. Delivering Healthcare

(recommended) ► **Watch** [Sendhil Mullainathan's TED Talk on health and](#)

[nudges](#) Banerjee and Duflo, Poor Economics. Chapter 2 and 3.

Pascaline Dupas. 2011. "[Health Behavior in Developing Countries.](#)" Annual Review of Economics 3:425–49.

Melody Schreiber. "[What Kills 5 Million People A Year? It's Not Just Disease.](#)" NPR Goats and Soda. September 5, 2018.

> Margaret E Kruk, Anna D Gage, Naima T Joseph, Goodarz Danaei, Sebastián García-Saisó, Joshua A Salomon. 2018. "[Mortality due to low-quality health systems in the universal health coverage era: a systematic analysis of amenable deaths in 137 countries.](#)" Lancet 2018; 392: 2203–12. (This is the research paper from which the Schrieber piece was drawn.)

Di Giorgio, Laura, David K. Evans, Magnus Lindelow, Son Nam Nguyen, Jakob Svensson, Waly Wane, and Anna Welander Tärneberg. "[An Analysis of Clinical Knowledge, Absenteeism, and Availability of Resources for Maternal and Child Health: A Cross-Sectional Quality of Care Study in 10 African Countries.](#)" BMJ Global Health vol 5, no 2 (December 2020): 1-31.

Jishnu Das, Jeffrey Hammer, and Kenneth Leonard. 2008. "[The Quality of Medical Advice in Low-Income Countries.](#)" Journal of Economic Perspectives 22 (2). Spring: 93-114.

> Nyqvist, Martina, et al. "[Reducing Child Mortality in the Last Mile: Experimental Evidence on Community Health Promoters in Uganda](#)" American Economic Journal: Applied Economics 2019, 11(3): 155–192. ([summary](#))

> Castro-Leal, F., Dayton, J., Demery, L. and Mehra, K. (2000). "[Public Spending on Healthcare in Africa: Do the Poor Benefit?](#)" Bulletin of the World Health Organization, 78(1), 66-74.

> Abhijit Banerjee, Angus Deaton, and Esther Duflo (2004). "[Wealth, health, and health services in rural Rajasthan](#)," Poverty Action Lab Paper No. 8, May.

> Abhijit V. Banerjee, Rachel Glennerster, Esther Duflo (2008). "[Putting A Band-Aid on a Corpse: Incentives for Nurses in the Indian Public Health Care System.](#)" Journal of European Economic Association 6(2-3): pp 487-500.

Tuesday session. (skill building) Help with final preparation. (attendance optional)

Final exam (In class)