

Pallavi Prabhakar

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EDUCATION

PhD in Economics, Norwegian School of Economics (NHH) <i>Supervisors:</i> Ingvild Almås, Orazio Attanasio, Vincent Somville	2021–2026
MSc in Development Studies, London School of Economics (LSE) <i>Supervisor:</i> Joana Nartiom	2016–2017
B.A. (Hons) in Economics, University of Delhi	2013–2016

VISITING POSITIONS

BRAC Institute of Governance & Development	Munshi Sulaiman	Research Fellow	2022–Present
Department of Economics, University of Oxford	Abi Adams	Recognised Student	Jan–Jul 2024
Institute for Fiscal Studies	Britta Augsburg	Researcher	Mar 2024
Indian Statistical Institute	Abhiroop Mukhopadhyay	Visiting Researcher	Feb–Mar 2023
Department of Economics, UC Berkeley	Edward Miguel	CEGA Fellow	Jan–Jun 2020

FIELDS OF INTEREST

Applied Microeconomics, Development Economics, Political Economy, Family Economics

REFERENCES

Ingvild Almås Professor of Economics University of Zurich ingvild.almas@econ.uzh.ch	Orazio Attanasio Professor of Economics Yale University orazio.attanasio@yale.edu	Selim Gulesci Professor of Economics Trinity College Dublin gulescis@tcd.ie	Costas Meghir Professor of Economics Yale University costas.meghir@yale.edu
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JOB MARKET PAPER

From Beliefs to Action: How Information Drives Civic Participation in India *with* Diwakar Kishore

Citizen participation underpins accountable governance, yet remains scarce in many low-income settings even after ambitious transparency reforms. We study whether comparative performance information can prompt citizens to participate. A randomized video shown to 2,106 adults in 50 Ranchi villages revealed the district's low rank on development indicators on health, education, infrastructure and explained formal grievance channels. Treated villagers were 4 p.p. more likely to sign a petition and 8.4 p.p. more likely to attend a grievance workshop within a week; one month later they were 4.7 p.p. more likely to have met a civic official and 6 p.p. more likely to voice views on social media. The video corrected overestimated rank beliefs and raised programme awareness, yet left perceived efficacy of individual action unchanged. Participation rose mainly for respondents who overestimated their district's rank at baseline. A simple model with two belief components—(i) the gap between observed performance and an aspirational benchmark and (ii) perceived efficacy—explains why closing the first gap alone can lift participation. This study's findings apply to 180 million citizens in India's aspirational districts and similar low-income contexts.

WORKING PAPERS

(Digital) Cash Transfers, Privacy, and Women's Economic Empowerment *with* Giulia Greco, Selim Gulesci, and Munshi Sulaiman [\[Draft\]](#)

A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of the Impact of Early Childhood Development on Child Health Outcomes *with* Ryan McWay and Ayo Ellis [\[Draft\]](#)

WORK IN PROGRESS

Family and Childhood Development: Kizazi Kijacho/The Next Generation with Ingvild Almås, Orazio Attanasio, Bet Caeyers, Pamela Jervis, Costas Meghir, and Charlotte Ringdal.

Parenting interventions in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) often rely on intensive training and close supervision of Community Health Workers (CHWs), making them challenging to scale. At the same time, cash transfers can ease financial constraints but may not be sufficient to shift parenting behaviors on their own. It remains unclear how to cost-effectively combine these approaches to support holistic child development. We conducted a large-scale Randomized Controlled Trial in Dodoma, Tanzania, to evaluate the relative effectiveness of three Early Childhood Development (ECD) intervention packages delivered during the child's first 1,000 days—from conception to age two. The interventions included: (i) a parenting program delivered by CHWs supported by a digital app; (ii) an unconditional cash transfer (UCT) program; and (iii) a combination of both. This study addresses that gap by testing the individual and joint impacts of parenting support and cash transfers, helping identify scalable solutions for early childhood development in resource-limited settings.

Transforming Governance: Accountability, Information, and Inclusive Growth in India's Districts with Diwakar Kishore.

Public service delivery in low- and middle-income countries is often constrained by weak state capacity and limited accountability. This study evaluates the Aspirational Districts Programme in India—one of the largest policy-monitoring initiatives globally—to examine whether improved administrative data systems and performance tracking can enhance governance and public service delivery outcomes. Leveraging administrative and satellite data, the study estimates the program's impact on level of public service delivery. The study will shed light on whether better information systems about government performance can accelerate delivery, enhance public service delivery, and close persistent development gaps across lagging regions.

Passing the Purse: What affects the decision to nominate others for cash transfers in Tanzania? with Ingvild Almås and Bet Caeyers

This paper examines who gives up control of a cash transfer by nominating an outside recipient and how this choice affects household welfare. In rural Tanzania, 1,200 households were randomly assigned a lump-sum transfer targeted to either the mother or father, each allowed to nominate the other or someone outside the household. We document the demographic and attitudinal predictors of decision to nominate outside the household, using random targeting as an instrument, estimate its impact on women's decision-making authority, household consumption, and spending on children. Results highlight how control over transfer delivery—and the decision to delegate it—shapes gendered empowerment and resource allocation.

PUBLICATIONS

- **Prabhakar P.**, Singh NS., et al. "Sexual and reproductive healthcare utilisation and affordability for South Sudanese refugees and host populations in Northern Uganda: A mixed methods study". *PLOS Global Public Health*. 2023 Sep 6;3(9)
- Singh, NS., **Prabhakar P.** et al. "They will say you want to make their home die": A mixed methods study to assess modern family planning use in partnered South Sudanese refugee and host populations in Northern Uganda." *PLOS Global Public Health* 2, no. 6 (2022)
- King, J., **Prabhakar P.** et al. Assessing equity of access and affordability of care among South Sudanese refugees and host communities in two districts in Uganda: a cross-sectional survey. *BMC Health Service Research* 22, 1165 (2022)

RESEARCH GRANTS as PI or Co-PI

International Growth Center: Transforming Governance	GBP 16,880 (2023)
University of Oxford: From Beliefs to Action	GBP 5,000 (2023)
FAIR, NHH: From Beliefs to Action	GBP 15,000 (2023)
STICERD, LSE: From Beliefs to Action	GBP 5,000 (2023)
WEE-Define Initiative: (Digital) Cash Transfers	USD 90,000 (2022)
Innovations for Poverty Action: (Digital) Cash Transfers	USD 118,000 (2022)
NHH Centre for Ethics and Economics: From Beliefs to Action	NOK 30,000 (2022)
University of Oxford: From Beliefs to Action	GBP 5,000 (2022)
RECAP, LSHTM: (Digital) Cash Transfers	USD 150,000 (2019)

AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

Norwegian School of Economics: Departmental Scholarship for PhD	2021-2025
Norges Bank Scholarship for academic exchange and travel	2023, 2025
Professor Keilhauss Minefond award for academic exchange	2025
Norwegian School of Economics Travel Funds for conferences	2021–2024
CEGA-Berkeley Fellowship for academic exchange	2020
Shri D.N. Malik Memorial Award for highest academic achiever	2016

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

ECO401: Optimisation and Microeconomic Theory (Masters)	Fall 2025–Present
ECN420: Econometrics (Masters)	Spring 2025
ECN421: Behavioural Economics (Masters)	Fall 2024–Spring 2025
ECN401: Microeconomics with applications (Masters)	Fall 2023
ECN402: Econometrics (Masters)	Fall 2022–Spring 2023

EXTERNAL PRESENTATIONS

2025: Advances in Field Experiments Conference (Chicago), TUM-Heilbronn Workshop, CSAE Conference–Oxford, Nordic Development Conference, SEEDEC, Economic Science Association- Conference-Nairobi, CMI–Bergen Development Workshop, Thrive Scientific Conference on early childhood development.
2024: SEEDEC, CSAE-Oxford, CMI–Bergen Development Workshop
2023: WEE-define Conference on Digital money and Women's empowerment, Nordic Development Conference, Bergen-Berlin Workshop, Indian Statistical Institute
2022: FAIR, Norwegian School of Economics, RECAP Health Economics Workshop, LSHTM
2021: CEGA-Global Workshop, Webinar with World Bank and Government of Uganda
2020: CEGA, University of California, Berkeley
2019: Ministry of Health and UNHCR, Uganda

WORK EXPERIENCE

Norwegian School of Economics	University Lecturer (50%)	2025–2026
BRAC Uganda	Senior Research Associate	2020–2021
BRAC Uganda	Research Associate	2018–2020
Oxford Policy Management	Analyst	2018
London School of Economics	Research Assistant	2017

OTHER

Software: Python, R, Stata, \LaTeX , Tableau, ArcGIS, ODK - Kobo, SurveyCTO
Skills: Social Network Analysis, Text Analysis, Impact Evaluation, Financing Framework for Resilient Growth
Languages: English (Fluent), Hindi (Native), Norwegian (Basic)
Citizenship: Indian
Permanent Resident: Norway

Last updated: September 15, 2025