

# Joshua D. Merfeld

merfeld [at] kdis.ac.kr

KDI School of Public Policy and Management  
263 Namsejong-ro, Sejong-si, South Korea, Office 343  
+82-44-550-1023  
[joshmerfeld.github.io/](https://joshmerfeld.github.io/)

## Academic Positions

---

KDI School of Public Policy and Management

Assistant Professor (2020 - Present)

Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service, New York University

Clinical Assistant Professor of Public Service (2018 - 2020)

Department of Global Economics, Sungkyunkwan University

Lecturer (2017)

## Research Affiliations

---

Institute of Labor Economics (IZA)

Research Affiliate (2020 - Present)

University of Washington Forum on Political Economy

Fellow (2020 - Present)

## Other Positions

---

The World Bank

Consultant (2019 - Present)

## Publications

---

“The Importance of Specification Choices when Analyzing Sectoral Productivity Gaps” with Peter Brummund. [Forthcoming](#) at *Agricultural Economics*.

“Should Farmers Farm More? Comparing Marginal Products within Malawian Households” with Peter Brummund. *Agricultural Economics*, [53\(2\): 289-306](#).

“Protecting Girls from Droughts with Social Safety Nets” with Jagori Chatterjee. *World Development*, [Volume 147, 105624](#).

“Moving up or Just Surviving? Non-Farm Self-Employment in India.” *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*, [102\(1\), January 2020: 32-53](#).

“Spatially Heterogeneous Effects of a Public Works Program.” *Journal of Development Economics*, [136, January 2019: 151-167](#).

“Relating Seasonal Hunger, Coping and Prevention Strategies, and Household Nutrition: A Panel Analysis of Malawian Farm Households” with C. Leigh Anderson, Travis Reynolds, and Pierre Biscaye. *Journal of Development Studies*, [54\(10\), October 2018: 1737-1755](#).

## Working Papers

---

“Sectoral Wage Gaps and Gender in Rural India.” IZA Discussion Paper No. 14391, available [here](#), and most recent version, available [here](#). Second revision requested, *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*.

“Combining Survey and Geospatial Data Can Significantly Improve Gender-Disaggregated Estimates of Labor Market Outcomes” with David Newhouse, Michael Weber, and Partha Lahiri. World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 10077, available [here](#).

“Small Area Estimation of Monetary Poverty in Mexico using Satellite Imagery and Machine Learning” with Anusha Pudugramam Ramakrishnan, Tom Swartz, and Partha Lahiri. Draft available [here](#).

“Labor Elasticities, Market Failures, and Misallocation: Evidence from Indian Agriculture.” Most recent version (of IZA Discussion Paper No. 13682 and previously entitled “Smallholders, Market Failures, and Agricultural Production: Evidence from India”) available [here](#).

## Works in Progress

---

“Poverty at High Frequency” with Jonathan Morduch. Draft soon.

“Does the timing of the school year affect child labor decisions in developing countries?” with Alex Eble. Draft soon.

“Can We Predict Movements in and out of Poverty? Applying Machine Learning to Household Surveys in East Africa,” with Linden McBride.

“Gender and hiring in SMEs: Evidence from an RCT in Bangladesh” with Asad Islam and Emily Beam.

“Does digitizing access to welfare programs improve access? Evidence from a randomized experiment” with Will Seitz and Shun Wang.

“Expanding childhood vaccinations through digital outreach: Evidence from a randomized experiment” with Will Seitz and Shun Wang.

“Decentralization and Program Implementation” with Ashwini Deshpande.

“Structural Transformation in a Changing Climate” with Rajeev Dehejia.

## Other Work

---

“The Gambia poverty assessment” (in progress).

“Estimating Poverty in Borno State, Nigeria” with Ryan Engstrom, David Newhouse, and M. Abul Kalam Azad.

“Structural Transformation in Sub-Saharan Africa” with Gildas Deudibe, Justin Ndoutoumou, and David Newhouse. Note prepared for the Sub-Saharan Africa Team for Statistical Development, Poverty and Equity Global Practice, World Bank.

## Awards

---

2022 Outstanding Reviewer Award, *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*.

## Service

---

*Referee service:* Review of Economics and Statistics, Journal of Public Economics, Journal of Development Economics, American Journal of Agricultural Economics, World Development, Food Policy, Journal of Official Statistics, Journal of Development Studies, Agricultural Economics, International Tax and Public Finance, Journal of Development Effectiveness, Social Indicators Research, Agribusiness

## Funding

---

“The short-term effects of the Covid-19 lockdown on rural communities in India” Co-I with Ashwini Deshpande, Kritika Saxena, and Lore Vandewalle (£19,952)

KDI School research funding (KRW 35,160,000)

## Presentations (Including Scheduled)

---

2022: Tilburg; Penn State; IZA; IFAD; Agricultural Economics Society Annual Conference

2021: Sungkyunkwan University; Korea University GSIS; Korea University Economics; Jobs and Development; Big4Small, SAE 2021; UN World Data Forum; ANU Crawford; Sogang University

2020: UC Dublin; KDI School, The Graduate Institute; Seoul National University

2019: NYU; Royal Economics Society; KDIS-3ie-ADB Conference on Impact Evaluation in Development Research; KER International Conference; NEUDC; Columbia; Econometric Society Winter Meetings

2018: AEA/ASSA; NYU

2017: Northwest Development Workshop; KEA/APEA; APPAM

2016: IATUR; Data for Policy; PNW Labor Day

2015: APPAM; STAARS

## Teaching Experience (Including Scheduled)

---

Development Economics (PhD)

Research Methods (PhD)

Analysis of Markets for Public Policy - Microeconomics (Masters)

Households and Development (Masters)

Statistical Methods (Masters)

Using Large Datasets in Policy Research (Masters)

Designing Data Collection for Program Evaluation (Masters)

Capstone: Advanced Research Projects in Quantitative Analysis (Masters)

Quantitative Analysis for Public Policy (Undergrad)

Mathematics for Economics (Undergrad)

## Education

---

### University of Washington

Ph.D. - Public Policy and Management (2018)

MS - Public Policy and Management (2015)

### Georgia State University

MPP - Public Policy (2013)

### University of Georgia

B.A. - Spanish (2008)

## Languages

---

English (Native), Spanish (Fluent), Korean (Beginner)