

Hongdi Zhao

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EDUCATION

Cornell University, Dyson School of Applied Economics and Management

Expected: May 2026

Ph.D., Applied Economics and Management

Research Interests: International and Development Economics, Machine Learning

Cornell University, Cornell Institute for Public Affairs (CIPA), Ithaca, NY

May 2018

Master of Public Administration, Concentration: International Development

Master Thesis: Study of Village Savings and Loans Associations and Their Ability to Address the Credit Needs of Smallholder Farmers in Southern Tanzania

East China Normal University (ECNU), School of Finance and Statistics, Shanghai, China

June 2016

Bachelor of Science in Statistics

Bachelor Thesis: Economic and Environmental Spatial Regression Analysis

PUBLICATIONS

Kosec, K., Song, J., Zhao, H., & Holtemeyer, B. (2022). The Gendered Impacts of Income Fluctuations on Household Departure, Labor Supply, and Human Capital Decisions: Evidence from Kyrgyzstan. *Feminist Economics*, 1–31. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13545701.2022.2101680>

FAO. (2022). Introducing the Agrifood Systems Technologies and Innovations Outlook (ATIO). *FAO*. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cc2506en>

Kosec, K., Akramov, K., Mirkasimov, B., Song, J., & Zhao, H. (2022). Aspirations and women's empowerment: Evidence from Kyrgyzstan. *Economics of Transition and Institutional Change*, 30(1), 101–134. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ecot.12302>

Ragasa, C., Lambrecht, I., Mahrt, K., Zhao, H., Aung, Z. W., & Scott, J. (2021). Can nutrition education mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 on dietary quality? Cluster-randomised controlled trial evidence in Myanmar's Central Dry Zone. *Maternal & Child Nutrition*, 17(4), e13259. <https://doi.org/10.1111/mcn.13259>

WORKING PAPER

“Dynamic Optimal Sampling for Child Malnutrition Prevention in Northern Kenya using Machine Learning Model” (with Chris Barrett, Sumanta Basu)

“Poverty Dynamics in Peru, a Data-Driven Approach Using Synthetic Panel” (with Seungmin Lee)

“Bring Power to the People or the Well-Connected? Evidence from Ethiopia on the Gendered Effects of Decentralizing Service Delivery” (with Katrina Kosec, Song Jie)

MAJOR RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

International Food Policy Research Institute, Washington, DC

Sep 2020 – Jul 2021

PIs: Katrina Kosec, Catherine Ragasa

Research Analyst, Development Strategy and Governance Division

Yale University, Department of Economics, New Haven, CT

Jul 2019 – Aug 2020

PIs: Rohini Pande (Yale University), Erica Field (Duke University), Giorgia Barboni (University of Warwick)

Pre-doctoral Research Fellow, Yale Economic Growth Center

Harvard Kennedy School of Government, Cambridge, MA

Jul 2018 – Jul 2019

Research Fellow, Evidence for Policy Design

PIs: Rohini Pande (Yale University), Erica Field (Duke University), Giorgia Barboni (University of Warwick)

Cornell Student Multidisciplinary Applied Research Teams (SMART) Project, New Orleans, LA Jan – May 2017
Research Team Member, Foundation for the Mid-South
PI: Ralph Christy (Cornell University)

CARE—Cornell Collaboration Research, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania Jun – Dec 2017
Research Fellow, Atkinson Center for a Sustainable Future
PIs: Arnab Basu (Cornell University), Margaret Johnson (Cornell University)

HONORS AND AWARDS

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| • Student Multidisciplinary Applied Research Teams (SMART) Program Leader, Cornell University | 2022, 2023 |
| • Graduate Resident Fellow , Flora Rose House, Cornell University | 2022 |
| • Data Science Fellow, The Data Incubator | 2020 |
| • Pi Alpha Alpha Honor Society Member | 2018 |
| • Teaching Assistantship, Cornell Policy Analysis Department (\$34,000) | 2018 |
| • Cornell Institute for Public Policy Fellowship Award, Cornell University (\$7,500) | 2016–2018 |
| • Atkinson Center for a Sustainable Future Research Fellowship, Cornell University (\$7,000) | 2017 |
| • Merit-based Scholarship for Statistics Student, East China Normal University | 2014 |
| • National Mathematical Modeling Contest, 3rd Place, East China Normal University | 2013 |

PROFESSIONAL WORKING EXPERIENCE

Mario Einaudi Center for International Studies, Ithaca, NY Oct 2016 – Dec 2017
Graduate Student Assistant, Cornell University

United Nations Environment Programme, Nairobi, Kenya May – Jul 2015
Project Analyst, Division of Policy Implementation

Ecobank Group, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania Aug 2014 – Feb 2015
Client Management Consultant, Corporate Banking Department

Women Empowerment, Manipal, India Jan – Feb 2013
Project Intern, Manipal University

TEACHING ASSISTANT EXPERIENCE

2023 Fall: Field Research and Pre-Engagement with Social Enterprises in Emerging Markets (Undergraduate & Graduate, AEM 4415/5415). Prof. Fridah Mubichi-Kut

2023 Spring: Research and Strategy in Emerging Markets (Undergraduate & Graduate, AEM 4421/5421), Prof. Ralph Christy, Prof. Fridah Mubichi-Kut

2023 Summer * 2023 Winter: Introductory Macroeconomics (Undergraduate, ECON 1120), Prof. Thomas Evans

2022 Fall: Emerging Markets (Undergraduate & Graduate, AEM 4420/5420). Prof. Ralph Christy

2018 Spring: Introduction to Statistics (Undergraduate: PAM 2100). Prof. Thomas Evans

SKILLS

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- **Software & Programming:** Stata (Advanced), Python (Advanced), Latex (Advanced), Excel (Advanced), R (Intermediate), PyTorch (Beginner)
 - **Languages:** Mandarin (Native Speaker), English (TOEFL: 103, IELTS: 7.5)