

Rocco Zizzamia

Centre for the Study of African Economies · Manor Rd · Oxford OX1 3UQ, UK

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Current Appointments

Lecturer in Quantitative Methods (Dept. of Int. Development, University of Oxford)	Sept. 2025-present
Research Fellow (Dept. of Economics, University of Oxford)	Nov. 2022-present

Education

<i>University of Oxford</i> , DPhil, International Development	2023
<i>University of Oxford</i> , MPhil, Development Studies (Distinction) with concentration in Development Economics	2018
<i>University of Cape Town</i> , Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Economic History (First Class)	2015
<i>University of Cape Town</i> , Bachelor of Social Science in Philosophy (First Class)	2014
Visiting student, University of California, Berkeley	

Research

WORK IN PROGRESS

[Acting early under uncertainty: Anticipatory cash transfers in the context of flood disasters](#) (with Stefan Dercon, Ashley Pople, Hannah Timmis, Prabhmeet Matta)

[Rejection sensitivity and on-the-job search: A lab-in-the-field experiment in South Africa](#), **Revise and Resubmit, Journal of Behavioural and Experimental Economics**

[Group versus individual coaching for rural social protection programs: Evidence from Uganda, Philippines, and Bangladesh](#) (with Stefan Dercon, Emily Beam, Dean Karlan, and others). NBER Working Paper No. 34309. **Conditionally accepted, American Economic Review: Insights**

Education Support During Climate Crises: An Evaluation of Cash and Remote Learning (with Noam Angrist and Stefan Dercon)

Welfare-Risk Trade-offs in Anticipatory Aid: A Portfolio Theory Approach (with Prabhmeet Matta)

[Fostering Adaptation to Climate Change: The Role of Multifaceted Social Protection Programmes and Microcredit](#) (with Anindita Bhattacharjee and Prabhmeet Matta)

Ultra-poor graduation programmes and resilience to climate shocks (with Nasir Iqbal and Saima Nawaz)

SELECT PUBLICATIONS

Jain, R., Budlender, J., Zizzamia, R., & Bassier, I. (2023). [The labor market and poverty impacts of COVID-19 in South Africa](#). *South African Journal of Economics*. 91(4), 419-445.

Zizzamia, R., Schotte, S., & Leibbrandt, M. (2022). [Snakes and Ladders and Loaded Dice: Poverty Dynamics and Inequality in South Africa, 2008 to 2017](#). *South African Journal of Economics*. 214-242.

Zizzamia, R., Bassier, I., Budlender, J., Leibbrandt, M., & Ranchhod, V. (2021). [Locked down and locked out: Repurposing social assistance as emergency relief to informal workers](#). *World Development*, 139, 105271.

Clementi, F., Fabiani, M., Molini, V., & Zizzamia, R. (2021). [Are We Really Painting the Devil on the Walls? Polarization and its Drivers in Sub-Saharan Africa in the Past Two Decades](#). *Journal of African Economies*.

Zizzamia, R. (2020). [Is employment a panacea for poverty: A mixed-methods investigation into employment decisions in South Africa](#). *World Development*. 130. 104938.

Schotte, S., Zizzamia, R., & Leibbrandt, M. (2018). [A poverty dynamics approach to social stratification: The South African case](#). *World Development*, 110, 88-103.

Past appointments

RESEARCH

Fulford Junior Research Fellow (Somerville College, Oxford University)	2023 - 2025
Consultant (BRAC International)	2025
Consultant (International Labour Organization)	2022
Research Officer (Southern African Labour and Development Research Unit)	2016 - 2021
Visiting Fellow (GIGA German Institute for Global and Area Studies)	2018
Short-Term Consultant (World Bank Group, Poverty Global Practice Unit)	2017 - 2018

TEACHING

Lecturer and convener, Quantitative Methods (Oxford Dept. of International Development)	2024-2025
Lecturer, Economics Foundation Course (Oxford Dept. of International Development)	2025
TA, Quantitative Methods (Oxford Dept. of International Development)	2020-2022
TA, Various (Philosophy Dept., University of Cape Town)	2013 - 2014

Grants (PI or co-PI)

Education Support During Climate Crises: An Evaluation of Cash and Remote Learning, Strategic Impact Evaluation and Learning | IPA

\$740,000 2025 - 2027

Anticipatory action for climate disaster response, Weiss Asset Management Foundation

\$1,000,000 2024 - 2025

The impacts of an ultra-poor graduation program in building resilience in flood-prone Pakistan, IGC

\$25,000 2025

Research on climate change adaptation practices using micro-narratives, Gates Foundation

\$85,000 2025

Anticipatory action for climate disaster response, J-Pal King Climate Action Initiative

\$250,000 2023 - 2025

Boosting decent employment for Africa's youth, International Development Research Centre

CAD\$500,000 2019 - 2022

Working to learn: an evaluation of an on-the-job training program, J-Pal Post-Primary Education Initiative
\$25,000 2019 - 2022

Awards

Clarendon Scholarship	2019 - 2022
Oxford Dept. International Development Scholarship	2022 - 2023
Papiya Ghosh Thesis Prize (best MPhil thesis in Development Studies)	2018
Skye Foundation Scholarship	2016 - 2018
Michael Wills Scholarship	2016 - 2018

Presentations

Since 2016 I have presented original research at over 40 international conferences and seminars.

Public engagement

My research has been featured in the [Financial Times](#), [The Economist](#) ([1](#), [2](#), [3](#), [4](#)), [The Mail and Guardian](#), among others. My own public-facing writing can be found [here](#).

Service

Policy engagement: Policy modeling for the [Special Covid Grant Working group](#) – proposal to introduce a [Social Relief of Distress Grant](#) adopted by the South African government.

Mentoring: Co-founder of the [Oxford Africa Society Mentorship Scheme](#)

Refereeing: American Economic Review; Insights; Journal of Economic Inequality; Economic Modelling; World Development; Review of Development Economics; Applied Economics Letters; South African Journal of Economics.

Editor: [CSAE Working Paper Series](#)

Organiser: CSAE Workshop on Social Protection and Climate Adaptation (2024); CSAE Research Seminar (2024-2025)

Other information

Programming/Software - Stata, R, Python

Languages - English (native), Italian (native), German (actively learning), Afrikaans (basic)

Sport - Oxford University First Marathon Team and half-Blue colours. Marathon PB: 2h28

References

Stefan Dercon (stefan.dercon@economics.ox.ac.uk); Pramila Krishnan (pramila.krishnan@qeh.ox.ac.uk); Christopher Woodruff (christopher.woodruff@qeh.ox.ac.uk)