

Abhilasha Sahay

SUMMARY

Empirical economist specializing in development economics and economics of gender. Ten years of professional and academic experience. Expertise in impact evaluation, survey design and causal analysis using experimental (randomized control trial) and quasi-experimental (difference-in-difference, regression discontinuity design and fixed effects) techniques. Proficient in managing large micro-data and conducting field research. Hands-on experience of working with Governments, development practitioners, and NGOs in developing countries across Africa (Nigeria, Mozambique, Ethiopia, and Tanzania), South Asia (India) and Southeast Asia (Philippines). Proven ability to conduct and lead research in challenging and resource-constrained environments.

EDUCATION

Ph.D. Economics, George Washington University	2015-2020
○ Primary Fields: Development Economics, Econometrics, Economics of Gender	
MSc. Economics, London School of Economics and Political Science	2012-2013
B. A. Honors Economics, Miranda House, University of Delhi	2009-2012

POLICY AND INDUSTRY EXPERIENCE

World Bank, Gender Group	Washington DC
<i>Economist (Staff)</i>	Jun 2022- present

Thematic Leader for Female Labor Force Participation (FLFP) and Regional Liaison for Africa region.

Technical Contributions:

- Lead and provide analytical support on projects relating to women's workforce participation and quality of employment
- Co-authoring research paper on FLFP and structural transformation in the World Bank Group's Jobs Flagship Report
- Providing technical inputs towards (i) Turkiye country economic memorandum, (ii) regional flagship initiative on women's economic empowerment in Africa, (iii) gender country diagnostics and country partnership framework from countries in the Africa region.
- Lead author on [Report on Gender Equality in Development: A 10-year Retrospective](#)
- Analytical Outputs:
 - Thematic Policy Note on [Increasing Female Labor Force Participation](#) (co-authored)
 - Thematic Policy Note on [Closing Gender Gaps in Earnings](#) (solo-authored)

World Bank, Africa Gender Innovation Lab	Washington DC
<i>Economist (Extended Term Consultant)</i>	Jul 2020 – Jun 2022

Managed a portfolio of 5 impact evaluation (IE) studies on boosting women's economic empowerment in rural Sub-Saharan Africa across four thematic areas: Skill Development, Youth Employment, Agriculture, and Social Norms

Technical Contributions:

- Conducted IE studies using randomized control trial design (RCT) to generate evidence on impact of providing:
 - Life-skills training (i.e., sessions on socio-emotional skills, sexual and reproductive health, gender-based violence, and financial literacy) and mentorship to out-of-school adolescent girls and their parents in Mozambique
 - Vocational training in non-farm trades and social networks support to HIV-affected women in Nigeria
 - Business skills training and access to mobile savings account to women micro-entrepreneurs in Tanzania
 - Livelihood training (i.e., crop-farming, animal husbandry) and gender-norms sessions to female pastoralists in Ethiopia
 - Economic empowerment training via engaging men/partners of women from fragile and conflict settings in Nigeria
- Led 5 impact evaluation workshop series to strengthen technical capacity of project implementation units; imparted 20-hours of training to 100+ officials (i.e., program managers and officers) across projects teams in Nigeria and Cote d'Ivoire
- Led a novel public expenditure review in Nigeria; furnished first-ever estimates on gender-incidence of public spending in the agriculture sector in Nigeria and provided recommendations to boost efficiency and gender-equity in budget utilization
- Contributed towards design and programming of a vocational training program in Nigeria (led by a local NGO); provided technical support to include socio-emotional skills and social network support sessions and embedded incentives to boost uptake and completion among trainees from marginalized communities

Client Engagement and Business Development:

- Developed research grant proposals and successfully raised ~USD 650K through competitive selection
- Authored a policy brief on “[Policy Solutions to Close Gender Gaps in the Agriculture Sector in Nigeria](#)”; disseminated findings among 50+ officials at the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Ministry of Finance, and Central Bank of Nigeria (in-person meetings during mission in Abuja)
- Organized and conceptualized a dissemination workshop for the Central Bank of Nigeria to share evidence on what works in boosting women’s financial literacy and uptake of financial services in Sub-Saharan Africa
- Built strong relationships with Government counterparts at line ministries, local and international NGOs, and World Bank Global Practices including Social Protection & Jobs, Agriculture, and Water to scope new IE studies and disseminate scholarly evidence
- Managed and mentored a team of 5 research analysts and consultants

World Bank, East Asia and Pacific Gender Innovation Lab

Washington DC

Research Consultant

Jan 2019 – Apr 2020

- Evaluated impact of a cash transfer program in the Philippines on women’s empowerment and exposure to violence using randomized control trial and regression discontinuity design
- Developed conceptual framework, research design and sampling strategy
- Authored technical concept note; peer-reviewed by academics and field experts
- Supervised in-person data collection (N=2500 households) to collect data on sexual and reproductive health, gender-based violence, employment, income, and time-use
- Undertook Bank missions to liaise with Ministry officials and World Bank country office staff

World Bank, Poverty Global Practice

Washington DC

Consultant

May 2017 – Aug 2017

- Conducted systematic review on ‘*Impact of Market Concentration on Welfare in General Equilibrium*’
- Distilled findings of the analysis and furnished recommendations for future research, which were presented at (i) World Bank Summer School (ii) Annual close of business World Bank meetings

Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India (GoI)

New Delhi

Consultant, Technical Support Agency to National Health Mission (Deloitte, India)

May 2014 – July 2015

- Provided technical and strategic support to GoI for its flagship public-health and nutrition program
- Led technical support team to appraise state health plans & monitored quarterly progress against targets
- Appraised state health plans and monitored quarterly progress against physical and financial targets
- Recommended budget approvals to GoI, deduced from rigorous gap analysis
- Built capacity of field officials on target-setting and cost effectiveness, raising resource utilization by 50%
- Executed review missions and monitoring visits to assess and facilitate on-ground progress
- Conducted fieldwork for a study on health procurement systems across 5 states in India
- Formulated policy recommendations based on findings; led to revamp in nation-wide procurement guidelines

WORKING PAPERS AND SELECT PROJECTS

“[Long-Term Impacts of Short Exposure to Conditional Cash Transfers in Adolescence: Evidence from the Philippines](#)”

(with Ervin Dervisevic and Elizaveta Perova) (*Revise and Resubmit, Economic Development and Cultural Change*)

[Conditional Cash Transfers and Gender Based Violence – Does Type of Violence Matter?](#) (with Ervin Dervisevic and Elizaveta Perova) (*Revise and Resubmit; Social Science and Medicine*)

[The Silenced Women: Can Public Activism Stimulate Reporting of Violence against Women?](#)” (*Under Review*)

Can Guilt Change Police Attitudes Towards Gender-Based Violence? Evidence from India (with Sofia Amaral, Kimberly Chaney, Victoria Endl-Geyer, Asmi Khushi, Nishith Prakash) (*Fieldwork completed*)

Shocks, Women, and Marriage Markets (with Aleksandr Michuda and Nivedhitha Subramanian) (*Analysis underway*)

Vocational Training Plus Programs and Women’s Empowerment: Experimental Evidence from Nigeria (with Nono Ayivi-Guedehoussou and Julia Vaillant) (*Baseline completed; Analysis underway*)

Social Networks and Women’s Work (with Nono Ayivi-Guedehoussou and Maria Emilia Cucagna) (*Analysis underway*)

Is the Legal Stick Enough? Unintended Consequences of Polygamy Ban in Benin (with Shatanjaya Dasgupta) (*Analysis Underway*)

AWARDS AND GRANTS

Rapid Social Response Adaptive and Dynamic Social Protection Umbrella, The World Bank Group (<i>USD 300,000; with Joao Montalvao and Sara Troiano</i>)	2020-2021
Social Protection Multi-Donor Trust Fund, The World Bank Group (<i>USD 350,000; with Joao Montalvao and Sara Troiano</i>)	2020-2021
Mariam K. Chamberlain Award, International Center for Research on Women (<i>USD 10,000</i>)	2019-2020
William R Waters Research Grant, Association for Social Economics, AEA (<i>USD 5000</i>)	2019-2020
Sigur Center Grant for Asian Field Research, George Washington University (<i>USD 6000</i>)	2019-2020
Sigur Center Grant for Asian Field Research, George Washington University (<i>USD 6000</i>)	2018-2019
Women's Rights and Gender Equality Award, GWU Research Days	2018-2019
First Prize for Research on Behavioral, Social and Cultural Studies, GWU Research Days	2018-2019
JN Tata Scholarship (USD 4000)	2012-2013

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

European Conference on Domestic Violence (upcoming), American Society of Health Economists (upcoming), American University (invited talk)	2023
Temple University (invited talk), University of Connecticut (invited talk), American University (invited talk), Nordic Conference in Development Economics (NCDE), Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management (APPAM), University of British Columbia (invited talk)	2022
Population Association of America Annual Meeting (PAA); Economics of crime field seminar; Northeast Universities Development Consortium (NEUDC); Southern Economic Association Annual Meeting (SEA)	2021
North East Universities Development Consortium (NEUDC); Pacific Conference for Development Economics (PacDev); Southern Economic Association Annual Meeting (SEA); Midwest International Economic Development Conference (MWIEDC); International Center for Research on Women (ICRW; invited talk)	2020
Washington Area Development Economics Symposium (WADES); Development and Political Economics Graduate Student Conference (DEVPEC)	2019
North East Universities Development Consortium (NEUDC); Urban Economics Association (UEA)	2018

MEDIA COVERAGE AND RESEARCH UPTAKE

<u>Reducing non-partner gender-based violence with conditional cash transfers in the Philippines</u> <i>East Asia and Pacific on the Rise</i> , November 2022	
<u>The Silenced Women: What works in encouraging women to report cases of gender-based violence?</u> <i>Let's talk Development</i> , March 2021	
<u>The Silenced Women: can Public Activism Stimulate Reporting of Violence Against Women?</u> <i>Policy Implications Podcast</i> , February 2021	
“Public activism led to increase in reporting of crimes against women, says study”, <i>Times of India</i> , December 2020	
<u>The Silenced Women</u> , <i>Association for Social Economics Podcast</i> , March 2020	
<u>Field Tales: Designing, Outreach and Reflections</u> <i>Sigur Center for Asian Studies</i> , August 2019	
<u>A Tale of Experiences and Learning</u> <i>Sigur Center for Asian Studies</i> , August 2019	

TEACHING EXPERIENCE AND OTHER SERVICES

Journal Referee: Forum of Social Economics, PLOS One, SAGE Journals	2020-present
Dissertation Committee Reader: Farah Tasneem (American University)	2023
Mentor at <u>Women in Econ and Policy</u>	2021-present
Mentor at Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management	2022-present
Member of Frontier Research Methods Technical Working Group (Gender Innovation Lab)	2021-2022
Graduate Teaching Assistant, George Washington University	2015-2018

LANGUAGE, TECHNICAL SKILLS, AND FIELD EXPERIENCE

Language: English and Hindi	
Programming: Stata, GIS/ArcMap, Python	
Field Experience: Abuja (Nigeria), Andhra Pradesh (India), Chhattisgarh (India), Delhi (India), Madhya Pradesh (India), Manila (Philippines), Tamil Nadu (India), Tripura (India), Uttar Pradesh (India)	