

Evaluating Solutions to Seasonal Poverty

Faculty Member: [Mushfiq Mobarak](#)

Proposal Description:

Development experts and policymakers often think of poverty as a chronic, binary phenomenon: People are either poor or they are not. However, hundreds of millions of the world's poor live nominally above the poverty line but regularly go hungry for some portion of the year (Devereux et al., 2009). This seasonal poverty is particularly severe for the rural poor, who typically suffer a so-called lean season in the time leading up to the harvest. During these periods, savings from the previous harvest dwindle and the price of staple crops rise, sometimes by as much as 100% in remote areas (Moser et al., 2009; Gilbert et al., 2017).

Seasonal poverty is one of the most pressing problems faced by the global poor. It is widespread; some 80 percent of the world's poor rely on agriculture for their livelihoods. In addition, despite its temporary nature, seasonal poverty contributes to chronic poverty in lasting ways such as reducing agricultural productivity (Fink et al., 2018) and permanently harming child health and learning (Christian and Dillon, 2017). These persistent damages may contribute to cyclical poverty.

This project will focus on two randomized controlled trials (RCTs) evaluating potential solutions to seasonal poverty: timely loans and seasonal migration assistance. The RA will assist with the collection, cleaning, and analysis of primary survey data.

Requisite Skills and Qualifications:

Experience with Stata strongly preferred. Econometrics I and II preferred. Additional programming experience and knowledge of RCTs is a plus.

Award: Kumsal Özgür

Tobin Application Link: [Tobin Application](#)

Project Type: Tobin RA

Project Year: 2019

Term: Fall 2019

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