

Rocco Zizzamia

Post-doctoral researcher and Somerville Junior Research Fellow

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EDUCATION

University of Oxford

DPhil, International Development (Supervisor: Prof. Pramila Krishnan)

Oxford, United Kingdom

Oct. 2019 – August 2023

University of Oxford

*MPhil, Development Studies
awarded with distinction (with courses taken from the MSc in Economics for Development)*

Oxford, United Kingdom

Oct. 2016 – July 2018

University of Cape Town

*Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Economic History
awarded in the first class*

Cape Town, South Africa

Jan. 2015 – Dec. 2015

University of Cape Town

*Bachelor of Social Science in Philosophy
awarded in the first class*

Cape Town, South Africa

Jan. 2012 – Dec. 2014

University of California, Berkeley

Visiting student in Philosophy and History

Berkeley, United States

Aug. 2013 – Dec. 2013

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*.

Schotte, S., **Zizzamia, R.** 2022. The livelihood impacts of COVID-19 in urban South Africa: A view from below. *Social Indicators Research*. 1-30.

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

Bassier, I., Budlender, J., **Zizzamia, R.**, 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

Leibbrandt, M., Schotte, S., **Zizzamia, R.** (2019). “Tackling persistent poverty and inequality: A dynamic perspective.” In *Confronting Inequality: The South African Crisis*, edited by M.S. Smith. Jacana Media.

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

SELECTED WORKING PAPERS

Zizzamia, R., & Ranchhod, V. (2020). *Earnings inequality over the life-course in South Africa*. Paris: Agence française de développement. (AFD Research Paper No. 160).

Zizzamia, R., Schotte, S., Leibbrandt, M., & Ranchhod, V. (2016). *Vulnerability and the Middle Class in South Africa* Cape Town: SALDRU, University of Cape Town. (SALDRU Working Paper 188/ NIDS Discussion Paper 2015/16).

WORK IN PROGRESS

Improved early action interventions through precise targeting, timely cash and early warning to mitigate the impacts of climate disasters: Field experimental evidence from Bangladesh (with Stefan Dercon, Ashley Pople, Hannah Timmis, BIGD Dhaka and GiveDirectly)

Rejection sensitivity and on-the-job search: A lab-in-the-field experiment in South Africa

Role of Life-Skills Coaching in BRAC’s Ultra-Poor Programme in Bangladesh (with Stefan Dercon, Ashley Pople and BIGD Dhaka)

The effect of timely cash transfers during an extreme flood shock: Evidence from the 2022 Pakistan Floods (with Muhammad Bin Khalid, Ashley Pople and Nihan Rafique)

Evaluation of BRAC support to village committees during crises within the ultra-poor programme (with Stefan Dercon, Ashley Pople and BIGD, Dhaka)

The effect of anticipatory action in the context of flood shocks in Somalia (with Ashley Pople, Michael Green, Lilly Schofield and Laura Swift)

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE AND TEACHING

- **Somerville College** Oxford, United Kingdom
Fulford Non-stipendiary Research Fellow October 2023 - present
- **Center for the Study of African Economies** Oxford, United Kingdom
Post-doctoral researcher November 2022 - present
- **International Labour Organization** Geneva, Switzerland
Consultant June 2022 - Dec. 2022
- **Department of Social Policy and Intervention, University of Oxford** Oxford, United Kingdom
Research assistant Jan. 2022 - June 2022
- **Department of International Development, University of Oxford** Oxford, United Kingdom
Teaching assistant, MPhil in Development Studies, Quantitative Methods Oct 2020 - June 2022
- **SALDRU, University of Cape Town** Cape Town, South Africa
Research officer Jan. 2016 - July 2021
- **National Income Dynamics Study-Coronavirus Rapid Mobile Survey** Cape Town, South Africa
Consultant, Labour and Firms working group May. 2021 - July 2021
- **GIGA German Institute for Global and Area Studies** Hamburg, Germany
Visiting fellow October. 2018 - December 2018
- **World Bank Group, Poverty Global Practice Unit, Africa Region** remote
Short Term Consultant 2017 - 2018
- **Philosophy Department, University of Cape Town** Cape Town, South Africa
Teaching assistant: Ethics, Political Philosophy, Great Philosophers Jan. 2013 - December 2014
- **Religious Studies Department, University of Cape Town** Cape Town, South Africa
Guest Lecturer: Religion, Conflict and Violence May 2014

RESEARCH GRANTS (PI OR CO-PI)

- **J-Pal King Climate Action Initiative** \$250,000
“Anticipatory action for climate disaster response” 2023 - 2024
- **International Development Research Centre** CAD\$500,000
“Boosting decent employment for Africa’s youth” Mar. 2019 - April 2022
- **J-Pal Post-Primary Education Initiative** \$25,000
“Working to learn: an evaluation of an on-the-job training program” Mar. 2019 - Jan. 2021
- **UNU-WIDER** \$8,000
“COVID-19 and livelihoods in urban South Africa” May 2020 - Mar 2021
- **German Institute for Global and Area Studies** \$8,000
“Poverty dynamics in South Africa: A mixed methods investigation” June 2017 - September 2017

HONOURS AND AWARDS

- Clarendon Scholarship (DPhil in International Development) Oct.2019 - Feb. 2022
Clarendon Trust
- ODID Scholarship (DPhil in International Development) Feb.2022 - Feb. 2023
Oxford Department of International Development
- Papiya Ghosh Thesis Prize (best thesis, MPhil Development Studies) 2018
Oxford Department of International Development
- Skye Foundation Scholarship Oct.2016 - July 2018
Skye Foundation
- Michael Wills Scholarship Oct.2016 - July 2018
University of Oxford and Dulverton Trust
- Various scholarships and awards during bachelor at UCT 2012 - 2015
University of Cape Town

PRESENTATIONS

- 2023** – Department of Social Policy and Intervention workshop, Oxford; CREB Applied Development Economics, Lahore; ESA Africa Regional Conference, Cape Town.
- 2022** – WB/IZA/UNU-WIDER Conference, Cape Town; CSAE Workshop, Oxford
- 2021** – UNU-WIDER Seminar, Helsinki; RESEP Seminar, Stellenbosch; Oxford Department of International Development, Oxford; CSAE Workshop, Oxford
- 2020** – Oxford Department of International Development, Oxford; Agence Française de Développement, Paris; SALDRU, Cape Town; African Centre for Excellence in Inequality Research, Cape Town; IUSSP Population, Poverty and Inequality Research Conference, remote
- 2019** – IDRC/ILO/INCLUDE Workshop, Nairobi; WB/IZA/UNU-WIDER Conference, Bangkok; IUSSP Conference, University of Michigan
- 2018** – CSAE Conference, Oxford; SALDRU Seminar, Cape Town; RESEP Seminar, Stellenbosch; African Studies Centre, Oxford; INET-YSI Africa Convening, Harare; HDCA Conference, Buenos Aires; AFD Conference, Paris; GIGA Seminar, Hamburg
- 2017** – Fifth Congress of African Economists, Malabo; HDCA Conference, Cape Town; CSAE Conference, Oxford; African Studies Centre, Oxford
- 2016** – DSA Conference, Oxford; SALDRU Seminar, Cape Town; International Workshop on the Middle Class in Africa, Cape Town

MEDIA

My research has featured or been referred to in the Economist, the Guardian, the Financial Times, Die Welt and in the South African Business Day, Mail and Guardian, Business Insider, eNCA, News24, Groundup, Sunday Times, University of Cape Town news, and Independent Online. I have been interviewed about my work by the Financial Times, The Economist and on South African national television (eNCA) and radio (5FM). Op-eds I have co-authored include:

- Covid-19 lays bare Cape Town's social divide, deepens underlying inequalities** 27 Mar. 2021
News24
- Covid-19 job losses persist, but grants cushion the blow** 30 Sept. 2020
Daily Maverick
- 'Distress grant' misses the mark** 15 July 2020
Business Day
- South Africa can – and should – top up child support grants** 31 March 2020
The Conversation
- Socio-economic class in South Africa: playing snakes and ladders with loaded dice** 8 August 2019
Econ3x3
- Stable middle-class in SA may be smaller than thought** 2 Oct. 2017
Business Day
- Defining the Middle Class in the Global South** 13 June 2017
Institut francais des relations internationales
- What to take into account when measuring poverty?** 23 March 2017
Oxford Centre for the Study of African Economies blog

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- **Languages:** English (native), Italian (fluent), Afrikaans (basic)
- **Prog. languages:** Stata (advanced), Python (intermediate)
- **Sport:** Oxford University First Marathon Team (2022/23), awarded Oxford half-colours for performance in 2023 London Marathon (2h32). Won various trail races in South Africa, the UK, and Italy.

References available upon request

Last updated: October 18, 2023