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**Citizenship:** Austrian

**Fields of Concentration:**

Development Economics  
Behavioral Economics  
Labor Economics

**Desired Teaching:**

Development Economics  
Behavioral Economics  
Microeconomics

**Dissertation Title:**

*Economic and Inter-generational Decision-Making in Families and Social Networks*

**Education:**

PhD Economics, University of Gothenburg, 2014 - (*expected completion data: 2020*)  
Supervisors: Professor Mikael Lindahl and Assistant Professor Yonas Alem

MSc Economics (*cum laude*), University of Bologna, 2012 – 2014

BSc Economics, University of Vienna, 2009 – 2012

BA International Development, University of Vienna, 2009 – 2013

Erasmus Exchange, Linköping University, Division of Economics, 2011

**Working Papers:**

“Parental Decision-Making and Educational Investments: Experimental Evidence from Tanzania” [**job market paper**]

“Behavioral Responses and Design of Bequest Taxation”, with Maksym Khomenko

“Distributional Preferences in Adolescent Peer Networks”, with Yonas Alem, Fredrik Carlsson, Martin G. Kocher and Mikael Lindahl

**Work in Progress:**

“The Effect of Women’s Autonomy on Labor Market Outcomes: Evidence from Rwanda”,  
with Yonas Alem

“Save Africa's Tropical Forests and Improve Firms' Productivity: A Randomized Controlled Trial  
in Rwanda“, with Yonas Alem and Johnson Rukundo

“Climate Risk, Firm Behavior and Industry Concentration: Evidence from Alpine Tourism”

**Teaching Experience:**

*Teaching Assistant*, Microeconomics (Doctoral level), 2016, 2019

*Teaching Assistant*, Microeconomics (Masters level), 2017 - 2018

*Teaching Assistant*, Microeconomics (Undergraduate level), 2017 - 2019

*Thesis Advisor*, (4 undergraduate students), 2017

**Technical Skills:**

*Proficiency*: Stata, ArcGIS, LaTeX, Office

*Familiarity*: Python

**Fellowships, Honors and Awards:**

Knut och Alice Wallenberg Travel Grant, 2018

Donationsnämnden Travel Grant, 2017

Adlerbertska Stipendiestiftelsen Travel Grant, 2017

Adlerbertska Hospitiestiftelsen Grant, 2015, 2016

**Presentations and Summer Schools (past and planned):**

Annual Oxford Development Economics Workshop (OXDEV), Oxford (CSAE), 2019

Nordic Development Conference, Copenhagen, 2019

Aswede Annual Conference, Uppsala, 2019

Seminar, Stockholm School of Economics, 2019

Seminar (PhD MicroWave Series), University of Stockholm, 2019

Lab-in-the-field Experiment PhD Workshop (CBESS), University of East Anglia, 2018

EfD Annual Conference, Addis Abeba, 2017

Summer School on Socioeconomic Inequality (HCEO), University of Chicago, 2017

Aswede Annual Conference, Örebro, 2017

Summer School for Experimental Economics, University of Amsterdam, 2016

PhD Conference, Department of Economics, University of Gothenburg, 2016-2019

**Languages:**

English (fluent), German (native), Italian (fluent), Swedish (basic), Spanish (basic)

**Other Activities:**

Vice Chair of the Graduate Student Association, Department of Economics, University of  
Gothenburg, 2014-2016

University of Gothenburg Doctoral Students Committee Board Member, 2017

## References:

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## Dissertation Abstract:

In my thesis, I study economic decision-making and preferences within the family, household and close social environment. In these micro-level units of analysis, individuals make decisions on the use and allocation of resources that often involve multiple generations, e.g. human capital investments, bequest decisions or other transfers. The intergenerational nature of these choices implies a high relevance for public policy for low-income contexts, where household decision-making is financially and socially constraint (Baland & Ziparo, 2017) as well as developed countries, where the study of socio-economic inequality over generations has gained increasing attention.

The economic outcomes that we observe at the family or household level represent an array of underlying individual preferences, decision powers and information asymmetries. To open this complex *black box* of household decision-making is empirically challenging. My dissertation uses multiple empirical methodologies, ranging from experimental to structural approaches, to study economic and inter-generational choices within families and social networks in important decision domains.

In my job market paper, **Parental Decision-Making and Educational Investments: Experimental Evidence from Tanzania**, I show that differences in decision power between spouses have significant implications for educational investments in children. I run a lab-in-the-field experiment with parents to test whether mothers avoid bargaining with their more powerful spouse, thereby sacrificing the ability to finance expensive educational inputs through income pooling. Mothers and fathers allocate money to a cash payout and a voucher for school materials. At the same time, they can choose to do so individually or together with their spouse. The experiment randomly varies how much couples can gain by deciding jointly on the allocation.

Parents strategically react to higher levels of this treatment by cooperating more, but particularly mothers continue to avoid bargaining and sacrifice on average 5.8% of voucher value by investing inefficiently. I show that these results are driven by mothers with low empowerment, who believe their spouse disagrees with their preferred allocation. After the redemption of the voucher for school materials children of non-cooperative parents achieve significantly lower test scores five months after the experiment, implying a negative inter-generational externality of parents' decisions. The findings of the paper also shed light on the emergence of alternative strategies of mothers to finance educational goods, such as informal saving groups or hiding of income.

In my second paper, **Behavioral Responses and Design of Bequest Taxation**, (joint with Maksym Khomenko), we study individual bequest preferences to inform on the optimal design of an intergenerational wealth tax, commonly represented by either inheritance or estate taxation. Depending on the tax design, old-age individuals can react with a number of responses, ranging from adjustments of wealth accumulation and inter-vivos gifts to changes in the distribution of inheritances among heirs. We leverage a unique and appropriate setup of Swedish inheritance taxation and rich administrative data. To understand individual responses to alternative tax schemes, e.g. adjustments in wealth accumulation, bequest distributions, and the resulting welfare changes, we estimate a comprehensive structural model of wealth accumulation and bequest decisions in old age.

We find that comparable inheritance and estate taxes result in sizable, but similar distortions to wealth accumulation and bequest distributions. By limiting strategic avoidance to wealth adjustments, estate taxation outperforms inheritance taxes in terms of tax revenues. Our model enables policymakers to design an intergenerational wealth tax that balances distortions, progressiveness and tax revenue and incidence according to their social welfare functions.

In my final chapter, **Distributional Preferences in Adolescent Peer Networks** (joint with Yonas Alem, Fredrik Carlsson, Martin G. Kocher and Mikael Lindahl), we study distributional preferences in adolescents' peer networks. These preferences measure how other's material payoffs feature in an individual's utility function and are behaviorally important for economic decision-making of individuals and groups alike. Evidence for preference peer networks at a young age can help to explain the distribution of other-regarding attitudes and the selection into friendship and professional networks as well as into political views later in life.

We collect network data on friendship links of 12-13 years old students in three Tanzanian public primary schools and run a lab-in-the-field experiment to elicit choices between allocations for themselves and a passive agent. Children are classified as efficiency loving, inequality loving, inequality averse and spiteful types. We find that children with the same preference types are more likely to report a friendship link and that, conditional on being friends, inequality-loving and spiteful types are correlated. Using a best-friend fixed effects specification, we show tentative evidence that these preference peer networks are the result of both selection and transmission by roughly equal shares. The role of peers in explaining distributional preferences goes beyond the composition of social networks and also comprises the relative position of a child within it. Low ranking in academic performance and high popularity among peers relate positively to inequality loving and spiteful preference types, suggesting a differential relevance of these two types of social hierarchies.

### **Bibliography:**

Baland, Jean-Marie, & Ziparo, Roberta. 2017. Intra-household bargaining in poor countries. WIDER Working Paper Series 108, World Institute for Development Economic Research (UNU-WIDER).