

JAKOB SVENSSON

Born August 22, 1965, Sweden

Research interests: Development economics, political economics

Position: Professor, IIES, Stockholm University, 2007-;

Director, IIES, Stockholm University, 2015-2024

Web: www.jakobsvensson.com

DEGREES

Stockholm University: B.A. in Economics, 1989; Stockholm University: Ph.D. in Economics, 1996;
Stockholm University: Docent in Economics, 2003.

ADDITIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Centre for Economic Policy Research (CEPR), European Development Research Network (EUDN),
Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL), Bureau for Research and Economic Analysis of Development (BREAD).

AWARDS, HONORS, (current) board member

The 2009 Assar Lindbeck Medal (awarded biannually to a young researcher who have made significant contributions to economic thinking and knowledge); Chair of the Prize Committee for The Bank of Sweden Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel, 2023-2024; Member of the Prize Committee for The Bank of Sweden Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel, 2014-2025; Member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, 2007-; Member of the Service Delivery Indicators' (SDI) Steering Committee, World Bank, 2015-; Member Europe's Advisory Group, Center for Global Development (CDG), 2016-2018; Chair of the Board, Association of Swedish Development Economists (ASWEDE), 2014-; Elected Member, Board of Trustees, SNS, 2016-2025; Member of the Technical Advisory Board for the Global Education Policy Dashboard, World Bank, 2019-; Chair of Myrdal Committee, Stockholm University, 2024-.

RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

A. Project leader for [externally funded] field research

“It’s (also) what you produce: Experimental Evidence on Creating Markets for Quality in Low-income Countries”, 2023-2028 [ERC Advanced Grant]; “Quality control and value creation: an experimental study”, 2021-2024 [Swedish Research Council]; “Creating markets: A clustered randomized trial on agricultural productivity and technology adoption”, 2018-2021 [Swedish Research Council]; “Community Health Promoters, Phase II: A Cluster Randomized Trial of Impact, Uganda”, 2016-2021 [CIFF]; “Input and Output Markets Constraint”, 2016-2017 [IGC]; “Quality of Agricultural Inputs, Uganda”, 2012-2016 [Swedish Research Council]; “Citizen Report Cards in Uganda: Phase II”, 2007- 2009 [World Bank]; “Community Health Promoters: A Cluster Randomized Trial of Impact”; 2009-2013 [CIFF]; “Citizen Report Cards in Uganda: Phase I”, 2004-2006 [World Bank]; “Impact Evaluation of HIV Prevention Activities for Adolescents in Lesotho”, 2010-2013 [World Bank]; “Public Expenditure Tracking Study (PETS) in Cambodia”, 2004-2005 [World Bank].; “Improving the Delivery of Primary Education Services in Uganda (PETS)”, 2002-2005 [World

Bank]; “Quantitative Service Delivery Survey (QSDS) in primary health sector in Uganda”, 2000 [World Bank]; “Confronting competition: Firm survey project in Uganda”, 1998 [World Bank].

B. Ongoing work

Technology adoption, and input and output market constraints in agricultural markets

Large-scale cost-effective incentive programs in the education and health sectors

Research on climate and development

C. Google scholar citations

D. Current working papers

“Scaling Care, Saving Lives: Evidence from an Iterative Trial in Uganda” (with P. Awori, M. Björkman Nykvist, and A. Guariso), draft IIES 2025.

“Born Again: Experimental Evidence on the Economic and Social Impacts of Religious Renewal” (with F. Loiacono and A. Madestam), draft IIES 2025.

“Market access for quality and demand for modern technologies” (with T. Bold, S. Ghisolfi, and F. Nsonzi), draft, IIES 2023.

“Community Health Provision at Scale: Evidence from a Clustered Randomized Trial in Uganda” (with P. Awor, M. Bjorkman-Nykvist and A. Guariso). Working paper, IIES, 2023.

“The Lost Human Capital: Teacher Knowledge and Student Achievement in Africa” (with Tessa Bold, D. Filmer, E. Molina) Policy Research Working paper 8849, World Bank, 2019

“Effect of a Micro Entrepreneur-based Community Health Delivery Program on Under-five Mortality in Uganda: A Cluster-randomized Controlled Trial” (with M. Bjorkman-Nykvist, A. Guariso, and D. Yanagizawa-Drott) CEPR Discussion Paper 11515, 2016

“What Do Teachers Know and Do? Does it Matter?” (with Tessa Bold, D. Filmer, G. Martin, E. Molina, B. Stacy, C. Rockmore, and W. Wane) Policy Research Working Paper 7956, Background Paper for the World Development Report 2018

“Tuning in the Market Signal: Estimating Impact of Access to Market Prices in Partial vs. General Equilibrium” (with T. Bold and D. Yanagizawa-Drott) Working Paper, IIES, 2017

“Free Education: Evidence from a Policy Experiment in Cambodia” (with M. Cheung, M. Iwanowsky, and A. Madestam)

E. Recent and most cited (\approx 1000 citations) peer-reviewed articles

“Weather shocks, mortality, and adaptation: Experimental evidence from Uganda”. *Journal of Development Economics*, 2025, vol. 176, 103478 (with M. Bjorkman-Nykvist and A. Guariso).

“Human resource challenges in health systems: evidence from 10 African countries”. *Health policy and planning*, 2024, vol 29 (7): 693-709 (with A. Sheffel, et al.)

“2024 års ekonomipris till Claudia Goldin”. *Ekonomisk Debatt*, 2023, vol 8: 35-45 (with T. Andersson, et al.)

“2023 års ekonomipris till Claudia Goldin”. *Ekonomisk Debatt*, 2023, vol 8: 35-45 (with T. Andersson, et al.)

“Market Access and Quality Upgrading: Evidence from Randomized Experiments,” *American Economic Review* 2022 (with T. Bold, S. Ghisolfi, and F. Nsonzi).

- “Can Good Products Drive Out Bad? A Randomized Intervention in the Antimalarial Medicine Market in Uganda,” *Journal of the European Economic Association*, 2021, 19(6); jvab053 (with M. Bjorkman-Nykvist and D. Yanagizawa-Drott)
- “COVID-19 Vaccine Acceptance and Hesitancy in Low and Middle Income Countries, and Implications for Messaging,” *Nature Medicine*, 2021, 27: 1385-1394 (with A.M. Mobarak, S.B. Omer [corresponding authors], et al.)
- “2021 års ekonomipris till David Card, Joshua Angrist och Guido Imbens,” *Ekonomisk Debatt*, 2021, 8 (49): 5-17 with T. Andersson, et al.)
- “An analysis of clinical knowledge, absenteeism, and availability of resources for maternal and child health: A cross-sectional quality of care study in 10 African countries” *BMJ Global Health*, 2020; 5:e003377 (with L. Di Giorgio, D. Evans, M. Lindelow, S.N. Nguyen, W. Wane, A. Welander Tärneberg)
- “2019 års Ekonomipris till Abhijit Banerjee, Esther Duflo och Michael Kremer (The 2015 Economics Prize to Abhijit Banerjee, Esther Duflo och Michael Kremer),” *Ekonomisk Debatt*, 2019, 8 (47): 5-14 (with P. Fredriksson, E. Mörk and T. Persson)
- “Reducing Child Mortality in the Last Mile: Experimental Evidence on Community Health Promoters in Uganda,” *American Economic Journal: Applied*, 2019, 11(3): 155-92 (with M. Bjorkman-Nykvist, A. Guariso, and D. Yanagizawa-Drott).
- “Incentivizing Safer Sexual Behavior: Evidence from a Lottery Experiment on HIV Prevention,” *American Economic Journal: Applied*, 2018, 10(3): 1–29 (with M. Bjorkman-Nykvist, L. Corno, D. de Walque)
- “Enrollment Without Learning: Teacher Effort, Knowledge, and Skill in Primary Schools in Africa,” *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 2017, 31(4): 1-21 (with T. Bold, D. Filmer, G. Martin, E. Molina, B. Stacy, C. Rockmore, and W. Wane)
- “Lemon Technologies and Adoption: Measurement, Theory and Evidence from Agricultural Markets in Uganda,” *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 2017, 132(3): 1055-1100 (with T. Bold, K. Kaizzi, D. Yanagizawa-Drott)
- “Experimental Evidence on the Long-Run Impact of Community Based Monitoring,” *American Economic Journal: Applied*, 2017, 9(1): 33-69 (with M. Bjorkman-Nykvist and D. de Walque)
- “2015 års ekonomipris till Angus Deaton” (The 2015 Economics Prize to Angus Deaton) in *Ekonomisk Debatt*: 8, 5-17, 2015 (with J. Hassler, M. Persson and T. Persson).
- “Eight questions about Corruption”, *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 2005, 19 (5): 19-42. [The article has also been translated and reprinted in Polish in *Gospodarka Narodowa* (National Economy), vol. 9, pp. 77-106, 2006, and a shorter edited version was translated into Chinese and published in *21st Century Business Herald* (China’s Wall Street Journal), Feb 2, 2006]
- “Local Capture: Evidence from a Central Government Transfer Program in Uganda”, *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 2004, vol. 119 (2): 679-706 (with Ritva Reinikka).
- “Who Must Pay Bribes and How Much? Evidence from a Cross Section of Firms”, *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 2003, vol. 118 (1): 207-30.
- “Political Budget Cycles: Do They Differ Across Countries and Why?”, *Journal of Public Economics*, 2006, 90 (8-9): 1367-1389, 2006 (with Min Shi).
- “Are corruption and taxation really harmful to growth? Firm level evidence”, *Journal of Development Economics*, 83 (1): 63-75, 2007 (with Ray Fisman).

“Power to the People: Evidence from a Randomized Field Experiment of a Community-Based Monitoring Project in Uganda”, 2009, *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 124:2 (with M. Bjorkman).

“Foreign Aid and Rent-Seeking”, *Journal of International Economics*, 2000, Vol. 51 (2): 437-461. [Reprinted in *Forty Years of Rent Seeking Research*, R.D. Congleton, A.L. Hillman, K.A. Konrad (eds), 2008, Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg].

F. Peer-reviewed articles

“Rethinking the Human Resource Crisis in Africa’s Health Systems: Evidence across Ten Countries,” *Health Policy and Planning* (forthcoming), 2024 (with A. Sheffel, K.G. Andrews, R. Conner, L. Di Giorgio, D.K. Evans, R., M. Lindelow, J. Sharma, W. Wane, A. Welander)

“HIV, Risk and Time Preferences: Evidence from a general population sample in Lesotho,” *Health Economics*, 2022, 31(5): 904-911 (with M. Bjorkman-Nyqvist, L. Corno, D. de Walque)

“Are Not-for-Profits Different? Theory and Evidence on the Pricing of Health Services in Uganda,” *Economics of Governance*, 2016, 17(1): 1-10 (with K. Bjorvatn)

“Policies and Institutions for Effective Service Delivery: The Need of a Microeconomic and Micropolitical Approach,” 2013, *Journal of African Economies* 22(2): 16-38 (with T. Bold)

“Bribes, Lobbying, and Development,” 2011, *American Political Science Review*, 105(1): 1-18 (with B. Harstad)

“Working for God? Evidence from a change in financing of not-for-profit health care providers in Uganda”, 2010, *Journal of the European Economic Association* 8(6):1159–1178 (with R. Reinikka).

“Getting Prices Right: The Impact of the Market Information System in Uganda, 2009, *Journal of the European Economic Association* 7(2–3): 435–445 (with D. Yanagizawa).

“The Power of Information in Public Services: Evidence from Education in Uganda,” *Journal of Public Economics*, 2011, 95 (7-8): 956-966 (with R. Reinikka)

“When is community-based monitoring effective? Evidence from a randomized experiment in primary health in Uganda”, *Journal of the European Economic Association*, 2010, 2-3: 571-581 (with M. Björkman).

“The institutional economics of foreign aid”, *Swedish Economic Policy Review*, 2006, 13(2): 115-137.

“Fighting corruption to improve schooling: Evidence from a newspaper campaign in Uganda”, *Journal of the European Economic Association*, 2005, 3 (2-3): 259-267 (with Ritva Reinikka).

“Using Micro-Surveys to Measure and Explain Corruption”, *World Development*, 2006, 34 (2): pp. 359–370 (with Ritva Reinikka).

“Why Conditional Aid Doesn’t Work and What Can Be Done About It?”, *Journal of Development Economics*, 2003, vol. 70 (2): 381-402.

“Political Instability, Corruption and Policy Formation”, *Journal of Public Economics*, 2003, vol. 87 (7-8): 1335-1837 (with P. Fredriksson).

“Political Budget Cycles: A Review of Recent Developments,” *Nordic Journal of Political Economy*, 2003, 29: 67-76 (with M. Shi)

“What Explains the Success or Failure of Structural Adjustment Programs?” *Economic Journal*, 2000, vol. 110 (October), 894-917 (with D. Dollar).

“When is Foreign Aid Policy Credible? Aid Dependence and Conditionality”, *Journal of Development Economics*, 2000, vol. 61 (1): 61-84.

“Foreign Aid and Rent-Seeking”, *Journal of International Economics*, 2000, Vol. 51 (2): 437-461. [Reprinted in *Forty Years of Rent Seeking Research*, R.D. Congleton, A.L. Hillman, K.A. Konrad (eds), 2008, Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg.

“Political Budget Cycles: A review of recent development”, *Nordic Journal of Political Economy*, 2003, vol. 29 (1): 67-76 (with M. Shi).

“Coping with Poor Public Capital”, *Journal of Development Economics*, 2002, vol. 69 (1): 51-69 (with R. Reinikka).

“Is the bad news principle for real?”, *Economic Letters*, 2000, 66(3): 327-331.

“Aid, Growth and Democracy”, *Economics & Politics*, 1999, vol. 11(3): 275-297.

“Investment, Property Rights and Political Instability: Theory and Evidence”, 1998, *European Economic Review*, Vol. 42 (7), pp. 1317-1341.

G. Book chapters, monographs, research reports

Political Economy and Macroeconomics: On Foreign Aid and Development, Monograph Series, No. 30, Institute for International Economic Studies: Stockholm, 1996.

Health Care on the Frontline: Survey Evidence on Public and Private Providers in Uganda, Africa Region Human Development Working Paper Series no. 38, 2000, The World Bank, Washington, D.C. [with M. Lindelöw and R. Reinikka].

“The Cost of Doing Business: Ugandan Firms’ Experiences with Corruption”, in R. Reinikka and P. Collier (eds.), 2001, *Uganda’s Recovery: The Role of Farms, Firms, and Government*, Washington DC: The World Bank.

“Confronting Competition: Investment, Profit, and Risk”, in R. Reinikka and P. Collier (eds.), 2001, *Uganda’s Recovery: The Role of Farms, Firms, and Government*, Washington DC: The World Bank (with R. Reinikka).

“Improving Governance and Controlling Corruption: Introduction”, in D. Kaufmann, M. Gonzalez de Asis, and P. Dininio (eds), 2002, *Improving Governance and Controlling Corruption: Towards a participatory and action-oriented approach*, Washington, D.C., The World Bank (with D. Kaufmann, M. Gonzalez de Asis, P. Dininio).

“Measuring and Understanding Corruption at the Micro Level”, in D. Della Porta and S. Rose-Ackerman (eds.), 2002, *Corrupt Exchanges: Empirical Themes in the Politics and the Political Economy of Corruption*, Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft (with R. Reinikka).

“Survey Tools for Assessing Performance in Service Delivery”, 2003, in Bourguignon, Francois and Luiz Pereira da Silva (eds.), *Evaluating the Poverty and Distributional Impact of Economic Policies*, Oxford University Press (with J. Dehn and R. Reinikka).

“Efficiency of Public Spending: New Microeconomic Tools to Assess Service Delivery”, 2004, in Tony Addison and Alan Roe (eds.), *Fiscal Policy for Development: Poverty, Reconstruction and Growth*, Palgrave Macmillan (with R. Reinikka).

“The power of information: evidence from public expenditure tracking surveys”, *Global Corruption Report 2004*, Transparency International, London: Pluto Press.

“Absorption Capacity and Disbursement Constraints”, 2006, in *Financing Development: What are the Challenges in Expanding Aid Flows? Proceedings of the 3rd AFD-EUDN Conference*, 2005, Agence Française de Développement.

“How Corruption Affects Service Delivery and What Can Be Done About It?”, 2006, in Rose-Ackerman, S. (ed.) *International Handbook on the Economics of Corruption*, Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd (with Ritva Reinikka).

“Efficiency and Demand for Health Services: Survey Evidence on Public and Private Providers of Primary Health Care in Uganda”, 2007, Paper Prepared for AFT: PREM 2, The World Bank.

“Absorption Capacity and Disbursement Constraints”, 2008, in Easterly, W. (ed.) *Reinventing Foreign Aid*, MIT Press.

“Impact Evaluation of Service Delivery Programs: Basic Education, Health, Water, and Sanitation, 2008, Paper prepared for the African Economic Research Consortium.

“Local Accountability”, 2010, in T. Besley and R. Jayaraman (eds) *Institutional Microeconomics of Development*, MIT Press (with M. Bjorkman and R. Reinikka).

“Delivering Service Indicators in Education and Health in Africa: A Proposal.” Policy Research Working Paper No. 5327, The World Bank (with Tessa Bold, B. Gauthier, and W. Wane)

“Service Delivery Indicators: Pilot in Education and Health Care in Africa.” CMI report no. 2011:8, Chr. Michelsen Institute, Bergen, Norway (with Tessa Bold, B. Gauthier, O. Maestad, W. Wane)

“Effect of a Micro Entrepreneur-based Community Health Delivery Program on Under-five Mortality in Uganda: A Cluster-randomized Controlled Trial” (with M. Bjorkman-Nykvist, A. Guariso, and D. Yanagizawa-Drott), CEPR Discussion Paper 11515, 2016.

“The Vicious Circle of Poverty, Poor Public Service Provision, and State Legitimacy in Sudan”, 2017, in A. Hamilton and C. Hammer, eds., *Data-Driven Decision Making in Fragile Contexts: Evidence from Sudan*, IBRD, The World Bank (with A. Hamilton)

“What Do Teachers Know and Do? Does it Matter?” (with Tessa Bold, D. Filmer, G. Martin, E. Molina, B. Stacy, C. Rockmore, and W. Wane), World Bank Research Working Paper 7956, Background Paper for the World Development Report 2018.

“Education, Institutions and Development”, in J-M. Baland, F. Bourguignon, T. Verdier and J-P. Platteau, eds. *Handbook on Institutions and Development*, Princeton University Press, 2020 (with Tessa Bold).

“Alleviating Global Poverty: A Note on the Experimental Approach”, in M. Lundahl, D. Rauhut, and N. Hatti, eds. *Poverty in Contemporary Economic Thought*, Routledge, 2021 (with P. Fredriksson, S. Jävervall, E. Mörk, and T. Persson)

SUPERVISION

Martina Björkman (2006), Anders Fredriksson (2009), Johan Kiessling (2009), David Yanagizawa Drott (2010), Maria Perotta (2010), Maria Cheung (2013), Abdulaziz Shifa (2013), Bei Qin (2013), Linnéa Wickström Östervall (2014), Shuhei Kitamura (2016), Miri Stryjan (2016), Erik Prawitz (2017), Mathias Iwanawsky (2018), Serena Cocciolo (2019), Benedetta Lerva (2020), Selene Ghisolfi (2020), Tillmann von Carnap-Bornheim (2023), Francesco Loiacono (2023), Sreyashi Sen (2024), Dominik Biesalski (2025), Iacopo Bianchi (2025).