

ISABELLE COHEN

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EMPLOYMENT

University of Washington, Evans School of Public Policy & Governance
Assistant Professor 2021 – *present*

OTHER AFFILIATIONS

Invited Researcher, J-PAL Digital Identification and Finance Initiative (DigiFi)	2023 – <i>present</i>
Affiliate, Center for Effective Global Action	2023 – <i>present</i>
Affiliate, Center for Statistics in the Social Sciences	2023 – <i>present</i>
Affiliate, Center for Studies in Demography and Ecology	2022 – <i>present</i>

EDUCATION

University of California, Berkeley	Ph.D.	2021	Economics
College of William & Mary	M.P.P.	2012	Public Policy
College of William & Mary	B.A.	2011	International Relations

PUBLICATIONS

“A big push intervention community intervention reduced rates of child marriage by 80%” with Maryam Abubakar and Daniel Perlman. *Nature*, 2026.

“Technology and the State: Building Capacity to Tax via Text.” *Journal of Public Economics*, August 2024, 236: 105154.

“Documenting Decentralization: Empirical Evidence on Administrative Unit Proliferation from Uganda.” *World Bank Economic Review*, 2024.

“When Who Matters: Interviewer Effects and Survey Modality” with Rebecca Walcott and Denise Ferris. *Evaluation Review*, 2023.

“Crowd In or Crowd Out? The Subnational Fiscal Response to Aid.” *World Development*, April 2023, 164: 106180.

“How Do Disadvantaged Groups Seek Information about Public Services? A Randomized Controlled Trial of Communication Technologies” with Katerina Linos, Melissa Carlson, Laura Jakli, Nadia Dalma, Afroditi Veloudaki and Stavros Spyrellis. *Public Administrative Review*, 2022, 82(4).

“Iron Deficiency and Schooling Attainment in Peru” with Alberto Chong, Erica Field, Eduardo Nakasone and Maximo Torero. *American Economic Journal – Applied Economics*, October 2016, 8(4): 222-55.

WORKING PAPERS

“Technology without Teeth: Evidence from ePOS Adoption in Pakistan” with Sher Afghan Asad. (May 07, 2025). Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=5245840>.

SELECTED ONGOING RESEARCH

“The demand for digital identification amongst small enterprise owners in Uganda” with Emma Riley (*Accepted at Journal of Development Economics via Pre-Results Review*)

“Allocating Identity: Distribution and Impact of Kaduna's KADRIMA Card,” with Emma Riley and Abiola Oyeбанjo.

“Auditing from Below: Experimental Evidence from Consumer Receipt Lottery,” with Sher Afghan Asad.

“Evaluating the effects of an intervention against child marriage: Six year follow up,” with Alison Drake.

“Safe Spaces for Married Adolescents: An Experiment in Northern Nigeria,” with Aisha Bello, Bilkisu Abba, Aminu Bello Gurin, and Daniel Perlman.

“Ending School-Related Gender Based Violence (SRGBV) in Primary Schools: A Two-Pronged Approach in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria,” with Adefunke Ekine, Oyeteju Odufuwa, Oluwatoyin Adebayo, Grace Abban-Ampiah, and Erik Andersen.

RESEARCH GRANTS:

2025	J-PAL Digital Identification and Finance Initiative in Africa (DigiFi), “Allocating Identity: Distribution and Impact of Kaduna's KADRIMA Card,” Co-PI, with Emma Riley and Abiola Oyeбанjo	\$219,957
2025	University of Washington Royalty Research Fund, “Understanding Equity and Efficiency in the Disbursement of Identity Cards for Social Protection”	\$40,000
2025	International Growth Center, “Leveraging Consumer Monitoring and Government Enforcement to Improve Tax Compliance,” Co-PI, with Sher Afghan Asad	\$100,715
2024	Gates Foundation via CARE International, “Re-IMAGINE: Delaying marriage and improving adolescent SRH in Niger,” University of Washington-based Evaluation Component, PI	\$300,000
2024	Gates Foundation via Centre for Girls Education, “Pathways to Choice – Learning to Scale,” University of Washington-based Evaluation Component, PI	\$203,832
2024	Fund for Innovation in Development, “A training method to prepare students and teachers for responding to school-related gender-based violence in Nigeria,” Co-PI, with Adefunke Ekine, Oyeteju Odufuwa, Oluwatoyin Adebayo and Grace Abban-Ampiah	\$215,000
2024	National Institutes of Health, “Evaluating the effects of an intervention against child marriage: Six year follow-up,” PI, with Alison Drake	\$396,146
2024	Center for Studies in Demography and Ecology Population Research Planning Grant, “Empowering Married Adolescents: An Impact Evaluation in Northern Nigeria,” PI	\$8,517
2024	CEGA Development Economics Challenges, “Empowering Married Adolescents: An Impact Evaluation in Northern Nigeria,” PI	\$20,000
2023	CEGA Global Networks, “Using peer information for taxation: A randomized field experiment in Ethiopia,” Co-PI, with Dagim Belay, Gebeyehu Manie and Firew Woldeyes	\$70,000

2023	CEGA Development Impact West Africa, “Impact of environmental, health and safety sensitization on liquified petroleum gas usage in Ghana,” Co-PI, with Isaac Doku, Hamdiyah Alhassan, Mohammed Nuhu Mujtaba	\$48,781
2023	CEGA Development Impact West Africa, “Solar lantern program: sensitization and willingness to pay by rural households in Ghana.” Co-PI, with Hamdiyah Alhassan, Ishaque Mahama, Isaac Doku and Oyeteju Oduduwa	\$49,996
2022	Center for Studies in Demography and Ecology Population Research Planning Grant, “Space Spaces Project,” PI	\$10,000
2022	J-PAL Digital Identification and Finance Initiative in Africa (DigiFi), “The demand for digital identification amongst small enterprise owners in Uganda,” Co-PI, with Emma Riley	\$263,000
2019	USAID Development Innovation Ventures, “Teacher Rotation and Student Outcomes: Experimental Evidence from Uganda,” Co-PI, with Frederico Finan, Ernesto Dal Bó, David Schönholzer and Kizito Omala	\$900,000
2019	BRAC-CEGA Learning Collaborative, “Take-up and Impact of Digital Repayment in Microfinance in Uganda,” Co-PI, with Denise Ferris	\$64,901
2019	CEGA Digital Credit Observatory, “Take-Up and Impact of Digital Repayment in Microfinance,” Co-PI, with Denise Ferris	\$41,000
2018	CEGA Development Economics Challenge Grant, “Tax Capacity and State Accountability,” PI	\$14,950
2018	International Growth Centre, “Tax Capacity and State Accountability: Firm Owner and Taxpayer Responses to Information,” PI	\$25,000
2018	JPAL Governance Initiative, Travel/Proposal Development Grant, “Tax Capacity and Fiscal Decentralization; Experimental Evidence from Uganda,” PI	\$5,070
2018	Economic Development & Institutions, “Teacher Rotation and Student Outcomes: Experimental Evidence from Uganda,” Co-PI, with Frederico Finan, Ernesto Dal Bó, David Schönholzer and Kizito Omala	\$130,000
2017	JPAL Governance Initiative, “Teacher Rotation and Student Outcomes: Experimental Evidence from Uganda,” Co-PI, with Frederico Finan, Ernesto Dal Bó, David Schönholzer and Kizito Omala	\$243,822
2017	International Growth Centre, “Teacher Rotation and Student Outcomes: Experimental Evidence from Uganda,” Co-PI, with Frederico Finan, Ernesto Dal Bó, David Schönholzer and Kizito Omala	\$40,000

PRESENTATIONS (including scheduled) – last three years:

- 2025 Allied Social Science Associations Annual Conference; IFPRI Applied Microeconomics and Development Seminar (invited seminar); University of Washington Epidemiology Seminar
- 2024 Pacific Conference for Development Economics; California Polytechnic University (invited seminar); UC Berkeley WARA West Coast Regional Conference; Public Management Research Conference; Western Economic Association International Conference; Advances with Field Experiments; Brown University PSTC Colloquium Series (invited seminar)
- 2023 Pacific Conference for Development Economics; Center for the Studies in African Economies Conference; Center for Studies in Demography and Ecology Seminar Series (invited panel); University of Arkansas (invited seminar); International Institute for Public Finance Conference; Advances with Field Experiments Conference; National Tax Association Conference; NEUDC Conference, Harvard University

CONFERENCE ORGANIZATION:

- 2024 Northwest Development Workshop, Seattle, Local Organizer and Program Committee Chair

2023 Pacific Conference for Development Economics, Seattle, Program Committee Member

REFeree SERVICE:

American Economic Review; Center for Effective Global Action Digital Credit Observatory (grant proposal); Economics & Politics; French National Research Agency (grant proposal); Journal of African Economies; Journal of Demographic Economics; Journal of Development Studies; Public Finance and Budgeting; Quarterly Journal of Economics; Regional & Federal Studies; University of Washington Royalty Research Fund (grant proposal); World Bank Economic Review

TEACHING:

2022 - Taxes and Social Policy (Graduate), University of Washington
2021 - Data Analysis Practicum (Doctoral), University of Washington
2021 - Impact Evaluation (Graduate), University of Washington
2021 - Financial Management and Budgeting (Graduate), University of Washington
2016 - 2018 Teaching Assistant, Economics, University of California - Berkeley

HONORS, SCHOLARSHIPS AND FELLOWSHIPS:

2022 APPAM PhD Dissertation Award, Honorable Mention
2018 George Break Prize in Public Finance
2012 William & Mary Outstanding Graduate Assistant (Public Policy)
2011 William & Mary Thomas Jefferson Public Policy Program Trice Fellowship
2011 Phi Beta Kappa
2007 William & Mary 1693 (Murray) Merit Scholarship

OTHER PUBLICATIONS:

“The Economic Impact and Financing of Infrastructure Spending” (with Thomas Freiling and Eric Robinson). December 2011. Thomas Jefferson Program in Public Policy, College of William & Mary.