Deboleena Rakshit

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Mexico City and Washington, DC

Overview

Development researcher with 7 years' experience in conducting rigorous evaluations across sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, having worked previously on implementing development projects at scale.

Relevant Experience

International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)

Washington, DC, USA

Senior Research Analyst I (2026–Present); Research Analyst II (2023–2026) 2023–Present

- **Mozambique school meals program:**
  - Led baseline enumerator training in Quelimane, Zambezia province, for a Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT) evaluation of the sustainability of a national school meals program
  - Developed questionnaires, programmed Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) surveys, and supervised data collection, cleaning, and analysis for baseline and midline reports
- **Literature review on women's empowerment interventions:**
  - Led literature review and evidence synthesis on the cost effectiveness of agricultural interventions targeting women's economic empowerment, spanning 41 countries and 15 types of programs
- **Takaful cash transfer secondary analysis:**
  - Cleaned and analyzed raw administrative data covering 13 million households in Egypt to estimate heterogeneous impacts of national cash transfers on ultra-poor households to inform future program design
  - Was lead author on report with the key finding on how households headed by women and with a higher presence of members with disabilities were more likely to benefit from the cash transfers
- **Evaluation of social protection programs in Bangladesh:**
  - Led analysis on two RCTs of a national cash transfer program and of a nutrition-sensitive agricultural intervention in Bangladesh, with a focus on women's empowerment in both papers
  - Presented results at conferences and donor workshops and co-authored papers on both
- **Somalia ultra-poor graduation program:**
  - Conducted enumerator training (remotely) for midline and endline rounds of an RCT evaluation of an ultra-poor graduation model in Baidoa, Somalia
  - Created and maintained dashboard to monitor data quality
  - Presented results to donors, implementation partners, and other key stakeholders at learning events in Lusaka, Zambia, and Nairobi, Kenya
- **Led adoption of agentic AI for research at IFPRI:**
  - Developed and shared an agent skill to build and manage CAPI surveys end-to-end
  - Led IFPRI-wide training on getting started with agentic AI for research attended by 100+ employees
  - Part of IFPRI's Data Governance Management Committee to help draft organization policy on AI use
  - Designed and led hands-on training session for a team of 15 research analysts based out of Bangladesh on using Claude Code and agentic AI in their work

Equimundo (formerly Promundo-US)

Washington, DC, USA

Data and Research Officer (2022–2023); Research Officer (2020–2022); Research Associate (2019–2020) 2019–2023

- **IMAGES data harmonization:**
  - Led a 3-year exercise to retroactively harmonize data from the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES) from 33 countries, resulting in a cross-country database of 67,000 observations and over 5,000 variables.
  - Managed design firm and worked with them on designing and launching the IMAGES survey online repository with an indexed database of survey items, survey design tools, data documentation, and all related published studies citing IMAGES data
  - Managed the $200,000 sub-grant that funded this exercise including budget tracking, vendor management, and regular reporting back to the donor
- **Literature review on boyhood in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA):**
  - Managed $150,000 project on a landscape review of research on and programming with adolescent boys (ages 8–13) across SSA

* Commissioned subject matter experts at universities, think tanks, and research institutes based in SSA to contribute as co-authors and reviewers, ensuring that all consultants and vendors were based in SSA and remunerated based on global standard rates
* Designed and led the quantitative analysis, supported the qualitative analysis, led the writing and made all editorial decisions on content, layout, and design

- **Training for fieldwork:**
  * Trained enumerators on survey tools for a post-COVID follow-up phone study in Rwanda
  * Trained research partners from Rwanda, Uganda, and Lebanon on monitoring and evaluation (M&E) frameworks at in-person workshop in Utrecht, Netherlands
  * Developed M&E plans and trained research partners in French for the "husbands' clubs" projects across multiple countries in West Africa and for a different school-based program in Paris, France

Stanford University — *Washington, DC, USA*

Research Assistant — 2019

- **Report on women's financial inclusion in Indonesia:**
  * Sourced secondary administrative data, led analysis for, and co-authored a landscape review of women's financial inclusion and empowerment in Indonesia

Quest Alliance — *Mumbai, India*

Business Development Coordinator (2016–2017); Program Coordinator (2015–2016) — 2015–2017

- **Managed implementation of youth employability program:**
  * Managed end-to-end implementation of employability projects across Maharashtra, helping Quest's network grow from 5 to 64 vocational training partners across 14 districts
  * Managed a youth skilling project that impacted 10,000 young people across Mumbai, Delhi, and Chennai, and achieved a 40% post-graduation placement rate
  * Led in-person training in Phnom Penh to pilot adaptation of employability curriculum with implementing partners in Cambodia, Laos, and Kenya
- **Built out new organizational functions:**
  * Designed and supervised implementation of a new monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system for a network of over 60 vocational training centers across India, with a focus on impact measurement
  * Started and built out the new industry engagement function focused on developing partnerships with large employers to help connect trainee graduates with jobs through apprenticeships

Enago Editorial Services — *Mumbai, India*

Senior Quality Analyst — 2014–2015

- **Managed team of social science-focused editors:**
  * Trained and quality-monitored team of 20 editors who worked on editing academic papers written by researchers who were non-native speakers of English
  * Developed style guides, training materials, and contributed to developing in-house editing software

Education

American University — *Washington, DC, USA*

Real Analysis (Graduate); Linear Algebra, Multivariable Calculus (College) — 2025

School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University — *Bologna, Italy,*

M.A., Development Economics | *Editor, SAIS Perspectives Magazine* | *President, Student Government* — *& Washington, DC, USA* 2019

Jadavpur University — *Kolkata, India*

B.A. (Honors), English Literature | *Co-edited blog tracking global censorship news* — 2011

Select Publications

Peer-reviewed journal articles

Allen IV, J.; Karachiwalla, N.; **Rakshit, D.** (2026). **Are low-income households conditionally cooperative? Contrasting evidence from a field-adapted contributions game.** Applied Economics Letters.

Lokot, M.; Sultana, N.; Hidrobo, M.; Ahmed, A.; Hoddinott, J.; **Rakshit, D.**; Roy, S.; Ranganathan, M. (2025). **Evolution of intimate partner violence impacts from cash transfers, food transfers, and behaviour change communication: Mixed-method experimental evidence from a nine-year post-programme follow-up in Bangladesh.** Social Science & Medicine, 117901.

Doyle, K.; Levtov, R. G.; Karamage, E.; **Rakshit, D.**; Kazimbaya, S.; Sayinzoga, F.; Sibomana, H.; Ngayaboshya, S.; Rutayisire, F.; Barker, G. (2023). **Long-term impacts of the Bandebereho program on violence against women and children, maternal health-seeking, and couple relations in Rwanda: A six-year follow-up of a randomized controlled trial.** EClinicalMedicine, 64, 102233.

Working papers

Leight, J.; Hirvonen, K.; Karachiwalla, N.; **Rakshit, D.** (2025). **Displacement and development: Evidence from a graduation program for Somalia's ultra-poor.** IFPRI Discussion Paper 2356.

Hoddinott, J.; Ahmed, A.; Quisumbing, A.; **Rakshit, D.** (2023). **Can gender-sensitive programs improve resilience? Medium-term impacts of an intervention in Bangladesh.** IFPRI Discussion Paper 2231.

Technical & policy reports

Leight, J.; Hirvonen, K.; Karachiwalla, N.; **Rakshit, D.** (2024). **Building pathways out of poverty in Baidoa: A randomized controlled trial: Evidence from the midline survey.** Learning Brief, IFPRI.

Rakshit, D.; Barker, G.; Gupta, T.; Lauro, G. (2023). **Step by step: Navigating boyhood in sub-Saharan Africa.** Equimundo.

Greene, M. E.; Heilman, B.; Barker, G.; **Rakshit, D.**; Gupta, T. (2022). **The International Men and Gender Equality Survey: A status report on men, women, and gender equality in 15 headlines.** Equimundo.

Doyle, K.; **Rakshit, D.**; Levtov, R.; Kazimbaya, S.; Karamage, E.; Rutayisire, F.; Ngayaboshya, S.; Sayinzoga, F. (2021). **Care, coping, and connection under Covid-19: Insights on couple relationships from a follow-up to the Bandebereho randomized controlled trial in Rwanda.** Promundo-US.

Rakshit, D.; Levtov, R. (2020). **Men, women, and gender relations in Georgia: Public perceptions and attitudes.** UNDP and UNFPA Georgia.

Rakshit, D. (2020). **Putting fathers' care to work: Landscape report on working fathers' uptake of parental leave.** Parental Leave Corporate Task Force.

Rakshit, D. (2020). **Engaging missing populations in gender-transformative programs.** Promundo-US and Plan International Canada.

Rakshit, D. (2020). **Recruitment and retention of male participants in gender-transformative programs.** Promundo-US and Plan International Canada.

Rakshit, D. (2020). **Role of facilitation in gender-transformative programs that engage men and boys.** Promundo-US and Plan International Canada.

Conferences

- **IFPRI RISE Research Day Conference, Washington, DC, 2026:** Displacement and development: Evidence from a graduation program for Somalia's ultra-poor.
- **Joint Data Center Research Conference on Forced Displacement, Bangkok, 2026:** Displacement and development: Evidence from a graduation program for Somalia's ultra-poor.
- **IFPRI RISE Research Day Conference, Washington, DC, 2024:** Long-term impacts of transfers on IPV: Evidence from a 9-year post-program follow-up in Bangladesh.
- **Sexual Violence Research Initiative (SVRI) Conference, Cancún, 2022:** The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on couple relationships in Rwanda.

Skills

- **Methods:** Randomized controlled trials, survey design and experiments, administrative data analysis, mixed methods
- **AI and automation:** Claude Code, Codex; building agent skills for research workflows
- **Data and analysis:** Stata, Python, QGIS, Tableau, LaTeX, Git
- **Survey platforms:** SurveyCTO, KoboToolbox
- **Languages:** Fluent: Bengali, French, Hindi; Basic: Italian, Portuguese, Spanish