Chunxiao Jing

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Agricultural and Applied Economics, University of Wisconsin-Madison

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Education

- **University of Wisconsin-Madison** *August, 2021-May, 2027 (expected)*
  Ph.D., Agricultural and Applied Economics Madison, WI
  Committee: Jeremy Foltz (Chair), Gisella Kagy, Vladimir Gimpelson

- **University of California, Los Angeles** *June, 2019*
  M.A., Applied Economics Los Angeles, CA

- **Nankai University** *June, 2018*
  B.A., Economics Tianjin, China

Fields of Interest

Primary Fields: Development Economics, Applied Microeconomics
Secondary Fields: Labor Economics, Structural Change, Environmental Economics

Job Market Paper

Weather Shocks and Structural Transformation: Micro Evidence from Africa

Abstract. Structural transformation is a central driver of economic development, yet the movement of labor from agriculture into more productive non-agricultural employment has remained slow in Sub-Saharan Africa. In this paper, I examine how household constraints shape this process using panel data from Niger, Malawi, and Ethiopia. I construct a weather-predicted NDVI growth index using a Random Forest and show that favorable weather-induced productivity shocks reduce agricultural labor in all three countries. These reductions are accompanied by manufacturing employment gains in Niger and Malawi but a substantial increase in idle labor—working-age individuals without agricultural or non-agricultural employment—in Ethiopia. Subsistence constraints weaken labor release in Niger and Malawi, while distance, land rights, and regional employment conditions shape adjustment in Ethiopia. I then develop a structural model linking Lewis-type labor release, labor transition under mobility and land-rights frictions, and Harris–Todaro employment absorption. Estimating the model using simulated method of moments indicates that subsistence constraints primarily limit transformation in Niger and Malawi, whereas transition frictions and limited employment absorption are more important in Ethiopia. Finally, counterfactual experiments evaluate individual and combined policies. Interventions that relax subsistence constraints generate the largest non-agricultural employment gains in Niger and Malawi, while land-rights reform and stronger employment absorption are more effective in Ethiopia. These findings highlight the importance of country-specific policies that translate agricultural labor release into productive employment.

Working Papers

Can the Service Sector Lead Structural Transformation in Africa? Evidence from Côte d'Ivoire [Link]
with Jeremy Foltz
In this paper, we examine whether the service sector can drive structural transformation in Côte d'Ivoire by combining high productivity with labor absorption. Using firm panel data and proxy-variable estimates of total factor productivity, we find that services are more productive than both agriculture and manufacturing and account for the largest expansion in formal employment. More productive service incumbents grow faster, more productive entrants expand after entry, and more productive firms are less likely to exit, with employment growth concentrated particularly among unskilled workers. These findings suggest that productive service firms can drive structural transformation by generating sustained employment growth.

Work in Progress

Gender Constraints and Labor Allocation during Structural Transformation

Climate Change and Conflict: Causal Evidence Using New Machine-Learning Methods with Jeremy Foltz

Book Chapters

Perspectives on *The Agricultural Wealth of Nations* with Héctor Paredes
Forthcoming, *Proceedings of the British Academy*

Research Experience

University of Wisconsin–Madison — Madison, WI
Research Assistant to Prof. Jeremy Foltz — August 2022–August 2026

Dissertation Fieldwork — Addis Ababa and Sidama, Ethiopia
Principal Investigator — August, 2026

University of California, Los Angeles — Los Angeles, CA
Research Assistant, MAE Research Lab — Spring, 2019

Teaching Experience

- **Principles of Microeconomics (Econ 101)** — *Teaching Assistant*
  Taught by Dr Steve Trost — Fall, 2026
- **The Growth and Development of Nations in the Global Economy (AAE 374)** — *Teaching Assistant*
  Taught by Professor Vladimir Gimpelson — Spring, 2024
- **The Growth and Development of Nations in the Global Economy (AAE 374)** — *Teaching Assistant*
  Taught by Professor Jeremy Foltz — Spring, 2023

Conferences and Presentations

* indicates upcoming

2027 ASSA Annual Meeting*, CSAE*
2026 NEUDC, MEA Annual Meeting, AAEA Annual Meeting, AAE Development Workshop
2025 ASSA Annual Meeting, AAE Development Workshop
2024 CSAE Conference, CES China Annual Conference, AAEA Annual Meeting
2023 AAE Development Workshop

RESEARCH GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS

Research Grants
Structural Transformation and Economic Growth (STEG), UK, PhD Research Grant, 2026–2027, £10,000
Structural Transformation and Economic Growth (STEG), UK, Small Research Grant, 2026–2027, £5,000

Fellowships
University of Wisconsin–Madison PhD Fellowship, 2025–2026, $35,636
University of Wisconsin–Madison PhD Fellowship, 2021–2022, $30,545

Research and Conference Travel Awards
AAE Research Travel Grant, 2026–2027, $2,500
Graduate Student Research Travel Grant, 2026–2027, $1,500
AAE Conference Travel Grants, 2023–2025, $2,000 total

Professional Service

- **Mentor Service**
  Mentor, The Graduate Applications International Network (GAIN) Program — 2022-2023 and 2024-2025
- **Department Service**
  The Taylor-Hibbard Club President, University of Wisconsin-Madison — 2023-2024

Language and Computational Skills

Languages: Chinese (Native), English (Fluent)
Computer Skills: Python, Stata, R, LaTeX, QGIS, SPSS
Methodological Expertise: Causal Inference, Machine Learning, Structural Modeling

References

Jeremy Foltz
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Steve Trost (Teaching)
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