

Jaime A. Meza-Cordero, Ph.D.

Department of Economics
University of Southern California
3620 South Vermont Ave. Kaprielian Hall 300
(213) 256-6592
Jaime.Meza@usc.edu

Dr. Jaime Meza-Cordero is an academic and practitioner with over 15 years of experience conducting applied microeconomics research in the fields of health, labor, education, and international development. He teaches classes of Principles of Economics, Intermediate Microeconomics and Macroeconomics, Macroeconomics and Policy, Development Economics, and Health Economics. His main areas of research expertise include: evaluation design, survey instrument development, implementation strategies, project management, data collection and analysis, report elaboration, technical assistance support, and capacity building. Dr. Meza-Cordero is highly trained in the application of statistical and econometric methods to conduct experimental, quasi-experimental, and mixed-method evaluations of public policy programs. His research has been published in leading journals such as the *Journal of International Development*, *Review of Development Economics*, *Journal of Community Informatics*, and *Spotlight on Public Health Research*. Dr. Meza-Cordero's active involvement in fieldwork has allowed him to develop innovative and cost-effective research strategies that emphasize stakeholder collaboration, incentive compatibility, and capacity building. In recent years, he has worked in projects with the Inter-American Development Bank, Millennium Challenge Corporation, UNICEF, United States Department of Labor, and nonprofit organizations.

Education

Ph.D., Development Economics, University of Southern California, 2014

M.A., Economics, University of Southern California, 2009

B.A., Economics, University of Costa Rica, 2007

Fields of Specialization

Development Economics, International Trade and Finance, Labor Economics, Public Policy.

Professional Experience

University of Southern California <i>Los Angeles, CA</i>	Assistant Professor of the Practice of Economics	2020-Present
University of Redlands <i>Redlands, CA</i>	Visiting Assistant Professor of Economics	2019-2020
IMPAQ International, LLC <i>Oakland, CA & Washington, DC</i>	Senior Research Economist Research Associate	2018-2019 2014-2018
Inter-American Development Bank <i>San Jose, Costa Rica</i>	Consultant	2013
University of Southern California <i>Los Angeles, CA</i>	Teaching Assistant	2008-2013
Economic Sciences Research Institute University of Costa Rica <i>San Jose, Costa Rica</i>	Research Assistant	2008
Estado de la Nacion Research Institute <i>San Jose, Costa Rica</i>	Research Assistant	2007

Teaching Experience

University of Southern California

Fall 2020: *Intermediate Macroeconomics (Econ 305)* & *Principles of Macroeconomics (Econ 205)*

Spring 2021: *Macroeconomic Analysis and Policy (Econ 501)*, *Intermediate Macroeconomics (Econ 305)* & *Principles of Macroeconomics (Econ 205)*

Fall 2021: *Macroeconomic Analysis and Policy (Econ 501)* x2 & *Principles of Macroeconomics (Econ 205)*

Spring 2022: *Macroeconomic Analysis and Policy (Econ 501)* x2 & *Intermediate Macroeconomics (Econ 305)*

Summer 2022: *Directed Research (Econ 590)*

Fall 2022: *Macroeconomic Analysis and Policy (Econ 501)* x2 & *Principles of Macroeconomics (Econ 205)*

University of Redlands

Spring 2020: *Principles of Economics (Econ 101)* & *Development Economics (Econ 221)*

Fall 2019: *Principles of Economics (Econ 101)* & *Health Economics (Econ 260)*

Selected Publications and Working Papers

Publications

Gulemetova, M. & Meza-Cordero, J. “Re-Evaluating the Behavioral Change from Conditional Cash Transfers: Evidence from the “Avancemos” National Program in Costa Rica”. Forthcoming at *Poverty & Public Policy*.

Meza-Cordero, J. (2022). “Conditional Cash Transfers Tools to Combat Child Labor: Evidence from a Randomized Controlled Trial in Costa Rica”. *Review of Development Economics*. DOI: 10.1111/rode.12949. Available from: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/rode.12949>

Meza-Cordero, J. (2022). “Digital Literacy and Long-Term Labor Outcomes: Impacts from the One Laptop per Child Program in Costa Rica”. *Journal of Community Informatics*, Volume 19, Issue 2. <https://doi.org/10.15353/joci.v18i2.4828>. Available from: <https://openjournals.uwaterloo.ca/index.php/JoCI/article/view/4828>

Meza-Cordero, J. (2020). “About the Origins of Health in Adulthood: Evidence from Costa Rica.” *Spotlight on Public Health Research*. DOI: 10.35831/sor.pubh/070920jmc. Available from: <https://www.spotlightonresearch.com/public-health-research/about-the-origins-of-health-in-adulthood-evidence-from-costa-rica>

Kracker-Selzer A., Michaelides, M., Li, J., Magill, K., Meza-Cordero, J., Mian, P. (2019). OCFT Livelihoods Services Evaluation. Office of the Assistant Secretary for Policy, Chief Evaluation Office Reports. Available from: <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/evaluation/pdf/Livelihoods-Services-Evaluation.pdf>

Meza-Cordero, J. (2017). “Play to Learn and Learn to Play: Evaluation of the One Laptop per Child Program in Costa Rica.” *Journal of International Development*, Volume 29, Issue 1, pages 3-31. Available from: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1002/jid.3267>

Meza-Cordero, J., Kugler, M., Gulemetova, M., Salas-Ocampo, D., Rodríguez-Barrantes, C., Campos-Barrantes, V. (2015). “Informe Final de Evaluación del Programa de Transferencia Monetaria Condicionada Avancemos.” United Nations Evaluation Group. Database of Evaluation Reports. Available from: http://www.unicef.org/evaldatabase/files/Informe_Final_Evaluacion_AVANCEMOS_CostaRica_2015-001.pdf

Zhang, Y., Lochocki, L., Meza-Cordero, J. (2015). “Final Evaluation Report of the Child Labor Eliminations Actions for Real Change (CLEAR) program Malawi.” Available from: http://www.impaqint.com/sites/default/files/files/CLEAR_FinalEvaluationReport_IMPAQ_toECLT%5B1%5D.pdf

Meza-Cordero, J. (2014). “Essays on Education Programs in Costa Rica.” University of Southern California Dissertation and Theses. Available from:
<http://digitallibrary.usc.edu/cdm/ref/collection/p15799coll3/id/414880>

Arias-Ramírez, R., Oviedo-Carballo, L., Meza-Cordero, J., Villalobos-Álvarez, M., Villalta-Mena, Y., Bartels-Villanueva, J. (2009). “Análisis y Plan de Acción para el Desarrollo Regional Endógeno del Gran Puntarenas.” Instituto de Investigaciones en Ciencias Económicas, Universidad de Costa Rica, *Informes*. Available from:
<http://www.iice.ucr.ac.cr/GP.informe%20final.rev..pdf>

Working Papers

Meza-Cordero, J. & Silva, S. “Cross-Country Analysis of Child Labor and Education: Commonalities and Differences Across Costa Rica, Ecuador, Malawi, Rwanda, Nepal, and India”. Under Review.

Meza-Cordero, J. & Ngwira, E. “The Role of Access to Finance on Working Children: Evidence from a Randomized Experiment in Malawi”. (Work in progress)

Selected Project Experience

Department of Labor/ILAB – Labor Market Supply and Demand in The Northern Triangle: Leveraging Data to Build an Efficient Labor Market 2017 – 2019

United States Department of Labor (USDOL), Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB)

The three main outcomes that this technical assistance project in El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala aimed to achieve were to: 1) Strengthen the labor market information (LMI) systems by producing and publishing updated labor force surveys, 2) Develop and implement establishment surveys to assess the demand and existing needs of qualified workers, and 3) Provide capacity building to enable policy-makers, educational and workforce training providers to develop data-driven labor policy and update curriculums to match in-demand job skills. Dr. Meza-Cordero was responsible for leading the construction of formal agreements with the Ministers of Labor, Statistics Bureau’s Directors, Vocational Training Institutions and Universities Presidents, and Private Sector representatives. He was also responsible for leading the efforts to update the existing labor force surveys and national household surveys to adhere to the international standards set at the 20th International Conference of Labor Statisticians at the ILO. Dr. Meza-Cordero was also responsible for working together with global and local partners in developing capacity building activities that included international workshops and the curriculum development of a certificate program conducted at local universities. [**Project Role:** *Project Manager and Technical Lead, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras*]

Department of Labor/ILAB – Closing the Evidence Gap on Child Labor 2015 – 2019

United States Department of Labor (USDOL), Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB)

This \$4.2M project was comprised of five randomized control trial impact evaluations of interventions to reduce child labor in Ecuador, India, Malawi, Costa Rica and Rwanda. The research questions addressed included whether facilitating education and livelihood services effectively results in mitigation of the worst forms of child labor, and whether there are synergies between policies to reduce the supply of child labor and policies to reduce the demand for child labor. Dr. Meza-Cordero was the principal investigator of the interventions in Costa Rica and Malawi and was responsible for the coordination with partners, design, data collection, data analysis, and report elaboration. [**Project Role:** *Principal Investigator, Costa Rica and Malawi*]

Department of Labor/ILAB – Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Human Trafficking Livelihoods Services Evaluation 2015 – 2019

United States Department of Labor (USDOL), Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB)

The goals of this project were to rigorously evaluate the effectiveness of the provision of livelihoods services to households in reducing child labor, including: 1) Conducting an evaluability assessment to determine the most rigorous and appropriate design and methodology to successfully study the results, achievements, and challenges of livelihoods service provision across projects, and 2) Conducting an evaluation using that design and methodology. Dr. Meza-Cordero's responsibilities included working with a team of researchers to conduct an evaluability assessment of livelihood projects across 19 countries in Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa, and East Asia; subsequently, designing and conducting mixed method evaluations for a subset of selected projects in order to draw country-level assessments as well as overall conclusions based on external validity. [**Project Role:** *Technical Lead, Myanmar, Ethiopia, and Rwanda*]

**Realizing Livelihoods Improvement through Savings and Education (REALISE),
External Evaluation**

2017

Eliminating Child Labour in Tobacco Growing (ECLT)

The REALISE project was directed towards the elimination of hazardous child labour in five major tobacco growing sub-counties in Hoima, Western Uganda, within the context of the country's National Action Plan. The project focused on preventing children under age 15 from any form of labor, and adolescents ages 15-18 from hazardous and worst forms of labor, particularly in tobacco farming. The program implemented activities of awareness raising, education improvement, livelihood support, and capacity building. Dr. Meza-Cordero was responsible for the qualitative data collection and analysis from five of the sub-counties in which the program was implemented, as well as from national level stakeholders in the country's capital. He was also part of the team that produced a final report and performed the presentation of findings and recommendations to ECLT and the Government of Uganda. [**Project Role:** *Technical Lead*]

Beoog Biiga II Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program, Burkina Faso

2016 – 2017

Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Burkina Faso

CRS implemented a three-year program in 700 primary schools and preschools in Burkina Faso, aiming to improve food insecurity through education, health, and nutrition. The program provided school feeding, take-home rations for girls, health training and nutritional supplements, and capacity building in schools and communities. The evaluation included qualitative components, including student, teacher, PTAs and household surveys. Dr. Meza-Cordero supported the preparation of the evaluation design, plan and implementation. [**Project Role:** *Technical Advisor*]

Food for Education and Child Nutrition Project, Senegal

2016

Counterpart International (CI)

Counterpart International implemented a \$9M USDA-funded MGD FFE program in the Saint Louis Region in Senegal. The evaluation of this program was composed by a mixed method, longitudinal nonexperimental design that included two quantitative methods to address the program's performance against its targets. A complementary qualitative method was added to the quantitative methods to explain the mechanisms through which outcomes were generated. Dr. Meza-Cordero supported the data analysis efforts and elaboration of the final evaluation report. [**Project Role:** *Task Leader*]

Child Labour Elimination Actions for Real Change (CLEAR), Phase 1 Final Evaluation

2015

Eliminating Child Labour in Tobacco Growing (ECLT)

The CLEAR project aimed to contribute to the elimination of hazardous child labour in tobacco growing areas in Malawi within the context of the National Action Plan for the Elimination of Child Labor elaborated by the Government of Malawi. The first phase of this project was implemented between 2011 and 2015 and protected children ages 5-17 from exploitative, hazardous and worst forms of child labour in tobacco growing by implementing a holistic approach consisting of children's rights awareness campaigns, improving access to education, and providing income generating activities and training. Dr. Meza-Cordero was responsible for the collection of qualitative data from three districts in Malawi, information analysis and was a co-author in the preparation of the final implementation evaluation report for the first phase of the CLEAR project. [**Project Role:** *Task Lead*]

Revision and Evaluation of the Conditional Cash Transfer Program in Costa Rica

2015

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Costa Rica

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Costa Rica, in partnership with the Costa Rican Government, funded the evaluation of the *Avancemos* Program in 2015. The *Avancemos* Program is an ongoing conditional cash transfer program that delivers a subsidy to underprivileged families under the condition of having good school attendance. The main objective of this intervention is to reduce high school students from dropping-out, consequently improving school completion levels and labor productivity. The evaluation of this program combines an implementation evaluation to analyze the way the program's resources have reached the beneficiary population, and an impact evaluation to estimate the effects of the program on variables of interest such as school attendance and completion levels. Dr. Meza-Cordero was responsible for the overall management of the project, supervision of data collection by the local team, impact evaluation analysis, and final reports elaboration. [**Project Role:** *Project Director / Principal Investigator*]

USDOL ILAB-Impact and Implementation Evaluation for Colombia

2014

United States Department of Labor (USDOL), Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB)

The United States Department of Labor (USDOL), Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB), in partnership with Escuela Nacional Sindical (ENS), implemented a project with the overarching objective to raise awareness of and improve worker's abilities to protect and claim their labor rights in Colombia. This technical cooperation project aimed to strengthen the capacities of workers to file complaints seeking remedies for forced labor law violations through Centros de Atención Laboral (Workers Rights Centers). The impact evaluation assessed the effects of the program on file claims by workers and their outcomes. The implementation evaluation also determined the validity of the project's design, project progress, efficiency of resource use, and sustainability. Dr. Meza-Cordero is responsible for managing the coordination, advances, and budget of the program. [**Project Role:** *Project Manager*]

MCC-Senegal Roads Rehabilitation and Irrigation Program

2014

Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC)

The Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) through the Senegal Compact funded the impact evaluation of a Roads Rehabilitation and an Irrigation program aiming to improve the economic performance of the agricultural industries in the benefited northern regions. Dr. Meza-Cordero was responsible for managing the raw data collected on the field and transforming it into public use datasets in accordance with the confidentiality agreements executed during data collection. [**Project Role:** *Task Leader*]

Evaluation of One Laptop per Child Program Costa Rica

2011 – 2014

Fundacion Quiros Tanzi

The purpose of this project was to evaluate the short-term effects of the One Laptop per Child Program (OLPC) in Costa Rica. The Fundacion Quiros Tanzi implemented a OLPC program in Costa Rica, starting in 2012. The program consisted of donating laptops to unprivileged students in both urban and rural areas of the country, with the objective of improving their technological skills. Dr. Meza-Cordero was in charge of: 1) Selecting a treatment group and a control group of schools, 2) Developing an instrument for all parents and students in order to assess the household behaviors at baseline and post-intervention, 3) Administering a baseline survey to all schools and providing the laptops to the treatment schools, 4) Administering the post-intervention survey to all schools, 5) Creating a panel with the two waves of collected data, and 6) Estimating the effects of the program and elaborating an evaluation report. Dr. Meza-Cordero was responsible for the design, implementation, data collection, and evaluation of the program. [**Project Role:** *Project Director / Principal Investigator*]

Selected Presentations and Participation in Conferences

Presentations

Meza-Cordero, J. "The Impact of One Laptop per Child Projects." Presented at the Yamaguchi-Takada Laboratory, Tokyo Institute of Technology. Tokyo, Japan. July 2012.

Meza-Cordero, J. "The Formation of Technologically Skilled Human Capital: Evaluation of the One Laptop per Child Program in Costa Rica." Presented at the Development Economics Seminar, University of Southern California. Los Angeles, CA. April 2013.

Meza-Cordero, J. "The Formation of Technologically Skilled Human Capital: Evaluation of the One Laptop per Child Program in Costa Rica." Presented at the Social Mobility Through Education and Technology Conference, Universidad Latina. San Jose, Costa Rica. May 2013.

Meza-Cordero, J. "The Formation of Technologically Skilled Human Capital: Evaluation of the One Laptop per Child Program in Costa Rica." Presented at the Econometric Society North American Summer Meeting. Los Angeles, CA. June 2013.

Meza-Cordero, J. "The Formation of Technologically Skilled Human Capital: Evaluation of the One Laptop per Child Program in Costa Rica." Presented at the 88th Western Economic Association International (WEAI) Annual Conference. Seattle, WA. July 2013.

Meza-Cordero, J. "The Formation of Technologically Skilled Human Capital: Evaluation of the One Laptop per Child Program in Costa Rica." Presented at the Economics Association Presentation Series, Universidad de Costa Rica. San Jose, Costa Rica. August 2013.

Meza-Cordero, J. "The Formation of Technologically Skilled Human Capital: Evaluation of the One Laptop per Child Program in Costa Rica." Presented at the Inter-American Development Bank, Research Department. Washington, DC. September 2013.

Meza-Cordero, J. "The Effects of Early Life Health on Education and Economic Outcomes in Adulthood." Presented at the 90th Western Economic Association International (WEAI) Annual Conference. Honolulu, HI. June 2015.

Meza-Cordero, J. "Play to Learn and Learn to Play." Presented at the United Nations University World Institute for Development Economics Research (UNU-WIDER) Human Capital and Growth Conference. Helsinki, Finland. June 2016.

Meza-Cordero, J. & Gulemetova, M. "Impact Unpacked: What worked? What didn't work?" Presented at the American Evaluation Association (AEA) Evaluation + Design Conference. Atlanta, GA. October 2016.

Meza-Cordero, J., Gulemetova, M., Gupta, S., Zhang, Y., & Kugler, M. "Closing the Child Labor and Forced Labor Evidence Gaps: Five RCT Impact Evaluations." Presented at the American Evaluation Association (AEA) Evaluation + Design Conference. Atlanta, GA. October 2016.

Meza-Cordero, J. "Evaluation of the Avancemos CCT Program." Presented at the 92nd Western Economic Association International (WEAI) Annual Conference. San Diego, CA. June 2017.

Meza-Cordero, J. "Impact Evaluation of the NNAT Program in Costa Rica: Using Mobile Technology to Track Program Participants." Presented at the United States Department of Labor Grantee Workshop. Washington, DC. August, 2017.

Meza-Cordero, J. “Final Evaluation of the Realizing Livelihoods Improvement through Savings and Education (REALISE) Project.” Presented at the Uganda National Steering Committee on Child Labor Semi-Annual Meeting. Kampala, Uganda. August, 2017.

Meza-Cordero, J., Gupta, S., Zhang, Y., & Simonetta, J. “Evaluating Child Labor Interventions in Challenging Environments.” Presented at the American Evaluation Association (AEA) From Learning to Action Conference. Washington, DC. November, 2017.

Meza-Cordero, J., “Interventions to Mitigate Child Labor: Evidence from Randomized Controlled Trials in Costa Rica, Ecuador and India.” Poster presentation at the American Evaluation Association (AEA) Speaking Truth to Power Conference. Cleveland, OH. November, 2018.

Meza-Cordero, J. “Randomized Controlled Trial of the NNAT Program in Costa Rica.” Presented at the 15th Western Economic Association International (WEAI) Annual Conference. Tokyo, Japan. March 2019.

Meza-Cordero, J. “Impact Evaluation of VSLA Program: Evidence from a Randomized Controlled Trial in Malawi.” Presented at the 94th Western Economic Association International (WEAI) Annual Conference. San Francisco, CA. July 2019.

Meza-Cordero, J. “Conditional Cash Transfers Tools to Combat Child Labor: Evidence from a Randomized Controlled Trial in Costa Rica”. Presented at Conference in Honor of John Strauss. Los Angeles, CA. April 2022.

Participation in Conferences

University of Southern California. “Advances in Development Economics: Conference in Honor of Jeffrey Nugent.” Los Angeles, CA. April 2011.

University of Southern California. “Global Crisis and Latin American Economies.” Los Angeles, CA. November 2012.

American Economics Association. “2014 Annual Meeting.” Philadelphia, PA. January 2014.

American Economics Association. “2015 Annual Meeting.” Boston, MA. January 2015.

United Nations University, World Institute for Development Economics Research. “30th Anniversary Conference: Mapping the Future of Development Economics.” Helsinki, Finland. September 2015.

American Economics Association. “2016 Annual Meeting.” San Francisco, CA. January 2016.

Impact Evaluation Network. “10th Annual Meeting.” Washington, DC. March, 2017.

International Labour Organization. “20th International Conference of Labor Statisticians.” International Labor Office. Geneva, Switzerland. October 2018.

National Economics Teaching Association. “15th Annual Economics Teaching Conference”. Kansas City, MO. October 2019.

National Economics Teaching Association. “17th Annual Economics Teaching Conference”. Virtual Conference. October 2021.

University of Southern California. “Los Angeles Economic Theory Conference”. Los Angeles, CA. December 2021

Computational Skills

Microsoft Office, Stata, R, RStudio, SPSS, E-views, Lyx, Tableau.

Honors and Awards

Summer Research Fellowship, Department of Economics, University of Southern California, 2011.

Graduate Merit Fellowship and Teaching Assistantship, Department of Economics, University of Southern California, 2008-2014.

Organization of American States Academic Scholarship, 2008. – Declined

University of Costa Rica Honor Scholarship, 2007.

Professional Affiliations

American Economic Association (AEA)

Western Economic Association International (WEAI)

American Evaluation Association (AEA)

National Economics Teaching Association (NETA)

Professional Activities

Reviewer for Quarterly Review of Economics and Finance.

Reviewer for International Journal of Educational Research

Languages

Spanish (native), English (fluent), Portuguese (advanced), French (basic).

Citizenship and Residency

Citizen of Costa Rica and Legal Permanent Resident of the United States.

References

Dorene Isenberg, Ph.D.

Professor of Economics

Department of Economics

University of Redlands

Dorene.Isenberg@redlands.edu

Nada Rayyes, Ph.D.

Project Director Evaluation & Educational Effectiveness Center

California State University, Long Beach

Nada.Rayyes@csulb.edu

Jonathan A. Simonetta

Vice President of International Development

American Institutes for Research

JSimonetta@air.org

Roman S. Ponos

Vice President of Business Development

Blumont, Inc.

RP1027@georgetown.edu