

JESSICA AGNEW

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EDUCATION

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, VA

Ph.D., Planning, Governance, and Globalization, August 2020

AAUW International Doctoral Fellow 2018-19

Thematic Tracks: Urban and Environmental Development Planning; International Development Planning

Graduate Certificate in Global Planning and International Development, *May 2020*

Master of Public Health, *December 2019*

Thematic track: Health Education and Behaviour Change

Cumulative GPA: 4.0

University of Guelph, Guelph, ON, Canada

Master of Science – Food, Agriculture, and Resource Economics, *May 2016*

Thesis: Market-Based Solutions for Nutritional Deficiencies – The Role of Grameen Danone Foods

Bachelor of Arts – Food, Agriculture, and Resource Economics, *December 2012*

AWARDS

Peacock Harper Culinary History Friends Scholarships, *awarded February 2020*

American Association of University Women International Doctoral Fellowship, *awarded July 2018*

Virginia Tech Dean's Scholar Award for Outstanding Applications, *awarded August 2016*

Robb Graduate Research Travel Grant, *awarded May 2016*

University of Guelph Board of Graduate Studies Research Scholarship, *awarded December 2013*

T.K. Warley Agri-food Policy Prize, *awarded April 2012*

Canadian Agricultural Economics Society Book Prize, *awarded April 2012*

RESEARCH AND TEACHING INTERESTS

Food security, food systems, social entrepreneurship and innovation, market-based approaches to nutrition, systems thinking, mixed methods research, research design, statistics and econometrics

DISSERTATION RESEARCH

Co-Principal Investigator

Title: Demand-side factors that affect the potential of market-based approaches to increase diet diversification in Mozambique

- Conceptualized the idea of using nutrition education to connect consumers and retailers of nutritious foods to promote the consumption of a diverse diet
- Crowdsourced funds to conduct pilot study in Nampula, Mozambique (\$16,525 total)
- Formed partnership with Universidade Lúrio as implementing partner
- Created implementation and research design using participatory and mixed methods approach
- Conducted training of facilitators and enumerators for qualitative and quantitative research components (including fully validated survey instrument)
- Oversaw implementation of fieldwork, including coordinating with Director of Nutrition at UniLúrio to fulfill all national administrative requirements
- Conducted analysis of qualitative and quantitative data including estimation of hedonic and structural regression models

PUBLICATIONS

Agnew, J., S. Costa, and R. Hall. "Investigating the Ability of Low-Income Households to Increase the Diversity of Food Purchases Using Trials of Improved Practices". *Manuscript submitted. Journal of Development Studies*.

Agnew, J. 2020. "Buying to Thrive: Exploring the Potential for Market-Based Approaches to Contribute to Increases in Diet Diversity in Mozambique." PhD Diss. School of Public and International Affairs. Virginia Tech.

Poole, N., **J. Agnew**, N. Ansari, B. R.V., M. Maestre Morales, R. Mehmood, and R. Parasar. 2020. Being realistic about the contribution of private businesses to public nutrition objectives: many challenges. *Food Chain* 9(2):91-102. <https://doi.org/10.3362/2046-1887.19-00013>

Henson, S., **J. Agnew**. 2020. "Are Market-Based Solutions a Viable Strategy for Addressing Micronutrient Deficiency? Lessons from Case Studies in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia." *Development Policy Review*. Published online. <https://doi.org/10.1111/dpr.12492>

Agnew, J., S. Henson, and J. Cao. 2020. "Are low-income consumers willing to pay for fortification of a commercially produced yogurt in Bangladesh." *Food and Nutrition Bulletin* 41(1):39-46.

Hall, R.P., S. Ranganathan, **J. Agnew**, M.E. Christie, S. Clark, G. Kirk, C. Lucero, and T. Archibald. 2019. Virginia Tech Food Access and Security Study. Virginia Tech, Blacksburg.

Agnew, J., and S. Henson. 2018. Business-Based Strategies for Improved Nutrition: The Case of Grameen Danone Foods. *IDS Bulletin* 49(1):39-46.

Agnew, J. 2016. "Market Based Solutions for Addressing Nutritional Deficiencies: The Case of Grameen Danone Foods Limited." Master of Science, Department of Food, Agriculture and Resource Economics, University of Guelph.

CONTRIBUTIONS

Ashford, Nicholas L., and Ralph P. Hall. 2018. *Technology, Globalization, and Sustainable Development: Transforming the Industrial State*. London, UK: Routledge.

Henson, S., J. Humphrey, and C. Hotz. 2016. How can small and medium-sized food businesses contribute to more diverse diets for low-income country populations? In *Technical Brief*. Washington, D.C.: GAIN.

“Marketplace for Nutritious Foods Research Methodology”, Global Alliance of Improved Nutrition Technical Advisory Workshop, Consultant, Washington, D.C. – November 2016

Leveraging Agriculture for Nutrition in South Asia Program Development Meeting, Consultant, Bangladesh, October 2014

PRESENTATIONS

“Willingness to pay for the nutritional benefits of fortified yogurt by low-income mothers in rural Bangladesh.” *Unite for Sight Global Health and Innovation*, Yale University, New Haven, CT, April 2019

“BUY2THRIVE – Connecting consumers and retailers of nutritious foods through market-based education”, *Clinton Global Initiative University*, Boston, MA, October 2017

“Finding the role of business in improving nutritional status of the poor.” *International Conference for Agricultural Economists*, Italy, August 2015

“Finding the role of business in improving nutritional status of the poor” *World Food Systems Conference*, ETH Zurich, Switzerland, June 2015

“Research on value chains for nutritious foods funded by A4NH (Agriculture for Nutrition and Health).” *Realizing the Potential of Animal Source Foods for Human Nutrition in the Developing World Workshop*, Leverhulme Centre for Integrative Research on Agriculture and Health, UK, April 2015

CURRENT POSITION

Assistant Director - Research, Operations, and Program Management
Center for International Research, Education and Development, Virginia Tech
September 2020 – Present

- Responsible for project operations and management for multi-million-dollar international development programs in agriculture, markets, technical and vocational education and training, higher education, and health (WASH, nutrition)
- Support business development activities including leading proposal development and technical writing
- Develop and maintain research portfolio in market-based approaches to nutrition, food security, health and nutrition research, and WASH activities
- Coordinate partners within and outside of Virginia Tech including faculty, technical experts and organizations, local higher education institutions and non-governmental organizations
- Adjunct faculty for Advanced International Development Policy and Planning (4000/5000 level course) (see Teaching Experience)
- Support finance team in creating budgets for project proposals

Current Research Activities

1. *A Exploring the Use of Blockchain Technology to Improve Food Security Through African Indigenous Vegetables in Western Kenya - LASER PULSE East Africa Research Grant (2020) - \$240,000*

This project involves the use of a smartphone application in the value chains for African Indigenous Vegetables to improve access to markets for smallholder farmers and stimulate demand for AIVs among low-income consumers in the county of Kakamega in Kenya to advance food and nutrition security.

- Co-Principal Investigator
- Responsible for technical and research design and implementation
- Assembled team for grant application
- Lead writer
- 12-month project

2. *Food Access and Security Among College Students at Virginia Tech*

- Core team member investigating the extent of food insecurity amongst undergraduate and graduate students across campus
- Responsible for report writing and communicating results to university administration
- Report led to \$1.5 million gift to Virginia Tech to create a food market and program for food insecure students
- Core team member for evaluating the food market pilot program

Operations and Program Management

Catalyzing Afghan Agricultural Innovation – Program Coordinator

- Organize trainings by Virginia Tech faculty for Afghan stakeholders both in India and online
- Assist in the delivery of trainings for participatory value chain analysis and market-based solutions in development and agriculture
- Assist in monitoring and evaluation activities and report writings
- Provide support in human resources and finance related activities

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Research Consulting

- Improving the Nutrition Curriculum Among Higher Education Institutions in Mozambique – UNICEF, Universidade Lúrio (Current)
- Evaluation of Adolescent Nutrition Programme (Including Cooking Academy and Heroes Game) – Global Alliance of Improved Nutrition, Universidade Lúrio (2019)
- Evaluation of Marketplace for Nutritious Foods Programme – Global Alliance of Improved Nutrition (2016)

Graduate Research Assistant, Global Forum for Urban and Regional Resilience, Virginia Tech, May 2018 – Aug 2018

- Grant proposal development – National Sciences Foundation on financial resilience and cryptocurrency
- Literature review paper on the field of research in cryptocurrency and monetary policy

Graduate Research Assistant, Agriculture and Applied Economics, Virginia Tech August 2016 – May 2018

- Manuscript preparation and proposal development for market-based approaches to nutrition

Subcontractor Researcher, Institute of Development Studies, Sept 2014 – August 2016

Leveraging Agriculture for Nutrition in South Asia (LANSA) Contract

- Planned and implemented research design for field work in Bangladesh to evaluate the demand for fortified yogurt
- Supervised and completed fieldwork implementation including: a value chain analysis of Grameen Danone Foods Limited, nutritional impact assessment, training of enumerator team, and piloting and executing a choice experiment and supplemental survey with 1,600 respondents
- Carried out quantitative and econometric analysis using R Studio and NLOGIT

Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition Contract, Evaluation of Marketplace for Nutritious Foods

- Conducted systematic literature review on business models as a nutritional intervention strategy
- Contributed to research design and field work implementation plan
- Carried out fieldwork in Kenya, November - interviews of businesses, value chain actors, government officials and civil sector organizations
- Contributed a framework and technical brief for market-based initiatives to address nutritional deficiencies

Graduate Research Assistant, University of Guelph, Sept 2013 – Aug 2016

- Conducted impact assessment of completed World Vision/USAID value chain development project in Sierra Leone to determine project outcomes and impacts
- Contributed recommendations for the formation of future value chain interventions programs
- Carried out research activities for the LANSA contract

Undergraduate Research Assistant, University of Guelph, May 2012 – Aug 2012

- Independently performed literature reviews and wrote theoretical paper on vertical economies of scope in small-scale dairy operation
- Worked with dairy processors to gather data on prices and costs of production
- Conducted price analysis in two cities in Ontario, Canada

Strategic Research Associates, Research Assistant, Dec 2010 – Aug 2013

- Responsible for completing survey-based research contracts (typically within the agricultural sector) and identifying research gaps for clients

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Center for International Research, Education, and Development, Virginia Tech, Aug 2018 – Present

Junior Financial Analyst, Reliance Home Comfort, May 2011 – Sept 2011

- Reconciled monthly financial statements to raw data sources to ensure accuracy and identify any discrepancies
- Responsible for daily reporting and distribution of marketing leads generation
- Streamlined reporting process for monthly reporting in various divisions

Strategic Initiatives Intern, Reliance Home Comfort, May 2010 – Sept 2010

- Responsible for conducting competitive and product research
- Identified problems and solutions to problems in external and internal processes and systems

- Assisted in creating and implementing new Customer Experience Service Process – Plan was presented to the Board of Directors
- Tracked and reported the outcomes of implemented policies to continue to improve effectiveness

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Adjunct Faculty, Virginia Tech, Fall 2020

Advanced International Development Policy and Planning

- 35 senior undergrads and graduate students
- Course focuses on evaluation of the effectiveness of international development programs and policies, systems and critical thinking, in-depth institutional, economic, and financial analysis, with cross-cutting themes including gender, and social and technical feasibility

Study Abroad Teaching Assistant, Virginia Tech, January 2019

Tropical Infectious Diseases in the Dominican Republic, Population Health Sciences

- Conducted health needs assessment with undergraduate students in experiential learning style class

Graduate Teaching Assistant, Virginia Tech, Sept 2017 – Dec 2017

Real Estate Data Analysis, Pamplin College of Business

Graduate Teaching Assistant, University of Guelph, Sept 2013 – April 2015

Economics of the Agri-food System, Department of Food, Agriculture, and Economics

- Used game learning methods to teach first year students the principles of micro-economics in a weekly seminar

Survey of Natural Resource Economics, Department of Food, Agriculture, and Economics

ACADEMIC SERVICE

Reviewer, Food Security Journal, January 2018 – Present

Research team member, Virginia Tech Food Security and Access Study, Jan 2017 – Present

Planning committee member, Women and Gender in Development Conference, Aug 2018 – Feb 2019

Planning committee member, Blacksburg Blockchain Symposium, Jan 2018 – Apr 2018

Peer reviewer, Community Change Journal, Virginia Tech, Sept 2018 – Present

Planning committee member, Ontario Agricultural College Colloquium, 2014-15

Academic Planning Committee Member, Program Representative, Department of Food, Agriculture, and Resource Economics, University of Guelph, 2011-12

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Nutrition educator, Virginia Cooperative Extension, 2017-19

Youth mentor, Northstar Baptist Church, 2016-19

In-school mentor program, Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Guelph, 2010-2012

Guelph Breakfast Program, 2011-2013