

## THOMAS KOKOSSOU

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### **PLACEMENT OFFICERS**

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### **EDUCATION**

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(\* joint degree)

Ph.D. Economics, McGill University, Canada	expected Summer 2025
M.A. Economics, McGill University, Canada	2018
B.Sc. Applied Economics*, Université Paris-Dauphine, France	2016
B.Sc. Economics*, Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM), Canada	2016

### **FIELDS OF SPECIALIZATION**

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Primary: Development Economics  
Secondary: Applied Microeconomics

### **DISSERTATION**

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Title: *“Technology and economic development: the causal effects of internet, electricity, and digital devices on labour market outcomes, living standards, and gender norms”*  
Committee: Prof. Matthieu Chemin (Chair), Prof. Sonia Laszlo

### **JOB MARKET PAPER**

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“High-Speed Mobile Internet, Firms, and Labour Market Outcomes: Evidence from Ecuador” *Sole author*. November 2024, 49 pages.

*Abstract:* Do firms benefit from high-speed internet if it comes through mobile connections? Combining panel data on the universe of formal firms in Ecuador alongside information on the introduction of 4G in Ecuadorian counties, I estimate the effects of high-speed mobile internet on employment and wages in firms. To deal with endogeneity arising from the non-random placement of internet infrastructure, I simulate a hypothetical 4G rollout based solely on cost considerations linked to geography, and use it as an instrument. Following the introduction of 4G, employment increases by 7.1% for micro firms in sectors that are the less intensive in the use of digital technologies, with younger workers and men experiencing the largest gains. Wages per worker rise by 3% for micro firms in high digital intensity sectors, and only impact men. I provide suggestive evidence that the effects on employment come from a response at the extensive margin (new users of internet) while effects on wage come instead from a response at the intensive margin (change in internet use by existing users). Overall, high-speed mobile internet positively impacts firm, but firm size and sector matter. Facilitating access to high-speed mobile internet can be important to help micro firms, but might not be effective for larger firms.

## PUBLICATIONS

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“Norm shifting interventions and beliefs about gender norms in Paraguay”, with Sonia Laszlo, Carolina de Miranda, Franque Grimard, Tania Insfrán, Laura Morínigo and Jim Warnick. September 2024, 50 pages. Forthcoming, *Economic Development and Cultural Change*. Article DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1086/733348>.

## WORK IN PROGRESS

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“The Socio-Economic Effects of Access to Electricity: Evidence from a Community-Based Micro Hydro Project in Kenya”, with Matthieu Chemin.

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

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*Teaching Assistant, McGill University*

Urban Economics (undergraduate)	Fall 2024
Economic Statistics (undergraduate)	Winter 2024
Microeconomic Analysis and Application (undergraduate)	Fall 2023
Macroeconomic Analysis and Application (undergraduate)	Winter 2023, Fall 2022
Microeconomics for Public Policy (graduate)	Fall 2022
Public Sector Economics (undergraduate)	Winter 2022
Industrial Organization (undergraduate)	Fall 2021
Government Policy towards Businesses (undergraduate)	Winter 2021
Economic Development (undergraduate)	Fall 2020, 2019, 2018; Winter 2020, 2019, 2017

## FIELDWORK EXPERIENCE

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Project Manager, ELIMU Evaluation Impact Unit, Kianyaga, Kenya      Sept. 2017 - June 2018

## OTHER RESEARCH AND RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

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Research Assistant, Prof. Sonia Laszlo, McGill University      Summer 2020

## GRANTS AND AWARDS

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Canadian Economics Association (CEA) Student Travel Grant	2024
Graduate Excellence Award	2018 - 2022
Allan A. Hodgson Arts Internship Award	2017
Institute for the Study of International Development (ISID) Graduate Field Research Award	2017

## CONFERENCE AND SEMINAR PRESENTATIONS

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2024 58<sup>th</sup> Annual Meetings of the Canadian Economics Association (Toronto Metropolitan University, Toronto)  
 CIREQ Lunch Seminar (x2) (McGill University, Montréal)  
 McGill Applied Micro Breakfast (McGill University, Montréal)

2023 ISID conference “Trends and Prospects in Development” (McGill University, Montréal)  
CIREQ Lunch Seminar (McGill University, Montréal)

## PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

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Refereed for *Journal of Development Studies*

## COMPUTATIONAL SKILLS

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Stata, Python, VBA, ODK (Open Data Kit)

## LANGUAGES

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French (native), English (fluent), Spanish (beginner/intermediate)

## PERSONAL INFORMATION

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French Citizen

## REFERENCES

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Matthieu Chemin Associate Professor of Economics Department of Economics McGill University <a href="mailto:matthieu.chemin@mcgill.ca">matthieu.chemin@mcgill.ca</a> +1-514-398-5077	Sonia Laszlo Professor of Economics Department of Economics McGill University <a href="mailto:sonia.laszlo@mcgill.ca">sonia.laszlo@mcgill.ca</a> +1-514-398-2102	Franque Grimard Associate Professor of Economics Department of Economics McGill University <a href="mailto:franque.grimard@mcgill.ca">franque.grimard@mcgill.ca</a> +1-514-398-4717
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## ABSTRACT OF OTHER PAPERS

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“Norm shifting interventions and beliefs about gender norms in Paraguay”, with Sonia Laszlo, Carolina de Miranda, Franque Grimard, Tania Insfrán, Laura Morínigo and Jim Warnick. September 2024, 50 pages. Forthcoming, *Economic Development and Cultural Change*. Article DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1086/733348>

*Abstract:* We conduct a lab experiment in the field in Paraguay to understand how individuals form individual and common beliefs around gender norms (around gender roles, gender-based violence, and sexual and reproductive health and rights) and to evaluate whether a norm shifting intervention influences these beliefs. We document a wedge between individual (first-order) and common (second-order) beliefs with participants believing others are less inclined towards gender equity and empowerment than they actually are, suggesting the presence of misperceived norms. We also find that the intervention is associated with an increase in individual normative beliefs towards more equitable sharing of household responsibilities.

“The Socio-Economic Effects of Access to Electricity: Evidence from a Community-Based Micro Hydro Project in Kenya”, with Matthieu Chemin.

*Abstract:* Currently, over a billion people worldwide lack access to electricity. Foreign aid projects have attempted to remedy the situation by extending the national grid; with disappointing results since most people in developing countries live at the poverty line and cannot afford to purchase the electricity.

In this paper, we provide the first randomized experiment of a project offering both a free connection and free electricity in people's homes, in a low-income setting in rural Kenya. Through a randomized experiment, we uncover significant causal effects: access to electricity leads to reduced reliance on polluting energy sources like kerosene. Connected individuals use more electrical appliances such as lights, phones, and TVs. Households transition from agriculture to non-farm paid work, indicative of structural change. Women are afforded more time away from household chores. Adults gain access to valuable information and children's television consumption remains unchanged. The policy implication for foreign aid projects is that free electricity should be offered on top of free connections in rural low-income settings to unleash the positive economic effects of electricity.