

Junior Abdul-Wahab, PhD

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Professional Profile

Development economist and policy specialist with 10+ years of experience in applied microeconomic research, survey design and implementation, and public-sector reform. My experience spans education, gender, jobs, poverty, evidence-informed policymaking, and climate resilience. I have led national policy reform initiatives and contributed research for the World Bank, UNICEF, Green Climate Fund, and government institutions.

Selected Policy Impact

- Led national policy-system reform in The Gambia, developing the Integrated Development Framework and National Policy Development Handbook as guides for policy development.
- Led technical analysis informing IMF programme negotiations on public-sector compensation, contributing to salary increases of approximately 60–100% for lower-paid civil servants.
- Co-authored the World Bank's The Gambia Poverty and Gender Assessment and The Gambia Economic Update, producing evidence and policy recommendations on education, gender, jobs, poverty, and human development.
- Designed and deployed Executive Dashboards for monitoring key economic and administrative indicators for the Office of the President.
- Coordinated World Bank Chief Economists of Government Forum convening senior government officials from 30+ African countries.

Professional Experience

UNICEF Innocenti | Remote May 2026 – Present
Quantitative Research Consultant

- Conducting quantitative research to support UNICEF education studies and programme evaluations on learning, equity, and child development.
- Contributing to the design of analytical frameworks, research instruments, and methodological approaches for education and social policy research.

World Bank | Remote, Washington DC October 2025 – May 2026
Research Consultant

- Conducted microeconomic analysis using household survey, population census, and administrative data to examine education, gender, jobs, migration, and sexual and reproductive health outcomes for the Spring 2026 Gambia Economic Update.
- Produced statistical outputs, data visualizations, and analytical inputs to support policy recommendations on human development, labour markets, gender equality, and inclusive growth.

Global Youth Climate Challenge | Remote, South Korea February 2025 – February 2026
Volunteer Researcher

- Supported youth-led climate action and climate education work by synthesizing scientific, policy, and programmatic evidence on climate impacts, youth engagement, climate finance, sustainability pathways, and locally led climate solutions.
- Contributed to the development of GYCC climate policy and advocacy outputs, including COP-related submissions, briefing materials, and youth-facing knowledge products that translate technical climate evidence into accessible, policy-relevant messages.
- Supported the preparation and refinement of youth-led climate action proposals, innovation concepts, and challenge submissions, helping young climate leaders strengthen problem framing, theory of change, evidence use, feasibility, and policy relevance.

World Bank & African Center for Economic Transformation October 2023 – June 2025
Presidential Fellow | The Gambia

- Led The Gambia's national policy reform agenda to institutionalize evidence-informed and results-based policymaking, authoring *The Gambia Policy Framework Diagnostic Report* and *National Policy Development Handbook*.
- Provided hands-on technical support to government offices on policy design, evaluation, capacity building, and analysis, including analytical support for public-sector wage-bill negotiations with the IMF.
- Designed and delivered data analytics and evidence-informed policymaking training for more than 100 public officials.
- Designed a pilot digital-transformation strategy for the Presidency and developed two real-time executive dashboards for monitoring macroeconomic indicators and priority national projects.
- Coordinated the 2025 World Bank Chief Economists of Government Forum in Banjul, convening senior government economic advisers from more than 30 African countries.

Woosong University | Daejeon, South Korea
Assistant Professor

March 2023 – February 2024

- Taught undergraduate and graduate courses in Economics and Business, and contributed to curriculum development and course design.
- Served as an academic mentor to undergraduate students, monitoring academic performance and attendance, providing guidance on study plans and career pathways, and supporting student success and retention.
- Supervised student research projects and served on 4 doctoral dissertation committees.

Green Climate Fund | Incheon, South Korea
Evaluation Assistant

July 2022 – March 2023

- Supported impact evaluations of climate resilience and adaptation projects in Vanuatu, Madagascar, and Nepal, contributing to evaluation design, survey instrument development, data cleaning, statistical analysis, and evidence synthesis.
- Contributed to the Second Performance Review of the Green Climate Fund through analytical inputs, literature review, portfolio analysis, and synthesis of findings for evaluation reporting.
- Supported evidence review products on women's empowerment, behavioural interventions, just transitions, and water systems to inform GCF evaluation work and strategic learning.

World Bank | Remote, Washington DC
Research Consultant

November 2021 – June 2022

- Co-authored the Education, Gender, and Jobs chapter of The Gambia Poverty and Gender Assessment, using household survey and administrative data to analyse poverty, education, labour market, and gender-related outcomes.
- Conducted statistical analysis, prepared data visualizations, and contributed policy recommendations on human capital, gender inequality, employment, and inclusive recovery.
- Supported preparation of analytical inputs for policy dialogue with government and development partners.

Institute of Statistical Social & Economic Research (ISSER)
Principal Research Assistant | Accra, Ghana

September 2018 – February 2020

- Supported survey design, field planning, instrument development, and implementation protocols across large-scale household, education, agricultural market, and social protection studies.
- Managed field operations for major research projects, including the Ghana Socioeconomic Panel Survey, UNICEF Time to Teach study, Ghana Commodity Exchange study, and randomized evaluations of social protection interventions.
- Recruited, trained, and supervised over 200 field enumerators and supervisors in CAPI-based data collection, research ethics, field protocols, and data quality procedures.
- Managed project data, conducted high-frequency quality assurance checks, harmonized datasets, prepared data for analysis, and contributed to project reports and presentations.

Ghana Statistical Service | Kumasi, Ghana
District Field Coordinator

August 2014 – May 2016

- Coordinated field operations across three municipalities for national business census and enterprise survey activities.
- Supervised data-collection teams, monitored field progress, resolved implementation issues, and ensured compliance with survey protocols.
- Led community entry and stakeholder engagement activities to support field access, respondent cooperation, and timely completion of data collection.
- Reviewed, verified, and certified survey data for quality, consistency, and completeness prior to submission.

Education

Doctor of Philosophy, Development Policy (*summa cum laude*) February 2020 – December 2022

- KDI School of Public Policy & Management, South Korea. *Dissertation*: Contemporary Issues on Gender and Child Development Outcomes.

Master of Public Policy (*summa cum laude*) February 2017 – August 2018

- KDI School of Public Policy & Management, South Korea. *Thesis*: Institutions, Trade, and Economic Growth.

Master of Philosophy, Economics August 2014 – July 2016

- University of Ghana. *Thesis*: Export Quality and Economic Growth in ECOWAS.

Bachelor of Arts, Economics & Political Science (*First Class*) August 2009 – May 2013

- University of Ghana.

Other Training

- MITx MicroMasters Program in Data, Economics, and Design of Policy (DEDP) 2025 – Ongoing
- Bureau for Research and Economic Analysis of Development – International Growth Center (BREAD-IGC) Virtual PhD course Spring 2022

Selected Publications & Policy Papers

- World Bank (2026). *The Gambia Economic Update: Learning Without Earning-Women's Educational Gains and Labor Market Constraints in The Gambia*. World Bank Group. (Co-author) [Full report]
- Abdul-Wahab, J., et al. (2025). *National Policy Development Handbook*. Banjul, The Gambia. [Full document]
- Abdul-Wahab, J., & Jobe, O. (2024). *The Gambia Policy Framework Diagnostic Report*. Ministry of Public Service, Administrative Reforms, Policy Coordination, and Delivery. [Full document]
- Abdul-Wahab, J. (2022). *Topics on gender and child development outcomes*. Doctoral dissertation, KDI School of Public Policy and Management. [Full report]
- Abdul-Wahab, J., & Rudolph, R. (2022). Gender, education, and jobs. In *The Gambia Poverty and Gender Assessment 2022: Securing a Robust and Inclusive Recovery* (pp. 43–61). World Bank Publications. [Full report]
- Abdul-Wahab, J., & Tabakis, C. (2018). Institutions, Trade, and Economic Growth: Evidence from Sub-Saharan Africa. KDI School of Public Policy & Management. [Full report]
- Independent Evaluation Unit (2023). *Second Performance Review of the Green Climate Fund*. Evaluation Report No. 13 (Feb). (Acknowledged for significant contribution). [Full report]

Working Papers

- Abdul-Wahab, J. (2025). Do Cash and In-Kind Food Transfers Differentially Affect Child Welfare? Identifying Mechanisms Using a Cluster Randomized Control Trial in Northern Uganda. (Draft Available).
- Abdul-Wahab, J., Mohammed, B., and Asiedu, E. (2023). The Trust Dividend: Evaluating the Impact of Internally-Driven Financial Sector Reforms on Consumer Deposits in Ghana. (Under Review).
- Abdul-Wahab, J., and Tabakis, C. (2023). Beyond the Ballot: How Local Female Political Leaders Shape Gender Norms in Ghana. (Draft Available).
- Abdul-Wahab, J., and Tabakis, C. (2022). Measuring women's status: A new measure and its implications for child development.

Conferences & Presentations

Organising Roles

- Local Planning Chair, World Bank Chief Economists of Government Forum, Banjul (2025).
- Chair & Planning Committee Chair. GHASKA Innovation Conference, Seoul (2023).

Presentations

- IUCN Leaders Forum, Jeju (2022): Climate urgency and lessons from community-led climate action.
- DAAD Alumni Conference, Accra (2019): Mother's Bargaining Power and Child Health Outcomes.

- Ghana Studies Association, Accra (2019): Measuring Mother's Bargaining Power using Household Surveys.

Selected Projects

The Gambia Economic Update (2026) | The Gambia
World Bank

October 2025 – May 2026
Research Consultant

- Cleaned, harmonised, and analysed microdata from the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS), Integrated Household Survey (IHS), and Labour Force Survey (LFS), together with population census and administrative data.
- Compiled and triangulated indicators from national and international sources, including UNICEF and the International Labour Organization, to complement estimates derived from household and labour-force microdata.
- Developed reproducible Stata workflows for survey-weighted descriptive and microeconomic analysis and production of analytical tables, figures, and statistical outputs.
- Applied Mincer earnings models, Heckman selection correction, Oaxaca–Blinder decomposition, and matching-based approaches, including robustness and cross-dataset consistency checks.
- Conducted analysis covering education, gender, employment, earnings, migration, and sexual and reproductive health, and contributed findings and policy recommendations on human development, labour-market participation, gender equality, and inclusive growth.
- Co-authored *The Gambia Economic Update: Learning Without Earning–Women's Educational Gains and Labor Market Constraints in The Gambia*.

Gambia Public Policy Reform | The Gambia
World Bank / African Center for Economic Transformation / Government of The Gambia

2023–2025
Project Lead

- Conducted a diagnostic assessment of The Gambia's national policy system, including a review of 44 national policy documents covering 16 ministries, departments, and agencies, institutional analysis, stakeholder consultations, and benchmarking against policy-development systems in Ghana and South Africa.
- Led preparation and co-authored *The Gambia Policy Framework Diagnostic Report*, translating the diagnostic findings into recommendations for strengthening policy development, coordination, implementation, and monitoring across government.
- Developed the Integrated Development Framework (IDF), creating a government-wide planning architecture that cascades national priorities from the long-term National Vision through development plans, sector policies, institutional strategic plans, and annual work plans, with clear institutional ownership and review mechanisms at each level.
- Led development of the *National Policy Development Handbook*, establishing the first government-wide standard for policy development across public institutions and introducing common processes, analytical tools, templates, and requirements covering the full policy cycle.
- Supported national stakeholder consultation and validation of the Handbook and the subsequent government approval process. The Handbook was approved by Cabinet as the national guide for policy development.
- Provided direct technical assistance to ministries and central government institutions on policy design, evaluation, analytical methods, and application of the new national policy-development approach.
- Designed and delivered training in evidence-informed and results-based policymaking to more than 100 government officials.

Public Sector Payroll and Wage Bill Reform | The Gambia
World Bank / African Center for Economic Transformation / Government of The Gambia

2024–2025
Lead Technical Analyst

- Reviewed and analysed monthly government payroll and wage-bill data covering a two-year period to identify expenditure patterns, anomalies, and potential weaknesses in payroll controls.
- Developed an automated analytical script to conduct recurring monthly payroll checks and flag anomalous payments and other outliers for targeted audit and verification, reducing reliance on manual payroll review.
- Identified structural weaknesses in the public-sector compensation system, including the proliferation of more than 100 allowance categories, which complicated routine audit and payroll oversight, and recommended rationalisation and standardisation of the allowance structure.
- Conducted fiscal scenario analysis of alternative salary-adjustment options, estimating their implications for the government wage bill and accounting for offsetting effects, including additional personal income-tax revenue as salary increases moved some civil servants into higher tax brackets.
- Complemented the fiscal modelling with a cost-of-inaction assessment examining prolonged erosion of real wages, staff turnover and movement to the private sector, and risks to employee morale, motivation, retention, and public-sector performance if salaries remained unchanged.

- Developed the analytical evidence base for government negotiations with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on public-sector salaries and participated remotely in technical discussions held alongside the IMF–World Bank Spring Meetings.
- The analysis informed negotiations that resulted in salary increases of approximately 60–100% for lower-paid civil servants, following several years of constrained salary adjustments under the IMF-supported programme.

Pilot National Digital Transformation Project | The Gambia

2024–2025

World Bank / African Center for Economic Transformation / Government of The Gambia

Project Lead

- Developed a detailed concept document for the digitalisation of the Office of the President and Cabinet at State House, setting out the proposed scope, institutional requirements, implementation approach, and priority digital systems.
- Designed and deployed a real-time Executive Council Dashboard that consolidated data submitted by focal persons across government ministries and synthesised trends in key economic and administrative indicators, including inflation, food stocks, government revenue, and expenditure, for executive decision-making.
- Designed and deployed a Project Tracker dashboard for monitoring, evaluating, and scoring implementation progress across priority national development projects.

Evidence Reviews on Women’s Empowerment and Water Systems | Global/Developing Countries

2022–2023

Green Climate Fund, Independent Evaluation Unit

Evaluation Assistant

- Supported the design, technical review, and quality assurance of the IEU evidence review on women’s empowerment, including review and editing of draft outputs, identification of consistency gaps, and synthesis of findings for internal and external learning.
- Developed knowledge and dissemination materials for the women’s empowerment review, including presentation decks and visual products synthesising key findings for broader use.
- Supported ideation and defined the analytical scope of the IEU water-systems evidence review.
- Drafted the terms of reference for the water-systems evidence review, specifying the required technical capacity, scope of work, deliverables, and evaluation criteria for selecting the external research team.

Climate Resilience & Adaptation Evaluations | Nepal, Madagascar, Vanuatu

2022–2023

Green Climate Fund, Independent Evaluation Unit

Evaluation Assistant

- Nepal Clean Cooking Solutions: Contributed to the design of a phased-rollout impact evaluation and supported the development of survey instruments to assess household welfare and gender-related outcomes.
- Madagascar Sustainable Landscapes: Cleaned, managed, and analysed project and survey data; produced analytical outputs and results tables for the project’s mid-term evaluation.
- Vanuatu Climate Information for Readiness, Adaptation and Protection: Developed a quasi-experimental evaluation approach to assess programme impacts while accounting for implementation and ethical constraints.

Second Performance Review of the Green Climate Fund | Global/Small Island Developing States (SIDS)

2022–2023

Green Climate Fund, Independent Evaluation Unit

Evaluation Assistant

- Contributed to the Second Performance Review of the Green Climate Fund, with a particular analytical focus on the Fund’s engagement with Small Island Developing States (SIDS).
- Examined the composition of climate finance, patterns of access, and the extent to which the Fund’s portfolio addressed the particular climate and development needs of SIDS.
- Reviewed and synthesised literature on the climate-finance landscape for SIDS, including the specific institutional, financing, and implementation challenges affecting their ability to access and effectively use international climate finance.
- Synthesised portfolio and literature-review findings into analytical inputs and recommendations on improving access to climate finance and strengthening support for climate adaptation and resilience in SIDS.

The Gambia Poverty and Gender Assessment (2022) | The Gambia

November 2021–June 2022

World Bank

Research Consultant

- Analysed multiple rounds of the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS), Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS), Integrated Household Survey (IHS), and Labour Force Survey (LFS), complemented by mobile-phone, geospatial, and administrative data, to examine poverty, education, employment, labour-market outcomes, and gender inequalities in The Gambia.
- Developed reproducible Stata workflows for survey-weighted descriptive and microeconomic analysis, producing analytical tables, figures, and statistical outputs to assess trends and disparities in human-capital and labour-market

outcomes.

- Synthesised findings across datasets and contributed policy recommendations on human capital, employment, gender inequality, and inclusive recovery.
- Prepared analytical inputs for policy dialogue with government counterparts and development partners.
- Co-authored the Education, Gender, and Jobs chapter of *The Gambia Poverty and Gender Assessment 2022: Securing a Robust and Inclusive Recovery*.

Ghana Socioeconomic Panel Survey (GSPS) | Ghana
ISSER / Northwestern University / Yale University

2018–2020

Principal Research Assistant

- Supported survey design, field planning, questionnaire programming, sampling and implementation protocols for a nationally representative longitudinal household survey.
- Recruited, trained, and supervised more than 200 field enumerators and supervisors in CAPI-based data collection, research ethics, field protocols, and data-quality procedures.
- Managed field operations and conducted high-frequency quality-assurance checks to identify and resolve data and implementation problems during fieldwork.
- Managed and harmonised survey datasets and supported data preparation, analysis, reporting, and presentation of survey findings.

Graduating the Ultra Poor | Ghana
ISSER / IPA / Northwestern University

2019

Fieldwork Manager

- Managed field implementation for a randomised evaluation of a social-protection intervention.
- Recruited, trained, and supervised field teams and programmed CAPI-based survey instruments.
- Supervised delivery of programme interventions to treatment households, including livestock assets and cash transfers.
- Developed and implemented real-time data-quality assurance systems and monitored incoming field data throughout implementation.
- Supported compliance with research protocols and timely delivery of high-quality evaluation data.

Ghana Commodity Exchange Study | Ghana
New York University / Government of Ghana

2019

Fieldwork Manager

- Coordinated field implementation for research on agricultural markets and participation in the Ghana Commodity Exchange.
- Recruited, trained, and supervised data-collection teams and programmed CAPI-based survey instruments.
- Monitored field implementation and incoming data and conducted quality-assurance checks throughout data collection.

Time to Teach: Teacher Attendance and Time on Task | Ghana
UNICEF / University of Ghana

2019

Field Coordinator

- Supported adaptation of research instruments and implementation protocols to the Ghanaian context.
- Contributed to survey design, sampling activities, field planning, and implementation.
- Recruited, trained, and supervised field staff and monitored adherence to research and data-quality protocols throughout fieldwork.

Integrated Business Establishment Survey I & II | Ghana
Ghana Statistical Service

2014 & 2016

District Field Coordinator

- Coordinated establishment-listing, business census, and enterprise-survey activities across three municipal areas.
- Supervised field data-collection teams, monitored implementation progress, and resolved operational and data-collection issues.
- Led community entry and stakeholder engagement with local authorities, businesses, and communities to facilitate field access and respondent participation.
- Reviewed, verified, and certified survey data for quality, consistency, and completeness prior to submission.

Teaching & Supervision

Woosong University, *Assistant Professor* | Daejeon, South Korea
Teaching

March 2023 – February 2024

- Undergraduate: Global Economic Systems, Managerial Accounting, Financial Accounting.

- Graduate: Business Management, Financial Management.

PhD Committee Participation

- Investigating the Effects of Industrial Structure Optimization, Technological Progress, and Carbon Intensity in 31 Provinces of China, Zhang Xinyue (2023).
- The Impact of Innovation and Entrepreneurship Education on College Students' Entrepreneurial Behavior, Li Dan (2023).
- A Study on the Mechanism of ESG Performance on Corporate Performance: Evidence from Chinese Listed Companies, Liu Wei (2023).
- Factors Influencing Customer Satisfaction and Loyalty in Chinese Cross-Border E-Commerce Platforms: Evidence from China, Wei Chen (2023).

Master's Thesis Supervision

- Climate-Responsive Social Protection and Environmental Policy: Assessing the Socioeconomic Impacts of the Vehicle Import Ban: A Case Study of Informal Transporters' Wellbeing in Côte d'Ivoire, Herve Azia (2026).

KDI School, *Graduate Teaching & Research Assistant* | Sejong, South Korea

February 2021 – July 2022

- Supported the delivery of graduate-level teaching in Econometrics, Advanced Research Methodology, Game Theory, Development Policy, and Public Policy Analysis.
- Facilitated tutorials, assessment activities, and academic support for postgraduate students.

University of Ghana, *Teaching & Research Assistant* | Accra, Ghana

August 2013 – July 2014

- *Undergraduate Courses:* International Economics

Skills & Expertise

- Research Methods: Applied microeconometrics, survey design and implementation, policy design and evaluation, impact evaluation (RCT & quasi-experimental), monitoring and evaluation.
- Software & Tools: Stata, R, Python, Excel, Tableau, Power BI, Looker Studio.
- Thematic Expertise: Education, public sector reform, poverty & inequality, gender, jobs, agriculture, climate resilience.
- Languages: Fluent: English, Akan, Hausa | Intermediate: French | Basic: Arabic, Korean.

Fellowships, Awards & Recognition

- Chief Economists of Government Presidential Fellowship | November 2023 | World Bank
- Certificate of Appreciation | August 2023 | Ghana Students in South Korea and Associates
- Global Ambassador Scholarship | February 2017, 2020 | Korea Development Institute
- Outstanding Thesis Award | December 2018 | KDI School
- Academic Excellence Award | Spring 2017, Summer 2017, Fall 2017 | KDI School

Professional Memberships & Networks

- Ghana Economic Society
- Ghana Studies Association
- African Econometric Society
- Chief Economists of Government Network