

Rui M. S. Benfica, PhD.
International Development Economist

Senior Research Fellow
Agrifood Innovation and Resilience Unit
International Food Policy Research Institute
1201 Eye Street, NW, Washington, DC 20005, USA
US Mobile/WhatsApp: +1-202-629-6168
E-mail: r.benfica@cgiar.org / rmsbenfica@gmail.com

SUMMARY: Rui Benfica is a Senior Research Fellow with the Agrifood Innovation and Resilience (AIR) Unit at the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), where he supports partners and national governments to strengthen evidence-based decision-making for inclusive, climate-resilient agricultural transformation. At IFPRI, he applies advanced macro–micro modeling and policy analytics to guide investment prioritization, improve food system resilience, and inform national strategies. He works across CGIAR Initiatives/Science Programs and bilateral programs to scale productivity-enhancing technologies, expand economic opportunities for women and youth, and strengthen rural livelihoods. Rui has nearly three decades of continuous collaboration with government institutions in Mozambique - as well as long-standing engagement in Kenya, Tanzania, Vietnam, and Colombia - helping build local analytical capacity and supporting policy reforms that advance food security, poverty reduction, and sustainable development.

Prior to joining IFPRI, Rui worked at the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), where he led impact assessments and economy-wide analyses that informed country strategies across Asia and Latin America. He previously served as Associate Professor at Michigan State University, contributing to Feed the Future impact evaluations and capacity-strengthening efforts in Mozambique and Cambodia. Earlier in his career, he worked at the World Bank on poverty analysis, gender, and rural development. Rui holds a Ph.D. in Agricultural Economics from Michigan State University and has published extensively on agricultural transformation, inclusive growth, and development policy.

1. EDUCATION

PhD, Agricultural Economics (2006)

- Department of Agricultural, Food and Resource Economics, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan, USA. Program focused on Agricultural Markets and Price Analysis, International Development and Agricultural Trade Policy.

MSc., Agricultural Economics (1998)

- Department of Agricultural, Food and Resource Economics, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan, USA, March 1998.

BSc., Economics (1995)

- Faculty of Economics, Eduardo Mondlane University, Maputo, Mozambique
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2. PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Senior Research Fellow, International Food Policy Research Institute **2019-Present**

- IFPRI Agrifood Innovation and Resilience (AIR) Unit
- CGIAR Research Program on Policies Institutions and Markets (PIM) led by IFPRI (2019-2021).

Lead Economist (P-5), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) **2015-2019**

- Research and Impact Assessment Division (RIA), Strategy and Knowledge Department (SKD), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

Associate Professor, International Development, Michigan State University **2011-2015**

- Department of Agricultural, Food and Resource Economics, Michigan State University.

Partnerships in Poverty Analysis and Policy Evaluation, World Bank **2011-2017**

- Africa Region - PREM and Poverty Practice
- Development Economics Research Group (DECRG)
- Social Protection – Africa Region

Economist, World Bank **2008 – 2011**

- Gender and Development Group - Poverty Reduction and Economic Management (PRMGE), Washington, DC, USA. Activities included:

Senior Poverty Economist, World Bank **2006 – 2008**

- Poverty Reduction and Economic Management (AFTPM) based in the Mozambique Country Office

Senior Agricultural Policy Specialist, USAID **1999 – 2000**

- USAID/Mozambique - Agriculture and Food Resources - Office of Increased Rural Incomes.

3. PUBLICATIONS

2026

- Benfica, R., Zambrano, P., Chambers, J., & Falek-Zepeda, J. (2026). [Assessing the development impacts of bio-innovations: the case of genetically modified maize and cassava in Tanzania](https://doi.org/10.1080/09535314.2025.2582642). *Economic Systems Research*, 38 (2), 251–274. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09535314.2025.2582642>
- Mekonnen, Dawit; Abate, Gashaw; Yimam, Seid; Benfica, Rui; Spielman, David; and Place, Frank (2026). [Seeds of change: The impact of Ethiopia's direct seed marketing approach on smallholders' seed purchases and productivity](#). *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*, 1-30.
- Mpuuga, D., Nakijoba, S., Ogwang, A., Boughton, D., and Benfica, R. (2026). [Linking crop productivity, market participation and technology use among smallholder farmers: Evidence from Uganda](#). *African Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics*. 21 (1), 17–42.

2025

- Nehring, Ryan; Farraz, Gabriel; Curan, Roberta; Magalhaes, Marilia; Benfica, Rui; et al. (2025). [A concept note on co-creating a living lab for locally led climate adaptation: Integrating local public procurement into Brazil's climate plan](#). CGIAR System Organization.

- Kafle, Kashi; Paliwal, Neha; and Benfica, Rui (2025). [Do youth work in agriculture? Short-term dynamics of on-farm rural youth employment in Tanzania and Malawi](#). *Journal of Development studies* 61(5): 748-775.
- Aragie, Emerta A.; Benfica, Rui; Thurlow, James; Xu, Valencia Wenqian; and Jones, Eleanor. (2025). [Mozambique: Cost effective options for inclusive and sustainable development](#). Agrifood Investment Prioritization Country Series Brief 8. Washington, DC: International Food Policy Research Institute.
- Boukaka, S. and Benfica, R. (2025). [Brewing Prosperity: An Analysis of Living Income Gaps among Coffee Smallholders in Central Kenya](#). *IFPRI Discussion paper* # 2342. Washington, DC, USA.
- Baragu, Geoffrey; Boukaka, Sedi-Anne; and Benfica, Rui (2025). [Assessing the gender dimensions in the true costs of food production in Kenya](#). Nature-Positive Solutions Initiative Policy Brief. IFPRI.
- Manuel, L., J. Araujo da Silva, Rolf de By, and R. Benfica (2025). [Toward Synergy in Mozambique's Agricultural Production Statistics: Complementarity between Integrated Agricultural Survey and Statistics from Space Approach](#). Centre of Excellence in Agri-Food Systems and Nutrition (CE-AFSN). Working Paper #1.
- Benfica, R., K. Davis (2025). [The true costs of food production in Kenya and Vietnam](#). N+ Infographic.
- Benfica, R., K. Davis (2025). [The true costs of food production in Kenya and Vietnam](#). Nature + Dashboard.

2024

- Benfica, R., K. Davis, The Anh Dao, Dang Toan Vu, D. Naziri (2024). [The true costs of food production in Vietnam](#). Nature + Initiative Policy Brief.
- Benfica, R., K. Davis, M. Oulu, C. Termote, C. Fadda (2024). [The true costs of food production in Kenya](#). Nature + Initiative Policy Brief.
- Aragie, E., R. Benfica, K. Paw, J. Randriamamonjy, and J. Thurlow (2024). [Assessing Investment Priorities for Driving Inclusive Agricultural Transformation: A Tanzania](#). *Development Policy Review*, 42 (6).
- Davis, Kristin E.; and Benfica, Rui (2024). True costs of food production in Kenya and Vietnam. Agriculture & Food Systems SDC Thematic Network Newsletter Article. First published online September 18, 2024. <https://www.sdc-foodsystems.ch/en/true-cost-of-food-production>
- Benfica, R., M. Hossain, K. Davis, Sedi Boukaka, C. Azzarri (2024). [The true costs of food production in Kenya and Viet Nam](#). *IFPRI Discussion paper* # 2269. Washington, DC, USA.
- Benfica, Rui (2024). [The true costs of food in Kenya and Vietnam: A conceptual framework](#). *CGIAR Nature-Positive Solutions Technical Report*. Washington, DC: International Food Policy Research Institute.
- Dossou-Yovo, E. R., A. Arouna, R. Benfica, G. Mujawamariya, and R. Yossa (2024). [A participatory framework for prioritizing climate-smart agriculture innovations in rice-based systems: A case study of Mali](#). *Smart Agricultural Technology* 7 (2024).

2023

- Benfica, R. (2023). [Effects of household income composition on food consumption in rural Malawi](#). *African Journal of Food, Agriculture, Nutrition and Development (AJFAND)* (23) 8 (2023), pp 197–221.
- Mpuuga, D., S. Nakijoba, A. Ogwang, D. Boughton, and R. Benfica (2023). [Linking crop productivity, market participation and technology use among smallholder farmers: Evidence from](#)

Uganda. *Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Food Security Policy Research, Capacity, and Influence (PRCI) Research paper #18*.

- Benfica, R., X. Diao, K. Pauw, and J. Thurlow (2023) [Mozambique's agrifood system structure and drivers of transformation](#). *Agrifood System Diagnostics Country Series*. IFPRI. Washington, DC.
- Benfica, R., X. Diao, K. Pauw, J. Randriamamonji, and J. Thurlow (2023). [Tanzania's agrifood system structure and drivers of transformation](#). *Agrifood System Diagnostics Country Series*. IFPRI.
- Benfica, R., and A. Nin-Pratt (2023). [The effects of agricultural R&D investments on poverty and undernourishment in sub-Saharan Africa](#). *African Journal of Agricultural Research* (19) 4 (2023), 380–396.
- Benfica, R., J. Chambers, J. Koo, A. Nin Pratt, J. Falck-Zepeda, G. Stads, and C. Arndt. (2023). [Food System Innovations and Digital Technologies to Foster Productivity Growth and Rural Transformation](#). 421-437. In: von Braun, J., Afsana, K., Fresco, L.O., Hassan, M.H.A. (eds) *Science and Innovations for Food Systems Transformation*. Springer Nature, Cham.
- Stads, G., A. Nin-Pratt, K. Wiebe, T. Sulser, and R. Benfica (2023). [Public investment in agri-food system innovation for sustainable development](#). *Frontiers of Agricultural Science and Engineering* 10 (1), 124-134

Up to 2022

- Stads, J., Wiebe, K., Nin-Pratt, A., Sulser, T., Benfica, R., Reda, F., and Khetarpal, R. (2022). [Research for the future: Investments for efficiency, sustainability, and equity](#). Book Chapter in “*Food Systems Transformation and Climate Change: Policy Priorities*”. Washington, DC. USA.
- Benfica, R. (2022). [Agricultural R&D investments and development goals in SSA: Assessing prioritization of value chains in Senegal](#). *African Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics* (17) 2 (2022), pp 126–145.
- Benfica, R., and Henderson, H. (2021). [The Effect of the Sectoral Composition of Economic Growth on Rural and Urban Poverty](#). *Review of Income and Wealth*, Volume 67, Issue 1, 248-284.
- Benfica, R., A. Nin Pratt. (2021). [Understanding the impacts of R&D Investments on Poverty and Undernourishment: A causal mediation approach](#). IFPRI Discussion paper 2048. Washington, DC. Also forthcoming in “*African Journal of Agricultural Research*”.
- Benfica, R., J. Chambers, J. Koo, A. Nin Pratt, J. Falck-Zepeda, G. Stads, and C. Arndt. (2021). [Food System Innovations and Digital Technologies to Foster Productivity Growth and Rural Transformation](#). Food Systems Summit Brief Prepared by Research Partners of the Scientific Group for UNFSS
- Kafle, K., R. Benfica, and P. Winters (2020). [Does Relative Deprivation Induce Migration? Evidence from sub-Saharan Africa](#). *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*, Volume 102, Issue 3, 99-119.
- Arndt, C., J. Chambers, P. Zambrano, A. Alatawi, R. Benfica, M. Edward, F. Barios, and A. Ahmed (2020). [Embracing Innovation to Meet Food Systems Challenges](#). Task Force 10 – Sustainable Energy, Water and Food Systems. T20 Saudi Arabia 2020.
- Mabiso, A., Benfica R. (2019). [The narrative on rural youth and economic opportunities in Africa: facts, myths, and gaps](#). *IFAD Research Series*, 61.
- Benfica, R., Cuinguara, B., Thurlow, J. (2019). [Linking agricultural investments to growth and poverty: An economywide approach applied to Mozambique](#). *Agricultural Systems* 172, 91-100.
- Benfica, R. (2019). [An inclusive rural transformation in progress, but with unequal pace and characteristics across countries](#). *Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)*. Santiago, Chile.

- Jayne, T., R. Benfica, F. Yeboah, J. Chamberlin (2019). [Agricultural Transformation and Africa's Economic Development](#). *African Economic Development*, 349-375.
- Jayne, T., Chamberlin, J., Benfica, R. (2018). [The Transformation of Rural Africa](#). Routledge. Book originally published as a special issue of the *Journal of Development Studies*. Volume 54, 5 (2018).
- Benfica, R., M. Squarcina, and A. de la Fuente (2018). [Structural Transformation and Welfare in Malawi: Decomposing the Poverty Effects of Occupational and Spatial Mobility](#). IFAD RS #25. Rome, Italy.
- Benfica, R., D. Boughton, R. Uaiene, and B. Mouzinho (2017). [Food Crop Marketing and Agricultural Productivity in a High Price Environment: Evidence and Implications for Mozambique](#). *Food Security*, 9(6), 1405-1418.
- Townsend, R., R. Benfica, A. Prasann, and M. Lee (2017). [Future of Food: Shaping the Food System to Deliver Jobs](#). *World Bank Publication*, number 26506. Washington, DC.
- Townsend, R., R. Benfica, A. Prasann, and M. Lee (2017). [Rural Youth Employment](#). G20 Paper by World Bank and IFAD. Hamburg, Germany.
- Benfica, R. and J. Thurlow (2017). [Identifying Priority Value Chains in Ethiopia](#). IFPRI-Strategy Support Program, Working Paper #110.
- Adjognon, S., S. Liverpool-Tasie, A. de la Fuente, and R. Benfica (2017). [The Heterogeneous Welfare Effects of Rural Non-Farm Employment: Evidence from Malawi](#). *The World Bank. PRWP* # 8096.
- Benfica, R. and T. Kilic (2016). [The Effects of Smallholder Agricultural Involvement on Household Food Consumption and Dietary Diversity: Evidence from Malawi](#). *IFAD Research Series* #4.
- Suttie, D. and R. Benfica, R. (2016). [Fostering Inclusive Outcomes in African Agriculture: Improving Agricultural Productivity and Expanding Agribusiness Opportunities](#). *IFAD Research Series* #3.
- Benfica, R. (2014). [Welfare and Distributional Impacts of Price Shocks in Malawi: A Non-Parametric Approach](#). *Food Security*. Volume 6, Issue 1, 2014: 131-145.
- Mabiso, A., B. Cunguara, and R. Benfica (2014). [Food \(In\) security and its drivers: insights from trends and opportunities in rural Mozambique](#). *Food Security*. Volume 6, Issue 5, 2014: 649-670.
- Benfica, R. (2012). [An Analysis of Poverty in Cash Cropping Economies of Rural Mozambique: Blending Econometric and Economy-wide Models](#). *Lambert Academic Publishing*, Saarbrücken, Germany.
- Arndt, C., R. Benfica and J. Thurlow (2011). [Gender Implications of Bio-fuels Expansion in Africa: The case of Mozambique](#). *World Development*. Volume 39, Issue 9, 2011: 1649-1662.
- Benfica, R., and Waafas Ofosu-Amaah (2010). [Supporting the Implementation of Gender-Aware Programs to Enhance Women Farmers' Contributions in Agriculture and Value Chains: A Policy Memorandum](#). *Gender and Development Group, World Bank*. Washington, DC.
- Arndt, C., R. Benfica, F. Tarp, J. Thurlow, and R. Uaiene (2009). [Bio-fuels, poverty, and growth: A CGE Analysis of Mozambique](#). *Environment and Development Economics*. Volume 15, Issue 1, 2009: 81-115.
- Arndt, C., R. Benfica, N. Maximiano, A. Nucifora, and J. Thurlow (2008). [Higher fuel and food prices: Impacts and responses for Mozambique](#). *Agricultural Economics* 39, 2008: 497-511.
- Fox, L., with R. Benfica, M. Ehrenpreis, H. Nordang, D. Owen, M. Sekkel and K. van den Broek (2008). [Beating the Odds: Sustaining Inclusion in a Growing Economy – A Mozambique Poverty, Gender and Social Assessment](#). *Directions in Development, World Bank*. Washington. D.C.

- Fox, L., R. Benfica and M. Sekkel (2007). Book Chapter “[Halving the Poverty Rate by 2015](#)” in “[Post-Stabilization Economics in Sub-Saharan Africa: Lessons from Mozambique](#)”, Edited by Jean A. P. Clement and Shanaka J. Peiris, *International Monetary Fund*. Washington DC, 2007.
- Boughton, D., D. Mather, C. Barrett, R. Benfica, D. Abdula, D. Tschirley and B. Cunguara (2007). [Market Participation by Rural Households in a Low-Income Country: An Asset-Based Approach Applied to Mozambique](#). *Faith and Economics*, Vol. 50, Fall 2007: 64-101.
- Fox, L., J. Abache, R. Benfica, M. Sekkel, R. Benfica, C. Arndt, F. Mafambissa, and S. Samuel (2006). [Job Creation in Mozambique: Is Labor Law reform the Answer?](#). *Ministry of Planning and Development/World Bank*. Maputo, Mozambique.
- Jayne, T., T. Yamano, M. Weber, D. Tschirley, R. Benfica, D. Neven, A. Chapoto and B. Zulu (2003). [Smallholder Income and Land Distribution in Africa: Implications for Poverty Reduction Strategies](#). *Food Policy* 28, 2003: 253-275.
- Tschirley, D., and R. Benfica (2001). [Smallholder Agriculture, Wage Labor and Poverty alleviation in Land-Abundant Africa: Evidence from Mozambique](#). *Journal of Modern African Studies*, volume 39, Issue 2, 2001: 333-358.

4. AFFILIATION IN PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

- Member of the *International Association of Agricultural Economists (IAAE)*, since 1994.
- Member of the *American Agricultural Economists Association (AAEA)*, since 1999.
- Member of *GTAP - Global Trade Analysis Project*, since 2009.

5. LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

LANGUAGES	LISTENING	SPEAKING	READING	WRITING
Portuguese	Native	Native	Native	Native
English	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Spanish	Excellent	Good	Good	Good
