

## **Universal primary education? Education policy, demand for education and child labor in Madagascar**

This dissertation provides an economic analysis of the respective impact of supply-side and demand-side factors on parents' schooling decisions in Madagascar. The goal of achieving universal primary education that has translated into free primary schooling since 2002 has resulted in a large and rapid increase in school enrollments. However, late entries and school dropouts still remain a problem. Three studies are presented, which respectively focus on the impact of school supply constraints on various educational outcomes, the trade-offs between domestic work, market work and school, and the impact of child fostering on school enrollment. Our results highlight the detrimental impact of distance in travel time to the nearest school on school attendance and achievement. The presence of a school which does not provide all primary levels is also found to be a strong determinant of school dropout in rural areas, and especially for girls in urban areas. The same holds true for multi-grade classes which have a significant negative impact on achievement for girls. Household resources and parental education have large effects on the trade-off between school and market work. Girls are less likely to go to school and more likely to drop out when their father is absent from home. They are also more likely to do household chores in the absence of their mother. Children residing in a household whose head is self-employed are more likely to do market work in urban areas, whereas the opposite effect is found when the spouse is self-employed. Fostering improves the enrollment of young children if they are blood-related to the head of the fostering-in household but has a negative impact if they are not blood-related to him.

Keywords: demand for education, school supply, child labor, child fostering, Madagascar

JEL classification : J22, I2, O15, J13