

Research Statement

By Diana Moreira

Research Topics: I'm interested in two topics, poor governance in governments and social mobility, both of which I study in the developing country context.

Poor Governance in Governments. How organizational structures within the government – hiring systems, Incentive structures, and leaders' identity - explain dysfunctional governments? How does politician-bureaucrat relation affect the delivery of services? How relevant is evidence on policy-effectiveness for policymakers' choice? One of the two-strand of my research focuses on answering those questions about poor governance in governments. My work is centered on government and its programs – and thus touching on Public Economics. Yet, most of my questions depart from the benevolent-centralized governments. Instead, I'm interested in political friction on the operation of governments (touching on Political Economics) and frictions arising from the complexity of the government operation (touching on Organizational Economics).

Social Mobility. How societies identify most talented? And how to make sure the most talented get the appropriate investments and opportunities? How to organize a public system that serves the median but also do not waste the most talented who has greater potential to climb the economic ladder? How do subjective elements of the demand for education – aspiration, norms and self-perception- restrain high-achievers from a poor background to rise in the ladder? One of the two-strand of my research focuses on answering those questions about social mobility.

There is also some overlap between the two topics, as access to governments by the laypeople might be an important element to well-functional governments. In current work, I study the pros-and-cons for governments in promoting social mobility within its organizational structure.

Fields: Development Economics and its intersection with Public, Political and Organizational Economics

Methodology: Reduced-form observational studies & RCTs