CURRICULUM VITAE

GUNTHER BENSCH

CONTACT INFORMATION

RWI Leibniz Institute for Economic Research
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PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2020 - present	RWI, Researcher, Research Division "Climate and Development Policy"
2008 - present	RWI, Researcher, Research Division "Environment and Resources"
2/2007 - 7/2008	RWI, Student assistant, Collaboration in consulting and research projects at Research Division "Environment and Resources"
4/2007 - 7/2007	Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), Rwanda, Intern, Baseline and impact survey for a micro hydro project
7/2006 - 8/2006	National University Eduardo Mondlane, Mozambique, University teaching position, eight week course "Desenvolvimento Sustentável - Optimização Dinâmica Aplicada" ("Sustainable Development - Applied Dynamic Optimization")
10/2002 - 1/2003	Ministry of the Environment and Health, Hamburg, Germany, Intern
8/2002 - 9/2002	Institute for Integrated Production Hanover, Germany, Student assistant, Consulting project on logistics monitoring for component suppliers in the automotive industry
Consultancy	Partner ecol GbR (2013-present); FMO (2015-18), GIZ (2007-22), Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands (2010-16), RVO (2014-18), SECO (2017), UNIDO (2011), World Vision (2011)
Field research	Bangladesh, Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Malawi, Morocco, Mozambique, Rwanda, Senegal, Tanzania

EDUCATION

2008 - 2013	Dr.rer.oec. (Ph.D. in Economics) at Ruhr University Bochum, Germany; Title: "Empirical Insights on Energy Access and its Poverty Impacts in Sub-Saharan Africa" (summa cum laude), Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Christoph M. Schmidt
2003 - 2008	Studies in Economics at Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms University Bonn, Germany (Diplom- Volkswirt); Thesis: "Pros and Cons of Unbundling Transmission Grids in the Electricity Industry", Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Martin Hellwig
2004 - 2007	Studies in Political Sciences, Cultural Sciences, Constitutional, Social and Economic History at Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms University Bonn, Germany
2005 - 2006	Studies in Economics at New University of Lisbon, Portugal
2002 - 2003	Studies in Business Sciences at the Distance Teaching University Hagen, Germany

PUBLICATIONS

Articles in refereed Journals

Ankel-Peters, J., G. Bensch, and C. Vance (2026). Comment on "Development Effects of Electrification: Evidence from the Topographic Placement of Hydropower Plants in Brazil". *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, forthcoming.

Bensch, G. and M. Grimm (2026), Behavioural Constraints in Energy Technology Uptake: Evidence from Real-Purchase Offers in Rural Rwanda and Senegal. *Environment and Development Economics*, forthcoming, doi: 10.1017/S1355770X26100540

Ruhinduka, R. D., G. Bensch, O. Selejio and R. Lokina (2026), What Could Explain Low Uptake of Rural Electricity Programs in Africa? Empirical Evidence from Rural Tanzania. *Environment and Development Economics*, forthcoming, doi: 10.1017/S1355770X25000099

Brodeur, A., Valenta, D., Marcoci, A., Aparicio, J. P., Mikola, D., Barbarioli, B., Alexander, R., Deer, L., Stafford, T., Vilhuber, L., Bensch, G. et al. (2026), AI-Assisted Teams Outperform AI-Led Teams but Not Human-Only Teams in Assessing Research Reproducibility in Quantitative Social Science. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America (PNAS)* 123 (22): e2524747123.

Hoenow, N.C., G. Bensch, and M. Kirk (2026). Introducing and Terminating Monetary Incentives in Non-Regenerating Forests: Insights from a Framed Field Experiment. *Environmental and Resource Economics* 89: 43.

Kaestner, K., G. Bensch and C. Vance (2026), Pass-through of cocoa prices along the supply chain: What's left for farmers in Côte d'Ivoire? *Journal of Agricultural Economics* 77 (2): 411-428.

Hammar, O., C. Bonander, G. Bensch, N. Jakobsson and A. Brodeur (2025), A Comment on "Gender Bias in Parental Attitude: An Experimental Approach" by Begum, Grossman and Islam (2018). *Demography* 62 (6): 1791-1799.

Bonander, C., O. Hammar, N. Jakobsson, G. Bensch, F. Holzmeister and A. Brodeur (2025), Try to balance the baseline: A comment on "Parent-teacher meetings and student outcomes: Evidence from a developing country" by Islam (2019). *European Economic Review* 175: 105021.

Ankel-Peters, J., G. Bensch, A. Dabadge, A. Munyehirwe, J. Rose, M. Sievert, E. Rukundo and J. Lay (2025), Tax Carbon Cautiously for Sub-Saharan Africa. *Nature Climate Change* 15 (1): 7-9.

Ankel-Peters, J., G. Bensch, K. Moull, M. Rauschenbach and M. Sievert (2025), Cost-effectiveness of rural energy access strategies. *Energy Policy* 203: 114633.

Ankel-Peters, J., G. Bensch, A. Köngeter, M. Rauschenbach and M. Sievert (2025), Are Rural Energy Access Programs Pro-Poor? Some are, many are not. *Energy Research & Social Science* 120: 103871.

Rose, J., J. Ankel-Peters, H. Hodel, M. Sall and G. Bensch (2024), The interrupted modern energy transition to LPG and the charcoal renaissance in urban Senegal. *npj Climate Action* 3: 96.

Bensch, G., M. Jeuland, L. Lenz and O. Ndiaye (2024), A Bridge to Clean Cooking? The Cost-Effectiveness of Energy-Efficient Biomass Stoves in Rural Senegal. *Energy Economics* 140: 107974.

Yegbemey, R., G. Bensch and C. Vance (2023), Weather information and agricultural outcomes: Evidence from a pilot field experiment in Benin. *World Development* 167: 106178.

Lenz, L., G. Bensch, R. Chartier, M. Kane, J. Ankel-Peters and M. Jeuland (2023), Releasing the killer from the kitchen? Ventilation and air pollution from biomass cooking. *Development Engineering* 8: 100108.

Lukuyu, J., G. Bensch, T. Conlon, A. Patel, V. Modi and J. Taneja (2022), Diesel GenSat: using satellite data to detect diesel-powered irrigation for guiding electrification in Ethiopia. *e-Energy '22: Proceedings of the Thirteenth ACM International Conference on Future Energy Systems*, 325–337.

Rose, J., G. Bensch, A. Munyehirwe and J. Peters (2022), The Forgotten Coal: Charcoal Demand in Sub-Saharan Africa. Special Issue on "The Future of Coal in the Global South". *World Development Perspectives* 25: 100401.

Bensch, G., J. Kluve and J. Stöterau (2021), The Market-Based Dissemination of Energy-Access Technologies as a Business Model for Rural Entrepreneurs: Evidence from Kenya. *Resource and Energy Economics* 66: 101248.

Bensch, G., M. Jeuland and J. Peters (2021), Efficient Biomass Cooking in Africa for Climate Change Mitigation and Development. *One Earth* 4 (6): 879-890.

Bensch, G. and J. Peters (2020), One-Off Subsidies and Long-Run Adoption – Experimental Evidence on Improved Cooking Stoves in Senegal. *American Journal of Agricultural Economics* 102 (1): 72-90.

Andor, M.A., G. Bensch, K.M. Fels and N. Kneppel (2020), Per Stups zum Energiesparen? Eine Meta-Analyse zu den kausalen Effekten von verhaltensökonomischen Interventionen auf den Energieverbrauch von privaten Haushalten. *Perspektiven der Wirtschaftspolitik* 20 (4): 352-382.

Bensch, G. (2019), The Effects of Market-Based Reforms on Access to Electricity in Developing Countries: A Systematic Review. *Journal of Development Effectiveness* 11 (2): 165-188.

Jaiswal, S., and G. Bensch (2019), A Methodological Framework to address Gaps in the Evidence on Infrastructure Impacts: The Case of an Indian Railway Project Evaluation. *Journal of Economic Methodology* 26 (1): 32-44.

Bensch, G., M. Grimm, M. Huppertz, J. Langbein and J. Peters (2018), Are Promotion Programs Needed to Establish Off-Grid Solar Energy Markets? Evidence from Rural Burkina Faso. *Renewable and Sustainable Energy Reviews* 90: 1060-1068.

Bensch, G., J. Peters and M. Sievert (2017), The lighting transition in rural Africa – From kerosene to battery-powered LED and the emerging disposal problem. *Energy for Sustainable Development* 39: 13-20.

Bensch, G. and J. Peters (2017), Enablers of Strong Cookstove Sales through a Purchase Offer Approach in Rural Senegal - An Explorative Analysis. *Boiling Point* 69, 6-9.

Bensch, G., M. Grimm and J. Peters (2015), Why Do Households Forego High Returns from Technology Adoption – Evidence from Improved Cook Stoves in Burkina Faso. *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization* 116: 187-205.

Bensch, G. and J. Peters (2015), The Intensive Margin of Technology Adoption - Experimental Evidence on Improved Cooking Stoves in Rural Senegal. *Journal of Health Economics* 42: 44-63.

Bensch, G. and J. Peters (2013), Alleviating Deforestation Pressures? Impacts of Improved Stove Dissemination on Charcoal Consumption in Urban Senegal. *Land Economics* 89 (4): 676-698.

Bensch, G., J. Peters and M. Sievert (2013), Fear of the Dark? – How Access to Electric Lighting Affects Security Attitudes and Nighttime Activities in Rural Senegal. *Journal of Rural and Community Development* 8 (1): 1-19.

Bensch, G., J. Peters and C. M. Schmidt (2012), Impact Evaluation of Productive Use – An Implementation Guideline for Electrification Projects. *Energy Policy* 40 (1): 186-195.

Bensch, G., J. Kluve and J. Peters (2011), Impacts of Rural Electrification in Rwanda. *Journal of Development Effectiveness* 3 (4): 567-588.

Discussion Papers (ongoing work)

Bensch, G., M. Frondel and C. Vance (2026), Energy-Efficient Biomass Cookstoves and the Rebound: Evidence from Field Experiments in Rwanda and Senegal. *USAEE Working Paper No. 26-667*.

Haveresch, N., J. Ankel-Peters and G. Bensch (2025), A slippery slope: topographic variation as an instrument. *I4R Discussion Paper Series 278*.

Bensch, G., J. Rose, J. Ankel-Peters and A. Brodeur (2025), The Robustness Dashboard. *I4R Discussion Paper Series 234*.

Bensch, G., J. Rose, F. Neubauer, J. Ankel-Peters and A. Brodeur (2025), A comment on "Partisan effects of information campaigns in competitive authoritarian elections: evidence from Bangladesh" by Ahmed et al. (2024). *I4R Discussion Paper Series 216*.

Brodeur, A., L. Fiala, J. Fitzgerald, E. Kujansuu, D. Valenta, O. Rogeberg and G. Bensch (2025), A Comment on "Improving Women's Mental Health During a Pandemic". *I4R Discussion Paper Series* 207.

Ankel-Peters, J., G. Bensch and C. Vance (2023), Spotlight on Researcher Decisions – Infrastructure Evaluation, Instrumental Variables, and Specification Screening. *Ruhr Economic Papers* #991.

Jaiswal, S., G. Bensch, A. Navalkar and T. Jayaraman (2022), The Socio-Economic and Environmental Impact of a Large Infrastructure Project: The Case of the Konkan Railway in India. *Ruhr Economic Papers* #936.

Bensch, G. (2013), Inside the Metrics – An Empirical Comparison of Energy Poverty Indices for Sub-Saharan African Countries. Ruhr Economic Papers #464. RWI.

Papers/Work in Progress

Barbarioli, B., G. Bensch, A. Brodeur, M. R. Jones, M. R. Retana Torre, L. Fazio, L. Fiala, G. A. Baki, E. Di Vito, G. Sheja. The AI Replication Engine: Autonomous Verification of Empirical Research in Social Sciences.

Bensch, G., J. Rose, J. Ankel-Peters and A. Brodeur. A Comment on "Friendship and female education: Evidence from a field experiment in Bangladeshi primary schools" by Hahn et al. (Economic Journal, 2020).

Bensch, G., J. Ankel-Peters and M. Sievert. Evidence Synthesis and Citation Practices: The Case of Women's Employment in Electrification Research.

Bensch, G., J. Ankel-Peters, A. Dabadge and M. Sievert. Rural Electrification and Urban Grid Reliability in Tanzania.

Articles in other Journals

Bensch, G. (2014), Tracking the Energy Poor – Empirical Insights on Energy Poverty Measurement Approaches. *International Association for Energy Economics (IAEE) Energy Forum* First Quarter 2014: 21-24.

Monographs (selected)

Bensch, G., M. Kreibaum, T. Mbegalo, J. Peters and N. Wagner (2017), The Status of Energy Access in Three Regions of Tanzania: Baseline report for an urban grid upgrading and rural extension project. *RWI Materialien* 111. Essen: RWI.

Bensch, G., M. Grimm, J. Langbein and J. Peters (2015), Impacts of Access to Solar Energy on Rural Households. An Evaluation of a Netherlands Supported Programme in Burkina Faso. *RWI Materialien* 95. Essen: RWI.

Bensch, G., J. Peters, and L. Schraml (2010), Energy Usage and Socio-economic Conditions in Mozambique. *RWI Materialien* 56. Essen: RWI.

Contributions to Books

Bensch, G., J. Peters and C. M. Schmidt (2013), Impact Monitoring and Evaluation of Productive Electricity Use – An Implementation Guide for Project Managers. In: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH (ed.), *Productive Use of Energy – PRODUSE - Measuring Impacts of Electrification on Small and Micro-Enterprises in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Eschborn: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH. 119-144.

Project reports (selected)

Bensch, G., K. Kaestner, L., C. Vance and A. Wilhelm (2022), Price formation on the futures market and the physical market for cocoa. *Final report for the Federal Agency for Agriculture and Food Research*.

Bensch, G, W. Cornelissen, J. Peters, N. Wagner, J. Reichert, and V. Stepanikova (2019), Electrifying Rural Tanzania. A Grid Extension and Reliability Improvement Intervention. Impact Report on behalf of the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO).

RWI (2016), Employment and Income Effects of Improved Cook Stove and Pico-Solar Interventions. *RWI Projektberichte*.

ecol and rebel group (2014), Independent Evaluation of Energizing Development (EnDev) Partnership Program. Report on behalf of the EnDev Governing Board.

Neelsen, S., J. Peters and G. Bensch (2011), Baseline Report on the GEF project Renewable Energy Based Electricity Generation for Isolated Mini-Grids, Zambia – Shiwang'andu Area Mini-Hydro Project Component. Report on behalf of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).

Bensch, G. and J. Peters (2008), PSP Hydro – Private Sector Participation in Micro-hydro Power Supply for Rural Development, Rwanda. Baseline Study Report. Report on behalf of Deutschen Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH.

PROJECTS (SELECTED)

2025 – 2028	"Reproducibility and Artifical Intelligence" with funding by Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft. Project partners: University Ulm, GESIS - Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences.
2025 – 2027	"Replicability at the Science-Policy Interface: The Case of Environmental Economics" with funding by Open Philanthropy. Project partners: Institute for Replication, University of Ottawa.
2022 – 2025	"Robustness and Replicability in Economics (R2E)" with funding by Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft and Open Philanthropy. Project partners: Stockholm School of Economics, University of Connecticut, and Institute for Replication.
2019 – 2022	"Price formation on the futures market and the physical market for cocoa" commissioned by Federal German Ministry of Food and Agriculture. Project partner: Jacobs University Bremen
2019 – 2022	"Electricity demand forecasting in agriculture – harvesting the synergies of machine learning and survey data for electrification planning in Ethiopia" commissioned by UK Aid. Project partner: Universität Massachusetts Amherst, Ethiopian Policy Studies Institute (PSI).
2017 – 2021	"Improved cookstoves in rural Senegal – health effects and the missing market" commissioned by International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie), German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), Deutschen Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ). Project parner: Duke University, USA, Ministère de l'énergie et du dévelopment des énergies renouvelables (MEDER) du Sénégal, RT International, Université Gaston Berger, Senegal, and World Bank; World Health Organization (WHO).
2017	"Meta-Analysis of the causal effects of behavioural interventions on the energy consumption of private households" commissioned by Ministry for Rural Areas and Consumer Protection Baden-Württemberg; Lead Principal Investigator.
2015 - 2016	"The Water-Energy-Food nexus: Global, Nile Basin and local case studies of resource use efficiency" in cooperation with International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and Centre for Development Research (ZEF) commissioned by German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ); Principal Investigator.
2014 – 2016	"Rigorous evaluation design for GIZ Morocco – Climate change adaptation" commissioned by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ); Lead Principal Investigator.
2010 - 2014	"Impact evaluation of energy and development cooperation supported by the Netherlands" in collaboration with International Institute of Social Sciences (ISS), The Hague, commissioned by Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Principal Investigator and Lead Applicant; recognized with the "Best Practice Award 2015" of the Poverty Reduction, Equity and Growth-Netzwerks (PEGNet).
2008 - 2012	"Productive Use of Electricity (PRODUSE)" commissioned by World Bank and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ); Principal Investigator.

PRESENTATIONS AT REFEREED CONFERENCES (SELECTED)

2025	Annual Workshop of the Sustainable Energy Transitions Initiative, Gothenburg/ Sweden.

2024	Annual Conference of the Verein für Socialpolitik [German Economics Association, VfS], Berlin/ Germany.
2023	Annual Meeting of the Environment for Development [EfD] initiative, Accra/ Ghana.
	Annual Conference of the Verein für Socialpolitik [German Economics Association, VfS], Regensburg/ Germany.
	German Development Economics Conference [GDEC], Dresden/ Germany.
2022	Merian Institute for Advanced Studies in Africa (MIASA) conference on "Policies for a sustainable rural transformation in Africa", Accra/ Ghana.
	Annual Conference of the European Association of Environmental and Resource Economists [EAERE], Rimini/ Italy.
2018	IZA/World Bank/NJD Conference on Jobs and Development, Bogotá/ Colombia.
	Annual Sustainable Energy Transitions Initiative meeting, Durham/ USA.
	World Congress of Environmental and Resource Economists, Gothenburg/ Sweden.
	Annual Congress of the European Economic Association, Cologne/ Germany.
2017	MAER-Net (Meta-Analysis of Economics Research Network) Colloquium 2017, Friedrichshafen/ Germany.
	International Workshop on "Causal Inference, Program Evaluation, and External Validity", Luxembourg.
2015	Annual Conference of the VfS, Münster/ Germany.
2014	Asian Development Bank-3ie Making Impact Evaluation Matter Conference, Manila/ Philippines.
	International Conference of the Int. Association for Energy Economics [IAEE], New York/ USA.
	World Congress of Environmental and Resource Economists [WCERE], Istanbul/ Turkey.
2013	Poverty Reduction, Equity and Growth Network [PEGNet] Annual Conference, Copenhagen/ Denmark.
2012	International Workshop on "Empirical Methods in Energy Economics" [EMEE], Berlin/ Germany.
	Nordic Conference in Development Economics, Gothenburg/ Sweden.
2011	Annual EAERE Conference, Rome/ Italy.
2010	International Conference on Infrastructure Economics and Development, IDEI/ World Bank/ PPIAF/ AFD, Toulouse/ France.
2009	IAEE European Conference, Vienna/ Austria.
2008	IAEE International Conference, Istanbul/ Turkey.

TEACHING

2018 – 2019	Specialization Course in Development Economics" at the Jacobs University Bremen
2018 - 2019	"Economic Policy Issues II (Macroeconomics)" at the Jacobs University Bremen
2018	Mini Lecture on "Impact Evaluation in Development and Environmental Economics. A Hands-On Introduction" am Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai/ India.
2017 - 2018	"Economic Policy Issues I (Microeconomics)" at Jacobs University Bremen (Fall Semester 2017).
2016	Course elements of the Certification Course in Climate Change, Ahmedabad/ India.
2012	Two-week capacity development workshop on impact evaluation for Mozambican researchers in Chimoio, Mozambique.
2011	Two-day workshop on quantitative evaluation at World Vision, Friedrichsdorf/ Germany.

2007 Eight-week course “Desenvolvimento Sustentável - Optimização Dinâmica Aplicada” (“Sustainable Development - Applied Dynamic Optimization”) at the National University Eduardo Mondlane, Maputo/ Mozambique.

REFEREEING

American Economic Journal: Applied Economics; American Economic Journal: Economic Policy; Journal of Development Economics; Journal of the Association of Environmental and Resource Economists; Journal of Environmental Economics and Management; Nature; The Economic Journal

African Development Review; Agricultural Economics; American Journal of Health Economics; Applied Energy; Building and Environment; Clean Energy; Climate Policy; Climatic Change; communications sustainability; Discover Sustainability; Economics of Energy and Environmental Policy; Energy & Buildings; Energy Economics; Energy Journal; Energy for Sustainable Development; Energy Policy; Energy Research & Social Science; Energy Sources, Part B: Economics, Planning, and Policy; Energy Strategy Reviews; Energy, Sustainability and Society; Environment, Development and Sustainability; Environmental Development; EPJ Data Science; Indoor Air; International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health; Journal of Benefit-Cost Analysis; Journal of Cleaner Production; Journal of Commodity Markets; Journal of Development Effectiveness; Journal of Environmental Management; Journal of Health Economics; Journal of International Development; Land; Land Economics; npj Climate Action; PLOS One; Renewable Energy; Renewable & Sustainable Energy Reviews; Resource and Energy Economics; SAGE Open; Sustainability; Sustainable Cities and Society; Sustainable Futures; The B.E. Journal of Economic Analysis and Policy; Utilities Policy; World Development; World Development Perspectives; World Review of Science, Technology and Sustainable Development

"Micro Perspectives for Decentralized Energy Supply" Conference in Bangalore (2015); 10th and 11th Annual meeting of the Environment for Development (EfD) initiative in Pucón and Addis Abeba (2016/ 2017); Conference of the Sustainable Energy Transition Initiative (SETI) 2020; 14. RGS Doctoral Conference in Economics 2021; 18th Annual meeting of the Environment for Development (EfD) initiative (WinEED); International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie, External Review); National Fund for Scientific and Technological Development, FONDECYT, for the Agencia Nacional de Investigación y Desarrollo de Chile (ANID, 2025); Metascience Novelty Indicators Challenge

LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

German	Native language	French	Fluent
English	Fluent	Spanish	Intermediate
Portuguese	Fluent	Italian	Intermediate