



TRANSILATE

SCIENTIFIC COMMUNICATION

J-PAL AFRICA LAUNCH

16-17 JANUARY 2011

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ABDUL LATIF JAMEEL
Poverty Action Lab



TRANSLATING RESEARCH INTO ACTION

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DEAR J-PAL AFRICA LAUNCH GUESTS, COLLEAGUES & FRIENDS,



It is with much excitement and anticipation that we launch J-PAL Africa as the newest addition to the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab's rapidly expanding network of professors and regional offices worldwide.

Based within the Southern African Labour and Development Research Unit (SALDRU) at the University of Cape Town, J-PAL Africa is well positioned to elevate J-PAL's work in Africa and ensure that our network makes a lasting contribution to evidence-based policymaking in the region. We will equip policymakers with the tools and knowledge to answer hard questions about which social programmes are working and thereby encourage them to trial innovative, bold policy options as well as design social programmes that have the potential to make a real difference in the lives of the poor. We will also embark on an intensive effort to train more African researchers to run high-quality impact evaluations that are fully rooted in Africa, to build capacity and to develop partnerships with policymakers in African countries.

Our launch conference is a celebration of the emerging knowledge base of evidence from randomised evaluations and of its role in informing policy changes. It is also a celebration of our partnerships with governments and NGOs across Africa that enabled these learning opportunities—through randomised evaluations of their programmes—or who are working zealously to roll out successful programmes to millions of people in need. We thank them for their courageous work.

On behalf of J-PAL and SALDRU, I welcome you to the J-PAL Africa launch conference and look forward to working with you in the future.

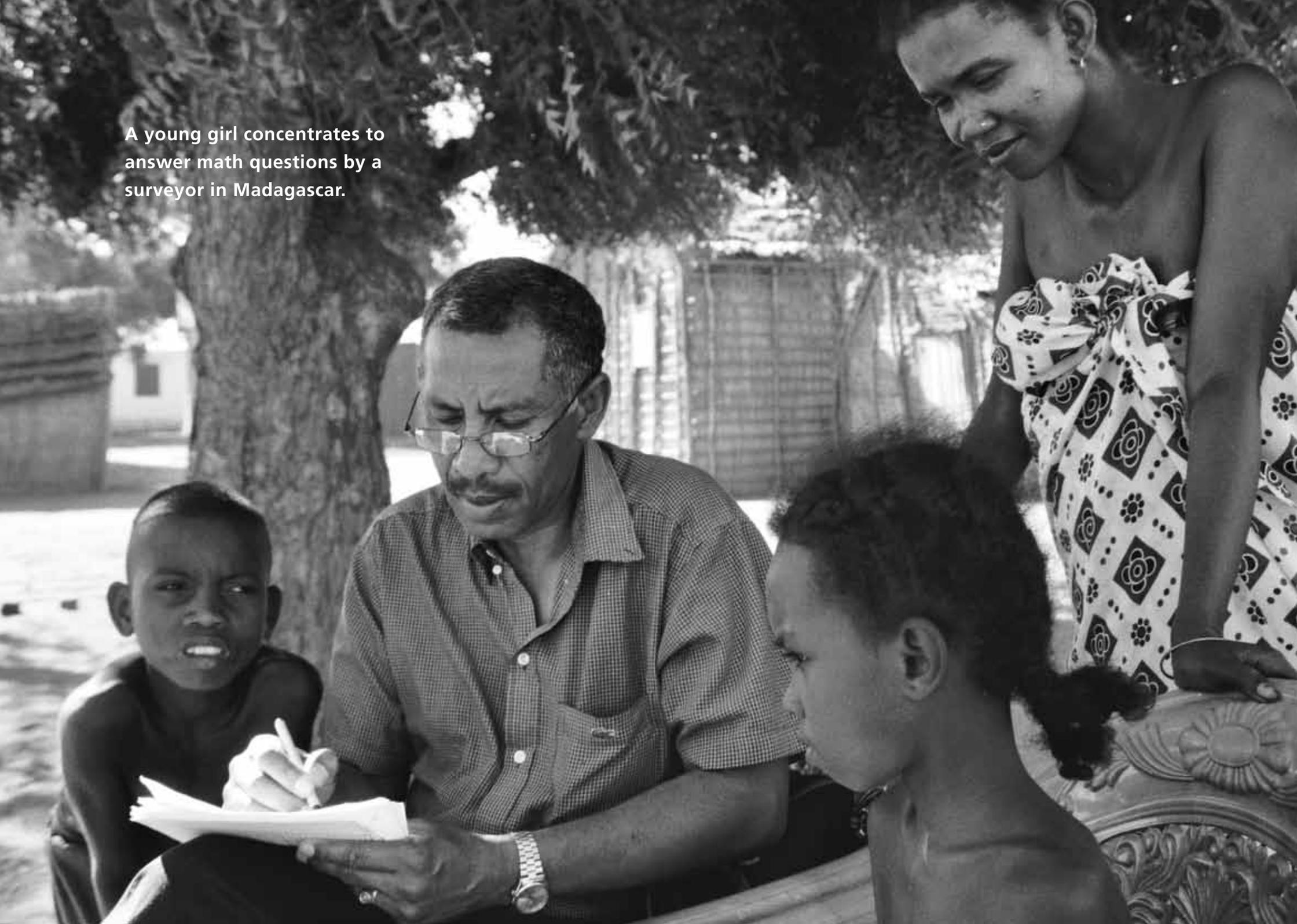
Sincerely,
Kamilla Gumede
Executive Director, J-PAL Africa





A school feeding programme in Madagascar.

A young girl concentrates to answer math questions by a surveyor in Madagascar.



ABOUT J-PAL: The **Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL)** was established in 2003 as a research lab within the Economics Department at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Since then, it has grown into a global network of researchers who are united by their use of randomised evaluations to answer critical policy questions in the fight against poverty.

We are named in honour of Abdul Latif Jameel, the father of MIT alumnus Mohammed Abdul Latif Jameel, who has supported J-PAL with several major endowments.

J-PAL's mission is to reduce poverty by ensuring that policy is based on rigorous evidence.

WE WORK TO ACHIEVE THIS BY:

CONDUCTING RIGOROUS IMPACT EVALUATIONS

J-PAL affiliated professors use randomised evaluations to test and improve the effectiveness of programmes and policies aimed at reducing poverty.

BUILDING CAPACITY

J-PAL shares expertise with people interested in rigorous programme evaluation and provides training on how to run high-quality impact evaluations.

IMPACTING POLICY

We use cost-effectiveness analysis to identify the most effective ways of achieving policy goals, disseminate this knowledge to governments and NGOs and work to promote the scale-up of successful programmes.

our global network

Since our inception, J-PAL's network of professors has grown from 11 to 51, our projects from 20 to 245, the countries where we work from 10 to 43, and the number of people we train each year from 22 to more than 250.

J-PAL's over-arching goal is to reduce poverty. We work in both developed and developing countries and across a wide range of policy issues. Examples include better programmes to improve school quality and learning; strategies to fight corruption and improve political governance; improved ways of promoting technology adoption in agriculture; strategies to maintain the supply of clean, safe water to more poor households; youth employment programmes and social inclusion; and many others.

J-PAL conducts policy outreach from its regional centres in [SOUTH ASIA](#) - at the Institute for Financial Management Research (Chennai, India); [EUROPE](#) - at the Paris School of Economics (Paris, France); [LATIN AMERICA](#) - at Pontificia Universidad Católica (Santiago, Chile);

and [AFRICA](#) - at the University of Cape Town (Cape Town, South Africa). With an extensive network of economists and experienced policy professionals, J-PAL not only conducts evaluations of social programmes but also collaborates with governments, NGOs and international development organisations to roll out countrywide scale-ups of those social programmes that have been found to be effective.

Already, J-PAL evidence has helped improve policy on issues as diverse as pricing policies for bednets, school-based deworming programmes, pension saving schemes, remedial education, and quotas for women in politics in India.

More information on successful development programmes that have been rigorously tested by J-PAL can be found at www.povertyactionlab.org/policy-lessons.

Photo: Vaccines are among the most cost-effective health strategies available, and many countries provide them for free. Yet, there are areas with low coverage. Offering small incentives can dramatically improve take-up and is a tiny price to pay for the immense benefits of vaccines.





J-PAL partners

J-PAL HAS MANY PARTNER ORGANISATIONS WORLDWIDE:

- **Nonprofits (NGOs) and governments who partner with J-PAL to evaluate their programmes.**
- **Governments, foundations, international development organisations and NGOs who use J-PAL's policy lessons on what works in poverty reduction to scale-up the most effective programmes.**
- **Donors who provide funding for evaluations or scale-ups.**
- **Research centres and researchers who work alongside J-PAL affiliated professors to evaluate social programmes.**

These partnerships are an integral part of J-PAL's research agenda and essential to our efforts to translate research into policy action. J-PAL is an impartial organisation with no stake in the development programmes we evaluate. Our interest is in empowering policymakers with the knowledge and tools to make informed choices about where to invest scarce resources in the fight against poverty.

Organisations who work with J-PAL do so because they too recognise the power of using randomised evaluations to pilot and scientifically test the efficacy of one or several competing programme design options. Because randomised evaluations measure the impact of real-life interventions, the evidence they generate is practical and action oriented.

If you have a programme you would like J-PAL to evaluate, kindly contact jpalafrica@povertyactionlab.org.

Photo: Teen pregnancies place a large added health risk on mothers and their babies. Is lack of education the cause of teen marriages and added risk of teen pregnancies? Or do early marriages prevent girls from completing their education, with adverse effects on their capacity to make more informed health decisions and help break the vicious circle of poor education and health outcomes? J-PAL is working with UNICEF to disentangle these complex effects in Bangladesh.

J-PAL RECEIVES WINNING RECOGNITION

J-PAL received the Inaugural BBVA Foundation Frontiers of Knowledge Award in 2008 in development cooperation for world-class research.

J-PAL Director Abhijit Banerjee was awarded the Inaugural Infosys prize in 2009 in recognition of his outstanding contributions to economic theory and for his pioneering work in the empirical evaluation of public policy.

J-PAL Director Esther Duflo and Affiliate Sendhil Mullainathan were named in Foreign Policy's Top Global Thinkers in 2010. Duflo and Mullainathan have also been recipients of MacArthur "genius" awards.

J-PAL Director Esther Duflo received the John Bates Clark Medal in 2010, given to "that American economist under the age of 40 who is judged to have made the most significant contribution to economic thought and knowledge."

"Esther's research is producing amazing insights into the difficult challenge of overcoming poverty in the developing world." — Bill Gates, co-chair, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation







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(1) 8, 10, 6, 3, 12 = 16
(2) 28, 16, 7, 35, 21 = 16, 21, 35, 4
(3) 45, 32, 60, 54, 42 =
(4) 24, 67, 100, 20 =

NUMERICAL CHART

1	10	100	1000
2	20	200	2000
3	30	300	3000
4	40	400	4000
5	50	500	5000
6	60	600	6000
7	70	700	7000
8	80	800	8000
9	90	900	9000

J-PAL IN THE NEWS: The results of our more than 245 ongoing and completed evaluations are building a growing evidence base for learning what works to reduce poverty. The news coverage of our randomised evaluations highlights their relevance for addressing critical policy questions.

Links to dozens of articles in the *New York Times*, the *Financial Times*, *The Economist*, and other major news sources are available at www.povertyactionlab.org/news.

Photo: Too many children come to school to find that their teachers haven't shown up. When this happens, they automatically lose days at school. But something can be done: linking teacher salaries to proof of presence based on twice daily photos with the pupils, taken with a camera with a tamper-proof date and time stamp. When teachers came to work, they taught, and children learned more.

THE PRAGMATIC REBELS

2 July 2010 *Bloomberg Businessweek*

"The financial crisis blew a hole in big-think economics, raising the profile of a new breed of skeptical empiricists committed to assiduous testing and tangible results, no matter how tiny. Even lentils can lead to little miracles."

MAKING ECONOMICS RELEVANT AGAIN

20 February 2008 *The New York Times*

"Ms. Duflo, Mr. Banerjee and their colleagues have a simple, if radical, goal. They want to overhaul development aid so that more of it is spent on programs that actually make a difference. And they are trying to do so in a way that skirts the long-running ideological debate between aid groups and their critics."

UNDERCOVER ECONOMIST:

ARRESTED DEVELOPMENT

8 June 2007 *Financial Times*

"When you're lost and running late, it is frustrating to stop and figure out the lie of the land. Nevertheless, that has to be better than speeding off in the wrong direction, however fleetingly satisfying the illusion of activity may be."



J-PAL BOARD

J-PAL'S LEADERSHIP: The J-PAL Board of Directors provides overall strategic guidance to J-PAL and also helps expand activities in research, capacity building, and policy outreach. Board members include affiliated professors and senior management who serve as the chairs for a thematic J-PAL Programme or as executive directors of regional offices.

GYANENDRA BADGAIYAN
Director of J-PAL South Asia

ABHIIT BANERJEE
Director of J-PAL, MIT

MARIANNE BERTRAND
University of Chicago

RYAN COOPER
Executive Director, J-PAL Latin
America

BRUNO CRÉPON
ENSAE and École Polytechnique

IQBAL DHALIWAL
Director of Policy, MIT

ESTHER DUFLO
Director of J-PAL, MIT

SEBASTIAN GALIANI
Washington University in Saint
Louis

FRANCISCO GALLEGO
Pontificia Universidad Católica
de Chile

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University of Minnesota

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MIT

KAMILLA GUMEDE
Executive Director, J-PAL
Africa

MARC GURGAND
Paris School of Economics

DEAN KARLAN
Yale University

ASIM KHWAJA
Harvard University

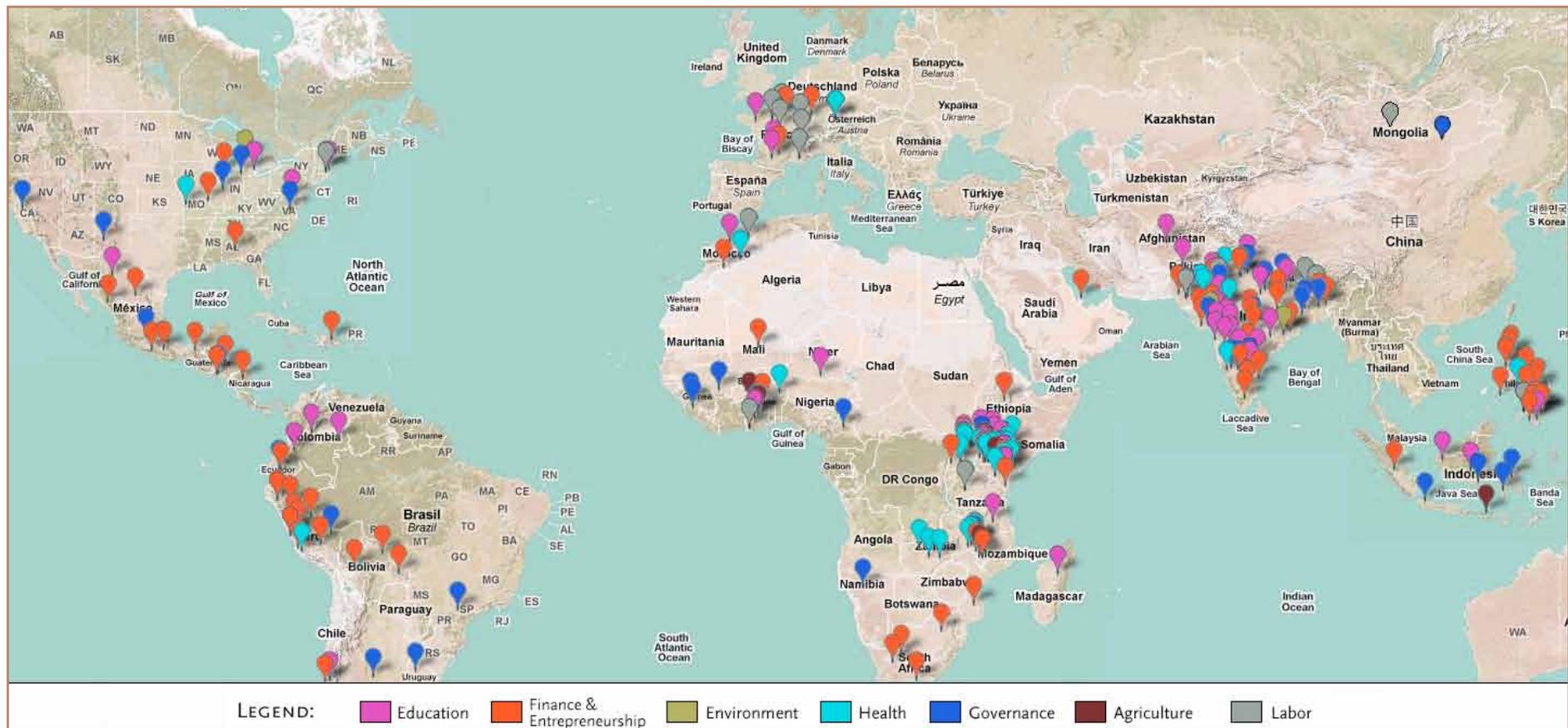
BENJAMIN OLKEN
MIT

ROHINI PANDE
Harvard University

CHRISTOPHER UDRY
Yale University



Smart subsidies to farmers can help boost technology adoption, farm productivity and returns. Offering farmers the chance to pre-order fertilizers during the harvest season—when farmers have cash on hand—can be as effective at increasing fertilizer use as a 50 percent subsidy at planting time.



J-PAL's more than 245 ongoing and completed randomised evaluations span 43 countries. These evaluations are highlighting policy-relevant findings across seven programme areas.

J-PAL programmes

LEARNING WHAT WORKS, SECTOR BY SECTOR: To maximise our network's ability to fill knowledge gaps and influence policy, J-PAL's work is focused on seven programme areas: agriculture, education, environment and energy, finance, health, labour markets, and political economy and governance. Each programme is chaired by J-PAL affiliates who are responsible for coordinating across the network and ensuring that our work answers pertinent research and policy questions.

AGRICULTURE

Three-quarters of the world's poor live in rural areas and depend directly or indirectly on agriculture. While agricultural productivity in recent decades has dramatically improved, in part through the adoption of new practices, these improvements have been unevenly spread. J-PAL's work on agriculture focuses on researching strategies to overcome barriers to adoption of improved agricultural practices. The Agriculture Technology Adoption Initiative (ATAI) is sponsored by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and is implemented jointly with CEGA at the University of California, Berkeley. (www.atai-research.org) The programme is led by RACHEL GLENNERSTER (MIT) and CHRISTOPHER UDRY (Yale University).

EDUCATION

Education remains one of the most promising ways for many children to attain a fuller, more productive life. Many developing countries have improved access to education, but the quality of education has remained too low. Although more children are now in school, many end up learning very little. J-PAL's Education Programme focuses on researching strategies to improve learning and school completion. The programme is led by ABHIJIT BANERJEE (MIT) and PAUL GLEWWE (University of Minnesota).

ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY

J-PAL's Environment and Energy Programme seeks to answer questions at the intersection of environment, energy, and poverty reduction. Current and future research focuses on three key areas: the benefits of environmental quality in terms of human health and welfare; the costs of producing environmental quality through reducing pollution; and climate change, with a particular focus on the costs of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and the costs of adaptation in response to climate change. The programme is led by MICHAEL GREENSTONE (MIT).

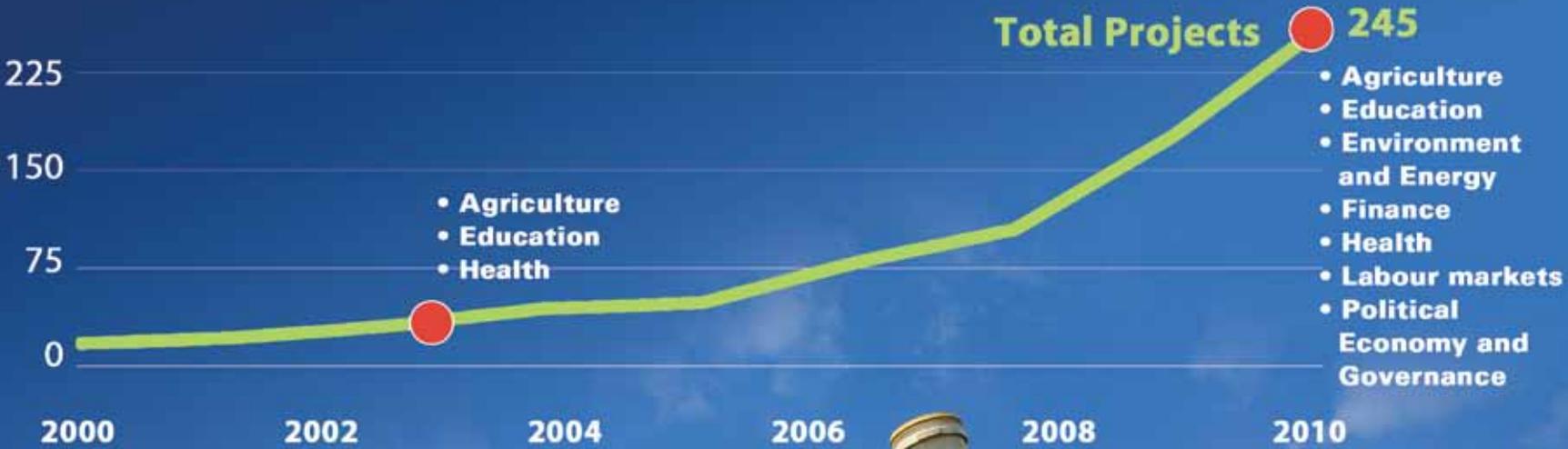
FINANCE

J-PAL's Finance Programme seeks to expand both the understanding of how households and firms demand and use financial services and how financial service providers perform and engage in the market. The programme is especially interested in recent financial innovations that could improve the quantity and quality of financial access at all levels of financial actors. Much of the existing evidence has focused on microfinance, but new work is underway on finance products for small and medium enterprises and on strategies for promoting savings. The programme is led by DEAN KARLAN (Yale University) and ASIM KHWAJA (Harvard University).

HEALTH

Despite large international aid investments and several global health initiatives, improvements in global health indicators, including progress towards the health-related Millennium Development Goals, have been highly uneven, and in some regions, HIV/AIDS is reversing earlier health gains. Many deaths from preventable diseases could be averted if women and children had better access to and made better use of available, often cheap, life-saving technologies and services such as effective ante-natal care, immunization, condoms and other HIV prevention methods, insecticide-treated bednets in malaria-prone areas, water purification, and oral rehydration solutions to treat diarrhoea in young children. The Health Programme seeks to enhance our understanding of how improvements in health services and delivery, health-oriented behaviour change and technology adoption can reduce poverty. The programme is led by ESTHER DUFLO (MIT) and SEBASTIAN GALIANI (Washington University in St. Louis).

A Growing Evidence Base





J-PAL PROGRAMMES CONTINUED

LABOUR MARKETS AND YOUTH

Adolescence is a critical time of life when important decisions are made (for example, about marriage and staying in school) that can dramatically impact future life trajectories. It is also a period of habit formation with potential long-term consequences for the individual. Investing in health and future human capital has the potential to positively affect poverty reduction well into the future through better skilled, healthier and active labour market participants, reduced fertility and lowered disease burdens. While governments and NGOs are responding to this challenge with an expanding portfolio of youth interventions, surprisingly little rigorous evidence exists to guide youth policy. J-PAL focuses on researching strategies to support school-to-work transitions, healthy habit formation and better targeting of youth strategies. The programme is led by MARIANNE BERTRAND (University of Chicago) and BRUNO CRÉPON (ENSAE and École Polytechnique).

POLITICAL ECONOMY AND GOVERNANCE

Governments around the world spend billions of dollars annually to provide basic services such as policing, and typically undertake the subsidized (or free) provision of services such as health care and education for the poor. The effectiveness of such public spending is often compromised by a number of connected factors: technological constraints on implementing policies, the choice of policies that do not reflect the needs or wishes of the people, leakages due to corruption, lack of community participation, and poor oversight of public spending. J-PAL evaluations are working to identify how policy responses can improve governance outcomes in low-income countries. The programme is led by BENJAMIN OLKEN (MIT) and ROHINI PANDE (Harvard University).

WHY RANDOMISE? It is not always obvious which policy will have the largest impact on intended beneficiaries: Do user fees help get products and services to those who need them the most, or do they simply undercut demand for essential services and leave the needs of the poor unmet? Do quotas for women in politics reduce (or increase) biases against women politicians? What is the most cost-effective way of improving learning in schools?

To design good policy, we need to know how well a policy is working and whether it is a good value for the money: Are there alternative ways of achieving the same outcomes at a lower cost? Do some aspects of the programme have no impact and only add to the cost of the programme? Random assignment offers a simple way to generate these insights.

In randomised evaluations, individuals are selected to receive a programme based on a lottery. Those individuals who do not receive the programme form a comparison group. The two groups are similar in every respect, except that one group receives the programme, while the other does not.

If, after the programme is implemented, the group that received the programme has different

outcomes (e.g. more or less healthy, or higher or lower test scores), we know that this difference was caused by the programme. This clear attribution of what effects were caused by the programme gives us insights about its effectiveness.

The growth of randomised evaluations of development programmes is a relatively recent innovation, and the scope for introducing an element of randomisation into development programmes continues to gain recognition.

Randomised evaluations can be implemented ethically when they avoid doing possible harm to study participants and avoid denying beneficial treatment to persons who would otherwise receive it. This is often possible because programmes tend to be oversubscribed, are scheduled to be rolled out in a gradual fashion or are initially tested with pilot programmes. In those cases, randomisation is one of the fairest and most transparent ways of determining participation.





Charging even very small user fees sharply limits access to preventive health care. User fees are promoted for many reasons, including better targeting of products and reduced wastage in health programs. Several experiments on different products and in different countries found very little support for these views. In the studies where this was tested, the act of paying for something did not help encourage people to use the product, nor did charging help target a product to those who need it.



cost effectiveness

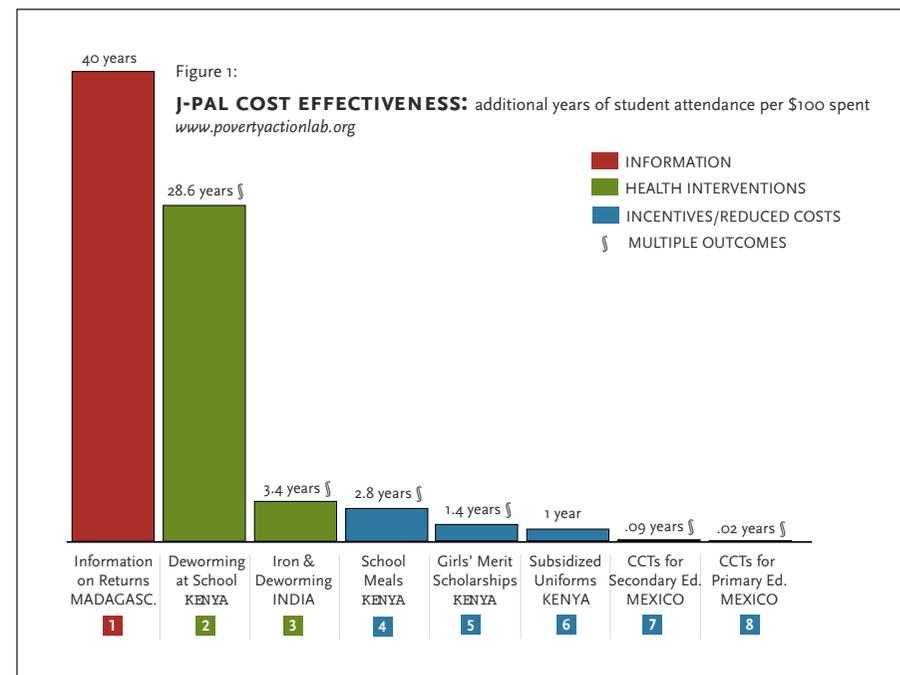
MAXIMISING IMPACT PER DOLLAR SPENT

When policymaker and practitioners choose between different strategies to achieve a goal, they can benefit from having clear evidence on which approaches deliver results most efficiently. By distinguishing programmes that work from those that don't, and sorting cost-effective programmes from those that come with a higher price tag, randomised evaluations provide policymaker with critical information to help make informed choices on where to invest scarce resources to fight poverty effectively.

There are many ways of increasing school enrolment and attendance, but there is huge variation in the costs of different programmes. Reducing or offsetting the cost of schooling through lower school fees or conditional cash grants increases student enrolment, but is relatively more expensive per year of schooling gained than other programmes. Policies which focus on reducing the barriers to attendance, such as malnutrition and intestinal worms, as well as policies which inform parents of the benefits of education generate the largest gains per \$100 spent.

J-PAL synthesises results from multiple randomised evaluations

to compare which programmes can achieve the greatest impact per dollar spent. When budgets are constrained, knowing which approach is most cost effective can help policymaker reach more people with their limited budgets.



J-PAL AFRICA'S VISION:

The J-PAL network of researchers already has more than 70 studies in 17 African countries and works closely with our sister organisation, Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA), to provide project research infrastructure in these countries.

J-PAL Africa will coordinate the network's efforts to build research capacity in Africa to expand both the number of randomised evaluations completed and the number of people who can run them. We will also coordinate efforts to place rigorous evidence on the agenda of policymaker in Africa, through pilots and evaluations of their own programmes and scale-up initiatives of successful interventions.

It is our belief that social programmes in Africa can be more effective in improving lives, if policymaker have access to rigorous evidence of what works and can make better use of this evidence.

OUR THREE-PRONGED STRATEGY IS TO:

- **Run high-quality impact evaluations to enable policymaker to base their policy choices on rigorous knowledge of what works;**
- **Train researchers in Africa to run high-quality evaluations; and**
- **Create awareness and actively work with partners across Africa to roll out successful development programmes to more people.**







J-PAL AFRICA'S VISION (CONTINUED):

We are exceedingly proud to be part of SALDRU and the University of Cape Town. SALDRU already runs a number of recognised training programmes in data analysis for policymaker. We will build on these strengths to offer training opportunities for students, researchers and professionals who want to retool and learn how to run randomised evaluations.



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To learn more, visit:

www.povertyactionlab.org/africa

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FROM SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE TO EFFECTIVE POLICY & **BETTER LIVES FOR ALL**

Conference on Lessons Learned from
Scientific Evaluations in Africa

by the **Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL)**

Cape Town, South Africa • 17th of January 2011

Accelerating social progress in Africa requires knowledge about what kinds of social programmes are effective. Yet all too often, such basic knowledge is lacking despite decades of policy reforms and thousands of different programmes launched. Why do we know so little? One important reason is that without careful methods, it is not always possible to tell how well a programme is working. In the past, we have not availed ourselves of the opportunity to rigorously evaluate these programmes and policies at their rollout. But that is beginning to change, in Africa and around the world.

This one-day conference marks the launch of J-PAL's regional office for Africa at the University of Cape Town in South Africa and brings together researchers, policymaker and development practitioners to present and discuss findings from rigorous evaluations of social programmes and their practical applications to pressing social problems in Africa.

Access to Education:

**Mass, School-Based Deworming
and Menstruation Cups**

Sarah Baird (George Washington University)
Margaret Ndanyi (School Health and Nutrition,
Government of Kenya)
Rebecca Thornton (University of Michigan)

Quality of Education: Going to School and Learning

Stephen Adu (Ghana Education Service)
Rukmini Banerji (Pratham, India)
Annie Duflo (Innovations for Poverty Action)
Usha Rane (Pratham, India)

Youth and Social Cohesion

Bruno Crépon (ENSAE and École Polytechnique, France)
Martin Hirsch (l'Agence du Service Civique, France)

Delivering Services to the Poor

Power to the People

Martina Björkman (Bocconi University, Italy)
Frances Nsonzi (Independent consultant, Uganda)

Incentives for Health Service Delivery

Nava Ashraf (Harvard Business School)
Victor Mukonka (Director of Public Health, Zambia)
Mannasseh Phiri (PSI, Zambia)

Emerging Lessons

Abhijit Banerjee (MIT)
Esther Duflo (MIT)





SCHOOL BASED DEWORMING: A BEST BUY FOR EDUCATION

An estimated 400 million children across the world are infected with intestinal worms that can cause anaemia, malnourishment and lethargy. If children are constantly sick, they miss school more often and lose out on the opportunities that come with education. Mass deworming programmes, based in schools, provide a cheap answer. Regular treatment for worms can reduce pupils' absenteeism by 25 percent at a cost of just 50 cents per child, per year.

The benefits of deworming are long lasting. A decade later when they were in their early twenties, children who received deworming treatment in western Kenya still showed positive effects, including significant effects on labour market participation.

Evidence from J-PAL's randomised evaluations has helped inform the debate and has contributed to the scale-up of school-based deworming. Since 2009, more than 7 million children have benefited from treatment for parasitic worms in India, Kenya, Madagascar, and Tanzania. The World Food Programme is deworming through its school feeding programme in 26 countries.

Sarah Baird is an Assistant Professor at George Washington University. She has worked on rigorous evaluations of deworming in Kenya, community driven development initiatives in Tanzania, and schooling and health of young women in Malawi.

Margaret Ndanyi is Head of School Health and Nutrition in the Government of Kenya and is responsible for the coordination of a national programme to roll out deworming treatment to more than 3 million children with worm infections, in Kenya, using the school system as a network for distributing medicines.

HOW CAN WE REDUCE BARRIERS TO GIRLS' EDUCATION?

In many parts of the world, social and cultural taboos and restrictions exist for women during their menstrual period. Women in very rural areas of Nepal are often restricted to separate huts or cow sheds during menstruation. Adolescent girls and their mothers were given re-usable menstrual cups in an effort to increase school attendance, attainment, self-esteem and health.

Take up of the product was relatively high: 60 percent of girls were using the cups six months into the study. And, use continued over time. Once a girl successfully used a menstrual cup, she continued to use it in more than 90 percent of subsequent months.

The modern sanitary products may well have improved convenience, and participants report spending less time doing laundry. But, these girls were only slightly more likely to attend school than girls not offered the cups. This suggests that while there may be value in providing sanitary products, merely providing them to girls may not be the solution for substantially reducing barriers to education.

Rebecca Thornton is an Assistant Professor of Economics at the University of Michigan and a J-PAL affiliated professor. She has worked on evaluating a merit-based scholarship in Kenya, HIV prevention strategies in Malawi, menstruation and education in Nepal, and more.





BACK TO BASICS: REMEDIAL EDUCATION IN GHANA

The introduction of free primary schooling in many countries has dramatically increased the number of children who go to school. These children need classrooms, teachers, school inputs, and quality teaching that is targeted at their level of school preparedness to benefit fully from improved access to education. Few of them get this. Schools often do not accommodate the learning needs of children who fall behind. Many children get promoted from grade to grade without mastering basic skills, leaving them lost and unprepared for the lessons taught. Concentrating on basic skills through remedial education can prove remarkably effective. In India, children who attended a three-month after-school 'Read India' camp run by the NGO, Pratham, jumped from simply recognising letters, to reading entire paragraphs on their own, at a low cost per pupil.

Building on this and other rigorous evidence on the benefits of contract teachers, the Education Service of Ghana has embarked on a large scale pilot programme that trains teacher community assistants to help children master basic reading and numeracy skills. If found to be successful, the programme may be scaled up to benefit children across Ghana.

Stephen Adu is Director for the Basic Education Division and Deputy Director General in the Ghana Education Service.

Rukmini Banerji is Director of Programmes for Pratham and a senior member of Pratham's national leadership team. Pratham is the largest NGO working to provide quality education to the underprivileged children of India. Established in 1994 to provide pre-school education to the children in the slums of Mumbai city, Pratham has since grown both in scope and geographical coverage.

Annie Duflo is Research Director at Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA). Based in New Haven in the United States, she heads up IPA's research network development.

Usha Rane has worked for Pratham since 1996 and is Pratham's regional head. She oversees programmes across five states and heads up Pratham's content development group.

YOUTH AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

Adolescence is a critical time of life when important decisions are made (for example about school participation and marriage) that can dramatically impact the future trajectory of lives. It is also a period of particular vulnerability to social and professional exclusion. In both developing and developed countries, unemployment rates are systematically higher (sometimes twice as high or more) for young adults than for older generations.

While governments and NGOs are responding to this problem with an expanding set of youth interventions, surprisingly little rigorous evidence existed until recently to guide policy. This has changed, though: In 2005 the French government created a special Fund [Fonds d'Expérimentation] to encourage innovative strategies to promote the social and professional inclusion of young people. Because evaluation of programme impact was mandatory for all test programmes, much-needed rigorous evidence is now emerging.

Chronic unemployment is a considerable problem in France, particularly in poor neighbourhoods, and young adults are most at risk. Evaluations underway test a variety of interventions, from more accessible health check-ups at youth clubs to access to housing programmes that aim to overcome transportation constraints and promote access to jobs. Other programmes test the efficacy of second-chance programmes that offer access to vocational training and apprenticeships for young adults who have dropped out of school. Additional evaluations are comparing the effectiveness of providing

entrepreneurship training and access to finance with the results of behavioural approaches that aim to build up the self-confidence and problem-resolution skills of young adults.

These challenges are far from unique to France. Many of the lessons learned should prove of interest to policymakers worldwide.

Bruno Crépon is a J-PAL affiliated professor and a researcher at Centre de Recherche en Économie et Statistique (CREST) and an Associate Professor at ENSAE and École Polytechnique. He has conducted randomised evaluations of programmes ranging from youth labour market initiatives in France to the impact of rural microcredit in Morocco.

Martin Hirsch is the former President of the "Emmaus France" charity organisation, and was until recently High Commissioner for Active Solidarities and High Commissioner to Youth in the French government. He is now President of France's Civil Service Agency.





SHOWING UP IS THE FIRST STEP: IMPROVING SERVICE PROVIDER ATTENDANCE

You can build schools and clinics and stock them with books, drugs, and equipment, but if the teachers, nurses, and other providers are chronically absent, these investments will be wasted. Much recent policy has focused on efforts to empower the local population to demand better services. Several approaches have been tried and a number have been rigorously tested—with mixed results.

An evaluation by Björkman and Svensson found the Citizen Report Card programme in Uganda to be very successful. The Citizen Report Card project informed communities about the quality of local health services and encouraged communities to be more involved with the state of the health service provision and strengthened their capacity to hold their local health providers to account for performance. A year after the intervention, treatment communities were more involved in monitoring the provider, and the health workers appeared to exert higher effort to serve the community.

In the treatment communities, use of general outpatient services was higher (20%), more people came for child birth deliveries (58%) and more patients sought prenatal care (19%). More people sought family planning services (22%) and immunisations increased for all age groups, especially newborns. In terms of changes in treatment practices, the treatment health facilities were more likely to use equipment during examination, waiting time reduced, and the absence

rate of health workers decreased by 13 percentage points. Relative to the comparison group, these communities saw an increase in infant weight and a 33% reduction in the mortality of children under 5 years old.

Martina Björkman is an Assistant Professor of Economics at the IGIER, Bocconi University in Italy and a J-PAL affiliated professor. She has done rigorous impact evaluations of public service delivery in Uganda, Lesotho and Nigeria.

Frances Nsonzi is an independent consultant. A Ugandan national, Frances Nsonzi has extensive experience in managing surveys to examine constraints to public service delivery in the health sector, project management of baseline and impact assessment studies, and leading and implementing regulatory reforms in selected areas.

NO MARGIN, NO MISSION? MOTIVATING COMMUNITY-BASED HEALTH SERVICE DELIVERY

Nava Ashraf is an Associate Professor at Harvard Business School and a J-PAL affiliated professor. She has conducted randomised evaluations of many programmes around the world, focused on innovations that can promote behaviour change in microsavings, agriculture and health. Professor Ashraf has been working in Zambia since 2005 on several randomised evaluations in health services delivery and health technology adoption.

Dr. Victor Mukonka, Director of Public Health and Research, Ministry of Health, Zambia. Dr. Mukonka oversees all research and public health initiatives within the Ministry of Health and is currently spearheading a new nationwide community health worker strategy.

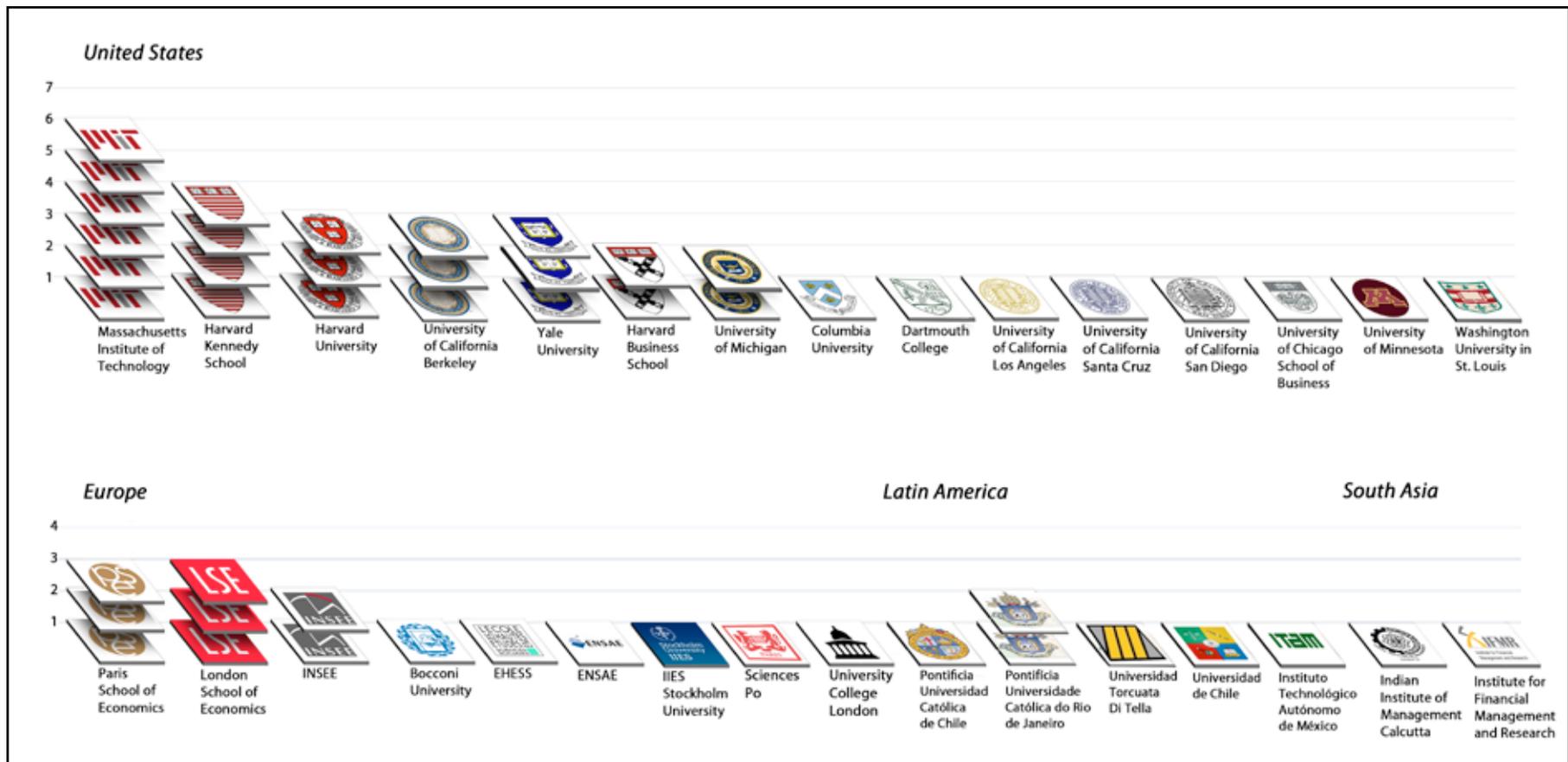
Dr. Mannasseh Phiri, SFH Executive Director and PRISM Chief of Party. Dr. Phiri has been collaborating with J-PAL and IPA Zambia on a randomised evaluation of incentives for hairstylists to promote the CARE female condom. SFH, a local affiliate of Population Services International (PSI), has been partnering with Professor Ashraf and J-PAL for the past five years on randomised evaluations of health product pricing and delivery in Zambia.

Many developing countries face dire shortages of trained health professionals, especially in rural areas far from health facilities. Initiatives to distribute and promote HIV/AIDS prevention products and efforts to provide early treatment of diseases such as malaria and pneumonia can fail in the absence of the health professionals needed to implement them.

One alternative is to train and incentivise individuals embedded in their communities to be health service providers. An innovative programme by the Society for Family Health (SFH) in Zambia trains hairstylists to promote and sell female condoms, which give women the ability to protect themselves against HIV. Hairstylists' relationships with their community provide advantages for promoting this health product that other distribution channels such as pharmacies or understaffed clinics lack. Hairstylists can build on the trust they have developed with their clients to share information, and repeat visits allow them to encourage continued use and troubleshoot any barriers to sustained adoption.

From a policy perspective, we need to understand what can motivate individuals to engage in pro-social health service activities. What kinds of incentives can draw in and retain the most effective promoters? Can social recognition be more motivating than financial compensation? J-PAL affiliated professors and SFH have collaborated to find the answers with a field experiment that randomises incentives across Lusaka hairstylists.

The answers we are learning from the private sector are also relevant for public sector policy. The Government of Zambia is embarking on a new, large-scale community health worker (CHW) strategy, which recruits and trains a new cadre of CHWs to provide basic early treatment for malaria and other diseases. Even though CHW programmes invest substantial resources in training and monitoring, high attrition and lack of motivation among the CHWs can undermine the benefits and sustainability of the strategy. The Government of Zambia is working to learn which kinds of recruitment messages work best, and which compensation structures best motivate CHWs to serve their communities.



J-PAL'S NETWORK OF AFFILIATED PROFESSORS DRAWS FROM LEADING ECONOMISTS AT MAJOR UNIVERSITIES AROUND THE WORLD.

J-PAL'S REGIONAL OFFICES AND CONTACT INFORMATION



SALDRU is a research unit housed within the University of Cape Town's School of Economics. The unit contributes to both research and teaching in the field of economics, particularly in the area of poverty alleviation. The basic premise of SALDRU's existence has always been that research should be "policy oriented and conveyed in such a way that it contributes to public debate and the improvement of a situation." Over the 30 years of its existence, research activity has put different emphases on these thrusts as it has responded to the different political and socio-economic changes in the country.

In the early 1990s, SALDRU's commitment to producing evidence-based analysis culminated in South Africa's first nationally sampled living standards survey, undertaken in 1993 by SALDRU and the World Bank. This study informed the Reconstruction and Development Programme and the ANC's overall policy with regards to poverty alleviation and development.

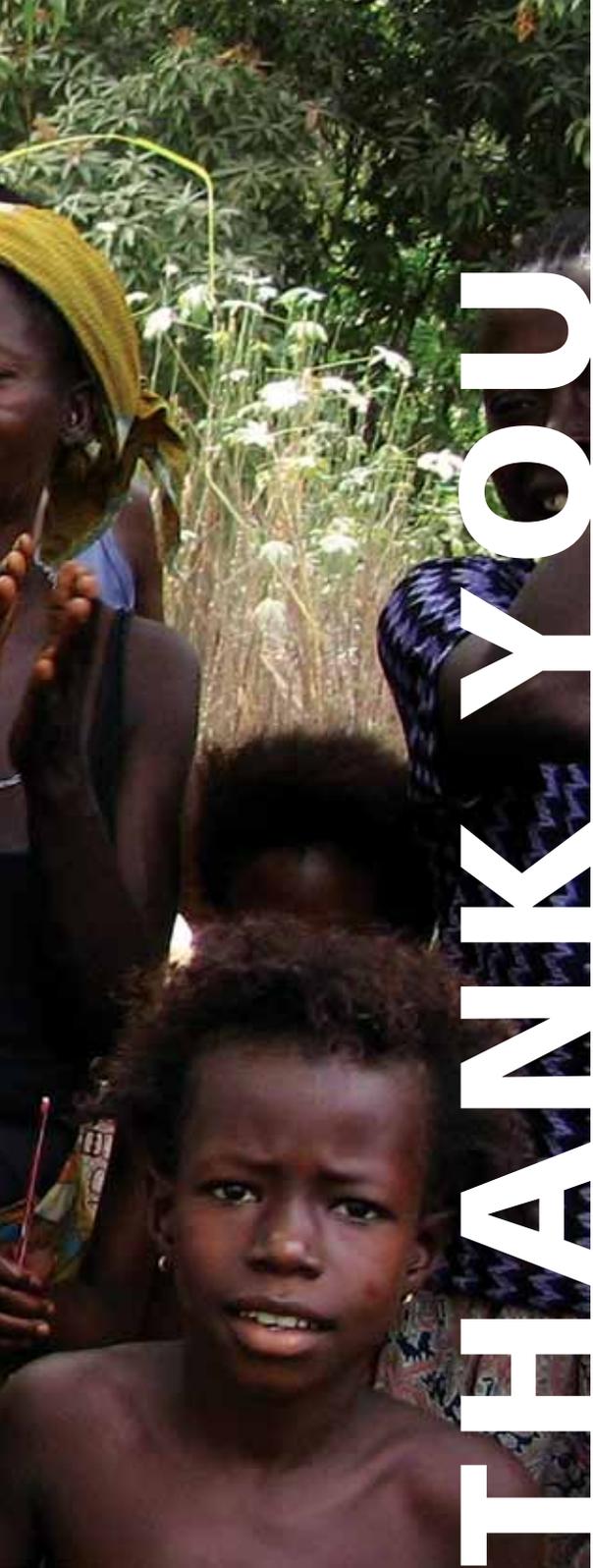
SALDRU built a data archive around this survey, one that became a repository of South African data sets. It also raised funds to start teaching extension courses on the analysis of survey data, with a focus on those from historically disadvantaged universities, NGOs, trade unions and government officials. These courses continue to run, and each year they attract between 60 and 70 participants, drawn from universities in South Africa and Southern Africa, government departments, research institutions and NGOs. Well over 500 participants have been trained. Building the capacity of people to work with and use data has helped improve the process of policy formulation.

Since 2000 SALDRU has undertaken a number of detailed surveys to generate knowledge about aspects of the lives of people affected by poverty, and in 2006 it was awarded a three-year project to launch South Africa's National Panel Study of Income Dynamics. This study will track about 30 000 South Africans over at least a decade to provide detailed analysis of who is getting ahead and who is falling behind in our post-apartheid society.

SALDRU







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