April 2019 Newsletter

April 11, 2019

Encouraging open data in the social sciences

On the J-PAL blog, Karl Rubio (Research Associate, J-PAL) writes, "Researchers spend huge amounts of time and money to collect data; yet after the publication of a paper, the data sit in their files, rarely revisited and slowly buried—unless they are published and shared. There has been a growing research transparency movement within the social sciences to encourage broader data publication, and some powerful tools and helpful infrastructure have been built out for this." Read more »

Targeting extreme poverty in Egypt

The Sawiris Foundation for Social Development (SFSD), in partnership with BRAC and J-PAL, has launched an evidence-based program in Upper Egypt aimed at alleviating extreme poverty. Building on BRAC's successful Ultra-Poor Graduation Program, SFSD and J-PAL have adapted this multifaceted livelihood approach to the Egyptian context. Learn more »

New affiliated professors join J-PAL

J-PAL welcomes four professors to our academic network: Marcella Alsan at the Stanford University School of Medicine, Kevin Donovan at the Yale School of Management, Robert Darko Osei at the University of Ghana, and Diego Ubfal at Bocconi University. Their varied research interests include health and socioeconomic disparities, firm growth and risk management, land registration, entrepreneurship, the transition from school to work, and attitudes toward immigrants. Meet the new affiliates »

The risks and rewards of voter information campaigns

Providing information on candidates' qualifications, policy positions, and performance in office can affect voter turnout and who they vote for. Evidence from several randomized evaluations finds that providing voters with information about candidates can lead to more qualified and accountable candidates being elected. Under certain conditions, however, information can have limited or even negative impacts. Read more in the latest policy insight »

J-PAL's Claire Walsh receives MIT Excellence Award

On March 21, Claire Walsh (Senior Policy Manager, J-PAL) received one of the highest honors of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)—the Excellence Award for Outstanding Contributor. The award is given to members of the MIT community who consistently go above and beyond in their work.

"Claire is truly exemplary in the quality of her work, and in her dedication to J-PAL's mission and community," said Iqbal Dhaliwal (Executive Director, J-PAL). "This award is an opportunity to celebrate not only Claire's achievements, but also the hard work and commitment of J-PAL's 400+ staff worldwide who go the extra mile every day." Read more »

Measuring women's and girls' empowerment in Southeast Asia

Coinciding with International Women's Day, J-PAL Southeast Asia hosted a workshop for more than forty policymakers, NGO staff, and donor representatives in Jakarta, Indonesia. Leveraging the Practical Guide to Measuring Women's and Girls' Empowerment in Impact Evaluation, the workshop explored strategies for applying a gender lens to program design and evaluation, designing survey questionnaires to measure women's empowerment, and more. Read about the event »

Upcoming Data, Decisions, Public Policy talks

This spring, J-PAL will host two talks in our D2P2: Data, Decisions, Public Policy lecture series. The lectures will take place at MIT and will be streamed via live webcast.

On April 25, J-PAL affiliate Paul Niehaus (UCSD) will discuss how GiveDirectly's unconditional cash transfers break the mold of traditional development programs. Can providing a basic income improve the lives of people living in extreme poverty? If we give money directly, what happens to people who receive it and their communities? Register now »

On May 14, Roberto Rigobon (MIT) will speak about the modern history of Venezuela from the discovery of the country's abundant oil reserves to today's turmoil. He will discuss the current humanitarian crisis and possible ways forward. Register now »

UPCOMING TRAININGS

Apply now for 2019 Executive Education courses

J-PAL's flagship in-person training course, Evaluating Social Programs, equips participants with resources and knowledge to design, use, and accurately interpret evidence from impact evaluations. Learn more and apply to participate in one of the upcoming trainings:

Cambridge, United States: June 10–14
Applications due April 12.

New Delhi, India: July 1–5
Applications due April 30.

Banda Aceh, Indonesia: July 20–21
Applications due June 30.

Cape Town, South Africa: July 29–August 2
Applications due May 12.

Free training for European organizations working on migration

Organizations working on migration and refugee inclusion issues in Europe are invited to apply for a free training to take place from May 27-29 at the Paris School of Economics. The training follows the launch of the European Social Inclusion Initiative, which took place on March 26, and is open to organizations interested in learning more about how to run randomized evaluations. Learn more and apply by April 12 »

MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

Women in Data Science conference unites global community of researchers and practitioners
MIT News

4 ways workplace automation can help HR teams get work done right
HR Technologist

Why India needs more women to contest 2019 elections
Bloomberg Quint

Public disclosures help hold politicians accountable
Chicago Booth Review

NEW RESEARCH PAPERS

Social networks, reputation and commitment: Evidence from a savings monitors experiment
Emily Breza, Arun G. Chandrasekhar

Private outsourcing and competition: Subsidized food distribution in Indonesia
Abhijit Banerjee, Rema Hanna, Jordan Kyle, Benjamin A. Olken, Sudarno Sumarto

Clinical decision support for high-cost imaging: A randomized clinical trial
Joseph Doyle, Sarah Abraham, Laura Feeney, Sarah Reimer, Amy Finkelstein

Bridging the intention-behavior gap? The effect of plan-making prompts on job search and employment
Martin Abel, Rulof Burger, Eliana Carranza, Patrizio Piraino

Want regular research updates? Sign up for the research newsletter »

FEATURED JOBS

TaRL Africa Managing Director, Teaching at the Right Level Africa, Ghana, Kenya, or South Africa
Project Director, Identification, Payments, & Governance Research Initiative, J-PAL Africa, Cape Town, South Africa
Policy Manager, J-PAL North America, Cambridge, United States
Senior Manager, Policy and Research, J-PAL South Asia, Tamil Nadu, India
Senior Training Associate, J-PAL South Asia, New Delhi, India
Human Resources Manager, J-PAL South Asia, New Delhi, India
Senior Research Associate, J-PAL Middle East & North Africa Initiative, Cairo, Egypt
Research Manager, J-PAL Middle East & North Africa Initiative, Cairo, Egypt
Finance and Operations Manager, J-PAL Middle East & North Africa Initiative, Cairo, Egypt

Explore open positions around the world »
Want regular job announcements? Sign up for the job newsletter »

The Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL) is a global research center working to reduce poverty by ensuring that policy is informed by scientific evidence. Anchored by a network of more than 170 affiliated professors at universities around the world, J-PAL draws on results from randomized impact evaluations to answer critical questions in the fight against poverty. We build partnerships with governments, NGOs, donors, and others to share this knowledge, scale up effective programs, and advance evidence-informed decision-making. J-PAL was launched at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 2003 and has regional centers in Africa, Europe, Latin America & the Caribbean, North America, South Asia, and Southeast Asia.