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**NEWSLETTER**

June 2023



Photo credit: Youth Impact

## **Impact of phone-based tutoring: Evidence from six countries**

School closures during the Covid-19 pandemic exacerbated learning challenges worldwide. During these closures, Youth Impact, a Botswana-based NGO, tested the impact of ConnectEd, a one-on-one tutoring program that uses phones to connect high-quality instruction with students and parents. Building on initial results from Botswana, in a randomized evaluation funded by a coalition of supporters, including J-PAL's [Innovation in Government Initiative](#), NGOs, governments, multi-laterals, and researchers tested and adapted ConnectEd across five other countries—and found the program to be highly effective.

In the first post of J-PAL's 20 for 20: Partner Voices blog series, where we showcase stories of results and impact with our partners to celebrate our 20th anniversary, Youth Impact shares key insights from this multi-country evidence.

[Read more](#)

## 🔊 UPDATED POLICY INSIGHT



Photo credit: Shutterstock.com

### What is the latest evidence on the impacts of microcredit?

Early evidence from randomized evaluations showed that a less flexible, traditional microcredit model did not have transformative impacts for the average borrower. In a newly updated Policy Insight, J-PAL's [Finance sector](#) shares more recent research that found lending to high-potential business owners and implementing flexible repayment plans can enhance the outcomes of microcredit. Furthermore, digital disbursement of loans led to better outcomes for women-owned enterprises. Policymakers, NGOs, and donors aiming to use microcredit to reduce poverty should understand the limitations of the traditional microcredit model while exploring the potential benefits of product design tweaks and innovations. [Read the Policy Insight »](#)

## FEATURED BLOGS



Photo credit: J-PAL Southeast Asia

### Tips for building successful international coauthorship collaborations

International collaborations can strengthen a research team's capacity and quality, but successful partnerships require careful planning and coordination. In a new blog post, we explore the benefits of international coauthorship and draw on the experiences of J-PAL staff and affiliates worldwide to offer suggestions for researchers seeking to expand their teams. [Read more »](#)



Photo credits: Courtesy of Nouf Abushehab (left) and Brian Daza (right)

## DEDP Alumni Spotlight: The journey from master's to PhD

Alumni of J-PAL and MIT's Data, Economics, and Development Policy (DEDP) [master's program](#) have gone on to work in government, nonprofits, international organizations, and research. In the first installment of our DEDP Alumni Spotlight series, [Evan Williams](#) (Senior Research, Education, and Training Associate, J-PAL Global) caught up with current PhD students Nouf Abushehab and Brian Daza from the class of 2020. They share their journeys from DEDP to becoming PhD researchers, current work, and goals for impacting research and evidence-based policy. [Read more »](#)

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### FEATURED RESEARCHER



The road to success is not an easy one; it can be rough and tough. To achieve your goals, you will need to have courage, patience, and persistence."



## Evans Osabuohien on cultivating networks and advancing agricultural innovation

In our newest African Scholar Spotlight, Evans Osabuohien (Covenant University) discusses what drew him to economics and his current research on increasing informal workers' take-up of health insurance products in Nigeria, funded by the [Digital Identification and Finance Initiative in Africa](#). He also explains how J-PAL and other organizations have supported his career trajectory, and provides advice to African researchers. [Read more »](#)

## WELCOMING OUR NEW AFFILIATED PROFESSORS

*In summer 2022, 33 talented researchers joined the J-PAL network. We will feature a few of them here each month.*



Alexia Delfino  
Bocconi University



Gregory Lane  
University of Chicago



Aurélie Ouss  
University of Pennsylvania

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## FEATURED MULTIMEDIA



Photo credit: Brvh Kwame Photography

### Perspectives from Africa-based researchers

Since its launch in 2019, J-PAL's [African Scholars Program](#) has offered funding, mentorship, training, and networking opportunities to 63 researchers across thirteen countries and thirty research projects.

Scholars met with staff from [J-PAL Africa](#) to share their perspectives on the program for African researchers interested in conducting impact evaluations. [Hear from the researchers](#) »

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## FEATURED EVENTS

### [Next week! June 22–23] J-PAL at 20: Science and the Fight Against Poverty

To mark J-PAL's 20th anniversary, join [J-PAL Europe](#) for a two-day colloquium hosted by the Collège de France in Paris. Policymakers, social innovators, funders, and researchers, including J-PAL co-founders [Abhijit Banerjee](#) (MIT; Director, J-PAL; Scientific Director, J-PAL Europe) and [Esther Duflo](#) (MIT; Director, J-PAL; Scientific Director, J-PAL South Asia), will discuss the research and policy work in Europe and the role of evidence in

alleviating poverty and addressing common challenges on a global scale. Attendance is first come, first serve on the day of the event. [Learn more »](#)

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## **[Webinar recording] Sharing Evidence on Women’s Agency in Central America**

Over the past few months, [J-PAL Latin America and the Caribbean](#) (LAC) organized a series of activities to help enhance evidence use and generation within Central American organizations that promote women's agency, with support from the Cotopaxi Foundation and Target Foundation. As part of this series, J-PAL LAC facilitated a recent webinar sharing evidence on gender agency and the relevance of evidence use. [Watch the webinar \(in Spanish\) »](#)

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### **FEATURED TRAININGS**

## **[June 27] Enroll now in the Data, Economics, and Development Policy MicroMasters Program**

The current semester of our online [MicroMasters program in Data, Economics, and Development Policy](#) (DEDP) is underway. Enrollment is open until June 27—but courses started May 30, so don't wait to enroll! Students who complete the DEDP program credential are eligible to apply for the on-campus [Master's in DEDP](#) at MIT or one of our [pathway universities](#). [Learn more and enroll »](#)

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## **[Due July 14] Apply for the Displaced Livelihoods Initiative’s Research Incubator**

J-PAL and Innovations for Poverty Action’s [Displaced Livelihoods Initiative](#) (DLI) will host a three-day randomized evaluation design workshop at the Paris School of Economics on October 17–19. The research incubator is designed for organizations promoting sustainable livelihoods for displaced persons and host communities. The incubator will help participants develop a concept note for a randomized evaluation of one of their own programs and establish the foundations for fruitful collaboration with researchers applying for impact evaluation funding through DLI. Applications for the DLI Research Incubator are open now and due by July 14. [Learn more and apply »](#)

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### **MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS**

Bihar's model of bicycles to girls replicated by six African countries, endorsed by UN  
The Indian Express

Center for caregiver advancement receives \$10 million grant to provide free training for caregivers in San Bernardino county  
Yahoo Finance

Using information and communication technology to improve mental health in Africa  
The Brookings Institution

US and UAE governments highlight early warning system for climate resilience  
MIT News

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### NEW RESEARCH PAPERS

Better Strategies for Saving More: Evidence from Three Interventions in Chile  
Abhijit Banerjee, Claudia Martínez A., and Esteban Puentes

Is Digital Credit Filling a Hole or Digging a Hole? Evidence from Malawi  
Valentina Brailovskaya, Pascaline Dupas, and Jonathan Robinson

The Last Mile of Monetary Policy: Inattention, Reminders, and the Refinancing Channel  
Shane Byrne, Kenneth Devine, Michael King, Yvonne McCarthy, and Christopher Palmer

Improving Hygiene and Sanitation through Parental Skill Training  
Asad Islam, Umair Khalil, and Tabassum Rahman

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### FEATURED JOBS

Research Associate, Johannesburg, South Africa  
Senior Policy Associate, Cape Town, South Africa  
(Senior) Policy and Research Associate (Inclusion Projects in Spain), Madrid, Spain  
Research Manager (IDEE), Paris, France  
Policy Associate (Morocco Employment Lab), Rabat, Morocco  
Policy Manager (Morocco Employment Lab), Rabat, Morocco  
Policy Associate (Health), New Delhi, India  
Research Associate (Targeted and Flexible Microcredit), Erode, India  
Senior Associate/Manager (Communications), New Delhi, India  
Evidence to Scale Manager, Cambridge, MA, US  
Senior Finance and Operations Associate, Cambridge, MA, US

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