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NEWSLETTER
April 2023



Photo illustration: J-PAL

15 ways to make the most of the J-PAL Dataverse

How can you utilize the more than 130 data sets from randomized evaluations housed in the J-PAL Dataverse? In celebration of the fifteenth anniversary of the Dataverse, we're sharing fifteen ways that students, teachers, researchers, policymakers, and more can reuse this high-quality data—from learning something new to conducting secondary research.

[Read more](#)



Photo credit: Pratham

J-PAL at 20: Evidence and the fight against poverty, June 22–23

To mark J-PAL's 20th anniversary, join J-PAL Europe for a two-day colloquium June 22–23, hosted by the Collège de France in Paris. Policymakers, social innovators, funders, and researchers, including our 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 J-PAL network's research and policy work in Europe, particularly promoting social inclusion, and the role of evidence in alleviating poverty on a global scale.

Attendance is **open to the public** on a **first-come, first-serve basis**; no registration is necessary. [See the full speaker lineup »](#)

UPDATED POLICY INSIGHT



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Vocational and skills training programs to improve employment outcomes

In a newly updated Policy Insight, J-PAL's [Labor Markets sector](#) highlights results from 28 randomized evaluations of vocational and skills training programs designed to prepare job seekers for employment. While vocational programs showed mixed results, those that included soft-skills training, job referrals, and practical work experience often increased hours worked and earnings. Vocational training also helped trainees acquire hard skills and certify and communicate those skills. [Read more »](#)

FEATURED BLOGS



Photo credit: CSEA

The impacts of J-PAL's Evaluating Social Programs course worldwide

J-PAL's [Evaluating Social Programs](#) course has reached over 2,750 people through more than 75 trainings held around the world since 2005. In a new blog post, J-PAL's training team highlights how connections and learnings from the course helped past participants forge partnerships with researchers and work with their organizations to evaluate innovations, including in biometric enrollment in

Liberia and education technology in India. [Read more](#) »



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Evaluating climate-resilient and gender-sensitive agricultural innovations

J-PAL and CEGA's [Digital Agricultural Innovations and Services Initiative](#) recently completed its first call for proposals—an important step in generating needed evidence on the impacts of bundled, digital technologies for small-scale agricultural producers in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. On our blog, [Sarah Coughlin](#) (J-PAL Global) highlights these newly funded studies, focusing on [cross-cutting themes](#) like climate resilience and gender sensitivity, and next steps for the initiative. [Read more](#) »



Photo credit: Lano Lan, Shutterstock.com

A look at the research on women's economic agency and employment

Despite significant progress, women continue to face challenges in labor market engagement and economic agency. J-PAL's [Gender and Economic Agency Initiative](#) (GEA) and [Jobs and Opportunity Initiative](#) (JOI) fund rigorous research to help reduce these ongoing labor market challenges for women. On the blog, GEA and JOI staff explore what the research indicates and where we need to learn more on women's work and economic empowerment. [Read more](#) »

FEATURED AFFILIATED PROFESSOR



With the rapid growth in digital financial services in many emerging economies, I also see significant potential for behavioral economics to inform consumer protection initiatives.”



Simone Schaner on behavioral economics and financial inclusion

In our latest Affiliate Spotlight, [Simone Schaner](#) (University of Southern California) reflects on how a policy-focused approach has motivated her research, which focuses on financial inclusion, household decision-making, and women in labor markets. As co-chair of the [Inclusive Financial Innovation Initiative](#), based at [J-PAL Southeast Asia](#), Simone also shares insights on charting a path for greater evidence use in policymaking.

[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.



Johannes Haushofer
Stockholm University



Jamie McCasland
University of British
Columbia



David Yang
Harvard University

FEATURED EVENTS

[April 14] Investing in Human Capital to Accelerate the Green Transition

Climate shocks threaten to increase poverty and deepen inequality, but investing in human capital can help increase climate resilience. In a live streamed event at the World Bank and International Monetary Fund Spring Meetings, [Esther Duflo](#) (MIT; Director, J-PAL; Scientific Director, J-PAL South Asia) will join panelists to discuss how decision-makers can build systems that increase adaptation and prepare people for jobs that will help mitigate climate change. [Watch the live stream »](#)

[May 5] Sharing Evidence on Women's Agency in Central America

How can we leverage the existing global evidence to effectively enhance the agency of women and girls in Central America? In an upcoming webinar, hosted by [J-PAL Latin America and the Caribbean](#) in collaboration with the Cotopaxi Foundation and the Target Foundation, researchers and J-PAL staff will share policy lessons and evidence on strategies that have supported women's agency and addressed restrictive gender norms around the world. The webinar will be held in Spanish. [Register »](#)

[Event recap] Promoting Digital and Financial Inclusion in Indonesia: Early Learnings From Exploratory and Pilot Studies

Earlier this year, the [Inclusive Financial Innovation Initiative](#), based at [J-PAL Southeast Asia](#), hosted a learning forum to share insights on accelerating digital financial inclusion in Indonesia. The forum connected participants from government agencies, research institutions, nonprofit organizations, and private firms to discuss innovations in high-priority areas that aim to maximize the benefits of digital financial services. [Read key takeaways »](#)

FEATURED TRAININGS

[Due April 16] Apply for Evaluating Social Programs in Cape Town

Curious to learn more about how rigorous evaluation can help you understand whether your organization's programs are achieving their intended impact, and how findings from evaluations can inform the design of evidence-based policies and programs? There is still time to apply for [J-PAL Africa's](#) upcoming [Evaluating Social Programs](#) course in Cape Town, South Africa July 17–21. **Applications are due April 16** —space is limited and applications are reviewed on a rolling basis. [Learn more and apply »](#)

[Due April 30] Apply for J-PAL Summer School: Development Methodologies

African researchers with a demonstrated interest in conducting impact evaluations are invited to **apply by April 30** for [J-PAL Europe's](#) summer training course in Rabat, Morocco July 4–7. In partnership with the French Development Agency, the French Fund for Innovation in Development, and Mohammed VI Polytechnic University, the course will enable participants to strengthen their knowledge and learn from renowned researchers in the J-PAL network. The training will be conducted in French and English. [Learn more and apply »](#)

[May 5–26] Free: Enroll in Impact Evaluations, Evidence Use, and Women's Agency

[J-PAL Latin America and the Caribbean](#) will host a free, virtual training on randomized evaluations and evidence use for organizations focusing on social programs relating to women's agency in Central America, supported by the Cotopaxi Foundation and the Target Foundation. The four-day event will be held in Spanish on May 5, 12, 19, and 26. [Learn more and enroll »](#)

[May 30] Enroll in the Data, Economics, and Development Policy MicroMasters Program

The next term of our online [MicroMasters program in Data, Economics, and Development Policy \(DEDP\)](#) is **now open for enrollment** and begins May 30. Courses cover a range of topics, such as microeconomics, data analysis, and foundations of political economy and development policy. Students who complete the DEDP program credential are eligible to apply for the on-campus [Master's in DEDP](#) at MIT or one of the [pathway universities](#). [Learn more at our webinar on May 16 and enroll »](#)

MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

[The complexity of female empowerment interventions \[Opinion\]](#)

[Ideas for India](#)

[Air pollution \[Explainer\]](#)

[MIT Climate Portal](#)

[What the World Bank can do about climate change \[Opinion\]](#)

[Project Syndicate](#)

[Talking high-dosage tutoring: A researcher and schools chief share strategies](#)

[Education Week](#)

[ICYMI: How changing parental beliefs can build stronger vocabulary and math skills for young children](#)

[The Conversation](#)

NEW RESEARCH PAPERS

[Improving Workplace Climate in Large Corporations: A Clustered Randomized Intervention](#)

[Sule Alan, Gozde Corekcioglu, and Matthias Sutter](#)

[Electronic Food Vouchers: Evidence from an At-Scale Experiment in Indonesia](#)

[Abhijit Banerjee, Rema Hanna, Benjamin A. Olken, Elan Satriawan, and Sudarno Sumarto](#)

[A Mother's Voice: Impacts of Spousal Communication Training on Child Health](#)

[Investments](#)

[Martina Björkman Nyqvist, Seema Jayachandran, and Céline Zipfel](#)

[Delivering Remote Learning Using a Low-Tech Solution: Evidence from a Randomized](#)

[Controlled Trial in Bangladesh](#)

[Liang Choon Wang, Michael Vlassopoulos, Asad Islam, and Hashibul Hassan](#)

FEATURED JOBS

[\(Senior\) Policy Manager, Paris, France](#)

[Policy Manager or Senior Policy Associate \(Turkey/Southeastern Europe\), Paris, France](#)

[Policy, Communications, and Training Director, New Cairo, Egypt](#)

[Post-Doctoral Fellow, New Cairo, Egypt](#)

[\(Senior\) Policy Manager \(Health\), New Delhi, India](#)

[King Climate Action Initiative Fellow, Cambridge, MA, US or remote](#)

[Senior Administrative Associate, Cambridge, MA, US](#)

[Senior Manager of Finance and Operations, Cambridge, MA, US](#)

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