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NEWSLETTER
September 2025



Photo credit: J-PAL

J-PAL North America launches new initiative on US crime and safety policy

This summer, J-PAL North America launched the [Initiative for Effective US Crime Policy \(IECP\)](#) to identify and scale evidence-informed solutions in public safety, enforcement, and crime prevention. The IECP launch event brought together over seventy researchers, policymakers, and practitioners to explore evidence gaps, share lessons from successful partnerships, and build connections to drive future research.

[Read more](#)

EVIDENCE-INFORMED DECISION-MAKING



Photo credit: EPIC India

Scaling an emissions trading market to reduce air pollution

Gujarat, India

The Government of Gujarat scaled the world's first emissions trading market for particulate matter, reducing air pollution for 15 million people—while also lowering industries' costs.

Policy issue: India's severe air pollution lowers the average life expectancy of residents by more than five years. With 1.4 billion people, India faces the dual challenge of reducing air pollution while fostering economic growth. Existing regulation, though a necessary first step, has not prevented pollution from worsening.

Evaluation: The Government of Gujarat worked with J-PAL affiliated researchers, [J-PAL South Asia](#), and EPIC India to [evaluate](#) the world's first emissions market for air pollution in Surat, Gujarat. Through the market, the government caps total industrial emissions while allowing plants to trade unused emissions allowances.

Results: Plants in the emissions market reduced air pollution by 20 to 30 percent compared to plants under existing regulation, while lowering their abatement costs by 11 percent. Researchers estimate that the resulting health benefits were at least 25 times greater than the costs.

Research in action: A new Evidence to Policy Case Study shares how the Gujarat Pollution Control Board scaled the market across Surat and Ahmedabad, reaching over 15 million people. The scale-up was conducted in collaboration with researchers, J-PAL South Asia, and EPIC India, with funding from J-PAL's [King Climate Action Initiative](#) and J-PAL South Asia's [Alliance for Scaling Policy Impact through Research and Evidence](#) and [Air and Water Lab](#). Following the success in Gujarat, other states in India have expressed interest in scaling up similar emissions markets.

[Read the Case Study](#)

[Watch the video](#)

Research by: [Michael Greenstone](#) (University of Chicago; Co-Chair, J-PAL's Environment, Energy, and Climate Change sector), [Rohini Pande](#) (Yale; Co-Chair, J-PAL's Political Economy and Governance sector), [Nick Ryan](#) (Yale), and [Anant Sudarshan](#) (University of Warwick)

FEATURED BLOGS



Photo credit: Zeina Osama, J-PAL

Beyond access: How norms shaped childcare and job service use

📍 Cairo, Egypt

Researchers partnered with Egypt's Ministry of Social Solidarity to evaluate a government program that offered subsidized childcare and job services for mothers in low- and middle-income areas of Greater Cairo. The study found that women did not use either service at meaningful rates. A new blog post explores how deeply rooted social norms—not just access to services—shaped women's decisions around work and childcare, and shares how these insights can inform more effective gender and labor policies in Egypt. [Read more »](#)

Research by: [Stefano Caria](#) (University of Warwick; Co-Chair, J-PAL's Labor Markets sector), [Bruno Crépon](#) (ENSAE and École Polytechnique, Scientific Director, J-PAL MENA), [Caroline Krafft](#) (University of Minnesota), and [Abdelrahman Nagy](#) (3ie)

Measuring what matters for women entrepreneurs

Nuanced concepts like empowerment and quality of life can be challenging to measure—but that doesn't mean they shouldn't be measured at all. In the latest guest post from partners on the J-PAL blog, Tanvi Jaluka (Research Lead, CARE) shares how qualitative research conducted for CARE's Strive Women program for women entrepreneurs in Pakistan, Peru, and Vietnam has informed their approach to accurate measurement. The post highlights CARE's Financial Health Framework and "Scorecard" tools, questions that arose, and the importance of listening and understanding to create richer measurement tools. [Read more »](#)

WELCOMING OUR NEW AFFILIATED PROFESSORS

This summer, we welcomed 29 talented researchers to the J-PAL network. We will feature a few of them here each month.



Susan Athey
Stanford University



Robert Fairlie
University of California,
Los Angeles



Angelino Viceisza
Spelman College

FEATURED MULTIMEDIA

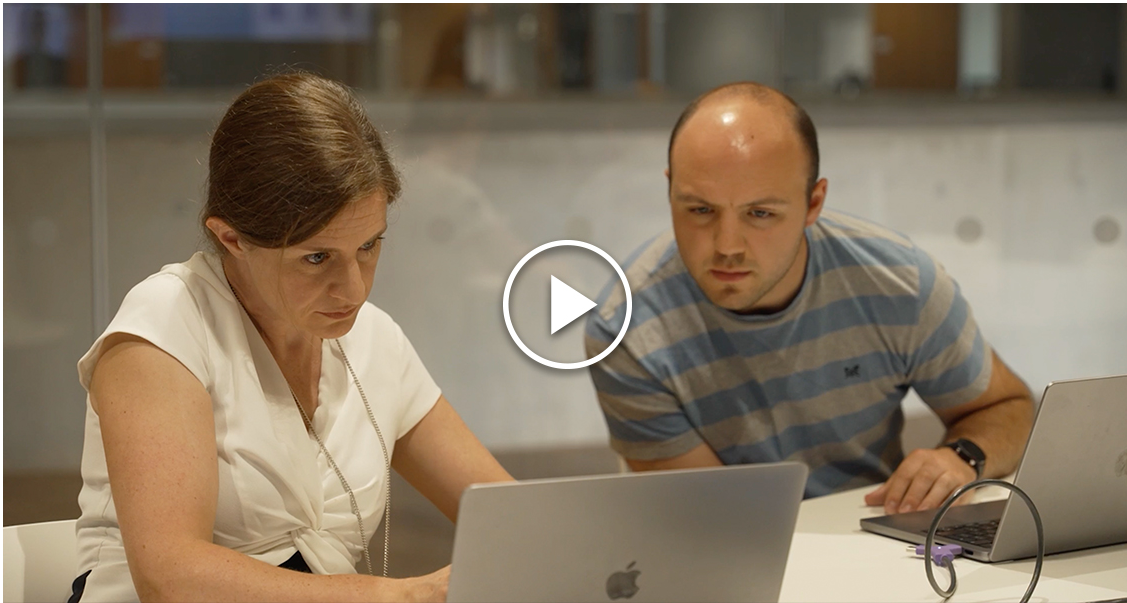


Photo credit: J-PAL

WATCH: Kate Orkin on unconditional cash transfers in Africa

A growing body of rigorous evaluations shows that unconditional cash transfers can improve health and welfare more effectively than food parcels or vouchers. In a new video, J-PAL affiliated professor [Kate Orkin](#) (University of Oxford) discusses how this evidence informed South Africa's emergency response during Covid-19. She recounts how the policy crisis sparked her collaboration with the South African government to scale evidence-informed emergency cash grants, ultimately reaching 28 million people. [Watch the video »](#)

FEATURED EVENT

Webinar series: Research to Action for Resilient Agriculture

 **October 1, 9, 23**

Join J-PAL and the Center for Effective Global Action for a three-part webinar series exploring evidence-informed strategies to help small-scale farmers become more resilient to climate change and use resources sustainably.

- **October 1:** Digital tools for managing weather-related risks
- **October 9:** Biofertilizers and cold storage technology
- **October 23:** Sustainable groundwater use in small-scale irrigation

Hear from leading experts at Digital Green, the International Food Policy Research Institute, MIT, the University of Chicago, and others who are testing innovation in

agricultural adaptation to climate change in low- and middle-income countries. [Register now »](#)

FEATURED TRAININGS

Get ready to learn this fall with DEDP MicroMasters courses

 **Courses start today (September 9)**

Courses in MITx and J-PAL's [Data, Economics, and Design of Policy \(DEDP\) MicroMasters program](#) have just begun, but enrollment is open until October 7. Check out electives like:

- [Political Economy and Economic Development](#) explores how political institutions shape economic outcomes.
- [The Challenges of Global Poverty](#) examines the root causes of poverty and the effectiveness of interventions across sectors such as health, education, and finance.

Courses are taught by MIT faculty and are free to audit, with the option to pay to take a proctored exam in pursuit of a course certificate. Learners who complete the full credential (five courses) can apply to MIT's residential master's program or one of several pathway universities. [Enroll today »](#)

Starting next week: Join J-PAL's online course on Evaluating Social Programs

 **Course starts September 16**

Join us for J-PAL's free, self-paced [online course](#) on Evaluating Social Programs. Designed for anyone with an interest in impact evaluation, the course walks through each step of designing a randomized evaluation and how to use evidence to measure the impact of social programs. [Learn more and enroll »](#)

MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

Findings from the first large-scale randomized controlled trial of maternal cash transfers in India
[LinkedIn](#)

Development finance: How to get more bang from fewer bucks
[Financial Times](#)

High salaries, empty classrooms: Why government school teachers stay absent
India Today

Better public service with data
MIT News

NEW RESEARCH PAPERS

The Effect of Information from Black Health Care Professionals on Covid Vaccination Take-Up

Martin Abel, Tanya Byker, and Jeffrey Carpenter

Expectations and Adaptation to Environmental Threats

Husnain F. Ahmad, Matthew Gibson, Fatiq Nadeem, Sanval Nasim, and Arman Rezaee

Household Preferences for Female Employment: A Field Experiment in Bangladesh

Yueh-ya Hsu, Reshmaan Hussam, Erin M. Kelley, and Gregory Lane

Can Cash Transfers Save Lives? Evidence from a Large-Scale Experiment in Kenya

Michael W. Walker, Nick Shankar, Edward Miguel, Dennis Egger, and Grady Killeen

Maternal Cash Transfers for Gender Equity and Child Development: Experimental Evidence from India

Jeffrey Weaver, Sandip Sukhtankar, Paul Niehaus, and Karthik Muralidharan

FEATURED JOBS

J-PAL and our partner organizations are recruiting for office-based and field Research Associates. [Apply by October 6 »](#)

Policy Associate, Guatemala City, Guatemala

Policy and Research Manager, São Paulo, Brazil

Senior Research Associate, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India

Research Manager, Jakarta, Indonesia

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