

THE KING CLIMATE ACTION INITIATIVE AT J-PAL

Advancing Effective and Equitable Climate Action

THE GLOBAL CLIMATE AND ENERGY CHALLENGE

Climate change disproportionately affects people living in poverty and threatens to reverse decades of progress in global poverty alleviation. Policymakers have called for reductions in both greenhouse gas emissions that drive the climate-related harms poor people face and carbon co-pollutants contributing to public health crises in low- and middle-income countries. At the same time, access to affordable and reliable energy in many parts of the world is urgently needed to support economic growth that can create opportunities to lift people out of poverty and to help them better adapt to the more extreme weather that climate change will bring. No silver-bullet technological or policy innovation will solve this complex global climate and energy challenge. Leaders in both the public and private sector need more evidence on which technological and policy innovations are effective and cost-effective, where, and why to direct limited resources to high-impact solutions to confront climate change and help vulnerable communities adapt.

THE KING CLIMATE ACTION INITIATIVE (K-CAI) AT J-PAL

The King Climate Action Initiative (K-CAI) at J-PAL designs, tests, and scales high-impact solutions at the intersection of climate change and poverty alleviation in collaboration with governments, NGOs, donors, and companies worldwide. K-CAI is an early stage R&D fund for climate policy and technology adoption, filling an important gap in the climate innovation ecosystem by investing in policy innovation and climate solutions that benefit people in poverty.



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Since launching in 2020, K-CAI has built a portfolio of:

30 RANDOMIZED EVALUATIONS



12+ SCALING PROJECTS



IN OVER 30 COUNTRIES

which have informed scale-ups that have reached

15+ MILLION PEOPLE



OPPORTUNITIES TO SUPPORT K-CAI

J-PAL is seeking funding partners for the second phase of our ambitious agenda to combat climate change and poverty. Investing in K-CAI will expand the movement for evidence-based climate solutions that benefit people living in poverty. We welcome many forms of funding partnerships, including support to expand K-CAI's work within a specific focus area (e.g. mitigation) or region:

- **US\$1,000,000** supports a full innovation competition (3-4 K-CAI grants for randomized evaluations and/or scaling)
- **US\$500,000** supports a small innovation competition (1-2 K-CAI grants for randomized evaluations and scaling)
- **US\$150,000** supports 2 research pilots
- **US\$100,000** embeds 2 staff with partners to scale and support evidence use

For more information, please contact K-CAI Project Director Claire Walsh: cwalsh@povertyactionlab.org or the K-CAI team: kcai@povertyactionlab.org

K-CAI PRIORITIZES FOUR FOCUS AREAS:



Mitigation: Reducing carbon emissions to slow the pace of climate change and its damaging effects



Pollution reduction: Reducing harmful carbon co-pollutants and thereby improving public health, without reducing critical access to energy



Adaptation: Building communities' ability to adapt to the economic, social, and environmental impacts of climate change, particularly in vulnerable settings threatened by rising sea levels, changing rainfall, and shifting disease vectors, among others factors



Energy access: Increasing access to affordable and reliable energy for low-income families and communities around the world, and shifting energy systems to cleaner sources

K-CAI'S APPROACH:

K-CAI delivers climate benefits by designing, testing, and scaling evidence-informed climate solutions in partnership with governments, the private sector, NGOs, scientists, and engineers. K-CAI supports projects that have the potential to benefit people experiencing poverty, prioritizing projects in low and middle-income countries and mitigation projects in high-income countries.

K-CAI takes a two-track approach:

1. Design, pilot, and evaluate innovations:

Through a competitive research fund, K-CAI brings together leading researchers and implementing partners to identify high-potential innovations and evaluate their effectiveness using randomized evaluations.

2. Scale effective solutions:

K-CAI catalyzes the scaling of effective interventions by funding technical assistance to decision makers in government, the private sector, and NGOs. It also supports the wider uptake of effective policies, technologies, and services, for example through public-NGO or public-private partnerships.

K-CAI catalyzes action quickly by prioritizing quicker evaluations that use administrative, satellite, and remote sensing data, and by encouraging collaborations with partners who can take innovations to scale.

OUR PROVEN TRACK RECORD GENERATING CLIMATE EVIDENCE & SCALING SOLUTIONS

Mitigation:

- Paying landowners not to cut trees on their property was a highly cost-effective way to slow deforestation and delay carbon emissions in Uganda and Mexico.
- Researchers are testing whether continuous emissions monitoring and leak alerts can reduce methane emissions from oil and gas facilities in Colorado, and scaling machine learning to better target pollution inspections in the US together with the EPA.
- Cleaner manufacturing practices significantly cut coal consumption and carbon emissions in brick manufacturing in Bangladesh, and are currently being scaled across Dhaka with support from a K-CAI scaling grant.

Reduction of carbon co-pollutants:

- In partnership with the Gujarat Pollution Control Board in India, researchers tested the world's first emissions trading scheme for particulate matter air pollution, which cut pollution and reduced compliance costs for firms. With support from a K-CAI scaling grant, the government scaled the scheme across two major cities of over 15 million people, with more cities set to join by 2025.

Adaptation:

- Flood tolerant seeds reduced losses, improved yields and profits, and led farmers in India to invest more in their farms. With K-CAI scaling funding, the government of West Bengal is scaling flood tolerant seed distribution with support from a K-CAI-funded team.
- In Niger, a K-CAI-funded team is working with local partners to scale a program training farmers to adopt rainwater harvesting techniques that increased agricultural output and brought land back into production.

Energy Access:

- In South Africa, researchers are evaluating the impacts of prepaid pricing and electricity grants for low-income households in partnership with the City of Cape Town.
- In Ghana, researchers are evaluating pricing strategies to improve the cost-effectiveness of subsidies to increase the adoption of cleaner cooking fuels.

WHY J-PAL?

J-PAL is well-positioned to help shift the norm towards evidence-informed climate change solutions, similar to the movement we helped catalyze in international development twenty years ago. In addition to our expertise in poverty alleviation and climate change, J-PAL has the policy partnerships, country infrastructure, and global influence needed to improve climate policy by generating rigorous evidence and translating it into action. With seven regional offices and a global network of over 900 researchers, J-PAL engages hundreds of partners around the world to conduct rigorous research, build capacity, share policy lessons, and scale-up effective programs—which to date have reached over **600 million people**.