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MENA NEWSLETTER

April 2025



Photo credit: Nashwa Safian Photography

Catch up on four months of updates from J-PAL MENA below! This year marks a significant milestone—five years since the establishment of J-PAL MENA.

KEY UPDATES

- Official launch event of HAPIE, J-PAL MENA's regional Air and Water Lab
- Building Evidence Ecosystems in Employment, Education through Training: a 3-day learning event with the European Training Foundation
- Participating in the Riyadh International Humanitarian Forum
- J-PAL MENA's 5-year anniversary celebration coming up in July

EVENTS & MILESTONES



Photo credit: Community Jameel

Launching the Hub of Advanced Policy Innovation for the Environment (HAPIE)

J-PAL MENA at The American University in Cairo launched **HAPIE** in February, featuring a keynote by H.E. Dr. Rania Al-Mashat, and a panel on Egypt's climate challenges with experts from international organizations, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the private sector.

As part of J-PAL's network of [Air and Water Labs](#) (AWLs) launched with Community Jameel, HAPIE is the regional AWL counterpart to India and South Africa, collaborating with governments to develop evidence-based clean air and water solutions. HAPIE has a unique identity as an extension of the [Egypt Impact Lab](#), broadening its sectoral focus to encompass environmental, energy, and climate change issues. HAPIE is made possible with generous support from its founding partners, [Community Jameel](#) and the [Sawiris Foundation](#) for Social Development. [Learn more and watch the event recording »](#)



Photo credit: J-PAL MENA

Building Evidence Ecosystems in Employment, Education Through Training

The [Egypt Impact Lab](#) (EIL) and the [European Training Foundation](#) gathered policy leaders and technical experts in Cairo this April to promote evidence-based employment and education initiatives. Together, we co-hosted a 3-day learning event that blended high-level policy dialogue with practical evaluation training, featuring insights from GIZ, ILO, UNICEF Egypt, WAPES, Swedish Public Employment Service, and RAND Europe.

The Building Ecosystems in Employment, Education, and Training (BEET) is the first in a series of learning events that the EIL aims to equip policymakers and practitioners with evaluation frameworks, evidence-sharing protocols, and best practices for crafting evidence-based policies. [View the event details »](#)

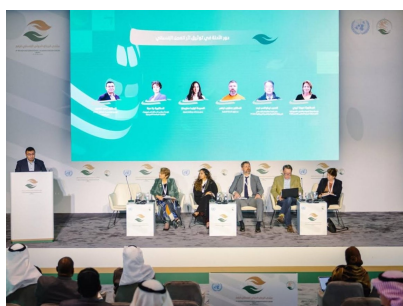


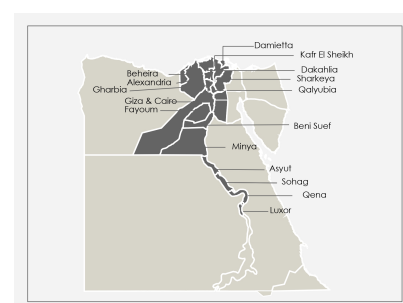
Photo credit: Riyadh International Humanitarian Forum Media

Advancing the role of evidence and data in driving impact for humanitarian action in MENA

J-PAL MENA and [Community Jameel](#) co-hosted a panel discussion at [The Riyadh International Humanitarian Forum](#) in Saudi Arabia, to explore the role of innovation and the generation of rigorous evidence in conflict settings. The session highlighted how targeted data and evidence-based approaches can inform and enhance humanitarian action, featuring real-world examples to demonstrate their impact. [Read more about our humanitarian portfolio »](#)

Boosting local capacity for data collection

Did you know? Over the past four months, our Research & Research Operations staff have trained 243 surveyors from local data collection firms that help us gather evidence on the ground in 17 different governorates. Through these workshops, surveyors built hands-on skills in using digital tools, applying ethical research practices, and tackling



Governorates where these surveyors collected data for J-PAL MENA's ongoing impact evaluations.

real-world field challenges—equipping them to collect high-quality data for J-PAL MENA’s ongoing impact evaluations. [Learn more about our capacity building offerings »](#)



Making every Egyptian pound spent on development count

How can policymakers ensure that national programs drive real change for families? The Egypt Impact Lab (EIL)—a collaboration between J-PAL MENA and Egypt’s Ministry of Planning and Economic Development, with support from [Community Jameel](#) and the [Sawiris Foundation](#) for Social Development—works with government partners to design and evaluate programs. In a new blog post, we share how [EIL’s integration](#) into the National Institute for Governance and Sustainable Development in 2024 marked a turning point in Egypt’s commitment to evidence-based governance. [Read the blog »](#)

ON THE HORIZON

Morocco Innovation and Evaluation Lab Policy Conference

The [Morocco Innovation and Evaluation Lab](#) is hosting a policy conference on June 25, 2025, at the [University Mohammed VI Polytechnic](#) campus in Rabat, Morocco. The event will bring together Moroccan decision-makers, international researchers, and development practitioners to share insights on key policy challenges and strengthen collaborations relating to education, employment and climate change resilience. To learn more about the event and how to register, reach out to mel_morocco@povertyactionlab.org »



Photo credit: Morocco Evaluation and Innovation Lab



Celebrating 5 years of J-PAL MENA

This year marks half a decade of J-PAL MENA’s work to advance evidence-based policymaking in the region. To commemorate this milestone, we are hosting a celebration this summer that will bring together key partners and colleagues to reflect on our journey, celebrate shared achievements, and explore the future of evidence-informed policymaking in the region. We are honored that Nobel Laureate [Abhijit Banerjee](#) (Co-Founder and Director, J-PAL) will be joining the event.

Roundtable: Harnessing Rigorous Research to Shape Climate Policy

On 14 May 2025, from 5:30–7:00 pm CET, our Executive Director [Ahmed Elsayed](#) will speak at a policy roundtable on how organizations are using rigorous evidence to inform climate action. Co-organized by the [Institute of Labor Economics \(IZA\)](#), [J-PAL Europe](#), and J-PAL’s [King Climate Action Initiative](#), the event will feature experts from the [Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research](#),



Photo credit: Dominic Sansoni, World Bank

the Centre for Net Zero, the German Council on Foreign Relations, and more. [Learn more and register to attend virtually »](#)

TEAM SPOTLIGHT: J-PAL MENA'S POST-DOCTORAL RESEARCH FELLOWS



Mai Mahmoud
Post-Doc Fellow

Mai brings expertise in development, agricultural and environmental economics. Her recent work focused on the role of prices in allocating new agricultural technologies, and the potential for machine learning methods to improve targeting of food aid programs. Mai holds PhD in Economics and Public Policy from Tufts University, and MSc in Economics from London School of Economics.

Yasmine, whose work spans development, gender, migration, and political economy, is a lecturer of economics at Cairo University and a short-term consultant with the World Bank. Her recent publication examines the impact of Internet use on citizens' perceptions of democracy in Africa. Yasmine holds a PhD and Master's degree in Development Economics from the University of Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne.



Yasmine Elkhateeb
Post-Doc Fellow



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