



# Introduction to Evaluating Social Programs: IRC Webinar Series

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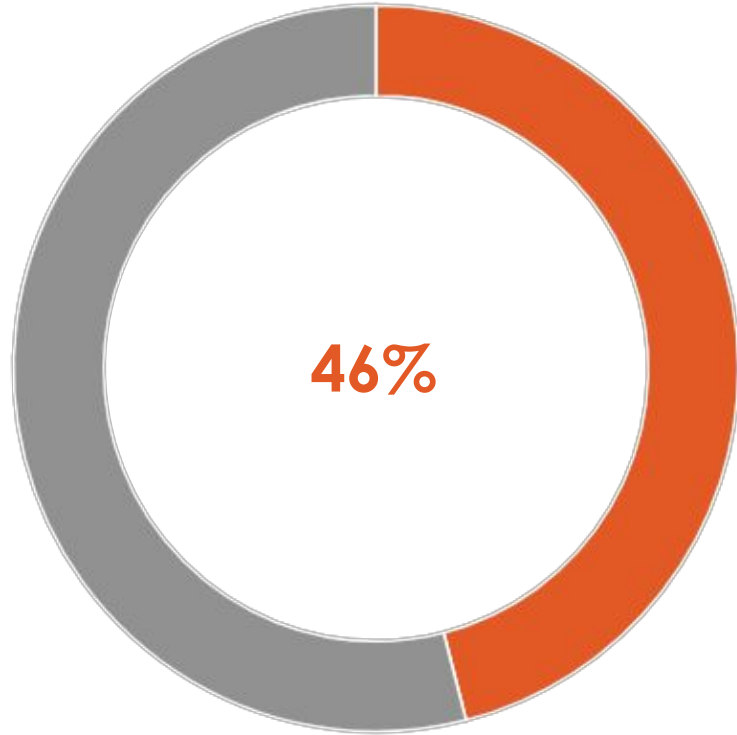
 [linkedin.com/company/j-pal](https://www.linkedin.com/company/j-pal)



A man with dark hair and a mustache, wearing a grey polo shirt, is focused on his work. He is standing in front of a wooden frame that holds numerous bundles of red and white threads. The background is filled with lush green trees and foliage, suggesting an outdoor setting. A large, semi-transparent orange arc is overlaid on the left side of the image, partially obscuring the man and the threads.

**What do we do at J-PAL?**

Poverty is a complex problem.



46% of the world's population,  
**3.4 billion people**, live on less  
than **US \$5.50** per day.

(World Bank 2018)

J-PAL's mission is to reduce poverty by ensuring that policy is informed by evidence, and research is translated into action.

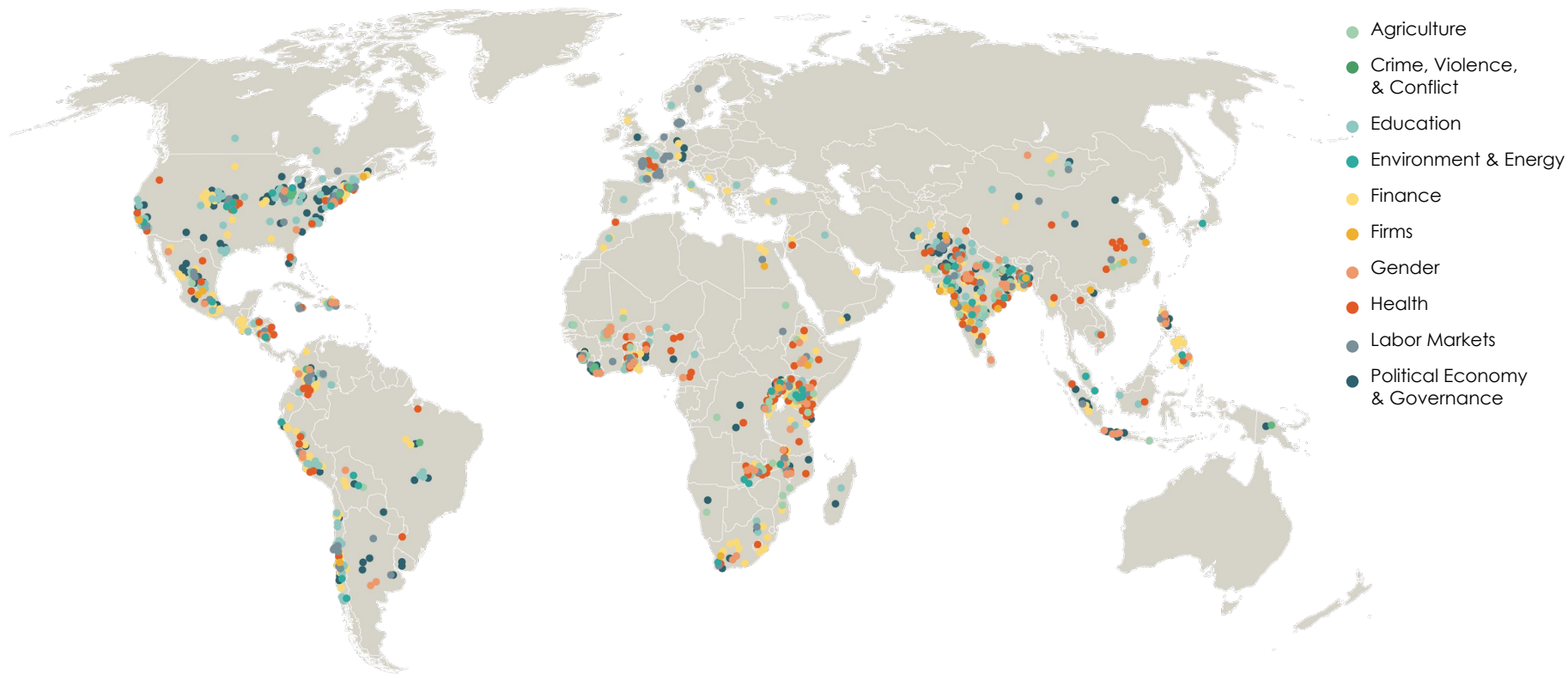
Randomized impact evaluations take a scientific approach to fighting poverty.



# We work with a global network of talented researchers



# Rich global evidence base: 1,020 randomized evaluations in 81 countries





# Nobel Prize in Economics for J-PAL co-founders' “experimental approach to reducing poverty”



At J-PAL, we translate  
research into action.



# J-PAL conducts three main activities



## **Research**

We fund innovative new research and help carry out affiliates' projects on the ground.



## **Policy outreach**

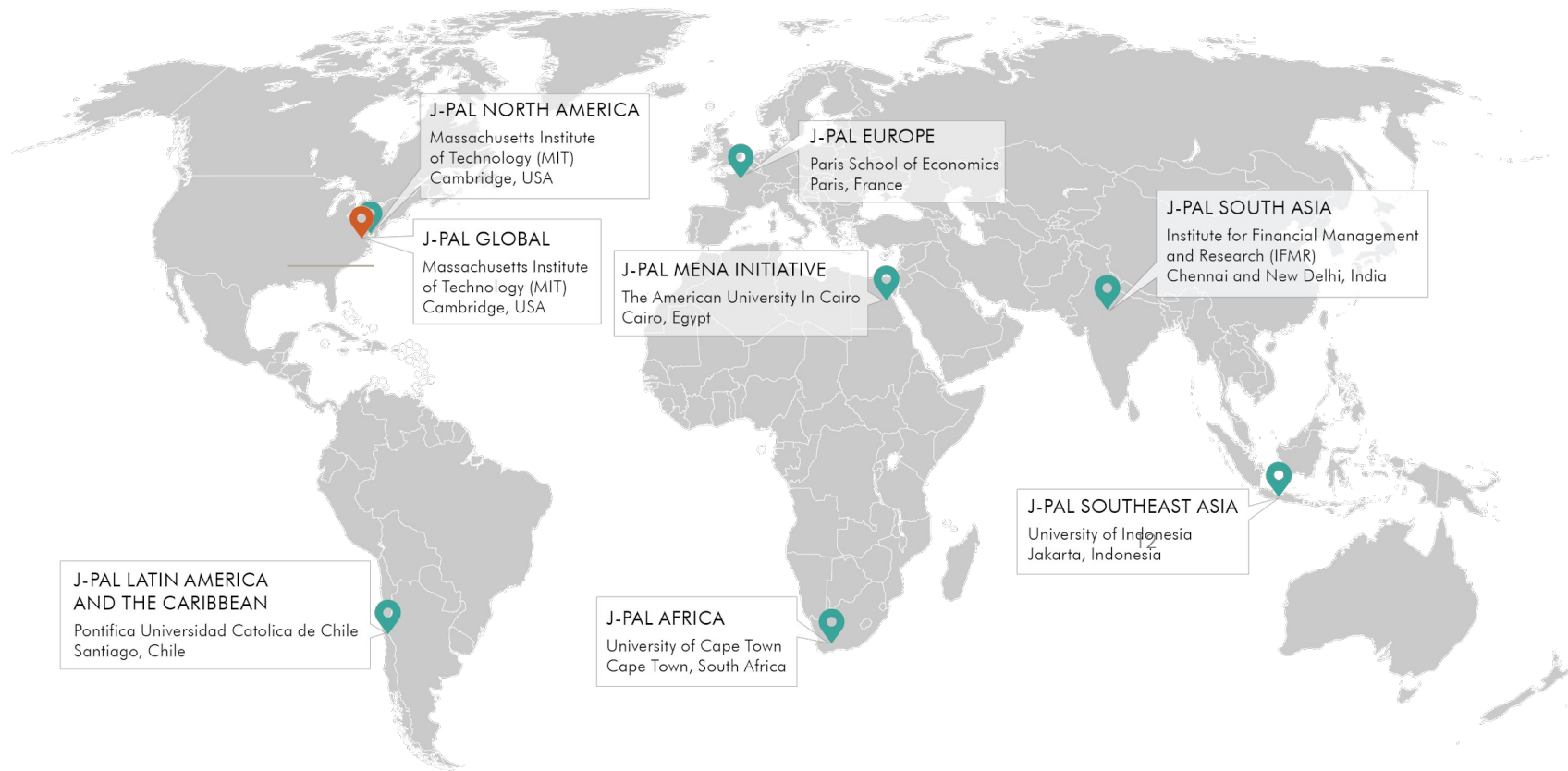
We synthesize research results, build partnerships, lend technical assistance, and embed staff.



## **Capacity building**

We lead executive trainings and develop rigorous online education to build sustainability.

# Regional offices and hundreds of local partnerships ensure J-PAL is locally grounded



# J-PAL MENA at the American University in Cairo



# Research and policy partnerships in MENA reflect regional priorities



Education Quality and Access



Financial Inclusion and Islamic Finance



Firms and Private Sector Development



Youth Unemployment and Labor Market Transitions



Gender and Women's Empowerment



Refugees and Host Communities

# Tremendous opportunity to expand use of rigorous impact evaluation in humanitarian settings

- 20 million internally displaced people and refugees in MENA
- Challenges compounded by conflict, climate change, and COVID-19 pandemic
- Few rigorous humanitarian evaluations in MENA or worldwide
- Launch of J-PAL's Humanitarian Initiative



Photo: Sule Alan | J-PAL

# Rigorous research in humanitarian settings comes with challenges



Photo: Salma Mousa | Stanford

1. Ethical considerations when working with especially vulnerable populations
2. Safety concerns for study participants, staff, researchers
3. Striking a balance between imperative to respond urgently in crisis, and identifying opportunities to evaluate



# Introduction to J-PAL Humanitarian Initiative

- Will fund randomized evaluations of innovative humanitarian programs in collaboration with humanitarian implementing organizations
- Led by Sule Alan (European University Institute) and Stefan Dercon (Oxford)
- Learning priorities:
  - Effectiveness of programs to deliver education, health, food security, water and sanitation, and livelihood support
  - Effective approaches for ensuring protection (restraint on the use of force, treatment and specialized care for victims of violence, risk reduction)
- Ways to get involved:
  - Share your priorities
  - Work together to evaluate your programs

# Looking ahead: Plan for the IRC webinar series

Session 1: Introduction to Randomized Evaluations in the Humanitarian Sector and Why Randomize? (June 15, 2020)

Session 2: Research Ethics in Humanitarian Settings (June 22, 2020)

Session 3: The Generalizability Puzzle (June 29, 2020)

Session 4: Building Effective Academic-NGO Partnerships in the Humanitarian Space (July 13, 2020)