

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Government of Odisha partners with J-PAL South Asia to maximise the impact of anti-poverty programmes



The signing of the Memorandum of Understanding in the presence of Honourable Chief Minister of Odisha Shri Naveen Patnaik, senior ministers of the Government of Odisha, and the leadership of J-PAL South Asia

Oct 31 2019

The Government of Odisha signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) today with the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL) South Asia to engage in a strategic evidence-based approach to policymaking in order to maximise the impact of state anti-poverty programmes across a wide range of sectors. Under this partnership, J-PAL South Asia, which is hosted at the Institute for Financial Management and Research (IFMR) in Chennai, will provide the Government of Odisha with technical assistance for the scale-up of evidence backed programmes to improve development outcomes across the state.

The partnership also establishes an overarching collaboration between J-PAL South Asia and the Government of Odisha under which J-PAL will work with several departments, including, but not limited to Labour, Education, Health, and Women and Child Development, to conduct policy-relevant randomised evaluations of new anti-poverty and development programmes. Additionally, a diagnostic

exercise and subsequent workshops will be conducted to build state capacity in the area of monitoring and evaluation.

The agreement was signed during a ceremony with the Honourable Chief Minister of Odisha Shri Naveen Patnaik, Global Executive Director of J-PAL Iqbal Dhaliwal, and Executive Director of J-PAL South Asia Shobhini Mukerji. Senior ministers and officers of the Odisha Government were also in attendance.

In his remarks, the Honourable Chief Minister of Odisha Shri Naveen Patnaik said:

“I am delighted that a Memorandum of Understanding has been made between the State Government of Odisha and J-PAL with a focus on policy dialogue encompassing malnutrition, distress migration, women empowerment, agricultural productivity, and health sector issues. As a part of our 5T Charter it is our government’s endeavor to partner with those who set global benchmarks. J-PAL, co-founded by Nobel Laureates Abhijit Banerjee and Esther Duflo, will also add great value to our transformation initiatives. I have been closely monitoring and look forward to the outcome of this partnership. The success we demonstrate will be a major step closer to my dream of an empowered Odisha.”

Iqbal Dhaliwal, Global Executive Director of J-PAL said “We are very grateful to Government of Odisha for inviting us to work in the state. We are very impressed by the clear vision of the government for a transformative agenda, and its capacity to deliver as evidenced by the effective response to the cyclones. Our hope is to work closely with various departments on a journey to combine local expertise with rigorous evidence to inform policies that improve the lives of the poor.”

J-PAL South Asia and The Government of Odisha will conduct an annual Policy Dialogue to identify the Government’s top policy priorities, conduct discussions to share evidence, and jointly come up with innovative solutions that can be field-tested through rigorous randomised evaluations.

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The Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL) is a global research center working to reduce poverty by ensuring that policy is informed by scientific evidence. Anchored by a network of 181 affiliated professors at universities around the world, J-PAL conducts randomised impact evaluations to answer critical questions in the fight against poverty.

J-PAL was launched at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 2003 and has 6 regional offices around the world. J-PAL South Asia, hosted by the Institute for Financial Management and Research (IFMR), Chennai, and has built partnerships for the generation of new research and advancement of evidence-informed policymaking with 16 Indian state and central government ministries, as well as training partnerships with the governments of Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, and Pakistan.

For more information, visit povertyactionlab.org/south-asia

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