

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

BRAC International partners with J-PAL South Asia to build evidence and support the roll-out of Inclusive Livelihoods programs in India

May, 13 2025 | [BRAC International](#) and the [Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab](#) (J-PAL) South Asia at IFMR have entered into a partnership to enhance the research, monitoring and evaluation components of the Samaveshi Aajeevika Yojana (SAY) and Satat Jeevikoparjan Yojana (SJY) - Urban programs.

The Samaveshi Aajeevika Yojana (SAY), a program within the [Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihoods Mission](#) (DAY-NRLM) aimed at achieving inclusive economic empowerment of rural women, particularly the extremely vulnerable, is being rolled out in eleven states (Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Telangana, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Assam, Meghalaya, West Bengal, Tripura, Rajasthan) by the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), Government of India. The Satat Jeevikoparjan Yojana (SJY) - Urban program, implemented by the Government of Bihar, is an adaptation of the same program for urban and semi-urban areas. Both programs are based on BRAC's Graduation Approach, a comprehensive livelihood program for people experiencing extreme poverty.

There is a pressing need for holistic and inclusive livelihood programs in India — and for a variety of stakeholders to work hand-in-hand to effectively deliver them at the last mile to end poverty. While the country has made significant strides in poverty alleviation over the last decade, approximately 195 million people continue to live in multidimensional poverty, according to the NITI Aayog's 2023 Multidimensional Poverty Index Progress report. Programs like SAY and SJY — that are underpinned by scientific evidence — are critical in combating poverty at scale for maximum impact.

The Graduation Approach is a globally successful model that seeks to support families to break out of extreme poverty by helping them become self-sufficient through business training, life-skills coaching, and short-term financial support. Randomised evaluations by researchers affiliated with J-PAL and Innovations for Poverty Action over 16 years across seven countries [found](#) the households receiving the full package of support had a greater standard of living — including higher spending power, regular meals and consumption, and higher income and savings.

BRAC, a nonprofit organization dedicated to empowering people in poverty, currently acts as a technical advisor to national and state governments in the implementation of SAY in the states of Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh; and SJY-Urban in Bihar. Through this new partnership, J-PAL South Asia will conduct rigorous research and monitoring to support the effective delivery of the programs in Bihar, Tamil Nadu and Telangana. J-PAL South Asia will also support the government in strengthening their existing monitoring systems to enhance the impact of the programs. Sharanya Chandran, Director of Policy and Communications at J-PAL South Asia, said: "When we seek to tackle poverty at this scale,

collaboration is key. Through partnerships like this, we ensure that critical decisions towards our shared goal of poverty alleviation through the graduation approach are based on rigorous data and evidence.”

This collaboration between BRAC International and J-PAL South Asia seeks to further embed the use of scientific evidence in policy making, facilitating cost-effective and sustainable programs that improve the lives of the most vulnerable. Shweta Banerjee, India Country Lead for BRAC’s Ultra-Poor Graduation Initiative, said: “Instituting a mechanism to evaluate and learn in real-time will help support government and partners get a view of ground reality. And via this partnership, we will ensure that our approach is tested and refined at every stage. JPAL is renowned for its world class research and we cannot be more excited to work with them on scaling graduation in three states of India.”

J-PAL South Asia’s partnership with the Ministry of Rural Development on SAY began in 2024 and is supported by [ASPIRE](#), which aims to scale impactful, evidence-based programs.

J-PAL South Asia currently serves as a knowledge partner to the Government of Bihar on SJY since 2018. The Government of Bihar introduced SJY (based on the Graduation Approach) in 2018 through JEEViKA, one of India’s largest State Rural Livelihoods Missions, and currently covers about 200,000 women-headed households in rural Bihar till date.

###

[About J-PAL South Asia](#)

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 over 1000 affiliated researchers at universities around the world, J-PAL conducts randomized impact evaluations to answer critical questions in the fight against poverty. J-PAL South Asia is hosted by the Institute for Financial Management and Research (IFMR).

[About BRAC International](#)

BRAC International is a nonprofit organisation with a mission to empower people and communities in situations of poverty, illiteracy, disease, and social injustice. Its approach is grounded in the conviction that people living in vulnerable situations can be agents of change if they are empowered with the tools, skills, and hope they need to change their lives. The organisation designs proven, scalable solutions that equip people with the support and confidence they need to achieve their potential. BRAC’s institutional expertise on successfully implemented programmes is applied across 10 countries, touching the lives of over 130 million people, where its models are adapted according to the country’s context.

For Media Enquiries: Saptarishi Dutta (J-PAL South Asia) | sdutta@povertyactionlab.org