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NEWSLETTER
December 2023

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Photo credit: Putul Gupta, J-PAL

Weathering the storm: Boosting small-scale farmers' risk protection

Climate change is making disastrous weather events more likely, but small-scale farmers in low-income countries often don't buy insurance that offers protection from these risks. As a result, they can be trapped in a cycle of low-risk, low-return agriculture. An updated Policy Insight from J-PAL's [Agriculture sector](#) summarizes evidence from 23 randomized evaluations on strategies to boost farmers' insurance take-up and use of climate-smart

agricultural technologies.

While the evidence on helping farmers overcome learning, trust, and credit constraints to increase insurance purchases is mixed, when farmers do invest in insurance, they make riskier but more profitable decisions. More research is needed to understand how to effectively combine financial tools and climate-adaptive strategies.

[Read the Policy Insight](#)



Photo credit: Mahmoud Abozeid, Life from Water

20 for 20: Life from Water's evidence-informed journey in Egypt

In the latest installment in our “20 for 20: Partner Voices” blog series marking J-PAL’s 20th anniversary, Mohannad Abouelrouse, founder and CEO of Life from Water Foundation in Egypt, highlights lessons from their partnership with J-PAL Middle East and North Africa to bridge gaps to address persistent challenges in water interventions and increase uptake of water treatment units in rural Egypt. [Read more »](#)



Photo credit: J-PAL

Learnings from the Graduation approach to support people facing extreme poverty

In light of global leaders’ renewed commitment to eradicate poverty at the 2023 Sustainable Development Goals Summit, in a new blog post,

Sayed Manzer (Policy Manager, J-PAL South Asia) and Tyler Spencer (Policy Manager, J-PAL Global) highlight the learnings, implementation, and scaling of the Graduation approach, an evidence-informed, multifaceted program developed by the NGO BRAC to help people transition out of extreme poverty. The blog post draws lessons from two publications: J-PAL's recently updated Graduation [Policy Insight](#) and an implementation [playbook](#) based on a program adapted in Bihar, India, for governments considering scaling the Graduation approach. [Read more »](#)



Photo credit: Laetitia Chadenat

Strengthening evidence generation through J-PAL's evaluation incubators

The latest blog post in a [series](#) from J-PAL's Training team shares stories from partners in Germany, Peru, Turkey, and the United States of how J-PAL's evaluation incubators have provided a toolkit to generate evidence on their own programs. Coupled with technical support from J-PAL staff on project and proposal development, participants used training from the incubator to actively engage in planning a randomized evaluation for their target program. [Read more »](#)

FEATURED RESEARCHER



Economics is fascinating—once you venture into economics, particularly research, you'll never want to go back.”



Jaah Mkupete on pursuing economics and how randomized evaluations can tackle complex questions

In the latest [African Scholar Spotlight](#) on the J-PAL blog, Jaah Mkupete, an economics lecturer at the University of Dar es Salaam, shares how he was drawn to the field of economics by listening to national budget debates in Tanzania. Mkupete highlights lessons from his research on the economics of education and the support he received from J-PAL through funding, workshops, access to training materials, and mentorship. He encourages aspiring economists to hone their data analysis and statistical software skills and to actively engage in networking opportunities. [Read more »](#)

WELCOMING OUR NEW AFFILIATED PROFESSORS

In summer 2023, 33 talented researchers joined the J-PAL network. We will feature a few of them here each month.



Ina Ganguli
University of
Massachusetts Amherst



Mathias Sinning
Australian National
University



Gabriel Tourek
University of Pittsburgh

FEATURED MULTIMEDIA



Photo credit: J-PAL

Celebrating J-PAL at 20 in Brazil and Chile

J-PAL Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) celebrated J-PAL's 20th anniversary by bringing together alumni, researchers, and staff for two events in Brazil and Chile in October and November. At the events, J-PAL LAC shared its main achievements with attendees and discussed the role of evidence in alleviating poverty and addressing common challenges on a global scale. [Discover more about J-PAL's work in LAC »](#)

FEATURED EVENT

[January 5–7] Shaping Policy, Transforming Lives: A Journey Through Time with J-PAL South Asia

J-PAL South Asia will host an immersive exhibition celebrating J-PAL's 20th anniversary in January 2024. Experience two decades of impactful innovations at the J-PAL exhibition, featuring stories, visuals, artifacts, and insights from extraordinary individuals and partners, showcasing the rigor of their work and providing insights on effective practices across various sectors. This exhibition will be held at Bikaner House, New Delhi, India on January 5 to 7 for general admission. For more information, contact [Saptarishi Dutta](#) (Senior Communications Manager, J-PAL South Asia) at sdutta@povertyactionlab.org.

FEATURED TRAININGS

[January 16] Enroll now in the Data, Economics, and Design of Policy MicroMasters Program

Enrollment is open for the next term of the [MicroMasters program in Data, Economics, and Development Policy \(DEDP\)](#); courses start on January 16. The online courses cover a range of topics, including microeconomics, data analysis, and public policy. Students who complete the DEDP MicroMasters credential can apply for the on-campus [Master's in DEDP](#) at MIT or one of the pathway universities. Learn more at our [webinar](#) on January 9 and [enroll in the program](#) »

[Deadline: February 2] Rigorous Impact Measurement for Humanitarian Professionals

[J-PAL Europe](#) is hosting a virtual training on evaluating evidence in humanitarian contexts. The training will be held from March 11 to 14 and consist of four half-days of lectures and working sessions. Join humanitarian professionals from NGOs, nonprofits, and international development organizations in learning about using randomized evaluations to rigorously measure impact. There will be a particular emphasis on interventions aiming to

improve protection outcomes, including a discussion on the design, ethics, and implementation of such evaluations, and how to address randomization strategies in humanitarian settings. Applications are due February 2. [Learn more and apply »](#)

MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

[Giving the poor a wodge of cash is better than dripping it out](#)
The Economist

[It's one of the biggest experiments in fighting global poverty. Now the results are in](#)
NPR

[Here's a realistic path to protecting the Amazon rainforest \[Opinion\]](#)
The Washington Post

[The first results from the world's biggest basic income experiment](#)
Vox

[Heidi Williams is steering the science of innovation toward progress](#)
Vox

[Paul Niehaus is changing how we think about fighting global poverty](#)
Vox

[Award for Kate Orkin's role in keeping millions out of poverty](#)
University of Oxford

NEW RESEARCH PAPERS

[Demand for Commitment in Credit and Saving Contracts: A Field Experiment](#)
Uzma Afza, Giovanna d'Adda, Marcel Fafchamps, Simon Quinn, and Farah Said

Universal Basic Income: Short-Term Results from a Long-Term Experiment in Kenya

Abhijit Banerjee, Michael Faye, Alan Krueger, Paul Niehaus, and Tavneet Suri

Unintended Consequences of Youth Entrepreneurship Programs: Experimental Evidence from Rwanda

Moussa Blimpo and Todd Pugatch


The Limitations of Activity-Based Instruction to Improve the Productivity of Schooling

Andreas de Barros, Johanna Fajardo-Gonzalez, Paul Glewwe, and Ashwini Sankar

Effect of Informational Videos on Vaccine Perceptions Among Unvaccinated Individuals: A Randomized Control Trial

Seung-Keun Martinez, Silvia Sonderegger, Andy Brownback, Guillermo Cruces, Monika Pompeo, and Joanne R. Morling

FEATURED JOB

 J-PAL Global is hiring an **Associate Director of Human Resources** to be a part of an exceptional, multicultural, collaborative, and inclusive community. This position will be based out of Cambridge, MA, US. Applications close January 10, but candidates are encouraged to apply as soon as possible, as applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis.

Does this sound like a good fit for you or someone you know? Please [submit your application](#) or [share the position with your network](#) »

ADDITIONAL JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Senior Policy Associate (Project Development in Climate and Urban Policy), Cape Town, South Africa

(Senior) Finance Manager, Paris, France

Associate Director of Policy, Paris, France

Research Associate (Education Project, Morocco Employment Lab), Rabat, Morocco
Research Associate (Iqraa Project, Morocco Employment Lab), Rabat, Morocco
Policy Manager (Scale-ups ASPIRE), New Delhi, Delhi, India
Senior Policy Associate, New Delhi, Delhi, India
Policy Associate, Jakarta, Indonesia
Research Manager, Jakarta, Indonesia
Web and Digital Communications Specialist, Cambridge, MA, US

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