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## **New blog series: Evidence on social programs in sub-Saharan Africa**

J-PAL Africa and *African Arguments*, a pan-African news and opinion platform, collaborated on a blog series that unpacks evidence from randomized evaluations to inform policy debates around social programs to reduce poverty in sub-Saharan Africa. The posts highlight lessons related to preparing households for shocks through [universal basic income](#); obstacles to accurately identifying those in need of social assistance; the benefits and challenges of [digital IDs](#); increasing girls' [enrollment in school](#); and how different electricity billing systems may impact [energy access](#).

[Read the blog series](#)

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## **JOI Brazil: An inaugural year of growth and learning**

Last month, we recognized International Workers' Day and the one-year anniversary of the Jobs and



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Opportunity Initiative in Brazil (JOI Brazil), run by J-PAL Latin America and the Caribbean . JOI Brazil is supported by funding partners including the Arymax Foundation, the nonprofit association B3 Social, the Tide Setubal Foundation, the impact investment fund Potencia Ventures, and the Inter-American Development Bank, as well as the initiative's implementing partner and host university, Insper.

In a post on the J-PAL blog, the JOI Brazil team reflects on the initiative's activities over the last year, from launching the initiative's first funding competition to starting a [social incubation process](#) to participating in evidence dissemination events. [Read more »](#)



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## The benefits of summer youth employment programs in the United States

Early employment experiences can offer young people vital opportunities for personal growth and a chance to establish foundational skills for the working world. However, youth from low-income households are more likely to face challenges accessing employment opportunities. Many cities in the United States have created summer youth employment programs to help address this challenge. A new evidence review from [J-PAL North America](#) examines results from thirteen randomized evaluations across four major US cities, finding that summer youth employment programs improved employment and earnings during the summer and reduced involvement with the criminal justice system. [Read more »](#)

## Balancing industrial growth, energy use, and climate change

While industrial growth is an important component of economic development in low- and middle-income



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countries, the industrial sector is responsible for more than one-third of energy consumption and related CO<sub>2</sub> emissions globally. As a result, climate impacts like droughts and floods are worsening. Reliable energy access is needed to help households experiencing poverty adapt to these effects. On our blog, J-PAL's [Firms and Environment, Energy, and Climate Change](#) sectors dive into emerging evidence that can provide insights to decision-makers on how to balance the tension between industrial growth, energy use, and climate change mitigation and adaptation. [Read more »](#)

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## FEATURED EVALUATION SUMMARY



Photo: Sarah Baird | J-PAL/IPA

### **The impact of cash transfers on girls' education and health in Malawi**

Despite the popularity of cash transfer programs, little is known about their long-term impacts and the importance of imposing conditions, such as school attendance or regular health checks. J-PAL affiliated professor [Craig McIntosh](#) (UC San Diego; Co-Chair, J-PAL's Agriculture sector) and coauthors evaluated the relative effects of providing conditional and unconditional cash transfers to teenage girls and their families in Malawi. The study found that among girls enrolled in school, conditional cash transfers increased school attendance and reduced HIV prevalence, while unconditional transfers helped girls delay marriage and childbearing. Impacts from the unconditional transfers quickly dissipated, while the conditional cash transfers led to improved outcomes two years later for girls who had dropped out of school before the program began. [Read more »](#)

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## FEATURED RESEARCH RESOURCE

### **Introduction to randomized evaluations**



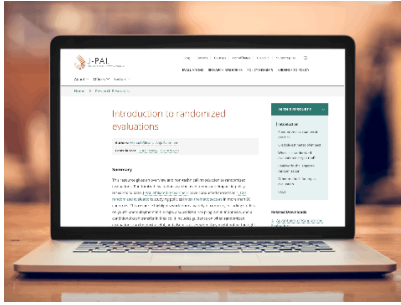


Photo: J-PAL

J-PAL affiliated professors have conducted more than 1,100 randomized evaluations in more than 90 countries. Our Introduction to Randomized Evaluations resource provides a non-technical overview of randomized evaluations and guidance on when they may or may not be the most useful evaluation method. The resource also highlights examples of this work worldwide, including studies on youth unemployment in Chicago, a subsidized rice program in Indonesia, and a conditional cash transfer in Mexico. [Read more »](#)

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## FEATURED MULTIMEDIA



Photo: Ivan Mahardika | J-PAL

### Why evidence on social protection is needed now more than ever

J-PAL launched the [Social Protection sector and Social Protection Initiative](#) earlier this year. In a new video, sector co-chairs [Rema Hanna](#) (Harvard; Scientific Director, J-PAL Southeast Asia) and [Benjamin Olken](#) (MIT; Director, J-PAL; Scientific Director, J-PAL Southeast Asia) share their perspectives on why rigorous evidence is urgently needed to improve targeting and effectiveness of social protection programs and discuss J-PAL's goals for this work. [Watch the video »](#)

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## WELCOMING OUR NEW AFFILIATED PROFESSORS

*In summer 2021, 38 talented researchers joined the J-PAL network. We will feature a few of them here each month.*



Taryn Dinkelman  
University of Notre Dame



Armin Falk  
University of Bonn



Harounan Kazianga  
Oklahoma State University

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## FEATURED EVENTS

### **[July 5] Countering discrimination: Policy and research to combat bias in the workplace**

Rigorous research has shown that discriminatory practices are often embedded in the workplace, which can prevent members of minority groups from reaching their full earning potential. This webinar will include a panel featuring policy and research experts from the European Central Bank, the tech company Applied, and the University of Chicago and will be moderated by J-PAL affiliated professor [Marianne Bertrand](#) (University of Chicago; Co-Chair, J-PAL's Labor Markets sector). Presenters will discuss promising innovations and areas in which further research is needed to reduce this type of bias. [Register »](#)

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### **[July 5] Women's economic agency in Central America, Mexico, and Colombia**

J-PAL Latin America and the Caribbean, in collaboration with J-PAL's [Gender and Economic Agency \(GEA\) Initiative](#), will host a webinar to share lessons from effective and scalable programs that promote women's economic agency. Speakers will discuss how the evidence can be applied in the Central American, Mexican, and Colombian regions. Additionally, researcher Luz Magdalena Salas Bahamón will present her GEA-funded study on how gender norms related to women's work and beliefs about others' perceptions of these norms influence couples' labor supply decisions in Colombia. The event will be held in Spanish. [Register »](#)

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## FEATURED TRAININGS

### **[July 6] Enroll in the MicroMasters summer semester**

The current semester of our online MicroMasters program in Data, Economics, and Development Policy (DEDP) began on May 31, and registration is open until July 6. Learn coding in R while building a strong foundation in probability and statistics in [14.310x Data Analysis for Social Scientists](#), gain an introduction to empirical research in development economics in [14.73x The Challenges of Global Poverty](#), learn how to design randomized evaluations and implement them in the field in [J-PAL 102x Designing and Running Randomized Evaluations](#), and learn how current applied economics uses data to tackle some of the toughest problems facing society in [14.009x Good Economics for Hard Times](#). Students who complete the full DEDP credential are eligible to apply for the on-campus Master's in DEDP at MIT. [Learn more and register »](#)

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## **MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS**

A study gave cash and therapy to men at risk of criminal behavior. 10 years later, the results are in.

Vox

Gujarat to launch India's first carbon trading market among large polluters

Hindustan Times

UNICEF Egypt holds seminar on early childhood development

Egypt Today

Play activities lifting Rohingya children's spirits in Bangladesh refugee camps

SBS News

Information works: The impact of training on the adoption of environmental technologies by farmers

VoxDev

To fight extreme poverty, empower women with more than cash

Phys.org

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## **NEW RESEARCH PAPERS**

Graduation Programs Targeting Women: Evidence from the Democratic Republic of Congo

Manuela Angelucci, Rachel Heath, Eva Noble

Targeted Subsidies for Water Conservation in Smallholder Agriculture

Humnath Bhandari, Ujjayant Chakravorty, Muhammad Ashraf Habib, Kyle Emerick

Can a Website Bring Unemployment Down? Experimental Evidence from France

Aïcha Ben Dhia, Bruno Crépon, Esther Mbih, Louise Paul-Delvaux, Bertille Picard, Vincent Pons

Aspirations and Financial Decisions: Experimental Evidence from the Philippines

David McKenzie, Aakash Mohpal, Dean Yang

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## **FEATURED JOBS**

Research Operations Associate (Project Support), São Paulo, Brazil

Research Operations Associate, New Cairo, Egypt

Policy Manager (Health), New Delhi, India

Training Manager, New Delhi, India  
(Senior) Research and Training Associate, Cambridge, MA, US  
Policy Manager (Gender and Agriculture), Accra, Ghana; Nairobi, Kenya; Abuja, Nigeria;  
Dodoma, Tanzania; or Kampala, Uganda  
Research Manager, Cambridge, MA, US  
Senior Development Manager, Cambridge, MA, US

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