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NEWSLETTER
December 2021



Photo: Harambee

Creating youth employment opportunities in South Africa

The Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated already high levels of unemployment among youth in South Africa. For three years, J-PAL has partnered with the Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator, a South Africa-based social enterprise, to improve tools for connecting employers with first-time job seekers. Together, we are now working to scale up multiple labor market interventions in South Africa.

[Read more](#)



Lessons from the pandemic: Education in Latin America and the Caribbean

School closures during the Covid-19 pandemic have affected over 170 million children across Latin America and the Caribbean, widening socioeconomic

gaps in educational attainment. A new blog post from [J-PAL Latin America and the Caribbean](#) discusses how a body of policy-relevant evidence produced by J-PAL affiliated researchers is crucial for improving school enrollment and learning during pandemic recovery. [Read more »](#)



Photo: Paula Bronstein/Getty Images/Images of Empowerment

Expanding the evidence base on women's economic agency

J-PAL's [Gender and Economic Agency Initiative](#) recently completed its second full funding competition, supporting nineteen research teams to produce evidence that addresses critical knowledge gaps for policymakers on women's economic agency. On the J-PAL blog, we highlight this growing portfolio of evaluations. [Read more »](#)

FEATURED EVALUATION SUMMARY



Photo: Suanna Oh

Increasing workplace productivity through financial stability in India

Financial stress and worries associated with poverty can directly affect people's ability to work effectively and increase their incomes. In a randomized evaluation in India, J-PAL affiliated professors [Supreet Kaur](#) (UC Berkeley), [Sendhil Mullainathan](#) (University of Chicago), and [Frank Schilbach](#) (MIT), with [Suanna Oh](#), found that giving small-scale manufacturing workers early wage payments for greater financial stability increased productivity and attention to detail among workers with higher preexisting financial strain. [Read more »](#)

FEATURED AFFILIATED PROFESSOR

Seema Jayachandran on tackling chronic gender inequities



Photo: Northwestern University

In our newest Affiliate Spotlight, [Seema Jayachandran](#) (Northwestern University; Chair, J-PAL's Gender sector) shares insights on her work examining gender inequities that persist in spite of overall economic growth. She discusses evidence on how to effectively counteract entrenched norms that perpetuate gender imbalances, and how one organization in India is putting this evidence into practice. [Read more »](#)

FEATURED MULTIMEDIA



Photo: J-PAL

Leveraging research for agricultural innovation

J-PAL's [Agricultural Technology Adoption Initiative](#) has partnered with Precision Development (PxD) to design and scale agricultural innovations for farmers in low- and middle-income countries. In a new video, J-PAL affiliated professor and PxD Co-Founder [Shawn Cole](#) (Harvard Business School) and PxD staff discuss how evidence from rigorous evaluations catalyzed the scale up of a low-cost, mobile phone-based agricultural information delivery system for smallholder farmers. [Watch the video »](#)

WELCOMING OUR NEW AFFILIATED PROFESSORS

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



Vittorio Bassi
University of Southern
California



Erika Deserranno
Northwestern University



Asad Islam
Monash University

FEATURED EVENTS

[December 9] How Can We Improve Social Inclusion at Scale Through Education Interventions?

J-PAL Europe will host a webinar on education interventions to improve social inclusion at scale, focusing on studies conducted in partnership with European ministries of education. Speakers include J-PAL affiliated professors [Michela Carlana](#) (Harvard Kennedy School) and [Sule Alan](#) (European University Institute), Joachim Krapels (Chief Science Officer and Senior Analyst, Porticus), and [Cillian Nolan](#) (Director of Policy, J-PAL Europe). [Register »](#)

[Webinar recap] Building Market Linkages in Uganda

On November 9, J-PAL affiliated professor [Craig McIntosh](#) (UC San Diego; Co-Chair, J-PAL's Agriculture sector) presented the results and policy implications of a large-scale randomized evaluation in Uganda. Researchers examined a digital marketplace designed to enhance smallholder farmers' ability to reach buyers directly and sell their goods at better prices. [Read the recap and watch the recording »](#)

[Webinar recap] Countering Discrimination: Generating Evidence and Policy Lessons from Across Disciplines

On October 25, J-PAL hosted a panel discussion on interdisciplinary research for policies and programs that aim to confront discrimination. J-PAL affiliated professors [Marianne Bertrand](#) (University of Chicago; Co-Chair, J-PAL's Labor Markets sector) and [Sendhil Mullainathan](#) (University of Chicago) were joined by leading academics in sociology, political science, and psychology to discuss the strengths of their disciplines in furthering anti-discrimination research, as well as areas where interdisciplinary collaboration is particularly important. [Read the recap and watch the recording »](#)

MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

[How a simple solution slashed child mortality in rural Kenyan villages](#)
Vox

[Fighting poverty: Learning from the ground](#)
BusinessWorld

[Solutions at the nexus of climate change and poverty alleviation](#)
MIT Campaign for a Better World

J-PAL: A science to alleviating global poverty

Borgen Magazine

NEW RESEARCH PAPERS

Mental Health Therapy as a Core Strategy for Increasing Human Capital: Evidence from Ghana

Nathan Barker, Gharad Bryan, Dean Karlan, Angela Ofori-Atta, Christopher Udry

The Origins of Gender Differences in Competitiveness and Earnings Expectations: Causal Evidence from a Mentoring Intervention

Teodora Boneva, Thomas Buser, Armin Falk, Fabian Kosse

When Bootstraps Aren't Enough: Aspirations, Learning, and Educational Supply

Alex Elbe, Maya Escueta

Audits and Government Hiring Practices

Maxmiliano Lauleta, Martín A. Rossi, Christian A. Ruzzier

FEATURED JOBS

Between November 22, 2021 and January 10, 2022, J-PAL and our partners are recruiting for positions in education, finance, operations, policy, research, and training.



Hear from staff worldwide about their experiences working for J-PAL.

[Watch the videos](#)

Senior Education and Training Associate, Abuja, Nigeria

Administrative and Communications Associate, Paris, France

Policy Manager (Education), Cairo, Egypt

Field Coordinator (Nurseries), Cairo, Egypt

Senior Policy Manager/Policy Manager, New Delhi, India

Instructional Designer, Cambridge, MA, US

Policy Associate, Cambridge, MA, US

Senior Policy Associate, Cambridge, MA, US

Senior Policy and Training Associate, Cambridge, MA, US

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