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NEWSLETTER
October 2023



Interviewing respondents for an evaluation in Indonesia. Photo credit: Aqila Putri, J-PAL

20 for 20: Fostering ethical research practices through collaboration

As part of our [20 for 20: Partner Voices](#) blog series marking J-PAL's 20th anniversary, a new blog post explores best practices for ethical research in complex situations. Mohammad Zeqi Yasin, head of research at the Research Institute of Socioeconomic Development (RISED), shared his experience working with J-PAL Southeast Asia on a large-scale exploratory survey of more than 1,600 vocational school teachers in Indonesia. He highlights how the collaboration helped the RISED team gain new skills for data collection in the field and primary research.

[Read more](#)



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A decade of J-PAL North America

J-PAL North America, based at MIT, celebrated its ten-year anniversary. Over the past decade, J-PAL North America has focused on catalyzing rigorous research and institutionalizing evidence-based policymaking to reach over 35 million people with evidence-based solutions. To mark the occasion, J-PAL North America brought together researchers, program implementers, funders, policymakers, and staff. The anniversary event highlighted the office's impact, reflected on important research, and recognized partners and researchers who have made this work possible. [Read more »](#)

UPDATED POLICY INSIGHT



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Separating the wheat from the chaff: Tailoring information to meet farmers' needs

Access to new agricultural technologies can empower farmers and increase efficiency. However, information about new technologies doesn't always offer actionable recommendations and often fails to reach farmers. An updated Policy Insight from J-PAL's [Agriculture sector](#) summarizes evidence from 41 randomized evaluations on strategies to reach small-scale farmers, supported in part by the [Agricultural Technology Adoption Initiative](#). It finds that policymakers should do more to ensure that selected technologies, defined information, and delivery mechanisms are relevant and well-aligned with local conditions and farmers' priorities. [Read the Policy Insight »](#)

NEW PUBLICATIONS



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Uncovering the unintended impacts of health care policies

Health care policies and interventions are often designed with a specific population in mind. However, these policies can impact people beyond the intended group—an occurrence known as “spillover effects.” Randomized evaluations can be an important tool for uncovering spillover effects; a new publication from [J-PAL North America](#) showcases studies conducted by J-PAL affiliated researchers that illustrate the broader impacts of health care interventions beyond their primary recipients. An accompanying [blog post](#) highlights the importance of accounting for spillover effects in policy and program implementation. [Read more »](#)



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Empowering youth with civic education: Results from three countries

How can student-centered teaching methods cultivate skills underpinning active citizenship skills, such as tolerance or respect, among youth? In a new Policy Briefcase, [J-PAL Europe](#) highlights an evaluation on the impact of a civic education program in Spain, France, and Greece, led by J-PAL affiliated professors [Marc Gurgand](#) (Paris School of Economics; Scientific Director, J-PAL Europe) and [Eric Maurin](#) (Paris School of Economics), [Simon Briole](#) (Postdoctoral fellow, University of Montpellier; former Postdoctoral fellow, J-PAL Europe) and coauthors. The program improved students’ altruism, political engagement, and the diversity of their social networks. Researchers also found that teachers played an important role in driving the program’s impacts. [Read more in English](#) or [French](#) »

FEATURED BLOGS



Photo credit: Miranda Aisha Putri, J-PAL

Post-pandemic learning: Three lessons from teachers on tech in classrooms

As part of J-PAL Southeast Asia's (SEA) work in education, J-PAL affiliated professors and coauthors are evaluating the impacts of tech-driven teaching methods to enhance learning outcomes in math. Researchers and staff visited several public junior high schools in Jakarta and Central Java, where they engaged with public school teachers who have adopted technology post Covid-19. In a new blog post, the J-PAL SEA team shares insights they learned from teachers about the opportunities and challenges of implementing technology in post-pandemic classrooms. [Read the key takeaways »](#)



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Null results, not null insights

Getting a null result can be disappointing, but often null results can yield insights and policy implications equally as important as statistically significant results. To understand the implications of a null result, it is important to know the root cause. A new blog post by [Michala Riis-Vestergaard](#) (Senior Research, Education, and Training Manager, J-PAL Global) provides a framework for distinguishing between three common causes of a null result: imprecise estimates, imperfect implementation, or a true lack of impact. [Read more »](#)

FEATURED RESEARCHER



Perseverance is key; make the most of online resources and keep nurturing your curiosity.”



Nneka Esther Osadolor on perseverance, accessing resources, and the transformative potential of randomized evaluations

In a new African Scholar Spotlight on the J-PAL blog, Nneka Esther Osadolor, an economics PhD candidate at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria, shares her interest in conducting randomized evaluations. Osadolor’s research interests span across an array of sectors, including financial inclusion, labor market interactions, education, and gender issues. She also delves into the significant questions that drive her research and provides invaluable advice for scholars in her region, including where to find resources to advance skills in randomized evaluations. [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.



Moussa Blimpo
University of Toronto



Clare Leaver
University of Oxford



Matt Lowe
University of British
Columbia

FEATURED EVENTS

[Event recap] Launching Air and Water Labs in India: Solutions and Advancements through Research for Water and

Air

J-PAL South Asia (SA), with support from Community Jameel, recently launched the [Solutions and Advancements through Research for Water and Air \(SARWA\)](#) in India. SARWA is part of [Air and Water Labs](#). and aims to accelerate the adoption of scientific evidence in air and water policy through meaningful collaborations with governments at the national and state levels. To formally launch SARWA, J-PAL SA hosted an event with government officials, academics, philanthropists, civil society, and private organizations, that facilitated discussion and fostered the development of a multi-stakeholder ecosystem to shape India's air and water policies. J-PAL SA is exploring collaboration opportunities with long-term partners, including the Gujarat Pollution Control Board and the Rajasthan State Pollution Control Board. [Read more »](#)

[Event recap] Inspiring the Next Generation to Engage in Development in Guatemala and Chile

J-PAL Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) recently hosted events for students at Universidad del Valle de Guatemala and Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile to increase awareness of career opportunities in development economics. The events showcased opportunities to advance research, strengthen local capacities, and promote evidence-based decision-making in the region. Together with these universities, J-PAL LAC aspires to ignite passion and understanding among future development economics leaders. [Read more in English or Spanish »](#)

MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

[Looking for hope on the climate? Look here. \[Opinion\]](#)
The Washington Post

[Oxford research on global issues recognised for impact](#)
Mirage News

[J-PAL North America and Results for America announce 18 collaborations with state and local governments](#)
MIT News

[Viewpoint: How a person's name can prompt hiring discrimination](#)
SHRM

[Ending extreme poverty is within reach. We can't give up \[Opinion\]](#)
Devex

NEW RESEARCH PAPERS

Private Actions in the Presence of Externalities: The Health Impacts of Reducing Air Pollution Peaks but Not Ambient Exposure
Susanna B. Berkouwer and Joshua T. Dean

Can a Private Sector Engagement Intervention that Prioritizes Pro-Poor Strategies Improve Healthcare Access and Quality? A Randomized Field Experiment in Kenya
Claire E Boone, Paul J Gertler, Grace Makana Barasa, Joshua Gruber, and Ada Kwan

Strength in Numbers? Gender Composition, Leadership, and Women's Influence in Teams
Christopher F. Karpowitz, Stephen D. O'Connell, Jessica Preece, and Olga Stoddard

Jobseekers' Beliefs about Comparative Advantage and (Mis)Directed Search
Andrea Kiss, Robert Garlick, Kate Orkin, and Lukas Hensel

FEATURED JOBS

Research Associate, Cape Town, South Africa
(Senior) Finance Manager, Paris, France
Associate Director of Policy, Paris, France
Policy Manager (Central America), Guatemala City, Guatemala
Senior Policy Manager (Environment, Energy, and Climate Change), New Delhi, Delhi, India
Research Associate (Early Childhood Education), Banaskantha, Gujarat, India
Policy Manager, Jakarta, Indonesia
Pre-Doctoral Research Fellow/Research Associate, Cambridge, MA, US
Senior Education Manager, Cambridge, MA, US

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