

Islamic Development Bank, Community Jameel, and Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab ready to join forces on embedding evidence-based policy labs with governments

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Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt | The [Islamic Development Bank](#) (IsDB), [Community Jameel](#) and the [Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab](#) (J-PAL) announced that they are ready to join force on a comprehensive cooperation programme with the aim of embedding evidence-based policy labs within governments.

By embedding these labs within governments, the partnership will support countries in achieving their development objectives by leveraging an evidence-based approach in the design of their social development programmes. Evidence-based programme design utilises data and evidence from rigorous impact evaluations which allow for increased understanding of the needs of vulnerable groups and the design of more impactful policies and programmes.

Through this collaboration, the IsDB, Community Jameel and J-PAL plan to embark on the partnership with pilot projects in selected IsDB member countries, helping them improve their evaluation of interventions and policies, particularly in the realms of social protection, labour promotion, and other programmes to promote human capital development.

The announcement came at an event at the 2022 IsDB Group Annual Meetings, hosted in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt. The event, titled [Next Frontier in Evidence-Based Policies: Charting a Path Forward](#), was co-organised by the IsDB, J-PAL, the [Egyptian Ministry of Planning and Economic Development](#), and Community Jameel.

Successful models of evidence-based policymaking have been piloted in Indonesia and Egypt, among other countries, where government-led partnerships with J-PAL have allowed for enhanced programmes and policies in line with the governments' development priorities. The event highlights how government-led partnerships with researchers operate, how they can be designed, and how they can help generate rigorous research to inform policy design.

H.E., Dr. Hala El Said, Egyptian Minister of Planning and Economic Development, said: “The utilisation of evidence essentially distinguishes effective policies from less effective ones. Promoting a culture of evidence-based policymaking is of particular significance to developing countries, having potential to save lives, reduce poverty, and improve development performance. From that perspective, high quality evidence should be placed at the heart of policy development and implementation.”

H.E. Dr. Muhammad Sulaiman Al Jasser, Chairman of the Islamic Development Bank Group, said: “I would like to highlight that IsDB is ready to join forces with Community Jameel, the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL) and other partners to develop a comprehensive South-South cooperation programme focused on evidence-informed policymaking through knowledge-sharing and government-embedded labs among IsDB member countries.”

Hassan Jameel, Vice Chairman of Community Jameel, said: “The ethos of our work at Community Jameel is grounded in science and promotes multidisciplinary approaches to instigate change in how we adapt to human challenges. J-PAL’s emphasis on evidence-based policy design has proven to be capable of addressing these challenges and supporting policymakers in adapting to specific contexts. We are proud to be coming together with the IsDB and J-PAL to announce a shared vision for achieving lasting change in the social programmes of countries across the Global South.”

George Richards, Director of Community Jameel, said: “This partnership unlocks the power of South-South collaborations between researchers and policymakers to have a positive impact at scale on the lives of millions of people. Community Jameel is excited to be joining with J-PAL and the Islamic Development Bank to scale this model of embedding evidence-based policy labs in government, from Cairo, where we launched the Egypt Impact Lab in March, to Jakarta and beyond.”

Iqbal Dhaliwal, Global Executive Director of J-PAL, said: “J-PAL is enthusiastic about the promise of this collaboration with the Islamic Development Bank and Community Jameel. Our regional offices in the Middle East and North Africa and Southeast Asia are leading exciting work with national governments to develop evidence labs. We are committed to deepening these partnerships through this pilot with IsDB and Community Jameel and interested in replicating the model with other governments as we demonstrate together how these labs can reduce poverty through evidence.”

In March 2022, the [Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab Middle East and North Africa](#) (J-PAL MENA) and the Egyptian [Ministry of Planning and Economic Development](#) (MPED) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) which saw the launch of the [Egypt Impact Lab](#), a collaboration that aims to strengthen the effectiveness of Egypt’s poverty reduction policies by rigorously evaluating promising and innovative government programmes and using results to inform scale decisions. The Lab seeks to build a culture of evidence-informed decision-making across government by building partners’ capacity to use evidence in programme design and delivery, and using administrative data to facilitate evidence-generation.

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About The Islamic Development Bank (IsDB)

Rated AAA by the major rating agencies, the Islamic Development Bank is a multilateral development bank that has been working for over 47 years to improve the lives of the communities it serves by delivering impact at scale. The Bank brings together 57-Member Countries across four continents, and Muslim communities in non-member countries, touching the lives of 1 in 5 of the world population. Its mission is to equip people to drive their own economic and social progress at scale, putting the infrastructure in place enabling them to fulfill their potential. Headquartered in Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, IsDB has regional hubs and centers of excellence in 11 of its Member Countries. Over the years, the Bank has evolved from a single entity into a group comprising five entities: Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), the Islamic Development Bank Institute (IsDBI) tasked with research and training, the Islamic Corporation for the Insurance of Investment, and Export Credit (ICIEC), the Islamic

Corporation for the Development of the Private Sector (ICD), and the International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC).

About the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab:

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 more than 190 affiliated professors at universities around the world, J-PAL conducts randomized evaluations to answer critical questions in the fight against poverty. We build partnerships with governments, NGOs, donors, and others to share this knowledge, scale up effective programs, and advance evidence-informed decision-making. J-PAL was launched at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 2003 and has regional centers in Africa, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Middle East and North Africa, North America, South Asia, and Southeast Asia.

For more information, visit povertyactionlab.org.

About Community Jameel:

Community Jameel advances science to help communities thrive in a rapidly changing world. An independent, global organisation, Community Jameel was launched in 2003 to continue the tradition of philanthropy and community service established by the Jameel family of Saudi Arabia in 1945. Community Jameel supports scientists, humanitarians, technologists and creatives to understand and address pressing human challenges in areas such as climate change, health and education.

The work enabled and supported by Community Jameel has led to significant breakthroughs and achievements, including the [MIT Jameel Clinic](#)'s discovery of the new antibiotic Halicin, critical modelling of the spread of COVID-19 conducted by the [Jameel Institute](#) at Imperial College London, and a Nobel Prize-winning experimental approach to alleviating global poverty developed by the co-founders of the [Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab](#) at MIT.

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