

# DAN DAVID PRIZE

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## Laureates 2013

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### Prof. Esther Duflo



Renowned French economist, Esther Duflo, is Professor of Poverty Alleviation and Development Economics in the Department of Economics at MIT and a founder and director of the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab. Educated in France and in the U.S., she combines rigorous analytic methods and strong, randomized study design to puncture preconceptions

and produce reliable measures of effects.

While her work ranges across a spectrum of social conditions and strategies related to alleviation of poverty, a number deal directly with the prevention of disease.

Duflo studied the long-term health effects of indoor air pollution on women and children, prompting reconsideration of prior policy assumptions; provided key insights in the control of malaria, which is estimated to kill more than one million persons each year; compared various combinations of incentives and education on fertility and sexually transmitted infection rates in Kenya, showing exactly how much benefit came from the combination of financial incentives and targeted education; and in rural India, she demonstrated that modest incentives achieved more than double the rate of completed immunization.

Duflo has shown it is possible to conduct definitive randomized controlled trials under real-life conditions to inform policy choices in preventive medicine and in other domains. It is imaginable that the cumulative impact of Duflo's work against poverty and ill health has the future potential to improve the lives of hundreds of millions of the planet's poorest inhabitants.

Esther Duflo is the recipient of a MacArthur Fellowship, was awarded the Best Young French Economist Award (*Le Monde*, *Cercle des économistes*), recognized with the John Bates Clark Medal, was named in 2011 one of *Time* magazine's 100 most influential people in the world, and most recently has been appointed by President Obama as a member of the President's Global Development Council.

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