

Government of Delhi partners with J-PAL South Asia to unlock high-quality administrative data for boosting social and economic growth in India's capital

25 February 2022, New Delhi - The Government of Delhi's Dialogue and Development Commission (DDC) has partnered with the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL) South Asia to systematically leverage high-quality administrative data for implementing policies geared toward stimulating social and economic development in the National Capital Territory of Delhi.

This partnership creates an overarching framework under which J-PAL South Asia and the DDC Delhi will collaborate to design policy solutions in key economic sectors, test them for effectiveness using randomized evaluations, and scale up the ones with maximum impact.

As first steps, J-PAL South Asia is working with the Government of Delhi to improve livelihoods for young workers in the national capital region by overhauling the services offered by Rozgar Bazaar, Government of Delhi's flagship job portal. Both are currently engaged in analyzing the data generated on the portal, with the goal to design solutions that provide better employment and career counseling services on Rozgar Bazaar.

J-PAL South Asia will also contribute to Delhi's Economic Policy by providing policy advice on key sectors such as Small and Medium Enterprises, drawing upon the findings from the research done by J-PAL's global network of the world's leading economists.

Deputy Chief Minister of Delhi, Manish Sisodia said: "Creating jobs in conventional as well as new-age markets is the biggest priority for the Delhi Government so that we can fulfill our vision of matching Singapore's economy by 2047. The partnership with J-PAL South Asia will be geared towards improving employment outcomes as well as increasing the participation of women in the labor force."

The agreement was signed during a ceremony by Vice Chairperson of DDC Delhi, Jasmine Shah, and the Executive Director of J-PAL South Asia, Shobhini Mukerji, in the presence of the Deputy Chief Minister, Manish Sisodia.

Jasmine Shah, Vice-Chairperson, DDC Delhi, said, "Under the leadership of Hon'ble Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, Delhi Government has shown the political will to explore and incorporate best policy practices around the world and Delhi has emerged as the hub of innovation. The collaboration with J-PAL South Asia will go a long way in optimizing policies to boost Delhi's social and economic growth by unlocking high-quality administrative data. The overarching framework of the partnership is broad and can be continuously updated in accordance with changing priorities over time."

Shobhini Mukerji, Executive Director, J-PAL South Asia, said: "The Government of Delhi's commitment toward applying scientific evidence and data in policymaking makes them our valued partner. This partnership will accelerate our ongoing work in Delhi, and I am confident

that the resulting policies will bring meaningful and lasting improvements to the lives of its people.”

This partnership is initiated by the IDEA Lab at J-PAL South Asia, part of J-PAL's Innovations in Data and Experiments for Action (IDEA) Initiative. IDEA supports governments, firms, and non-profit organizations in accessing and analyzing administrative data for policy research in a secure and ethical manner. The IDEA Handbook, prepared with contributions from the world's leading researchers and experts, provides guidelines on leveraging data while upholding the highest standards of privacy, ethics and security.

Iqbal Dhaliwal, Global Executive Director, J-PAL, said: “Analysis of the vast amount of administrative data collected by governments can help them better understand in real time their citizens’ preferences and to invest their scarce resources to identify and scale the most impactful innovations that address those needs. Partnerships between policymakers and researchers dedicated to advancing development can greatly accelerate efforts to do so in a creative, ethical and secure manner.”

Among the first policy issues to be tackled under this partnership will be child health and learning losses in the aftermath of the pandemic. J-PAL South Asia, under the guidance of DDCCD, is working closely with the Health and Education departments to evaluate solutions to increase child immunization rates and reduce school dropouts among others.

The collaboration also enables J-PAL South Asia to advance its mission of strengthening the culture evidence-based policymaking within the government. Officials of the Government of Delhi will be invited to attend J-PAL South Asia’s courses on data collection and survey design, and on randomized evaluations as part of this partnership.

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