J-PAL
ABDUL LATIF JAMEEL POVERTY ACTION LAB

Photo: Aimee Hare | J-PAL

The future of the MicroMasters in Data, Economics, and Development Policy

Summer 2022 marked the five-year anniversary of the Data, Economics, and Development Policy (DEDP) MicroMasters program. The online program, jointly led by J-PAL and MITx, has welcomed more than 50,000 learners from 214 countries and territories. We have awarded over 8,000 course certificates, equipped more than 800 learners with the DEDP MicroMasters credential, and expanded to a suite of seven rigorous courses that cover microeconomics, randomized evaluations, data analysis, political economy, and economic development. We take this opportunity to reflect on our achievements, challenges, and aspirations for the next five years and beyond. Read more on lessons learned over the past five years and the future of the program »

EVIDENCE-INFORMED DECISION-MAKING

Launching a policy lab focused on social inclusion in Spain

Photo: Spanish Ministry of Inclusion, Social Security, and Migration

In 2020, poverty in Spain reached its highest level since the 2008 financial crisis, highlighting the need for evidence-based policies to spur economic and social resilience. This summer, the Spanish Ministry of Inclusion, Social Security, and Migration joined with J-PAL Europe to launch a policy lab to encourage the use of evidence in the development of social policymaking. The Spanish government has committed to testing new social inclusion programs with randomized evaluations, including job training and tutoring, providing insights for social policy across the country. Read more »

Photo: Dietmar Temps | Shutterstock.com

Lessons on mitigating learning loss from crises

The United Nations estimates that 101 million schoolchildren fell below minimum reading proficiencies in 2020 amid the global pandemic and widespread school closures. As countries around the world work to mitigate learning losses while bringing children back into the classroom, lessons from previous crises can inform education policies going forward. From Covid-19 to humanitarian emergencies, a new piece on the J-PAL blog explores what we've learned on how to protect student learning in the immediate and long-run aftermath of crises. Read more »

Photo: Juan Arredondo | Getty Images | Images of Empowerment

Expanding evidence generation on gender equity enhancing programs

The Gender and Economic Agency Initiative (GEA) launched in 2020 and has since expanded rapidly in its core mission of funding innovative research on strategies to promote women's work and enhance women's economic agency worldwide. With support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the Target Foundation, GEA has continued to fund

innovative research projects in South Asia and East Africa while expanding its geographic scope into Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). In a J-PAL blog post, we discuss these new projects and the pressing need for more evidence-informed policy in the LAC region. Read more in English and Spanish »

FEATURED POLICY INSIGHT

Photo: Juan Arredondo | CC BY-NC 4.0

The impacts of economic interventions on intimate partner violence

An estimated one in every three women worldwide has suffered physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner in her lifetime. In a new Policy Insight, J-PAL's Crime, Violence, and Conflict sector team synthesizes evidence from 22 randomized evaluations examining how providing households with greater access to financial resources can affect women's exposure to violence. Despite evaluating a diverse set of interventions, the evidence remains mixed. In some cases, increasing women's income reduced intimate partner violence; however, in other instances, there is evidence it triggered violence in the household. Read more »

WELCOMING OUR NEW AFFILIATED PROFESSORS

In summer 2022, 33 talented researchers joined the J-PAL network. We will feature a few of them here each month.

Victoria Baranov
University of Melbourne

Michael Best
Columbia University

Heidi Williams
Stanford University

[September 19] CGI 2022: Reversing the Global Slide on Poverty

At the Clinton Global Initiative's 2022 meeting, Abhijit Banerjee (MIT; Director, J-PAL; Scientific Director, J-PAL Europe) will join World Trade Organization Director-General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Togolese Minister of Digital Economy and Transformation Cina Lawson, and Chief Executive Officer of the Millennium Challenge Corporation Alice Albright in leading a session on how to scale effective anti-poverty interventions. Topics of discussion will include leveraging data and technology to improve the targeting of anti-poverty interventions, and encouraging governments, businesses, and NGOs to work together to implement and scale evidence-based anti-poverty solutions. The event will be held live in New York City. Learn more »

[September 20] NYT Climate Forward: What Is the Connection Between Inequality and Climate Change?

At The New York Times Climate Forward Conversations, Esther Duflo (MIT; Director, J-PAL; Scientific Director, J-PAL South Asia) will join two other Nobel laureates, Yale economist William Nordhaus and New York Times columnist Paul Krugman, for a panel on climate and poverty. The three will discuss ripple effects of climate inequality across economies, economic tools to address climate change, and incorporating equity and inclusion into climate action. The event will be held live in New York City in coordination with New York Climate Week. Get tickets »

[Webinar Recap] Gender Norms and Women's Work

J-PAL's Gender and Economic Agency Initiative, in partnership with the International Development Research Centre Growth and Economic Opportunities for Women - East Africa, recently hosted a webinar to share insights from the latest research on gender norms and women's economic empowerment, as well as reflections from policymakers in Kenya and Uganda. In a new post on the J-PAL blog, we recap the discussion and share insights on how current evidence fits within country-level policy priorities. Read more »

It's not too late to enroll in the MicroMasters fall semester

The next term of our online MicroMasters in Data, Economics, and Development Policy (DEDP) began on September 6, but there is still plenty of time to enroll. Courses include:

- 14.310x Data Analysis for Social Scientists: Learn to code in R while building a strong foundation in probability and statistics;
- 14.100x Microeconomics: Gain an introduction to microeconomic theory, together with empirical results and policy implications;
- J-PAL 102x Designing and Running Randomized Evaluations: Learn how to design and implement randomized evaluations;
- 14.73x The Challenges of Global Poverty: Gain an introduction to empirical research in development economics;
- 14.750x Political Economy and Economic Development: Apply key theories and empirical techniques to explore the effect political institutions have on economic development.

Students who complete the DEDP credential are eligible to apply for the on-campus Master's in DEDP at MIT. Learn more and register »

MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

Odisha to introduce gender equality programme in over 20,000 govt. schools
Times Now

Veddis Foundation and J-PAL through ASPIRE host national leaders to boost governance and state capacity In India
India Education Diary

J-PAL expands evidence-to-policy government partnerships to fight poverty worldwide
MIT News

Women officers must be on front lines of policing [Opinion]
Hindustan Times

NEW RESEARCH PAPERS

How Hybrid Working from Home Works Out
Nicholas Bloom, Ruobing Han, James Liang

STEM Summer Programs for Underrepresented Youth Increase STEM Degrees
Sarah R. Cohodes, Helen Ho, Silvia C. Robles

The Effect of Community Engagement on Healthcare Utilization and Health Insurance Enrollment in Ghana
Stephen Kwasi Opoku Duku, Edward Nketiah-Amponsah, Christine J. Fenenga, Wendy

Janssens, Menno Pradhan

Social Protection and Social Distancing During the Pandemic: Mobile Money Transfers in Ghana
Dean Karlan, Matt Lowe, Robert Darko Osei, Isaac Osei-Akoto, Benjamin N. Roth, Christopher R. Udry

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