
April Newsletter: A new global learning alliance, evidence-based policy in Egypt, and cash grants to protect the Amazon

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Photo credit: Diego Ubilla, Inesper

New Alliance for Data, Evaluation, and Policy Training will advance data-driven decision-making

In late March, J-PAL launched the [Alliance for Data, Evaluation, and Policy Training \(ADEPT\)](#) with Community Jameel to train the next generation of researchers and decision-makers to innovate, test, and scale effective policies. ADEPT brings together universities, governments, and other partners united by this shared vision.

Early members of the Alliance include Inesper, a leading research and training institution in Brazil; the National School of Statistics and Applied Economics (ENSEA) of Abidjan in collaboration with the Government of Côte d'Ivoire; the Paris School of Economics; and Princeton University. Together with J-PAL, members will create innovative pathways for

learners that include hosting virtual and in-person courses, developing new academic programs, and cultivating a network of evidence-informed policy professionals to drive change globally.

[Learn more](#)

J-PAL North America reaffirms the value of rigorous, policy-relevant research

Recent changes affecting the United States' data and evaluation infrastructure, from database closures to funding cuts, threaten the future of policy-relevant evaluations. In a new post, [J-PAL North America's](#) leadership emphasizes the value of rigorous research in identifying policies that achieve their intended goals—ensuring that public dollars are spent on solutions that deliver results. The blog shares five examples of studies by J-PAL affiliated professors that have informed policies on health care, housing, and employment in the United States—impacting tens of millions of Americans. [Read more »](#)

A new partnership to advance evidence-informed policy in Benin

Last month, [J-PAL Africa](#) and Benin's Ministry of Development and Coordination of Government Action launched a new partnership to co-identify, generate, and integrate actionable research into policy. Marking the launch, the Benin Evidence Forum brought together government officials and J-PAL Africa leadership to reflect on how data and impact evaluations can support policy priorities in Benin. [Read more »](#)

EVIDENCE-INFORMED DECISION-MAKING



Photo credit: Sophie Garcia, Hans Lucas

Broadcasting change: Scaling up a family planning media campaign

Burkina Faso

Policy issue: Although contraception has many benefits, social norms and misinformation discourage its use in many countries. Inexpensive, fast, and scalable information programs can help raise women’s awareness of the benefits and misconceptions of contraception.

Evaluation: Researchers conducted a [randomized evaluation](#) on the impact of a family planning radio campaign, developed and implemented by Development Media International (DMI), that challenged misconceptions about contraception.

Results: The campaign increased contraception use and decreased misperceptions about contraception.

Research in action: A new Evidence to Policy Case Study from J-PAL’s [Health sector](#) describes how DMI used this evidence to inform the scale-up of the radio campaign across Burkina Faso, and adapted the campaign to seven southern and eastern African countries.

[Learn more](#)

Research by: [Rachel Glennerster](#) (University of Chicago), [Joanna Murray](#) (Development Media International), and [Victor Pouliquen](#) (University of Essex)

FEATURED BLOGS

Making every Egyptian pound spent on development count

How can policymakers ensure that national programs drive real change for families? The [Egypt Impact Lab \(EIL\)](#)—a collaboration between [J-PAL MENA](#) and Egypt’s Ministry of Planning, Economic Development, and International Cooperation, with support from Community Jameel and the Sawiris Foundation for Social Development—works with government partners to design and evaluate programs. In a new blog post, Mays Abou Hegab (Deputy Executive Director, Sawiris Foundation for Social Development), [Nayera Adly Husseiny](#) (Senior Policy and Communications Manager, J-PAL MENA), Nader Diab (Head of Programmes, Community Jameel), and [Aya Essam](#) (Policy Associate, J-PAL MENA) share how EIL’s 2024 integration into the National Institute for Governance and Sustainable Development marked a turning point in Egypt’s commitment to evidence-based governance. [Read more »](#)

Protecting the Amazon with cash grants

A series of randomized evaluations has shown that cash grants enabling landowners to adopt sustainable practices—known as payments for ecosystem services (PES)—offer a promising, community-driven approach to environmental conservation. A new blog post from [J-PAL Latin America and the Caribbean](#) shares how a partnership with the Brazilian Ministry of Planning and Budget to rigorously evaluate the PES program Bolsa Verde is supporting vulnerable communities while reducing deforestation in the Amazon. [Read more »](#)

MORE ON THE J-PAL BLOG



Photo credit: Rebecca Aranda

Driving equity in STEM and youth development in Los Angeles

[Read more »](#)



Photo credit: Southern Methodist University

Postdoc spotlight: Alipio Ferreira, J-PAL '23, on environmental research in Latin America and the Caribbean

[Read more »](#)

FEATURED RESEARCHER



[Evidence] suggests that having successful women in STEM engage in activities like career fairs, classroom visits, and science experiments may impact young girls' aspirations and interest in STEM."



Danila Serra on getting more women into STEM and leadership roles

To celebrate International Day of Women and Girls in Science, J-PAL affiliated professor [Danila Serra](#) (Texas A&M University) joined [J-PAL Africa](#) on X for an "Ask Me Anything" session, where she shared her research on women's education, leadership, and expanding economic opportunities in male-dominated fields. Danila discussed the impact of role models and Instagram on [women's decisions to study STEM](#) and how to promote women's leadership in savings groups in Uganda. [Read more »](#)

WELCOMING OUR NEW AFFILIATED PROFESSORS

In summer 2024, we welcomed 35 talented researchers to the J-PAL network. We will feature a few of them here each month.



Mireille Jacobson
University of Southern
California



Raymond Kluender
Harvard University



Monica Lambon-Quayefio
University of Ghana

FEATURED EVENT

Europe policy roundtable: Shaping climate action

 **May 14**

Join the IZA Institute of Labor Economics, [J-PAL Europe](#), and J-PAL's [King Climate Action Initiative](#) for a policy roundtable on how governments, funders, and implementers use rigorous evidence to shape and carry out effective climate policies. The discussion will explore how researchers and policymakers can collaborate to meet urgent climate challenges, highlighting J-PAL's [Air and Water Labs](#) as a case study. [Learn more and register »](#)

FEATURED TRAINING

ICYMI: Open enrollment for the DEDP MicroMasters Program

 **Term starts May 13**

The MicroMasters Program in [Data, Economics, and Design of Policy](#) (DEDP) is open for enrollment, with the next series of courses starting on May 13. [Enroll today »](#)

Interested in learning more? DEDP staff will discuss scholarships, important dates, and answer questions live during a webinar on **May 6**. [Register »](#)

MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR NETWORK

Ending period stigma in schools [Podcast]

CEPR

Vocational skills training has multiple economic benefits

International Monetary Fund

NEW RESEARCH PAPERS

Estimating Impact with Surveys Versus Digital Traces: Evidence from Randomized Cash Transfers in Togo

Emily Aiken, Suzanne Bellue, Joshua E. Blumenstock, Dean Karlan, and Christopher Udry

Therapy, Mental Health, and Human Capital Accumulation Among Adolescent Girls in Uganda

Sarah Baird, Berk Özler, Chiara Dell'Aira, Luca Parisotto, and Danish Us-Salam

Can Reducing Information Frictions Strengthen State Capacity? Experimental Evidence from a Very Large Public Works Program

Eric Dodge, Yusuf Neggers, Rohini Pande, and Charity Troyer Moore

Chat Over Coffee? Diffusion of Agronomic Practices and Market Spillovers in Rwanda

Esther Duflo, Daniel Keniston, Tavneet Suri, and Céline Zipfel

FEATURED JOBS

Associate Director of HR, Finance, and Operations, Cape Town, South Africa

Policy Manager (Firms), Accra, Ghana or Nairobi, Kenya

Senior Research Associate (Jobs and Opportunity Initiative Brazil), São Paulo, Brazil

Policy Manager (Satat Jeevikoparjan Yojana), Patna, Bihar, India

Policy Manager (Scale-Ups), New Delhi, Delhi, India

Senior AI Policy Associate, Cambridge, MA, US

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