Applying randomized evaluations to practice

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J-PAL: Connecting the dots from research to policy

Research
We fund innovative new research and help carry out affiliates’ projects on the ground.

Policy outreach
We synthesise research results, build partnerships, lend technical assistance, and embed staff.

Capacity building
We lead executive trainings and develop rigorous online education to build sustainability.
A randomized evaluation constructs the counterfactual by basing program participation on a lottery

Before a program starts, individuals are **randomly assigned** to two groups. With enough people, both groups have **statistically identical** characteristics, on average.
Insights from a research partnership with the Central Bureau of Statistics in Indonesia
Effectively targeting anti-poverty programs in Indonesia

Partnership with the Indonesian Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS) and a local NGO to compared the effectiveness of different methods of identifying the poor:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Targeting methods</th>
<th>Proxy means test method (PMT)</th>
<th>Community method</th>
<th>Hybrid method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accuracy</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community satisfaction</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The community-based method of selecting who qualified for the cash transfer program were less accurate than proxy-means tests overall, but they greatly improved local satisfaction and better matched the poor’s own concept of poverty

Alatas et al. (2016)
Innovations in Data and Experiments for Action (IDEA) Initiative

- **Increase the use of administrative data** by data providers—governments, non-profits, and private firms for evidence-informed decision-making

- **Make administrative data accessible**

- **Build the capacity** of data providers to access, analyze, use, and share administrative data, through trainings and the establishment of in-house data analytics units
Thank you

Questions?
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