



J-PAL

ABDUL LATIF JAMEEL POVERTY ACTION LAB

EUROPE

Rigorous impact evaluation to inform programming

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- I. **Introducing J-PAL**
- II. Selected case studies
- III. Working with J-PAL



J-PAL is a global research organization with a network of more than 180 affiliated professors who use randomized evaluations to inform policy



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Locally grounded: Six regional offices; hundreds of close govt & NGO partners



J-PAL Global

Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)
Cambridge, USA



J-PAL North America

Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)
Cambridge, USA



J-PAL Latin America and the Caribbean

Pontificia Universidad Catolica de Chile
Santiago, Chile



J-PAL Europe

Paris School of Economics
Paris, France



J-PAL South Asia

Institute for Financial Management & Research
Chennai & New Delhi, India



J-PAL Southeast Asia

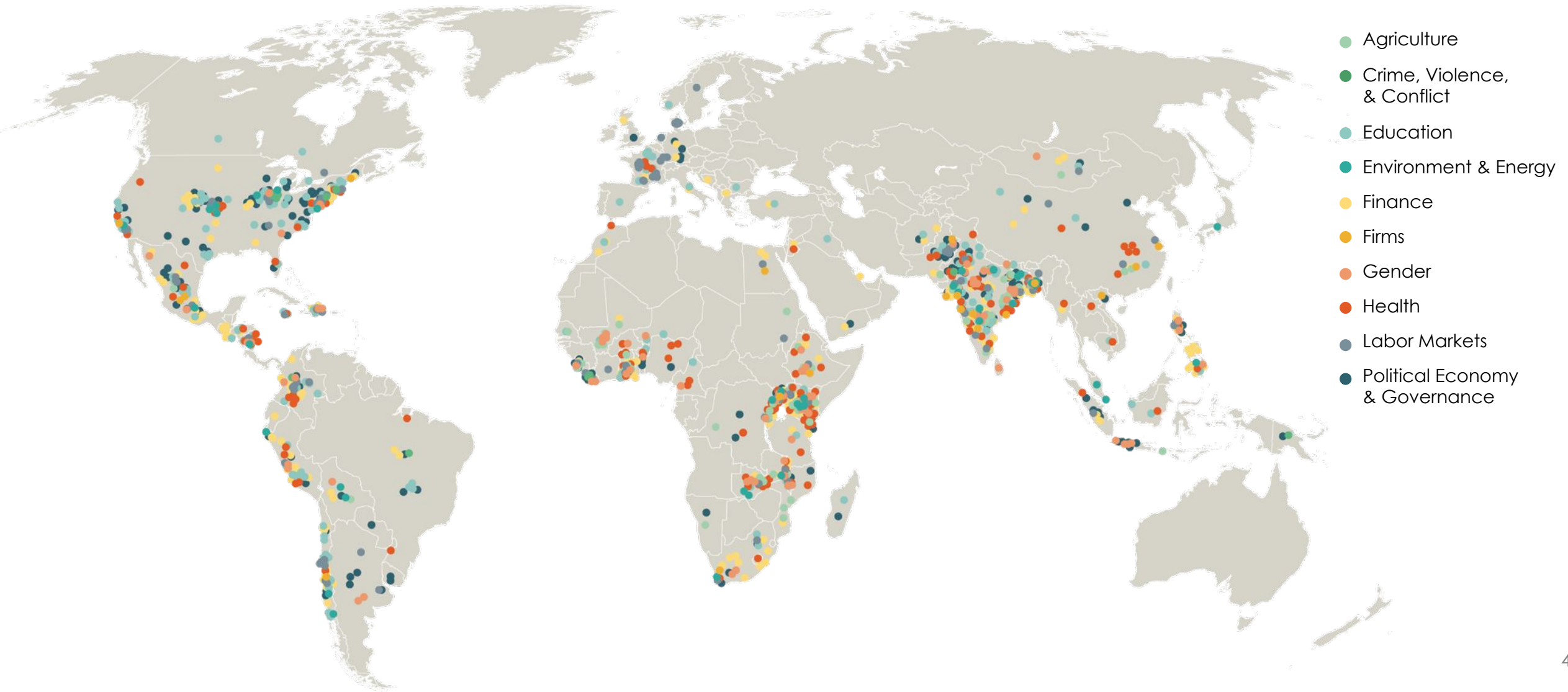
University of Indonesia
Jakarta, Indonesia



J-PAL Africa

University of Cape Town
Cape Town, South Africa

Globally informed: 978 randomized evaluations in 83 countries



Connecting the dots from research to policy



Research

Fund randomized evaluations of programs aimed at improving the inclusion of migrants and refugees.



Policy outreach

Build learning partnerships and share results.



Capacity building

Organize customized trainings for policymakers and project implementers.

Research across 10 different sectors



Agriculture



Crime, Violence,
and Conflict



Education



Environment
and Energy



Finance



Firms



Gender



Health

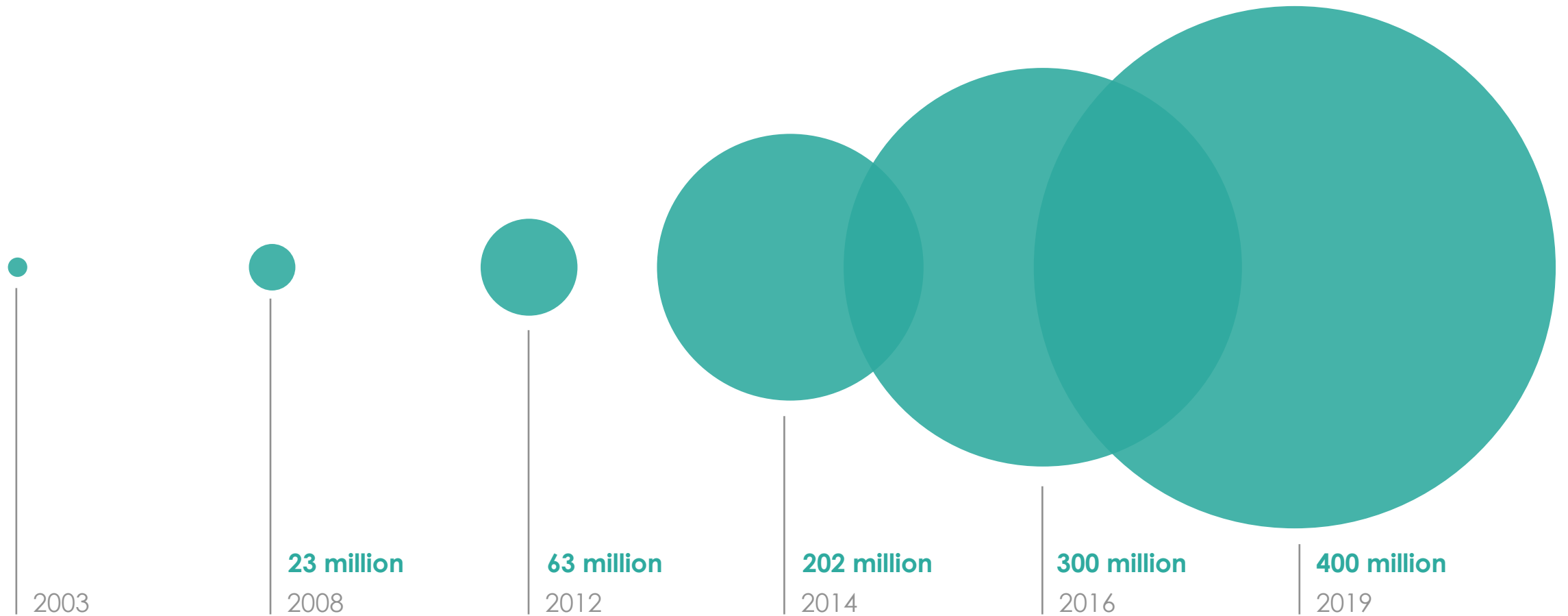


Labor Markets



Political Economy
and Governance

People reached by programs scaled up after being evaluated by J-PAL affiliates



Nobel 2019: Research that has “dramatically improved our ability to fight poverty in practice”

Policy influence

The Laureates’ work has had clear effects on policy, both directly and indirectly. Naturally, it is impossible to precisely measure how important their research has been in shaping policies in various countries. However, it is sometimes possible to draw a straight line from research to policy.

Some of the studies we have already mentioned have indeed had a direct impact on policy. The studies of remedial tutoring eventually provided arguments for large-scale support programmes that have now reached more than five million Indian children. The deworming studies not only showed that deworming provides clear health benefits for schoolchildren, but also that parents are very price-sensitive. In accordance with these results, the WHO recommends that medicine is distributed for free to the over 800 million schoolchildren living in areas where more than 20 per cent of them have a specific type of parasitic worm infection.



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Sierra Leone and Iraq: Measuring intergroup trust and social capital

Fambul Tok: Community reconciliation in Sierra Leone

- Can a community-based truth and reconciliation program launched ten years after civil war help communities rebuild trust?
- Cilliers, Dube, and Siddiqui wanted to explore the potential for building social capital – the norms and networks behind civic engagement
- Sierra Leone NGO Fambul Tok held ceremonies held at village level in which:
 - Victims shared accounts
 - Perpetrators sought forgiveness



How do you measure trust and social capital?

Variables

Index of participation in community groups

Index of participation in community groups, without women's membership or meetings

Indicators

PTA membership

Village development committee membership

Youth group membership

Women's group membership

Secret society membership

Religious group membership

PTA meeting attendance

Village development committee meeting attendance

Youth group meeting attendance

Women's group meeting attendance

Secret society meeting attendance

Religious group meeting attendance

Community meeting attendance

Table 2. Reconciliation and social networks. Each row represents a separate assignment. All specifications are cross-sectional because we do not have baseline section pair fixed effects and the second round indicator. SEs are clustered at the s level, and * is significant at the 10% level. The control mean is the mean in the con

Variables

Index of network strength

Indicators

Number of people respondent would approach for advice / help

Number of people respondent would ask to collect money for them

Number of times respondent listed as good friend

Number of times respondent listed as someone to ask for advice / help

Fambul Tok: Results

- Researchers used survey response data to create indices of:
 - Forgiveness
 - Community participation
 - Social network strength
 - Contribution to public goods
- Individuals in villages where ceremony took place were (selected):
 - 45% more likely to attend PTA meetings,
 - 11% more likely to be listed by neighbors as someone they could ask for help or advice
 - Listed 5% more individuals as those they'd be willing to lend money to
 - More likely to forgive perpetrators

Northern Iraq: Measuring intergroup trust

- Can intergroup contact create trust after conflict?
- Setting: a suburb of Erbil with significant population of Iraqi Christians displaced by ISIS
- Soccer league: Christian members randomly assigned to either an all-Christian team or one mixed with Sunni Arabs



Shifts in behaviors

... and attitudes

Behavioral Outcomes

1. Attend Ramadan dinner event (three weeks post-intervention)
 2. Train with Muslims at least once a week (four months post-intervention)
 3. Register for mixed league in the future (one day post-intervention)
-

Attitudinal Indices

1. Trust toward Muslims
 - 1.1 Agree with adage that “even if a Muslim is a piece of gold, it would burn a hole in your pocket”
 - 1.2 Willing to sell land to a Muslim
 - 1.3 Generally speaking, agree that most people can be trusted
 - 1.4 Do not believe that Sunni Arab civilians are responsible for their suffering
 - 1.5 Believe that Sunni Arabs are welcoming toward Christians
 - 1.6 Believe that most Sunni Arabs did not approve of the actions of ISIS
 2. Belief in Coexistence
 - 2.1 Believe that it is arbitrary to divide Iraqis in to ethnic and sectarian identities
 - 2.2 Believe that life would be better if Iraqis treated each other as Iraqis first
 - 2.3 Believe that tolerance is an important quality to teach children
 - 2.4 Believe that Christians need to arm themselves for protection
 - 2.5 Believe that life these days is unpredictable and dangerous
 3. Salience of Iraqi Identity
 - 3.1 Identify above all else as Iraqi or Arab
 - 3.2 Proud or very proud to be Iraqi
 - 3.3 Believe that Iraqis of different backgrounds could live together peacefully
-

Northern Iraq: results from the pilot study

- Iraqi Christians assigned to mixed teams...
 - Are 26 percentage points more likely to attend a mixed social event (coinciding with *iftar*) three weeks later
 - Are 45 percentage points more likely to train with Muslims four months later
 - Are 31 percent more likely to believe peaceful coexistence is possible

India: Reshaping gender attitudes



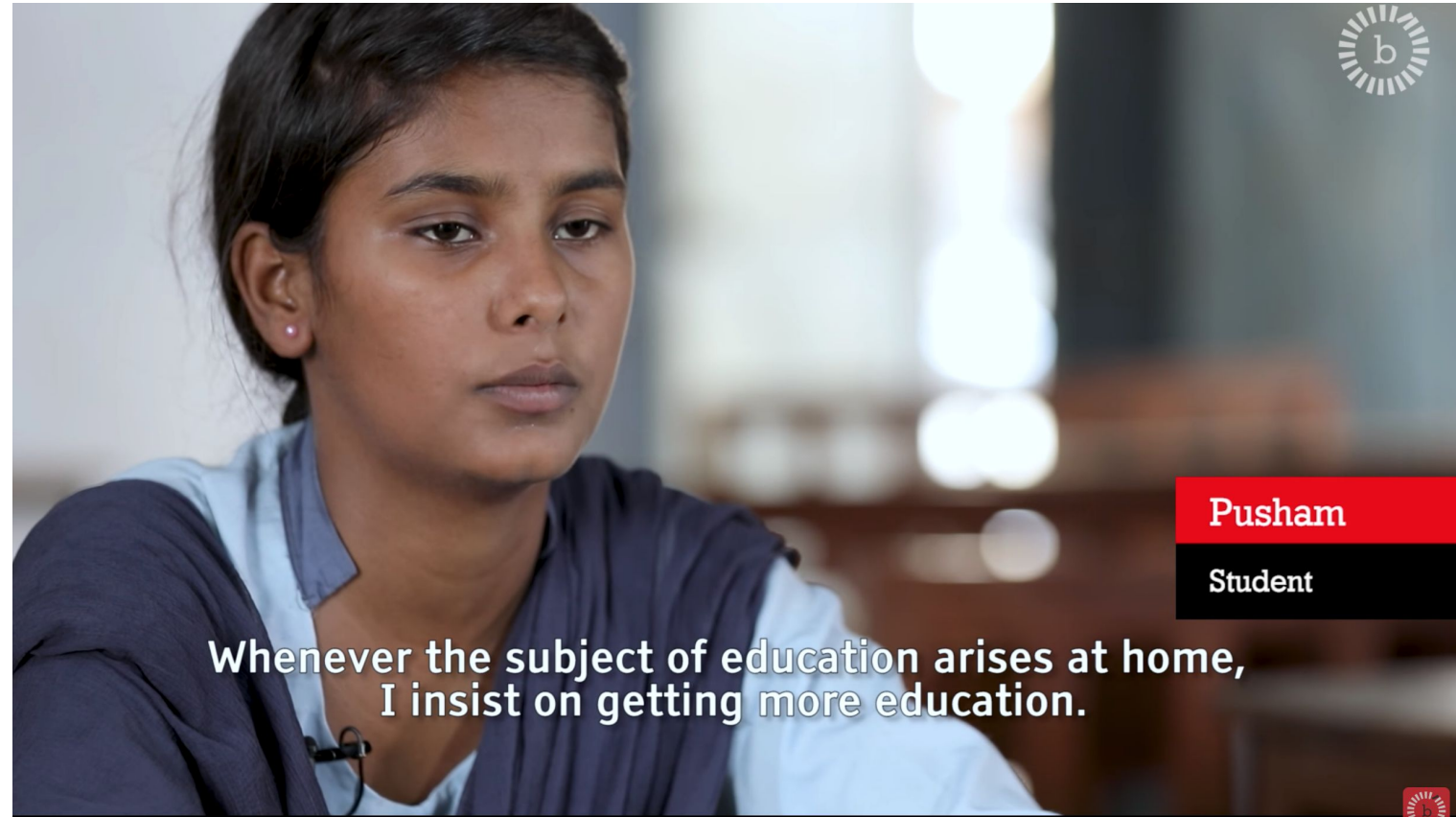
You don't get to go outside and play."



Legion of Stars program: Shifting attitudes and norms

- Researchers Dhar, Jain, and Jayachandran (2018) partnered with Indian NGO Breakthrough to evaluate the impact of a school-based program focused on reducing gender inequality in Haryana
 - 45-min session every 3wk for 2.5 years
 - 7th to 10th graders
 - combined rights-based message w more practical arguments for gender equality

(Dhar, Jain, and Jayachandran 2018)



Clear impact on attitudes; but limited behavior change for girls, who face more constraints



Secondary
school-based
gender attitude
campaign

↑ gender attitudes exhibit more support for gender equality

↑ girls' mobility and opposite sex interactions for both genders

↑ boys' participation in chores; did not reduce girls' chores

(Dhar, Jain, and Jayachandran 2018)

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Resources

- **Policy staff** to help you think through whether an RCT is appropriate, and to match you with affiliates with the required expertise...
- ...and to help you consider how to draw on existing evidence for program design
- **Funded research initiatives** to help you fund evaluations in certain areas
 - Governance Initiative
 - Crime and Violence Initiative
 - Agricultural Technology Adoption Initiative
 - Post-primary Education Initiative
 - Women's Economic Agency Initiative
 - Jobs Initiative
- **Training courses** (open enrollment and custom-designed)

More information

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