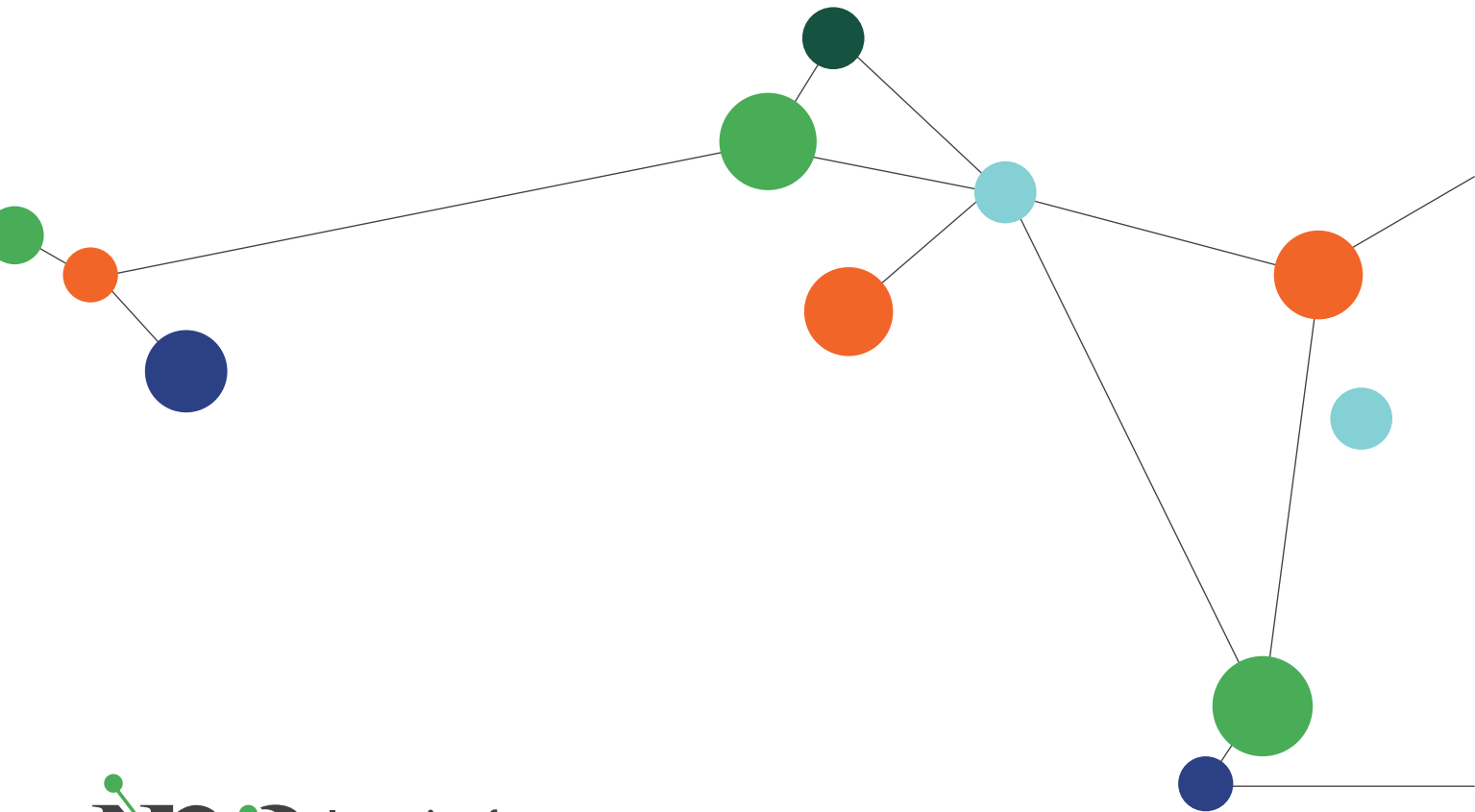


2022 Annual Report:

Putting Evidence to Work
Around the World



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2022

Annual Report:

**Putting Evidence
to Work Around
the World**



A preschool-aged student in Costa Rica learns math skills as part of a technology-based preschool math and coding program evaluated by IPA. © 2022 Hugo Salas

A Letter from Executive Director Annie Duflo



Dear Friends,

The year 2022 marked a momentous milestone for IPA as we celebrated our 20th anniversary and reflected on the progress achieved together. Twenty years ago, Dean Karlan saw that global development investments were not sufficiently guided by rigor, data, or evidence, prompting him to found IPA with a vision to create a world with more evidence and less poverty.

The growth and achievements we've witnessed since have surpassed even Dean's initial aspirations. None of us could have foreseen that, two decades later, we would have successfully completed over 900 studies, collaborating with hundreds of researchers, practitioners, and decision-makers. Nor could we have imagined establishing a strong presence in 20 countries across Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Today, we are proud to have more than 600 dedicated full-time staff, the majority of whom are from and operate in the very countries where we work.

During our 20-year journey, IPA has been at the forefront of rigorous research on poverty-related issues. We have pushed the boundaries of what

is possible, applying rigorous methodologies to complex and challenging topics, such as using randomized evaluations to reduce human trafficking and support victims. One of our most recent initiatives, the Displaced Livelihoods Initiative, funded by the IKEA Foundation and in partnership with the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL), will provide rigorous evidence on impactful livelihoods programs for displaced populations and host communities.

We continue to pioneer innovative approaches to research. Through our Research Methods Initiative, we are exploring new ways to make our research design and data collection more accurate, timely, and cost-effective. We have not only incorporated new ways of surveying people, including phone, web, SMS, and social media platforms, but we are also studying how these different survey modes impact both the cost and quality of research.

IPA continues to improve research quality in other ways, by fostering greater inclusivity and representation in our work and in the broader field of international development. This year we formed a partnership with the Research in Color Foundation, aimed at amplifying the presence

and long-term engagement of scholars from diverse backgrounds in the fields of economics, politics, and related areas. We are also committed to enhancing diversity, equity, and inclusion not only among our researchers, but also in our partnerships and workforce. This commitment is exemplified by our collaborations with universities and research institutions in Africa, our initiatives to improve funding accessibility for local researchers, our program for nurturing a pipeline of researchers through the strategic presence of IPA country offices, and our efforts to build a diverse and representative workforce. The work of IPA in collaboration with our partners has significantly influenced policy in over 20 countries. This influence ranges from broad, system-level impact—fostering the use of evidence and data in the education sectors of Ghana, Peru, the Philippines, and elsewhere—to the scale-up of specific evidence-informed policies and programs, such as informing Women’s Economic Empowerment Policy in Kenya and supporting the scale-up of evidence-informed teacher contracts in Rwanda. These accomplishments serve as a testament to the power of evidence-based research in driving meaningful social change.

Our 20th anniversary symbolizes not only the journey of IPA, but also the tremendous strides we have made with our partners in advancing the evidence-to-impact movement on a global scale. It is with great pride that we also celebrated Dean’s recent appointment as Chief Economist for USAID—a profound recognition of his dedication to generating rigorous evidence that drives positive change in the lives of those living in poverty.

We have come a long way, from being a small group of economists advocating for randomized evaluations, to the recognition of the use of randomized controlled trials for poverty alleviation by the Nobel Prize in Economics in 2019. We have evolved into an ecosystem of decision-makers, researchers, and practitioners, all collaborating to promote the use of rigorous evidence on a broader scale. We continue to strengthen our work through our Embedded Labs and Right-Fit Evidence Unit, equipping partners with the tools and knowledge to make informed decisions based on evidence. We firmly believe that only through this approach can we drive sustainable change that benefits those most in need.

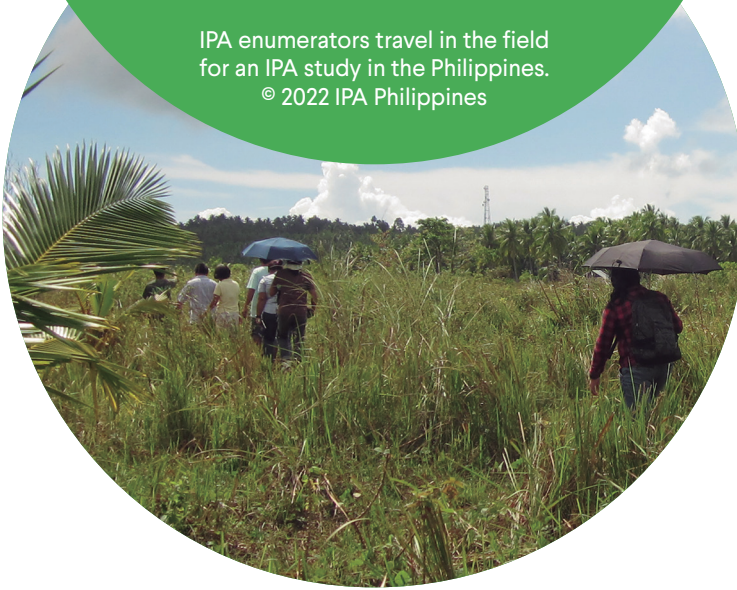
In 2022, our commitment to advancing the use of evidence received a significant boost through a generous \$8 million commitment from philanthropist MacKenzie Scott. This gift, along with other donors’ support, will further strengthen our efforts to create lasting impact in the fight against poverty. As I look back on everything we have accomplished together, I am filled with immense pride. But more than that, I am excited about the future that lies ahead.

With warm regards,

Annie Duflo



IPA enumerators travel in the field
for an IPA study in the Philippines.
© 2022 IPA Philippines



About IPA

We Discover and Advance What Works to Improve the Lives of People Living in Poverty

Every year, governments, private foundations, individual philanthropists, and non-governmental organizations across the globe invest millions of dollars in poverty alleviation, yet half of the global population lives on less than \$6.85 USD per person, per day.¹ Why? At Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA), we believe limited evidence exists on what works to help people living in poverty, and the evidence that does exist often goes unused. This leads to programs that are either ineffective or not as effective as they could be, and often to wasted money and enduring poverty. With a network of researchers and partners, we test innovative solutions, support our partners to generate and use data and evidence, and help bring proven approaches to scale around the world.

Our Vision: A World with More Evidence and Less Poverty

Our Sectoral Expertise



AGRICULTURE



CONSUMER PROTECTION



EDUCATION



ENTREPRENEURSHIP & PRIVATE SECTOR DEVELOPMENT



FINANCIAL INCLUSION



HEALTH & NUTRITION



HUMAN TRAFFICKING



INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE



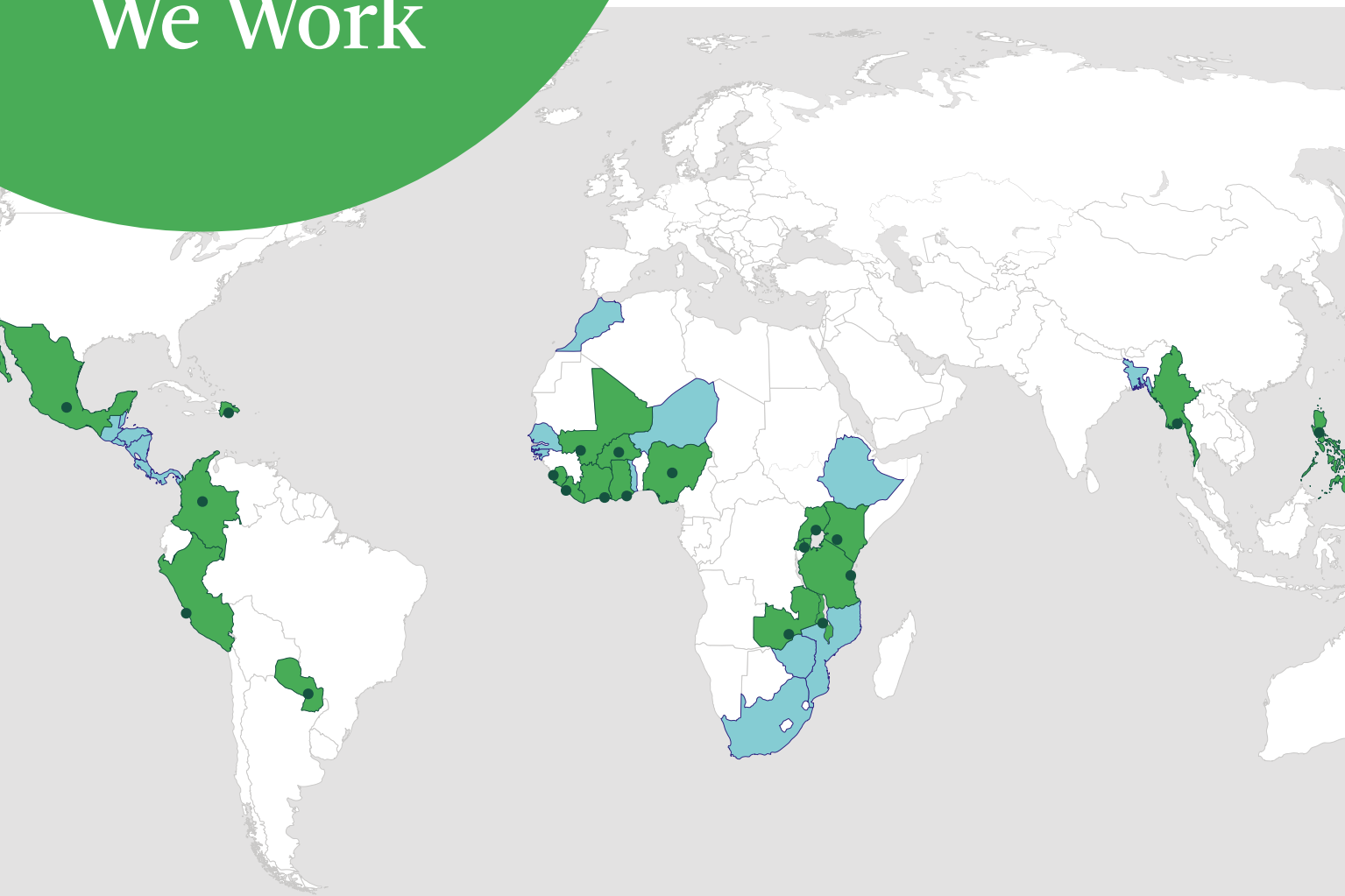
PEACE & RECOVERY



SOCIAL PROTECTION

1. A farmer in Baguio, Benguet, Philippines. © 2019 Nathaniel Sison on Unsplash
2. A person holding a mobile phone. © 2018 freestocks on Unsplash
3. A teacher with students in a classroom, photographed during an IPA study in Ghana. © 2019 IPA
4. A woman (left) shows an IPA analyst around a factory in Colombia. © 2020 Luz Karime Palacios
5. A surveyor works with a study participant during an IPA study in Paraguay. © 2018 IPA Paraguay
6. A photo taken during IPA's growth charts study in Zambia. © 2017 Rachel Levenson
7. Two boats on the water in Palawan, Philippines. This is not a depiction of a confirmed instance of human trafficking. © 2018 Konrad Binder on Unsplash
8. The shadow of a young anonymous woman. © 2021 Katty Elizarova on Shutterstock
9. A photo of Kutupalong Refugee Camp in Bangladesh. © 2018 Sebastian Chaskel
10. A photo of a market in Ethiopia, taken during an IPA study evaluating the Graduation program. © 2015 Nate Barker

Where We Work



COUNTRY OFFICES

East Africa

- Kenya
- Malawi
- Rwanda
- Tanzania
- Uganda
- Zambia

West Africa

- Burkina Faso
- Côte d'Ivoire
- Ghana
- Liberia
- Mali
- Nigeria
- Sierra Leone

Asia

- Myanmar
- Philippines

Latin America & the Caribbean

- Colombia
- Dominican Republic
- Mexico
- Paraguay
- Peru

OTHER HIGHLIGHTED COUNTRIES WHERE WE WORK

- Bangladesh
- Belize
- Costa Rica
- El Salvador
- Ethiopia
- Guatemala
- Guinea-Bissau
- Honduras
- Morocco

- Mozambique
- Nicaragua
- Niger
- Panama
- Senegal
- South Africa
- Togo
- Zimbabwe

Our Values



Commitment to Improving Lives

We exist to develop and use evidence to improve the lives of people living in poverty.



Co-Creation

We work to co-create relevant evidence and locally-rooted change.



Rigor

We are unrelenting and rigorous in our pursuit of effective solutions and the use of data.



Diversity

Our diverse ideas, experiences, and identities allow us to make a greater impact locally and globally.



Integrity

We hold ourselves and our partners to the highest ethical standards in all we do and how we do it.



Collaboration

We build strong relationships, based upon mutual respect, with researchers, partners, and each other to achieve greater impact.



Dr. Dean Karlan from USAID's official website

Our People

IPA Founder Dr. Dean Karlan Appointed USAID Chief Economist

In 2022, we proudly announced the appointment of Dr. Dean Karlan, founder of IPA, Professor of Economics and Finance at Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management, and Co-Director of the Global Poverty Research Lab, as the Chief Economist for the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

As the USAID Chief Economist, Dr. Karlan assumes the crucial role of serving as USAID's principal economist and leading expert in economic policy and analysis. Leveraging insights from randomized controlled trials and other rigorous evaluations, Dr. Karlan provides invaluable support to USAID in making evidence-based decisions and advancing development objectives.

Our People

Thanking Former and Current IPA Staff

Throughout the past 20 years, we have benefitted from the expertise, dedication, and passion of exceptional individuals determined to push forward the use of evidence to solve poverty problems. Our anniversary is not only a significant moment in IPA's journey but also a milestone in the global advance of the evidence-to-impact movement. We extend boundless gratitude to all those who have contributed to this progress, whether you are still at IPA or encouraging evidence-informed decision-making elsewhere. Special recognition goes to those exceptional staff members who have remained members of our team for over a decade. We take great pride in celebrating the amazing people who have contributed to the remarkable growth and success of IPA.

IPA Staff with over a Decade of Service:

Rebecca Antwi Yeboah
Suleiman Asman
Mary Ateto
Benjamin Ayim
Nick Ayugi
Obed Djan
Annie Duflo
Charlette Emomeri
George Ganda
Nathanael Goldberg
Juan Manuel Hernandez-Agramonte
Kyle Holloway
Japheth Juma
Joyce Jumpah
Eunice Kioko

Daiva Latifi
Linnet Magero
Christina Masalonga
Ann Mayuga
John Mboya
Fatoma Momoh
Bonnyface Ndung'u
Doug Parkerson
Pace Phillips
Lindsey Shaughnessy
Peter Srouji
Deborah Wambua
Gladys Wanjala
Loïc Watine

Our People

Building a More Diverse, Equitable, and Inclusive Workplace

Recognizing that a diverse workforce not only enriches our organizational culture but also brings a wealth of ideas, experiences, and insights to our work, in 2022, we strengthened our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). By furthering our DEI efforts, we become more effective in addressing the challenges and opportunities within the communities where we work.

Through experience, we have learned that technical knowledge, combined with a deep understanding of and connection to the local context, is key to creating sustainable impact. Investing in local talent is and has always been a central component of our strategic ambition. By year-end, 71 percent of our full-time staff were working in their home countries, and 41 percent of our country and regional leaders hailed from the countries where we operate. We remain deeply committed to fostering diversity within our entire team and increasing the number of colleagues from low- and middle-income countries (LMICs).

We are also determined to bolster women's representation among leadership positions. Currently, 46 percent of our leadership roles are

held by women, and we believe our sustained efforts will achieve full gender parity and cultivate an inclusive environment where all individuals can flourish. In pursuit of this commitment, in 2022, we launched Women of IPA (WIPA) employee resource groups in our country offices across Africa, Latin America, and the United States. These groups serve as empowering and nurturing spaces for women, fostering learning and mutual support to enable success and growth in the workplace.

In 2022, we also introduced an equitable and transparent compensation policy, ensuring that our team members are valued and recognized for their diverse talents and efforts. Moreover, we revamped our hiring practices to attract a more diverse pool of highly qualified candidates.

Looking ahead, we reiterate our dedication to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion within our organization. Embracing a diverse and inclusive workplace is integral to our mission and our effectiveness, and we will continue to refine our efforts to build a workforce that mirrors the diversity and richness of the countries where we work.

A group photo taken at an IPA/J-PAL staff training in Kenya. © 2018 Lindsey Shaughnessy





IPA Executive Director Annie Duflo (center-left in the photo) meets with local scholars in Côte d'Ivoire. © 2022 Stéphane Bationo

Our Network

Enhancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Across Researchers and Partners

In 2022, we strengthened our dedication to fostering DEI in research through the expansion of our Locally Grounded Researchers Initiative, which was launched the previous year. Our primary objective is to promote DEI principles within our network of researchers and partnerships, with a special emphasis on LMICs. Our firm belief is that conducting research locally and involving researchers from the countries where we operate will lead to more policy-relevant and impactful studies and more sustainable policies and programs.

Guided by an advisory committee composed of esteemed academics from different countries in

Africa, we are confident in our ability to make significant progress through ongoing engagement with our partners. In 2022, we achieved several milestones in our strategy, focusing on Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Uganda, and Zambia. These achievements are key to laying the foundation for a more inclusive and impactful future.

STRENGTHENING THE NETWORK OF LOCAL RESEARCHERS

We continued to establish partnerships with universities and research institutions across Africa—including the African School of Economics, the University of Nairobi, and Lagos Business School, among others—bringing our total partnerships to 20. In addition, we held seven networking events with 157 participants across Africa, bringing together researchers and policymakers to forge relationships and advance their interests and participation in conducting research.

ENHANCING ACCESS TO FUNDING FOR LOCAL RESEARCHERS

We held workshops that provided tailored proposal development and support to local researchers, as well as matchmaking opportunities to capitalize on diverse perspectives and local knowledge when forming teams. These workshops led to the submission of 37 proposals for new research projects, with 13 projects led by a local researcher successfully awarded funding.

We also revised the management guidelines for IPA's competitive funds to make funding more accessible to local researchers. This includes expanding the number of outlets where calls are posted and the languages in which submissions can be made. Additionally, we established a grant fund for country offices to submit proposals for exploratory research in collaboration with early-career African researchers.

DEVELOPING A PIPELINE OF RESEARCHERS THROUGH IPA COUNTRY OFFICES

To offer early career researchers a chance to gain hands-on experience, we established the African Internship Program across all our country offices. We onboarded four PhD students as interns, three in Burkina Faso and one in Ghana. Within IPA, we created the Applied Research Methods (ARM) Group, comprising staff members with the capacity to be researchers on projects, and established the ARM network pipeline to identify diverse staff with the potential to be part of this group.

Looking ahead, we are committed to continue expanding the Locally Grounded Research Initiative to other countries, and we have already initiated collaborations with partners in Mali, Mexico, Rwanda, and Tanzania. Beyond offering consistent project development support and matchmaking opportunities for our researchers, we are establishing visiting researcher programs, allowing academics from our network to share and exchange knowledge at IPA's partner universities. Additionally, we are enhancing the Africa Internship program by increasing the number of internship opportunities available to African young professionals.

Though it is still early to measure the full impact, we are encouraged by the progress and potential this initiative holds to diversify and strengthen our network of researchers and partners.



“Personal interactions that lead to the creation of research partnerships for professional development are key. These relationships require time, energy, and research funding, but they are the basis on which a researcher builds his reputation and professional development.”

—Associate Professor Eugénie Maïga,
Norbert Zongo University, Burkina Faso,
IPA Partner



A photo of attendees at a research proposal writing workshop that IPA held in Bamako, Mali, to equip the next generation of researchers with practical tools and tips for writing a strong research proposal. © 2023 Abdoulahi Boris Traore

Our Network

IPA Partners with the



RESEARCH IN COLOR
FOUNDATION

As part of our commitment to DEI, we are pleased to announce our partnership with the Research in Color Foundation. This collaboration will increase the representation and retention of scholars of color in economics, policy, and related fields. As a result of this alliance, IPA will provide financial sponsorship to support two mentees and one early career Ph.D. student of color who are enthusiastic about development economics and policy. These individuals will be designated as IPA Scholars through Research in Color, fostering equitable opportunities and contributing to a more diverse and effective research community.

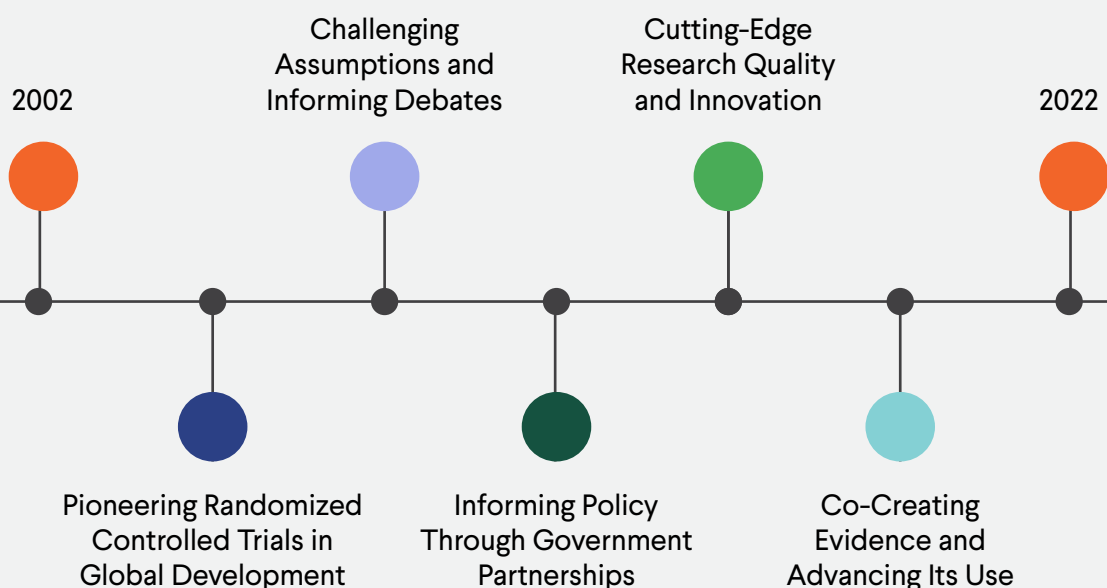
“Africa accounts for only one percent of new research, creating an urgent need for locally-based research and locally functioning universities. We can’t expect knowledge to decolonize itself. We need to just do it, without asking permission.”

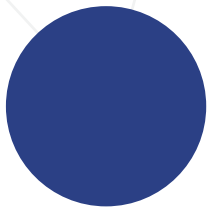
—Leonard Wantchekon, Founder and President of the African School of Economics and Professor at Princeton University, IPA Partner

20 Years of Reducing Poverty Worldwide

2022 marks a special occasion for IPA as we commemorate the 20th anniversary of our founding. IPA was created two decades ago to address the lack of rigor, data, and evidence about what works to help those who live in poverty. Since then, we have experienced remarkable growth and impact. While our commitment to rigorous evaluation remains steadfast, IPA has evolved into an organization that extends beyond any single methodology.

Today, we participate in strategic collaborations with partners to co-create evidence and advance its use. Notable initiatives that showcase our expanded scope include the Right-Fit Evidence Unit, which functions as an advisory team to assist organizations in leveraging data to enhance their operations and effectiveness, and our Embedded Labs, which involve IPA working closely with government partners to institutionalize the use of evidence. The following highlights exemplify some of the accomplishments on our 20-year journey.





Pioneering Randomized Controlled Trials in Global Development

At its beginnings, IPA, along with a few other organizations including our close partner at MIT, the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL), embraced rigorous methodologies—particularly randomized controlled trials (RCTs)—to measure the impact of development interventions. In an RCT—a widely used method in medical research—programs or policies are randomly assigned to different groups. Among these groups, one serves as the comparison group and receives no intervention, while the others receive either the intervention being tested or different versions of the intervention to assess which components are more effective. This random assignment is crucial because it eliminates the influence of bias or pre-existing difference between the groups. It also allows researchers to attribute any differences in group outcomes to the intervention being evaluated. **In 2019, economists Abhijit Banerjee, Esther Duflo, and Michael Kremer were recognized with the Nobel Prize in Economics for using this approach in poverty alleviation.**

One notable RCT conducted by IPA in partnership with researchers Michael Kremer and Edward Miguel in Kenya examined the impact of a free deworming program for children at schools. The results were remarkable. The program reduced serious worm infections by 61 percent and even had positive effects on untreated children in nearby areas (known as spillover effects). These health improvements translated into significant educational benefits, including a 25 percent reduction in school absenteeism and increased attendance in secondary school, particularly for girls.²

Inspired by IPA's findings about the positive impacts of school-based deworming, the Deworm the World Initiative was founded and then incubated by IPA to help governments launch, monitor, and sustain school-based deworming programs across the world. Deworm the World later became part of Evidence Action, an organization that implements programs backed by rigorous evidence at scale. IPA's evidence continues to serve as a backbone for school-based deworming. As of 2022, governments throughout sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia have implemented regional and national school-based deworming programs, reaching a total of nearly 250 million children.³



A teacher gives a tablet to a child on a “deworming day.”
© 2012 Sierra Visher

20 Year Economic Impacts of Deworming

Twenty years later, IPA conducted a follow-up study to track participants in the original deworming RCT and assess their well-being in adulthood, successfully overcoming the significant challenge of finding and reaching individuals after such an extended period. The results revealed that those who were dewormed during childhood experienced a nine percent increase in the hours worked outside of agriculture. Furthermore, they enjoyed higher incomes, earning on average 10-14 percent more than their non-treatment counterparts.⁴ This exemplifies how IPA continues to generate compelling evidence, providing valuable insights into the program benefits even long after their implementation.

Another notable RCT implemented by IPA aimed at identifying effective methods to improve water quality in rural Kenya. Researchers Michael Kremer, Edward Miguel, Sendhil Mullainathan, Clair Null, Jessica Leino, and Alix Zwane partnered with local communities to install free chlorine dispensers at water sources so people drawing water could easily add chlorine, ensuring the water was safe to drink. To maximize the impact, they also promoted the program through existing social marketing campaigns around chlorine and enlisted paid promoters from the community to encourage its usage.

As a result of these combined efforts, the take-up of chlorine to treat water increased by 53 percentage points. Remarkably, even after the promotion ended, families continued to use the dispensers consistently, and this trend persisted for over two years. The evaluation's most striking finding was its impact on child health: the implementation of chlorine water treatment resulted in a 25 percent reduction in the likelihood of all-cause child mortality.⁵

IPA played a pivotal role in establishing the Dispensers for Safe Water program, which is currently operated by Evidence Action alongside Deworm the World. Dispensers for Safe Water currently provides free chlorine dispensers for families in Kenya, Malawi, and Uganda.



A woman using a chlorine dispenser in Kenya.
© 2012 Jessica Hoel

Growing the Dispensers for Safe Water Program

Evidence Action announced that starting in 2022 it would install 24,000 chlorine dispensers throughout rural Malawi and Uganda. With this expansion, approximately nine million people across the two countries will have access to safe water. As it expands in Malawi and Uganda, the program will continue to serve more than two million people in rural Kenya.

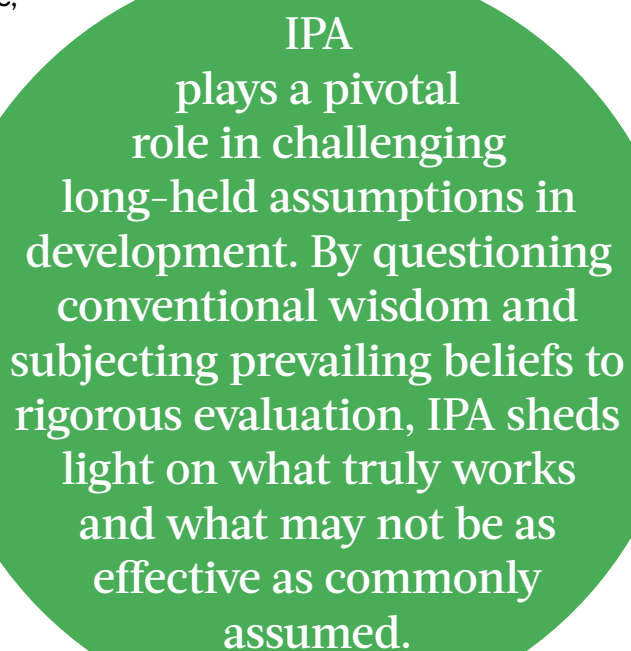


Challenging Assumptions and Informing Debates

Over the years, poverty alleviation programs primarily focused on delivering goods or services, infrastructure development, training initiatives, or microloan provisions. There was a widespread belief that direct cash transfers to the poor might be misused or misallocated. However, with extensive research supported by IPA, this conventional wisdom has been overturned. The evidence demonstrates that unconditional cash transfers can effectively improve the lives of individuals living in poverty.

This groundbreaking research has led to a notable shift in donor support, with millions of dollars now being allocated to cash transfer programs. While cash transfers alone are not a perfect solution to poverty alleviation, their importance is now widely recognized. Furthermore, cash transfers are revolutionizing how we gauge the effectiveness of interventions. Programs are now being assessed against cash benchmarks, which directly compare their impact to providing cash of equal value to the program's cost.

In 2022, IPA collaborated with the World Bank to delve deeper into the intricacies of cash transfers. This partnership aims to uncover essential details, such as determining the appropriate transfer amount and frequency of distribution, among other critical aspects.



IPA
plays a pivotal
role in challenging
long-held assumptions in
development. By questioning
conventional wisdom and
subjecting prevailing beliefs to
rigorous evaluation, IPA sheds
light on what truly works
and what may not be as
effective as commonly
assumed.



A cash transaction taking place in Uganda. © 2013 Will Boase

From Evidence to Award-Winning Implementation

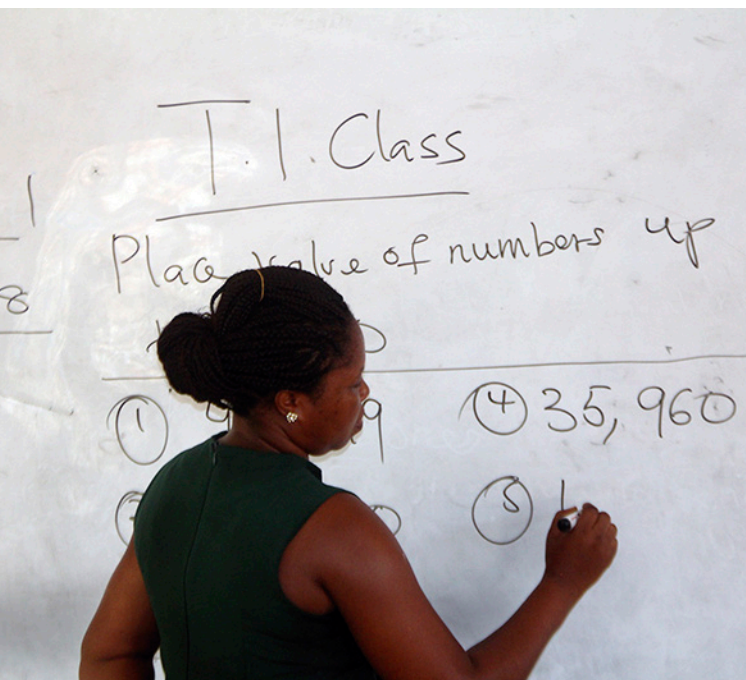
The Government of Togo partnered with IPA, GiveDirectly, and the Center for Effective Global Action (CEGA) to launch a pioneering contactless direct payments program. This program was designed to identify individuals living in extreme poverty and facilitate their self-enrollment in the government's cash transfer program, known as Novissi. To maximize the program's reach, high-resolution satellite imagery and nationally representative household consumption data were used to select the

poorest villages and neighborhoods. Within these areas, machine learning algorithms leveraged mobile phone metadata and phone surveys to prioritize the most vulnerable individuals. This critical insight allowed for the prioritization of those most in need, especially during the challenging times of the COVID-19 pandemic, enabling efficient and contactless emergency cash transfers. Novissi has brought significant benefits to approximately 819,972 people, amounting to an estimated value of \$8 trillion USD.⁶ The remarkable achievements of the program have earned prestigious recognition, including the Paris Peace Forum award and the 2022 SXSW Innovation Award.

Informing Policy Through Government Partnerships

IPA's role has evolved from developing evidence to collaborating closely with government partners in using that evidence to foster change. One such example is the implementation of "differentiated learning," also known as "teaching at the right level," an approach that focuses on teaching children based on their learning levels rather than age or grade. This approach has proven to be effective in various contexts in India and Africa, thanks in part to research supported by IPA. Currently, differentiated learning is being implemented in Ghana's lowest-performing schools with technical support from IPA. Our role focuses on supporting the Ghana Ministry of Education (MoE) in taking differentiated learning from a tested, controlled environment to a truly cost-effective scale-up. Specifically, we are working with the MoE to ensure that the program is

scaled in a data-driven way, that it is implemented as the evidence suggests it should be, and that the government is owning and driving the program's monitoring, evaluation, and learning activities sustainably, especially once IPA's direct involvement phases out. For example, through this partnership, we have learned the critical significance of teacher training as a crucial component for program effectiveness. IPA is currently supporting the MoE in exploring the most cost-effective approaches to teacher training and conducting a study to identify the most efficient method for providing refresher training to teachers. Our study involves testing both in-person and digital training methods to assess their effectiveness.



A photo taken during an IPA study in Ghana of a teacher writing a lesson on a whiteboard in front of her classroom. © 2019 IPA Ghana

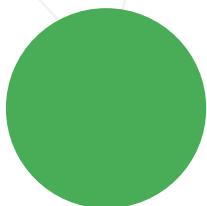


A photo from the Cross-Country Learning Exchange event in Kigali, Rwanda, in November 2022. © 2022 Bethany Park

Building a Culture of Evidence-Informed Policymaking

In November 2022, IPA organized a Cross-Country Learning Exchange in Kigali, Rwanda, bringing together education policymakers and partners from 11 countries. The event aimed to promote local leadership and facilitate peer learning and collaboration, with a particular emphasis on improving education policy in the countries where we operate. Public sector participants led knowledge-sharing sessions, focusing on lessons learned from institutionalizing the use of evidence through Embedded Evidence

Labs. The event emphasized collaboration and explored effective ways of working closely with policymakers to co-create research agendas aligned with policy priorities. Colleagues shared tools and insights to support the scaling of evidence-informed programs for improved learning outcomes. Additionally, the event highlighted the significance of integrating robust monitoring, evaluation, and learning practices within government structures in order to increase the use of evidence. The exchange fostered an atmosphere of open dialogue, laying the foundation for further advancements in evidence-based education policies and promoting lasting collaborations among participants.



Cutting-Edge Research Quality and Innovation

At IPA, our commitment lies in generating credible evidence to support our partners. As the world evolves, we continuously adapt our data gathering and analysis methods, as well as the research areas we explore. While randomized evaluation remains integral to our work, we recognize the value of integrating diverse methodologies, including timely descriptive statistics and qualitative research.

Over the years, we have been at the forefront of pioneering and embracing new research methods. While traditional in-person surveys still represent the heavy lifting of our work, we have expanded our methods to include phone, web, SMS, and social media platforms for evidence gathering. Furthermore, we actively study how these different survey modes impact both the cost and quality of our research. Leveraging sensor data, satellite imagery, and administrative information like financial transactions, enables us to address vital research questions. To tackle the challenges and opportunities of big data, we employ machine learning algorithms to detect fraud as part of our consumer protection agenda and to predict poverty probability, improving service targeting for the ultra-poor.

Beyond methodological innovation, thematic innovation is equally crucial to us. Our innovative survey design approaches enable accurate measurement of sensitive topics,

such as intimate partner violence, and exploration of new research areas, like human trafficking prevention. Employing privacy-protective techniques, such as special numeric codes for survey responses, allows us to gather rigorous data on confidential topics like gang membership. Our adaptability and innovative spirit enable us to embrace new technologies swiftly and respond to changing realities, exemplified during the pandemic when we seamlessly transitioned from in-person to remote surveys. This leadership is widely recognized in our field. For instance, in 2022, we provided technical support to the Immigration Policy Lab and Mercy Corps, utilizing WhatsApp to survey Venezuelan migrants, a traditionally challenging group to gather data about. These innovations extend to other humanitarian contexts, pushing the frontiers of our research and knowledge, ultimately benefiting more people.

At IPA, we take immense pride in our track record of producing high-quality evidence, and we remain committed to pushing the boundaries of research to gain deeper insights into what works.



Veronica Kakengi (left) introduces the UNSGSA to mobile money agents and entrepreneurs on October 18, 2022, in Dar es Salaam's Makumbusho Market. Kakengi also helps the UNSGSA with translating the local language, Swahili, into English. (Photo by Patrick Van Katwijk/Getty Images)

IPA Hosts UN Secretary-General's Special Advocate Queen Máxima to Meet with Mobile Money Users in Tanzania

In 2022, IPA was honored to host a field visit to Dar es Salaam's Makumbusho Market during a visit to Tanzania by Her Majesty Queen Máxima of the Netherlands in her capacity as the UN Secretary-General's Special Advocate for Inclusive Finance for Development (UNSGSA). Queen Máxima traveled to Tanzania to better understand how digital payments are being used in the country, the costs associated with them, and their potential to help small businesses and other users.

Despite the prevalence of mobile money in Tanzania, most transactions are still made using

cash, which can be less efficient than digital payments and expose consumers to risks. IPA is leading two research initiatives that aim to foster financial inclusion and encourage the adoption of mobile money. The first is the Transaction Cost Index, led by researchers Xavier Giné and Francis Annan. Its goal is to establish the first-ever index of the actual cost of completing mobile money transactions in Tanzania (as well as Uganda and Bangladesh). This index will encompass listed prices, unofficial fees like "off-the-books" agent charges, and non-pecuniary costs such as failed transactions. The second initiative is the Interoperable Payments Systems, led by researchers Philip Roessler, Russell Toth, Tiffany Tsai, and Mark Walsh. This research aims to explore the impact of interoperable payment systems on the expansion of financial inclusion and digital retail payments. The insights gained from these research endeavors will inform IPA's efforts in promoting financial inclusion in Tanzania.




Co-Creating Evidence and Advancing Its Use

IPA is today an organization that not only generates but also advances the use of rigorous evidence on a broader scale. We have come to understand that for evidence to have a meaningful impact on people's lives, our research must address questions that are not only relevant to academia but also crucial for decision-makers. Aligned with this vision, we have shifted our focus towards a model of co-creating evidence. This means engaging an ecosystem of decision-makers, researchers, and practitioners to define research questions and program modalities that respond to the most urgent issues or policy opportunities while remaining implementable within real-world resources and constraints.

We not only recognize but also actively leverage the potential of evidence at various stages of a project's life cycle to maximize the probability of achieving successful impact. For example, in 2022, our Right-Fit Evidence Unit collaborated with the LEGO Foundation to translate theoretical ideas into creative, implementable solutions for out-of-school children in refugee contexts in Uganda and Ethiopia, thereby creating pilot-ready programs that can later be rigorously evaluated. Our evidence plays a key role in informing a program's design and its theory of change, thereby increasing the likelihood of generating a positive impact when the program reaches a level of maturity suitable for an impact evaluation.

Through our Right-Fit Evidence Unit, we are actively strengthening institutional monitoring, evaluation, and learning systems, enhancing organizations' potential for success. In 2022, we partnered with the Somos Comunidad project in Colombia to develop a monitoring, evaluation, and learning model to assess the program's implementation. This undertaking ensures the proper implementation of an innovation, because even projects with proven results need precise implementation to achieve their intended outcomes. Furthermore, this approach allows for necessary adjustments, encourages continuous learning, and facilitates data-driven adaptation along the way.



Our Embedded Evidence Labs are playing a pivotal role in institutionalizing the use of evidence within governments, acting as central hubs for strengthening the use of data and evidence in public policy. This model allows IPA and policymakers to work side by side to embed a cycle of data and evidence-driven decision-making in government. As a result, governments take ownership of the evidence labs and maximize the potential for evidence to inform policy, even after IPA's direct support ends. IPA supported its first embedded lab together with J-PAL in Peru in 2016. Today, in partnership with our network of governments and researchers, IPA is scoping or advancing 21 Embedded Evidence Labs.



A photo taken during IPA's evaluation of a pay-for-performance model for teachers in Rwanda. © 2019 IPA Rwanda



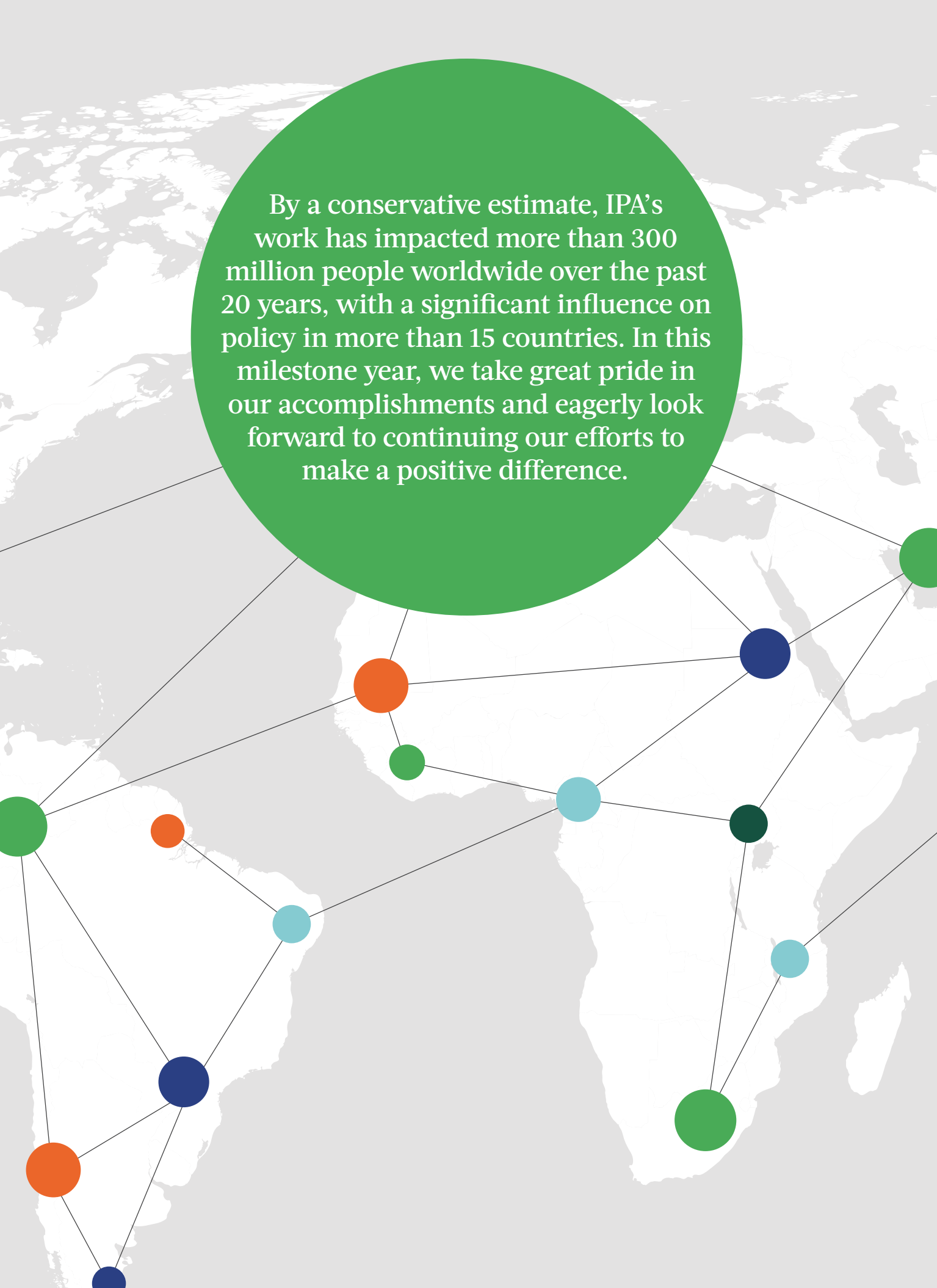
IPA Builds Embedded Lab Partnerships to Advance Early Learning Outcomes for Children in Five Countries

IPA partnered with the LEGO Foundation and Ministries of Education in five countries to establish Embedded Evidence Labs aimed at improving early learning outcomes for children. The primary objective is to enhance the use of data and evidence for education policy by embedding teams within the ministries. This approach fosters a horizontal learning process, enabling both parties to learn from each other while simultaneously building capacity in data and evidence utilization.

In Rwanda, IPA and the Georgetown University Initiative on Innovation, Development and Evaluation (*gui²de*) have established an Embedded Evidence Lab to support the Ministry of Education in scaling a successful pay-for-performance contract scheme. The lab's current focus is on supporting the Government of Rwanda's new comprehensive assessment in public schools, which is necessary for an effective scale-up of the contract initiative. Its broader vision is to serve as a central hub providing services related to diverse educational themes, engaging with academics, strengthening policy-analytic capabilities, and fostering iterative feedback loops for policy design, evaluation, and adaptation. Ultimately, the Embedded Evidence Lab aims to create an environment where data-driven decision-making and evidence-based practices lead to improved learning outcomes for students, making a lasting impact on education policy.

In Colombia, IPA's Lab in Early Childhood Development, working closely with the Colombian Family Welfare Institute (ICBF), is involved in designing, piloting, evaluating, and scaling policy initiatives that address the challenges faced by ICBF. One of their initial projects focused on improving teachers' mental health, which ICBF prioritized as a post-COVID measure. The lab team is currently collaborating with researchers to conduct a randomized evaluation to assess the intervention's effectiveness and decide whether it should be scaled up.

In Uganda, Kenya, and Sierra Leone, our Embedded Evidence Labs are in the early stages of scoping and building support. Our main goal is to strengthen data systems and utilize existing evidence to inform public policy decisions. Assessments help us understand our partners' current capacity in data and evidence utilization, allowing us to collaboratively design a work plan to establish an Embedded Evidence Lab that aligns with their needs.



By a conservative estimate, IPA's work has impacted more than 300 million people worldwide over the past 20 years, with a significant influence on policy in more than 15 countries. In this milestone year, we take great pride in our accomplishments and eagerly look forward to continuing our efforts to make a positive difference.



Accelerating and Strengthening Evidence Use

IPA is thrilled to announce a gift of \$8 million USD in unrestricted support from novelist and philanthropist MacKenzie Scott. This investment will help IPA accelerate and strengthen its efforts to put evidence to work. While instances of successfully translating evidence into programs and policies have grown, significant hurdles persist in transforming evidence-based approaches into impactful large-scale initiatives. Even when strong intervention evidence exists, critical questions regarding scalability, cost-effectiveness, and contextual adaptability linger. Furthermore, forging coalitions with stakeholders committed to success remains essential.

To address these challenges, we are expanding our Policy Impact Fund, enabling rapid responses to policy opportunities and the overcoming of barriers that obstruct data-driven decision-making. We are also intensifying our cost-effectiveness analysis to guide scaling decisions, and we are committed to furthering our efforts to nurture local evidence ecosystems. This includes ongoing actions to diversify our researchers and partners, broaden the scope of our Embedded Evidence Labs model, and facilitate cross-country learning on evidence-informed policymaking. We are confident that these efforts will accelerate and strengthen evidence use, enabling IPA to make a greater impact on the lives of people living in poverty.

2022 Supporters

We are grateful to all members of the global IPA community who support our mission to discover and advance what works to improve the lives of people living in poverty. . In addition to grassroots-level support of individuals around the world, our work in 2022 was made possible by grants and contributions from the following funders and donors.

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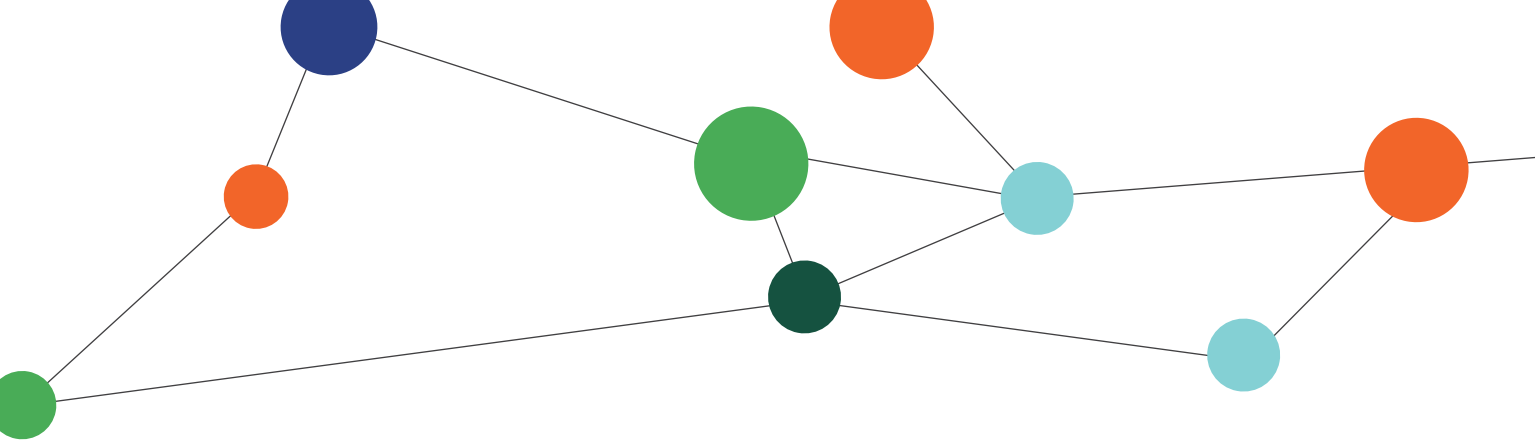


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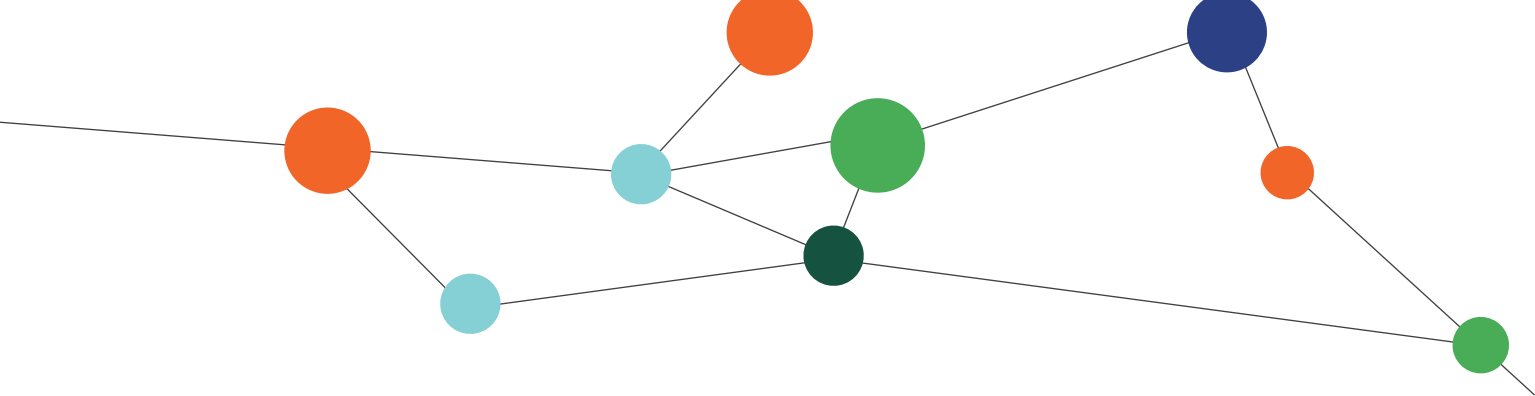
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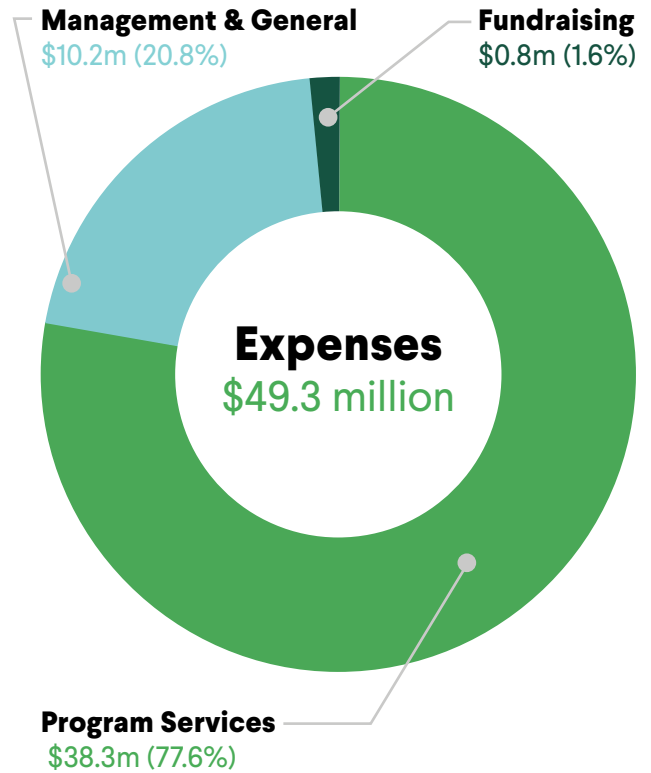
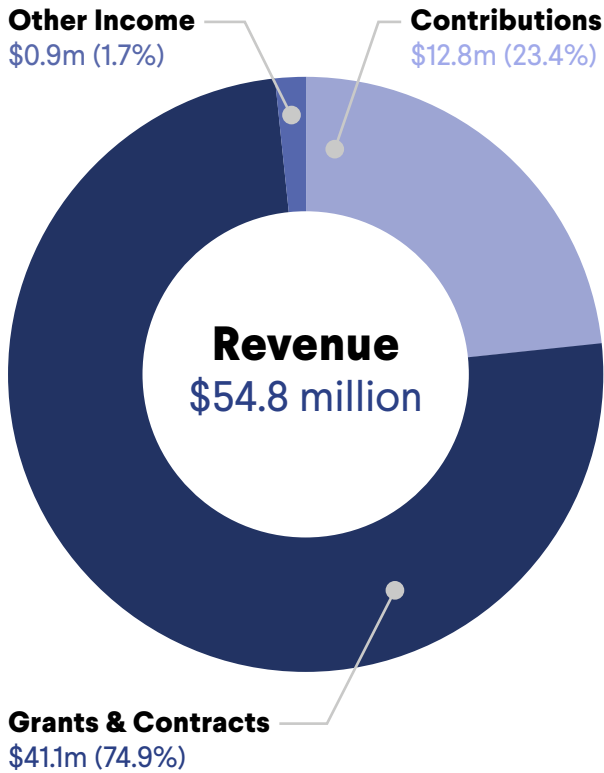
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2022 Financial Report



Net Assets

End of 2021: **\$6.63m**
 End of 2022: **\$11.86m**
 Change in Net Assets: **\$5.23m**

IPA's 2022 fiscal year covered January 1 to December 31, 2022. Percentages are calculated using exact amounts rather than rounded amounts. See our full, audited financials at: poverty-action.org/financials

IPA is recognized as a platinum-level Candid's GuideStar participant, demonstrating our commitment to transparency. We are also one of The Life You Can Save's top recommended charities for effective giving.



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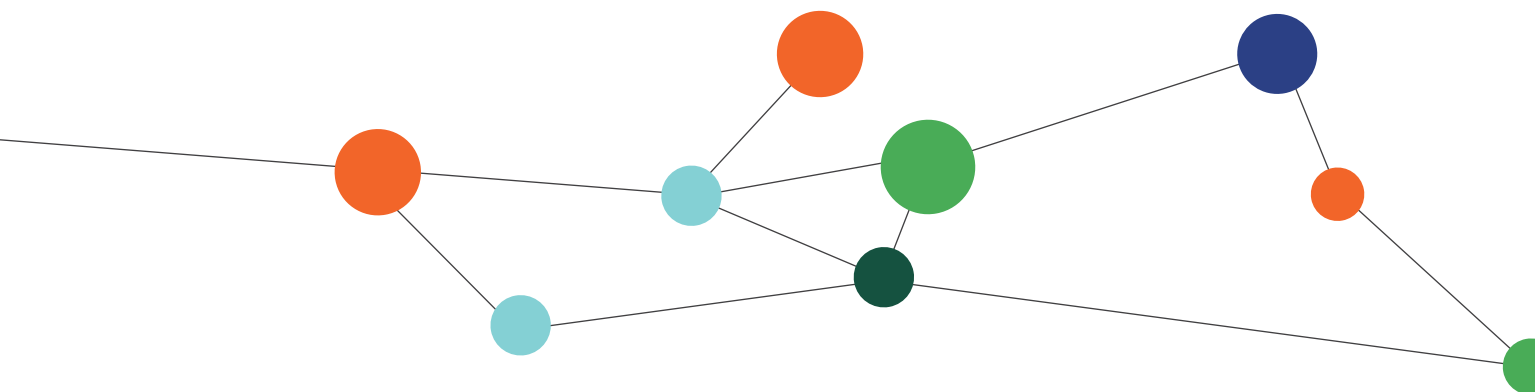
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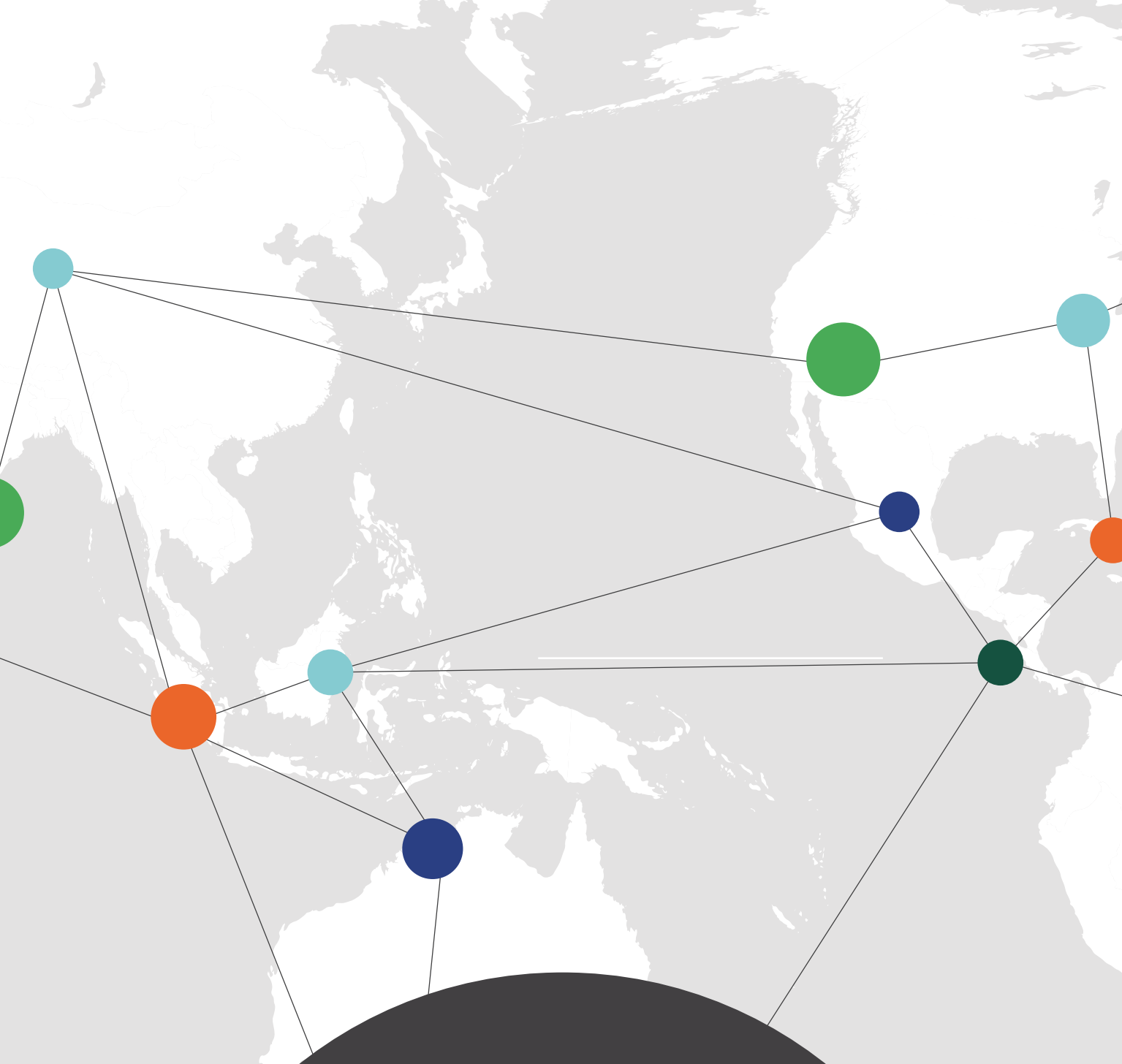
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References

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