

Myanmar



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Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) is a research and policy non-profit that discovers and promotes effective solutions to global poverty problems. IPA brings together researchers and decision-makers to design, rigorously evaluate, and refine these solutions and their applications, ensuring that the evidence created is used to improve the lives of the world's poor. Since our founding in 2002, IPA has worked with over 575 leading academics to conduct over 650 evaluations in 51 countries. Future growth will be concentrated in focus countries, such as Myanmar, where we have local and international staff, established relationships with government, NGOs, and the private sector, and deep knowledge of local issues.

More Evidence

In Myanmar, we have continued our global tradition of rigorous, applicable research by building foundational research capacity and conducting evaluations in areas of pressing national concern. Examples of our work below offer promising insights into everyday issues that affect the lives of people in Myanmar.

HEALTH | SOCIAL PROTECTION

Can unconditional cash transfers to mothers improve child nutrition? In Myanmar, which has one of the highest rates of child growth stunting in the Asia-Pacific region, IPA is working with researchers to evaluate the impact of maternal cash transfers and nutritional information on child health and wellbeing. Additionally, researchers are testing whether delivering cash through governmental institutions or through an existing microfinance institution is more cost-effective and easier to scale-up.

HEALTH

Do digital health records improve health unit performance and the quality of care? Health management information systems (HMIS) have many potential benefits—they could improve the accuracy of diagnoses, prevent doctor error and reduce processing times. However, the introduction of such an innovative technology raises a variety of organizational and adoption challenges, and little rigorous evidence exists on its effects. IPA is conducting a pilot study in peri-urban Yangon to provide insights on how to scale a Clinic Management Information System (CMIS).

HEALTH

Can mobile phone-based education reduce infant mortality? Myanmar has the highest infant mortality rate in Southeast Asia, and mobile phone-based education may be a cost-

IPA MYANMAR
Since 2015

FOCUS SECTORS
Agriculture, Financial Inclusion, Governance, Health, Peace & Recovery, Small & Medium Enterprises, Social Protection

RESEARCH PROJECTS
6 in progress

KEY PARTNERS
Christian Aid, Duke University, Government of Myanmar, Harvard University, International Growth Centre, Joint Peace Fund, Koe Koe Tech, London School of Economics and Political Science, Myanmar Nurses and Midwives Association, Namati, Population Services International, Save the Children International, University of Sydney

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effective way to alleviate this problem, as the country has one of the highest rates of smartphone uptake in the developing world. IPA and Koe Koe Tech are piloting a study on the effects of a maternal health education app on pregnant women's health literacy and behavior, and whether social network effects mitigate or intensify impacts.

Better Programs & Policies

IPA evidence has already contributed to improving millions of lives. Now, with 15 years of evidence to build on, our programs are increasingly focusing on government and partner collaboration to translate evidence into better programs and policies.

SOCIAL PROTECTION

IPA is supporting the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement to study the best way to deliver maternal financial support. IPA's research on maternal cash transfers will advise the Government of Myanmar on the most appropriate model to be extended at scale as it seeks to fulfill its commitment to a universal maternal cash transfer program for pregnant women and children under two. Additionally, this research will inform the Government of Myanmar's financial inclusion efforts – as of 2013, only 6 percent of the population held a bank account, and the cash transfers, being administered by Pact Global Microfinance Fund, provide a unique opportunity to start expanding access to financial services.

PEACE & RECOVERY

Public opinion research conducted by IPA is informing Myanmar's national peace process. The Joint Peace Fund (JPF) has been set up to support the peace process in Myanmar—providing financial, technical, and advisory assistance to support programming involving a range of stakeholders including the government, armed organizations, civil society, non-governmental organizations, and community-based organizations. IPA is supporting the JPF through the Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices baseline study, which aims to contribute to the development of a comprehensive understanding of people's knowledge of, behavior toward, and expectations of the peace process.



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Our Future

IPA Myanmar is becoming a go-to resource for evidence-based insights for government, nonprofits, and the private sector. As we continue to expand our presence in Myanmar, we are focusing on two goals. They are to:

- » **Reinforce IPA's status as a known source of high-quality research.** We continue to bring our expertise in high-quality impact evaluations to Myanmar, providing the capacity to run rigorous evaluations across sectors. We work together with knowledgeable government and academic partners through the concept and design stage to ensure that the evidence provides rigorous, meaningful results for decision-makers.
- » **Partner with decision-makers to seek, generate, and apply evidence at scale to help the poor.** IPA will work together with our close partner, the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL), to train policymakers on what kind of evidence is needed in which decisions, how to determine what evidence is rigorous, and how to use evidence to guide programs and policies. We seek to work together with local and international researchers to both provide opportunities for local academics to build and apply their skills and to make our evidence more relevant to the local policy context. IPA also supports decision-makers in applying this evidence along the path to scale.

Building a world with **More Evidence** and **Less Poverty.**

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