

Innovations for Poverty Action Announces Founder Dr. Dean Karlan Appointed as USAID Chief Economist

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WASHINGTON, D.C. --Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) celebrates today's announcement of Dr. Dean Karlan's appointment as Chief Economist for the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). As the USAID Chief Economist, Karlan will serve as USAID's principal economist and top expert on economic policy and analysis. In this role, Dr. Karlan will use insights from randomized controlled trials and other empirical assessments to support USAID in making evidence-based decisions and in achieving a range of development objectives.

Throughout his distinguished career as an economist, Karlan's research has focused on microeconomic issues of poverty, typically employing experimental methodologies and behavioral economics insights to examine what works, what does not, and why. Karlan is the founder of IPA, an international research and policy non-profit organization that creates and shares evidence on what works to address global poverty-related issues and equips decision-makers to use this evidence. Since its founding in 2002, IPA has conducted over 950 evaluations (650 complete, 300 ongoing) in 51 countries.

"On behalf of IPA, I would like to extend our congratulations to Dr. Dean Karlan on his appointment as the Chief Economist of USAID, the U.S. agency leading America's international development efforts and catalyzing innovation for sustainable economic growth," said Annie Duflo, executive director of IPA. "Dean Karlan's appointment signals a renewed focus on behavioral science and experimental methodologies," said Duflo. "At IPA, we recognize the significance of Karlan's appointment as Chief Economist and we are encouraged to see USAID prioritizing the generation, sharing, and use of evidence to support inclusive, sustained, and resilient economic growth to reduce global poverty."

Karlan and IPA both use an experimental approach first pioneered by Economics Nobel Prize laureates and IPA affiliates Abhijit Banerjee and Esther Duflo of MIT and Michael Kremer of the University of Chicago. This experimental approach to fighting global poverty by

conducting randomized evaluations brings rigor to development economics and provides evidence to decision-makers.

Karlan's appointment comes at a critical time as the world confronts challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, ongoing humanitarian conflicts, and economic shocks that have weakened social support systems.

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Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) is a research and policy nonprofit that creates and shares evidence and equips decision-makers to use that evidence to reduce poverty. For 20 years, IPA has led the field of development in cutting-edge research quality, innovation, and impact. Our long-term presence in 20 countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean has enabled us to build long-term relationships with key decision-makers whose questions and needs drive our research. To learn more, visit www.poverty-action.org.

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