



DEVELOPMENT INNOVATION VENTURES

2024 Awardees

[Development Innovation Ventures](#) (DIV) is USAID’s tiered-evidence, open innovation grantmaking program. DIV provides flexible funding to innovators and researchers to test promising ideas, build evidence of what works to substantially improve development outcomes, and scale highly cost-effective solutions to improve millions of lives. DIV uses a rigorous, evidence-driven approach to ensure each dollar invested generates the greatest possible social impact.

In 2024, DIV added 30 new awards across 20 countries and seven technical sectors to its portfolio. Learn more about the latest grants below and at [this link](#).

Built on the belief that game-changing ideas can come from anyone, anywhere, DIV accepts applications year-round from social entrepreneurs, nonprofits, companies, government partners, and researchers—across every sector and country in which USAID operates. Grantees are selected through a highly competitive process based on their proposal’s evidence of impact, cost-effectiveness, scalability, and financial sustainability.

Inspired by the venture capital model, DIV invests in a portfolio of projects, providing small grants to advance and test promising innovations and larger grants to help scale proven solutions. The “stages” in grantee profiles correspond with the following:



Stage 1: Pilot

Up to \$200,000 to pilot innovations that are early in development and need real-world testing to understand user demand, social outcomes, and feasibility.



Stage 2: Test and Position for Scale

Up to \$1.5 million to support impact evaluations, further market testing, or operational expansion of innovations that have already conducted successful pilot testing.



Stage 3: Transition to Scale

Up to \$15 million to transition proven approaches to scale.



Evidence Generation

Up to \$1.5 million to evaluate widely-used approaches that lack sufficient evidence of causal impact and cost-effectiveness.

Photo: A community health worker tracks immunization records that were verified using the Simprints Vero biometric fingerprint scanner. Credit: Simprints

2024 DIV GRANTS IN AFRICA

Adapting a Therapy Approach to Prevent Crime

Network for Empowerment & Progressive Initiative (NEPI) | Nigeria

www.nepiliberia.org

Stage: 2 || Amount: \$950,000

The Network for Empowerment Progressive Initiative (NEPI) started implementing the Sustainable Transformation of Youth in Liberia (STYL) program in 2012. A randomized controlled trial found that STYL's approach (targeted cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) plus a cash transfer) significantly reduced high-risk men's likelihood of committing crimes and engaging in antisocial behaviors, including a 40 percent reduction in engagement in theft and robbery in the first year after the program's completion. DIV will support NEPI to test and scale the STYL program in Nigeria. Under this award, NEPI will pilot STYL with high-risk young men in Lagos to assess the applicability of STYL to other contexts. NEPI will test adaptation strategies for scalability while working to ensure implementation fidelity of the STYL program as it scales. [Learn more.](#)

Bringing Preventative Care to Older Adults

Hope to Live | Kenya

www.hopetolivekenya.org

Stage: 1 || Amount: \$200,000

Hope to Live Charity Organization provides education and training programs for older adults to help them take preventative health care actions and empower them to advocate for themselves with dignity. Hope to Live will pilot different delivery approaches to scale its program—including through community-based organizations and in-home versus community settings—while measuring participants' engagement with and trust in the program, as well as their health status, behavior changes, and knowledge of health topics. [Learn more.](#)

Community Health Worker-Led Participatory Learning and Action

FHI 360 | Mozambique, Nigeria

www.fhi360.org | HQ: Durham, NC

Stage: 3 || Amount: \$5,000,000

To strengthen the uptake of effective neonatal care practices, such as thermal care, skin-to-skin contact and care-seeking for sick newborns, some countries have adopted the Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) model. In the PLA model, trained facilitators convene community groups of women who are pregnant or of reproductive age to identify maternal and newborn health challenges, and develop and implement localized strategies to improve health practices. FHI 360 and its partners Ekjut and University College London (UCL) will work with the governments of Mozambique and Nigeria to replicate a Community Health Workers (CHW)-led version of the PLA model that has previously been tested and scaled in India. In a DIV-funded RCT, the partners will assess the impact of the locally adapted intervention on the neonatal mortality rate and adoption of high-impact practices, and assess the program's feasibility and cost-effectiveness. This study will generate lessons about adapting PLA to different contexts to inform what is needed for institutionalization and scale to other countries with high neonatal mortality rates. [Learn more.](#)

Evaluating Progressive Versus Proportional Digitized Property Tax Collection

L'Organisation des Etudes Economiques sur le Kasai (ODEKA) | Democratic Republic of the Congo

Stage: 2 || Amount: \$488,000

To examine whether progressive property taxation can increase tax compliance and revenues in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), which collected just 9 percent of its GDP in 2021, l'Organisation des Études Économiques sur le Kasai (ODEKA) is partnering with a provincial tax authority on a randomized controlled trial (RCT) that compares neighborhoods that are assigned to the current flat fee schedule, a proportional tax rate schedule, or a schedule of progressive property tax rates. This RCT, supported in part by the Fund for Innovation in Development, measures the effects of the different tax schedules on total government revenue, household compliance, perceptions of fairness, and motivation to pay taxes and is designed to inform future tax policy. Support from DIV will increase the endline survey sample to improve the study's ability to detect statistically significant effects. This funding will also help scale up digitization of the tax assessment process, an initiative co-funded by the International Centre for Tax and Development. Digitization, including the development of a comprehensive database of properties and assessed values, will strengthen the provincial government's ability to administer taxes by improving record keeping and updating. [Learn more.](#)

Evaluating the Effectiveness of a Family Planning Radio Program

Family Empowerment Media, Inc. | Nigeria

www.familyempowermentmedia.org

Stage: 2 || Amount: \$1,500,000

Inspired by a study in Burkina Faso showing that a radio serial drama could significantly increase contraceptive use, Family Empowerment Media (FEM) has developed a similar social and behavioral change campaign adapted for Nigeria. FEM's shows and advertisements, including first-person narratives, interviews, and dramas, provide information and encouragement on contraceptives for family planning. FEM will implement its campaign in Nigeria and conduct a randomized controlled trial to measure the impacts on families' use of modern contraception, changes in knowledge and attitudes towards contraception, and women's health and well-being immediately and one year after the campaign. [Learn more.](#)

Evaluating the Effectiveness of Consumer Overdraft for Financial Resilience

FINCA International, Inc. | Tanzania

www.finca.org | HQ: Washington, D.C.

Stage: 2 || Amount: \$1,300,000

FINCA International is partnering with Kuunda, a business-to-business financial technology solutions provider that has developed a menu of affordable, real-time overdraft solutions for last mile consumers and mobile money agents. Kuunda's consumer overdraft product provides instant microloans using an algorithm that leverages consumer transactional data to generate credit scores. DIV will support FINCA and Kuunda by funding a randomized controlled trial of the consumer overdraft product in Tanzania. The study will measure the impact of the overdraft product on indicators of household and financial wellbeing, including consumption, business expenditures, and ability to manage financial shocks. In addition, Kuunda will test if it can continue to sustainably

scale its model while lowering its credit score threshold and extending overdraft protection to more consumers. [Learn more.](#)

Evaluating the Impact of Rainwater Harvesting Technology at Scale

Tufts University | Niger

www.tufts.edu | HQ: Medford, MA

Stage: 2 || Amount: \$950,000

To help restore degraded soil on farming land, researchers at Tufts University, the University of Diffa, and the University of California, Santa Barbara are testing a rainwater harvesting method built around two catchment techniques (half-moons and soil pits) that collect both rainfall and runoff while increasing the nutrient content of the soil. A previous randomized evaluation showed that the trainings increased adoption of the technique (from 4 percent in the control group to 95 percent in the training group) in the first year and resulted in a meaningful (0.15 standard deviation) increase in agricultural production over three years. With support from DIV, the researchers are partnering with the Government of Niger and Sahel Consulting Group to: (1) optimize the rainwater harvesting training program so that it can be administered sustainably by the government and other partners in Niger, and (2) evaluate the effectiveness of the program at scale. In addition, the research will compare the costs and benefits of in-person monitoring with remote sensing techniques. Results from these studies will inform the Government's efforts to promote rainwater harvesting as a defense against desertification as it aims to preserve the livelihoods of millions of smallholder farmers. [Learn more.](#)

Increasing Access to Justice Through Improved Judicial Efficiency

oTree Open Source Research Foundation | Kenya

www.otree.org | HQ: Houston, TX

Stage: 2 || Amount: \$900,000

oTree developed a behavioral intervention designed to improve court efficiency by compiling analyzed court data in "OnePagers", which are brief, informational snapshots of recent case clearance rates and court delays. oTree is now partnering with the Kenyan judiciary to expand use of the OnePagers nationwide, lead workshops to equip judiciary staff with the necessary skills to interpret and operationalize the OnePagers effectively, and train judiciary statisticians in using updated tools to analyze court data and make additional recommendations to reduce court delays. With DIV support, oTree will also conduct a new randomized control trial to confirm the results of a previous study of OnePagers' impacts on court postponements and overall judicial efficiency, and to measure downstream impacts on economic growth. If this RCT demonstrates positive effects, Kenya's judiciary intends to use OnePagers nationwide. [Learn more.](#)

Piloting Digital Training for Lay First Responders

LFR International | Sierra Leone

www.lfrinternational.org | HQ: Encino, CA

Stage: 1 || Amount: \$200,000

Road traffic injuries are a leading cause of death globally, particularly affecting low and middle-income countries where emergency medical services (EMS) may be scarce. LFR International's Lay First Responder (LFR) program trains lay people who are frequently on the roads—such as motorcycle taxi drivers—to administer prehospital care. After qualifying through a short in-person training program, lay first responders can respond quickly to accidents, providing emergency trauma care and transportation to medical facilities. LFR seeks to convert its training curriculum to a digital program on a mobile application, which can reach trainees at a lower cost, and provide a path to scale its training in resource-limited settings. With DIV support, the organization will conduct a small-scale randomized controlled trial to evaluate the effectiveness of digital versus in-person training on lay first responders' knowledge and skills retention. The study also seeks to identify the qualities that lead an individual to be a “super responder – individuals who were identified in a prior study as more likely to respond to incidents. [Learn more.](#)

Testing a Biometric Identification System to Improve Malaria Vaccine Rates

Simprints | Ghana

www.simprints.com

Stage: 2 || Amount: \$1,500,000

Simprints developed a digital system that uses biometrics, such as fingerprints, to verify patient identities and track individual immunization records over time. Working with the Government of Ghana, Simprints is exploring integrating this biometric tool into the national Maternal and Child Health (MCH) e-tracker. USAID has been supporting the national rollout of the tracker, which makes patient files accessible from anywhere in the country. When children come for immunizations, the biometric system is designed to efficiently and accurately identify the child and match them with their individual health records. With support from DIV, Simprints will conduct a randomized controlled trial to measure the impact of its biometric identification system on the proportion of young children fully vaccinated against malaria and other diseases. The study will also assess the cost-effectiveness of the integrated system compared with the status quo approach to patient tracking. Findings from this study will help determine the cost-effectiveness of biometric identification systems and inform countries' integration of biometric identification into immunization systems at scale. [Learn more.](#)

Testing a Budgeting Intervention to Address Seasonal Hunger

Center for Effective Global Action (CEGA) | Malawi

www.cega.berkeley.edu | HQ: Berkeley, CA

Stage: 2 || Amount: \$1,500,000

In Malawi, most rural households experience seasonal hunger. Center for Effective Global Action (CEGA) at the University of California, Berkeley runs a low-cost behavioral intervention that consists of training farmers to use simple planning boards divided into income and expense categories, helping participants budget their harvest income to smooth consumption throughout the year. Farmers keep the planning boards to remind them of their plans and receive physical labels for their bags of maize that reflect their spending plan for the upcoming year. Adapted from a prior DIV-funded study in Zambia, CEGA will partner with One Acre Fund (IAF) to facilitate the intervention, while CEGA researchers evaluate the overall approach using a randomized controlled trial. The evaluation will generate key evidence on the near-term and persistent impacts of the approach, as implemented in a new context and at a larger scale, on households' savings, consumption, and expenditures. If it shows positive impacts, IAF may integrate it into its programming across Africa, which reaches approximately four million households. [Learn more.](#)

Testing a Digital Platform and Incentives to Deliver Child Health Care

Dimagi, Inc. | Nigeria

www.dimagi.com | HQ: Boston, MA

Stage: 2 || Amount: \$1,500,000

Dimagi developed CommCare Connect (CCC) to encourage frontline workers to reach children in high-need areas. Through CCC, which is built on Dimagi's CommCare platform, locally led healthcare organizations fulfill pay-per-service delivery contracts under which frontline workers rapidly learn, deliver, and are paid for verified high-impact services. CCC improves the efficiency of tracking and verifying high-impact health interventions, such as Vitamin A supplementation and oral rehydration salts (ORS) to treat diarrhoeal dehydration, which have been found to significantly reduce child mortality. With DIV support, Dimagi will refine how CCC supports child health campaigns and to conduct a randomized controlled trial to evaluate whether it is more cost-effective than the status quo in delivering Vitamin A and ORS to children under five in northern Nigeria, where GiveWell is funding a CCC expansion. The RCT will also test a variation of the pay-for-performance contracts to determine the best approach to serving the hardest to reach children. [Learn more.](#)

Testing a Program to Improve School Monitoring and Management

Promoting Equality in African Schools (PEAS) | Uganda

www.peas.org.uk

Stage: 2 || Amount: \$1,500,000

To make the school inspection process more efficient and effective, Promoting Equality in African Schools (PEAS) and Uganda's Directorate of Education Standards (DES) developed Inspect and Improve, a program that aims to empower public school leaders—including principals and headteachers—to drive improvements. The annual Inspect and Improve cycle includes three components: (1) PEAS and DES staff spend one day observing schools to understand their strengths and areas for improvement; (2) PEAS and DES staff conduct a workshop with school leaders to develop a school improvement plan; and (3) PEAS provides ongoing support for school leaders

via in-person and virtual check-ins and a community of practice to help leaders implement their plans. With support from DIV, PEAS will conduct a randomized controlled trial to generate rigorous, causal evidence on the impact of Inspect and Improve on school management practices, teaching quality, perceptions of school climate and safety, student attendance, and student learning. [Learn more.](#)

Testing Community-led Outreach Clinics to Improve Health in Rural Areas

Health Access Connect | Uganda

www.healthaccessconnect.org | HQ: Dallas, TX

Stage: 2 || Amount: \$1,500,000

To bring healthcare closer to those who need it in Uganda, Health Access Connect (HAC) has organized recurring one-day mobile “Medicycles” outreach clinics through which public health facilities provide health care services, equipment, and medicine to last-mile communities. With support from DIV, HAC will expand Medicycles to at least 124 additional villages and conduct implementation research to explore community participation. HAC will also partner with Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) to conduct a randomized controlled trial to measure the direct impacts of Medicycles on healthcare usage, reported sick days, and missed work and school days, and to assess any spillover effects in neighboring villages. [Learn more.](#)

Testing Phone-Based Targeting for Urban Social Protection

GiveDirectly | Malawi

www.givedirectly.org | HQ: New York, NY

Stage: 2 || Amount: \$1,500,000

Low-income countries spend an average of 1.5 percent of GDP on social protection programs, but significant gaps in coverage result in only 18 percent of the poorest households receiving the program benefits for which they are eligible. GiveDirectly aims to address the inefficiency and high cost of identifying and enrolling recipients with MobileAid, its eligibility assessment model that leverages machine learning and cell phone data to identify the extreme poor and then deliver benefits via mobile money transfers. With funding from DIV, GiveDirectly, in partnership with researchers from the University of Berkeley and the Government of Malawi, will evaluate the comparative accuracy and cost-effectiveness of different targeting methods for identifying households eligible for cash transfers. GiveDirectly’s approach could significantly improve the speed, efficiency, and accuracy of urban poverty targeting in Malawi and serve as a model for other countries. [Learn more.](#)

Testing Unite for a Better Life, a Program to Reduce Intimate Partner Violence

Paris School of Economics (PSE) | Cameroon

To help reduce intimate partner violence (IPV), the Paris School of Economics (PSE) seeks to test two adaptations of an IPV prevention program, Unite for a Better Life (UBL), in Cameroon. UBL has previously been piloted and tested in Ethiopia. The program aims to reduce IPV by addressing social norms and behaviors through structured, culturally relevant sessions that include discussion, activities, and exercises led by trained facilitators. In Cameroon, the sessions and program delivery have been adjusted to incorporate lessons from the Ethiopia trial and will be delivered via two methods. The in-person delivery approach differs from previous program iterations by engaging couples in sessions that are held separately for men and women, while a podcast adaptation aims to offer a scalable, technology-based approach. With support from DIV, PSE, in collaboration with a local non-profit, Leap Girl, and the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), will conduct a cluster randomized controlled trial to evaluate UBL as delivered in-person and via podcasts in Cameroon. The study will evaluate UBL's impact on IPV in the 18 months after implementation, as well as women's perceptions of changes in their male partner's behavior and shifts in gender norms. By generating rigorous evidence on the effectiveness of UBL as delivered via these two methods, results from this study are designed to contribute to global efforts to address IPV and improve the well-being of women in fragile settings. [Learn more.](#)

2024 DIV GRANTS IN ASIA

Evaluating a Social Protection Program to Reduce Poverty

Harvard University | Indonesia

www.harvard.edu | HQ: Cambridge, MA

Stage: 2 || Amount: \$1,500,000

The Government of Indonesia has begun piloting PENA (Economic Heroes), a social protection program inspired by the evidence-based Graduation Approach. The Graduation Approach centers on a larger one-time asset transfer and accompanying support, such as counseling, to help move households out of poverty. However, additional innovation is needed to adapt elements of the graduation approach to the Indonesian context and facilitate implementation on a massive scale. With DIV support, Harvard researchers will innovate and test PENA's design, including streamlining it for scalability. Along with partners, they will conduct a randomized controlled trial to rigorously evaluate several variations of PENA to understand: (1) whether it is more effective at improving key outcomes than current social assistance programs; (2) how to identify people who have the highest potential to graduate from social assistance programs; (3) which program variations are most effective; and (4) whether such programs can be made easier to scale without compromising effectiveness. [Learn more.](#)

Evaluating the Effects of a Well-being Curriculum on Student Success

Within Reach, Inc. | India

www.labhya.org | HQ: Topsfield, MA

Stage: 2 || Amount: \$910,000

Within Reach (formerly Labhya USA, Inc.) is working in public schools, in partnership with three state governments in India, to pioneer a scalable social-emotional learning program that equips primary school children with crucial coping skills and emotional resilience. This program, called Saharsh, integrates mindfulness practices and interactive storytelling sessions into daily 30-minute classes. Within Reach is rigorously testing its curriculum with a large-scale randomized controlled trial in the state of Tripura, where the government is interested in using this evidence to adapt and scale student mental health programming. [Learn more.](#)

Evaluating the Teach Tool to Improve Education Effectiveness

National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER) | India

www.nber.org | HQ: Cambridge, MA

Stage: Evidence Generation || Amount: \$775,275

The World Bank's "Teach" tool is an open-access classroom observation tool that aims to improve teaching practices in primary schools. As of 2024, the tool is being implemented in 36 countries, with further scaling planned. Given the tool's widespread use, DIV will support a multi-institutional research team to conduct a randomized controlled trial of the tool in the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh, where the government is rolling out the tool to approximately 20,000 schools. Researchers will test different methods of selecting the videos and, in a subset of schools, will train observers to directly provide coaching and mentoring to teachers. The study will evaluate the impact of the tool on teaching quality and student learning, comparing the basic approach to the enhanced version. Results of this study will provide important evidence on the effectiveness of the Teach tool and how best to implement it in India and the many other countries in which it is, or may be, used. [Learn more.](#)

Piloting a Machine Learning-Powered English Tutor

Amira Learning | India

www.amiralearning.org | HQ: San Francisco, CA

Stage: 1 || Amount: \$200,000

Amira Learning has developed a personalized adaptive learning platform for English literacy that uses machine learning and natural language processing to detect and diagnose speech errors that elementary school students make while reading aloud. Amira Learning then delivers customized reading instruction ranging from word recognition skills to reading comprehension. The platform builds on over 30 years of lab-based research and has reached over three million students in the U.S., and in 17 additional countries. With DIV funding, Amira Learning will pilot and test their product with approximately 4,700 primary school students throughout India and investigate implementation challenges, student take-up, engagement, and retention with the aim of applying learnings to adapt the platform for scale in India. [Learn more.](#)

Scaling Government-Led Graduation Programs to Alleviate Poverty

BRAC | Indonesia, Philippines

www.brac.net

Stage: 3 || Amount: \$5,000,000

BRAC pioneered the Graduation Approach to address the complex nature of extreme poverty. It consists of a set of core interventions designed to enable households to overcome the various challenges of extreme poverty and generate sustained improvements in their income, consumption, and overall well-being. With support from DIV, BRAC will work with the governments of Indonesia and the Philippines to integrate the Graduation Approach's core interventions into current poverty reduction strategies, programs, and budgets. This award will also support independent research on key design and implementation processes, as well as qualitative research to establish the most effective pathways to scale through governments. Ultimately, BRAC aims to enable the governments of Indonesia and the Philippines to deliver high-quality Graduation programming to 30,000 households within the award period, and to millions more over the next decade. [Learn more.](#)

Testing a Digital Tool for Healthcare Workers to Reduce Child Mortality

Terre des Hommes | India

www.tdh.org

Stage: 2 || Amount: \$1,500,000

Terre des Hommes developed the Integrated e-Diagnostic Approach (leDA), a digitalized IMCI job aid that has been shown to improve healthcare worker performance and protocol adherence. The leDA software is updated as best practices change, helping to standardize care and support evidence-based clinical decisions in real time. At the end of a patient consultation, leDA gives healthcare providers an analysis of signs, symptoms, and test results, and suggests a diagnosis, which the provider can then use to propose treatment. Terre des Hommes has been using leDA in the state of Jharkhand since 2020. With DIV support, Terre des Hommes will conduct a randomized controlled trial of leDA in India to evaluate the impact of leDA on the percentage of children under five who are correctly diagnosed and treated. [Learn more.](#)

Testing an Artificial Intelligence-Enabled Agricultural Extension Chatbot

Digital Green | India

www.digitalgreen.org | HQ: San Francisco, CA

Stage: 2 || Amount: \$900,000

Since 2008, Digital Green has been improving agricultural extension through community videos, an approach that has been rigorously tested and found to increase adoption of both improved agricultural practices and crop yields. Digital Green now aims to expand their reach and impact with an AI-enabled chatbot that draws content from their videos and other vetted sources. The chatbot delivers real-time, localized advice to extension workers in local languages, helping them better assist farmers. A randomized controlled trial will compare the effectiveness of the chatbot with traditional extension methods, and measure impacts on yields, farmer incomes, and adoption of improved agricultural practices. [Learn more.](#)

Testing Directed Bank Payments and Training to Advance Women’s Empowerment

Yale University | India

www.yale.edu | HQ: New Haven, CT

Stage: 2 || Amount: \$1,279,000

Research shows that when women gain control over a greater share of household resources, their agency and decision-making power in the household improves. Researchers from Yale University have worked with officials in the Indian state of Madhya Pradesh to automatically set up biometrically-linked bank accounts for women participating in India’s largest rural workfare program, and train women on using the accounts to save and support their needs. With DIV support, the Yale research team will update and test the program at large scale through an evaluation that will measure the program’s impact on women’s financial engagement, economic activity, agency, and attention to gender norms. The research team will work closely with government officials to incorporate the findings into the scale-up of the program, aiming to reach Madhya Pradesh’s 7.8 million registered female workers. [Learn more.](#)

Using Satellite Imagery to Reduce Air Pollution

Aureolin Research, Consultancy, and Expertise Development (ARCED) | Bangladesh

www.arced.foundation

Stage: 1 || Amount: \$200,000

ARCED developed an information system that combines satellite images with machine learning algorithms to identify and locate illegal brick kilns and predict the health harm each individual kiln causes—based on proximity to schools, healthcare facilities, and population centers. Bangladesh’s Department of the Environment (DoE) uses this information to prioritize which illegal brick kilns to target for enforcement. With support from DIV, ARCED will conduct a randomized controlled trial to determine whether the system improves the efficiency of enforcement action and ultimately reduces the number of harmful kilns in operation. If the trial is successful, ARCED will transfer the technology to the DoE and train government employees to update and maintain the system. ARCED’s system has the potential to benefit Bangladesh’s entire population, as more kiln operators are deterred from operating in locations where they would have the largest negative health effects. [Learn more.](#)

2024 DIV GRANTS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Evaluating a Motivational Video to Inspire Math Achievement at Scale

The Agency Fund | Brazil

www.agency.fund | HQ: San Francisco, CA

Stage: 2 || Amount: \$1,500,000

The Agency Fund will evaluate the impact of a 30-minute inspirational video designed to motivate underrepresented students to continue participating in the national Math Olympiad competition, and to pursue studies in STEM fields and careers. This intervention targets the top 5 percent of students selected for the second round of the national competition and aims to inspire students to change their beliefs and aspirations about their own abilities. Without this motivational intervention, many talented students may self-select out of STEM opportunities. With DIV support, researchers will conduct a randomized controlled trial involving 12,000 schools, where students in the treatment arm will be exposed to the video. Outcomes will include Math Olympiad performance, national standardized exam scores, and university enrollment, as well as changes in student beliefs about STEM. [Learn more.](#)

Experimental Evidence on Public-Private Partnerships in Education

Vanderbilt University | Colombia

www.vanderbilt.edu | HQ: Nashville, TN

Stage: 2 || Amount: \$1,350,000

Vanderbilt University, in collaboration with IPA Colombia and the Secretary of Education for Bogotá, has been conducting a randomized controlled trial (RCT) on a Public-Private Partnership model developed by the city of Bogotá, which authorized private schools to bid on public contracts to operate in underserved areas. These schools, known as Concession Schools or Schools in Administration (SA), are given autonomy in pedagogy design but are held accountable to universal academic and administrative performance standards. With support from DIV, the research team will expand the RCT to include an additional student cohort, extend the follow-up period to measure longer-term impacts on students' outcomes, and analyze these schools' cost-effectiveness. If positive, the findings from this research could help Colombia optimize the SA model and provide a scalable solution to improving public education and reducing educational inequality throughout the country. [Learn more.](#)

Increasing Corner Store Profits through Inventory Microfinancing

Medici Group (DBA Propaga) | Mexico

www.propaga.mx | HQ: Miami, FL

Stage: 2 || Amount: \$450,000

Despite generating approximately 15 percent of Mexico's gross domestic product, neighborhood corner stores—where many people purchase grocery and household products—often lack access to the capital they need to purchase enough inventory to grow their businesses. Propaga partners with some of the largest companies that distribute consumer goods sold in these neighborhood stores. Propaga's "buy now, pay later" microloan portal, which is integrated with distributor purchase platforms, uses a proprietary algorithm to identify credit-worthy retailers who are offered short-term loans to buy additional inventory to grow their businesses. With DIV support, Propaga will conduct a randomized controlled trial to understand the impact of the tool on

the revenues and household income of participating retailers, and to test varying interest rates and late fees to determine optimal contract terms. [Learn more.](#)

Piloting AI-based Entrepreneurship Training

Hacer Peru | Peru

www.hacerperu.pe

Stage: 1 || Amount: \$200,000

Leveraging recent advances in large language models, Hacer Peru has developed a training, mentoring, and consulting tool that aims to provide guidance on leading business and management practices to small business owners at a fraction of the usual cost. With the support of DIV, Hacer Peru will build on an initial pilot of its MAIA platform to reach 4,000 *bodegueros* (convenience store owners) and expand into a second sector. Hacer Peru will conduct testing, such as changing the model's emphasis and the frequency and type of notifications, to determine the best ways to encourage engagement and learning among entrepreneurs. Hacer Peru will also use the DIV award to develop additional modules to make the platform more useful for various industries. The steps taken by Hacer Peru could help identify a substantially more affordable way to deliver entrepreneurship training and consulting services to MSMEs in Peru and around the world. [Learn more.](#)

Testing a Behavior Change Approach to Counter Criminal Youth Recruitment

Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) | Colombia

www.poverty-action.org | HQ: Washington, D.C.

Stage: 2 || Amount: \$600,000

The Parceritos program is a cognitive behavioral intervention that seeks to address gang recruitment in Medellín by combining behavioral change techniques with information provided on the economic and social benefits from education, aiming to shift high-risk adolescent boys toward more productive futures. Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) Colombia is partnering with local nonprofit Presencia Colombo Suiza and the Medellín Mayor's office, to implement and evaluate the program. Funding from DIV will support a randomized controlled trial to rigorously evaluate the Parceritos program's impacts on gang membership and engagement with the criminal justice system, as well as school completion, occupational choice, and earnings. DIV will also support the dissemination of results and preparation to scale to other urban areas, should the evaluation find positive results. [Learn more.](#)