In Peru, 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 research below offer promising insights into everyday issues that affect the lives of the Peruvian poor.

**FINANCE**

**Business training for microcredit clients can be helpful in growing knowledge but not necessarily profits.** An IPA study that evaluated a training program for female microcredit clients in Peru found that those who received the training were earning 26 percent higher than their peers in “bad months” when they would have expected downward fluctuations in their sales. Clients who received business training were also significantly more likely to keep records of their account withdrawals, and had better knowledge about business and how to use profits for business growth and innovation. However, there was no evidence that the training had an impact on business revenue, profits, or number of workers employed.

**EDUCATION**

**Can teaching at-risk kids social and communication skills reduce violence and improve students’ learning and well-being?**

In partnership with the Ministry of Education and the World Bank, this large-scale program will introduce a learning curriculum into public schools in vulnerable neighborhoods of Lima. IPA will follow the progress of students in the program, designed as part of the National Strategy Against School Violence, throughout the two-year pilot in 350 schools and will work with the Ministry of Education to determine the scale-up feasibility of the program.

Other on-going work includes a study on a new approach to teaching math in pre-school and work with the Ministry of Health on pay-for-performance.
Better Programs & Policies

IPA evidence has already contributed to improving millions of lives. Now, with ten 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

A holistic package of services can help the ultra-poor escape poverty. Years of research have taught us that many “income generating” programs, such as microcredit, neither reach the ultra-poor, nor do much to alleviate poverty. So we built this approach, modeled after BRAC in Bangladesh, to address many of the problems of the poor at once. We are testing the model in seven countries, and preliminary results are promising. In Peru, the program paired an asset transfer—usually guinea pigs—with a small cash transfer, health education, savings accounts, and weekly monitoring visits. Early results in Peru show positive results, including an increase in income for those who participated in the program.

GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIPS

IPA helps create a culture of evidence-based decisionmaking. Together with our partners at the Jameel Latif Poverty Action Lab at MIT, IPA supported the launch of the Quipu Commission in Peru, which convenes several government ministries together with researchers to build a policy-focused research agenda and works to institutionalize learning and innovation within ministries. Our next stage of growth is to solicit new studies responding to policy gaps, specifically in education.

Our Future

IPA Peru is at an inflection point in its evolution as an organization. We are transitioning from our early status as a young nonprofit working in the development space into a go-to resource for evidence-based insights for government, nonprofits, and the private sector. As we navigate this transition, we are focusing on two goals. They are to:

» Reinforce IPA’s status as a known source of high-quality research. We are the only research organization in Peru specialized in randomized evaluations. We will build on this foundation as we grow our research network locally and internationally and strengthen our research management and data collection capacities, including computer-assisted interviewing.

» Partner with decisionmakers to seek, generate, and apply evidence at scale. IPA works with the Peruvian government and other civil society institutions with the aim of promoting the use and production of evidence. We do this by helping to create a culture of evidence and learning in the public sector through workshops, seminars, conferences, and trainings and through institutionalizing the use and production of evidence by establishing commissions and partnerships. We will also empower citizens to demand evidence through sharing results in mass and social media.

Building a world with More Evidence and Less Poverty.

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