



Annual Update

2021 showed us how much evidence really matters. This year, **CEGA research on the impacts of lockdowns, mask wearing, behavioral nudges, social distancing, and the targeting and delivery of emergency aid generated important insights for policymakers seeking to protect their citizens from the widespread socioeconomic impacts of COVID-19.** Meanwhile, CEGA research influenced policy in numerous other ways: **gender-based civics trainings** are scaling across India, the Ghanaian government is adopting a new **energy monitoring technology**, BRAC is engaging boys and young men in programs designed to **improve girls' health** in Tanzania, and several governments are applying evidence on the long-term, intergenerational costs and benefits of school-based **deworming** in their decision making.

CEGA renewed our commitment to **innovation, inclusivity, and openness** this year. We believe that by being agile in our use of new tools, methods, and data sources; by inviting and supporting diverse and inclusive research collaborations; and by promoting an open and transparent research culture, we can help to create better evidence, better policy decisions, and ultimately better outcomes for people living in poverty.

In 2021, CEGA continued to **push the frontiers of data science for development (DS4D)**, leveraging non-traditional data sources—including call detail records, satellite imagery, and sensor networks—to generate real-time insights for policymakers and learning modules for those seeking to integrate new data sources and methods into their research. Our direct collaboration with the Government of Togo informed the **design** of the country's flagship social protection program and helped allocate cash assistance to over 138,500 individuals using a novel, machine learning (ML)-based approach. We invested in **MOSAICS** (Multi-Task Observation using Satellite Imagery & Kitchen Sinks), a low-cost, scalable platform for extracting features from satellite data for policy decision-making developed by affiliated faculty Tamma Carleton and Solomon Hsiang. Additionally, we produced a **series of Geo4Dev learning modules**, with the aim of making novel geospatial datasets as well as analytical tools and approaches accessible to a wider community of researchers and partners.

CEGA has doubled down on our investment in low- and middle-income countries (LMIC) scholars, and our commitment to promoting a culture of inclusion in global development research. We believe that supporting research led by scholars and institutions in LMICs, in addition to being a moral imperative, can be an important mechanism for driving evidence-based policy change. This year, we added a **non-resident (virtual) fellowship** to our suite of capacity building opportunities for LMIC scholars, and are excited about reaching African scholars who can't travel to Berkeley for an extended period and thus couldn't otherwise access our training, mentorship, and research funding opportunities. In 2021, we continued to foster **collaborative research** between LMIC and US-based researchers and are currently hosting **six residential fellows** this fall for the first time in fifteen months.

Additionally, CEGA continued to **advance tools that facilitate high-quality, transparent, and reproducible research.** Our Berkeley Initiative for Transparency in the Social Sciences (BITSS) launched two digital platforms that make it easier for researchers and policymakers to access priors and replication results at scale: the **Social Science Reproduction Platform** (SSRP) and the **Social Science Prediction Platform** (SSPP). Separately, the BITSS team **opened up** the analysis behind a **landmark 20 year study**, using tools from our Open Policy Analysis (OPA) toolkit. We expanded our Cost Transparency Initiative, which seeks to understand the costs of a program, policy, or portfolio—in addition to its impacts—to inform the allocation of scarce resources.

While 2021 has been a slog with a protracted and uneven response from COVID-19, it has shown us how much evidence matters for decision-making. **At CEGA, we are committed to working with our partners around the world to ensure that decisions affecting millions of people living in poverty are made with the best evidence and analytical tools available. We couldn't do this without our diverse network of donors and collaborators.** Thank you for your continued commitment to our mission to support innovative, inclusive, and open research that improves lives.

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