SIEF has a new partnership with the International Center for Journalists, a U.S.-based organization that seeks to empower journalists and engage citizens in developing countries for better reporting on issues that matter to improving lives. SIEF and ICFJ have launched a webinar series to provide training to African journalists about impact evaluation and evidence-based policymaking in health, education, water and sanitation and early childhood development. The first webinar was on impact evaluation and how governments use evidence. The second webinar, which will run March 17, will be on early childhood development.

**Featured Expert:** Penny Hawkins  
**Position:** Head of Evaluation  
**Where:** U.K. Department for International Development

At university, Penny Hawkins thought about a career as a psychologist. That's what she was studying at Victoria University of Wellington, in New Zealand. What about becoming an evaluator? It didn't cross her mind then. Besides, she didn't know what an evaluator was. Then fate intervened.

Today, Hawkins is a public sector evaluation guru - serving as Head of Evaluation at the Department for International Development, the U.K. department in charge of administering overseas aid. DFID has played a huge role in the Strategic Impact Evaluation Fund's own history, funding its creation in 2012. We spoke with Hawkins by Skype about her own history, why impact evaluation matters, and the results that keep her up at night.

Meet SIEF’s new manager

Alaka Holla, a senior economist with the World Bank's Health, Nutrition and Population Global Practice in the Europe and Central Asia region, has been appointed SIEF’s new program manager. Since joining the World Bank as a Young Professional in 2009, Alaka has worked on impact evaluations focused on female labor productivity in the Africa region and on service delivery issues. Alaka worked closely with SIEF in the past as a health economist. She was also a core team member of the World Development Report 2015: Mind, Society, and Behavior.

Blogs

Read the interview

Featured Evaluation

In Nigeria, more than one in 10 children will not survive to see a fifth birthday, and nearly one in 20 women will die in childbirth. In collaboration with the Government of Nigeria, SIEF researchers evaluated a program to save the lives of mothers and their babies by improving access to reliable health services and increasing demand for these services. The results of the evaluation will help policymakers in Nigeria and other countries understand how to help protect and support the lives of women and infants.

A new video about the program highlights a day in the life of a midwife. The film was debuted at the Gates Foundation as part of SIEF researcher Marcus Holmlund's presentation there on his work in Nigeria.

SIEF consultant and researcher Jacobus Cilliers' work on forgiveness and reconciliation in Sierra Leone was featured on NPR's The Hidden Brain podcast.

SIEF researcher David McKenzie responds to complaints that "randomized experiments take too much time."

Can doctors' waiting rooms be turned into a learning experience for mothers? SIEF researchers in the Caribbean are testing whether showing videos in pediatric clinics' waiting rooms will help. Read more here.

In the news

In the Philippines, impact evaluation results helped the government secure a $400 million loan to expand their conditional cash transfer program, Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program. SIEF recently published a policy note on the results of an impact evaluation of the program.

SIEF's work was highlighted in a Brookings Institution blog on the costs of early childhood development.