



discussion on

Can We Do More with Less in Foreign Aid? American Universities' Contributions to Effective Foreign Assistance

Michael Kremer, Harvard University, and USAID Scientific Director for Development
Innovation Ventures (DIV)

Karthik Muralidharan, University of California, San Diego

Thursday, March 1, 2012

1:30 to 2:30 pm

2212 Rayburn

Dear Colleague:

We would like to invite you or your staff, to a special briefing sponsored by the Caucus for Effective Foreign Assistance, to be held **Thursday, March 1st from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. in Room 2212 of the Rayburn House Office Building**. This is a unique opportunity to learn how American universities are helping in the search for more effective ways to meet global poverty reduction targets.

The briefing will feature two researchers who have rigorously evaluated a series of primary school programs in India and Sub-Saharan Africa, with the goal of finding the most cost-effective among them. They will discuss which programs offer greatest impact for money-- and how the evidence has influenced policy-makers. We also will hear how other governments are improving the effectiveness of their social programs through high quality development research.

With limited resources to improve living standards in poor countries, it is necessary to make choices about where to invest foreign assistance dollars. Under these circumstances, researchers can help to evaluate the costs and benefits of innovative alternatives, enabling us to cut wasteful programs and redirect funds to alternatives with proven effectiveness.

Sincerely,

Ander Crenshaw
Member of Congress

Adam Smith
Member of Congress

Speaker Biographies:

Michael Kremer is a professor of economics at Harvard University. He will discuss the comparative effectiveness of 3 different school assistance programs launched in Kenya: free school uniforms, merit scholarships, and school health programs. He is a Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution and has been a recipient of both a MacArthur "genius" fellowship and a Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers.

Karthik Muralidharan is an assistant professor of economics at the University of California, San Diego. He will present results from nearly 10 years of field research on primary education in India, examining how student test scores are affected by teacher bonuses, school block grants, and the hiring of non-union contract teachers. He will also discuss the challenges in implementing India's Right to Education legislation.