Evidence for Policy Design (EPoD) at Harvard Kennedy School, with the support of the Human Resource Development Fund of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (HRDF), will be funding empirical studies of labor market issues in Saudi Arabia. EPoD is now calling for proposals from researchers for both pilot studies and full research projects.

The Ministry of Labor of Saudi Arabia has, since the late 2000s, built a large portfolio of labor market policies to address some of the Kingdom’s key economic issues. Key policy leaders from the ministry have formed a collaboration with EPoD at Harvard Kennedy School to design a research-policy engagement around these initiatives. HRDF in Saudi Arabia has partnered with EPoD to support and catalyze this research and the resulting policy outputs. The HRDF-EPoD collaboration seeks to build on the principles of EPoD’s Smart Policy Design1 approach and generate in-depth knowledge of the current constraints in the areas of employment and job creation in Saudi Arabia and to design and test potential policy solutions using these findings in order to improve outcomes for Saudi men, women, and youth.

Under this initiative, EPoD will fund rigorous empirical research to improve labor market outcomes in Saudi Arabia. Research can also focus on building a better bridge between economic theory and the Saudi context, though it is important that outcomes are relevant to labor policy in Saudi Arabia.

The broad research priorities of this initiative are presented in a Background Paper which summarizes existing evidence and labor policies in Saudi Arabia and is organized around the following six themes:

- Human Capital Development and Job Creation
- Employability and Unemployment
- Saudization and Quotas
- Women in the Labor Market
- Youth Employment
- Matching in Markets

We welcome proposals that fit within multiple themes; however, except in rare circumstances proposals must fall within at least one of these six themes as they relate to Saudi Arabia. If a researcher is uncertain about whether a research project is eligible for funding under this RFP, please contact epod_rfp@hks.harvard.edu.

Proposals are due by 11:59 PM EDT on April 30, 2015. Please refer to the RFP website for guidelines and instructions on the application process and related forms.

1 To learn more about EPoD’s Smart Policy Design framework visit: http://epod.cid.harvard.edu/policy-research-engagements