

Effect of Financial products and services Cash and in-kind transfers on Sense of belonging

Cash and in-kind transfers had a moderate effect on enhancing Ugandan microentrepreneurs' sense of belonging by fostering support for inclusive refugee policies.

Geographic Area: Sub Saharan Africa

Effect: Moderate Effect (g =0.112)

Confidence in study findings: Low confidence (1 study with 10 effect sizes)

Short Summary:

The study in this cell evaluates how cash and in-kind transfers influence a shared sense of belonging among refugees and host community members in Uganda. Baseler (2021) found that when cash transfers were paired with messaging linking the aid to refugee policies, microentrepreneurs showed greater support for inclusive policies and were more comfortable accepting refugees in close social roles, such as neighbors, friends, or relatives. Using a social distance index, the study demonstrated that this intervention reduced prejudice and strengthened social identification, indicating a moderate positive effect on sense of belonging.

Long summary

The Intervention:

The intervention included microcredit, microinsurance, microsavings, and financial literacy support, alongside cash and in-kind transfers. Programs covered direct provision of goods, food assistance, conditional or unconditional social safety nets, and short-term cash-for-work schemes. Some interventions combined transfers with additional support, such as skills training or health services..

How the Intervention is expected to work:

The intervention linked cash transfers to Uganda's refugee aid-sharing policy, aiming to foster empathy and perspective-taking among microentrepreneurs. By receiving tangible benefits and learning that these were tied to inclusive policies, participants were expected to engage in discussions about marginalization and shared experiences, reducing prejudice. The intervention also aimed to strengthen social cohesion by increasing support for refugees' presence in Uganda, improving host community attitudes and promoting a shared sense of belonging.

The Evidence Base:

There is 1 impact evaluation within the cell utilising a randomised-controlled-trial as its main methodology for testing the effectiveness of this impact evaluation. This study is based in Uganda.

Evidence Findings:

This study indicates that combining financial assistance with information about refugee aid-sharing can significantly improve host community attitudes, enhancing refugees' sense of belonging. Microentrepreneurs who received transfers alongside messaging about aid policies were more supportive of refugee hosting, exhibited reduced social distance from refugees, and engaged in more pro-social behaviors. Overall, the intervention had a moderate positive effect on fostering social cohesion and a sense of belonging for both host and refugee communities.

The Impact Evaluation Evidence

Baseler (2021): In this study, cash grants were assessed for their impact on the sense of belonging between refugees and Ugandan microentrepreneurs. The study measured sense of belonging by tracking how social relations between refugees and Ugandans improved after the cash transfers were given. While cash assistance provided some evidence of intermediate social cohesion, the findings suggest that financial transfers alone did not significantly improve sense of belonging - the cash accompanied with information about aid-sharing helped ease the tension around refugees and Ugandans. This study is rated medium confidence due to no power calculations.

Confidence assessment:

Overall Low: The cell is rated low confidence due to a limited number of studies.

Other outcomes in this study:

Social cohesion / Feelings of trust & Acceptance of diversity

Human security / Economic security

Human security / Food security and nutrition & Health security