

## Effect of Intergroup contact and peace education on government performance

Intergroup contact and peace education interventions show a **harmful effect** on perceptions of government performance.

**Geographical region:** Sub Saharan Africa

**Effect size:** Harmful effect ( $g=-2.029$ )

**Confidence in the study findings:** Low Confidence (1 study ;7 ES)

### Short Summary

Intergroup contact and peace education interventions had a **harmful effect** on perceptions of governance. While interventions improved community participation, conflict resolution skills, and local civility, they did not significantly change trust in the national government or perceptions of government performance. Confidence in this cell is low because it contains only one study.

### Long summary

#### *The Intervention*

The intervention promoted human rights, civic participation, and non-violent conflict resolution in 67 conflict-prone communities. Facilitators conducted 8-day workshops, training approximately 10% of residents in mediation and political education. The Community Empowerment Program (CEP) improved local engagement and dispute resolution but had limited impact on perceptions of government performance.

#### *How the intervention is expected to work*

The intervention is designed to improve community dynamics by fostering civic education, non-violent conflict resolution, and increased participation. It educates individuals on human rights and democratic principles, encourages collaboration, and strengthens community involvement in governance. By empowering marginalized groups and forming peace committees, the program aims to reduce local violence, foster cooperation, and enhance trust in governance, though impact on national-level perceptions may be limited.

#### *The evidence base*

The cell includes one impact evaluation. One study employs randomized controlled trials (RCTs). The study is conducted in Liberia.

#### *Evidence findings*

The intervention had a harmful effect on perceptions of government performance, with little impact on trust in local or national authorities despite improvements in community engagement and conflict resolution skills.

### *The Impact evaluation evidence*

**Blattman (2011)** evaluates Liberia's Community Empowerment Program (CEP), an intervention aimed at improving civic education, conflict resolution, and community participation in 68 conflict-prone communities, compared to 179 control communities. Implemented by UNHCR and JPC (2009-2010), the program provided 8-day training workshops covering human rights, dispute resolution, and democratic values. Using a randomized controlled trial (RCT), researchers surveyed leaders and community members before and after the program, with follow-up periods ranging from 1 to 22 months. While the program increased community participation and non-violent conflict resolution, it had little impact on perceptions of local and national government performance, as shown in Figures 5a and 5b, where confidence in governance remained unchanged. This suggests that while civic education can shape community dynamics, trust in government may require institutional reforms beyond local-level interventions. The study is rated as a low confidence quantitative study due to lack of reporting attrition.

### *Confidence assessment*

The cell's confidence is low because it includes only one study.

### **Other outcomes in this study**

- Violence and atrocity prevention/ Diplomatic relations and peaceful dispute resolution
- Community and state governance/Government performance
- Social Cohesion/ Willingness to help