

The effect of social inclusion and reintegration activities on intermediate social cohesion outcomes

Effect: Small or none

Confidence in study findings: High and medium confidence

Headline finding: Inclusive community activities can support intermediate social outcomes such as knowledge about other groups. But effects are at best small.

Short summary

Social inclusion and reintegration activities generally produced small or no intermediate social cohesion outcomes.

Long summary

The intervention

Social Inclusion and reintegration activities included group-based reintegration efforts for returnees, non-combatants, or displaced populations. This includes community dialogues and reconciliations which draw participants from different sections of a community and create opportunities for exchanging information and perspectives, clarifying viewpoints, and developing solutions to issues of interest to the community. It also includes inclusive community programmes, such as community-driven development (CDD). It does not include reintegration of combatants which is a different intervention sub-category. The evidence in this summary refers to CDD.

How the intervention is expected to work

The interventions aim to increase the engagement of all groups in a community and understanding of the perspectives of these groups. This can support intermediate social cohesion outcomes, which include measures of levels of forgiveness, knowledge about other specific groups, knowledge of peace and conflict mediation approaches, sociocultural awareness, social and emotional skills, and self-efficacy i.e., an individual's perception that they can create change.

The evidence base

The cell consists of one systematic review, which consisted of 104 studies conducted in 29 fragile and conflict-affected countries, including Afghanistan, Colombia, Uganda, Nepal, and Iraq. Of these, three studies of two interventions present relevant evidence for this cell.

Review evidence

Two studies of community-driven development from Afghanistan and Liberia reported an effect on women having increased freedom of movement and association. Both studies found a small insignificant effect with an average effect size of zero.

In contrast, qualitative evidence from the community-driven development (CDD) programme in Afghanistan found that it led to stronger intermediate social cohesion measures among community members through inclusive development planning and local leadership participation, particularly when women were included in the councils. These effects are not

quantified. So, the study reports that interventions that engaged both men and women and included community stakeholders were more effective in creating inclusive spaces that foster belonging, mutual understanding, and cooperation.

Confidence assessment: The review is rated high confidence, but the cell summary is low confidence because of the small number of included studies and inconclusive evidence.

Effect: The study does not mention any effect size, the data are narratively synthesized

Source: Lwamba (2022)

Lwamba E, Shisler S, Ridlehoover W, Kupfer M, Tshabalala N, Nduku P, Langer L, Grant S, Sonnenfeld A, Anda D, Eysers J, Snilstveit B. Strengthening women's empowerment and gender equality in fragile contexts towards peaceful and inclusive societies: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Campbell Syst Rev.* 2022 Mar 8;18(1):e1214. doi: 10.1002/cl2.1214. PMID: 36913184; PMCID: PMC8904729.