

### **Effect of social inclusion & reintegration activity on civic participation**

The BRA-KDP program in Aceh, Indonesia, showed **no effect** on civic participation and decision-making efficacy among conflict-affected communities.

**Geographical region:** East Asia & Pacific

**Effect:** No effect (g = 0.003)

**Confidence in study findings:** low (1 study with 2 effect size)

#### **Short Summary**

The Community-Based Reintegration Assistance for Conflict Victims Program (BRA-KDP) provided block grants to 1,724 conflict-affected villages in Aceh. A quasi-experimental study compared program villages with non-recipient communities. While villagers were intended to serve as primary decision-makers, supported by traditional elders and village government, the program had no effect on civic participation or decision-making efficacy in BDP communities. Conflict-affected individuals in treatment areas reported lower perceived influence compared to control villages, though this difference weakened after adjusting for selection biases.

#### **Long summary**

##### *The Intervention*

BRA-KDP focused on community-driven development (CDD) by providing block grants to conflict-affected villages. Activities included infrastructure development, livelihood support, and participatory decision-making, with the goal of promoting inclusive community governance and empowering local populations to manage development projects.

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

The intervention aimed to increase civic participation by engaging conflict-affected communities in the planning and implementation of local projects, such as schools, clinics, and public infrastructure. By facilitating participatory decision-making, the program aimed to empower communities to take a leading role in local governance and project selection.

##### *The Evidence base*

The cell contains two studies; one high-medium confidence SR & one low confidence IE, which was conducted in Indonesia & used a quasi-experimental design to assess the impact of the intervention on outcomes of interest.

##### *Evidence Findings*

Despite its participatory design, the BRA-KDP program had no effect on civic participation or decision-making efficacy in treated communities. Conflict-affected villagers perceived lower influence over decisions in BDP areas, although this effect diminished after accounting for selection biases. The program's short duration and limited scope may have constrained measurable impacts.

##### *The review Evidence*

Lwamba Etienne (2022) conducted a systematic review on gender-focused interventions in fragile and conflict-affected settings (FCAS), analysing 104 impact evaluations of 14 intervention types. Findings show positive effects on empowerment but weaker impacts on long-term behavioural change. Civic participation increased, yet restrictive gender norms remained a barrier. Collaboration with local institutions facilitated engagement, while gaps in evidence persist for MENA and Latin America.

*Included Studies:* The cell contains one low, consistent primary study. The detailed cell summary thus provided here:

**Barron (2009):** The study evaluated the Community-Based Reintegration Assistance for Conflict Victims Program (BRA-KDP) in Aceh, Indonesia. This intervention aimed to support conflict-affected communities by providing block grants directly to villages. The evaluation used a quasi-experimental design to compare treatment villages that received the program with control villages that did not. Initially planned for two phases across Aceh, only the first phase was completed. Conducted from August to the following year, the program targeted 1,724 villages—about one-third of Aceh's total—across 67 rural sub districts chosen for their conflict impact and success in fund disbursement, ensuring all villages in these sub districts received block grants. To address selection bias, the researchers utilized matching techniques, where treatment villages were matched with control villages based on factors like conflict exposure and village characteristics to ensure comparability. An instrumental variables approach addressed non-compliance and confounding factors, isolating the program's effects. Alternative specifications were used to test the robustness of findings, particularly regarding social divisions and conflict escalation.

The study found that While villagers were seen as the primary decision-makers, followed by traditional elders and village government, their perceived influence was lower in BDP communities, despite the program's participatory focus. Overall, decision-making efficacy was low, with conflict victims in treatment areas feeling less influential than those in control groups, though this effect weakened after adjusting for selection biases. The study is rated as a low confidence.

*Link to review study summaries:*

Lwamba Etienne (2022).

The study may be accessed via EGM.

*Confidence assessment*

Overall, the cell is rated as low due to the small (n) in the cell and the presence of low confidence in the findings.

#### **The other outcomes assessed in the study**

**Social cohesion/**Feeling of trust & acceptance of diversity. Sense of belonging

**Human security/**Economic security, Education security, Health security,

**Community & state governance/**Government performance,

**Violence or atrocity prevention/**Nature and scale of violence or atrocities