

Effect of Social Inclusion & Reintegration Activity on Economic Security.

The BRA-KDP program had a small effect on economic security outcomes, improving poverty reduction and asset ownership but not significantly affecting housing, water access, employment, or wages.

Geographical region: East Asia & Pacific

Effect: Small effect ($g = 0.036$)

Confidence in study findings: Low (1 study with 7 Effect size)

Short Summary

The study evaluated the Community-Based Reintegration Assistance for Conflict Victims Program (BRA-KDP) in Aceh, Indonesia, which provided block grants to 1,724 conflict-affected villages. Using a quasi-experimental design, researchers compared treatment and control villages, employing matching techniques and instrumental variables to account for selection bias. Findings indicated an 11% reduction in poverty and increased asset ownership, particularly for motorbikes and agricultural machinery, benefiting conflict-affected households. These improvements likely stemmed from indirect economic gains rather than direct funding. However, the program had small effects on other measures of economic security, including housing quality, access to clean water, employment, and wages.

Long summary

The intervention

The BRA-KDP program focused on community-driven development (CDD), providing block grants to conflict-affected villages. Key activities included infrastructure development, livelihood support, and participatory decision-making to allow communities to allocate resources based on local priorities.

How the intervention is expected to work

The BRA-KDP program by channeling funds directly to communities, the program aimed to reduce poverty and strengthen local economic security. Community decision-making allowed residents to prioritize cash disbursements and investments in productive assets, fostering local economic recovery and indirectly improving household wealth and asset ownership.

The Evidence base

The cell contains two studies: one high-medium confidence systematic review & one primary study, which was conducted in Indonesia & used a quasi-experimental design to assess the impact of the intervention on outcomes of interest.

Evidence Findings

The BRA-KDP program contributed to reducing poverty by 11% and increasing asset ownership among conflict-affected households. However, it had small effects on housing quality, water access, employment, and wages. Overall, improvements were largely due to indirect economic benefits from community-driven allocation rather than direct program outputs.

The review Evidence

The systematic review highlights limited economic impacts of community-driven development in fragile and conflict-affected settings. While cash transfers and microfinance improved short-term financial access, long-term outcomes were constrained by social norms and gender

inequalities. Vocational training and entrepreneurship programs increased employment opportunities but faced cultural and structural barriers, consistent with the BRA-KDP findings of modest economic effects.

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 plans 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.

After accounting for selection effects, the study observed that BRA-KDP reduced poverty by 11% in conflict-affected communities. The program led to moderate gains in asset ownership, notably in engine motorbikes and agricultural machinery. Motorcycle ownership increased significantly for conflict victims, suggesting indirect economic benefits rather than direct program funding. However, BRA-KDP did not impact access to quality housing, clean water, employment rates, or wages. While direct income data is unavailable, poverty reductions suggest improved earnings, especially for lower-income households. The study is rated as a low confidence.

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.

Link to review study summaries:

Lwamba Etienne (2022).

The study may be accessed via EGM.

The other outcomes assessed in the study

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

Human security/Education security, Health security,

Community & state governance/Government performance,

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