

Effect of Social Inclusion & Reintegration Activity on Government Performance

The BRA-KDP program had no effect on village-level government attitudes but increased confidence in higher levels of government.

Geographical region: East Asia & Pacific

Effect: No effect ($g = 0$)

Confidence in study findings: low (1 study with 4 effect size)

Short Summary

The BRA-KDP program provided block grants to conflict-affected villages in Aceh, Indonesia, aiming to strengthen governance and trust in authorities. A quasi-experimental study compared program and non-program villages and found no measurable effect on trust or attitudes toward local village or district governments. However, confidence in higher levels of government increased, possibly because program benefits were attributed to national authorities. Limited local impact may reflect the program's short duration and narrow scope in addressing deeper governance challenges.

Long summary

The Intervention

The Community-Based Assistance for the Reintegration of Conflict Victims (BRA-KDP) in Aceh implemented community-driven development (CDD) through block grants, focusing on infrastructure development, livelihood support, and participatory decision-making in 1,724 high-conflict villages.

How the intervention is expected to work

The BRA-KDP program plans to improve government performance by increasing local community involvement in decision-making and enhancing transparency. By fostering trust in authorities and promoting civic engagement, the program strengthened social cohesion and supported the reintegration of conflict victims, ultimately improving governance in affected villages.

The Evidence base

The cell includes **one primary quasi-experimental study** conducted in Indonesia, assessing the impact of the program on government performance and civic attitudes.

Evidence Findings

The BRA-KDP program had no significant effect on village-level government attitudes but increased confidence in higher levels of government. Overall confidence in these findings is low, based on the single study.

Included studies:

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 subdistricts chosen for their conflict impact and success in fund disbursement, ensuring all villages in these subdistricts 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 BRA-KDP program is set to enhance trust and awareness of local government, but its impact on key indicators of attitudes toward government was limited. There was no significant change in trust levels or support for democracy. Respondents generally felt they had a role in local decision-making, but their perceptions of political efficacy remained low. In fact, some villagers in program areas reported feeling less influential in community decision-making, contrary to the program's empowerment goals. Behavioral measures also showed no improvement in trust in village or district government. However, the program did appear to increase confidence in subdistrict, district, and provincial governments, likely due to their involvement in facilitating the program. This could suggest that the program's credit was attributed to these higher levels of government, as subdistrict facilitators played a key role, while district government had less involvement. The lack of improvements in trust at the local level may be attributed to the short duration of the program and its limited scope in addressing deeper governance issues. The study is rated as a low-confidence study.

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/Civic Participation

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