

**Staff**

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Country Director, Uganda

**Timeline**

2:00pm

**Date**

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# Village Enterprise Impact Evaluation in Uganda: Alleviating Poverty with an Integrated Microenterprise Graduation Program (Kampala)

Helping the ultra-poor develop sustainable livelihoods is a global priority, and policymakers are faced with competing ideas about the best way to approach this problem.

In Uganda, Village Enterprise and IPA partnered with researchers to conduct a randomized evaluation that measured the impact of diverse components and variants of Village Enterprise's graduation-style program, which provides poor households with a combination of cash transfers, mentorship, business training, and support for the formation of businesses and savings groups over a one-year period.

At this dissemination event in Kampala, researchers joined representatives from IPA, Village Enterprise, and the Government of Uganda. Primary investigator Munshi Sulaiman discussed the implementation and findings of IPA's evaluation. Preliminary results suggest that Village Enterprise's microenterprise development program led to increased consumption, assets, and income, as well as improvements in nutrition and subjective well-being, while cost-effectiveness was high. A cost-equivalent cash transfer appeared to have less promising medium-term impacts on poverty reduction and subjective well-being than the microenterprise program, though estimates are more ambiguous.

IPA Uganda Country Director Damien Kirchhoffer followed with a presentation placing these results in the context of a larger research and policy agenda around graduation-style programs and cash transfers. The results present promising evidence for a streamlined, cost-effective graduation model, and suggested that a suite of assets, training, and savings can reduce poverty among the ultra-poor.

After the presentations, Munshi Sulaiman, the lead researcher on this evaluation, joined a panel with Village Enterprise CEO Dianne Calvi, Mercy Corps Chief of Party Robert Mwadime,

Ministry of Gender, Labor and Social Development Monitoring and Evaluation Manager Hassan Mbaziira, and journalist Charles Odongtho. The panel and audience discussed what lessons could be drawn from these results about the efficacy of graduation programs as compared to cash transfers, strategies for scaling Village Enterprise's program to reach more beneficiaries in Uganda, and the importance of rigorous research for poverty alleviation, among other topics.

The presentations and panel were followed by a networking session, a Q&A with journalists and a cocktail reception.

A full summary of this evaluation's results is available [here](#).

## **Address**

Protea Hotel

## **City**

Kampala

## **Country**

Uganda