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The long term impacts of grants on poverty: 9-year
evidence from Uganda's Youth Opportunities Program*

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July 30, 2018

Abstract

In 2008, Uganda granted hundreds of small groups \$400/person to help members start individual skilled trades. Four years on, an experimental evaluation found grants raised earnings by 38% (Blattman, Fiala, Martinez 2014). We return after 9 years to find these start-up grants acted more as a kick-start than a lift out of poverty. Grantees' investment leveled off; controls eventually increased their incomes through business and casual labor; and so both groups converged in employment, earnings, and consumption. Grants had lasting impacts on assets, skilled work, and possibly child health, but had little effect on mortality, fertility, health or education.

Keywords. Employment, poverty, entrepreneurship, cash transfers, occupational choice, Uganda, field experiment, labor market programs, health, education, Uganda
JEL index. J24, O12, D13, C50

*Acknowledgments: For research assistance during this round of data collection we thank Chiara DaFazio, Peter DeBevoise, Alex Nwasa, Samuel Obway, Harrison Pollack, field staff from Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) Uganda, as well as the study participants for generously giving their time. In earlier rounds of the study, other IPA staff were indispensable: Filipe Azevedo, Mathilde Emeriau, Benjamin Moore, Patryk Perkowski, Pia Heller, and Alexander Segura. For comments we thank Johannes Haushofer, Joe Kribicki, Dean Karlan, Paul Sulzman, Berk Ocker, Chris Udry, and numerous anonymous participants. A Vanguard Charitable Trust funded the 9-year round of data collection. Prior rounds of data were funded by the same trust, the World Bank, and the Government of Uganda. Martinez's initial work on this project between 2006 and 2010 was conducted as an economist at the World Bank. All opinions in this paper are those of the authors, and do not necessarily represent the views of the Government of Uganda, the World Bank, or the IADB.

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The Long Term Impacts of Grants on Poverty: 9-year Evidence from Uganda's Youth Opportunities Program

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