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RECOVR Roundup Vol. 33: Social Protection in the Time of COVID-19

In this thirty-third installment of our RECOVR Roundup series, we are sharing new findings and analysis from the [RECOVR Research Hub](#) and from our partner organizations, as well as links on what is happening in the Social Protection landscape in response to COVID-19. Read the [previous installment](#) if you missed it, and [sign up for our mailing list](#) if you'd like to receive this roundup series directly to your inbox.

As always, we encourage you to [write to our team](#) with ideas for features.

New Findings & Analysis

United States: Twenty Year Outcomes of an Unconditional Cash Transfer

A casino opening created a natural cash transfer experiment.

In 1996, a group of researchers was four years into a study of child development in a rural area of the United States. Their study included a substantial number of kids from a local Native American tribe which then opened a casino and began giving every man, woman, and child in the tribe a cash payment of approximately \$5,000 per year (children's funds were paid into a trust fund until they graduated high school). The researchers are publishing the results on life outcomes for those children nearly 20 years later. Despite the Native American children starting in worse conditions, after receiving the money they were better off as adults than the non-Native kids, suggesting the cash was able to overcome the risk factors of the poorer life conditions in which they'd started.

As adults, the Native children reported fewer symptoms of anxiety and depression, better physical health and financial well-being, and fewer risky/illegal behaviors compared to the others in the study. And the longer they'd received the cash (from being younger when the study started), and the more cash they received (from having two recipient parents), the better off they were nearly two decades later. The authors conclude that these findings

support the long-term effects of programs like the child tax credit or universal basic income that provide cash directly to families with children. [Read more here.](#)

What We're Reading & Watching

- Political forces have a huge bearing on the implementation of social protection programs. In his [new edited book](#), Tom Laver and colleagues dive deep into the politics of distributing social transfers using six country case studies to show **how national and local political forces and government's ability to reach the poorest shape these programs.**
- Based on evidence from 152 studies, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency has added its voice to several other authors' on [what works to reduce poverty through social protection](#). **For most indicators, cash transfers contributed to progress in the direction intended by policymakers.**
- [More encouraging evidence](#) for the graduation approach—this time for residents of the Maratane Refugee Camp and surrounding host community households in rural Mozambique. **Participants who got the support and training programs reported more income and savings, and lower food insecurity.**
- And Concern Worldwide has [published a series of reports](#) about a four-year program combining a graduation approach with participatory watershed management.
- On March 10th, the Partnership for Economic Inclusion (PEI) convened partners at the Fragility Forum 2022 to share both country experiences and practitioners' lessons on "[Advancing Economic Inclusion for Forcibly Displaced People.](#)" **This PEI interview** (including IPA's [Nathanael Goldberg](#)) **featured five case studies of impact evaluations of graduation programs implemented across fragile, conflict, and violence-affected (FCV) contexts in Afghanistan, Uganda, the DRC, Nigeria, and Mozambique.**
- [BASIC \(Better Assistance in Crises\) Research](#) held a roundtable asking, **"In crisis settings, how can international, national, and local actors work together to strengthen commitments and effectively, efficiently, and sustainably provide social assistance to those in need?"** You can watch the video [here](#).

March 31, 2022