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Timeline

2023

Study Status

In Progress

Study Type

Randomized Evaluation

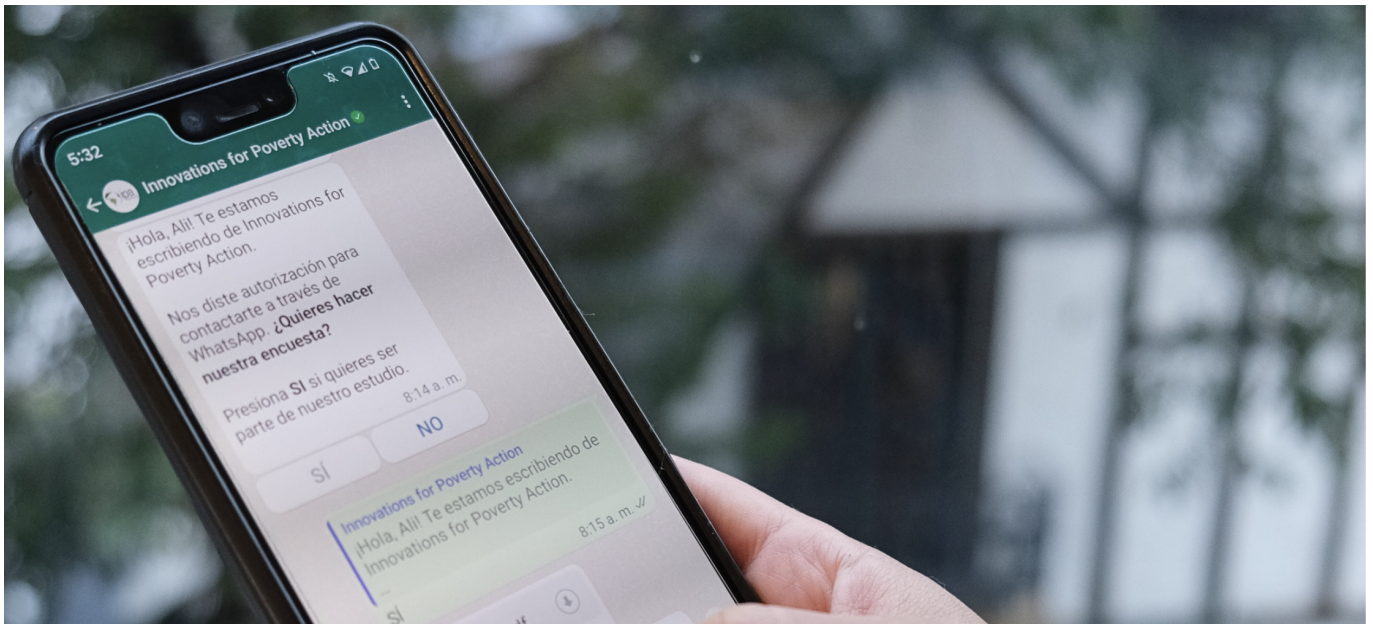
Sample Size

1,727 Venezuelan migrants

Research Implemented by IPA

Yes

Mobile Data & WhatsApp: Impact on Social Program Access for Venezuelan Migrants in Colombia



A migrant being contacted by IPA

Researchers partnered with IPA Colombia and the National Planning Department of Colombia to evaluate whether providing displaced Venezuelans with mobile data access and information about social programs through WhatsApp could enhance their awareness and interest in these programs, improve employment outcomes, and improve overall well-being.

The humanitarian crisis and violence in Venezuela have caused nearly three million Venezuelans to flee to Colombia.¹ Displaced Venezuelans in Colombia often contend with limited Internet access, which restricts the amount of information they can receive about social programs and economic opportunities.

Researchers partnered with IPA Colombia and the Department of National Planning in Colombia to conduct a randomized evaluation involving 1,727 displaced Venezuelans. The evaluation aimed to find out if giving these Venezuelans better access to mobile data and information about government social programs through WhatsApp could increase their understanding and interest in these programs, improve their job situations, and enhance their overall quality of life.

Participants were divided into four groups at random:

- One group received only mobile phone credits.
- A second group got mobile phone credits and information through private WhatsApp messages.
- The third group received mobile phone credits and information in WhatsApp groups.
- The fourth group (comparison group) was given mobile phone credits and the same information sent to the second and third groups, but after they had completed the survey at the end of the intervention.

This setup allows researchers to compare the effects of different ways of receiving

information about government services and assistance programs (privately or in groups) on participants' knowledge, interest in social programs, employment outcomes, and overall well-being.

Results will be available mid-end 2024.

Sources

¹ Amnesty International, "Facts and figures: Regularization and protection of Venezuelan nationals in Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Chile," Amnesty International, September 21, 2023, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2023/09/facts-figures-venezuelans-colombia-ecuador-peru-chile/>

Implementing Partner



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