Women’s entrepreneurship & IPV: A cluster-randomized trial of microenterprise assistance and partner participation in post-conflict Uganda

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What is SWAY?
SWAY is a research program in northern Uganda dedicated to understanding the scale and nature of war violence, the effects of war on youth, and the evaluation of programs to recover, reintegrate, and develop after conflict.

In this Research Brief:
• The well-being of women and girls in northern Uganda
• The impacts of war and displacement
• Recommendations

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Civil War, Reintegration, and Intimate Partner Violence
Jeannie Annan, Christopher Blattman, Dy...
Research question

• Do cash grants + business training lead to increased income for marginalized women in post-conflict setting?
Women’s economic empowerment

Engaging men

IPV
Research questions

• Do cash grants + business training lead to improved autonomy, partner relationships and decreased IPV?

• Does more inclusive approach (engaging men) to economic program lead to partner’s support for business and improved partner relationship? Autonomy? Attitudes around gender roles?

• Does inclusive approach to economic program lead to reduction of IPV?
120 small, poor villages in northern Uganda

80-300 households per village

Rain-fed subsistence farming

Recovering from conflict
Context: Post-conflict recovery

Low-level insurgency 1987-2006

 Civilians the main target of rebel violence and conscription
Mass forced displacement 2002-08

To camps around local trading centers, usually a few kilometers from home villages
Return 2007-09

Intervention implemented as villagers are finishing resettlement in their original villages
NGO and community identify 15 of poorest, most marginalized people per village

Ages 18-35 (average 27). Average education 3 years. 15 hours of work/week, almost none in nonfarm enterprise. Cash earnings $4.47 per month
Women’s Income Generating Support (WINGS) program

1. 5 days of business skills training
   - Basic accounting, sales, etc.
   - Make a simple business plan
   - Encouraged to become petty traders and small retailers

2. $150 unconditional grant

3. 5 follow-up visits over 6 months
   - Aim to provide
     1. Accountability & commitment to invest
     2. Business advice
Two cluster randomized controlled trials

1800 clients in 120 villages

"Phase 1"

60 villages: Training, grant and follow-up

30 villages: WINGS

30 villages: W +

"Phase 2"

60 villages: Training and grant 20 months later
Measures and Analysis

Measures

Income:
- Earnings, consumption, assets. Employment hours; financial assets and access

Relationship, empowerment and violence measures:
- Quality of relationship with partner
- Support from partner
- IPV
- Attitudes toward gender norms
- Autonomy and influence in household purchases

Analysis

- Intent to Treat (ITT) using OLS regression
- Standard errors clustered by village
- Also looked at TOT and per protocol
Did women improve economically?

- **Occupational shift**: Likelihood of non-farm business doubles and work hours increase by two thirds

- **Earnings increase by two thirds** without group encouragement, and **more than doubles** with group encouragement

- Overall, WINGS brings poorest villagers up to levels of existing traders

(Blattman et al., 2014)
But little evidence of impact on women’s autonomy or violence.
But those with worse partner relationships earned less
Research questions

• Does more inclusive approach (engaging men) to economic program lead to partner’s support for business and improved partner relationship? Autonomy? Attitudes around gender roles?

• Does inclusive approach to economic program lead to reduction of IPV?
Intervention 2: WINGS +

- All WINGS components plus *Tic Kacel Ryemo Can*

- Invitation to male partner or other male household member

- Additional day in business training on
  - Cultural, gender and financial barriers to female entrepreneurship
  - Communication
  - Joint problem-solving
Use second phase to evaluate W+

**“Phase 1”**

- 60 villages: Training, grant and follow-up
- 30 villages: Intensify group formation and cooperation
- 30 villages: No added services

**“Phase 2”**

- 60 villages: Training and grant 18 months later
- 30 villages: WINGS
- 30 villages: W +

1800 clients in 120 villages
Impact on partner relationship but not IPV
Conclusions

• A slight, very low cost addition led to positive effects on women’s relationship with partner (similar to effect for couples therapy)

• We need to better understand the mechanisms of change within the household--how and when to engage men in women’s empowerment, particularly in cost-effective and scalable ways.

• Economic programs important entry point for broader interventions that use economic gains to stimulate wider social changes.