

Final findings

Post trauma services for women's empowerment

This research project on the 'Cost-benefit analysis of cash transfer programmes and post trauma services for the economic empowerment of women in Uganda' examined the extent to which a combination of cash transfers and trauma support addresses trauma and impacts on the sustainable economic independence of highly traumatized women in Northern Uganda. This study investigates the effect of social protection and trauma relief on social-economic resilience of highly traumatized communities in Uganda and in Ethiopia. The research compared the effects of existing trauma programmes and a new intervention developed for this study, specifically designed for low resource settings with high Post Traumatic Stress (PTS). The intervention was called the Self-Help Low-Cost Post-Traumatic Stress programme (SHLCPTS) and was based on Eye Movement Desensitizing and Reprocessing (EMDR) techniques. The study found that the effect of all the support modalities for the relief of PTS were higher on economic resilience (income, capability and empowerment) than the effect of the social protection programmes. The combined effect on economic resilience of support for trauma relief and social protection support together was the highest. Statistical analysis indicates the eight groups (which received different programs) do differ significantly on income. This difference can be attributed to counselling, SHLCPTS and receiving both cash transfer/in-kind and counselling.

The following are the final findings and policy messages:

Final findings

The conclusion of this research is that supporting trauma relief is cost-beneficial to improve income-resilience. Social protection programmes will result in higher social-economic resilience (SER) if trauma relief is incorporated, among populations with high PTS. This study investigates the effects of social protection policies and relief of post-traumatic stress on social economic resilience. The findings of the studies in the first and second wave and in the two countries showed consistent results of the significant positive effect of trauma relief on SER as a strong independent variable next to livelihood support. The interviews of the second Uganda study show that those who received the SHLCPTS-program have a very positive opinion about it and perceive a better SER. The Ethiopia study (phase three) indicates that the effect of the SHLCPTS program is large for Capability, Income, and Empowerment. Traumatized communities need to feel protected and enabled to regain their livelihood as a precondition to dissuade them from taking risky and dangerous routes in search of protection and prospects. The findings point to the conclusion that the reorganization of the provision of both livelihood support and mental health support contributed to a sense of self-efficacy and positively impacted on resilience, specifically on the perceived capability and income security. Empowerment correlates systematically high with social-economic resilience. This offers an opportunity to organize services in a way that will contribute to refugees feeling both protected and offered prospects to rebuild their livelihoods in the locations where they receive such support. Support for trauma relief critically enhances the positive impact of the livelihood support on SER. The SHLCPTS program showed very good results on social and economic variables (income, capability and empowerment), and is a low cost but evidently effective program. It has been designed with a view to the possibility of upscale ability in low resource areas and proved as effective as other mental health programs. The ICT based SHLCPTS program performed well in the traumatized community in Northern Uganda and shows the potential of ICT based support to help address PTS while strengthening socio-economic resilience of vulnerable traumatized

communities.

Policy messages

The results of this research can strengthen policy on integration and re-integration of returnees and refugees. The results of this research scientifically shows that the addition of PTS relief programmes are a precondition for better effects of social protection and livelihood support.

This leads to the following recommendations:

- Integration of SHLCPTS and other forms of trauma support in social protection and livelihood programmes can strengthen the positive effects on SER;
- More research is necessary for the possibilities to provide such services digitally;
- Strengthening of capacity for professional mental health referrals;
- More emphasis on the positive effects of livelihood programmes is necessary in order to strengthen the positive thoughts regarding integration and reintegration;

Contribute to avoid the negative influences of PTS on communities with high numbers of severe PTS. This can be achieved by strengthening law and order and minimize criminal organizations (including human traffickers) in order to enhance the feeling of security in the communities.

Knowledge products

- Reisen, van, M., Stokmans, M., Nakazibwe, P., Kidane, S. (2018) "Enhancing Effectiveness of Social Protection by Psycho-Social Support in Uganda and Ethiopia". Tilburg University.
- Reisen, van M. 2018. Dutch White Paper on Development Cooperation Beacons a New Discourse of Hope. IDN. See: <https://www.indepthnews.net/index.php/the-world/eueurope/beacons-a-new-discourse-of-hope>
- Reisen, van M. 2018. Dutch White Paper on Development Cooperation Beacons a New Discourse of Hope. (Online publication)
- Reisen, van, M. et al. 2018. Livelihood-support and Trauma Relief in relation to Social-Economic Resilience in Northern Uganda and Northern Ethiopia. Research Summary. Tilburg University, Tilburg. http://194.0.234.211/wpcontent/uploads/2016/07/Summary-Research-Traumaand-Livelihood-Refugees-Uganda-Ethiopia-Tilburg-University_Final1.pdf
- Book with researchers from Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia, Sudan. Reisen, van, M., et al. (eds.) 2018. *Triggers of Mixed Migration and Human Trafficking in the wider Horn Region*. (forthcoming)
- Advocacy briefs: <http://isis.or.ug/womens-economic-empowerment-in-the-changing-world-of-work/> and <http://isis.or.ug/download/cost-benefit-analysis-of-cash-transfer-programmes-and-posttrauma-services-for-economic-empowerment-of-women-in-uganda/>
- Findings fact Sheet: Reisen, van M. et al. 2016. Interim findings Post trauma services for women's empowerment.

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Weblink

<http://includeplatform.net/research-group/cost-benefit-analysis-cash-transfer-programmes-post-trauma-services-economic-empowerment-women-uganda/>