



Monthly Update of Forced Displacement Literature Review

October 2020

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¹ The compilation of monthly literature reviews can be accessed in a [pdf version](#) or on our [online database](#).

² The JDC Literature Review provides summaries of recently published research to encourage the exchange of ideas on topics related to forced displacement. The findings, interpretations and conclusions expressed in the literature included in this review are entirely those of their authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Joint Data Center, UNHCR, the World Bank, the Executive Directors of the World Bank or the governments they represent. For convenience, the literature review contains links to websites operated by third parties. The Joint Data Center and its affiliate organizations do not represent or endorse these sites or the content, services and products they may offer, and do not guarantee the accuracy or reliability of any information, data, opinions, advice or statements provided on these sites.

UN Peacekeeping and Forced Displacement in South Sudan

Ralph Sundberg

International Peacekeeping, Volume 27, Issue 2 (2020), Pages 210–237

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Previous sub-national research has shown that the presence and size of armed peacekeepers reduces the number of civilian and battle-related deaths, however little is known about the effects of peacekeeping deployments on forced displacement. This paper **explores whether UN peacekeeping deployments reduce the number of people forcibly displaced by violence in South Sudan**. The author argues that the deployment of peacekeepers may affect both push and pull factors for forced displacement. A peacekeeping presence may decrease actual levels of violence as well as the perceived threat of violence. A larger peacekeeping force has a higher deterrence capacity. At the same time, they may act as a pull factor by attracting conflict-affected people to areas with better security and opportunities.

The analysis is based on Geo-PKO data, which tracks the sub-national location and size of UN deployments, and an original dataset on events of displacement in South Sudan's 74 counties between 2011 and 2017. The statistical analysis yields two main results: (1) **No robust evidence is found for peacekeeping reducing the occurrence or magnitude of forced displacement**; and (2) **peacekeepers might act also as pull factors, as those displaced tend to seek shelter in protected sites around peacekeeping bases**. The author argues that the theoretical argument may still be valid, but that an effect was not feasible to identify in South Sudan where the peacekeeping mission—despite its comparatively large numbers—lacks credible deterrent capacity.

Living Conditions and Settlement Decisions of Recent Afghan Returnees: Findings from a 2018 Phone Survey of Afghan Returnees and UNHCR data

Mohammad Haroon, Nandini Krishnan, Jeffrey Savage, Christina Wieser, and Thea Yde-Jensen

UNHCR and the World Bank, June 2019

<https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/344311561017281303/living-conditions-and-settlement-decisions-of-recent-afghan-returnees-findings-from-a-2018-phone-survey-of-afghan-returnees-and-unhcr-data>

More than 2 million displaced Afghans have returned to Afghanistan between 2014 and 2016, the majority from Pakistan, including over half a million registered refugees who returned under UNHCR's voluntary return program. This report **describes and analyzes the living conditions of Afghan refugees who returned from Pakistan in 2014 or after, with a particular emphasis on documented returnees**. It sheds light on the decision of return, the choice of destination, and returnee livelihoods.

The analysis is based on data from the 2011 *Afghan Population Profiling, Verification and Response survey* (PPVR) covering 507,000 registered Afghans who lived in Pakistan in 2011, the *Voluntary Repatriation Form survey* (VRF) covering 125,000 returned to Afghanistan between 2014 and 2017, and the 2018 World Bank Phone Survey (WBPS) of post-2013 returnees. To assess the change in living conditions of post-2013 returnees after their return to Afghanistan, registered returnees in the PPVR are matched with documented post-2013 returnees in the WBPS applying propensity score matching methods.

Key findings:

- **Afghan refugees who returned to Afghanistan between 2014 and 2017 tended to be worse off in monetary terms than refugees who stayed in Pakistan.** Afghan refugees who returned between 2014 and 2017 were less wealthy, lived in refugee villages or temporary housing in Pakistan, had previously considered repatriating, and visited Afghanistan regularly. However, there is some evidence that registered Afghan refugees with at least some formal education were more likely to return.
- **Most refugees returned to their province of origin, prioritizing proximity to social networks** even though these provinces tended to have lower employment rates and higher poverty rates. Afghans living in their province of origin were more likely to be employed and were less likely to have the same type of job as they did before returning—suggesting that social networks may have assisted returnees to find work. Returnees who do not settle in their province of origin move to relatively urban areas in search of safety, services and employment opportunities.
- **Recent returnees are living under difficult circumstances.** Afghan returnee households are large and although most families have at least one person working for pay, they have low job stability and low wages.
- **Returnees generally experience a deterioration in employment opportunities, wages, and job stability after returning to Afghanistan.** Most returnees work as daily wage laborers in non-agriculture, and returnees generally experience a decrease in the employment opportunities, wages, and job stability after returning to Afghanistan.

- **Access to education improves post return for both boys and girls** and the gender-gap in school attendance is reduced, driven by an increase in the number of households where all girls attend school.
- **Returnees tended to be more urbanized than hosts, with relatively better outcomes on a range of socio-economic measures** (e.g. higher exposure to formal education, greater access to infrastructure). However, male returnees had lower employment-to-population ratios, lower labor force participation rates, and slightly higher unemployment rates. Returnees also suffered higher indebtedness, on average, and were less likely to own their own homes.

Big Data for Sampling Design: The Venezuelan Migration Crisis in Ecuador

Juan Eduardo Munoz, Jose Victor Gallegos Munoz and Sergio Daniel Olivieri

World Bank Policy Research Working Paper Series, No. 9329 (2020)

<https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/110561595423329189/big-data-for-sampling-design-the-venezuelan-migration-crisis-in-ecuador>

Even though Ecuador has a reliable and up-to-date sampling frame for the national census, the lack of information on the numbers of Venezuelans displaced in Ecuador and their locations in the country posed challenges for the design and implementation of the Human Mobility and Host Community Survey (*Encuesta de personas en Movilidad y Comunidades de Acogida*, EPEC). The survey aimed to gather comparable data on Venezuelan migrants and their host communities. This paper **presents a methodology that exploits ‘Big Data’ to generate representative samples of Venezuelan and host households in Ecuador.**

The analysis is based on Call Detail Records and External Detail Records between June 2018 and March 2019 provided by Telefónica de Ecuador.

Telefónica de Ecuador analyzed their database to determine how many of their active mobile phones in each primary sampling unit (PSU) were likely to belong to Venezuelans displaced abroad, based on the name of the account holder or the volume of calls and messages to/from Venezuela. To estimate the total number of Venezuelans in each PSU, figures were adjusted using Telefónica’s market shares (to estimate the total number of Venezuelan phones from all companies in each PSU) and the fraction of the population using mobile phones. The analysis revealed:

- 470,095 Venezuelans were estimated to be living in Ecuador in 2019. Venezuelan were concentrated in the main cities of the corridor from the Colombian border in the north to the Peruvian border in the south.
- There is a high provincial variation, ranging from cantons hosting almost 90,000 Venezuelans displaced abroad (Guayaquil and Quito) to others with none. More than half of Venezuelans are living and working in just four cantons (Guayaquil, Quito, Mana, and Santo Domingo).

In the first sampling stage, 200 PSUs were stratified into three categories depending on the Venezuelan migrant density, defined as the ratio between the number of Venezuelan cellphones in the PSU (as per Telefónica's estimates) and the total population of the PSU (as per the 2010 population census). Within each stratum, the sample was selected with probability proportional to the number of households reported by the 2010 Census. In the second sampling stage, all households in each of the selected sectors were listed and stratified into three categories considering nationality and demographic composition. Within each stratum, the sample was selected by systematic equal-probability sampling.

This methodology can be useful in designing sampling frames in countries with limited information (e.g. lack of a recent census or a migratory registry) and scarce resources to rapidly gather socio-economic data of migrants and host communities for policy design. The prospects of applying the methodology may be limited in settings where telecommunication companies lack the capacity to provide the requisite data and where the company's market share and coverage is low. Since migrant and refugee populations are often very mobile, it is also necessary to regularly update the data and sampling frame.

Shoring Up Economic Refugees: Venezuelan Migrants in the Ecuadoran Labor Market

Sergio Daniel Olivieri, Francesc Ortega, Ana Mercedes Rivadeneira Alava and Eliana Carranza

World Bank Policy Research Working Paper Series, No. 9332 (2020)

<https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/354821595510754331/shoring-up-economic-refugees-venezuelan-migrants-in-the-ecuadoran-labor-market>

This paper **analyzes the labor-market conditions of around 340,000 Venezuelan displaced abroad, who migrated to Ecuador between 2016 and the summer of 2019.**

The analysis is based on new data from the Survey of Migrants and Receiving Communities

in Ecuador (*Encuesta a Personas en Movilidad Humana y en Comunidades Receptoras en Ecuador*, EPEC) covering Venezuelan migrants who arrived in Ecuador after January 2016 as well as Ecuadorans living in the same localities (1900 households in total).

Key findings:

- Venezuelan migrants (between 2016 and the summer of 2019) represented 2 percent of Ecuador's population (and 3 percent of the labor force), reaching much higher concentrations in several provinces.
- **Venezuelan migrants are younger and more educated than Ecuadorian natives.** Venezuelans have an average age of 32 years—3.5 years younger than the average Ecuadorian. The proportion of individuals with low educational attainment (at most primary education) is 22 percentage points lower for Venezuelan migrants than for Ecuadorians. The proportion of college-graduates is 27 percentage points higher for Venezuelans than for Ecuadorians.
- **Venezuelan migrants have very high employment rates**, about 17 percentage-points higher than Ecuadorians in the same locality, and account for 3 percent of Ecuador's employment.
- **The quality of employment is much lower for Venezuelan workers than for natives, characterized by high informality and temporality, higher weekly work hours, and lower wages, despite higher educational attainment.** The informality rate for Venezuelan workers is 15 percentage points higher and they are 29 percentage-points more likely to have temporary contracts. Venezuelan workers were 6 percentage-points more likely to be underpaid by their employers. Venezuelan migrants work 5.5 hours more than the average native worker, but their average monthly earnings are 36 percent lower. The native-immigrant gaps in quality of employment and earnings are much larger among workers with higher education levels, suggesting that college-educated Venezuelans are unable to access high-skill, high-productivity jobs.
- **There is a high degree of occupational downgrading.** 72 percent of the Venezuelans who migrated to Ecuador report that their skills were used more productively in their jobs back in Venezuela.

These findings have two important implications: (1) the skills of many Venezuelan migrants are vastly underutilized; and (2) the brunt of the adjustment to the inflows of Venezuelan workers has fallen disproportionately on the lower paid and least skilled Ecuadorian workers in the main receiving areas.

The authors use the data to simulate the impact of: (a) providing legal work permits to all Venezuelan workers; and (b) adopting measures that allow Venezuelan workers to obtain employment that matches their education level or their pre-migration occupation. These simulations demonstrate that:

- If Venezuelans are provided with work permits, the rate of informal employment among Venezuelans would fall substantially and, as a result, average wages for Venezuelan migrants are likely to increase (by 9 percent to 18 percent depending on education levels).
- If Ecuador's government adopts measures that allow Venezuelan workers to obtain employment that matches their education level or their pre-migration occupation (e.g. administrative actions to facilitate Venezuelans' educational credentials), then Ecuador's GDP would increase between 1.6 percent and 1.9 percent. In addition, this policy would help shift the burden of adjustment away from the more economically vulnerable native workers.

The authors conclude that, given the high educational attainment of Venezuelan migrants and the cultural and linguistic proximity between them and the Ecuadorian population, **there are promising policy actions that can generate substantial economic gains for Ecuador and, at the same time, shift the burden of adjustment away from the most vulnerable segments of the labor market.**

Perceptions About the Labor Market Integration of Refugees: Evidences from Syrian Refugees in Jordan

Zeynep Sahin Mencutek and Ayat J. Nashwan

Journal of International Migration and Integration (2020)

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s12134-020-00756-3>

This article **examines the labor market integration of Syrian refugees in Jordan**. It describes how labor market integration depends on the alignment of four diverging perspectives: (1) the host state perspective, expressed through policies and laws on refugee employment; (2) the refugee perspective shaped by refugees' actual participation in the formal and informal labor markets and the challenges they face; (3) the host community perspective, which affects their reactions to refugee integration; and (4) the donor perspective, which has implications for development aid and support to refugees'

employment rights. The analysis is based on qualitative research methods, particularly ethnographic policy analysis, interviews, and desk research.

Main arguments:

- Refugees' legal right to work is one of the most contentious policy issues for the Jordanian government and for its relations with citizens, refugees, and donors, as it intersects with the country's demographic dynamics, economy development vision, and relations with external actors.
- From the perspective of donors, ensuring Syrians' legal access to labor market in the immediate host countries, like Jordan, is a policy tool for keeping refugees in the origin region.
- For the host community, refugee employment is understood to be crucial for refugees' self-reliance and local integration, but it is also perceived as the source of competition for already scarce job opportunities.
- For refugees, access to the labor market and support are ways of gaining sustainable livelihood opportunities, self-reliance, and dignity. However, this access is marked by exploitation, vulnerability, and discrimination in workplaces as well as the anti-refugee rhetoric of local host communities.
- Programming in refugee employment necessitates taking all these four perspectives into account.

The impact of coronavirus (COVID-19) on forcibly displaced persons in developing countries

OECD, June 2020

<https://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/policy-responses/the-impact-of-coronavirus-COVID-19-on-forcibly-displaced-persons-in-developing-countries-88ad26de/>

This brief identifies the steps that governments can take to address the consequences of COVID-19 in situations of forced displacement in developing countries with a view to ensuring that no one is left behind. The brief examines the exposure of forcibly displaced persons to health risks and the socio-economic consequences of the pandemic, in particular in fragile contexts. It further highlights key protection safeguards to be integrated in the effort to improve health systems and resilience of societies.

Main points:

- The risk of COVID-19 transmission could be heightened in situations of fragility, high population density and camp settings.
- With the majority of refugees living in low or middle-income countries with weaker health and social protection systems, and many experiencing pre-existing vulnerabilities, they may be disproportionately affected by the consequences of the pandemic. Their vulnerability may be compounded in fragile contexts.
- Restrictive public health measures, in addition to health and livelihoods impacts, may have affected the rights of forcibly displaced persons, including the right to asylum, freedom of movement, right to education and work. Moreover, restrictive measures may have also influenced directly or indirectly patterns of displacement and potentially generated further displacement.
- UN agencies, experts and NGOs have highlighted critical protection safeguards and minimum legal standards, and some have taken concrete measures to protect refugees and put in place preparedness measures as well as an emergency response.
- Key options advanced by global plans and various organizations on the response to COVID-19 in forced displacement situations point to the need to address risks of violence, discrimination and xenophobia and to the importance of inclusion of the forcibly displaced into health sector response plans and social protection schemes. Immediate response should include decongestion, surveillance, testing, treatment and awareness raising. As countries across the world are increasing the coverage of social protection and jobs programs in response to COVID-19, there is an opportunity to include forcibly displaced persons and other vulnerable groups into social safety nets from the outset.
- Official Development Assistance (ODA) will have an important role to play in the recovery phase where many developing countries may be faced with liquidity risks.

The brief identified a number of policy options to safeguard rights and protect health priorities. These include:

- Include refugees systematically into donor country health sector strategies and programming;
- Work with refugee-hosting and return countries to include refugees alongside host communities into national and local-level health response plans and social protection schemes;
- Manage border restrictions in a manner which respects international human rights and refugee law, including the principle of non-refoulement;
- Build the resilience of health systems with particular focus on fragile contexts and ensuring urgent support is allocated to those with weaker health systems; and

- Preserve ongoing humanitarian and ODA to ensure they are not diverted from their initial goals.

Leaving No One Behind: Refugee Inclusion in the World Bank's Response to COVID-19

Lauren Post

International Rescue Committee, June 2020

<https://www.rescue.org/report/leaving-no-one-behind-refugee-inclusion-world-banks-response-COVID-19>

This report **argues that refugees, who are typically left out of development plans, are at risk of being left out of national COVID-19 response plans funded by donors like the World Bank.** The report sets out five key actions the World Bank—and other international financial institutions and development banks—should take so that support reaches refugees and other displaced populations. Specifically:

- **Systematically include displaced populations in World Bank-funded COVID-19 response plans and activities, including national healthcare, social safety net schemes, and remote education programs.** The Bank should consider a systematic protocol for refugee inclusion in COVID-19 response plans, and elevate its Refugee Policy Review Framework for policy dialogue with host governments to drive inclusive national policies that give refugees access to national services and the formal labor market.
- **Adapt COVID-19 response programming and relevant policies to meet the needs of conflict-affected people.** There are a number of lessons that the Bank can draw from the humanitarian sector about how to best understand and address needs of the most vulnerable during a crisis. Humanitarian actors can also share best practices for quickly pivoting programming in the midst of a crisis like COVID-19 (e.g. from Ebola crisis in DRC).
- **Coordinate with and fund the humanitarian system—including UN agencies and NGOs.** The Bank has developed a much more robust partnership with UN Agencies responding to humanitarian crises, however this appears to happen in places where the Bank and UN already have a strong working relationship, rather than systematized across all humanitarian contexts where the Bank works. Systematic consultation with NGOs at the country level could go a long way towards achieving better outcomes. The Bank should also consider directly financing humanitarian NGOs that can help

implement programs, such as cash transfers, in places where the World Bank is not on the ground or may not have access to segments of vulnerable populations.

- **Ensure development financing and global economic policies support refugees in the short- and longer-term.** Some of the World Bank's \$160 billion COVID-19 response funds should help countries meet refugees' needs, alongside their hosts, in the immediate and longer-term. The Bank should also start planning now for how it can support the socioeconomic development of refugees above and beyond what the Global Concessional Financing Facility and the International Development Association Window for Hosts and Refugees (IDA19) can fund with current financing levels over the next few years. In addition to financing, the World Bank and IMF should work with the G20 countries on a broader economic response that involves debt relief for poor and fragile states.
- **Through the Joint Data Center, generate evidence on the socioeconomic impacts of COVID-19 in fragile and conflict-affected states and for displaced populations.** The World Bank-UNHCR Joint Data Center on Forced Displacement is well-placed to drive forward an agenda and implement research to garner socioeconomic data on refugees and other vulnerable people. World Bank poverty and livelihoods surveys should be extended to included refugees, and analysis of this data should be disaggregated by status.

Additionally, the report recommends that the Bank's shareholders should: (a) address existing arrears and frontload financing committed to the World Bank for IDA19; (b) increase contributions to the Global Concessional Financing Facility; and (c) consider appropriate debt relief measures beyond the initial moratorium.

Vegetation changes attributable to refugees in Africa coincide with agricultural deforestation

Jean-François Maystadt, Valerie Mueller, Jamon Van Den Hoek and Stijn van Weezel
Environmental Research Letters, Volume 15 (2020)

<https://doi.org/10.1088/1748-9326/ab6d7c>

This paper examines the effect of refugees on natural vegetation and agricultural land in host areas in Africa. The analysis is based on two main sources of data: (a) a dataset of 810 geo-referenced refugee camps monitored by UNHCR in 49 African countries over 2000–

2016; and (b) satellite datasets on vegetation condition and change. The data and analysis do not cover refugees integrated in rural communities or cities.

Main results:

- In line with established linkages between inter-annual weather anomalies and vegetation, precipitation is shown to have a positive effect on vegetation, while temperature is shown to have a negative effect.
- **While conflict events negatively affect vegetation, the magnitude of the effect is quite small after considering refugee presence.** Doubling the number of conflict events in a given location would affect vegetation by less than 1%. These findings are consistent with earlier global analysis which suggest that there are small associations between conflict and environmental degradation after controlling for population growth.
- **Refugees are positively associated with vegetation condition.** Doubling the number of refugees increases the Enhanced Vegetation Index (EVI), a measure of landscape condition, by 3 percent. Out-migration of natives is not responsible for improvements in vegetation.
- **There is no systematic evidence that refugees contribute to deforestation due to their engagement in resource-extractive activities.** There is no statistical evidence that refugees affect the Burn Area Index (BAI), a measure of charcoal signals following the burning of vegetation, associated with land clearing for informal settlements, cultivation or charcoal production. This suggests that refugees are not extracting biomass for fuel or other purposes at a massive scale in the long term.
- **There is increased risk of forested areas being converted to cropland.** The refugee-induced vegetation change seems to be associated with a small, increase in agricultural production, as reflected by the estimated effects on Net Primary Productivity (NPP), which measures vegetative biomass accumulation. Local farmers may be responding to incentives to expand agricultural production and intensify crop production with potentially higher yields. Alternatively, this may be in result of refugees' desire to remain self-employed in the agricultural sector in receiving areas.
- There were marked positive shifts in vegetation in areas neighboring refugee camps following 2007. While not attributed to a particular policy, the authors note that these positive effects coincide with rhetoric in policy documents expressing urgency over mitigating the environmental degradation in areas surrounding refugee camps. Both international initiatives and reforms by national and local governments might have contributed to reduce the incentives for deforestation

The authors note that the level of special aggregation in the analysis may mask the magnitude of the degradative processes that occur within closer proximity to the refugee camps.

No Lost Generation: Supporting the School Participation of Displaced Syrian Children in Lebanon

Jacobus de Hoop, Mitchell Morey and David Seidenfeld

The Journal of Development Studies, Volume 55, Supplement 1 (2019), Pages 107-127

<https://doi.org/10.1080/00220388.2019.1687875>

According to the authors, in 2014 there were around 1.5 million Syrian refugees in Lebanon—including 500,000 children of primary school age—out of a total population of 5.9 million. Several policies have been implemented to encourage school attendance including: waiving primary school fees; waiving the requirement for a residency permit; providing basic supplies to students; opening afternoon shifts in public primary schools; and providing an accelerated program for children who had been out of school for a prolonged period so that they could continue schooling at an age-appropriate grade. Despite these efforts, approximately half the Syrian children of primary school age in Lebanon did not attend school in the 2015/2016 school year. This can be compared to an average attendance rate of nearly 93 percent in Syria prior to the onset of the crisis.

This paper **examines the impact of a cash transfer program, No Lost Generation (NLG), on school enrolment and attendance of displaced Syrian children in Lebanon**. NLG provided monthly cash transfers for each child enrolled in an afternoon shift at a primary school, intended to cover the cost of transport to school for children ages 5–9 and offset a substantive portion of the income lost if older children (ages 10–14) attend school. The pilot was implemented in the 2016/2017 school year.

The authors employ a geographical regression discontinuity design comparing children in pilot governorates with children in neighboring governorates. A baseline questionnaire was administered to 1,440 households before the start of the 2016/2017 school year in September and October 2016 (before NLG was launched) and a follow-up questionnaire was administered to the same households by telephone in March 2017, several months into the program and the school year.

Main findings:

- **There was no evidence found that NLG increased school enrolment in general or in afternoon shifts.** School enrolment among Syrian children rose rapidly across all

Lebanon's governorates during the period of the evaluation, resulting in **supply-side capacity constraints that appear to have dampened positive enrolment impacts.**

- **Household expenditure on the education of children receiving NLG benefits increased** relative to the corresponding expenditure on children in the control governorates, partly due to the increased use of paid bus services to commute to and from school.
- **There were substantial impacts on school attendance among enrolled children,** which increased by 0.5 days to 0.7 days per week, an improvement of about 20 per cent relative to the control group. This expansion is comparable among younger children (receiving lower-value transfers) and older children and also among boys and girls.

The authors conclude that supply-side constraints may hamper the delivery of goods and services to populations in need across many sectors, including education. Consequently demand-side interventions may not be able to achieve the outcomes desired unless they are implemented in coordination with supply-side interventions. The authors also emphasize that it is possible and important to identify opportunities to carry out rigorous evaluations of strategic humanitarian interventions even in challenging contexts.

Economic Transfers and Social Cohesion in a Refugee-Hosting Setting

Elsa Valli, Amber Peterman and Melissa Hidrobo

The Journal of Development Studies, Volume 55, Supplement 1 (2019), Pages 128-146

<https://doi.org/10.1080/00220388.2019.1687879>

This paper **examines if a transfer program targeted to Colombian refugees and poor Ecuadorians in urban and peri-urban areas of northern Ecuador resulted in changes in measures of social cohesion.** The program was a short-term cash, food, and voucher program paired with nutrition training implemented over six months by WFP. Although the program did not involve the implementation of intensive activities to foster social cohesion, implicit targeting decisions, socialization, and messaging components may have influenced social cohesion on an interpersonal level

The definition of social cohesion in this study is based on six aggregated indicators: (a) trust in individuals and social connectedness; (b) personal agency; (c) attitudes accepting diversity; (d) freedom from discrimination; (e) confidence in institutions; and (f) social participation. The analysis is based on a cluster randomized control trial based on surveys of

over 2,000 households conducted in March-April 2011 (before the first transfers) and in October–November 2011 ('midline').

Key results:

- **The program contributed to reported improvements in social cohesion among Colombian participants** through enhanced personal agency, attitudes accepting diversity, confidence in institutions, and social participation. These effects are independent of the type of transfer (cash, food, or voucher) and accrue to all Colombian nationals, regardless of their motivation for migration (economic versus political or personal motives).
- **The program had no impact on reported social cohesion among Ecuadorian beneficiaries.**
- Two of the six dimensions of social cohesion are not affected by the treatment among either group, namely, trust in individuals and freedom from discrimination.
- There were no negative impacts of the program on the indicators or domains analyzed.

The authors hypothesize that these impacts are driven by the joint targeting of Colombians and Ecuadorians, the interaction between these national groups at monthly nutrition sessions, and the messaging around social inclusion by program implementers. The authors conclude that **even short-term social protection schemes hold promise for positively affecting social cohesion between refugees and host populations.**