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# The long term impacts of grants on poverty: 9-year evidence from Uganda's Youth Opportunities Program\*

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## Abstract

In 2008, Uganda granted hundreds of small groups \$400/person to help members start individual skilled trades. Four years on, an experimental evaluation found grants raised earnings by 38% (Blattman, Fiala, Martinez 2014). We return after 9 years to find these start-up grants acted more as a kick-start than a lift out of poverty. Grantees' investment leveled off; controls eventually increased their incomes through business and casual labor; and so both groups converged in employment, earnings, and consumption. Grants had lasting impacts on assets, skilled work, and possibly child health, but had little effect on mortality, fertility, health or education.

**Keywords.** Employment, poverty, entrepreneurship, cash transfers, occupational choice, Uganda, field experiment, labor market programs, health, education, Uganda  
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# The Long Term Impacts of Grants on Poverty: 9-year Evidence from Uganda's Youth Opportunities Program

In 2008, Uganda granted hundreds of small groups \$400/person to help members start individual skilled trades. Four years on, an experimental evaluation found grants raised earnings by 38% (Blattman, Fiala, Martinez 2014). We return after 9 years to find these start-up grants acted more as a kick-start than a lift out of poverty. Grantees' investment leveled off; controls eventually increased their incomes through business and casual labor; and so

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