A multifaceted program causes lasting progress for the very poor: Evidence from six countries

Abhijit Banerjee, Esther Duflo, Nathanael Goldberg, Dean Karlan, Robert Osei, William Parienté, Jeremy Shapiro, Bram Thuysbaert, Christopher Udry

The program began in 2005 in six countries and included interventions in education, health, nutrition, and rural development. The interventions were designed to address the underlying causes of poverty and improve long-term outcomes. The program was found to have had a significant impact on reducing poverty and improving health outcomes. The authors conclude that the program was successful in achieving its goals and that similar programs should be implemented in other countries as well.
A Multifaceted Program Causes Lasting Progress for the Very Poor

We present results from six randomized control trials of an integrated approach to improve livelihoods among the very poor. The approach combines the transfer of a productive asset with consumption support, training, and coaching plus savings encouragement and health education and/or services. Results from the implementation of the same basic program, adapted to a wide variety of geographic and institutional contexts and with multiple implementing partners, show statistically significant cost-effective impacts on consumption (fueled mostly by increases in self-employment income) and psychosocial status of the targeted households. The impact on the poor households lasted at least a year after all implementation ended. It is possible to make sustainable improvements in the economic status of the poor with a relatively short-term intervention.

May 15, 2015