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The Graduation Program Effects on Armed-Conflict Victims:

Results Evaluation from Colombia.

Viviana León-Jurado[1] and Jorge Higinio Maldonado[2]

Abstract

As part of the Colombian government's strategy to support the armed-conflict victims, a Graduation Program called "Transformando Mi Futuro" (Transforming my future) was implemented. Unlike other graduation programs, this one targets the urban population and has no assets transfers. To evaluate this program, a Results Evaluation (Before/After) approach was performed using the information collected before and after implementing the program. The main results show positive changes in well-being and a reduction in the gap between the actual perception of well-being and the expectations for two and five years, and positive changes in labor income and savings. These results suggest that the program contributed to improving the living conditions of participating households. However, heterogeneity analysis shows that impacts are differentiated according initial status of participants. This exercise is part of the set of evaluations carried out within the Platform for Evaluation and Learning of the Graduation Program in Latin America (www.plataformagraduacionla.info).

Keywords: Victims, poverty, labor income, savings, informal credit, and well-being.

JEL codes: C32, C36, D04, H53, I32, I38

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Los efectos del programa graduación en población víctima del conflicto armado: Evaluación de resultados para Colombia

Viviana León-Jurado y Jorge Higinio Maldonado

Resumen

Como parte de la estrategia para atender a la población víctima del conflicto armado, el gobierno colombiano implementó el programa "Transformando Mi Futuro", un programa de tipo graduación con dos particularidades: 1) no entrega una transferencia monetaria y, 2) focaliza hogares urbanos. La evaluación de este programa fue hecha a través de una Evaluación de Resultados, con la información recolectada de los hogares antes de que iniciara el programa y una vez este terminó. Los resultados principales muestran cambios positivos en la percepción de bienestar y una reducción en la brecha entre la percepción actual de bienestar y la esperada a 2 y 5 años. Así mismo se identifican cambios positivos en ingresos laborales y ahorros. Estos resultados sugieren que el programa, al menos de manera parcial, contribuyó al mejoramiento de las condiciones de vida de los beneficiarios. Sin embargo, el análisis de heterogeneidad muestra que los impactos varían dependiendo de las condiciones iniciales de los participantes. Este ejercicio es parte de las evaluaciones desarrolladas por la Plataforma para la Evaluación y el Aprendizaje de los Programas de Graduación en América Latina (www.plataformagraduacionla.info).

Palabras clave: Víctimas, pobreza, ingresos laborales, ahorro, crédito informal y bienestar.

Códigos JEL: C32, C36, D04, H53, I32, I38

1 Introduction

A Graduation approach is an integrated intervention that establishes five components: consumption support, savings, asset transfer, technical training, and life skills development. It was implemented for the first time in 2002, when the BRAC in Bangladesh carried out a Graduation Program (GP) of poverty called *Challenging the Frontiers of Poverty Reduction/Targeting the Ultra Poor*, in which 400.000 households participated. This approach has shown positive and long-lasting impacts (Banerjee et al., 2015). For this reason, the Ford Foundation, the International Development Research Centre of Canada (IDRC), and "Fundación Capital" (FK) funded, through the Platform for Evaluation and Learning of the Graduation Programs, the assessment of this type of programs in Latin America (Honduras, Mexico, Paraguay, and Colombia), where the governments are now the implementers. The Platform is coordinated by "Centro de Estudios sobre Desarrollo Económico" (CEDE) of the Department of Economics at the Universidad de Los Andes.

For the Colombian case, the Graduation Program is "Transformando Mi Futuro" – Transforming my future- (TMF), which focused on victims of the armed conflict. TMF is an initiative implemented in 2016, which objective is to "strengthen the capacities of the participants by providing tools that allow them to increase their human, social, financial and productive capital, and, in this way, give more efficient use to the reparation resources they will receive from the UARIV[3] (Unidad para la Atención y la Reparación Integral de Víctimas)" (FK, 2016). Unlike the conventional Graduation Program, TMF does not include asset transfer, and it targets households in urban settings. The program focuses on the construction of capacities around three educative components: i. Life skills, ii. Entrepreneurship – technical training – and iii. Financial education.

For assessing TMF, Process, and Results Evaluations were carried out. The former has the objective of identifying how the implementation of the program accomplishes and follows the initial design. The Results Evaluations (RE) seeks to measure TMF's participants' performance before and after implementation by analyzing living conditions changes. This type of evaluation is typically known as Before/After evaluation. Specifically, this document's

[3] UARIV is the Colombian unit for support and integral reparation of victims of armed conflict.

objective is to present and analyze the main insights provided by the RE. Due to this evaluation's non-experimental nature, the observed changes are not entirely attributable to the program. However, given that there is no asset transfer and that most of the results are related to soft skills, they provide a robust idea about how the program might modify these participants' perceptions that otherwise would remain unchanged. This analysis bases on the collected information gathered during May and July of 2016 before the program began (Base Line - BL), and April of 2017, once the program had finished (end-line - EL).

In this way, given the program's design with an emphasis on life skills, the main results indicate positives changes in the participants' well-being perceptions. There is a positive reduction in the gap between the actual perception of well-being and the expectations for two and five years. This change suggests that most participants consider that they are closer to their expectations at the end of the program. Additionally, there are positive changes in indirect results as Incomes and Savings, last concentrated on informal practices. All results suggest that TMF contributed to improvements in the living conditions of participants.

The article organizes as follows: Section 2 describes the TMF program, Section 3 explains the methodology and survey collection, Section 4 presents the principal results of the evaluation, and Section 5 concludes.

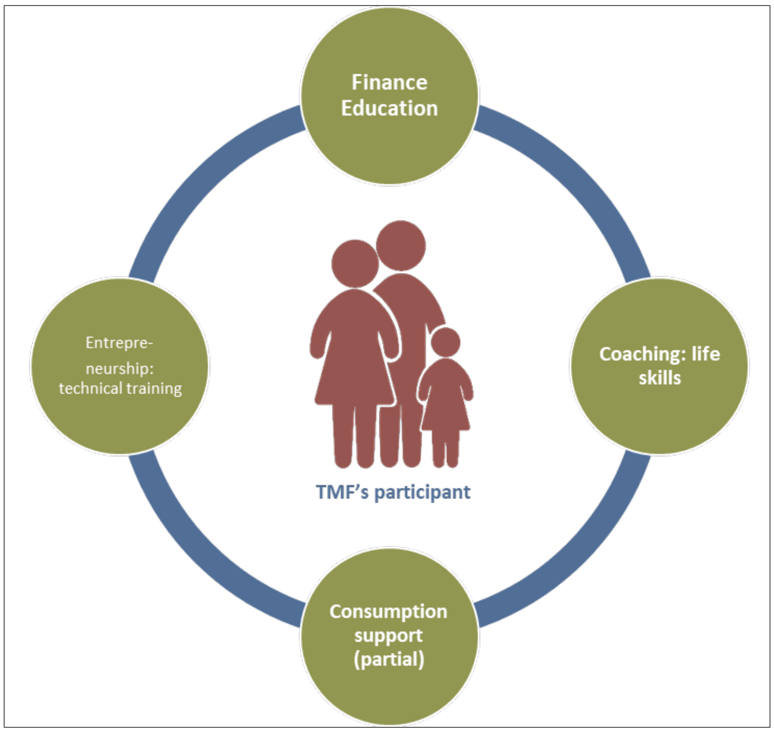
2 The TMF program

The TMF program analyzed here was the third cohort of this intervention implemented by the UARIV, a government adaptation of the graduation approach designed to fight extreme poverty in rural areas. The TMF's purpose was to "strengthen the capacities of the participants by providing tools that allow them to increase their human, social, financial, and productive capital, and, in this way, give more efficient use to the reparation resources they will receive from the UARIV" (FK, 2016). The program was implemented between April and December of 2016.

The program targeted households registered in the Victims Registry (Registro Único de Víctimas – RUV) with a Program of Assistance, Care, and integral Reparation (Plan de Asistencia, Atención y Reparación Integral – PAARI) that requested the support from the reparation to invest in productive activities. Additionally, only victims between 18 and 60 years old could participate.

TMF, unlike the conventional Graduation Program, did not include a component of asset transfer and targeted urban households. It focused on four components: i) Financial Education, ii) Entrepreneurship – technical training, iii) Life skills-coaching, and iv) Consumption support (See figure 1). The last one is an indirect component because it is covered by the Conditional Cash Transfer program of Colombia, "Familias en Acción."

Figure 1. TMF's components



These program components were implemented through home visits using tablets with an app designed for this aim and accompanied by coaches. The training was completed in 9 months, with 12 home visits per household. The coaches, who maintain direct contact with households, were in charge of all activities (home visits and five workshops). On average, every coach had 40 participants and did 30 home visits per week.

At the end of the intervention, the program had 788 participants distributed in ten municipalities in four departments: Atlántico, Risaralda, Valle del Cauca, and Meta (Table 1).

Table 1.Distribution of participant households

Department	Municipality	Recipient households at the baseline	Recipient households at the end-line
ATLANTICO	Barranquilla	120	120
	Soledad	40	40
	Malambo	40	40
RISARALDA	Pereira	118	117
	Dosquebradas	80	77
VALLE	Cali	120	120
	Tuluá	40	40
	Buga	40	40
META	Villavicencio	120	114
	Granada	80	80
	TOTAL	**798**	**788**

3 Methodology

The Results Evaluation (RE) carried out, known as a pre/post of before/after estimation, captures the changes in living conditions of the treated households from their situation before (pretest) the intervention to the situation after (posttest) it. This analysis does not take the time trend into account. Therefore, not all the effects can be attributed entirely to the intervention. The estimation following the model is described below.

$$Y_{it} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 D_{it} + u_{it} \qquad (1)$$

Where $\widehat{\beta_1}$ is the differences in time estimator, D_i is the dummy that takes the value of 0 in the time of pre-treatment ($D_i = 0$) and 1 in the time of post-treatment ($D_i = 1$). Y_i is the outcome variable. The model estimated took into account fixed effects and robust errors.

To implement this type of evaluation, the information was gathered from the target population both before and after the intervention; the survey before the intervention is known as the baseline, and the one after, the end-line. In this case, quantitative and qualitative information was gathered. The quantitative data was collected through a survey that allowed evaluating the variables agreed upon for this study. For the qualitative analysis, a series of structured interviews with the participants, known as Truncated Life Stories, was implemented. These interviews have a deep biographical emphasis that aims to understand the program's influence on the participants' life from their perspective.

The sample size for the quantitative analysis was determined by a two-sample paired-means test considering four criteria: (1) the significance level, (2) the minimum detectable change (MDC), (3) the temporal correlation, and (4) the desired sample power. The standard 95% significance level was elected for criteria (1), with an MDC of 0.115 SD, and the desired power was set at 80%, according to social analysis. Finally, the temporal correlation was established to 0.5, due to both the short duration of the program (9 months), which would lead to a high correlation, and the significant impact that the program is expected to have on psychological variables (which would lead to a lower correlation).

In the end, the sample was set to 528 households, but anticipating possible attrition, a total of 575 households were surveyed. In the end, 531 households from the baseline and 549 participants were included in the study. In the end-line, a total of 464 families and 474 participants were interviewed. This sample corresponds to 87.4% of the total sample size from the baseline. The reasons for which households did not attend the survey at the end-line were: 1) Drop out of the program, 2) Migration (not related to the intervention), 3) Holiday, 4) Could not be contacted, or 5) Sick or died.

The outcome variables were defined following the theory of change of the intervention and the graduation-approach expected results. According to recent literature, there are two types of causes of poverty: external and internal constraints. The former refers to traditional constraints such as market failures, liquidity and credit constraints, and lack of education. The latter include the behavioral bias, lack of aspirations, and agency absence, which can be decisive in the individual's capacity to overcome poverty (Dalton et al., 2015; Lybbert y Wydick, 2015). With this in mind, we identify two types of variables according to how the program is expected to affect them: direct (internal constraints) and indirect (external constraints). The former are those variables where effects are expected given the life skills training from the program. It is important to note that TMF did not deliver a cash transfer for the development of entrepreneurship. Therefore, the rise in self-esteem and self-confidence, and change of the household's mentality through life skills training is an expected result.

In contrast, changes in conventional variables like savings or income are not likely to occur. Consequently, the indirect variables are those that the program can affect through changes in the direct variables. For example, the strengthening of the participant's agency and finance education can promote saving behavior variations (See Table 2).

Table. 2. Outcome variables for the TMF evaluation

	Dimension	Outcome variable	Description
Indirect	Income	Monthly per capita income	The variable captures the monetary value reported by the household, divided by the number of household members.
	Consumption	Monthly per capita expenditures	The variable measures the quantities and values for different types of expenditure on goods and services reported by the households divided by the number of members
	Savings	Adoption of savings practices in the household	The variable measures the presence of household savings using informal means (in-kind, cash, animals, and others) or formal means (financial entities).
		Monetary value of the savings in the household	The variable captures the monetary value of household savings. The value reported by the household head (cash or in-kind) for different savings types.
	Productive activity	Work hours	The variable captures the average work hours per participant per week.
Direct	Social Capital	Structural Social Capital (SSC)	The SSC is composed of 4 sub-indicators that measure the perception of the participant about organizational density (SSC1), networks and mutual support (SSC2), expectations about networks and support (SSC3), and collective action (SSC4) (https://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol19/iss1/art16/).
		Cognitive Social Capital (CSC)	The CSC is composed of 2 sub-indicators that measure the perception of the participant about solidarity (CSC1) and cooperation (CSC2) (https://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol19/iss1/art16/).
	Expectations and aspirations	Well-being expectations	The well-being is measured through the perception of the participant's well-being and the expected well-being in 2 and 5 years.
		Gap expectations	The variable measures the gap between expected and current well-being.
		Well-being aspirations	The well-being is measured through the participant's perception of the desired well-being in 2 and 5 years.
		Gap aspirations	The variable measures the gap between aspirations and current well-being.
		Locus of control	The indicator is measured through the Internality, Powerful Others, and Chance Scales - IPC Levenson Scale (1981).
		Agency	The indicator is measured through the "State Hope Scale" of Snyder (2002)
	Empowerment	Decision-making index	The decision-making index corresponds to the participant's perception of the decision-making power of income, education, spending, and others in the household.
		Empowerment index	The Empowerment Index is measured through a fragment of the ESAGE Scale created by Pick et al. (2007) to identify the level in which the participant is involved in their community and municipality to have a perspective of the Opportunities Structure.

In the next section, we present the main findings of the TMF's RE. The interpretation of results has to consider that RE captures the time changes in treated households without the certainty that the difference is an exclusive program effect, as this is a non-experimental evaluation.

4 Results

4.1 Household Characteristics

The TMF participant's household is 32 years old on average and is composed of four members. In the endline, most families live in their own homes (71.5%), a fact related to the restitution processes that provide houses to the victims of displacement (Vivienda de Atención Prioritaria). An average of two children and two women integrated the beneficiary households (see Table 3).

Table 3. Socioeconomic variables in the Base and End-line

Variable	Base-line	End-line
A. Household		
Average age of the household members	31,51 (13,85)	32,39 (14,21)
Household size	3,85 (1,65)	3,89 (1,66)
Own home ownership (%)	66,52 (47,24)	71,58 (45,15)
Average number of women in the household	2,07 (1,05)	2,12 (1,09)
Average number of children in the household	2,02 (1,034)	2,00 (1,007)
Observations	**464**	**464**
B. TMF participant		
Age	45,23 (13,18)	46,17 (13,26)
Proportion of women (%)	73,84 (44,00)	73,84 (44,00)
Proportion of head households (%)	77,00 (42,12)	81,01 (39,42)
Proportion of achieved secondary studies (%)	42,12 (49,42)	41,20 (49,27)
Working (%)	56,11 (49,67)	58,64 (49,29)
Proportion receiving reparation (%)	7,39 (26,17)	6,33 (24,37)
Observations	**474**	**474**

Source: Baseline and end-line TMF Survey

As shown in Table 3 (Panel B), the participants of TMF at the end-line are on average 46 years old; the majority of them are women (73.2%) and household heads (81%). Specifically, we found that near 60% of participants reported working in the main work along with the intervention. Other interesting issues can be observed among the working self-report of the base and end-line. Table 4 shows in more detail these changes. In the end-line, 198 participants (42%) reported working both at the base and end lines, 68 (14%) were working in the baseline but were not in the end-line. On the other hand, from the 208 participants that did not work in the baseline, 128 continued in this situation at the end of the program, and 80 reported that they were working in the end-line.

Table 4. Dynamics of working status between Base and End Line

Changes in working status		Number of participants	%
Baseline	End line		
Working	Working	198	41.7%
Non -working	Working	80	16.9%
Non -working	Non -working	128	27%
Working	Non -working	68	14.3%

We analyze the different variables for the total sample and the groups made of this condition. The group that always worked is the Group I, those who began to work during the intervention are the Group II, the participants that did not work along the intervention are the third Group, and those who lose their job conform the Group IV.

4.2 General Results

As mentioned before, the indirect indicators are those of income, expenditure, savings, credit, daily working hours, and social capital. The results in these indicators are going to be presented next. It is worth recalling that the changes in these indicators cannot be attributed entirely to the program since there may be other confounding factors that affected the variables during the time of the intervention. Another aspect to keep in mind is that these indicators are not expected to be directly affected by the program because the intervention did not give a monetary transfer to the household. Therefore, the program did not directly affect neither of these variables, so the changes observed in the indirect effect could have come from a change in other variables—for example, changes in the perception of well-being (Direct variable).

That said, there were positive changes in the monthly per-capita income of the households, which are reflected in a reduction of their monetary poverty[4]. This change in income, however, did not bring about a significant increase in expenditure. Following this, the savings of the households did increase, primarily driven by the rise in the adoption of informal savings. Their borrowing behavior also improved, with a decrease in the practice of taking credits from loan sharks. These changes suggest that the financial education component of the program was successful in encouraging positive financial behaviors both for savings and credit practices (See Figure 2).

There are no significant effects on the beneficiaries' daily working hours when it comes to the labor variables. However, the labor income variables both for the employed and for the self-employed did show positive changes. In line with these results, the total labor income for the participants (the sum of the primary and the secondary working activities) increased.

The social capital indicators show a negative change in the structural social capital (SSC), understood as "relatively objective and externally observable social structures, such as networks, associations, and institutions, and the rules and procedures they embody" (Uphoff, 2000; Grootaert & Van Bastelaer, 2002; Maldonado & Moreno-Sánchez, 2014). These results are not particularly troubling, considering that the SSC is only expected to be affected marginally and indirectly through the formation of organizations with other participants, an activity that is promoted by the program. However, during the qualitative and quantitative fieldwork it was observed insecurity and delinquency situations in the community that could contribute to social capital weakness. As mentioned before, this decrease cannot be exclusively attributed to the program. On the other hand, the Cognitive Social Capital did not observe any change (Figura 2). The Cognitive Social Capital "incorporates subjective and intangible elements such as norms of behavior, shared values, reciprocity, and trust" (Grootaert & Van Bastelaer, 2002).

[4] The Poverty Line for 2015 corresponds to $ 245.856 COPs ($192 USDppa) in urban areas, and $147.752 COP ($115 USDppa) in rural areas, according to the DANE; 1 $UDSppa = $1.278 COP.

Figure 2. Changes in income, expenditures, and Monetary poverty

Note: Significance ***p<0.01, **p<0.05. *p<0.1; Source: Baseline and end-line TMF Survey

This study's direct indicators are mainly subjective variables that provide information about the participants' well-being perception and well-being aspirations and expectations, and their capacity to achieve their goals. Aspirations are measured through the goals that the individual would like to achieve, whereas the expectations are measured through the goals that the participant realistically believes he or she can reach. As mentioned by Bernard et al. (2014) "[…] expectations are about the likelihood (belief) of possible states and action-outcome links, while aspirations are about the 'desirableness' (preference) of those states and/or the actions (behavior) linked with them." As part of this last concept, the study also measures the agency of participants through their Locus of control and Self-efficacy. Locus of control is defined as the level in "which persons believe they control the factors that shape their lives" (Lybert and Wydick, 2016). Self- efficacy refers to the belief of the person about their capacity to achieve goals, also known as "judgment of capability" (Bandura, 2006).

The measurement of well-being aspirations and expectations of the individuals is done through the "ladder of life," a strategy similar to the one used by Moya and Carter (2014) and the one proposed by the World Bank in 2007 (Narayan et al., 2007). This ladder has ten steps, where the highest represents the best possible level of well-being the participant considers she/he can obtain in her/his community. According to the qualitative analysis carried out in the study, some essential components to their perception of well-being are health, food security, economic stability, peace, and good relationships with others.

Based on these concepts, the study finds positive changes in their current perception of well-being. The end-line perception of well-being presents a 7,5% increase compared with the baseline (5,1 baseline mean). This change suggests the program improved the participants' self-perception, an aspect that is also documented in the qualitative analysis. This change can be associated with changes in their habits, such as better personal care and the purchase of self-care items and clothing. No changes were found in the well-being aspirations and expectations for 2 and 5 years in the future.

Locus of control, measured by the IPC Levenson Scale (1981), helps measure individuals' beliefs regarding how their lives are affected by their actions, fate, or others. Through the "State hope scale" (Snyder, 2002) it was measured the Agency and Self-Efficacy variables. The former identifies the individual's capacity to set goals (goal-directed determination) and take action to reach them. According to Lybert and Wydick (2016), in Sen's capabilities framework, the agency is understood as "the freedom to define and pursue the goals that are most meaningful to an individual." The latter captures –as mentioned before- the individual's belief on their ability to achieve their goals (Bandura, 2006). Neither of these variables shows any significant change after the implementation of the program (Figure 3).

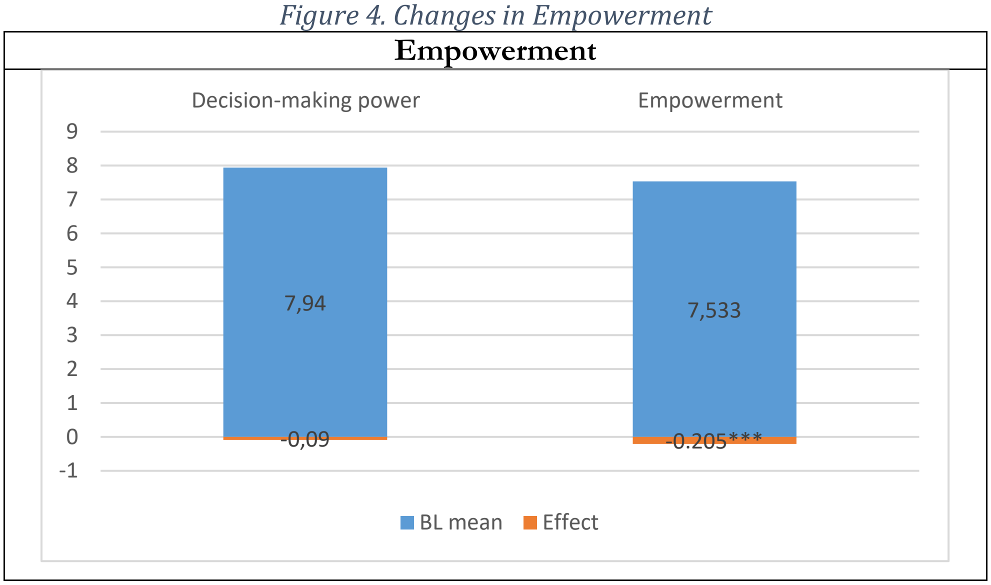
Figure 3. Changes in subjective variables

Note: Significance ***p<0.01, **p<0.05. *p<0.1; Source: Baseline and end-line TMF Survey

The last of the direct variables studied is empowerment. The empowerment indicator is measured using a short version of the ESAGE (Scale for the measurement of personal agency and empowerment) designed by Pick et al. (2007). This indicator helps identify the capacity of the participants to make effective decisions in their lives and community. According to the framework of the project, empowerment can be understood as the capacity or freedom of the individual for making decisions (Kabeer, 1999; Narayan, 2002). The different definitions of this concept are agreed on about empowerment is a process where the individual transit from an environment that does not allow the decision-making to one that enables it (Kabeer, 1999). This implies that an individual is empowered in the instant when he/she acquires the autonomy to choose what happens in his/her life (Narayan, 2005). In other words, for this to happen, the individual must count on an environment that enables she/he to make those decisions; she/he also must have the emotional, physical and financial resources to do so, and she/he has to have the capacities to accomplish a clear objective she/he has set out to achieve.

The evaluation shows a slightly negative change in this indicator, which can be correlated with other factors that also affected the social capital indicators and could negatively affect the ESAGE by disrupting some aspects of the participants' communities (Figure 4). When it comes to decision-making inside the household, which captures the participant's authority in her family environment, no significant changes are found.

Figure 4. Changes in Empowerment



Note: Significance ***p<0.01, **p<0.05. *p<0.1; Source: Baseline and end-line TMF Survey

4.3 Heterogeneous effects

The general results show a picture of the total population changes; however, it is essential to look at the heterogeneity of the impact across the types of households mentioned in Table 4, since the events that led to their different situations might also affect the variables of interest.

Figure 5 shows the main results in the indirect variables evaluated, disaggregated by the groups defined. Groups I and II show positive and significant changes in the per-capita monthly income, which is consistent with their labor situation –the participant reported been working in the end-line-. Furthermore, Group II –those who begin their productive activity along with the intervention- did not report labor income in the baseline, which led to a significant increase in this variable, as shown in Figure 5. Accordingly, the daily work hours of this Group increased up to 5 hours per day. The unobserved or negative changes in this variable for Groups III and IV are related to the non-working status of these participants at the end-line. The reduction of poverty for the Groups I and II can also be a direct consequence of positive changes in income.

Figure 5. Changes in income, poverty, and working hours for all the Groups of TMF's participants

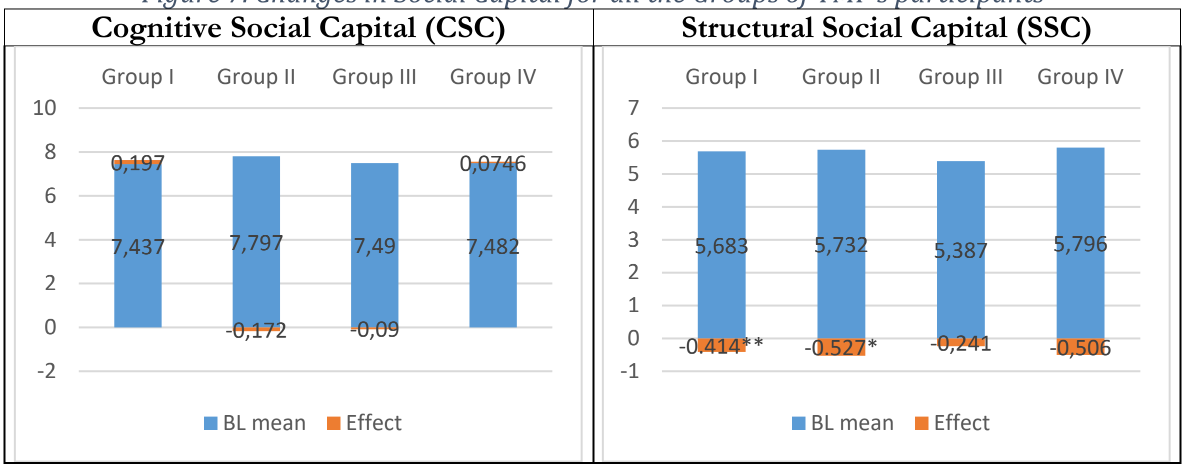
The changes in savings are focused on informal practices. The use of "piggy banks," informal loans, jewelry, and animals are included in this type of savings. The Groups I, II, and III showed positive changes in this variable, which can be evidence of the financial education effectiveness given by the program. The loss of labor income in Group IV can be the reason for the non-implementation of saving practices. The credit behavior shows a reduction in informal borrowing that can include the "Loan Shark" credits, a type of loan characterized for having high-interest rates. This positive change can be observed only in Group I, those who work along with the intervention (Figure 6).

Figure 6. Changes in savings and credit for all the Groups of TMF's participants

Note: Significance ***p<0.01, **p<0.05. *p<0.1; Source: Baseline and end-line TMF Survey

On the other hand, the only changes that can be observed in Social Capital are in the SSC, with a negative change. As it was referenced previously, this situation is expected, given the program focused its intervention in the creation of social organizations, specifically, "Savings Groups." This effort could not be enough given the insecurity context that is accompanied by a process where the households are building their links with their community (see Figure 7).

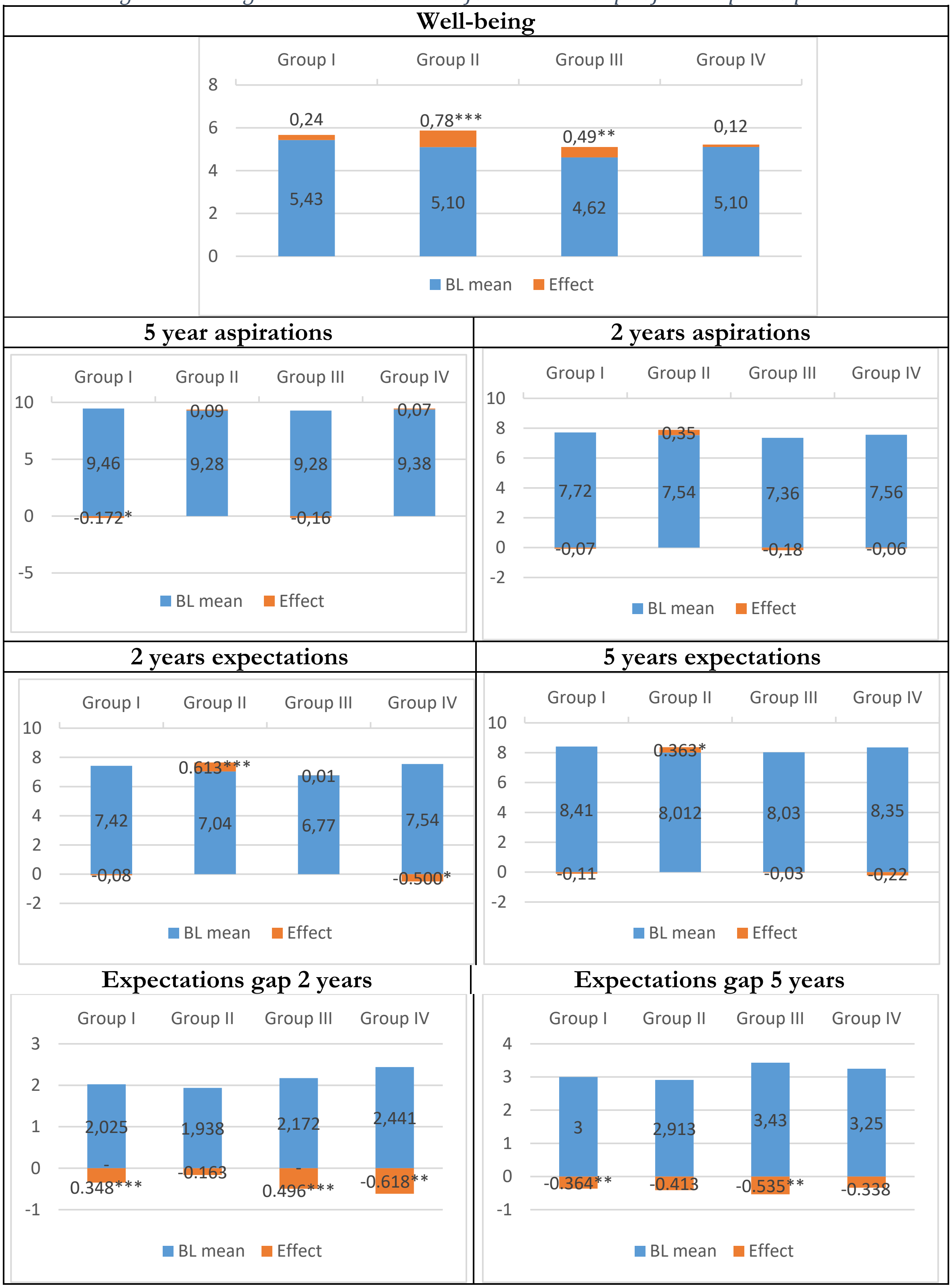
Figure 7. Changes in Social Capital for all the Groups of TMF's participants



Note: Significance ***p<0.01, **p<0.05. *p<0.1; Source: Baseline and end-line TMF Survey

Given the effort of the program in the coaching in life skills and the resulting expected changes in the psychological assets, the direct variables that we evaluated are well-being, expectations, locus of control, and agency. In the general results, there was a positive change in the well-being perceptions of the participants. Figure 8 shows that these changes were driven by Groups I, II, and III. The changes in the reduction gap between the actual perception of well-being and the expectations for five and two years show a positive behavior for all the groups. This change indicates that most of the participants believed that they were closer to their expectations at the end of the intervention.

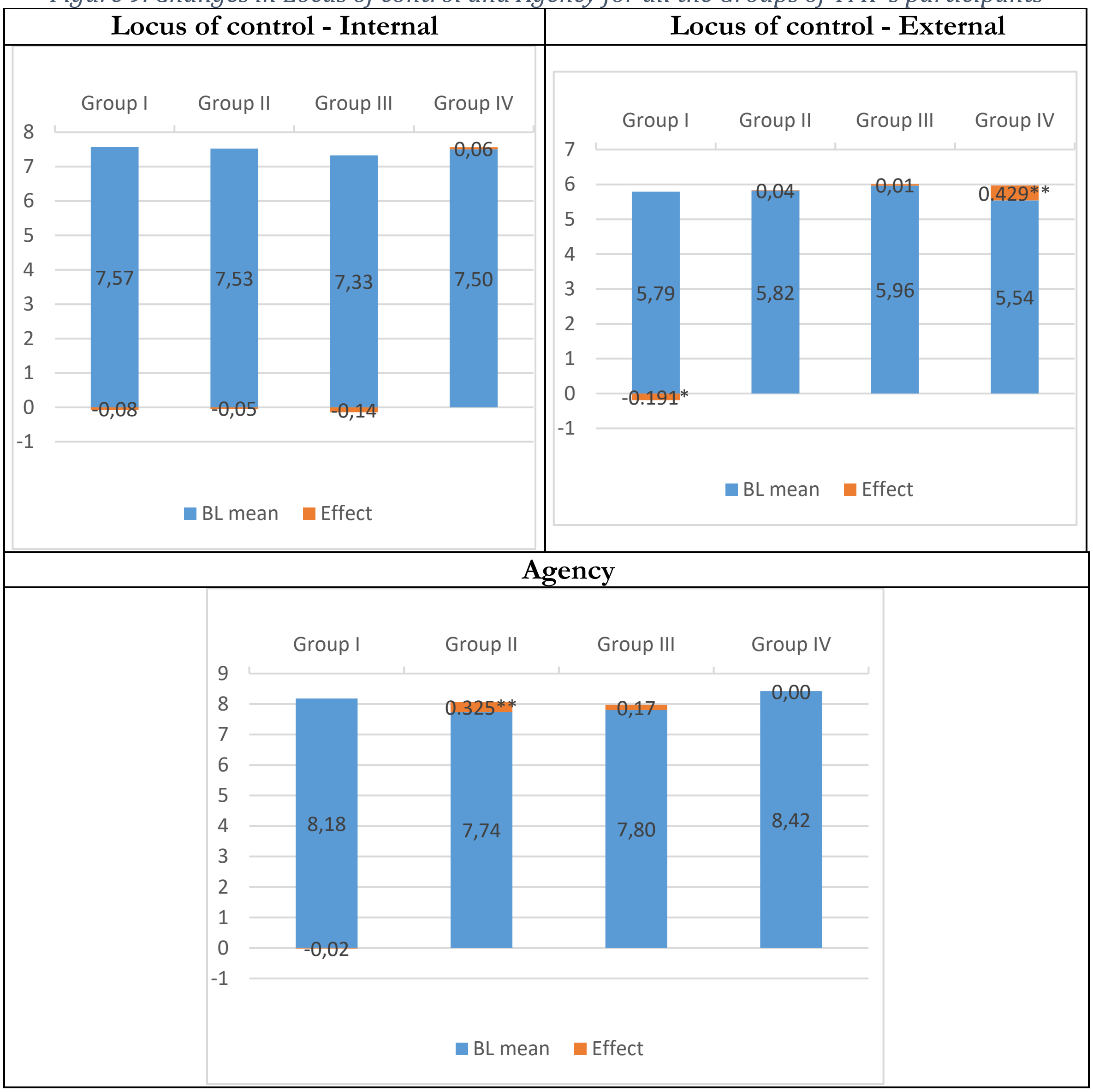
Figure 8. Changes in Direct variables for all the Groups of TMF's participants



Note: Significance ***p<0.01, **p<0.05. *p<0.1; Source: Baseline and end-line TMF Survey

Figure 9 shows the results of the locus of control and agency. The external Locus of control shows a positive change for Group IV (the only one that loses their productive activity along the intervention), which indicates a strengthening in the belief that what happened to their lives is a consequence of fate or God. The internal Locus of control did not show changes for any group. Nevertheless, the agency defined as "the capacity to use one's pathways to reach desired goals" (Snyder, 2002) presented positive changes in group II –the participants who begun to work in the program implementation.

Figure 9. Changes in Locus of control and Agency for all the Groups of TMF's participants



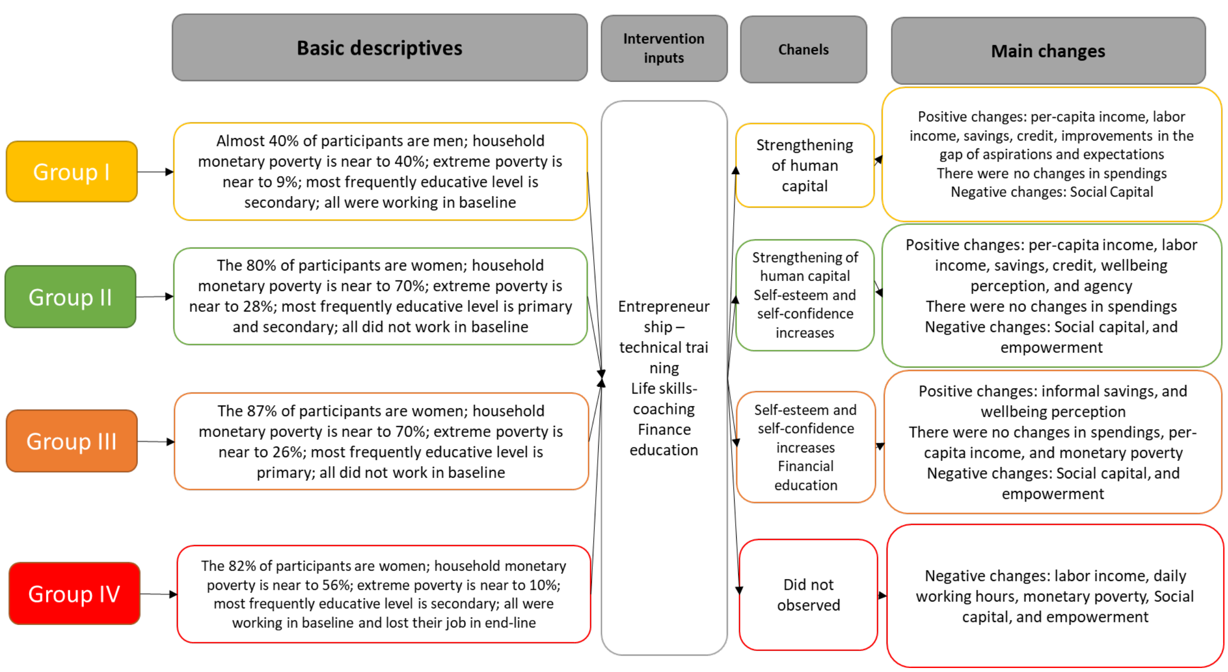
Note: Significance ***p<0.01, **p<0.05. *p<0.1; Source: Baseline and end-line TMF Survey

5 Discussion

The evaluation of the program TMF shows positive changes in income, poverty reduction, informal savings, and informal credit that can be related to the components of technical skills training, financial education, and life skills coaching, given by the intervention. The improvements in well-being and agency can be a direct outcome of life skills coaching as well as a consequence of the positive changes in the indirect variables mentioned.

The disaggregation of the intervened population in four groups allowed for a clearer interpretation of the changes each of these groups underwent. On the one hand, the individuals in the Group I, characterized by having a high proportion of men compared with the others have lower levels of poverty and a higher education level than groups II and III in the baseline. The effects in this group that started off relatively better suggest that the lessons learned from the program were put in use in the productive activities the participants were already involved in, bringing about an increase in the time dedicated to working and in labor income. The qualitative analysis corroborates this by finding that the participants who belonged to this Group report finding the teachings from the program very useful for their businesses (see Figure 10).

Figure 10. Theory of change for the TMF's Groups of analysis



Group II – those who started working during the intervention – are conformed primarily by women (80%), and have lower education and higher poverty levels than group I in the baseline. In this case, given that program did not involve a monetary transfer, the findings suggest that an increase in the agency for the participants, which led to a better capacity to set goals in the short term, as well as the life skills and technical training (which increased human capital), could have driven the participants to find a job either as employees or entrepreneurs. The qualitative analysis finds that the program provided many tools for those who decided to start their own business.

Groups III and IV have the highest percentage of women (87 and 82% respectively), but lower poverty levels than Group II. In the case of Group III, the program appears to have benefited their perception of well-being. The qualitative analysis also finds a general increase in self-esteem and self-perception. Whereas group IV shows that, depending on the situation, the support provided by the program might not prove enough to generate a change in these households.

These results attest to the differences in the workings of the program for each household. For those that already had a productive activity, the program helped by giving them tools to improve those activities, but it did not change their well-being perception or their empowerment. A possible reason for this is that they were not thinking about starting a new activity and had a stable source of income at the beginning of the program. For those in Group II, the mechanisms were different: They showed positive changes in their perception of well-being, agency, and expectations for the future. In this case, the program seems to have encouraged the participants to implement different business ideas, from working as waiters/cooks to opening small businesses.

As for the way the program could have affected groups III and IV, the training in life skills seems to have improved the perception of well-being for the households in Group III. According to the qualitative analysis, the increase in self-esteem and self-perception was commonplace. An important aspect to point out was the role of the financial education component of the program, given that group III, not having had income neither at the beginning nor at the end of the intervention, did show an improvement in their savings behavior. However, as corroborated by the effects on group IV, this program was not strong enough to affect all households.

6 Conclusion

The primary objective of this evaluation was to capture the changes in key variables of the participant households and provide some intuition about the causal effect of the TMF program on them. The information suggests that one of the main effects of the program was an increase in the perception of well-being for most of the participants, which indicates that those treated by the program increased their self-esteem and their perception of themselves as a consequence of the life-skills training. This change comes with an increase in their living conditions, captured by an increase in the per-capita income and the reduction of poverty. Also, another result shows an apparent effect of the financial education provided by TMF on their saving and credit habits, given that most of the participants – both with and without a productive activity – increased their savings or reduced their use of cumbersome credits.

Table 5 shows a summary and a classification of the observed effects, classified by group. In total, 25 indicators were evaluated. The table shows the number of positive (+), negative (-), and not statistically significant (NO) effects found for each of the Groups and gives a score for each of them. For this score, each positive effect adds one point, while the negative ones deduct one, and the insignificant effects neither add nor deduct any points. Group II has the highest score (7), followed by the group I (4), while groups III and IV obtain a score of 1 and -6, respectively. The subsequent classification places the effect on each group as medium (Group I), medium-high (Group II), medium-low (Group III), and low (Group IV).

Table 5. Comparison Groups and effect classification

Indicators/Groups	**Group I**	**Group II**	**Group III**	**Group IV**
Indirect	1 **-** 7 **+** 5 **NO**	1 **-** 6 **+** 6 **NO**	0 **-** 1 **+** 12 **NO**	3 **-** 0 **+** 10 **NO**
Direct	2 **-** 1 **+** 9 **NO**	2 **-** 4 **+** 6 **NO**	1 **-** 1 **+** 10 **NO**	3 **-** 0 **+** 9 **NO**
Total	3 **-** 8 **+** 14 NO	3 **-** 10 **+** 12 **NO**	1 **-** 2 **+** 22 **NO**	6 **-** 0 **+** 19 **NO**
Score	**4**	**7**	**1**	**-6**
Level	**Medium**	**Medium-high**	**Medium- Low**	**Low**

Note: NO – No statistically significant effect; + Positive effects; - Negative effect

Given the primary objective of the TMF program to "strengthen the participants' capacities so that they have tools that allow them to increase their human, social, financial and productive capital and, in this way, give a more efficient use to the different resources they will receive from the UARIV", and the observed changes, it is safe to conclude that TMF was able to strengthen the human and financial capital of the participants. However, at least with the observed indicators, the same cannot be said about their productive and social capital.

When it comes to social capital, two things are worth mentioning: on the one hand, it has been proven that the armed conflict has negative effects on the building of social capital in Colombia, given that individuals prefer not to associate with their communities to avoid being detected and re-victimized (Rubio, 2014). On the other hand, the communities of the participants seem to be affected by common crime, with the insecurity manifested by robberies and gang violence that are commonplace, reducing the participants' trust in their communities. The combination of these two factors can be manifesting itself in the targeted population through a diminished formation of social organizations and a reduced trust in their community (which means a lower social capital). It is imperative to keep in mind that these victims have lost the social connections they had in their previous environments and communities and that rebuilding this capital is going to take a more prolonged and more focused effort not only with the individuals but also with their communities.

In terms of productive capital, it could be said that this objective follows a different timeline than this intervention. Strengthening the productive capital of the participants could only be possible after the households received the compensation, since it would be difficult for these households to obtain productive assets without the financial resources to do so. For this reason, although some effects on this regard were found on group II and during the qualitative analysis, these should be understood as an indirect consequence of the program. Still, the results found in group II open the door for further discussion, mostly if programs similar to TMF were to be carried out, or if the program itself was enhanced with an asset transfer. More concisely, an asset transfer that aimed to increase productive capital could be enhanced by the mechanisms that led to the results found in group II of this study.

Finally, it is important to discuss the implications of the focalization, conditional on the desired effects. Given that TMF did not focalize based on poverty and living conditions, the participants of the program had a high level of heterogeneity. At least 40% of the participants did not live in conditions of monetary poverty at the beginning of the program, and most of them were involved in productive activity, either as their main or as their secondary occupation. This characteristic presents severe challenges in the way the program is projected to operate for each "type" of participant. As an example, the participants in group I (those who worked throughout both before and after the implementation) exhibited more changes in the indirect indicators than in the direct ones, and they are a different population than group III, who worked neither at the beginning nor at the end of the intervention, and for whom very little results were found. The comparison between these two groups allows for the discussion of whether, given that this program is aimed to promote entrepreneurship, it is better to target employed than unemployed participants in a scenario where there is no monetary transfer.

On the other hand, from the perspective of the participants who did change their occupation status, it could be thought that the ideal group would be the second one. However, the identification of the mechanisms that allowed for the higher accomplishment of this group compared with group III is not clear, and therefore, the identification of the group is not clear either. This being said, group II is still the one with the most potential for improvement in a scenario that involved a monetary transfer.

Lastly, group IV brings forth the vulnerability of the participants, which deepens in the face of shocks, such as job loss and increased poverty. This proves the vulnerability of the households, understanding that for them, the situation is worse as they have lost their ties to their communities and their means of income in the face of the conflict. It also states the need for contingency measures in the program, or the coordination with other interventions, since the economic relief of this program is limited and indirect, and it is not enough to help the households overcome this type of shocks that diminish the effects of the program.

The last aspect to point out is that, although initially, one would think that only the direct indicators should be affected by this program, there were several changes in indirect variables as well. This suggests that the program mechanisms are ultimately leading to changes in the living conditions of the participants captured by the indirect variables. These results are especially relevant as they provide evidence about the importance of the life-skills building component of TMF to promote changes in the behavior and the choice making of the participants.

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