Challenges to Promoting Social Inclusion of the Extreme Poor: Evidence from a Large Scale Experiment in Colombia

Laura Abramovsky, Orazio Attanasio, Kai Barron, Pedro Carneiro and George Stoye

22/11/2014
Introduction

- Extreme poor face numerous interacting constraints keeping them in poverty (e.g. Duflo, 2012), including:
  - Capital and skill constraints (e.g. Banerjee and Newman, 1993; Ghatak and Jianh, 2002)
  - Psychological and behavioural constraints (e.g. Mullainathan and Shafir, 2013)
  - Failure to access social programs (e.g. Currie, 2006)

- We evaluate the large-scale pilot of a national social programme in Colombia, aimed at overcoming these constraints by:
  - Providing social support to these families (social worker home visits).
  - Providing information and assistance in taking up existing social programmes.
  - Improving supply and access to these existing programmes.
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  - Providing social support to these families (social worker home visits).
  - Providing information and assistance in taking up existing social programmes.
  - Improving supply and access to these existing programmes.
Research Questions

In this project, we address the following question:

- **Was this programme effective in improving the**
  1. knowledge of, and usage of existing social programmes
  2. labour market outcomes of the extreme poor during the 18 month pilot period?
Main findings

Preview of results:

1. Our experimental analysis indicates that overall this programme was ineffective at improving these outcomes during the pilot period.

2. We find this result unsurprising given how light treatment was (150 families per social worker/year).

3. The programme is currently run in the same way.
   - Caveat: Even a stronger treatment may not yield effects.
Structure of Presentation

1. Introduction
   1. Overview of Unidos Programme
   2. Implementation of the Pilot (Juntos)
   3. Empirical Results
   4. Concluding Remarks
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Overview of Unidos Programme
Overview of Unidos Programme (1)

- Large scale, ambitious programme targeting the hardest to reach households

- Objective is achieved through a three-arm strategy:
  1. Intensive period of psychosocial support up to 5 years, provided by trained social workers (to enable self-development and function as part of society)
  2. Social services – information, assistance and preferential access.
  3. Social services – improving the supply.
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Overview of Unidos Programme (2)

- **Eligibility:** poorest 1.5 million households as of March 2008:
  - SISBEN 1 families – maximum of 1.2 million households
  - Displaced households (Registro Único de Población Desplazada) – 300,000 households

- **Current status:** Serving majority of targeted families:
  - 5 million people
  - 45% in rural areas
  - >90% of municipalities
  - 10,000 social workers
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Evaluation Design (1)

The Pilot Programme (Juntos):

- **77 municipalities** (representative of the entire country)
- Cluster randomization: each municipality divided into several neighbourhoods (clusters)
- Cohorts: Neighbourhoods are randomly allocated to four groups (1 – 4)
- Treatment commences at different times for each cohort
  - More than one year elapses between cohort 1 and 4
  - Cohort 1 = treatment, Cohort 4 = control.
  - Treatment group further subdivided between ‘classic’ and ‘intense’ (more visits)
- Analyse three sub-population groups separately: Displaced, Urban, Rural
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Evaluation Design (2)

- Rich dataset collected at baseline and followup
- Timing:
  - Random allocation: September 2008 to April 2009
  - Baseline data collection: November 2009 to March 2010
  - Follow-up data collection: June to August 2011
  - Months between baseline and follow-up is 12+ months
  - Evaluation finished in December 2011: all eligible households in the 77 municipalities are being treated in principle since then
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Implementation of the Pilot (Juntos)
Concerns with Implementation

1. High number of families per social worker:
   - Juntos/Unidos: \( \sim 150 \) families per social worker on average per year
   - Chile Solidario: \( \sim 50 \) families per social worker on average per year

2. Light treatment
   - All treated received very low number of visits (both official and self-reported) <3.5 visits on average at follow-up
   - Intensive treatment group did not receive a greater number of visits than the classic group: Little sense in distinguishing between different treatment types

3. Contaminated control group
   - On average, the control group had received 1 visit at baseline and 1.5 visits at followup (self-reported)
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The Data

- Our analysis is conducted using two samples:
  1. Household level sample:
     - focusing on labour market outcomes and social programme knowledge of HH heads
     - balanced panel of 2,446 households
  2. Individual level sample:
     - focusing on labour market outcomes of individuals aged 18 - 60 yrs belonging to these households.
     - balanced panel of 5,042 individuals.

- In this presentation, I will focus on the household level results

- Selection into sample: Treatment status does not predict selection into our panel

- Balanced at baseline: Overall, our sample appears balanced on observables characteristics at baseline (next slide).
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## Baseline Balance: Labour Market Outcomes, HH Head

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Displaced</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Rural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>Treatment-Control</td>
<td>Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Labour Market Outcomes</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.03)</td>
<td>(0.03)</td>
<td>(0.03)</td>
<td>(0.04)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.04)</td>
<td>(0.04)</td>
<td>(0.04)</td>
<td>(0.05)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-employed</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.03)</td>
<td>(0.04)</td>
<td>(0.04)</td>
<td>(0.05)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wage earner</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.03)</td>
<td>(0.03)</td>
<td>(0.03)</td>
<td>(0.04)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wage earner formal</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.01)</td>
<td>(0.02)</td>
<td>(0.02)</td>
<td>(0.02)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wage earner informal</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>0.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.02)</td>
<td>(0.03)</td>
<td>(0.04)</td>
<td>(0.04)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.03)</td>
<td>(0.04)</td>
<td>(0.02)</td>
<td>(0.03)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wage and Salary earnings</td>
<td>93291.46</td>
<td>5172.80</td>
<td>96539.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(14,839.69)</td>
<td>(18,361.41)</td>
<td>(11,800.52)</td>
<td>(15,017.70)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-employment earnings</td>
<td>60888.00</td>
<td>29301.02</td>
<td>88720.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(10,882.09)</td>
<td>(29,922.13)</td>
<td>(11,764.81)</td>
<td>(15,074.85)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure</td>
<td>35.60</td>
<td>-3.44</td>
<td>80.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6.07)</td>
<td>(7.17)</td>
<td>(8.36)</td>
<td>(11.07)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Table continues on next slide)

### Notes:
1. The variables wage earner, wage earner formal, wage earner informal and unemployed have been omitted from the F-test due to perfect collinearity.
2. Standard deviations in parentheses. t-tests: *p<10%, **p<5%, ***p<1%
### Baseline Balance: Demographics, HH Head

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<tr>
<td><strong>Demographic Characteristics:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>44.37</td>
<td>50.76</td>
<td>52.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.95)</td>
<td>(1.12)</td>
<td>(1.21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household Respondent</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>0.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.03)</td>
<td>(0.04)</td>
<td>(0.03)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Relationship</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>0.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.02)</td>
<td>(0.04)</td>
<td>(0.04)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of households members</td>
<td>5.18</td>
<td>5.77</td>
<td>5.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.10)</td>
<td>(0.20)</td>
<td>(0.21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.02)</td>
<td>(0.04)</td>
<td>(0.03)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of Household Members under 10</td>
<td>1.34</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>1.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.11)</td>
<td>(0.04)</td>
<td>(0.03)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No of Household Members over 60</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>0.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.04)</td>
<td>(0.05)</td>
<td>(0.05)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years of schooling</td>
<td>4.44</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>2.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.23)</td>
<td>(0.36)</td>
<td>(0.23)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipality Level Characteristics:</td>
<td>62.81</td>
<td>56.20</td>
<td>54.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipality Composite Index</td>
<td>(3.10)</td>
<td>(4.39)</td>
<td>(5.40)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>F(127,15) =</th>
<th>F(145,15) =</th>
<th>F(117,15) =</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P-value</td>
<td>0.095</td>
<td>0.214</td>
<td>0.529</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Clusters:**
- Control: 128
- Treatment: 145

**N by Group (Control/Treatment):**
- Control: 380
- Treatment: 741
- Total: 1121

**N:**
- Total: 656
- Total: 669

**Notes:**
1. The variables wage earner, wage earner formal, wage earner informal and unemployed have been omitted from the F-test due to perfect collinearity.
2. Standard deviations in parentheses, t-tests: *=10%, **=5%, ***=1%
Results: Focus of current evaluation

- This presentation focuses on two areas the programme may have had a beneficial impact:
  1. Knowledge and usage of social welfare programmes.
  2. Labour market outcomes.
Empirical Strategy

- We’ve seen that there is (i) some contamination of control group; and (ii) minor imbalances of treatment and control.
- We therefore estimate the impacts under several empirical specifications:
  1. Standard OLS using assigned treatment giving ITT.
  2. IV strategy, using the assigned treatment as an instrument for (i) official treatment; (ii) perceived treatment (contamination).
- In all specifications, we control for baseline demographic characteristics (observable differences).
- The general results are consistent across all specifications.
- In this presentation, we report (i) the ITT estimates and (ii) IV estimates for perceived treatment at household level.
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### Impact Results: Social Programmes (Knowledge and Usage)

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>Usage</td>
<td>Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ITT (1a)</td>
<td>IV (1b)</td>
<td>ITT (2a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Familias en Accion</strong></td>
<td>0.009 (0.013)</td>
<td>0.031 (0.042)</td>
<td>0.046 (0.039)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Jovenes en Accion</strong></td>
<td>0.014 (0.045)</td>
<td>0.048 (0.158)</td>
<td>0.017 (0.058)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Jovenes Rurales emprendedores</strong></td>
<td>0.039*** (0.017)</td>
<td>0.130*** (0.058)</td>
<td>-0.031 (0.022)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Crédito ACCES del ICETEX</strong></td>
<td>0.000 (0.01)</td>
<td>0.099 (0.103)</td>
<td>0.002 (0.053)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Red Banca de la oportunidades</strong></td>
<td>0.007 (0.024)</td>
<td>0.024 (0.079)</td>
<td>0.033 (0.045)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Generación de ingresos de Accion Social</strong></td>
<td>0.046 (0.049)</td>
<td>0.145 (0.143)</td>
<td>0.000 (0.056)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alianzas productivas</strong></td>
<td>0.000 (0.001)</td>
<td>0.050 (0.052)</td>
<td>0.000 (0.068)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Programa para el Desarrollo</strong></td>
<td>0.013 (0.001)</td>
<td>0.045 (0.028)</td>
<td>0.015 (0.031)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Asistencia técnica rural</strong></td>
<td>0.004 (0.033)</td>
<td>0.013 (0.043)</td>
<td>0.021 (0.035)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**
1. OLS regressions used to estimate the ITT using assigned treatment. IV regressions: Instrument perceived treatment with assigned treatment.
2. Robust and clustered standard errors reported in parentheses; t-tests: *significant at 10%, ** at 5%, *** at 1%. Regressions included the same baseline characteristics as those characteristics included in the first-stage regressions.
3. Impact on usage of programmes cannot be estimated due to lack of variation for all programmes except for Familias en Accion. As shown in section 4 usage is close to zero for most programmes.

- We estimate a small effect on knowledge of Jovenes Rurales emprendedores (no effect on usage) for displaced population.
- We estimate a positive effect on usage of Familias en Accion for rural population.
- Since we’re testing multiple hypotheses, we cannot rule out that this effect is due to chance.
Impact Results: Labour Market Outcomes

- We estimate a positive impact on active status for the displaced population.
- Again, we are hesitant to give too much weight to this result due to the large number of hypotheses we are testing.
Concluding Remarks
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- Overall, across all groups and samples, we find insufficient evidence to suggest a positive impact of the programme.

- Primary hypotheses for why this is the case:
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Thank you
### Average number of home visits by assigned treatment group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Control</th>
<th>Classic</th>
<th>Intensive</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Displaced</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Baseline</td>
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<td>0.63</td>
<td>0.60</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(0)</td>
<td>(0.69)</td>
<td>(0.69)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Followup</td>
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<td>1.82</td>
<td>1.87</td>
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<td>(1.45)</td>
<td>(1.56)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Urban</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Baseline</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>0.98</td>
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<tr>
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<td>(0.68)</td>
<td>(0.58)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Followup</td>
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<td>1.63</td>
<td>1.84</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Rural</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baseline</td>
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<td>(2.14)</td>
<td>(2.28)</td>
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</table>

- **Official visits**
- **Perceived visits**
### Selection into sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIABLES</th>
<th>Displaced</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Rural</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assigned Treatment</td>
<td>-0.040</td>
<td>-0.328</td>
<td>-0.023</td>
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<td>Baseline Characteristics</td>
<td>0.051</td>
<td>0.214</td>
<td>0.024</td>
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<tr>
<td>F-test (Test of Joint Significance of Interaction of Demographics and Treatment)</td>
<td>1.816</td>
<td>2.175</td>
<td>1.161</td>
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<td>P-value</td>
<td>0.064</td>
<td>0.021</td>
<td>0.321</td>
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<tr>
<td>Observations (N)</td>
<td>1,872</td>
<td>1,720</td>
<td>2,280</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:

(i) Clustered standard errors are reported in parentheses (*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1);

(ii) Columns (2), (4) and (6) control for pre-treatment characteristics: labour market status (active/ inactive), age and education level of household head, an indicator for whether the household head is also the household respondent; household size and composition; and an index variable for municipal well-being; as well as the interaction of each of these with the treatment dummy.

(iii) The f-test tests the null hypothesis that the coefficient on all of the pre-treatment characteristics interacted with treatment are jointly equal to zero.