

# Evaluating Alternative Cash Transfer Designs in Kenya Using Behavioral Economics

Last registered on November 05, 2014

Trial Information

## General Information

### Title

Evaluating Alternative Cash Transfer Designs in Kenya Using Behavioral Economics

### RCT ID

AEARCTR-0000541

### Initial registration date

November 05, 2014

### Last updated

November 05, 2014 2:57 AM EST

### Location(s)

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## Primary Investigator

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**Additional Trial Information****Status**

In development

**Start date**

2014-11-10

**End date**

2016-04-30

**Keywords**

[Welfare](#)

**Additional Keywords**

[Cash transfer](#)

## **JEL code(s)**

## **Secondary IDs**

## **Abstract**

This study aims to draw on insights from behavioral economics to conduct a rigorous impact evaluation of alternative unconditional cash transfer designs in Kenya. The study's implementing partner, GiveDirectly, which provides unconditional cash transfers to poor households in rural Kenya, will be experimentally varying several features of these transfers. One area of focus will be the timing of transfers, where GiveDirectly will vary the structure and schedule of transfer payments, as well as recipients' control over these timing aspects. A second area of focus will be the role of social information and norms, varying the amount and kind of information recipients receive about assets purchased by their peers. This study will exploit the variation across these different designs to quantify impacts on 1) household-level socio-economic outcomes (income, assets, etc.), 2) measures of well-being (food security, intra-household discord/conflict, various psychosocial scales), and 3) recipients' decision-making process and cognitive ability.

## **External Link(s)**

## **Registration Citation**

### **Citation**

Shah, Anuj et al. 2014. "Evaluating Alternative Cash Transfer Designs in Kenya Using Behavioral Economics." AEA RCT Registry. November 05.  
<https://www.socialscisceregistry.org/trials/541/history/3038>

Sponsors & Partners

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Experimental Details

## **Interventions**

### **Intervention(s)**

All households in this study will receive an unconditional cash transfer totaling around \$1000 USD from GiveDirectly. The structure and timing of these transfers, as well as the information provided to recipients, will be randomized at the household level.

### **Intervention Start Date**

2014-11-10

### **Intervention End Date**

2016-03-15

## **Outcomes**

### **Outcomes (end points)**

Key outcome variables include 1) household-level socio-economic outcomes (income, assets, etc.), 2) measures of overall well-being (food security, intra-household discord/conflict, various psychosocial scales), and 3) recipients' decision-making process and cognitive ability.

### **Outcomes (explanation)**

## **Experimental Design**

### **Experimental Design**

The experimental design comprises two arms looking at 1) transfer timing and 2) information sharing.

On transfer timing, cash transfer recipients will be asked to choose the timing and structure of payments that they would most prefer to receive their transfer. One randomly selected group of recipients will receive the transfer according to their preferred payment structure and schedule, while the other group will be assigned a random payment structure and schedule.

On information sharing, the study will take a list of uncommon investments made by past recipients and randomly vary, at the recipient-investment level, (a) whether the recipient is told about this investment, and (b) if so, the type of information each recipient receives.

### **Experimental Design Details**

#### **Randomization Method**

Randomization done in an office by a computer

#### **Randomization Unit**

Randomization will occur at the household level (since transfers are distributed at the household level).

#### **Was the treatment clustered?**

No

## **Experiment Characteristics**

**Sample size: planned number of clusters**

510 households

**Sample size: planned number of observations**

510 households

**Sample size (or number of clusters) by treatment arms**

Information Arm

255 households get popularity information on 2-3 randomly selected investments (out of 5)

255 households get cost-benefit information on 2-3 randomly selected investments (out of 5)

Timing Arm

280 households get preferred transfer schedule

230 households get random transfer schedule

**Minimum detectable effect size for main outcomes (accounting for sample design and clustering)**

Supporting Documents and Materials

**Documents**

IRB

**Institutional Review Board(s)**

**IRB Name**

Social and Behavioral Sciences Institutional Review Board at the University of Chicago

**IRB Approval Date**

2014-10-28

**IRB Approval Number**

IRB14-1019-AM001

**IRB Name**

Maseno University Ethics Review Board

**IRB Approval Date**

2014-10-15

**IRB Approval Number**

MSU/DRPC/MUERC/00105/14

Analysis Plan

**Analysis Plan Documents**