THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ACTIVE LABOR MARKET PROGRAMS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN: EVIDENCE FROM A META ANALYSIS

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Abstract.
We present a systematic collection and assessment of impact evaluation studies of active labor market programs (ALMP) in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). The paper delineates the strategy to compile a novel meta data base on LAC policies, and provides a narrative review of the total of 44 program evaluation studies. The quantitative analysis extracts a sample of 152 impact estimates from these studies, and uses meta regression models to analyze systematic patterns in the data. In addition to analyzing earnings and employment outcomes, we also code and investigate measures of job quality, hours worked, and formality. The latter are of particular interest given the regional context. We find that training programmes have a (small) positive impact, especially on increasing the employment opportunities of beneficiaries, but also on improving their earnings and their chances of finding formal employment; they are not more effective, however, than other program types. In terms of targeting, we find that active programs in the region seem to work better for women than for men, whereas there is no differential effectiveness when comparing youth to prime-age workers.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Active labour market policies (ALMPs) have been increasingly implemented in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) over the past few decades. A number of these measures were implemented during economic downturns and many have targeted specific groups. Impact evaluations provide a useful means of assessing the scale of a programme and its impact and transferability to the wider society. In the case of ALMPs, it is important to assess the impact of participation on outcomes such as employment, earnings and quality of work in order to gain a comprehensive view of their effectiveness.

A rich literature on impact evaluations of ALMPs is available globally (e.g. Martin and Grubb 2001, Card et al. 2010 and 2015, Kluve 2010, OECD 2015), but it primarily relates to findings in OECD countries, which are often not applicable to the context of LAC . However, an increasing number of individual impact evaluations conducted on ALMPs in LAC have been carried out, although to date little effort has been made to categorize the results by type of policy and country. In light of this comparatively limited literature, a systematic analysis of the results helps to consolidate findings and generate useful additional, novel evidence. In this context, the aim of this paper is to identify systematic patterns and commonalities arising from recent impact evaluation studies, to draw some conclusions on what is known about the effectiveness of ALMPs in LAC, and to also highlight shortfalls in those areas in need of further research.

Accordingly, the paper takes a three-pronged approach to systematically reviewing the evidence: section 2 provides a description of the available studies and their distribution across LAC countries, while section 3 presents a narrative literature review. Section 4 comprises a quantitative meta-analysis. In particular, Section 2 delineates how studies were selected for this systematic assessment, and presents findings on their distribution over time, across countries and by type of policy. The nar rative literature review of Section 3 analyses impacts at the individual level against their theoretical expectations, while the meta-analysis of Section 4 allows a systematic decomposition and analysis of individ-ual impacts, placing them within a broader context and taking into account additional factors, such as the macroeconomic environment. Finally, Section 5 concludes by bringing together the findings from the narrative literature and the meta-analysis while drawing a number of policy conclusions that arise from this comparison.

2. AN OVERVIEW OF IMPACT EVALUATIONS ON ALMPS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

The set of impact evaluation studies reviewed in this paper is the result of a detailed and careful process of selection, which was undertaken during the period February to July 2015, and included the following steps. First, an initial search of articles was undertaken systematically, using the following sources: (i) studies identified during the process of compiling the ILO Compendium of labour market policies (see Escudero et al. 2016); (ii) works undertaken by researchers in IZA's programme evaluation and NBER's labour studies networks (following Card et al. 2010 and 2015); (iii) papers referenced in literature reviews conducted by Ibarrarán and Rosas-Shady (2009), Sanz (2012) and Vezza (2014); (iv) studies by international banks on impact evaluations, such as 3ie's Register of Impact Evaluation Published Studies (RIEPS) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB); and (v) articles citing the previous meta-analyses of Card et al. (2010) and Kluve (2010).

Second, all studies originating from these sources were screened according to chosen criteria (see Table 1). More specifically, the studies selected were those that assessed the effects of particular programmes at the individual level in comparison to non-participation, and controlled for selection into treatment and control groups. In addition, only papers in English or Spanish were included. Subsequently, a number of articles were rejected as information on standard errors was not provided. As a result, the final sample consists of 44 impact evaluation studies, which are discussed, examined and analysed in a number of different ways in the following sections of this paper.

< Table 1 about here >

In geographical terms, a significant number of the programmes covered by the studies selected were implemented in Argentina and Peru. In fact, of the 52 programmes evaluated by the 44 studies included in the review, 18 where undertaken in these two countries alone (Figure 1). Chile and Colombia also showed significant coverage with a total of seven impact evaluations carried out in each country. In contrast, Brazil and Mexico show relatively limited participation in terms of the total number of documented impact evaluations, while there were even fewer studies for

Bolivia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Panama and Uruguay. Coverage of studies in Caribbean countries is somewhat scarce, with the exception of Dominican Republic, which has four impact evaluations of the Juventud y Empleo programme.

< Figure 1 about here >

In terms of coverage over time, the number of studies peaked at the beginning of the 2000s (Figure 2). As the dates reported correspond to the year in which the programme evaluation started, the high number of papers in the early 2000s is composed largely of impact evaluations of the Jóvenes programmes, a prototypical model of intervention aimed at improving youth employability and implemented across Latin American countries throughout the 1990s. Since then, there has been a generally upward trend, with an increase in the number of impact evaluations in 2005 and 2009. The small number of papers from 2011 onwards is largely a reflection of the fact that the programmes were implemented only a few years ago, so any evaluations would be ongoing.

< Figure 2 about here >

Regarding the methodological approach, the majority of studies use quasi-experimental designs. Indeed, 75 per cent of impact evaluations are based on quasi-experimental methods, out of which 42 per cent use tools to correct for selection bias into participation based on both observable (e.g. age, sex, etc.) and unobservable (e.g. motivation, skills, etc.) characteristics, while the remaining 58 per cent use methods based purely on observables. A growing trend in the use of experimental methods has been observed since the mid-2000s, and particularly recently: five of the nine studies from 2010 onwards use randomized designs. It is worth noting that estimated impacts derived from randomized controlled trials do not differ widely from quasi-experimental designs in terms of statistical significance (see also Card et al. 2010, 2015). Moreover, impact estimates do not show any particular trend over time and, therefore, technical developments in evaluation methods do not seem to have any specific effect on the sign or statistical significance of programme impacts (Figure 2).

In terms of coverage by type of ALMP, training programmes are the most commonly evaluated intervention in the region – accounting for 67 per cent of the 52 programmes evaluated by the 44 studies examined. This is not surprising since training programmes are also the most popular intervention in the LAC countries analysed, but it is still disproportionate in relation to other regions (Card et al. 2015) Moreover, most of these training programmes consist of measures that aim to support the entry of young people into the labour market (again consistent with the distribution of policies implemented in the region). This is in accordance with the significant investment that the region has made in youth labour market policies over the past two decades. Other relatively prevalent categories include interventions to promote self-employment and micro-enterprise creation, public works and employment subsidies. In contrast, only two impact evaluations for labour market services have been reviewed.

There is a degree of heterogeneity in the distribution of interventions evaluated across countries in the region. While studies on Caribbean and South American countries have focused on the evaluation of training programmes, Central American countries are oriented more towards self-employment and micro-enterprise creation programmes. Moreover, most of the studies on public works, employment subsidies and labour market services have been carried out in high-income countries in the region, such as Argentina, Chile and Uruguay (Table 2).

< Table 2 about here >

Disadvantaged groups are the focus of the majority of impact evaluations that meet the criteria for inclusion in the review, consisting of around 90 per cent of all estimates – with the remaining 10 per cent of the studies focusing on recipients of unemployment insurance. In contrast, there was no coverage of the long-term unemployed – which was the focus of a significant number of impact evaluations in OECD economies, as shown in Kluve (2010) and Card et al. (2010, 2015). This is not surprising, since long-term unemployment is typically a problem experienced in developed countries.

In addition, many studies analyse whether programme effectiveness varies according to the socio-economic characteristics of the beneficiaries. Thus, about 40 per cent of the estimates look at the impact of the programme by sex and 20 per cent are specifically oriented towards the

effectiveness of interventions on the labour market outcomes of women. Youth interventions appear to be the main type of programme evaluated by studies in the sample, with policies targeting those aged 15 to 24 accounting for around 70 per cent of the total number of estimates, while around 25 per cent are specifically aimed at those aged 25 and over and the remaining 5 per cent at no specific age group. Finally, there is a lack of empirical studies on the effectiveness of programmes for disabled people and individuals from ethnic or minority groups, although these groups are often the target of ALMPs in LAC.

3. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ALMPS IN LAC: A NARRATIVE LITERATURE REVIEW

This section attempts to identify patterns, commonalities and trends in the 44 individual impact evaluations discussed above. The review focuses on three main variables of ALMP effectiveness; namely, the impact on beneficiaries in terms of: (i) employment, either paid, formal or otherwise; (ii) earnings, either regular wages or net income; and (iii) other factors, including transitions between informal and formal employment, hours worked, etc. Each of these variables is disaggregated, where possible, by age group (youth and adult) and sex. The remainder of this section examines the literature according to the type of ALMP; specifically, training programmes, public works, employment subsidies, self-employment and micro-enterprise creation programmes and labour market services. It also reviews the literature on impact evaluations of PESs.

3.1 Training programmes

Taking a closer look at the 29 studies that assess the effectiveness of training, most of the literature stresses the positive role of vocational training and other skill development measures in fostering more successful labour market trajectories. In fact, training programmes generally have a positive impact on increasing the employment chances of beneficiaries. Of the 23 studies examined that analyse the impact of training on employment outcomes, 15 find favourable effects on the future employment opportunities of participants in the short or medium term (Table 3).

< Table 3 about here >

The impact evaluations reviewed suggest that labour market outcomes are strongly influenced by the design of the programme. In this regard, the chances of success appear to be enhanced when an on-the-job train- ing component is included (such as in apprenticeships and internships). Some examples of this trend are ProJoven in Peru (Ñopo et al., 2007) and the Opción Joven and Pro-Joven programmes in Uruguay (Naranjo Silva, 2002). In addition, programmes that include input from private institutions as well as training schemes where providers are selected through a bidding process are found to have greater impacts on employability than those that do not include these elements (Medina and Núñez, 2005). One explanation for this could be that communication and social dialogue with the private sector allows training providers to improve the relevance and quality of the training offered and, therefore, develops workers' skills to match the requirements of employers.

The impact of training on earnings is also fairly positive, with the majority of studies recording significantly positive impacts (21 out of the 27 studies that analyse the impact of training on earnings). Interpreting the impact on earnings, however, is not always straightforward, and a number of studies provide caveats regarding the interpretation of their findings. For instance, the earnings impact of the Argentinian Programa Joven could have been influenced by different labour market conditions that partic- ipants faced rather than programme-specific effects (Aedo and Núñez, 2004). While a number of studies find universally positive outcomes on earnings – such as Ñopo et al. (2007) on ProJoven in Peru – others obtain positive impacts only for specific groups or programme components. For instance, some heterogeneity is observed in the earnings impacts according to the level of educational attainment. Indeed, some studies find that the earnings impact is considerably lower once educational attainment is controlled for (Jimenez and Kugler, 1987). In other cases, the impact on earnings seems to be related to the institution responsible for the training, with some studies finding weaker earnings impacts for public sector training than for private training (Medina and Núñez, 2005; Chong and Galdo, 2006).

Fewer studies have measured the effect of training programmes on employ- ment quality than their effects on employability or earnings potential. Nevertheless, a significant number of studies analyse the impact of this kind of programme on issues such as the probability of obtaining

formal employment or the number of hours worked (16 and 6 studies in the review sample, respectively). Regarding the effect on formality, the vast majority of studies find that training programmes have a positive effect on formal employment. Some particularly interesting examples are the Juventud y Empleo in the Dominican Republic, which showed persistent long-term effects on the formality of employment, although not on overall employment (Ibarrarán et al., 2015), and Jóvenes en Acción in Colombia which, despite negligible overall employability impacts for males, had sig- nificant effects on the chances of obtaining a formal contract (Attanasio et al., 2011). The only two exceptions to this general trend are the programmes PROIMUJER in Uruguay (Alesina et al., 2005) and Galpão in Brazil (Calero et al., 2014), as both were found to have a negligible impact on formal employment.

In contrast, empirical evidence on the impact of training programmes on hours worked is somewhat mixed. Indeed, only the programmes Programa de Formación en Oficios para Jóvenes de Escasos Recursos in Chile (Centro de Microdatos, 2008) and ProJoven in Peru (Ñopo et al., 2007) were found to have a universally positive effect on the number of hours worked. The remaining studies either do not find any effect – for example, the pro- gramme PROIMUJER in Uruguay (Alesina et al., 2005) – or the positive impact is confined solely to women – such as in the case of PROCAJOVEN in Panama (Ibarrarán and Rosas-Shady, 2006). Elsewhere, other benefits associated with training programmes were identified, such as improved access to credit and improvements in non-cognitive skills, as in the case of Entra 21 in Argentina (Alzúa et al., 2013) and Galpão in Brazil (Calero et al., 2014), respectively – irrespective of whether these positive impacts actually improved labour market outcomes.

In terms of differences across groups of participants, one of the most interesting findings is that training programmes that specifically target youth are more likely to have positive impacts. The clear majority of studies on youth training programmes find a positive impact on labour market performance (e.g. increased employment opportunities and participation in the labour market or a fall in unemployment) of participants (16 out of 18 studies). Only studies on the programmes Proyecto Joven in Argentina (Alzuá and Brassiolo, 2006) and PROCAJOVEN in Panama (Ibarrarán and Rosas-Shady, 2006) documented negligible effects. This persistent finding differs notably from the empirical evidence for OECD countries, which concludes that youth represents

a target group that is particularly difficult to assist effectively (Betcherman et al., 2004; Kluve, 2016).

Two main hypotheses address this interesting finding. First, there may be differences in human capital between youth programme participants in OECD countries and other regions. On average, young people in OECD countries have fairly high levels of skills and, therefore, the youths targeted by training programmes in these countries often constitute a disadvan- taged group that is hard to assist. In emerging and developing countries, where the skills intensity of the labour demand is lower, training inter- ventions may target a more heterogeneous group, in which a large fraction of participants have a higher potential to succeed in the labour market (Puerto, 2007). Second, certain specific characteristics of youth training programmes in LAC may help to make them more success- ful. For example, most of the training initiatives implemented in the region correspond to the Jóvenes programme model, which is characterized by very particular features, such as: (i) the provision of training by specialized institutions that balance the needs of employers with skills supply; (ii) a comprehensive training offer, which includes several components (e.g. basic skills, soft skills, job-search assistance, counselling and infor- mation provision), and combines an initial classroom-based training phase with a subsequent job experience phase in firms; and (iii) the presence of financial incentives to both employers (hiring subsidies) and beneficiaries (daily stipends) to encourage participation (Puerto, 2007).

In addition, the impact of training programmes on employment and earnings are overall higher among women than men. While some studies find that the impact on earnings and/or employment is significant only for women (Aedo and Núñez, 2004; Attanasio et al., 2011), others find a positive impact for both sexes, but longer lasting for women (Delajara et al., 2006). Interestingly, impact evaluations of Peru's ProJoven programme suggest that this intervention helped to provide avenues by which women could be drawn into male-dominated industries, and thus achieved a pro-female impact (Ñopo et al., 2007).

3.2 Public works

To date, much of the empirical evidence on the impact of public works programmes has focused on their role as an anti-poverty strategy and very little is known about the employment outcomes

of these programmes. This is not surprising since, in emerging and developing countries, these programmes have traditionally focused on local development (through the provision of infrastructure and community services) and poverty reduction (by offering temporary employment to vulnerable families).

Unfortunately, there is limited coverage of public works studies in the sample analysed (only four). All four studies assess the income effects on beneficiaries during participation; while two of the evaluations analyse whether participation improves future employment prospects (Table 4). According to the reviewed studies, public works provide effective income support, which reinforces the "pro-poor" nature of this type of programmes. In particular, the programmes Trabajar (Jalan and Ravallion, 2003) and Plan Jefes (Ronconi et al., 2006), implemented during different economic crises in Argentina, as well as the Peruvian programme Construyendo Perú (Macroconsult S.A., 2012) and the Bolivian PLANE (Hernani-Limarino et al., 2011) have, according to the studies, been successful in their anti-poverty objective. This success may be partly attributable to the fact that workfare participants were already receiving relatively low wages – below the wage offered by the public works programme – which itself was prob- ably below the reservation wage for the non-poor population (Jalan and Ravallion, 2003).

< Table 4 about here >

The four studies reveal that the public works programmes are found to benefit different groups to varying degrees. While female participants in the Argentinian Plan Jefes were found to exhibit the greatest earning gains (Ronconi et al., 2006), younger beneficiaries of the programme Trabajar showed a higher positive impact (Jalan and Ravallion, 2003). This may be due to the fact that younger workers have lower reservation wages and wage expectations than their older counterparts, and thus were more likely to experience improvements from the public works programme.

However, findings from the few available studies are less conclusive with respect to the countercyclical role of public works programmes. Indeed, the positive effects associated with participation in the programme Construyendo Perú were not found to be higher in recessionary

times, thus undermining the strength of the programme as a countercyclical tool (Macroconsult S.A., 2012).

In the two studies that examined employment prospects, the results are less positive. For instance, the evaluation of the programme PLANE implemented in Bolivia shows that, within the context of high labour market rigidity in which the programme took place, there was no impact on the probability of employment post-intervention. The study noted that this does not detract from the pro-poor nature of the programme, as it did help with consumption smoothing; however, it was not effective at improving labour market outcomes (Hernani-Limarino et al., 2011).

3.3 Employment subsidies

Employment and wage subsidies take several forms, including payment of a proportion of the worker's salary – such as the Argentina Proempleo programme (Galasso et al., 2004) – or offering reductions in social security contributions over a specified period of time – as in the case of Programa de Bonificación a la Contratación de Mano de Obra in Chile (Fundación AGRO UC, 2009). In LAC countries, subsidies usually target vulnerable groups, such as beneficiaries of conditional cash transfers (CCTs) and young people. Of the four studies on employment and wage subsidies covered in this review, all look at the impact on employment, while two evaluations also analyse the effects on earnings (Table 4). Three of the four studies report a positive impact on the employability of participants, with indiscriminate impacts on men and women, where analysed – as in the case of Proempleo in Argentina (Galasso et al., 2004) and Subsidio al Empleo Joven in Chile (Centro de Microdatos, 2012), with the former also documenting positive impacts on youth. Only one impact evaluation of Programa de Bonificación a la Contratación de Mano de Obra in Chile found a negligible employment impact (Fundación AGRO UC, 2009). The explanation given in the study was that the programme design allowed employers to select those workers who were most employable, and therefore did not benefit less employable candidates.

The available studies illustrate that wage subsidies can boost employment probabilities, particularly when they are provided directly to individuals as a supplement to their earnings. For instance, an evaluation of the programme Subsidio al Empleo Joven in Chile finds that this

intervention has been successful in increasing the employment opportunities of vulnerable youth (Centro de Microdatos, 2012).

3.4 Self-employment and micro-enterprise creation

It is usually the case that self-employment and micro-enterprise creation programmes include technical services, such as counselling, training and assistance with business planning, in addition to the financial assistance. This trend is observed among the five programme evaluations included in this review, as all of them incorporated a training element (Table 4). For instance, Jóvenes Rurales Emprendedores, implemented in Colombia to promote independent work among poor young people in rural areas (including remote areas) of the country, includes training courses oriented towards different economic sectors (e.g. agriculture, manufacturing, tourism), whose content and structure is agreed in consultation with the private sector and after taking local labour market needs and recent trends into consideration (Steiner et al., 2010).

Among the five self-employment and micro-enterprise creation studies, the three that evaluated employment impacts all found positive effects. Similar results were evident with respect to raising earnings or profits, when measured (Table 4). In particular, Microemprendimientos Productivos in Argentina (Almeida and Galasso, 2010), TechnoServe in Central America (Klinger and Schündeln, 2011) and Atención a Crisis in Nicaragua (Macours et al., 2013) were successful in helping beneficiaries to start a business or become self-employed. In addition, positive effects on earnings were observed in the case of the programmes TechnoServe in Central America (Klinger and Schündeln, 2011), Jóvenes Rurales Emprendedores in Colombia (Steiner et al., 2010), Atención a Crisis in Nicaragua (Macours et al., 2013) and the business training programme for female micro-entrepreneurs implemented in Peru (Valdivia, 2011), with programme beneficiaries reporting gains in terms of hourly wages or profits. However, the overall earnings impact was negligible in the Argentinian programme Microemprendimientos Productivos (Almeida and Galasso, 2010), although it was higher for the better educated participants. This is consistent with previous literature, which found that self-employment programmes are strongly influenced by levels of educational attainment (Sanz, 2012).

The empirical evidence of three of the studies suggests that programmes which combine technical assistance with financial support increased the likelihood of starting a business, thus supporting the hypothesis that capital constraints are a major impediment to would-be entrepreneurs in these countries. Accordingly, seed capital and business grants were able to facilitate those with "entrepreneurial" ambitions and, for those who were already moving towards self-employment, helped to overcome the major obstacle of the initial sunk costs.

Despite the positive effects of self-employment and micro-enterprise creation programmes on labour market outcomes, some debate exists concerning the role of these initiatives as a local development strategy. Some studies stressed the pro-poor nature of this type of programmes when targeting rural communities. For instance, in Nicaragua, the pro- gramme Atención a Crisis led to increased participation in non-agricultural self-employment and higher income from related activities, which therefore contributed to the structural development of some rural areas (Macours et al., 2013). However, given the strong correlation between self-employment and informality and the fact that many micro-enterprises and small firms operate in the informal sector with low levels of productivity, programmes promoting independent work could be considered to be incentives to engage in informal employment (OAS/ECLAC/ILO, 2010).

3.5 Labour market services and the PES

There is a shortage of impact evaluation studies on the role of labour mar-ket services and public employment services (PES) in LAC, which may reflect the limited use of the programmes compared with other ALMPs in the region. Evaluations of the ProEmpleo programme in Peru (Chacaltana and Sulmont, 2004) and Programa Jóvenes al Bicentenario in Chile (Acero et al., 2009) find that the effects were positive, for both employment and earnings. More specifically, employment impacts of ProEmpleo were found to be both significant and lasting, with the effects after six months per- sisting for 12–18 months. The impact on earnings was positive for those who had worked previously – an increase in hourly wages of around 7 to 10 per cent following the programme compared with their wages before participating (Chacaltana and Sulmont, 2004). Meanwhile, Programa Jóvenes al Bicentenario in Chile presented more modest impacts, but did improve the employability of participants (Acero et al., 2009).

Finally, the lack of impact evaluations on PES and labour market services suggests that more research is needed to estimate the effectiveness of these programmes in a context of high informality and where hiring usually takes place through informal means. Moreover, the relatively weaker capacity of labour market and social institutions to implement programmes in many LAC countries might also have an effect on the efficacy of job-search assistance programmes in these countries. In this regard, a new impact evaluation of the Colombian PES (Agencia Pública de Empleo) aims to fill in this void (Escudero et al. 2016, forthcoming).

It is important to bear in mind several limitations of the narrative litera ture review carried out in this section. First, although there are a number of potential negative indirect effects associated with these policies (such as substitution or deadweight effects), there have been no attempts to evaluate the indirect effects of these programmes within the literature reviewed, and therefore no conclusion can be drawn regarding the magnitude of these effects. Second, in several of the ALMP categories, the number of studies is rather limited. Third, all the individual evaluation results described in this section are subject to factors beyond the control of the programme evaluation (e.g. macroeconomic conditions), which can skew both results and interpretation. This issue is partly addressed in Section 4. Indeed, the meta-analysis allows for a decomposition and synthesis of the 44 impact evaluations reviewed in this section, taking into account the macroeconomic context of respective interventions. Moreover, this meta-analysis allows general conclusions to be drawn regarding what works in the region, and under which circumstances.

4 A NEW META ANALYSIS SAMPLE OF ALMP EVALUATIONS FOR LAC

4.1 Sample description

The final stacked version of the LAC meta data contains 152 impact estimates from a total of 44 studies (the complete list of these studies is given in the appendix). 91 of the estimates are for short-term impacts, and 61 are for medium-term impacts. Figure 3 presents the distribution of countries in the data, separately for the short- and medium-run estimates. The figure shows that the majority of estimates come from Peru, with an essentially equal number of short- and medium-run estimates, mostly originating from several evaluations of the “Projoven” program.

Corresponding to the respective size of the country in the region, Argentina, Chile and Colombia are those countries that are also represented in the data with a relatively large number of estimates. This is not the case, however, for Brazil and Mexico, both of which enter with a rather small number of program evaluation estimates. The Dominican Republic also has several impact estimates, all originating from different evaluations of the "Juventud y Empleo" program. The program stands out because of the experimental design used for assessing impacts of several cohorts of training participants. The remaining countries in the data are Bolivia, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Panama, and Uruguay.

< Figure 3 about here >

Figures 4 and 5 show the distribution of program starting times contained in the LAC meta data. It can be seen that there is a peak of impact estimates from the mid- to late-1990s, reflecting the evaluations of the original "Jóvenes" programs. Over the last decade, the number of estimates remains rather constant, and no increase in evaluation efforts can be deduced from these figures.

< Figures 4, 5 about here >

Table 5 presents summary statistics for the LAC meta sample. The first panel looks at the program intake group and shows that – quite different from OECD countries (see above) – about 90% of estimates are for the intake group of "disadvantaged" or "vulnerable" workers, while only about 10% enter as registered unemployment insurance recipients, and none from long-term unemployment. "Disadvantaged" is typically defined – by program eligibility rules or the evaluators – using some measure of low-income (e.g. individuals from lower percentiles of the household income distribution, or explicitly from relative or absolute poverty) and/or low skills (most often defined as having no secondary schooling degree). Individuals without work or working in the informal sector may also be defined as disadvantaged.

< Table 5 about here >

Looking at the second panel in Table 5, there is very little variation by ALMP program type in LAC. More than 80% of programs are skills training programs, and only a few impact estimates

for the other three categories – job search assistance, private sector incentives, public sector employment – have been produced. This is likely in line with a deliberate focus of labor market policies in LAC on training programs over the last two decades. At the same time, the third panel shows that these programs are relatively short, falling into either the category of short duration (4 months or less) or medium duration (5-9 months).

The participant composition is depicted in panels four and five of Table 5. About 40% each of the available impact estimates are for male and female participants separately, and about 20% are for pooled gender impacts. Finally, the focus on youth interventions shows in the distribution of program estimates by age group: about 70% of impact estimates are for the group of workers 25 years or younger, about 25% are for workers older than 25, and about 5% are for the pooled age group.

Table 6 presents the evaluation methods used in the studies represented in the LAC meta sample. It can be seen that about 20% of estimates originate in experimental studies, while the majority of estimates (about 55%) come from non-experimental designs using a comparison group with longitudinal data. There are virtually no estimates from duration models for Latin American ALMPs, and about one quarter of estimates is based on cross-sectional approaches. Looking at the dependent variable (panel 2), about half of the estimates each considers the probability of employment and earnings, respectively, as outcomes. Both regression and matching methods are used to adjust for covariate imbalance between treatment and control groups.

< Table 6 about here >

4.2 Estimation results for the full sample

Table 7 depicts an overview of estimated program impacts. First, it can be noted that only a very small number of estimates are significantly negative. For this reason, the meta regressions implemented subsequently (see below) do not use ordered probit models as e.g. for the Card et al. (2010, 2015) meta data, but combine the “significantly negative” and “insignificant” categories into a non-positive category, and use linear probability models with an indicator “positive significant yes/no (1/0)” as dependent variable. Second, the descriptive statistics do not suggest

that medium-run estimates are more likely to be positive in LAC than the short-run estimates – quite different from the strong findings from OECD meta analysis samples. Instead, the fraction of significantly positive estimates is 11 percentage points smaller in the medium run (44%) than in the short run (55%).

< Table 7 about here >

This is striking, especially against the fact that most programs in the LAC data are training programs, and the pattern identified in Card et al. (2015) that shows that especially the human capital inducing programs show increasingly positive impacts in the long run. This result may point to the fact that the human capital investments implied in the LAC training programs are too small (recall the relatively short durations of the programs) to effectuate large long-term employment or earnings gains. Whereas counterexamples exist (e.g. Ibarrarán et al. 2015 who find some slowly increasing and sustained impacts in a long-term study for the Dominican Republic), it has to be mentioned that the overall positive judgment of the "Jóvenes" programs has been largely based on their short-term impacts. These may in fact provide only a partial view. Finally, Table 7 reports median effect sizes for those few studies for which effect sizes could be coded. Since this number is quite small, however, the meta regressions will use the positive sign/significance models only – recall from the results in Card et al. (2010, 2015) and the graphs shown above that the effect size models and the sign/significance models generally produce the same qualitative findings.

Table 8 contains empirical results from meta-analytical regressions. The first column reports a basic specification with covariates for (i) program type and time horizon, (ii) target group, and (iii) evaluation design and program details. Each augmenting separately the basic specification, the second column introduces country dummies, the third column includes interaction terms (training interacted with time horizon, age group, and duration, respectively), and the fourth column includes both interaction terms and contextual factors (Annual GDP growth and unemployment rate, both measured at the time when the specific program was in place). Column five is the full specification with all covariates.

< Table 8 about here >

The results from the meta regression indicate that training in LAC is not more successful than other program types (panel i), and – quite different from the results for ALMP worldwide – that impact estimates do not become more positive over time. This may be a cause for concern in the design of the training programs, as the human capital component contained may not be substantial enough to bring about significant and sustained impacts. In terms of the target group (panel iii), no differential effects by age group seem to exist. Regarding gender, there is some indication for the same pattern found for the worldwide sample, i.e. females are more likely to benefit than males; the coefficients are consistently negative for males and consistently positive for females, though not significant at conventional levels.

Looking at program details (panel iii), programs with a short duration are significantly less likely to produce positive impact estimates. Also the contextual factors (panel iv) show significant correlations: Different from the overall results presented above, ALMP in LAC seem to be working particularly well during an upswing, not a recession: The annual GDP growth rate shows a significantly positive correlation with program effectiveness, and the unemployment rate a significantly negative correlation. To some extent, this might explain that there are short-term impacts only: ALMPs in LAC may help disadvantaged individuals into (better) work during good times, but may not be able to sustain these impacts. This would also be in line with the significantly negative coefficient for the indicator for Argentina, the country in LAC with probably the severest experience of recessions during the last two decades.

4.3 Estimation results for the training subsample

Given that the largest part of the LAC meta sample (126 of the 152 program estimates) is categorized as the evaluation of a training program, in a subsequent step an effort was made to investigate whether any additional conclusions can be drawn regarding the type of training. To that end, the data were augmented by binary indicators for training components, i.e. each indicating whether the specific program contained i) classroom training, ii) on-the-job training or internship, iii) a job insertion or life skills component, and iv) whether it contained entrepreneurship training. Clearly, more detailed aspects would have been of interest as well, in particular the planned and actual durations of training (overall and by component). This would

have potentially allowed a precise analysis of training design features. Unfortunately, however, too little information on these aspects is provided in the studies to be included and coded into the meta data. Two other – equally coarse – indicators that were coded additionally intend to capture dimensions of the target group, to investigate further the relatively large group of "disadvantaged" served by programs in LAC: One indicator looks specifically at whether training programs explicitly target the poor population, and another indicator specifies whether the program targets youths up to 24 years of age.

Looking at these additional indicators, almost all training programs comprise a classroom training component (93.6 per cent, or 118 of the 126 estimates). The share of on-the-job-training components is also high, with 77 per cent of the estimates (97 of the 126 overall). At the same time, only 20 per cent – 25 of the 126 estimates – contain a life skills or jobs insertion component. And a mere 5 estimates (i.e. 4 per cent) cover entrepreneurship training. Given this pattern, the meta regressions for the training subsample (reported below) will report specifications using indicators mapping this information into the number of components a training program comprises: 25 per cent of programs (32 estimates) have one component only, 55 per cent of programs have two components (69 estimates), and 20 per cent have three or more components (25 estimates). Finally, regarding the additional population indicators, two thirds of training programs (84 estimates) are explicitly pro-poor, and 58 per cent (73 estimates) target the bottom bracket of the youth population up to 24 years of age.

Table 9 reports the estimation results for a series of specifications for the training subsample, including the above specified indicators. First, the results do not show a strong pattern by number of program components. Relative to one-component programs, there is no indication that two- or three-component programs are significantly more likely to effectuate positive labor market impacts. This is perhaps somewhat unexpected, in light of the overall ALMP results indicating that "comprehensive" programs appear to work better. Secondly, however, as with the full sample (Table 8 above) it is the case that programs with short duration (4 months or less) still display significantly less positive outcomes. This points to a potentially interesting result: The number of training components per se may not be the key design factor in devising a "comprehensive" program, but it may be the length of the program instead. Whereas the results for this sample point into this direction, the limitations of the analysis have to be recalled: the

coding of the training components is relatively coarse, frequently studies do not report program duration, and both measures only partially capture the "intensity" of the program (as would be given e.g. by hours per day).

< Table 9 about here >

Besides the pattern by program duration, the additional results that can be taken from Table 9 are similar to patterns found also for the larger LAC sample. First, there is an indication that program estimates for male participants are (marginally) significantly less likely to be positive than for pooled-gender programs. Second, training programs seem to work better when unemployment is low. Third, other factors included here – experimental vs. non-experimental evaluation; time of program operation – do not seem to play a significant role in determining program success. In particular, the newly added variables capturing whether a program is explicitly pro-poor, or targeting only the bottom bracket of the youth age range up to 24 years, do not seem to be determinants of a program's success or failure.

5. CONCLUDING REMARKS

This sections summarizes the main findings arising from a narrative review and a meta-analysis carried out on a sample of 44 impact evaluations of ALMPs in the region. This sample was gathered following an exhaustive search of available studies and finalized after applying a systematic selection procedure to control for quality and scope of the impact evaluations. Two sets of conclusions arise from the analysis: one, more qualitative, relating to the distribution of studies and the other, quantitative, linked to the effectiveness of the policies whose evaluations were included in the analysis.

In terms of the qualitative aspects, the first finding that arises from the analysis is that the number of studies is heavily skewed in relation to both country and programme coverage. Most studies analyse programmes in Peru and Argentina, which together account for almost 35 per cent of the

sample, and 70 per cent of the studies analyse training programmes. Neither of these is representative of the diversity and coverage of ALMPs in the region.

Second, there has been a clear upwards trend in the number of impact evaluations conducted, especially after 2005. Importantly, this has not changed the significance of impacts over time, meaning that the increased attention has had a greater influence on the number of studies than on the results of impact evaluations themselves. Third, 75 per cent of the sample consisted of quasi-experimental evaluation methods (mainly PSM and DID), whereas experimental approaches based on RCTs have become more widespread in recent years. However, the effects of experimental and quasi-experimental evaluations do not significantly differ in LAC. This is in line with findings from other meta-analyses and is reassuring with respect to the robustness of all the different evaluation strategies.

In terms of the second set of results regarding programme effectiveness, a number of findings are worth highlighting. First, training programmes have a positive impact, especially on increasing the employment opportunities of beneficiaries, but also on improving their earnings and their chances of finding formal employment. Yet, once factors such as the duration of the programme, the target group and the economic and country conditions are controlled for, training programmes are not more effective than other ALMPs in raising the employment outcomes of participants in LAC. However, given the lack of impact evaluations of other types of programmes, it is not possible to conclude which type of ALMP is most effective in the region. Importantly, programmes of short duration (four months or less) are significantly less likely to show positive treatment effects.

Second, although the lack of abundant studies does not allow general conclusions to be drawn regarding the effectiveness of other types of ALMPs, a number of commo patterns are nevertheless evident among those available ones. For instance, employment subsidies and self-employment and micro-enterprise creation programmes have shown mainly positive effects in terms of increasing the probability of employment (or starting a business), as well as raising earnings (when measured). In contrast, the four available public works studies are shown to be mainly effective at providing income support during participation, but the limited evidence is mixed regarding their impact on employment.

Third, in terms of target group, the meta-analysis shows that ALMPs are more effective among women. This is particularly interesting since these types of programme traditionally focus on men in the region, leaving CCTs for their female counterparts. Moreover, there is no significant difference in the effectiveness of the programmes across age groups, while in the existing literature from other regions such interventions are more effective for prime-age workers than for either youth or older participants.

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Table 1. Sources and selection criteria of impact evaluation studies reviewed

	Sources	
Global	– Source material based on sampling approach by Card et al. (2015)	– IZA programme evaluation network – NBER labour studies network – 3ie's Register of Impact Evaluation Published Studies (RIEPS) – Ibarrarán and Rosas-Shady (2009) – Studies citing Card et al. (2010) and Kluve (2010)
LAC	– Source material added to the 18 LAC studies of Card et al. (2015)	– Studies identified while creating the ILO Compendium of labour market policies – Sanz (2012) and Vezza (2014) – Website of the Office of Evaluation and Oversight of the IADB
	Inclusion	**Exclusion**
Methodology	– Treatment effects assessed at the individual level – Control for selection bias into treatment and comparison groups – Effects estimated relative to non-participation	– Comparison of effectiveness of different ALMPs – Standard errors not reported
Programmes examined	– Evaluation of one particular programme	– Examination of ALMPs on a broader scale – Other forms of labour market policies
Language	– English and Spanish	– Other languages

Table 2. Number of studies by country and type of program

	Training	Public works	Employment subsidies	Self-employment and micro-enterprise creation	Labour market services	%
Argentina	5	2	2	1		19.2
Bolivia, Plurinational State of		1				1.9
Brazil	2					3.8
Chile	4		2		1	13.5
Colombia	6			1		13.5
Dominican Republic	4					7.7
El Salvador				1		1.9
Guatemala				1		1.9
Mexico	4					7.7
Nicaragua				2		3.8
Panama	2					3.8
Peru	6	1			1	15.4
Uruguay	2			1		5.8
%	67.3	7.7	7.7	13.5	3.8	100

Note: The 44 studies selected evaluate a total of 52 programmes as some studies analyse more than one programme, namely Ibarrarán and Rosas-Shady (2009) and Klinger and Schündeln (2011). Specifically, Klinger and Schündeln (2011) analyse the effectiveness of the programme "Business Plan Competitions" implemented by the NGO TechnoServe in El Salvador, Guatemala and Nicaragua.

Table 3. Findings on the impact of training programs by study, outcome variable and target group

Study	Employment				Earnings				Hours worked			Formal employment			Notes and other estimates
	Overall	Women	Men	Youth	Overall	Women	Men	Youth	Overall	Women	Men	Overall	Women	Men	
Aedo and Núñez (2004)		+	ns	ns		+	ns	ns/+							Results on earnings are statistically significant only for young males and adult females. Treatment group: individuals aged 16 to 35. Youth refers to people under 21.
Alesina et al. (2005)		+				ns				ns			ns		No significant effect on job retention. Treatment group: women.
Alzuá and Brassiolo (2006)	ns	ns	ns		ns	ns	ns					+			Treatment group: youth aged 16 to 35.
Alzuá et al. (2013)	+	ns	+	+	+										Treatment group: individuals aged 18 to 30. Youth refers to people under 25.
Attanasio et al. (2011)		+	ns			+	+						+	+	Negative effect on job retention. Treatment group: youth aged 18 to 25.
Calderón-Madrid (2006)		+	ns												Positive effects on job retention.
Calero et al. (2014)	+				+							ns			Positive effects appear after five months. Treatment group: individuals aged under 29.
Card et al. (2011)	ns	ns	ns	+	+	ns	ns	+	ns	ns	ns				Treatment group: individuals aged 18 to 29. Youth refers to people aged 17 to 19.
Castillo et al. (2014)												+	+	+	Treatment group: individuals aged 18 or over.
Centro de Microdatos (2008)	+				+				+			+			Positive effects on job tenure, social protection coverage and other job-quality measures. Treatment group: youth aged 20 to 30.

Table 3 (contd.)

Study	Employment				Earnings				Hours worked			Formal employment			Notes and other estimates
	Overall	Women	Men	Youth	Overall	Women	Men	Youth	Overall	Women	Men	Overall	Women	Men	
Chong and Galdo (2006)					+	+	+/ns								Larger effects on earnings in the medium term than in the short term. Male participants show positive effects in the short term and no effects in the medium term. Treatment group: youth aged 16 to 25.
Corseuil et al. (2013)	+				+							+			Treatment group: youth aged 17.
Delajara et al. (2006)	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+							Larger effects on employment and earnings for women with higher education.
Díaz and Jaramillo (2006)	ns	+	–	+	+	+	+	+	+	ns	ns	+	+	+	Women and youth aged 16 to 20 benefit more from the programme. Positive effects on working hours for youth. Treatment group: youth aged 16 to 24.
Galdo and Chong (2012)	ns	+	ns		+	+	+					+	+	+	Larger effects on earnings and formality for participants of high-quality training schemes. Treatment group: youth aged 16 to 25.
Ibarrarán and Rosas-Shady (2006)	ns	+	ns	ns	ns	+	ns	ns	+	+	ns				Treatment group: individuals aged 18 to 33. Youth refers to people under 25.
Ibarrarán and Rosas-Shady (2009)	ns	+	ns	+	+	+	+					+	+	+	Summarizes the findings of seven impact evaluations.
Ibarrarán et al. (2014)	ns	ns	ns		+	+	ns					+	ns	+	Impact on earnings is found only in the formal sector. Treatment group: youth aged 16 to 29.

Table 3 (contd.)

Study	Employment				Earnings				Hours worked			Formal employment			Notes and other estimates
	Overall	Women	Men	Youth	Overall	Women	Men	Youth	Overall	Women	Men	Overall	Women	Men	
Ibarrarán et al. (2015)	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	+	ns	ns				+	ns	+	Results correspond to long-term estimates. Treatment group: individuals aged 16 to 29. Youth refers to people under 22.
Jimenez and Kugler (1986)					+		+								Larger effects on earnings are found for long training courses.
Jimenez and Kugler (1987)					+										Non-significant effects of short training courses on earnings.
Kaplan et al. (2015)	–				–										Positive effects on overall job retention.
Medina and Núñez (2005)					ns	ns	ns	ns							
Naranjo Silva (2002)	+				+							+			
Ñopo et al. (2007)	+	+			+	+	+		+	+	+				Larger effects on employment for women. Treatment group: youth aged 16 to 25.
Revenga et al. (1994)		+	+			ns	+								Larger effects on earnings for the more highly educated.
Rosas-Shady (2006)					+							+			Treatment group: youth aged 16 to 24.
Santa María et al. (2009)	+				+	+						ns	+		Treatment group: youth aged 16 to 29.
Statcom (2006)	+				+							+			Positive effects on overall job retention. Treatment group: youth aged 16 to 21.

Notes: The estimated effects are classified as: positive and statistically significant (+), negative and statistically significant (-) and not statistically significant (ns). Specific target populations are defined in the notes column. All estimates correspond to short-term effects, unless otherwise specified.

Table 4. Findings on the impact of other ALMPs by study, outcome variable and target group

Study	Employment				Earnings				Hours worked			Formal employment			Notes and other estimates
	Overall	Women	Men	Youth	Overall	Women	Men	Youth	Overall	Women	Men	Overall	Women	Men	
Public works															
Hernani-Limarino et al. (2011)	–				–										
Jalan and Ravallion (2003)					+	+	+	+							Estimated effects only during participation.
Macroconsult S.A. (2012)					+	+									Estimated effects only during participation.
Ronconi et al. (2006)	ns				+	+	+					ns			Positive effects on employment and earnings only during participation. Larger effects on women's earnings.
Employment subsidies															
Castillo et al. (2008)	+														Effects are estimated at the firm level.
Centro de Microdatos (2012)	+	+	+												Treatment group: youths aged 18 to 25.
Fundación AGRO UC (2009)	ns				ns										
Galasso et al. (2004)	+	+	+	+	ns										Larger effects on employment for women, youth and highly educated individuals.

Table 4 (contd.)

Study	Employment				Earnings				Hours worked			Formal employment			Notes and other estimates
	Overall	Women	Men	Youth	Overall	Women	Men	Youth	Overall	Women	Men	Overall	Women	Men	
Self-employment and micro-enterprise creation															
Almeida and Galasso (2010)					ns	ns		–	+						Positive effects on earnings for highly educated individuals.
Klinger and Schündeln (2011)	+				+										Employment refers to opening a business.
Macours et al. (2013)	+				+										
Steiner et al. (2010)	+				+				ns			ns			Formality is just one variable in the "job-quality index". Treatment group: youths aged 16 to 25.
Valdivia (2011)					+										Results refer to improvements in business sales and profits. Treatment group: women with family business.
Labour market services and the PESs															
Acero et al. (2009)	+				+										No significant effects on job retention. Treatment group: youth aged 18 to 29.
Chacaltana and Sulmont (2004)	+				+										Positive effects on job retention. Treatment group: youth aged 16 to 25.

Notes: The estimated effects are classified as: positive and statistically significant (+), negative and statistically significant (-) and not statistically significant (ns). Specific target populations are defined in the notes column. All estimates correspond to short-term effects unless otherwise specified.

Table 5. LAC meta data: sample summary statistics

	# estimates short-run	per cent	# estimates medium-run	per cent
Program intake group				
Registered UI	12	13.19	2	3.28
Disadvantaged	79	86.81	59	96.72
LTU	0	0	0	0
Type of program				
Training	76	83.52	50	81.97
Job Search Assistance	3	3.3	4	6.56
Private sector incentive	8	8.79	3	4.92
Public sector employment	4	4.4	4	6.56
Program duration				
Unknown or mixed	20	21.98	9	14.75
4 months or less	25	27.47	24	39.34
5-9 months	46	50.55	28	45.9
Over 9 months	0	0	0	0
Gender of program group				
Pooled	26	28.57	9	14.75
Male only	32	35.16	26	42.62
Female only	33	36.26	26	42.62
Age of program group				
Pooled age	28	30.77	14	22.95
Youths	55	60.44	45	73.77
Older workers	8	8.79	2	3.28

Table 6. LAC meta data: evaluation methods used

	# estimates short-run	per cent	# estimates medium-run	per cent
Basic methodology				
cross sectional	24	26.37	18	29.51
duration with comparison group	2	2.2	0	0
experimental	8	8.79	16	26.23
longitudinal with comparison group	57	62.64	27	44.26
Dependent variable				
Hazard off register	2	2.2	0	0
Probability employed	44	48.35	32	52.46
Earnings	45	49.45	29	47.54
Covariate adjustment method				
Regression	31	34.07	32	52.46
Matching	60	65.93	29	47.54

Table 7. LAC meta data: summary of estimated impacts

	Significant negative	Insignificant	Significant positive
Short-term (N=91)	5	36	50
	5.49	39.56	54.95
Medium-term (N=61)	2	32	27
	3.28	52.46	44.26
Median effect size for estimates with P(Emp), short-term, N=23		-0.0229	0.2456

Notes: One significant long-term impact coded with the medium-term impacts.

Table 8. LAC meta data: Linear probability models for positive sign/significance of estimated program impacts

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
(i) Program type and time horizon (base: other programs, short-run)					
Training program	-0.048	-0.055	0.083	0.111	0.058
	(0.098)	(0.097)	(0.150)	(0.154)	(0.155)
Effect estimated in medium-run	-0.054	-0.059	0.073	0.07	0.188
	(0.080)	(0.075)	(0.149)	(0.138)	(0.162)
Interaction: training * medium-run			-0.143	-0.155	-0.261
			(0.155)	(0.144)	(0.170)
(ii) Target group (base: pooled age, pooled gender)					
Youths (25 yrs and younger)	0.072	-0.11	0.192	0.23	0.081
	(0.131)	(0.117)	(0.159)	(0.136)	(0.145)
Older workers (over 25)	-0.049	-0.074	-0.04	0.103	0.054
	(0.146)	(0.155)	(0.145)	(0.142)	(0.159)
Interaction: training * youths			-0.152	-0.208	-0.116
			(0.214)	(0.169)	(0.176)
Males	-0.267	-0.237	-0.278	-0.218	-0.214
	(0.118)	(0.124)	(0.127)	(0.140)	(0.137)
Females	0.109	0.131	0.099	0.153	0.155
	(0.116)	(0.124)	(0.124)	(0.119)	(0.123)
(iii) Evaluation design and program details (base: non-experimental, missing or unknown duration)					
Experimental evaluation	0.005	-0.052	0.014	0.126	-0.006
	(0.131)	(0.149)	(0.133)	(0.126)	(0.135)
Year of program start	-0.003	0	-0.003	-0.003	-0.007
	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.011)	(0.010)
Short duration (4 months or shorter)	-0.572	-0.735	-0.595	-0.672	-0.912
	(0.127)	(0.158)	(0.134)	(0.140)	(0.141)
Medium duration (5 to 9 months)	-0.317	-0.289	-0.303	-0.33	-0.515
	(0.133)	(0.130)	(0.285)	(0.309)	(0.272)
Interaction: training * medium duration			-0.021	-0.002	0.201
			(0.333)	(0.344)	(0.315)
(iv) Country indicators					
Argentina		-0.352			-0.314
		(0.189)			(0.111)
Chile		-0.168			-0.222
		(0.190)			(0.161)
Peru		-0.056			-0.33
		(0.146)			(0.136)
Colombia		-0.004			0.043
		(0.128)			(0.110)
Panama		0.05			-0.022
		(0.186)			(0.190)
(v) Contextual factors					
GDP growth rate				0.026	0.038
				(0.015)	(0.021)
Unemployment rate				-0.031	-0.04
				(0.009)	(0.013)
Constant	7.169	0.336	6.812	7.924	15.874
	(18.053)	(18.359)	(17.660)	(22.461)	(19.716)
N	152	152	152	150	150
R-squared	0.32	0.36	0.33	0.40	0.44

Notes: Standard errors (in parentheses) clustered at the study level.

Table 9. LAC meta data training subsample: Linear probability models for positive sign / significance of estimated program impacts

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
(i) Training program characteristics (base: one component, missing/unknown duration)					
Two training components	-0.353	-0.387	-0.37	-0.427	-0.405
	(.196)	(.209)	(.227)	(.178)	(.202)
Three training components	-0.245	-0.185	-0.259	0.049	-0.045
	(.213)	(.197)	(.406)	(.255)	(.281)
Short duration (4 months or shorter)	-0.427	-0.692	-0.414	-0.429	-0.625
	(.223)	(.26)	(.257)	(.229)	(.161)
Medium duration (5 to 9 months)	-0.116	-0.098	-0.116	-0.081	-0.072
	(.169)	(.18)	(.182)	(.154)	(.157)
Interaction one component * short duration	-0.162	-0.037	-0.169	-0.175	-0.212
	(.288)	(.281)	(.383)	(.232)	(.211)
(ii) Target group (base: pooled age, pooled gender)					
Youths (25 yrs and younger)	0.191	0.015	0.191	0.099	-0.049
	(.185)	(.137)	(.223)	(.067)	(.126)
Older workers (over 25)	0.093	0.139	0.093	0.262	0.189
	(.139)	(.128)	(.156)	(.077)	(.138)
Males	-0.45	-0.418	-0.452	-0.456	-0.501
	(.167)	(.178)	(.174)	(.184)	(.211)
Females	-0.05	-0.022	-0.052	-0.063	-0.107
	(.174)	(.19)	(.183)	(.164)	(.207)
Program explicitly targeting the poor			0.021	-0.082	0.073
			(.201)	(.192)	(.218)
Program targeting youths up to 24 yrs of age			0.003	0.221	0.123
			(.398)	(.16)	(.205)
(iii) Evaluation design and program details					
Experimental evaluation	-0.064	-0.077	-0.071	0.03	-0.079
	(.146)	(.179)	(.164)	(.143)	(.126)
Year of program start	-0.008	-0.007	-0.007	-0.017	-0.021
	(.009)	(.012)	(.01)	(.01)	(.015)
Effect estimated in the medium-run	-0.011	-0.01	-0.012	-0.015	-0.02
	(.076)	(.075)	(.076)	(.067)	(.068)
(iv) Country indicators					
Argentina		-0.296			-0.364
		(.245)			(.124)
Chile		-0.099			-0.11
		(.244)			(.225)
Peru		0.019			-0.207
		(.202)			(.241)
Colombia		-0.082			0.073
		(.173)			(.125)
Panama		0.336			0.192
		(.305)			(.301)
(v) Contextual factors					
GDP growth rate				0.043	0.061
				(.02)	(.03)
Unemployment rate				-0.038	-0.038
				(.008)	(.018)
Constant	16.24	16.048	15.735	35.051	44.269
	(18.832)	(23.39)	(20.4)	(20.43)	(29.507)
N	126	126	126	124	124
R-squared	0.43	0.43	0.44	0.40	0.40

Notes: Standard errors (in parentheses) clustered at the study level.

Figure 1. Number of impact evaluation studies reviewed by country

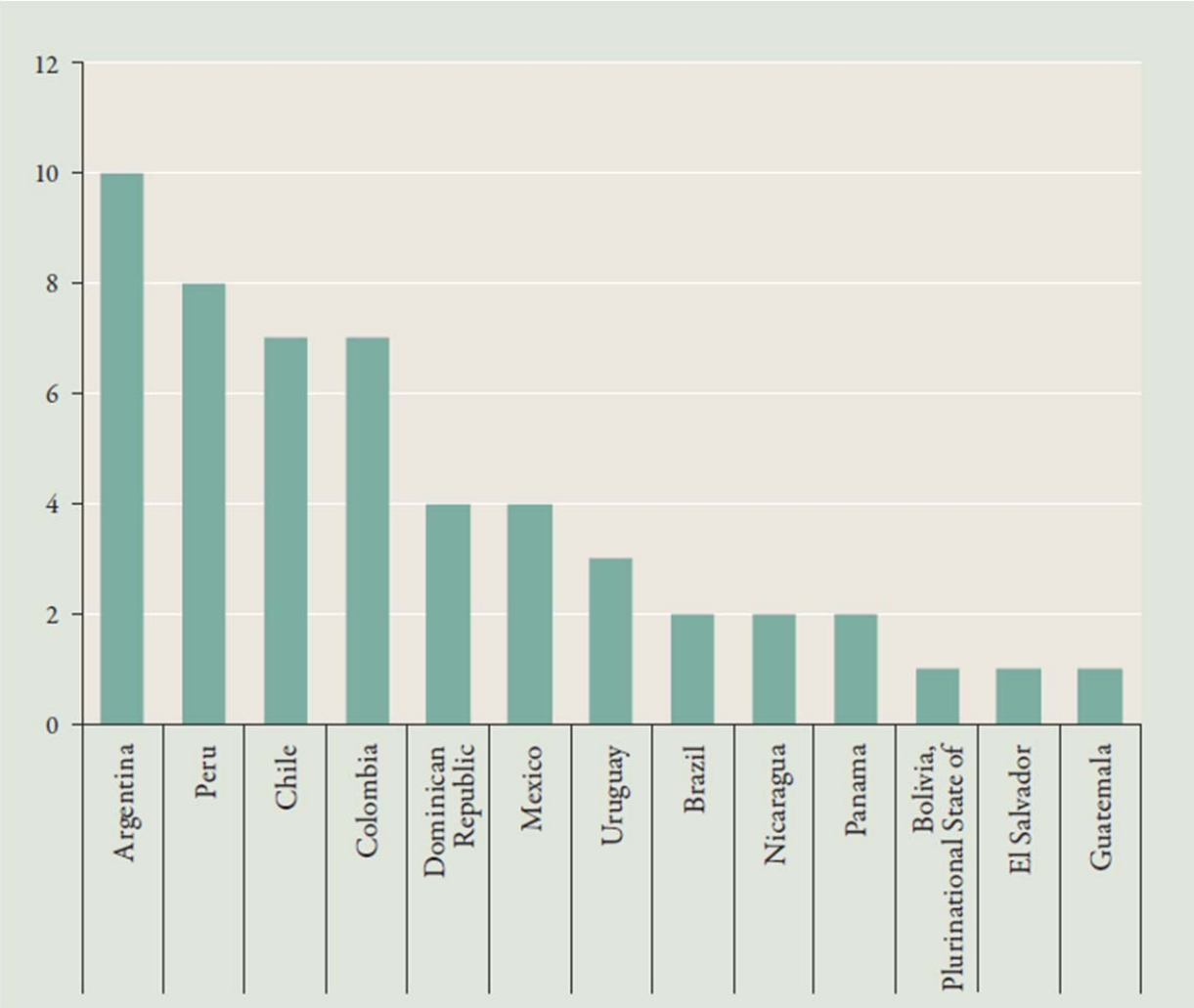
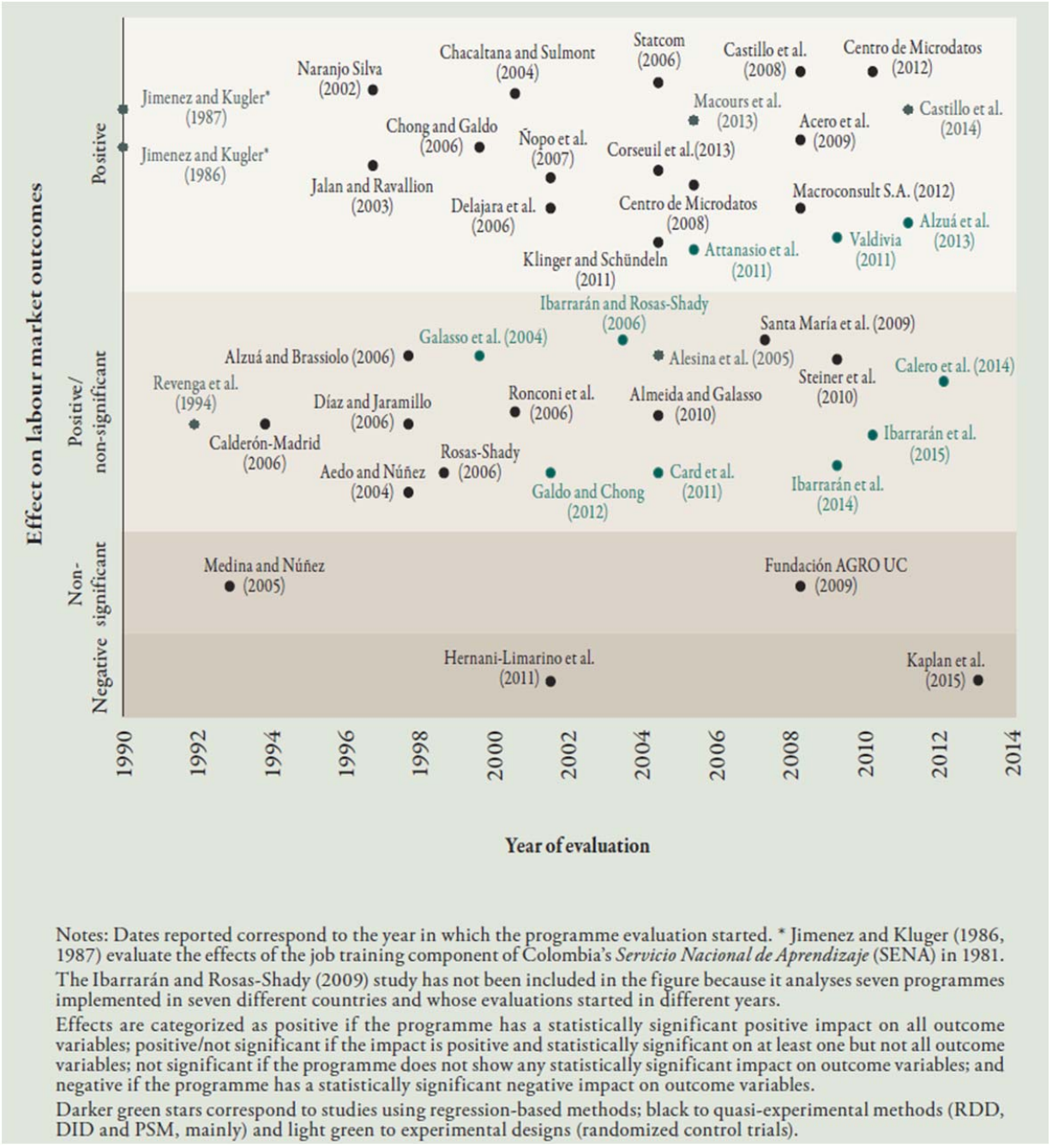


Figure 2. Mapping of studies by year of evaluation, significance, and method



Notes: Dates reported correspond to the year in which the programme evaluation started. * Jimenez and Kluger (1986, 1987) evaluate the effects of the job training component of Colombia's *Servicio Nacional de Aprendizaje* (SENA) in 1981.

The Ibarrarán and Rosas-Shady (2009) study has not been included in the figure because it analyses seven programmes implemented in seven different countries and whose evaluations started in different years.

Effects are categorized as positive if the programme has a statistically significant positive impact on all outcome variables; positive/not significant if the impact is positive and statistically significant on at least one but not all outcome variables; not significant if the programme does not show any statistically significant impact on outcome variables; and negative if the programme has a statistically significant negative impact on outcome variables.

Darker green stars correspond to studies using regression-based methods; black to quasi-experimental methods (RDD, DID and PSM, mainly) and light green to experimental designs (randomized control trials).

Figure 3. Impact estimates in LAC meta sample by country

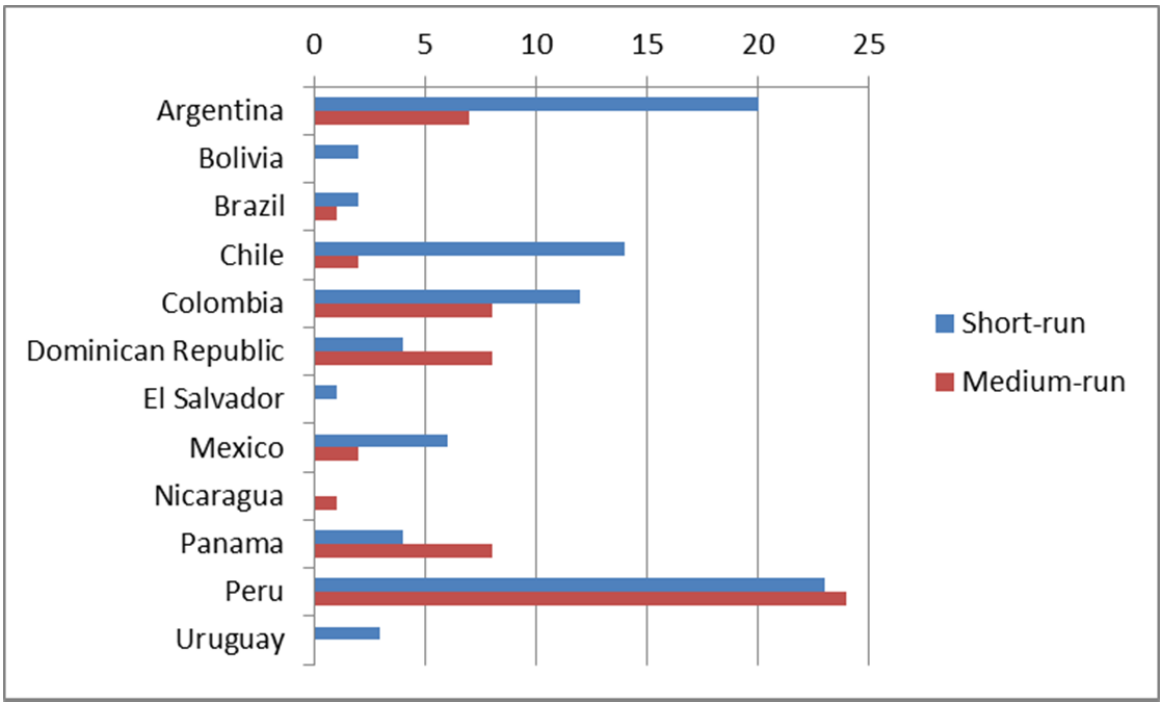
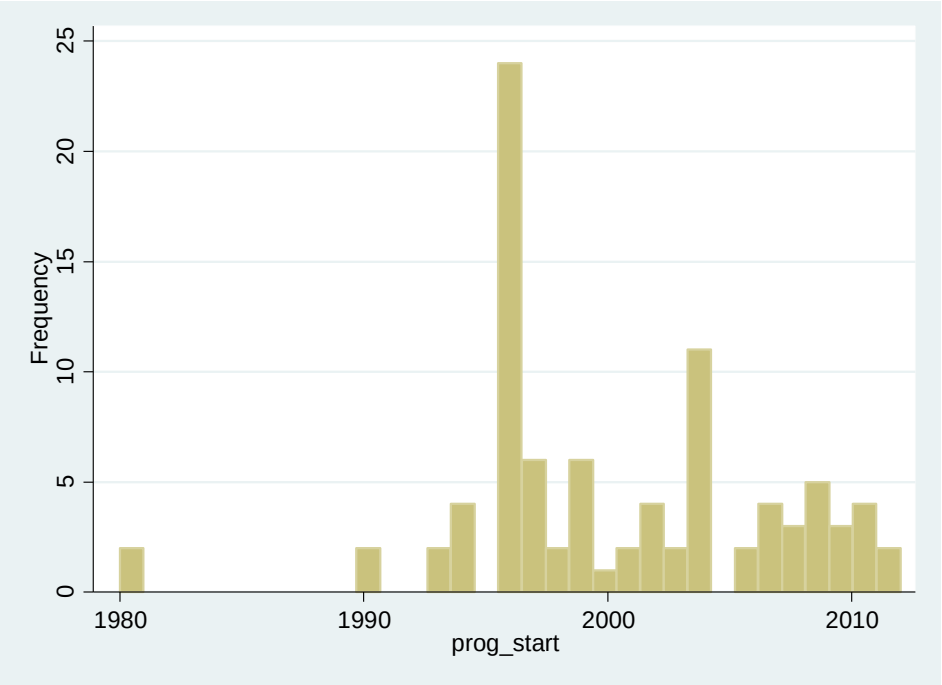
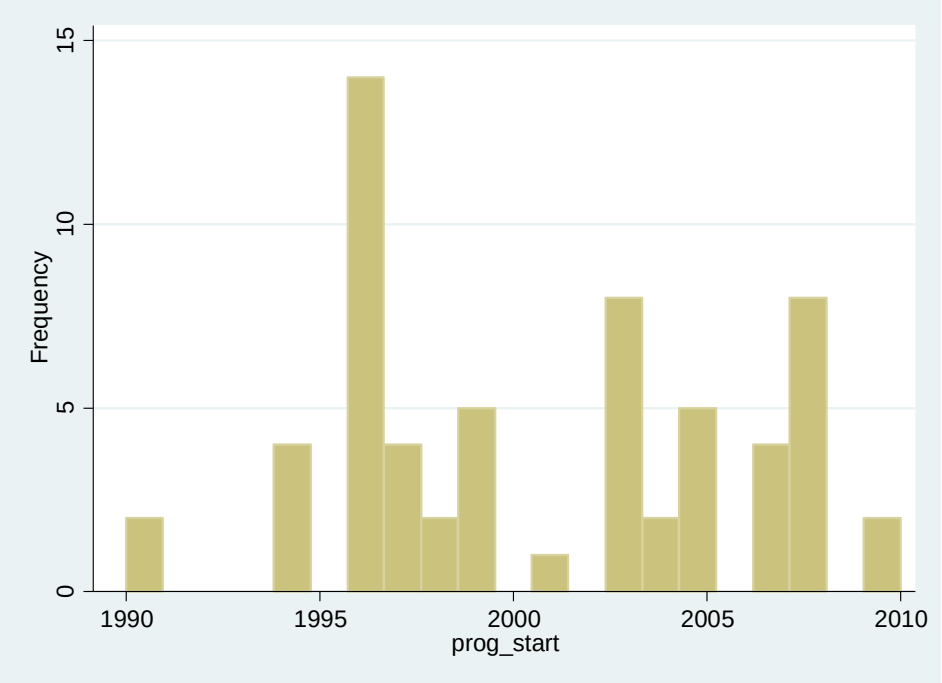


Figure 4. LAC meta sample: distribution of program start times – short-run estimates



N=91 impact estimates.

Figure 5. LAC meta sample: distribution of program start times – medium-run estimates



N=61 impact estimates.