

Fortnightly links: banking and cash transfers, Angola, redistribution, and Rio 2016

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An interesting study ([gated](#); [ungated](#)) using experimental evidence from Uganda, Malawi, and Chile finds that providing free bank accounts only modestly increases savings and does not appear to significantly improve downstream economic outcomes. The paper does a good job of setting its findings amongst a broader literature and does not conclude that subsidised banking does not work, but rather that its effects are likely heavily conditioned by context.

ODI has just published a [comprehensive literature review](#) of the evidence for the effectiveness of cash transfers. In short, it finds that cash transfer can have positive effects on short- and medium-term outcomes such as monetary poverty, education and health, and that the size and duration of transfers are key.

The oil price crash has had [devastating effects](#) in Angola, the sub-Saharan country most dependent on commodity exports; about 45% of its GDP comes from the oil and gas sector. However, its continued classification as an 'upper middle income' country thanks to the 15 year economic boom has limited its access to relief through foreign aid.

Chris Hoy and Andy Sumner have a great new CGD Working Paper (blog [here](#), which links to paper) that argues that the potential for redistribution to tackle extreme poverty in most developing countries is high.

The 2016 Olympic Games are underway in Rio and producing plenty of development-related chatter. In this [blog post](#), Simon White considers the economic costs and impacts of hosting major sporting events, and three Canadian experts propose [three ways to reimagine the Games](#) here. Robin Wright offers provides an [introduction](#) to the members of Team Refugees, who are stealing the hearts of sports fans around the world -- in stark contrast to ordinary refugees and asylum seekers, [contends](#) Roger Cohen in a *New York Times* editorial. And we'll be keeping an eye out to see if there is a bump in tourism to Tonga in the coming months after the [country's flagbearer stole the show](#) at the Opening Ceremony last weekend.