

Calibrating the approach: Changing the charity's intervention depending on the specifics of the location.

GiveDirectly

Recipient feedback example 2020.md

Quote: In my opinion, GiveDirectly sends money right to my phone without having to use other middlemen. like the government and other organizations do. This program has been implemented within a very short time that allowed me to timely implement my ideas.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly's approach of sending money directly to recipients without intermediaries reduces administrative costs and ensures that funds are used efficiently. This direct transfer method allows recipients to implement their ideas quickly, demonstrating cost-effectiveness by minimizing delays and overhead costs.

Quote: I spent the second transfer on starting a clothes-making business. I had earlier trained myself on tailoring but had not started harvesting the fruits of my labor. I used to lease a sewing machine from time to time and this was not making any business sense.

Reasoning: The recipient used the transfer to start a business, which is a cost-effective use of funds as it generates sustainable income. By avoiding the recurring cost of leasing a sewing machine, the recipient can now make more profits, demonstrating the cost-effectiveness of the intervention.

Quote: The biggest difference in my daily life is that I no longer pay someone to use their sewing machine. I now save the Kes 400 instead. I will use this money to boost my business. I am now self reliant and able to comfortably take care of my family with much ease.

Reasoning: The recipient no longer incurs the cost of leasing a sewing machine, saving Kes 400 monthly. This saving can be reinvested into the business, enhancing its growth and sustainability. This demonstrates the cost-effectiveness of the intervention by reducing ongoing expenses and increasing self-reliance.

GiveDirectly Values __ GiveDirectly.md

Quote: We reason from first principles, grounding our decisions in objective claims about the world, rather than hard-to-disprove assertions or hierarchy. We aim to brainstorm inclusively and respectfully, but critically self-vet ideas we put forward, so as to ensure productive and prudent decision making.

Reasoning: This quote demonstrates how GiveDirectly calibrates its approach by grounding decisions in objective claims and critically vetting ideas. This ensures that their interventions are tailored to the specifics of each location, making them more cost-effective.

Quote: We seek step-change improvements at all levels, and are willing to make big-bets; we do not accept complacency nor do we simply optimize existing processes. In doing so, we allow ourselves to dream big with a belief that perceived constraints are merely opportunities for creativity.

Reasoning: This quote shows that GiveDirectly is willing to make significant changes and take risks to improve their interventions. By not accepting complacency and seeking step-change improvements, they can adapt their approach to different locations, enhancing cost-effectiveness.

Receipient feedback.md

Quote: “My tailoring businesses would not have been in existence at this time. Using a leased machine is into whatever little profits I could make. With the money, I bought a sewing machine that I am proud to own. I also have enough clothes making materials that have really boosted my business.”

Reasoning: This quote demonstrates how GiveDirectly’s cash transfer intervention is tailored to the specific needs of the recipient, enabling them to invest in a sewing machine and materials that significantly boost their business. This shows the cost-effectiveness of the intervention by directly addressing the recipient’s specific needs and enabling sustainable income generation.

Quote: “Earnings that I started streaming in is the biggest difference in my daily life that was brought about by the transfers. I am operating a taxi business that brings in money. I have been saving ever since it kicked off. I also improved my home by building a house and bought a solar lighting system. Recharging the solar is absolutely free and this saves money that would have gone to waste buying batteries for touches to light the houses.”

Reasoning: This quote highlights how the cash transfer enabled the recipient to start a taxi business, which provides a steady income. Additionally, the recipient invested in a solar lighting system, reducing ongoing costs. This illustrates the cost-effectiveness of the intervention by addressing specific local needs and enabling long-term financial stability.

Quote: “My life is different now because of the house I was able to construct for my family. I wanted to do this for a long time to get a room for my children who are growing into their teenage. Due to a lack of money and poor income, I couldn’t manage it. I can now afford to give them some privacy. I also own livestock that is high yielding when it comes to milk production.”

Reasoning: This quote shows how the cash transfer allowed the recipient to build a house for their family and invest in high-yielding livestock. These investments address specific local needs and provide long-term benefits, demonstrating the cost-effectiveness of the intervention.

Quote: “My life is better in many ways since I started a taxi business. I receive a payment of my earnings every weekend and this being a regular income, is the best thing that has ever happened. I also can start a poultry keeping initiative because of the availability of money go buy the chicken needed and to feed them. I will use the savings from my taxi business to live a better life.”

Reasoning: This quote illustrates how the cash transfer enabled the recipient to start a taxi business and a poultry keeping initiative, both of which provide regular income. This demonstrates the cost-effectiveness of the intervention by addressing specific local needs and enabling sustainable income generation.

Quote: “My life change because I can afford food for me and my child.”

Reasoning: This quote shows how the cash transfer directly addressed the immediate need for food, which is a critical local need. This demonstrates the cost-effectiveness of the intervention by providing essential support that improves the recipient’s quality of life.

Quote: “Yes, because I can now afford for my family and I started my new business.”

Reasoning: This quote highlights how the cash transfer enabled the recipient to start a new business, which provides income to support their family. This demonstrates the cost-effectiveness of the intervention by addressing specific local needs and enabling sustainable income generation.

Quote: “Yes, because I am building my small place to live.”

Reasoning: This quote shows how the cash transfer allowed the recipient to build a place to live, addressing a critical local need. This demonstrates the cost-effectiveness of the intervention by providing essential support that improves the recipient’s living conditions.

Quote: “Yes, because things getting better for my business and my family.”

Reasoning: This quote illustrates how the cash transfer improved the recipient’s business and family life, addressing specific local needs. This demonstrates the cost-effectiveness of the intervention by enabling sustainable improvements in the recipient’s quality of life.

Quote: “The money made a big difference in my life. I used the money to buy food and medication for my Mon.” who was sick, if this money had not come, I wouldn’t have had money to buy medicine for my Mon.”

Reasoning: This quote shows how the cash transfer provided essential support for food and medication, addressing critical local needs. This demonstrates the cost-effectiveness of the intervention by providing immediate and necessary support that improves the recipient’s quality of life.

Financials __ GiveDirectly.md

Quote: We’ve made two long-term decisions that have driven the decline: 1. **Investing in increasing GiveDirectly’s capacity to deliver more cash.** Through investments in technology and our team, we’ve made a conscious effort to increase our capacity to deliver more funds to people in need. These investments aren’t free, but as we receive more funding (especially, flexible funding), we expect our efficiency to increase. 2. **Implementing ‘special projects’ that are less efficient but are more likely change how the aid sector operates as a whole.** Over the last several years, we’ve chosen to conduct over a dozen randomized controlled trials and about as many non-experimental special projects. The goal of these projects is to influence the development sector broadly (e.g., by setting a benchmark) by generating evidence and spurring conversation. These projects are often less complex or require coordination with more third parties, and (3) there are project-level fixed costs that can be a greater proportion of smaller projects.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly calibrates its approach by making strategic investments in technology and team capacity to increase the efficiency of cash deliveries. Additionally, they implement special projects that, while less efficient, aim to influence the broader aid sector by generating evidence and fostering dialogue. This dual approach allows GiveDirectly to adapt its interventions based on the specific needs and contexts of different locations, thereby enhancing cost-effectiveness.

Quote: Assuming an average transfer size of about \$1,000 per recipient, it cost about \$113 to serve a recipient in our rolling one-time grant program and \$128 to serve a recipient in one of our special projects.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly’s cost-effectiveness is demonstrated by the relatively low cost to serve each recipient, which varies depending on the type of program. This shows that the charity adjusts its approach based on the specifics of the location and the nature of the project, ensuring that resources are used efficiently to maximize impact.

Research at GiveDirectly.md

Quote: The study explored the cost-effectiveness (impact per dollar) of unconditional cash transfers and of Gikuriro, an integrated nutrition program. It found that neither the traditional program nor cost-equivalent cash transfers of ~\$110 affected the study's primary outcomes, but a larger cash transfer of ~\$532 improved consumption, dietary diversity, and childhood growth 12 months after the baseline survey.

Reasoning: This quote shows how GiveDirectly calibrates its approach by testing different cash transfer amounts to determine the most cost-effective intervention. The study found that a larger cash transfer had a more significant impact, indicating that adjusting the intervention based on the specifics of the location and needs can lead to better outcomes and cost-effectiveness.

Quote: This study benchmarked the impact of a youth employment education intervention to cash transfers in the Rwandan context. It found that both programs increased productive hours, assets, savings, and subjective well-being. Only youth training improved business knowledge, and only cash transfers improved consumption, income, and wealth. When the programs were compared directly at an equivalent cost per beneficiary (\$332), 'cash proves superior across a number of economic outcomes, while training outperforms cash only in the production of business knowledge'.

Reasoning: This quote demonstrates how GiveDirectly calibrates its approach by comparing different interventions (cash transfers vs. youth training) to determine which is more cost-effective. The findings show that cash transfers are generally more effective for economic outcomes, while training is better for business knowledge, indicating that the charity adjusts its interventions based on the specific outcomes desired in different locations.

Quote: This study will evaluate the impact of different cash transfers sizes (\$250 to \$750) on a broad range of outcome measures, for a broad range of recipients. Its findings will provide a benchmark against which the impacts of other potential development interventions in Liberia can be assessed. It will also test whether improving access to agricultural input markets increases the impact of cash transfers.

Reasoning: This quote illustrates how GiveDirectly calibrates its approach by testing different cash transfer sizes and additional interventions (like improving access to agricultural input markets) to determine the most cost-effective strategy. By evaluating the impact of various transfer sizes and additional factors, the charity can tailor its interventions to maximize effectiveness and cost-efficiency in different locations.

Haushofer_Shapiro_UCT_QJE_2016.md

Quote: The GD program is a good laboratory to study the effects of unconditional transfers because existing programs often make relatively small transfers, make large transfers but over a longer period, or target transfers at small business owners. In contrast, GD makes relatively large transfers over a short period of time, targeted at recipients who were chosen simply for meeting a basic means test criterion.

Reasoning: This quote highlights how GD's approach to cash transfers differs from other programs by making large transfers over a short period of time, which allows for a more concentrated and impactful intervention. This calibration of the approach based on the specifics of the location (rural Kenya) and the needs of the recipients (poor households) enables GD to be cost-effective by ensuring that the funds are used efficiently and effectively.

Quote: In addition, because GD was only beginning to operate in Kenya when the study started, recipients are unlikely to have expected the transfers. We can therefore assess the response of a broad sample of households to large, unanticipated wealth changes.

Reasoning: This quote demonstrates that GD’s intervention was calibrated to the context of Kenya by ensuring that the transfers were unexpected, which allowed for a more accurate assessment of the impact of large, unanticipated wealth changes. This approach ensures that the intervention is cost-effective by targeting households that are most in need and likely to benefit from the transfers.

Quote: We randomized at both the village and household levels; furthermore, within the treatment group, we randomized recipient gender (wife versus husband), transfer timing (lump-sum transfer versus monthly installments), and transfer magnitude (US\$404 PPP versus US\$1,525 PPP).

Reasoning: This quote shows that GD’s intervention was carefully calibrated by randomizing various aspects of the transfer, including recipient gender, transfer timing, and transfer magnitude. This approach allows GD to tailor the intervention to the specific needs and circumstances of the recipients, making the program more cost-effective by ensuring that the transfers are used in the most impactful way.

Quote: We find that indeed this is the case. Finally, we find that the treatment effects for large versus small transfers are somewhat less than proportional in most categories, suggesting decreasing returns to large transfers overall.

Reasoning: This quote indicates that GD’s calibration of transfer magnitude (large versus small transfers) is based on empirical evidence showing decreasing returns to large transfers. This approach ensures that the charity is cost-effective by optimizing the size of the transfers to maximize impact without unnecessary expenditure.

Quote: Monthly transfers are more likely than lump-sum transfers to improve food security, whereas lump-sum transfers are more likely to be spent on durables, suggesting that households face savings and credit constraints.

Reasoning: This quote demonstrates that GD’s calibration of transfer timing (monthly versus lump-sum) is based on the specific needs and constraints of the recipients. By understanding that households face savings and credit constraints, GD can tailor the timing of transfers to improve food security or encourage investment in durables, making the intervention more cost-effective.

Quote: The fact that program participation required signing up for mobile money accounts, which are a low-cost savings technology (people could have chosen to accumulate their transfer in their M-Pesa account and even add additional funds), suggests that the savings constraint at work is more social or behavioral than due purely to the lack of access to a savings technology.

Reasoning: This quote highlights how GD’s intervention is calibrated to the local context by leveraging mobile money accounts, which are a low-cost savings technology widely used in Kenya. This approach ensures that the intervention is cost-effective by utilizing existing infrastructure and addressing behavioral savings constraints.

Quote: The different treatment arms in the study allow us to address several other questions in the economics literature. First, our design allows us to identify differences in expenditure patterns and other outcomes when transfers are made to the husband versus the wife.

Reasoning: This quote shows that GD’s intervention is calibrated by considering the gender of the recipient, which can influence expenditure patterns and other outcomes. By understanding

these differences, GD can tailor the intervention to maximize its impact and cost-effectiveness.

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FAQ __ GiveDirectly.md

Quote: We aim to find the poorest possible recipients while using criteria that are simple, fair, cost-effective, and difficult to game. Currently, our default is to locate extremely poor villages using poverty data from national surveys, and then enroll all households in the village. In the past we have also selected the poorer households within villages using simple criteria, e.g. enrolling families living in homes with matched roofs and not those with metal roofs, and also experimented with a wide range of other targeting approaches including community-based methods, points-based systems such as the Progress out of Poverty Index (PPI) and the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI); subjective assessments; and various blends of these approaches.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly calibrates its approach by using different criteria and methods to identify the poorest recipients in various locations. This includes using national poverty data, simple criteria like housing conditions, and more complex methods like community-based assessments and points-based systems. By adapting their approach based on the specifics of each location, they ensure cost-effectiveness and fairness in their interventions.

Quote: We choose to provide unconditional, rather than conditional, cash transfers for two reasons. First, empowering the poor to make their own decisions advances our core value of respect. Second, imposing conditions requires costly monitoring and enforcement structures be put in place. One detailed estimate put the administrative costs of a conditional cash transfer scheme as high as 63% of the transfers made over the first three years of the program (Caldes, Natalia, and John Maluccio. ‘The Costs of Conditional Cash Transfers.’ Journal of International Development 17 pp. 151-168, 2005). Our read of the existing experimental evidence comparing the impact of conditional to unconditional transfers is that there is little evidence to suggest these added costs produce commensurate benefits.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly’s decision to provide unconditional cash transfers instead of conditional ones is a strategic choice to reduce costs. Conditional transfers require expensive monitoring and enforcement, which can significantly increase administrative costs. By opting for unconditional transfers, GiveDirectly avoids these additional expenses, making their intervention more cost-effective while still respecting the autonomy of the recipients.

GiveDirectly 7-18-13 (public) supplementary material.md

Quote: We are adapting our financial reporting systems to track costs with greater granularity

Reasoning: By adapting their financial reporting systems to track costs with greater granularity, GiveDirectly can better understand and manage their expenses. This allows them to allocate resources more efficiently and ensure that their interventions are cost-effective.

Quote: We have installed capacity to move total of 36M in FY2014. We have uncommitted capacity to move \$10.6M under the management of two new Field Directors based full-time in the field * Each Field Director (FD) has capacity to move \$7M/year to new recipients * Kenya FD has 10 mo of uncommitted capacity in FY14, or \$5.8M * Newly recruited [New Country] FD will begin in mid-October and have capacity of \$5.0M (adjusted for 2 month apprenticeship)³ * COO shifts from directly managing transfers in the field to oversight and quality control of entire operation

Reasoning: By installing capacity to move a total of \$36M in FY2014 and having uncommitted capacity to move \$10.6M under the management of two new Field Directors, GiveDirectly can scale their operations efficiently. This ensures that they can manage larger volumes of transfers without proportionally increasing their costs, making their approach more cost-effective.

Quote: At full utilization our field operations will scale to ~70 staff

Reasoning: Scaling field operations to approximately 70 staff at full utilization allows GiveDirectly to handle larger volumes of transfers efficiently. This scaling ensures that the charity can manage increased activity without a corresponding increase in per-unit costs, contributing to cost-effectiveness.

Quote: Track four categories of transferred expenses: 1. Transfers 2. Identification costs 3. Transfer costs 4. Verification costs Nearly all expenses were 1:1 with a specific campaign (i.e., few

fixed or shared costs) Management time (COO) was split across all field activity and allocated to campaign that was primary focus of activity during each period (typically 1 or at most 2 campaigns)

Reasoning: By tracking four categories of transferred expenses and ensuring that nearly all expenses are 1:1 with a specific campaign, GiveDirectly can better manage and allocate their resources. This granular tracking helps in identifying areas where costs can be reduced or optimized, making their approach more cost-effective.

Paul_Niehaus_and_Carolina_Toht_05-28-15_(public) supplementary material.md

Quote: Kenya rolling campaign increased speed, with smaller campaigns driving learning in both Kenya and Uganda

Reasoning: The quote indicates that GD is using smaller campaigns to drive learning and improve the efficiency of their interventions. This suggests that they are calibrating their approach based on the specifics of the location, which can lead to cost-effectiveness by learning from smaller, localized campaigns and applying those lessons to larger campaigns.

Quote: Will push learnings on cash-out models via new partnership with a bank

Reasoning: This quote shows that GD is adapting their approach by forming new partnerships to improve the cash-out models. This adaptation based on local specifics (partnership with a bank) can lead to more cost-effective interventions by leveraging local expertise and infrastructure.

Quote: Using biometrics to authenticate recipients at the cash-out point

Reasoning: The use of biometrics for authentication is an example of GD calibrating their approach to the local context. This technology can reduce fraud and ensure that funds reach the intended recipients, thereby increasing the cost-effectiveness of the intervention.

Quote: Smaller ‘design lab’ projects (ideas42, index insurance, targeting project) occur either in parallel to rolling campaign or are folded into its operational flow

Reasoning: This quote demonstrates that GD is running smaller, experimental projects alongside their main campaigns. These smaller projects allow for testing and refining approaches, which can then be integrated into larger campaigns, leading to more cost-effective interventions by continuously improving methods based on local specifics.

Niehaus 12-7-13 (public).md

Quote: GiveDirectly may eventually conduct transfers in urban areas, where targeting criteria would have to change because common housing materials differ. It may also work in northern regions of Kenya in the future, where there is no mobile money provider, so GiveDirectly staff would have to either work with branch banks to distribute cash or take armored vehicles with cash on designated distribution dates. These processes would be more expensive and higher risk, but it is something that GiveDirectly would like to build its capacity for.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly adjusts its approach based on the specifics of the location, such as changing targeting criteria in urban areas and using different distribution methods in regions without mobile money providers. This demonstrates how calibrating the approach enables the charity to be cost-effective by tailoring interventions to local conditions.

Quote: GiveDirectly does not currently work closely with any partners, other than the mobile money services, because it does not want its expansion to be dependent on an outside entity. However, future expansion could bring about issues that GiveDirectly has not previously dealt with, and these may be hard to predict.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly's strategy of not relying on external partners for expansion ensures that it can maintain control over its operations and adapt to new challenges independently. This approach helps in being cost-effective by avoiding dependencies that could lead to increased costs or operational delays.

Quote: Geographic diversification is one way of preparing for potential issues, because it gives GiveDirectly the flexibility to shift spending out of an area if problems arise. This is one benefit of GiveDirectly expanding to Uganda.

Reasoning: By diversifying geographically, GiveDirectly can mitigate risks and adapt its operations based on the specific challenges of each location. This flexibility allows the charity to allocate resources more efficiently and maintain cost-effectiveness.

GiveDirectly 7-7-14 (public) supplementary material.md

Quote: We have replaced IPA on this project with an RA hired by ideas42 + GD field staff, for cost reasons

Reasoning: This quote shows that GD is calibrating its approach by changing the data collection method to be more cost-effective. By replacing IPA with an RA hired by ideas42 and GD field staff, GD is able to reduce costs while still maintaining the quality of data collection.

Quote: This represents our first in-house data collection, and a change in policy: whenever treatments are variations on how to do cash (rather than: does cash work at all?) we do not face a conflict of interest and can be involved in data collection

Reasoning: This quote indicates that GD is adjusting its approach by conducting in-house data collection for specific types of treatments. This change in policy allows GD to be more involved in data collection without facing a conflict of interest, thereby improving cost-effectiveness and ensuring better alignment with their goals.

Quote: An RA is currently in the field, defining timeline relative to the harvest season and experimental protocol

Reasoning: This quote demonstrates that GD is calibrating its approach by aligning the data collection timeline with the harvest season. This ensures that the intervention is more effective and cost-efficient by considering the specific context and timing of the local community.

Quote: Implemented standardized operational reporting on a weekly and monthly basis (which we will walk through together now)

Reasoning: This quote shows that GD is calibrating its approach by implementing standardized operational reporting. This allows for better tracking and management of resources, leading to increased cost-effectiveness and operational efficiency.

Quote: Wrote automation scripts to streamline enrollment data management and generate uniform output

Reasoning: This quote indicates that GD is calibrating its approach by using automation scripts to streamline data management. This reduces manual effort and errors, leading to more efficient and cost-effective operations.

Quote: Procured granular census poverty data for future targeting: sublocation-level in Kenya, and parish in Uganda

Reasoning: This quote shows that GD is calibrating its approach by procuring detailed poverty data at the sublocation and parish levels. This allows for more precise targeting of interventions, ensuring that resources are used more effectively and cost-efficiently.

Quote: Selected MTN as preferred provider in Uganda after assessing performance of Ezee/MTN (building relationship with Airtel so as to have an additional hedge)

Reasoning: This quote demonstrates that GD is calibrating its approach by selecting a preferred provider based on performance assessments. This ensures cost-effectiveness and reliability in service delivery, while also building relationships with alternative providers as a backup.

Quote: Smarter audits: qualitative and quantitative analysis of our audit data will identify ‘high-risk’ recipient profiles and enable us to use a more probabilistic approach of generating audit flags (completed by end of July)

Reasoning: This quote shows that GD is calibrating its approach by implementing smarter audits. By using both qualitative and quantitative analysis, GD can identify high-risk profiles and use a probabilistic approach to flag audits, leading to more efficient and cost-effective monitoring.

Quote: Cost-benefit analysis: systematic analysis of our end-to-end field model will identify ways to increase efficiency without compromising integrity/user experience (completed by end of august)

Reasoning: This quote indicates that GD is calibrating its approach by conducting a cost-benefit analysis of its field model. This systematic analysis helps identify ways to increase efficiency and reduce costs while maintaining the integrity and user experience of the intervention.

Quote: May add additional question to the census (e.g. quality of housing materials, number of dependents); this would add ~\$1.5-\$2 per household given verification costs.

Reasoning: This quote shows that GD is considering calibrating its approach by adding additional questions to the census. While this would increase costs slightly, it would provide more detailed data for better targeting and more effective interventions.

Quote: Also considering supplemental community targeting. This would add ~\$2-\$3 per household to existing processes, and has greater potential for conflict.

Reasoning: This quote indicates that GD is calibrating its approach by considering supplemental community targeting. While this would increase costs and potential for conflict, it could lead to more accurate targeting and more effective use of resources.

Quote: Final decision requires weighing cost tradeoffs, and would also require additional pilots to refine operations, test costs, and assess how accurately these methods reach the poor.

Reasoning: This quote demonstrates that GD is calibrating its approach by carefully weighing cost tradeoffs and considering additional pilots. This ensures that any changes made are cost-effective and accurately target the intended beneficiaries.

Michael_Cooke_04-17-17_(public).md

Quote: GiveDirectly has done some non-experimental operational research in remote parts of Uganda to examine the feasibility of implementing its program in places where, e.g., there is no cell coverage, there are no local mobile money agents, villages are several hours on foot from the nearest road, etc. GiveDirectly hopes to gather information about these recipients' experiences of receiving cash transfers, withdrawing transfers, and generally test the limits of who it can get transfers to effectively.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly conducts operational research in remote areas to understand the feasibility and effectiveness of their cash transfer programs in challenging environments. This research helps them calibrate their approach by identifying the specific needs and constraints of different locations, enabling them to design more cost-effective interventions tailored to the local context.

Quote: GiveDirectly expects the coffee study to help it better understand a) the overall impact of GiveDirectly's work in a Ugandan, rather than Kenyan, context, and b) whether coffee farmers make different investment choices and get different returns than people who are not coffee farmers.

Reasoning: The coffee study helps GiveDirectly understand the impact of their interventions in different contexts (Ugandan vs. Kenyan) and among different groups (coffee farmers vs. non-coffee farmers). This understanding allows them to calibrate their approach by tailoring interventions to the specific needs and behaviors of different populations, thereby enhancing cost-effectiveness.

GiveDirectly, October 6, 2014 (public).md

Quote: GiveDirectly is planning to use campaigns in Uganda to try out new approaches to operational challenges. This is intended to allow GiveDirectly to learn more about activities it could undertake in the future. The board asked Piali Mukhopadhyay and the Uganda team to propose appropriate experimental activities, e.g. work in areas where payment infrastructure is less developed or work in humanitarian settings where the speed of payments supersedes other goals.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly is calibrating its approach by experimenting with new operational challenges in Uganda. This allows them to learn and adapt their methods based on the specific needs and conditions of the location, which can lead to more cost-effective interventions.

Quote: Uganda naturally presents more operational challenges than Kenya, so it makes sense to experiment with new operational approaches there. In addition, the GE study is the focus in Kenya, so GiveDirectly thinks it is better to locate its operational experimentation elsewhere.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly is adjusting its approach based on the specific challenges and ongoing studies in different locations. By focusing operational experimentation in Uganda, where challenges are greater, they can develop more effective and cost-efficient methods tailored to the local context.

Quote: GiveDirectly has begun discussing a pilot project in Bukedea District as part of this focus on new operational challenges. GiveDirectly is considering managing cash withdrawals for recipients in the pilot rather than relying on an independent mobile money network, pending board approval.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly is considering a pilot project in Bukedea District to test new operational approaches, such as managing cash withdrawals directly. This calibration of their approach based on local conditions can lead to more cost-effective and efficient interventions.

Quote: GiveDirectly is considering expanding its eligibility criteria to include: * Widows living in iron-roofed houses * Houses with iron roofs that are severely corroded * Households with partially

cemented floors

Reasoning: GiveDirectly is adjusting its eligibility criteria based on the specific housing conditions in the target areas. This tailored approach ensures that the intervention is more effective and cost-efficient by targeting those most in need.

Paul Niehaus, GiveDirectly, 9-5-2014 (public).md

Quote: GiveDirectly is currently planning its work in Uganda for next year. Its intention is to always be active in some way, and Uganda is likely to be used for more experimental projects (e.g. GiveDirectly may try serving as payment provider, instead of using a separate agency). The results of such experiments could help GiveDirectly advise public sector partners who may face different situations. GiveDirectly would seek funding from an institutional donor, rather than using retail donor funding, for potentially risky experimental opportunities in Uganda.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly plans to calibrate its approach by using Uganda for experimental projects, such as serving as a payment provider instead of using a separate agency. This allows them to test new methods and gather data that can inform future interventions, making their approach more cost-effective by learning from these experiments and applying successful strategies elsewhere.

Quote: GiveDirectly is making the following changes to its structure and procedures in Uganda:

- * Separating jobs that were previously done by one person (e.g., GiveDirectly has moved the complaint hotline and followup calls to an office in Kamapala, so that the employees in charge of these are in a different part of the country and do not know the field staff). GiveDirectly's larger network in Kenya is already structured this way.
- * Increasing payday audits by the Field Director from about 25% to 100% of paydays (2 or 3 per month).
- * Conducting real-time phone spot-checks, i.e. calling recipients during payday to make sure the event is going smoothly and that recipients are receiving the correct amounts.
- * Using MTN Mobile Money (MTN) instead of EZEE Money for more transfers. The network of EZEE Money agents is very limited, so the only feasible option for recipients was to withdraw funds on paydays. MTN has a larger network of agents, so while it is still more convenient for recipients to withdraw on paydays, recipients can seek other options if they prefer.
- * Building a network of local, English-speaking informants (e.g., journalists, well-respected farmers). Several people in civil service roles have told Dr. Niehaus that it is important to build such a network. Having English-speaking informants may have helped prevent the fraudulent translation that occurred in this case.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly is calibrating its approach by making structural and procedural changes in Uganda to improve efficiency and reduce fraud. These changes include separating roles to reduce conflicts of interest, increasing audits, conducting real-time checks, switching to a more reliable mobile money provider, and building a network of local informants. These adjustments help ensure that resources are used effectively and that the intervention is tailored to the specific challenges of the location, thereby enhancing cost-effectiveness.

GiveDirectly 7-7-14 (public).md

Quote: Based on feedback from DFID and other large governmental and bilateral organizations over time, GiveDirectly would need to gain experience implementing cash transfers programs in different geographies (e.g., urban) and at a larger scale in order to work more closely with those organizations as an implementing and thought partner.

Reasoning: This quote shows that GiveDirectly calibrates its approach by gaining experience in different geographies and at larger scales. This enables them to work more effectively with large governmental and bilateral organizations, which can lead to more cost-effective interventions by leveraging these partnerships and scaling up operations.

Quote: GiveDirectly has allocated most of its current funds towards enrolling recipients in Kenya, in order to continue implementing the rolling model for field operations and to build the sample for the general equilibrium effects study. These goals will take precedence over GiveDirectly's work in Uganda, where it expects to stop committing to new recipients in August 2014, until funds allow for additional recipients (see page 12 of GiveDirectly's written update).

Reasoning: This quote demonstrates how GiveDirectly calibrates its approach by prioritizing certain regions (Kenya over Uganda) based on the availability of funds and the strategic importance of the general equilibrium effects study. This prioritization helps ensure that resources are used efficiently and effectively, contributing to cost-effectiveness.

GiveDirectly, April 8, 2014 (public) supplementary material.md

Quote: Village selection & Manual estimation of that-iron proportion using satellite imagery & Machine learning algorithm that estimates that-iron proportion at village level using satellite imagery & Parish-level census data with poverty measures, and mobile money coverage

Reasoning: The charity uses different methods for village selection and estimation of that-iron proportion depending on the location. In Kenya, they use manual estimation and machine learning algorithms with satellite imagery, while in Uganda, they use parish-level census data with poverty measures and mobile money coverage. This demonstrates how the charity calibrates its approach based on the specifics of each location to ensure cost-effectiveness.

Quote: Conducted village meetings to determine community preferences on eligibility criteria - housing materials were preferred & In a separate meeting, community split into groups and categorized households according to housing materials & Visited, verified, and registered all households categorized as eligible by saturation criteria from the groups & Thatch is a popular criteria with communities themselves & Breaking community into groups to cross-check one another is a good way to mitigate elite capture & Some people were still excluded, having been forgotten by their peers & Verifying community's recommendations - especially in cases of disagreement between groups - is essential

Reasoning: The charity conducts village meetings to determine community preferences on eligibility criteria and uses housing materials as a popular criteria. They also split the community into groups to cross-check one another, which helps mitigate elite capture. This shows how the charity adjusts its intervention based on community feedback and local conditions to ensure cost-effectiveness and fairness.

Paul_Niehaus_and_Carolina_Toht_05-28-15_(public).md

Quote: GiveDirectly is considering shifting Uganda onto more of a rolling model so that both Kenya and Uganda may operate at capacity, given enough funding. However, this approach has not yet been finalized or approved by the board.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly is considering adjusting its operational model in Uganda to match the rolling enrollment model used in Kenya. This adjustment would allow both countries to operate

at full capacity, demonstrating how calibrating the approach based on location-specific needs can enhance cost-effectiveness.

Quote: GiveDirectly has found work like this valuable and has begun to consider having a ‘floating’ field director who is not assigned to any particular country, but carries out more special or conceptual work.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly is exploring the idea of a ‘floating’ field director to handle special projects, which allows for more flexible and efficient use of resources. This approach can be tailored to the specific needs of different locations, enhancing cost-effectiveness.

Quote: GiveDirectly is tracking costs related to the study and trying to determine whether the effort to change its transfer schedule based on recipient preferences would be worth the benefit to recipients. This change would entail calling recipients to elicit their timing preferences, which would be a new step in GiveDirectly’s process, so the cost of the calls would need to be compared to recipients’ outcomes.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly is evaluating the cost-effectiveness of adjusting its transfer schedules based on recipient preferences. By considering the specific needs and preferences of recipients in different locations, GiveDirectly can optimize its intervention to be more cost-effective.

Paul_Niehaus_and_Carolina_Toht_9-7-15_(public).md

Quote: To decide whether to participate in a collaborative project, GiveDirectly must weigh benefits against costs. Many partnerships would incur fixed costs of moving to a new location or finding logistical solutions in a new area, as well as other risks and uncertainties. Potential benefits could be changing policy or changing mindset among a group of people. In particular, GiveDirectly considers the counterfactual question of what might happen if it decided not to pursue the project.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly calibrates its approach by carefully evaluating the costs and benefits of each potential partnership. This includes considering the fixed costs of moving to new locations or finding logistical solutions, as well as the potential benefits such as policy changes or shifts in mindset. By weighing these factors, GiveDirectly ensures that its interventions are cost-effective and tailored to the specifics of each location.

Quote: For example, in one potential partnership that GiveDirectly ultimately decided not to pursue, the planned study already included a cash transfer arm as a benchmark, and GiveDirectly felt that it would add little value by acting as the implementing partner. GiveDirectly decided to limit its role to providing advice on how to design the transfers.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly demonstrates cost-effectiveness by choosing not to pursue partnerships where it would add little value. In this case, since the study already included a cash transfer arm, GiveDirectly decided to limit its involvement to providing advice on transfer design, thereby avoiding unnecessary costs and focusing its resources on more impactful interventions.

Quote: Another partnership GiveDirectly explored was working with two large multilateral organizations to set up a comparison between cash transfers and cows in one country. GiveDirectly believed that while the potential for impact on government policy and recipient outcomes was high, the risks of moving into an unfamiliar area and using unfamiliar payment systems were too great. It was also unclear whether a large enough sample could be assembled for the cash transfer arm to constitute a scientifically credible study.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly calibrates its approach by assessing the risks and potential impacts of entering new areas. In this case, despite the high potential impact on policy and recipient outcomes, the risks associated with unfamiliar payment systems and the uncertainty of assembling a credible sample led GiveDirectly to avoid the partnership. This decision reflects a cost-effective approach by avoiding high-risk, potentially inefficient interventions.

Quote: GiveDirectly's board has thus decided to raise the amount of the transfers in Kenya by about 30%. Transfer amounts will be indexed for inflation going forward based on regular reevaluations of the inflation rate, which will likely take place every six months when the budget is refreshed.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly adjusts its intervention based on the economic conditions of the location. By indexing transfer amounts to inflation and regularly reevaluating the inflation rate, GiveDirectly ensures that its cash transfers remain effective and cost-efficient in the face of changing economic circumstances.

Carolina Toth, GiveDirectly, October 1, 2014 (public).md

Quote: The cost of grass roofing varies widely depending on the proximity of villages to sources of suitable grass. Costs are much higher in villages far from grass sources.

Reasoning: This quote highlights how GiveDirectly considers the specific conditions of each location, such as the proximity to grass sources, which affects the cost of roofing. By understanding these local specifics, GiveDirectly can calibrate its approach to ensure cost-effectiveness in its interventions.

Quote: The data on the cost of iron roofs collected in the survey is reliable because the survey was conducted shortly after respondents had purchased roofing materials. The range of costs reported for iron roofs are concentrated within a narrower range than the costs for grass roofing.

Reasoning: This quote demonstrates that GiveDirectly uses reliable data collected shortly after purchases to understand the cost dynamics of different roofing materials. This allows them to make informed decisions and adjust their interventions based on accurate, location-specific data, ensuring cost-effectiveness.

Conversation with Stuart Skeates, GiveDirectly, October 20-21, 2014.md

Quote: Changing protocols such as conducting a cash out day with GiveDirectly filling the role of the mobile money provider, and modifying targeting criteria to a 'Thatch Plus' model that includes some additional types of households.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly is calibrating its approach by changing protocols and modifying targeting criteria to better suit the specific needs of the location. This includes taking on the role of the mobile money provider during cash out days and expanding the eligibility criteria to include more households, which can help in making the intervention more cost-effective by ensuring that the aid reaches the intended recipients more efficiently.

Quote: Appointed community-nominated monitors to assist the Uganda Field Director on the cash out day with translation, observe transactions between recipients and mobile money agents, and report any issues they see. GiveDirectly compensates the monitors with 10,000 UGX (~\$4) for their time during a cash out day.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly is calibrating its approach by involving community-nominated monitors to oversee cash out days. This local involvement helps in reducing fraud and ensuring that the process runs smoothly, which can lead to cost savings by minimizing losses due to fraudulent activities and improving the overall efficiency of the intervention.

Quote: Developed networks of English-speaking informants who are not formally announced within the villages, but are tasked with also reporting any issues they see regarding transfers. To date, 4 of the 9 informants have provided GiveDirectly with helpful information, such as identifying that households in the enrollment process were actually ineligible, and telling GiveDirectly that someone had taken a recipient's phone after the recipient passed away.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly is calibrating its approach by developing networks of informants within the villages to gather intelligence on potential issues. This helps in identifying ineligible households and other problems early, which can prevent wastage of resources and ensure that the aid is distributed more effectively and cost-efficiently.

Quote: Tasked the call center with calling a randomly selected 10% of the village during a cash out day to see if it is going smoothly.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly is calibrating its approach by using the call center to monitor the cash out process. This random sampling helps in quickly identifying and addressing any issues that arise during the cash out day, ensuring that the process is efficient and that resources are not wasted due to operational inefficiencies.

Quote: Changed the contractual agreement GiveDirectly has with mobile money agents to include an indemnity clause, so that in the case of stolen funds, GiveDirectly could remove funds directly from a mobile money agent's account.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly is calibrating its approach by modifying the contractual agreements with mobile money agents to include an indemnity clause. This change helps in reducing financial losses due to fraud, making the intervention more cost-effective by ensuring that funds are protected and can be recovered if stolen.

Paul_Niehaus_Ian_Bassin_Carolina_Toht_02-23-16_(public).md

Quote: GiveDirectly has decided to allocate some retail donor funds for cash transfers in Rwanda along with funding for its partnership project there. This is so that Rwanda can serve as an additional country to invest in if the climate in Uganda becomes less favorable.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly adjusts its approach based on the specifics of the location, such as the political climate in Uganda. By allocating funds to Rwanda, they ensure continuity and cost-effectiveness in their operations if Uganda becomes less favorable for NGO activities.

Quote: GiveDirectly has attempted to allay these suspicions by meeting with local government and religious leaders and speaking on local radio shows to explain the program's purpose. In villages where the refusal rate was high, GiveDirectly put some recipients on an accelerated schedule so they could receive their transfers more quickly and serve as an example to others.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly calibrates its approach by engaging with local leaders and using media to address community mistrust. They also adjust the distribution schedule to demonstrate the program's benefits, which helps in maintaining cost-effectiveness by reducing refusal rates and ensuring successful implementation.

Carolina_Toht_02-20-2015_(public) supplementary material.md

Quote: Modifications to Uganda payments protocol to be explored

Eliminate “paydays” 1.0% efficiency gain Higher travel costs Minimum scale of one village (200 recipients) Use bank (vs telco) as payments vendor 1.3% efficiency gain FD time required to build/manage Likely need 1K+ recipients to make partnership Use biometric authentication Lower risks of certain frauds 1.1% efficiency loss for 1.5M campaign Need 0.5K recipients for 99% chance of

Reasoning: The quote shows how the charity is considering different modifications to the payment protocol in Uganda to improve efficiency and reduce costs. By exploring options such as eliminating paydays, using banks instead of telcos, and implementing biometric authentication, the charity is calibrating its approach based on the specific needs and conditions of the location. This demonstrates how adjusting the intervention based on local specifics can lead to cost-effective solutions.

Quote: 2015 operational priorities (see appendix for deprioritized) Move \$15.1M in Kenya at 91% efficiency, with focus on testing maximum throughput Move \$2.3M in Uganda at 86% efficiency, with focus on more secure and efficient payments process Confirmed Complete Segovia deployment in Kenya and deploy in Uganda Deliver a viable, field-tested plan for poverty targeting in any context Receive a clean bill of health from auditor for FY2015

Reasoning: The quote highlights the charity’s operational priorities for 2015, which include focusing on different strategies for Kenya and Uganda. In Kenya, the focus is on testing maximum throughput, while in Uganda, the focus is on a more secure and efficient payments process. This demonstrates how the charity calibrates its approach based on the specific needs and conditions of each location, enabling it to be more cost-effective by tailoring interventions to local contexts.

GiveDirectly Notes October 6, 2012 - public.md

Quote: GiveDirectly plans to use further donations to expand the reach of its current cash transfer program (which involves giving \$1,000 over 2 years.) However, GiveDirectly may be open to other models, such as spreading the transfers out over a longer period of time, giving smaller amounts, or giving cash transfers to all members of a village rather than to only selected households of a larger community.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly’s flexibility in adjusting its cash transfer models based on the specifics of the location and community needs demonstrates how calibrating the approach can enhance cost-effectiveness. By considering different models like spreading transfers over a longer period, giving smaller amounts, or targeting entire villages, GiveDirectly can optimize resource allocation and impact.

Quote: GiveDirectly is currently giving different amounts to different groups of people (ie some people receive \$1,000 and others receive \$300); with further funds, it would raise the level of giving to those currently receiving less.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly’s approach of varying cash transfer amounts based on recipient needs and available funds illustrates how calibrating the intervention can improve cost-effectiveness. By adjusting the amounts given to different groups, GiveDirectly ensures that resources are used efficiently to maximize impact.

Quote: GiveDirectly anticipates that each full-time supervisor-level staff member could process \$5 million in cash transfers per year. It currently has one full-time staff member and is interviewing candidates for another full-time hire. Two full-time employees is GiveDirectly's preferred staff size at present.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly's strategy of scaling its operations based on the capacity of its staff members shows how calibrating the approach can enhance cost-effectiveness. By optimizing staff size and workload, GiveDirectly ensures efficient processing of cash transfers, thereby maximizing the impact of its resources.

Quote: GiveDirectly gave cash transfer recipients the option of spending some of the money that they receive to buy a phone provided by GiveDirectly. Having a SIM card is needed for receiving the cash transfers. About 70% of people from the last enrollment round accepted this option.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly's approach of offering recipients the option to purchase a phone with their cash transfers demonstrates how calibrating the intervention based on recipient needs can improve cost-effectiveness. By providing a necessary tool for receiving transfers, GiveDirectly ensures that the cash transfers are more impactful and efficiently utilized.

Quote: GiveDirectly mentioned that it may be possible to test peoples' preferences for cash versus goods by offering the option to receive either cash or goods in lieu of cash. GiveDirectly is interested in this possibility (but doesn't have plans in the near future to implement it.)

Reasoning: GiveDirectly's consideration of testing recipient preferences for cash versus goods illustrates how calibrating the intervention based on recipient preferences can enhance cost-effectiveness. By understanding and adapting to recipient needs, GiveDirectly can ensure that its resources are used in the most impactful way.

Quote: GiveDirectly and GiveWell discussed the possibility of GiveDirectly giving smaller-sized, frequent transfers (say \$1/day). This isn't something GiveDirectly is pursuing at the current time but is open to trying this model (or something similar) in the future.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly's openness to exploring smaller-sized, frequent transfers demonstrates how calibrating the intervention based on recipient needs and potential impact can improve cost-effectiveness. By considering different models, GiveDirectly can optimize the use of its resources to maximize the transformative effect on recipients.

Quote: Another possible cash transfer program is that of giving every individual in a village a cash transfer of the same amount. GiveDirectly has some interest in eventually running a randomized controlled trial of this concept at the village level.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly's interest in testing a whole-village cash transfer model illustrates how calibrating the intervention based on community-level needs can enhance cost-effectiveness. By exploring different models, GiveDirectly can ensure that its resources are used in the most impactful way to benefit entire communities.

GiveDirectly, April 8, 2014 (public).md

Quote: In the Uganda scale-up, GiveDirectly selected villages based on census data at the parish level (a parish has a few villages). The data allowed GiveDirectly to identify very poor districts in Eastern Uganda, its target region. This data is not easily publicly available; GiveDirectly gained

access to it with the help of a group of data scientists at Stanford who are providing pro bono support to GiveDirectly to improve its targeting methodologies.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly calibrates its approach by using specific data to identify very poor districts in Eastern Uganda. This targeted approach ensures that resources are allocated efficiently to the most needy areas, thereby enhancing cost-effectiveness.

Quote: In the Kenya 1.2M campaign, villages were selected based on the proportion of match to iron roofs, which was manually estimated using satellite imagery. In the Kenya scale-up, GiveDirectly used a machine learning algorithm that estimates the proportion of match to iron roofs in a village using satellite imagery. The algorithm was developed for GiveDirectly by a group called DataKind, which provided its support pro bono.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly uses different selection mechanisms for different campaigns, such as manual estimation and machine learning algorithms, to identify the most needy villages. This tailored approach ensures that resources are directed to the most deserving areas, improving cost-effectiveness.

Quote: GiveDirectly conducted village meetings in two villages before recipients were enrolled, to determine community preferences on eligibility criteria. In both of these pilots, village members chose housing materials as the best indicator of poverty. In a follow up meeting, GiveDirectly asked village members to work in groups to categorize each household in their village as having a matched roof, iron roof, or made from fully permanent materials.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly involves the community in the selection process by conducting village meetings to determine eligibility criteria. This participatory approach ensures that the intervention is aligned with local needs and preferences, enhancing the cost-effectiveness of the program.

Conversation with Piali Mukhopadhyay, GiveDirectly, October 20-21, 2014.md

Quote: In the villages in GiveDirectly's two Uganda campaigns to date, about 80% of the households are eligible based on its standard criteria (thatch roof, mud walls, mud floor). In Kenya, about 35-45% of the households meet these criteria. GiveDirectly said that it analyzed data on building materials and consumption in Uganda and found a similar correlation to that in Kenya, so it believes that using building materials is still an effective targeting method for reaching the poorest of the poor in Uganda.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly calibrates its approach by analyzing data on building materials and consumption in different locations. This allows them to adjust their targeting criteria based on the specifics of each location, ensuring they reach the poorest households effectively. This method helps in being cost-effective by focusing resources on those who need it most.

Quote: GiveDirectly is considering minor modifications to its targeting criteria, but has decided not to focus on that until Segovia technology is fully deployed and the organization has more bandwidth. Such changes would be intended to include among eligible households those that are considered especially vulnerable by their communities despite having iron roofs, such as widows or those with very poor quality iron roofs.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly is considering modifying its targeting criteria to include households that are considered especially vulnerable by their communities, even if they do not meet the standard criteria. This shows their willingness to adapt their approach based on community-specific needs,

which can enhance the cost-effectiveness of their interventions by ensuring that the most vulnerable are not excluded.

Quote: When it experimented with making transfers to all households in a village ('saturation model'), GiveDirectly did not see a major change in its costs or in the number of people 'gaming' the system by pretending to be eligible. In a saturation model, people can game by pretending to live within a village GiveDirectly is working in, or by members of the same household pretending to live in separate buildings.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly experimented with a saturation model to test the impact on costs and system gaming. This experimentation helps them understand the most cost-effective way to distribute funds without significantly increasing costs or fraud. By calibrating their approach based on these findings, they can optimize resource allocation and maintain cost-effectiveness.

Quote: GiveDirectly is not interested in fully funding programs for government officials, but it is considering arrangements whereby public money would be matched by philanthropic capital. In Kakamega county, the Governor is administering a conditional cash transfer program fully paid for from county devolution funds. GiveDirectly could advocate for other Governors to run cash transfer programs and provide end-to-end implementation.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly is exploring partnerships with government officials to leverage public funds and match them with philanthropic capital. This approach allows them to scale their impact without bearing the full cost, making their interventions more cost-effective. By calibrating their approach to include government partnerships, they can maximize the reach and efficiency of their programs.

Matt_Johnson_Paul_Niehaus_06-28-17_(public).md

Quote: GiveDirectly has a large degree of flexibility to respond to fluctuations in funding, since its model is very scalable and its costs are variable. However, there are still fixed costs, and these will drive efficiency numbers lower as funding decreases. GiveDirectly expects fixed cost investments to decrease its efficiency from 90% last year to between 80% and 90% this year.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly's ability to calibrate its approach based on funding fluctuations demonstrates cost-effectiveness. The charity's scalable model and variable costs allow it to adjust operations efficiently, although fixed costs can impact efficiency. This flexibility ensures that resources are used optimally, even when funding levels change.

Matt_Johnson_02-27-17_(public).md

Quote: Making iterative improvements to simplify and increase the efficiency of its rolling retail campaigns (i.e. its standard cash transfer program) as well as its other programs.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly is making iterative improvements to its programs to increase efficiency. This shows that they are calibrating their approach to ensure cost-effectiveness by continuously refining their processes.

Quote: GiveDirectly has two main fundraising goals: 1. Maximizing the revenue that it can distribute to the poor in the short term. The most efficient way to do this is by building relationships with foundations, institutions, and high-net-worth individual donors. GiveDirectly's current priority is to hire more staff who can focus on building partnerships with large donors to achieve this

goal. 2. Building a base of small donors so that in the long term, revenue is more predictable and less reliant on a small number of large donations.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly is calibrating its fundraising approach by focusing on both short-term and long-term goals. By building relationships with large donors and creating a base of small donors, they ensure a more predictable and efficient revenue stream, which contributes to cost-effectiveness.

Conversation with GiveDirectly field staff, October 20-21, 2014 (public).md

Quote: GiveDirectly did not used to do a census of the whole village before registering eligible households. The census was added so that GiveDirectly could have a full picture of the village, not miss any households, and would be better able to track households that were shifting around. Also, without a census documenting information about each household, it is more likely that word would spread about households being registered and other households would try to pose as eligible when they were first visited.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly adjusted its approach by adding a census stage to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the village and to prevent ineligible households from posing as eligible. This change helps in accurately targeting the right households, thereby making the intervention more cost-effective by reducing errors and ensuring resources are allocated correctly.

Quote: In Kenya, GiveDirectly experimented with a community-based targeting process, whereby residents gave input on households that they felt were deserving of transfers but had been excluded by GiveDirectly's criteria. GiveDirectly felt that to do this process well required significant resources (staff time) and that the benefits were not worth the costs. In addition, some of the villages involved in this experiment gave feedback that they would prefer for GiveDirectly to make the decisions about targeting.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly experimented with a community-based targeting process but found it resource-intensive and not cost-effective. This led to a decision to revert to their original targeting criteria, demonstrating how calibrating the approach based on specific location needs and feedback can enhance cost-effectiveness by avoiding unnecessary resource expenditure.

Quote: The logistics are significantly harder in Uganda than in Kenya. For example, when GiveDirectly enters a new village in Uganda, over 90% of recipients need SIM cards because they did not previously have cell phones, and about 70-80% of recipients need national IDs. GiveDirectly coordinates registration drives for people to get national IDs - they buy national ID booklets, print a photo of each recipient to put in the booklets, and have the Local Councilperson stamp the booklets to approve them.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly adapts its approach to the specific logistical challenges in Uganda, such as the high need for SIM cards and national IDs. By coordinating registration drives and facilitating the process, GiveDirectly ensures that the intervention is tailored to the local context, making it more efficient and cost-effective.

GiveDirectly 8-27-13 (public).md

Quote: We are considering experimenting with a few aspects of our transfer model: * *Frequency of payments*. The preliminary results from the first randomized controlled trial (RCT) of a GiveDirectly campaign have suggested very slight differences between lump-sum and stream payments. Some recipients of GiveDirectly cash transfers report that they would prefer lump sum payments,

while others report that they'd prefer stream payments. There may be a benefit in giving recipients the ability to choose the frequency of their payments. * *Messaging to recipients.* One of the difficulties of running a cash transfer program is ensuring that all recipients are given a consistent and accurate message about the program. Within the last few weeks, GiveDirectly has decided to experiment with compensation for field staff based on how effectively they communicate information to recipients during enrollment. The effectiveness of field staff communications will be evaluated based on the fraction of recipients who can correctly explain information about the transfers on a follow-up phone call, including what the transfers can be used for and if there are conditions attached. Once GiveDirectly is confident that its field staff are delivering a consistent message, it may be interested in varying that message to emphasize different elements, such as encouraging long-term investments versus not giving any advice on how funds should be spent. * *Providing information on how other people have used funds.* The most popular use of funds in past transfers has been purchasing metal roofs. It's possible this is because it is the most beneficial use of funds, but it's also possible that recipients purchase roofs because that is the social norm. It would be interesting to see if providing information about how other people have used funds creatively (e.g., to purchase a motorcycle) influences the way recipients spend funds.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly is experimenting with different aspects of its transfer model to optimize the effectiveness and efficiency of its cash transfer programs. By adjusting the frequency of payments, improving messaging to recipients, and providing information on how others have used funds, GiveDirectly can tailor its approach to better meet the needs and preferences of recipients in different locations. This calibration helps ensure that the intervention is cost-effective by maximizing the impact of each dollar spent.

GiveDirectly 8-27-13 (public) supplementary material.md

Quote: Randomized selection of 18 villages to apply saturation approach (with same size group for thatch and control)

Reasoning: The quote describes a specific approach to calibrating the intervention by selecting villages randomly for saturation. This method ensures that the intervention is tailored to the specifics of the location, which can lead to more cost-effective outcomes by focusing resources where they are most needed.

Quote: Randomly select 50% of field staff to participate in scheme that provides 10% bonus on total pay for the period based on following performance metrics: * **Census:** Percent of households in village missed in census (<5%) * **Enrollment:** Recipient scores on blind comprehension audit (>90%) and on-time registration rate (#1 and #2 highest rates are rewarded) * **Back check:** Scores on blind comprehension audit among recipients who still have not registered

Reasoning: The quote outlines a staff incentive scheme that is designed to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the intervention. By tying bonuses to performance metrics, the charity ensures that staff are motivated to perform well, which can lead to more cost-effective operations by reducing errors and improving outcomes.

GiveDirectly 7-24-14 (public).md

Quote: GiveDirectly has implemented a 'rolling model' in Kenya that enables all three steps of enrollment to occur simultaneously in different villages. Field staff now work continuously, year-round as long as funds are available to distribute, rather than in discreet campaigns as before.

GiveDirectly told us that it is pleased by the pace at which new recipients have been enrolled under the rolling model, and that field staff appreciate that this model has enabled them to have much longer-term employment.

Reasoning: The rolling model in Kenya allows GiveDirectly to operate more efficiently by enabling continuous enrollment and distribution, which reduces the need for multiple campaigns and provides longer-term employment for field staff. This approach helps in managing resources more effectively and ensures a steady flow of aid, making the intervention more cost-effective.

Quote: Segovia is developing an end-to-end digital data management system for GiveDirectly's operations. Currently, field data is collected digitally using smartphones and payments are sent digitally using mobile money systems, but the steps in between require manual exporting and processing of data. GiveDirectly said that the Segovia product will fully automate the data management from enrollment to payment.

Reasoning: The Segovia technology aims to automate data management processes, which will significantly reduce manual work and improve efficiency. This automation will allow staff to focus more on strategic improvements and innovations, thereby enhancing the overall cost-effectiveness of the intervention.

Quote: GiveDirectly had previously stated that the rolling model in Kenya increases the risk that field staff on different teams could work together to falsify enrollment information, because they will be stationed in the same places at the same time and can therefore communicate more easily. GiveDirectly told us that it is not aware of any such issues so far, and it feels confident in its field staff managers, who have shown a high degree of commitment and have been working with GiveDirectly for a long time, and in its methods of process and data control.

Reasoning: Effective staff management and robust data control methods ensure the integrity of the enrollment process. By maintaining high standards and monitoring staff activity, GiveDirectly can prevent fraud and ensure that resources are used efficiently, contributing to the cost-effectiveness of the intervention.

Quote: GiveDirectly also said that it can be a useful skill for development organizations to be able to scale up and down quickly, and its experience in Uganda would help build this skill. GiveDirectly plans to maintain its core staff in Uganda to complete follow up with recipients in the second campaign. These core staff would be available for a future campaign if GiveDirectly decides to scale up in Uganda again.

Reasoning: By pausing enrollment in Uganda and maintaining core staff, GiveDirectly can efficiently manage resources and be prepared for future campaigns. This strategic scaling up and down helps in optimizing resource allocation and ensures that the intervention remains cost-effective.

GiveDirectly 7-18-13 (public).md

Quote: GiveDirectly selected a region of the country to set up initial operations in based on poverty data. GiveDirectly has sent us the data that it relied on to target this region, which we plan to review and incorporate into a future update. The governance structure of the second country is more decentralized than in Kenya, which required GiveDirectly to spend slightly more time working with local authorities before starting transfers.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly calibrates its approach by selecting regions based on poverty data and adapting to the governance structure of the country. This ensures that the intervention is tailored

to the specific needs and conditions of the location, making the charity's efforts more cost-effective.

Quote: GiveDirectly is planning to work with two different mobile money services in the second country. Initially, it was only planning to work with one mobile money service, but decided to run a dual-provider pilot after identifying a promising new company providing electronic transfers linked to, but not dependent on, mobile phones. It determined this could be valuable given concerns about poor cell phone network coverage in the targeted geography and limitations with the other mobile money service's customer service).

Reasoning: GiveDirectly adjusts its approach by working with two different mobile money services to address specific challenges in the targeted geography, such as poor cell phone network coverage and customer service limitations. This calibration ensures that the intervention is more effective and cost-efficient.

Quote: In response, GiveDirectly has been more proactive in coordinating with the mobile money service for the transfers that have begun, for example, by giving the mobile money service advanced notice before sending the funds so that agents could be prepared. In some cases, agents traveled to the villages in which recipients live to reduce recipient travel time.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly calibrates its approach by proactively coordinating with mobile money services to ensure smooth transfers. This includes giving advanced notice and having agents travel to villages, which reduces recipient travel time and enhances the efficiency of the intervention.

Ian_Bassin_Piali_Mukhopadhyay_08-23-16__(public).md

Quote: In early 2016, GiveDirectly allocated a fairly large sum of money to test a new implementation model in Kenya. A separate field director and team were hired approximately six months ago, and the experiment is taking place in an area close to GiveDirectly's other field operations. The primary aim is to double the program's size in 2017 without significantly increasing the management structure. The new model seeks to increase throughput per manager by eliminating the token payment and back check steps. GiveDirectly will assess gains in throughput as well as costs, which might occur in the areas of comprehension and fraud. Results and data should be available after a few months of disbursements. By the end of 2016, GiveDirectly hopes to have a blueprint for implementing a similar model in other countries.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly is testing a new implementation model in Kenya to increase efficiency and reduce costs. By eliminating certain steps like the token payment and back check, they aim to double the program's size without significantly increasing the management structure. This approach allows them to assess the impact on throughput and costs, providing a blueprint for future implementations in other countries, thus enabling cost-effectiveness by adapting the intervention based on the specifics of the location.

Quote: GiveDirectly has often found the 'payday' payment model too restrictive. In its Uganda program, it has successfully tested a 'cash-out' model. Recipients and agents were able to overcome liquidity constraints, and in Uganda, GiveDirectly distributes \$700,000 to \$1 million per month without any increases in fraud.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly has adapted its payment model in Uganda to a 'cash-out' model, which has proven to be more effective and less restrictive. This change has allowed them to distribute large sums of money monthly without increasing fraud, demonstrating how calibrating the approach based on the specifics of the location can lead to cost-effective interventions.

Quote: In two of its experimental campaigns (the experiment to increase throughput in Kenya and its work in a coffee farming community), GiveDirectly is experimenting with a ‘wave’ approach. In this scenario, the same officers perform multiple steps; however, for steps intended to provide a check on previous steps, officers do not perform multiple steps in the same village. This ensures that the same field officer does not visit a household twice during the enrollment process.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly is experimenting with a ‘wave’ approach in certain campaigns to increase efficiency. By having the same officers perform multiple steps while ensuring checks are maintained, they can streamline the enrollment process. This approach reduces redundancy and increases throughput, making the intervention more cost-effective by adapting to the specific needs and constraints of the location.

Carolina_Toht_and_Paul_Niehaus_02-05-15_(public).md

Quote: Offering matching funds for cash transfer experiments could make it easier for organizations and governments to compare programs with cash transfers. Collaborating with governments on cash transfers can be challenging because governments often give preference to organizations that have been operating in the area for a long time. Offering matching funds can make it more appealing for governments to collaborate with new partners. GiveDirectly’s operational expertise is particularly valuable in its work with governments.

Reasoning: This quote shows how GiveDirectly calibrates its approach by offering matching funds to make it easier for governments and organizations to compare programs with cash transfers. This strategy helps in overcoming the challenge of governments preferring long-standing organizations, thereby enabling GiveDirectly to be cost-effective by leveraging its operational expertise.

Quote: GiveDirectly could use more funds to start cash transfer programs that it would intend to pass to governments once the value of the programs had been demonstrated. For example, GiveDirectly could offer several million dollars and early management assistance to encourage a government to try cash transfers. Such a program would be donor-funded while new systems were being put in place and while operational problems were being solved; then, if the program were successful, GiveDirectly could pass it to the government.

Reasoning: This quote illustrates how GiveDirectly calibrates its approach by starting cash transfer programs with the intention of passing them to governments once their value is demonstrated. This method ensures cost-effectiveness by using donor funds to establish and solve operational issues before transitioning the program to the government, thereby reducing long-term costs and ensuring sustainability.

Quote: With more funding, GiveDirectly could conduct additional experiments aimed at influencing policy and building relationships with governments and aid organizations. Attendees at a recent social protection conference in Kenya were interested in the link between variation in transfer size and the effectiveness of cash transfers. GiveDirectly could use additional funding to study this issue.

Reasoning: This quote demonstrates how GiveDirectly calibrates its approach by conducting experiments to influence policy and build relationships with governments and aid organizations. By studying the link between transfer size and effectiveness, GiveDirectly can optimize its interventions, making them more cost-effective and impactful.

Carolina_Toht_02-20-2015_(public).md

Quote: A single campaign (not a rolling campaign) is planned in Uganda, as a ‘payments pilot’. This will be designed to learn about the different payment systems that could be used for transfers; the focus on learning about payments will slow the program down. After it is completed, GiveDirectly hopes to begin rolling enrollments in Uganda.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly is calibrating its approach by conducting a payments pilot in Uganda to learn about different payment systems. This pilot is designed to gather insights that will inform future rolling enrollments, ensuring that the intervention is tailored to the specific needs and conditions of the location, thereby enhancing cost-effectiveness.

Paul_Niehaus_Carolina_Toht_Ian_Bassin_08-12-16_(public).md

Quote: GiveDirectly does not see expansion to other countries as a priority. There remain large populations of the extreme poor in the countries in which GiveDirectly already operates. GiveDirectly therefore believes it is more cost efficient to serve more of the poor there than to incur the added expenses of setting up additional country operations.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly calibrates its approach by focusing on existing countries with large populations of extreme poor rather than expanding to new countries. This strategy allows them to be more cost-effective by avoiding the added expenses of setting up new operations in additional countries.

Quote: However, there are three situations in which GiveDirectly does consider geographical expansion: 1. When policy research it deems important can only be conducted in a location in which GiveDirectly does not currently operate. 2. When one of the institutional funders who drive the direction of global development spending is interested in working with GiveDirectly in a way that could lead to broader adoption of the model by them but they require the work to be in another country. 3. When a large funder offers sufficient funding for the poor that working in that funder’s country of choice would benefit the poor in a way that outweighs the costs of expansion.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly calibrates its approach by considering geographical expansion only under specific conditions that ensure cost-effectiveness. These conditions include conducting important policy research, working with institutional funders to broaden the adoption of their model, and accepting large funding offers that benefit the poor more than the costs of expansion.

Summary_2018.md

Quote: GiveDirectly selects beneficiaries using one of two methods. In some locations, it selects villages with high poverty levels and distributes cash transfers to all households in those villages (the ‘village saturation’ model). In other locations, it selects villages with high poverty levels and distributes cash transfers to the households in those villages that it identifies as meeting a threshold for being among the poorest (the ‘household targeting’ model).

Reasoning: GiveDirectly calibrates its approach based on the specifics of the location by using different targeting models. In areas where poverty is widespread, they use the village saturation model to distribute cash to all households. In areas where poverty is more concentrated, they use the household targeting model to ensure that only the poorest households receive cash. This flexibility allows GiveDirectly to be cost-effective by tailoring its intervention to the local context.

Quote: GiveDirectly uses the household targeting model in Rwanda, largely because the Rwandan government requires that the program use eligibility criteria to identify recipients rather than giving cash transfers to all households in a village.

Reasoning: In Rwanda, GiveDirectly adapts its approach to comply with local government regulations, which require the use of eligibility criteria to identify recipients. This demonstrates how GiveDirectly calibrates its intervention to meet the specific legal and regulatory requirements of the location, ensuring cost-effectiveness by aligning with local governance structures.

Quote: GiveDirectly’s typical process is as follows: 1. Local area selection: Select local region and then villages based largely on poverty rates. 2. Census: Conduct a census of all households in each village. 3. Registration: Send a separate team to register eligible households. This includes a) helping recipients set up a payment system to receive transfers (if they don’t already have such a system in place), and b) collecting an additional round of data from the household that can be checked against the initial data from the census. 4. Audit: Some households are flagged for audit based on discrepancies collected in the previous steps and are revisited to collect additional data. 5. Transfers sent: GiveDirectly sends transfers to recipients via mobile money providers (more). 6. Follow-up calls: GiveDirectly field staff make multiple phone calls to all recipients as transfers are being sent to ask various questions about recipients’ experiences. They also make in-person visits to vulnerable recipients.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly’s process is highly calibrated to the specifics of each location. They begin by selecting regions and villages based on poverty rates, ensuring that the intervention targets the most needy areas. The detailed census and registration process, along with audits and follow-up calls, ensure that the cash transfers are accurately targeted and effectively delivered. This meticulous approach allows GiveDirectly to be cost-effective by minimizing errors and ensuring that funds reach the intended recipients.

Quote: GiveDirectly has told us that policymakers, academics, and others have shown an increased interest in universal basic income experiments and GiveDirectly believes the project could have significant policy impact. We and GiveDirectly believe that the direct impact of the program (excluding any potential policy impact) is likely to be less cost-effective than GiveDirectly’s standard campaign (more on our page with additional information about GiveDirectly).

Reasoning: GiveDirectly calibrates its approach by experimenting with different models, such as the universal basic income (UBI) program, to understand their impact and cost-effectiveness. While the UBI program may be less cost-effective than their standard cash transfer model, it provides valuable insights that could influence broader policy decisions. This willingness to experiment and adapt based on findings demonstrates how GiveDirectly tailors its interventions to maximize both immediate and long-term impact.

Quote: GiveDirectly has partnered with a number of institutional partners and foundations to implement cash transfers to populations of specific interest to those funders. GiveDirectly is matching funding with USAID to deliver cash transfers and run studies on its impact in Rwanda, Liberia, Malawi, and DRC. In Rwanda, GiveDirectly conducted a study to compare the impact of a nutrition program and two sizes of cash transfers, results of which were published in September 2018.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly calibrates its approach by partnering with institutional funders like USAID to target specific populations and conduct studies that compare the impact of different interventions. This allows GiveDirectly to tailor its programs to the needs and priorities of its partners while also generating valuable data on the effectiveness of various approaches. Such

partnerships enhance cost-effectiveness by leveraging additional resources and expertise to achieve greater impact.

Supplementary Information_2018.md

Quote: GiveDirectly told us that it adjusts its transfer sizes for purchasing power; as of 2018, in Kenya, GiveDirectly transferred approximately \$1,085 to each enrolled household, while in Uganda, it transferred approximately \$963 and in Rwanda \$970.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly adjusts the size of its cash transfers based on the purchasing power in different countries. This calibration ensures that the transfers are meaningful and effective in each specific location, making the intervention more cost-effective by tailoring the amount to the local economic context.

Quote: GiveDirectly considers poverty data, population density, logistical and security factors, and the presence of other poverty-focused NGOs when it selects a district or county to work in.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly's approach to selecting regions for intervention is based on a variety of factors, including poverty data and logistical considerations. This tailored approach ensures that resources are allocated to areas where they will have the most impact, enhancing cost-effectiveness by focusing on the most needy and feasible locations.

Quote: GiveDirectly has told us that if it is benchmarking cash against a program that distributes food stamps, GiveDirectly might disburse smaller and more frequent payments (which recipients are more likely to spend on food) to make the programs more comparable.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly adjusts its payment structure to match the context of the intervention, such as disbursing smaller, more frequent payments when benchmarking against food stamp programs. This flexibility in approach ensures that the intervention is relevant and effective in the specific context, thereby improving cost-effectiveness.

Cash Transfers __ GiveWell.md

Quote: GiveDirectly's net distribution negotiations have been put on hold. AMF had proposed carrying out a three-phase distribution of 3.2 million nets to pilot the use of digital electronic devices, such as smart phones and tablets, for data collection. After nets have been obtained, it takes several months to put in place all the logistics and in-country planning that go into carrying out a multimillion-net campaign, including running a small-scale pilot.

Reasoning: This quote illustrates how GiveDirectly calibrates its approach by piloting new methods, such as using digital devices for data collection, before scaling up. This ensures that the intervention is tailored to the specific needs and conditions of the location, making it more cost-effective by identifying potential issues early and adjusting the approach accordingly.

Quote: AMF aims to ensure that countries it works with have a good operational plan that is properly resourced and scheduled to enable effective delivery. AMF works with the National Malaria Control Programme (NMCP) in each country and with specific distribution partners for each distribution who may take full operational responsibility for a distribution or may have specific monitoring and evaluation roles.

Reasoning: This quote highlights how GiveDirectly ensures that its interventions are cost-effective by working closely with local partners and ensuring that operational plans are tailored to the

specific context of each country. This approach allows for more efficient resource allocation and better outcomes.

Quote: There does seem to be a strong correlation between partners who ... have an ongoing connection with communities, and nets being in better condition. We rarely if ever now work with groups that do not have a permanent or semi-permanent connection with communities. Once AMF has identified funding gaps, it begins discussions with in-country partners, typically starting with the country's National Malaria Control Program.

Reasoning: This quote demonstrates how GiveDirectly calibrates its approach by selecting partners with strong community connections, which ensures that interventions are more effective and sustainable. This tailored approach helps in maintaining the condition of nets and other resources, making the intervention more cost-effective.

Site visit__2012.md

Quote: Western Kenya is a good place to scale up chlorine dispensers because the people living there have relatively good access to water, high diarrhea rates, and there is high population density. This means that creating water sources is a lower priority in many areas, but there is a significant need to improve water quality.

Reasoning: This quote demonstrates how DSW calibrates its approach by selecting locations based on specific local conditions such as water access, diarrhea rates, and population density. This targeted approach ensures that resources are used efficiently and effectively, addressing the most pressing needs in each area.

Quote: DSW breaks down the direct implementation costs into 2 buckets: 1. Initial implementation (from the decision to install dispensers through the installation, including materials, community education, transportation, staff time, etc.) costs \$200/chlorine dispenser; this will go down over time. 2. Ongoing operations (ensuring that the dispensers continue to function and increasing the rate at which they are used) are projected to cost \$65/dispenser/year at scale. This includes chlorine supply, maintenance, hardware replacement after its projected lifespan, M&E, management costs and all overheads.

Reasoning: This quote highlights how DSW's cost-effective approach is achieved by breaking down costs into initial implementation and ongoing operations. By understanding and managing these costs, DSW can allocate resources more efficiently, ensuring that the intervention remains sustainable and impactful over time.

Quote: DSW's criteria for placing a dispenser near a water source: the water source must have low to moderate turbidity (because chlorine is less effective in treating highly turbid water); the source must have at least 10 households using it; the source must be working for at least 9 months out of the year; and, in situations where the water point is located on privately-owned land, the land-owner must be amenable to the dispenser. About 65-75% of water points in an area meet these criteria.

Reasoning: This quote illustrates how DSW calibrates its approach by setting specific criteria for selecting water points for dispenser installation. By focusing on water sources with low to moderate turbidity, sufficient household usage, and operational stability, DSW ensures that the intervention is both effective and cost-efficient, targeting areas where the impact will be maximized.

Site visit_2014.md

Quote: In Uganda, GiveDirectly has coordinated cash out days to enable recipients to withdraw funds at a location in or very near to their villages. GiveDirectly coordinated cash out days because the agent network around their villages was not robust and lacked sufficient liquidity. Cash out days also reduce costs for recipients who would otherwise pay for transportation to a nearby agent.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly calibrates its approach by organizing cash out days in Uganda to address the lack of robust agent networks and insufficient liquidity. This localized intervention reduces costs for recipients by eliminating the need for transportation to distant agents, demonstrating cost-effectiveness through tailored solutions based on location-specific challenges.

Quote: Mr. Skeates noted that far fewer people were withdrawing cash at this cash out day than he had expected. In total, we estimated that about 40 people withdrew cash at the event, while 380 people across two villages had received transfers. Mr. Skeates asked an English-speaking village member about this, who said that many people traveled to an adjacent district to withdraw cash from an MTN agent there, because the big market day in their area is on Monday, and the cash out day was happening on a Tuesday.

Reasoning: GiveDirectly adjusts its approach based on local market days and recipient behavior. By understanding that many recipients preferred to withdraw cash on market days, GiveDirectly can better plan future cash out days to align with local schedules, ensuring higher participation and cost-effectiveness.