



# New Directions in Graduation Research

December 4, 2020  
10 am – 2.15 pm EST





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# Graduating to Resilience

## Research and Learning Priorities



**2-3 December 2020**  
**Rita Larok**

# Agenda

1. Activity Summary
2. Our learning agenda
3. Learning Questions
4. Possible RCT Ideas for Cohort 2



# Activity Summary

- **Goal:** Extremely poor refugee and Ugandan HHs in Kamwenge district graduate from conditions of food insecurity and fragile livelihoods to self reliance and resilience
- **Donor:** USAID Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance
- **Implementer:** AVSI with Trickle UP and IMPAQ International + External Evaluator – Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) conducting a randomize control trial
- **Period:** Oct 01, 2017 to Sept 30, 2024 (7 Years) in 2 cohorts + 1 year refinement + 6 month refinement
- **Target:** 13,200 HHs (50% host / 50% refugee)
- **Participants:** Women and youth as primary participants with their households
- **Cohort 1 Target:** 6,629 Participants and 37,585 members

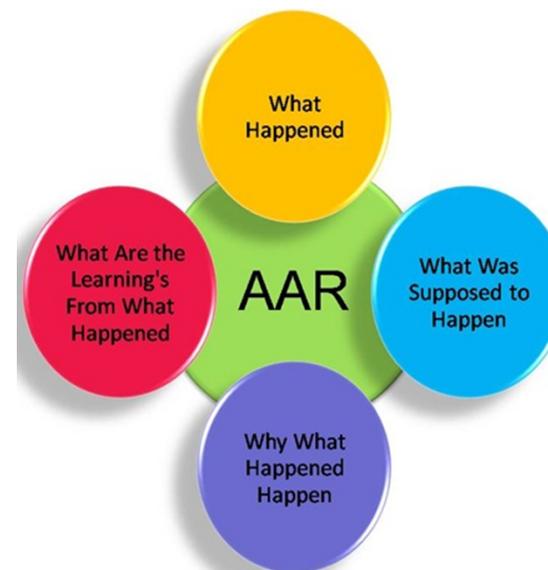
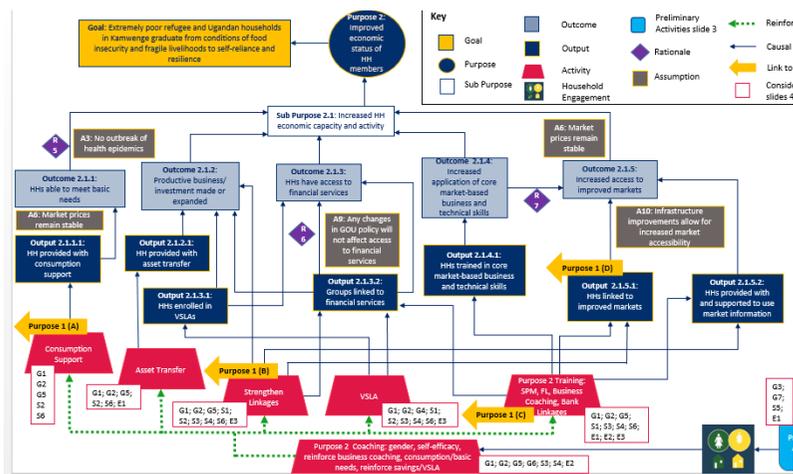
# RCT Research for Cohort 1

PROGRAM COMPONENT	ARM 1 STANDARD GRADUATION	ARM 2 GROUP COACHING	ARM 3 EMPOWERMENT MODEL
Consumption Support	●	●	●
Livelihood Skills Training and Support	●	●	●
Savings and Financial Inclusion	●	●	●
Asset Transfer	●	●	—
Coaching	INDIVIDUAL	GROUP	INDIVIDUAL
Linkage and Referrals	●	●	●

# Our Learning Approach

- Pause-and-reflect
- Before-action reviews
- Context assessments
- After-action reviews
- M&E for learning
- Theory of change
- Technical evidence base
- Assessments
- RCTs

The Innovation Continuum

# Learning Questions



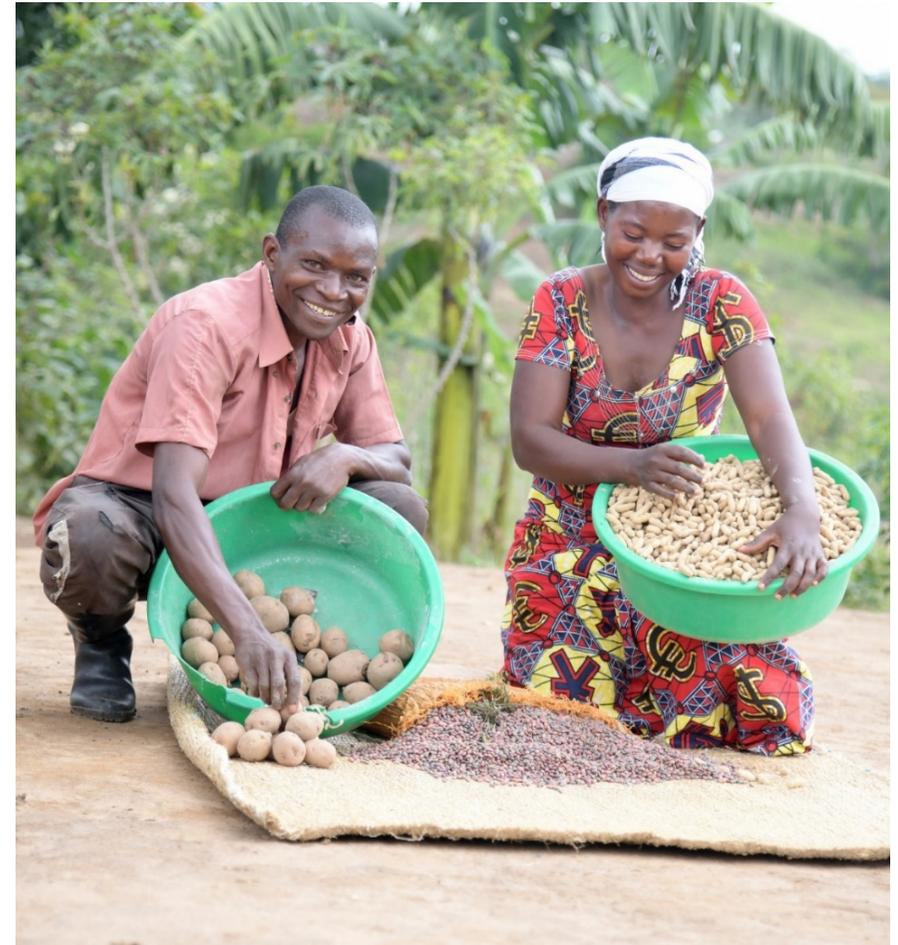
- The learning agenda details approaches for learning-while-implementing as well as learning questions to benefit the broader evidence base and immediate/future implementation.
  - Questions specific to broader evidence base to be answered by **end of implementation**:
  - Questions specific to improve implementation in Cohort 1 and Cohort 2 to be answered by **July 2021**

# Learning Questions

- Questions to improve implementation in Cohort 2 and contribute to broader evidence base to be answered by end of implementation and others by **July 2021**:
- External Use Only by end of implementation
  1. How to scale the Graduation Approach?
  2. What is the effect of implementing as an RCT on factors like social cohesion, design, and motivation?
- Internal and External Use by July 2021
  1. How have gender dynamics changed and what does this change mean for time use and women's empowerment?
  2. What effect does consumption support have on intra-HH dynamics, basic needs, and participation in other Activity components?
  3. What factors lead to sustainable and effective private sector engagement?
  4. What are the various dimensions of livelihood diversification from business plan creation to business operation?
  5. What characteristics of the VSLA have influenced the effectiveness of the savings groups (SGs) and how have other factors (other Activity components, HH characteristics, shocks) affected savings?
  6. What is the relationship between mental health and the graduation approach?
  7. How do we balance a woman-plus approach while effectively engaging the entire HH?
  8. What coach attributes lead to the greatest improvement in household outcomes among refugees and host community members?

# Possible RCT Research Ideas for Cohort 2

- Two treatment arms
  - **Arm 1:** The most cost-effective arm from Cohort one
  - **Arm 2:** New design to be determined
    - Consider testing a cognitive behavior module to better understand the role of mental health and participant outcomes.
    - Test the woman+ HH approach from Cohort 1 with a more intensive gender approach to better understand how gender dynamics have changed and what does this change mean for time use and women's empowerment?





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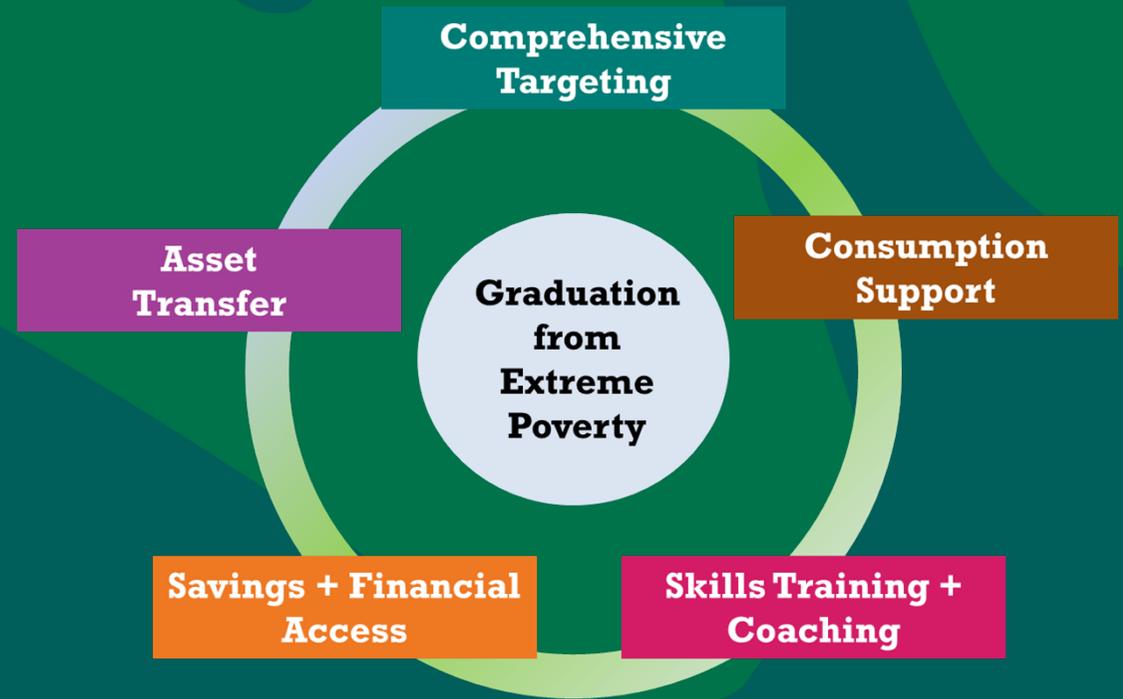
# GRADUATION PROGRAMME MALAWI

4<sup>th</sup> December 2020

Thokozani Kalanje  
Graduation Programme Manager

# INTRODUCTION TO THE GRADUATION PROGRAMME

- A Livelihoods Programme using the Graduation Approach
- The program is designed to promote self-reliance and build resilience and thereby reduce need for external support in the long-term
- The programme has an “enabling environment” which focuses on the broader community



# Areas of Implementation and Coverage

- Duration: 5 years (2017-2021)
- Location: Nsanje and Mangochi
- Target Group: Extreme poor and poor households with labour capacity who are married
- Direct Beneficiaries: Pilot 200, Scale Up to 1800 in cohort 2 and 3, and over 6,000 households in enabling environment



Son to Graduation lead farmer in Mangochi District

# Unique Aspects of the Malawi approach to Graduation:

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- We are trying to be gender transformative within our Graduation model:
  - Addressing economic empowerment but also promoting agency among women, as well as social and cultural change within the families
- The gender specific component of the Graduation programme is known as *Umodzi*, meaning 'united'
- Engages couples to reflect upon and discuss issues such as gender norms, power, decision-making, budgeting, violence, positive parenting and healthy relationships.
- Aims at transforming gender & power relations among targeted couples
- One short coming – we don't address these issues at the community level

## Research Component:

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- Concern has partnered with Trinity College Dublin to better understand the barriers faced by households, particularly women, in escaping poverty.
- The impact evaluation has three treatment arms in the (600 households each), all of whom will get the basic graduation package and a control arm.
- The research aim is to primarily learn:
  - Whether gender of the graduation program recipient matters (female empowerment, spousal cohesion and IPV, and ultimate welfare outcomes)
  - What is the impact of an add-on couple's empowerment training, 'Transforming Gender & Power Relations'.

# Initial Programme findings from our M&E and programme data



- Increased women's participation in HH decision making
- Shared family visions
- Improved attitudes towards Gender Equality
- Decrease in acceptability of violence
- Reduced inequalities on HH roles, conjugal rights, etc
- Building social resilience
- Transforming gender & power relations impacts on HH graduation from extreme poverty by fostering economic corporation between couples

# Initial Findings from a Qualitative Impact Protocol (QuIP)

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- The Research team integrated qualitative research into their impact evaluation and the initial findings show;
  - Increased sharing of chores between couples
  - Increased peace and harmony between couples
  - Growing acceptance by the community of the husband assisting the wife with household chores
  - Evidence of joint decision making and collaboration between couples

# Where can we go from here?

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- While we have learned a lot from integrating Umodzi into the Graduation approach, some gaps we have identified:
  - Community versus/and household interventions for gender empowerment
    - What interventions work at the community level and are needed to promote change at the household level.
    - What works better at the household level?
- Intensity and duration: How long/how often do these interventions need to happen to bring about the needed change.
- Scalability of such gender transformational programs within Graduation

The image features a background of abstract, organic shapes in various shades of green, ranging from a deep forest green to a lighter, vibrant green. The shapes are layered and overlapping, creating a sense of depth and movement. Centered horizontally and vertically is the text "THANK YOU" in a clean, white, sans-serif font. The letters are bold and evenly spaced, standing out clearly against the complex green background.

THANK YOU

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