Photo: Daniela Van Leggelo-Padilla / World Bank

Graduating to Resilience - Uganda

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AVSI People for development

Overview of the Graduating to Resilience Activity

Goal: Graduate extremely poor refugee and Ugandan households in Kamwenge District from conditions of food insecurity and fragile livelihoods to self-reliance and resilience.

Period: 7 years (Oct 1, 2017 - Sept 30, 2024) in two cohorts

Participants: 13,829 women and youth as primary participants

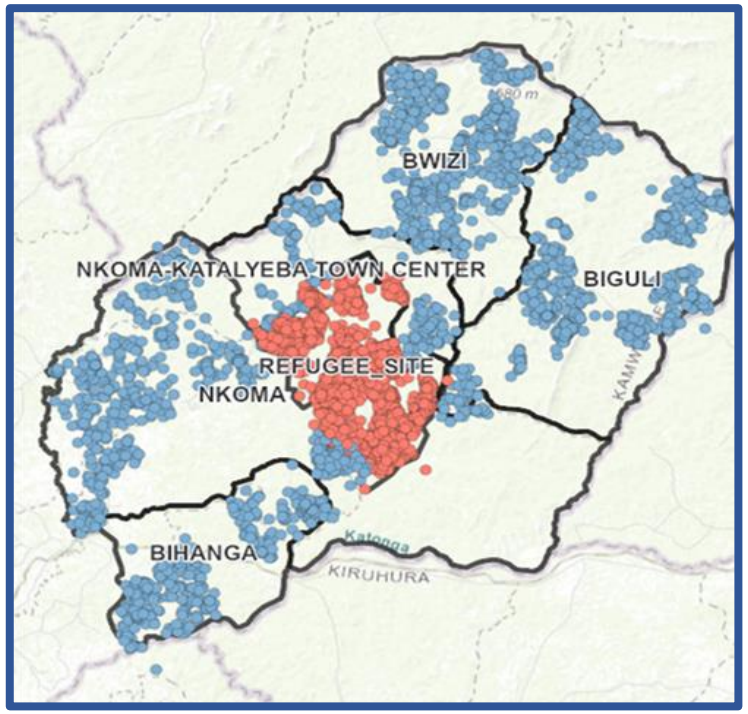
- Cohort 1: 6,629 primary participants (Active 5,199) +40,000
- Cohort 2: 7,051 primary participants +42,000

Budget: $36.7 million

Implementor: AVSI Foundation in consortium with Trickle Up and American Institutes for Research (AIR)

Funder: United States Agency for International Development - Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance

Graduation package: Coaching, Linkages/Referrals, Asset Transfers, Savings, Skills Training, Consumption Support

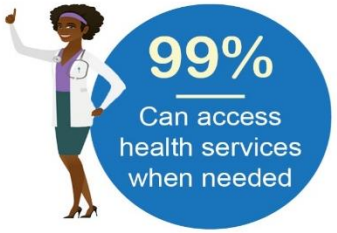


Blue: Host Community Households
Red: Refugee Households

Graduating to Resilience Outcome Level Results

100%
Self-efficacy
99% social capital

99%
Children in school



99%
Can access health services when needed

98%
live in an improved living structure

93%
Savings
of more than two months

98%
Have more than two sources of income

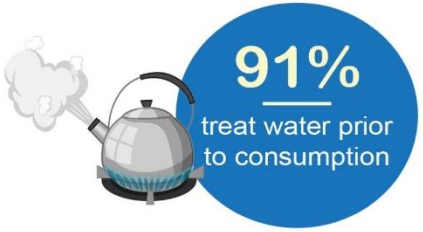
83.7%
Reported earning profits

100+
Groups
Opened bank accounts

86%
Households with acceptable food consumption score

99%
Dietary diversity

92%
with good hand washing practices

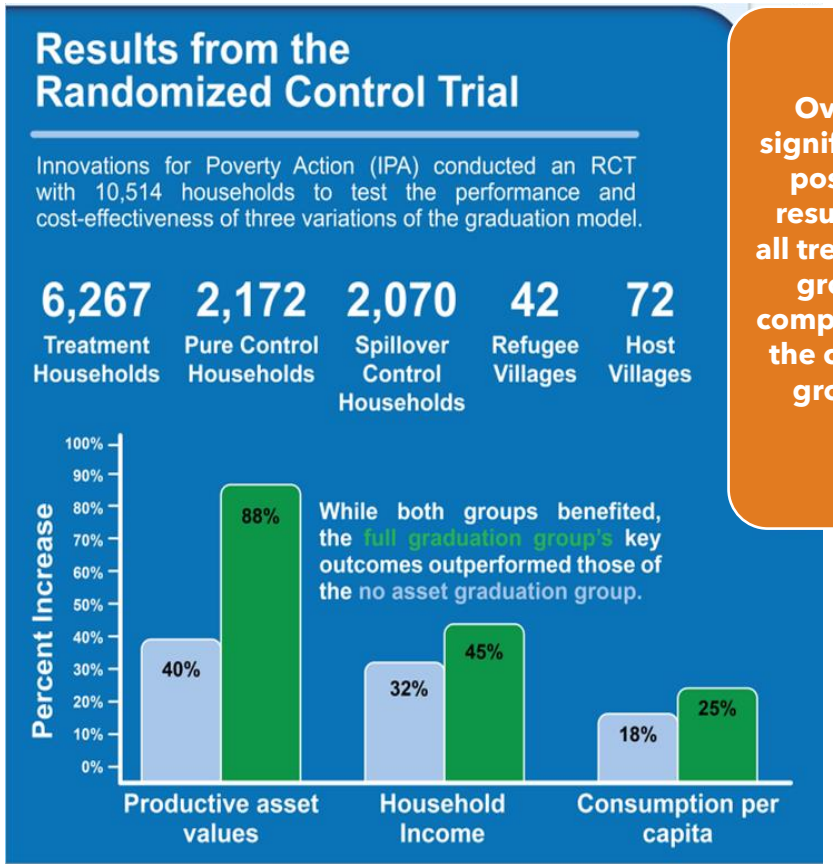


91%
treat water prior to consumption

Summary External Evaluation – IPA Main Findings

- **Large positive impact of the program on several key outcomes** - Productive assets, income, consumption, food security, subjective well-being, both in refugee and host communities increased. Additional positive effects on savings, nutrition, schooling, psychometrics.
- **On economic activity,** effects were larger in absolute terms for hosts (but refugees start from a lower base).
- **Group coaching** had same impact as individual coaching. All program versions have positive impact.
- **Asset transfers'** recipients performed better than without.
- **Spillovers:** Some evidence of positive (consumption, food security, business activity); larger for hosts, at most moderate for refugees.
- **Cost-efficiency:** The group coaching arm had similar impacts to individual coaching arm in each of these metrics but 13% lower costs and therefore performs best in the cost-benefit analysis.
    - *Group coaching scaled adding a quarterly individual household coaching touch point.*

Asset vs Non-Asset Comparison

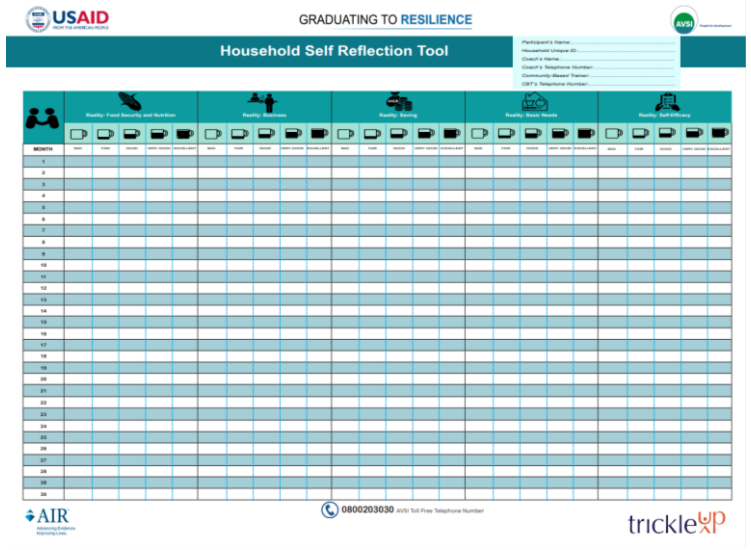


Overall significantly positive results for all treatment groups compared to the control groups

[The Impact of a Graduation Program on Livelihoods in Refugee and Host Communities in Uganda | Innovations for Poverty Action (poverty-action.org)]

Internal Activity Learning Data on Coaching

- Group coach **case load** 1:100 optimum
- Integrate **Digital and Visual coaching** – stories, pictures, videos
- Design **hand-held participant visual vision** and planning tools ex graduation maps, self-assessments tools



Collaboration with Duke University: Preliminary coaching study results

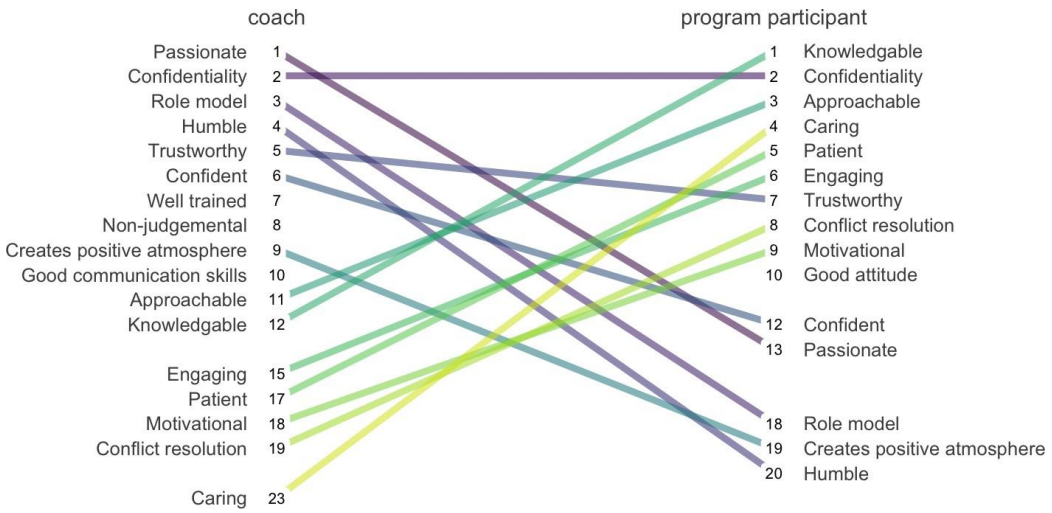
External – Coach characteristics and Influence on program outcomes

- No strong association between coach demographics and coaching characteristics.
- **The best coaches make a real difference in the lives of their clients– as much as $2,500 USD (PPT)** in spending on productive assets and 0.22-0.32 standard deviations in food security and wellbeing, respectively.
- A coaches' background does not help or hurt their ability to develop relationships with their clients.
- It does not appear to be important to the typical client that they are paired with a same-sex coach of the same age.

Confidentiality is critical for both coaches and participants **and trust is ranked at the same level for both.**

Coach and Participant perspectives on the most important coach characteristics that contribute to client success differ

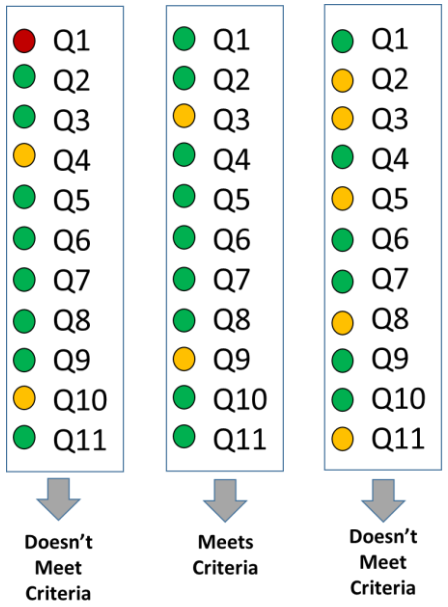
- Coaches emphasized the importance of having passion, being a role model, and showing humility.
- Clients point to being knowledgeable and kind (approachable, caring, patient).



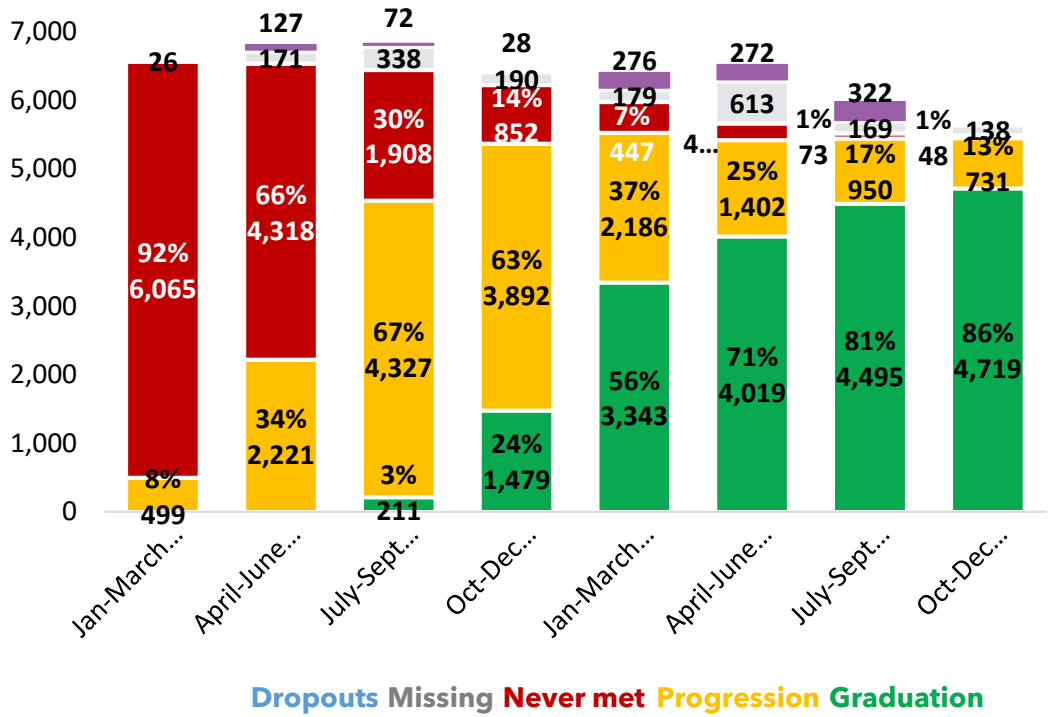
Internal Activity Learning | Graduation Criteria – development, thresholds

- Tailored graduation criteria, setting a threshold for **"responsible graduation"** - Meet criteria 3 quarters consecutively
- **Criteria based on poverty characterization** – food security - access and balanced, income sources, basic needs (health, education), water treatment, hand washing, decent dignified shelter, savings, productive assets, social cohesion, self-efficacy
- **Differing pace between refugees and hosts on graduation progression – although they catch up**

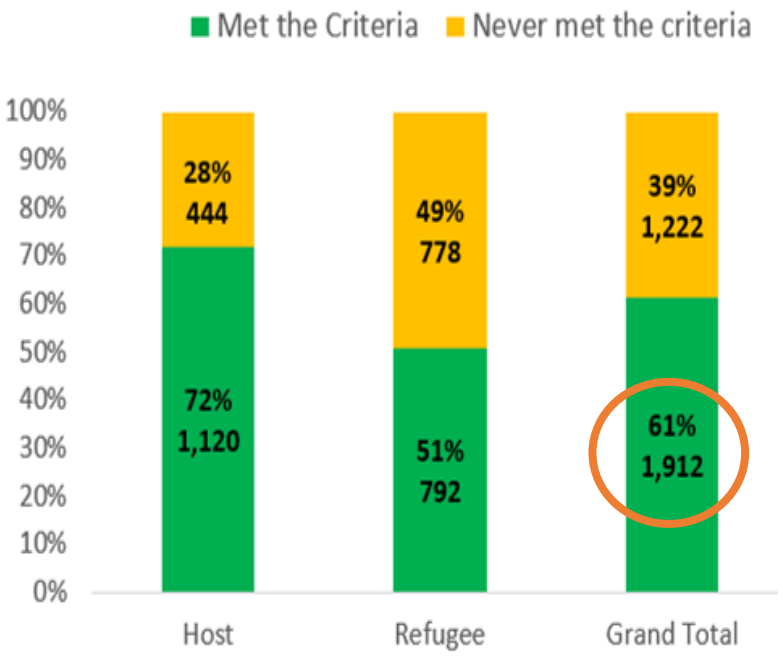
Graduation Criteria Response Options and Scoring

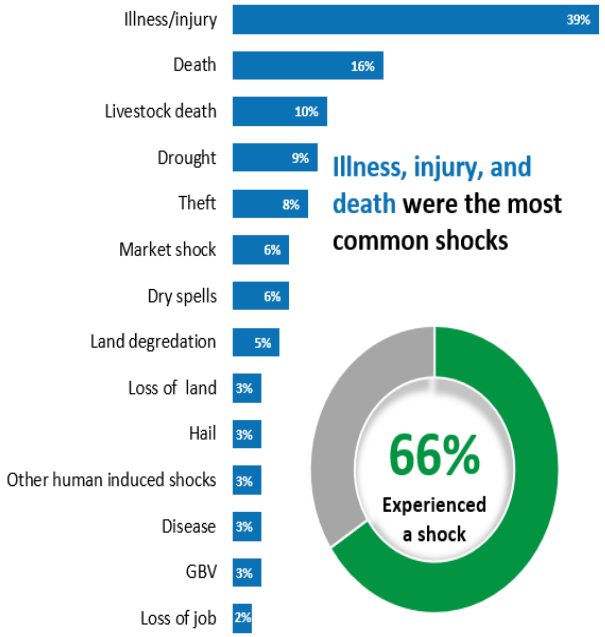


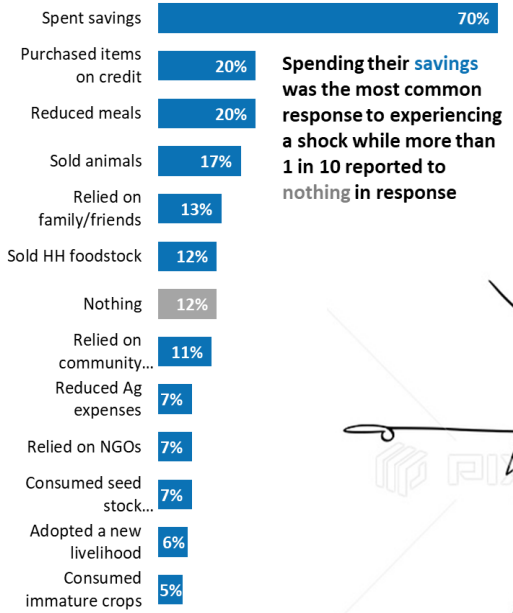
Cohort 2: Graduation



Impacts on Resilience | 18 months Post-Graduation [Graduated Households (73%)]







Internal Activity Learning | Timing, sequencing and cost

Adjusted implementation period from 30 months to 24 months – based on graduation rates, drop-out rates and costs

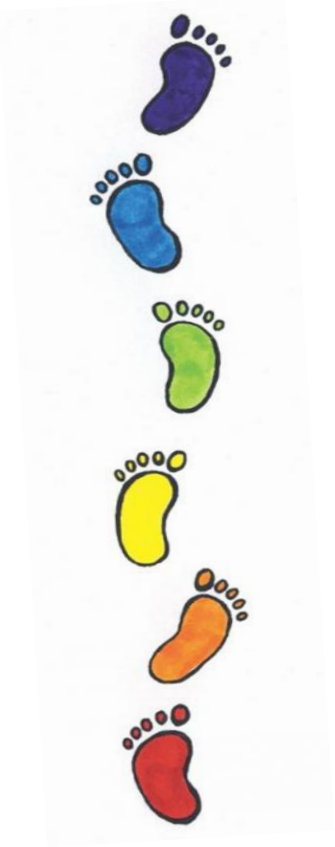
Cohort 1: 30 months

Cohort 2: 24 months

Main Lessons

- Drop out reduced from 25% to 16% between cohort 1 and 2 – study on reasons for drop out (met goals, lost interest, shifted)
- Cost significantly reduced – Cohort 1: Average 1,428 USD and Cohort 2: Average 968 USD
- Graduation Results – Cohort 1: 73% and Cohort 2: 86% - Reduced timing and stronger results / reduced dropouts
- Sequencing worked OK in both cohorts – no adjustments made – Note: Apprenticeships to be considered as part of tech training not asset

Lessons: What Works? Building Resilience



- Target the WHOLE household
- Use group coaching and get the right coach/CBT participant ratio
- Digital and Visual Integration
- Diversify livelihood enterprises and opportunities and asset transfers are critical
- Plan for shocks and stresses through savings and social networks.
- Supportive sytems are critical – layer and intergrate – build partnerships (market, government)
- Optimum timing: 18-24 months
- **Economic Inclusion programs can have significant positive impact on Refugees and Host Communities**

Look out!

New Evidence - Upcoming

- Does adding a structured mental health component impact graduation and resilience? **Midline - No**
- Longitudinal study on cost effectiveness and sustainability of graduation results
- Coach characteristics and their influence on graduation resilience - Look out for full findings

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