

# The Economic Impacts of Gender Targeting and Transformative Couples Training: Evidence from a Multifaceted Anti-poverty Program in Malawi

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- 1 What is the impact of **recipient gender** on household welfare outcomes?
- 2 What is the impact of the '**Transforming Gender and Power Relations Couple Training**' on household welfare outcomes?

# Literature: Welfare Impacts of Multifaceted Anti-poverty Programmes

- What is in the literature?
  - Programmes increase consumption, income, assets, food security, labour supply and financial ([Banerjee et al., 2015](#), [Bandiera et al., 2017](#), and [Bedoya et al., 2019](#)).
  - [Bandiera et al. \(2017\)](#) found gains persist and accelerate 4 and 7 years after the intervention.
  - Programme may have unintended effects, such as decreasing the mobility of women outside the house ([Roy et al., 2015](#)).
  - [Asadullah and Ara \(2016\)](#) suggest a possible takeover by men of income generating activities over time.

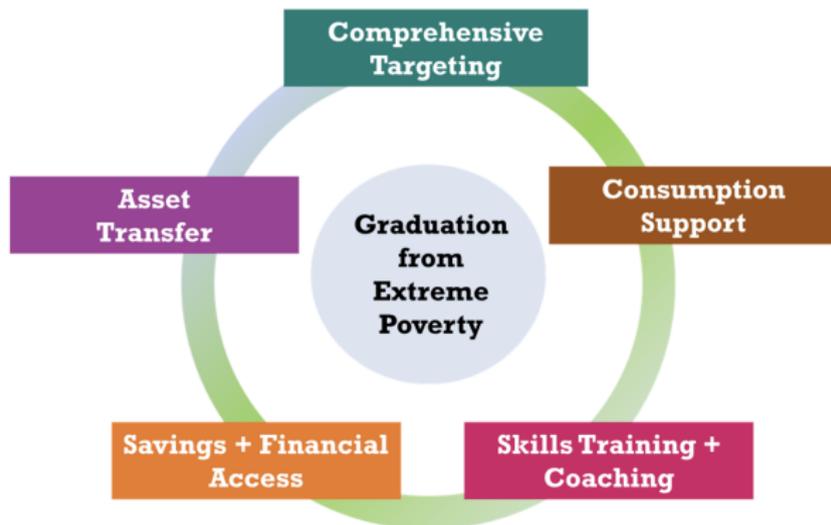
The welfare impacts of targeting economic inclusion programmes by gender are mixed:

- Cash transfers to women increases expenditure on food towards a more nutritious diet ([Armand et al., 2020](#)), while [Almas et al., 2020](#) find little evidence for consumption shifting at the household level.
- No findings to date on whether gender targeting of the Graduation program has differential results.

# Literature: Couples Training

- [Ismayilova et al. \(2018\)](#) find that both an economic intervention and one combined with family coaching increased women's financial autonomy, compared to control households, with no within treatment effects
- [Gupta et al. \(2013\)](#) finds that compared to savings groups alone, the provision of gender groups decreases economic abuse.

Figure: Concern's Graduation Approach



# Theory of Change - Targeting

Gender specific targeting of consumption support, business training, HH visits, asset transfer and VSLA membership.

## Aims to improve:

- Women's Economic Outcomes
- Women's Empowerment (later presentation)
- HH welfare, Investment in HH Public Goods

## Risks

- Increase in spousal conflict (including IPV)



# Theory of Change - Umodzi

Transformative gender training known as Umodzi, meaning 'united'.

## Aims to improve:

- Cooperation/shared vision
- Communication skills
- Perceptions: role of the women
- Savings/productive investment
- Efficient resource allocation

## Aims to decrease:

- Conflict/violence triggered by shifts in power
- Conflict between children/parents



Randomised Control Trial to test the effect of gender targeting and the inclusion of gender transformative training on household welfare outcomes

- 1 All benefits are targeted to **female**
- 2 All benefits are targeted to **male**
- 3 All benefits are targeted to **female**, and the couple is exposed to a **monthly couples training course** called Umodzi for 12 months
- 4 **Control Group**

# The Sample

- 200 villages, stratified across Mangochi and Nsanje districts, and covers a total of 3,300 couples.
- Eligible HH classified as "poor" or "very poor" by community wealth ranking (mostly), or a proxy means test based on household materials and livestock assets.
- Census conducted in late 2017 and early 2018 to identify 3,300 eligible HHs.

# The Randomisation

- 50 villages in each arms.
- Treatment villages: 18 HHs surveyed (12 treatment, 6 control).
- Control villages: 12 HHs surveyed.
- Half of villages delayed by one year, creating cohorts 1 or 2.

Treatment/Control Arm: Equal split between Mangochi and Nsanje for each arm

Female Recipients  
600 HHs

Male Recipients  
600 HHs

Female + 'Transforming  
Gender & Power Relations'  
Training: 600 HHs

Control Group  
1,500 HHs

## **Productive Annual Income**

- Includes business, wage, livestock and agriculture annual income.

## **Total Value of Livestock**

- Includes cattle, poultry and other small livestock.

## **Consumption**

- Includes food and non-food expenditure, festivals, health care and education.

## **Assets**

- Total assets owned across a range of 48 items

## **Food Security**

- Annual Food Security Index: 9 components, ranges from 0 (severely food insecure) to 9 (food secure).
- Recent Food Security Index: 3 components, ranges from 0 (severely food insecure) to 3 (food secure).

## Estimation Equation

$$Y_{(i)hvt} = \beta_1 + \beta_2 T_{hvt}^1 + \beta_3 T_{hvt}^2 + \beta_4 T_{hvt}^3 + \beta_5 Y_{(i)bl} + \alpha X_{(i)bl} + \gamma Z_{cd} + \epsilon_{hvt}$$

- Variables  $T^1$ ,  $T^2$  and  $T^3$  capture treatment status, taking value of 1 if household  $h$  in village  $v$  received:
  - $T^1$  - female targeted Graduation program
  - $T^2$  - male targeted Graduation program
  - $T^3$  - female targeted plus Umodzi Graduation program
- Coefficients  $\beta_2$ ,  $\beta_3$  and  $\beta_4$  capture treatment impact on our specified outcomes,  $Y$ , for household  $h$ /individual  $i$
- We control for baseline values of outcome  $Y$ , individual baseline variables,  $X(i)bl$ , the time of follow-up,  $t$  and district and cohort,  $Z_{cd}$ .
- $\epsilon_{hvt}$  is our statistical error term. Errors are clustered at the level of cluster randomisation.

## Table: Baseline Balance

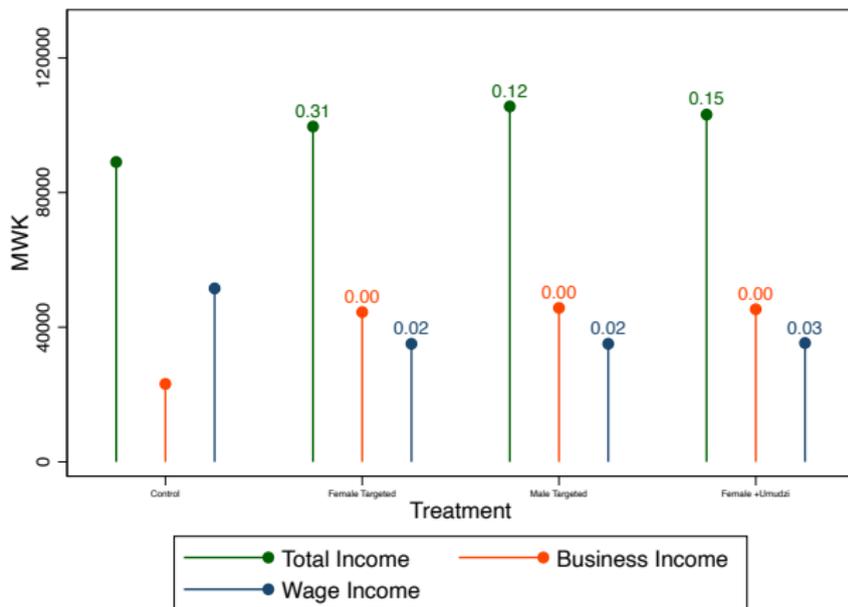
	Total Sample Mean	Control Mean	T1 Female Targetted Mean	T2 Male Targetted Mean	T3 Female plus Umodzi Mean	Trt 1 vs Control p-value	Trt 2 vs Control p-value	Trt 3 vs Control p-value	T1-C Normalized Difference	T2-C Normalized Difference	T3-C Normalized Difference
<b>Demographics</b>											
Female Spouse Age	35.56	36.11	35.21	35.01	35.88	0.24	0.12	0.75	0.07	0.09	0.02
Male Spouse Age	42.75	42.99	42.59	42.29	43.13	0.65	0.33	0.84	0.03	0.05	-0.01
Female Spouse Literacy	0.31	0.28	0.29	0.36	0.33	0.77	0.02	0.13	-0.02	-0.17	-0.10
Male Spouse Literacy	0.60	0.56	0.60	0.61	0.64	0.22	0.10	0.03	-0.08	-0.11	-0.15
HH Size	5.65	5.67	5.55	5.60	5.78	0.35	0.66	0.42	0.06	0.03	-0.06
<b>Household Variables Baseline</b>											
Total Productive Income	98,916.72	95,449.07	90,144.33	94,587.21	115,599.68	0.65	0.96	0.24	0.03	0.01	-0.07
Business Income	30,652.29	21,973.30	28,685.90	28,893.62	43,464.63	0.28	0.28	0.08	-0.06	-0.06	-0.11
Wage Income	56,353.79	61,017.73	53,231.13	48,548.34	62,407.70	0.34	0.12	0.89	0.07	0.11	-0.01
Livestock Income	2,585.65	2,749.37	2,693.17	2,172.82	2,722.45	0.96	0.60	0.98	0.00	0.03	0.00
Harvest Income	9,325.00	9,708.67	5,534.13	14,972.43	7,004.89	0.05	0.11	0.24	0.13	-0.10	0.08
Ttl Annual Expenditure	343,667.67	321,656.03	354,715.74	360,800.19	338,560.66	0.16	0.05	0.42	-0.12	-0.15	-0.06
Annual Food Expenditure	254,410.41	255,080.46	251,650.29	264,708.75	246,093.48	0.85	0.53	0.57	0.02	-0.05	0.05
Annual Non-Food Expenditure	72,018.63	65,983.49	73,646.92	74,172.72	74,563.63	0.30	0.23	0.31	-0.08	-0.10	-0.08
Ttl Asset Value	651,825.44	627,774.26	625,920.34	691,688.47	662,645.24	0.97	0.07	0.25	0.00	-0.12	-0.08
Ttl Livestock Value	19,436.21	20,532.67	20,375.59	19,588.27	17,203.02	0.99	0.91	0.55	0.00	0.01	0.04
Observations	2,362	612	579	587	584						
<b>Female Spouse Baseline Variables</b>											
Ttl Income	49,529.44	51,067.18	51,205.62	47,578.12	48,220.13	0.99	0.45	0.62	-0.00	0.05	0.03
Business Income	17,157.66	14,779.95	19,050.67	14,511.16	20,428.60	0.36	0.92	0.19	-0.06	0.01	-0.08
Savings	3,652.82	3,757.20	4,373.32	3,071.79	3,413.28	0.54	0.43	0.74	-0.04	0.05	0.02
Loans Borrowed	846.63	468.58	1,119.08	981.43	836.56	0.04	0.08	0.10	-0.13	-0.11	-0.11
Observations	2,361	611	579	587	584						
<b>Male Spouse Baseline Variables</b>											
Ttl Income	81,561.58	77,466.35	73,982.36	76,511.40	98,443.62	0.76	0.98	0.19	0.02	0.01	-0.07
Business Income	27,429.27	21,025.33	25,411.27	25,133.39	38,448.63	0.49	0.51	0.11	-0.04	-0.04	-0.09
Savings	7,518.34	5,362.25	5,771.93	7,667.36	11,359.46	0.74	0.14	0.23	-0.02	-0.09	-0.07
Loans	3,127.27	2,447.39	3,976.77	3,027.94	3,097.35	0.24	0.35	0.45	-0.09	-0.05	-0.05
Observations	2,362	612	579	587	584						

Standard errors are clustered at the level of randomisation.

# A. Income (+ 5 months)

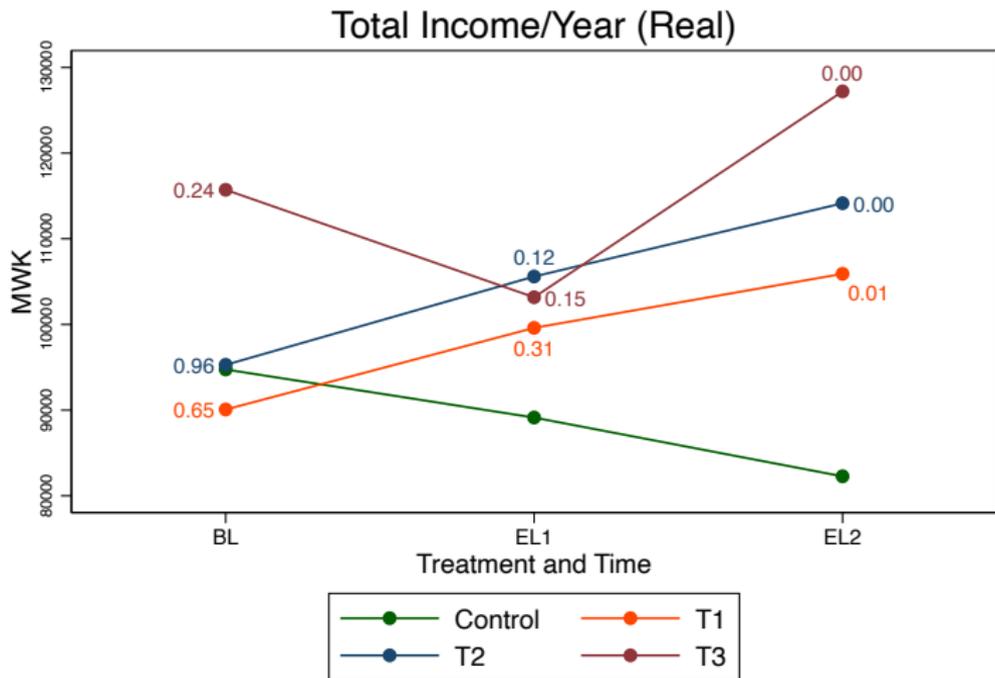
- No significant impact on income.
- Main impact is **structural change** in graduation HHs income source (business income doubled, wage income fell).

Figure: Income, and its components



# Income (+ 17 months)

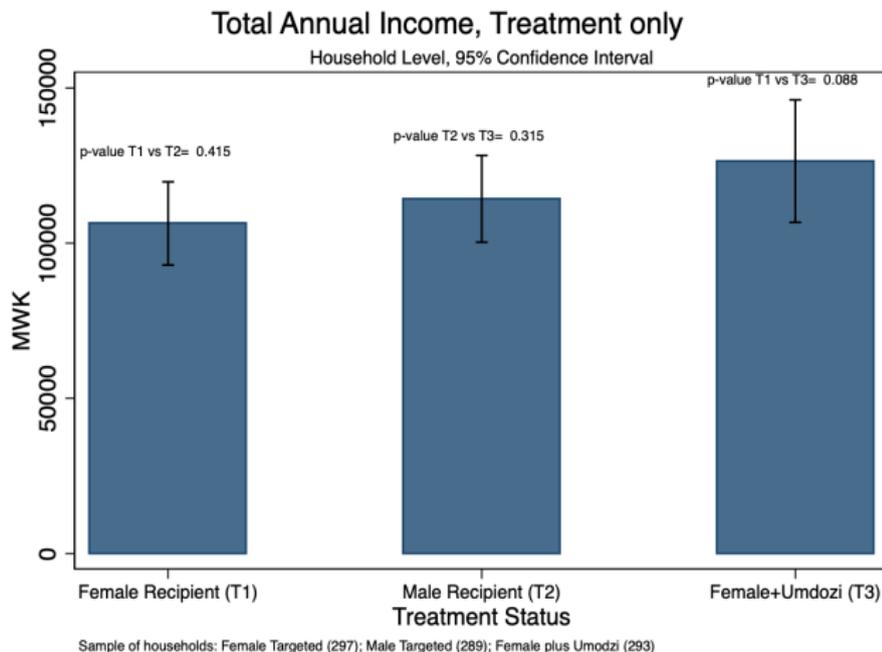
- Total income significantly higher for all graduation HHs, with the Umodzi group having the highest increase (55% higher than control).



P-values of the differences between each treatment group and control are displayed by the mean of each group.

# Income (+ 17 months), Treatment Comparison

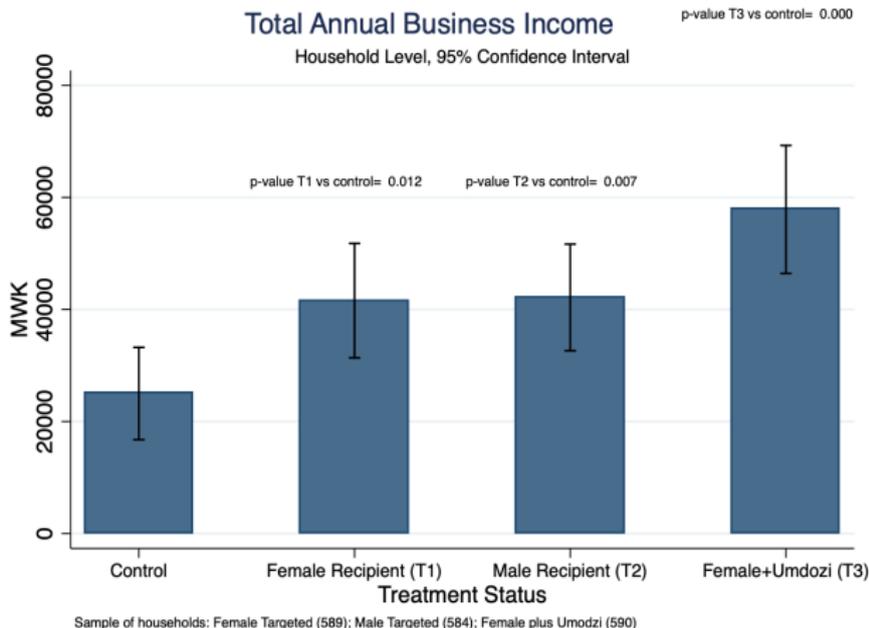
Umodzi HHs have (marginally) higher income than female targeted HHs.



# Focus on Business Income (+ 17 months)

Income differences driven by **business income**. Compared to control business income:

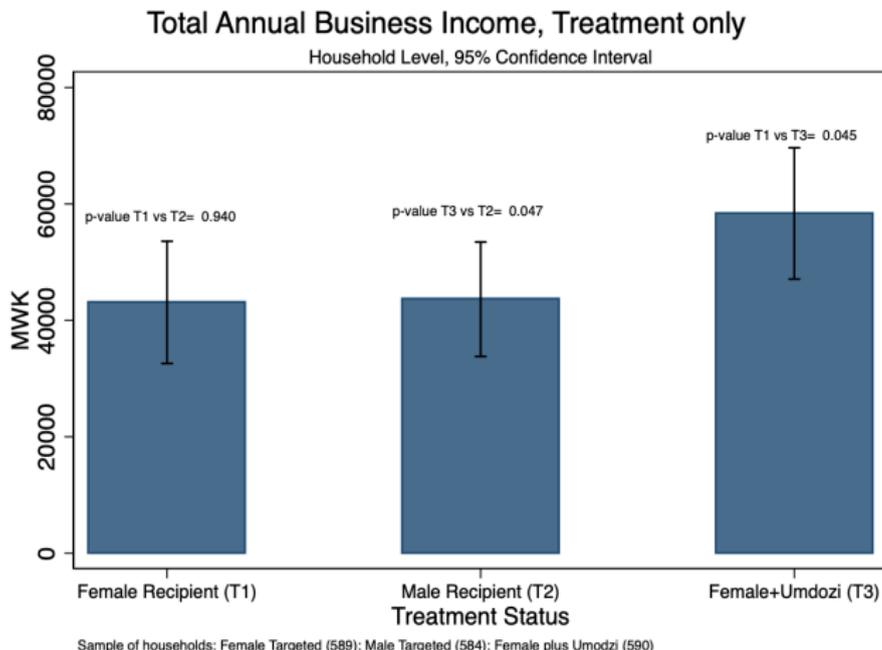
- Umodzi group: 2.5 x higher
- Female targeted: 1.78 x higher
- Male targeted: 1.8 x higher



# Income, Treatment Group Comparison (+ 17 months)

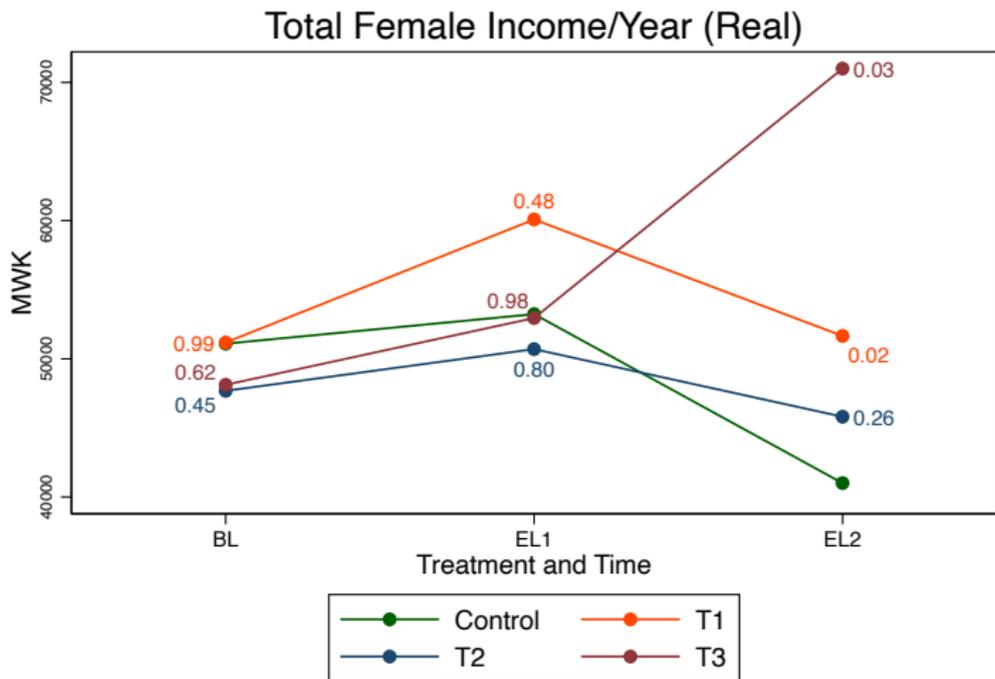
Umodzi out-performs simple graduation.

- Greater business income than female and male targeted households



# Looking at Income by Gender

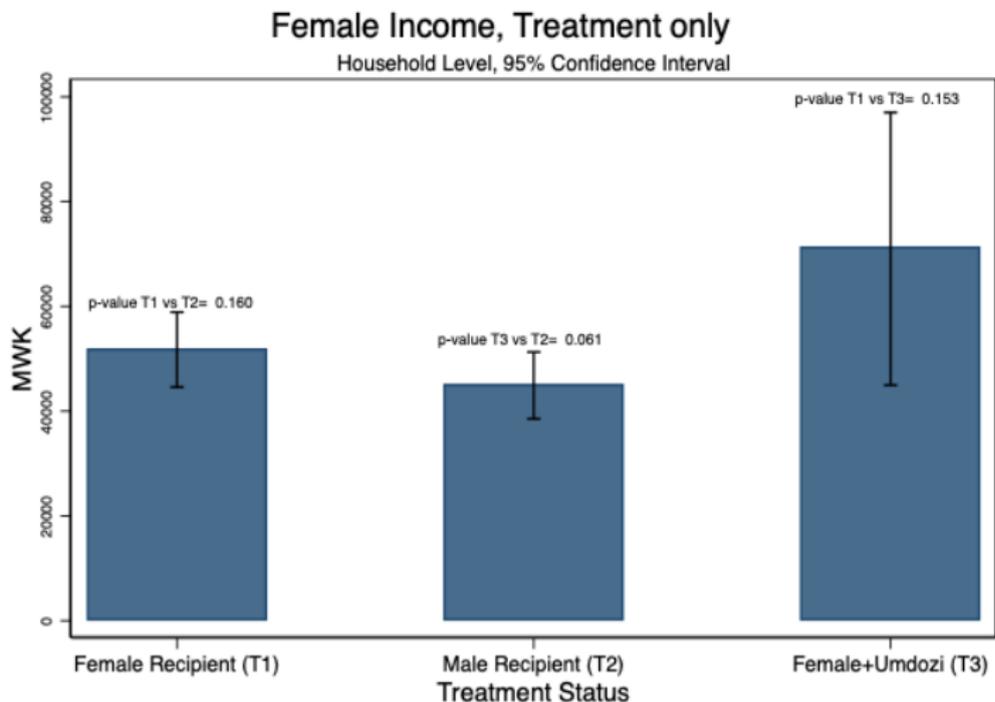
Female spouses in female targeted households have higher income than control



P-values of the differences between each treatment group and control are displayed by the mean of each group.

# Looking at Income by Gender

Suggestive evidence that for business income female spouses in Umodzi households have higher income.

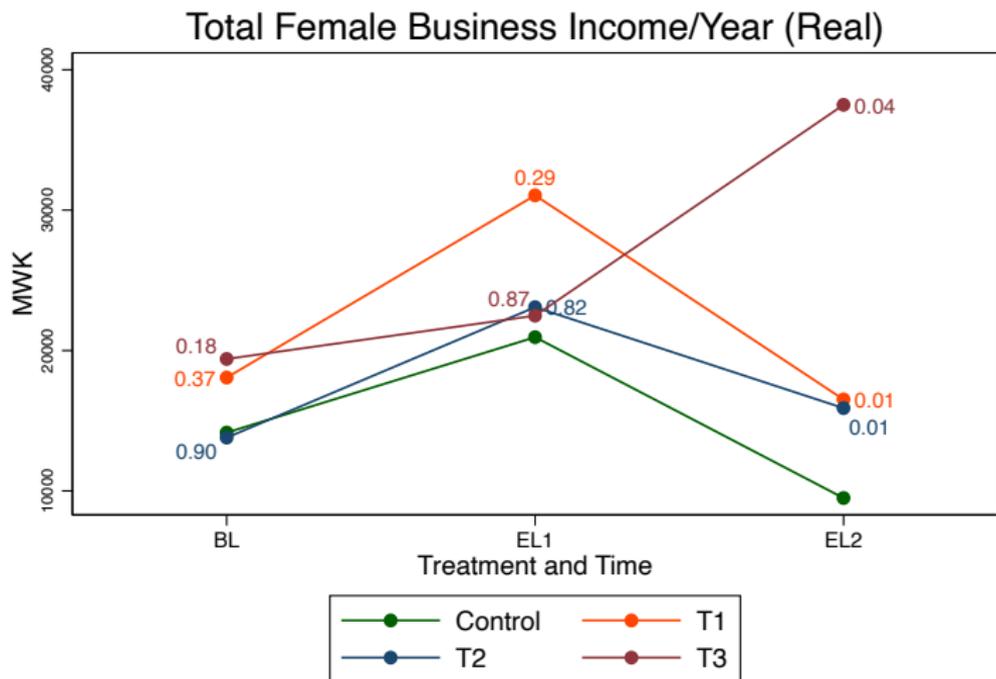


Sample of households: Female Targeted (573); Male Targeted (574); Female plus Umodzi (580)

# Looking at Income by Gender

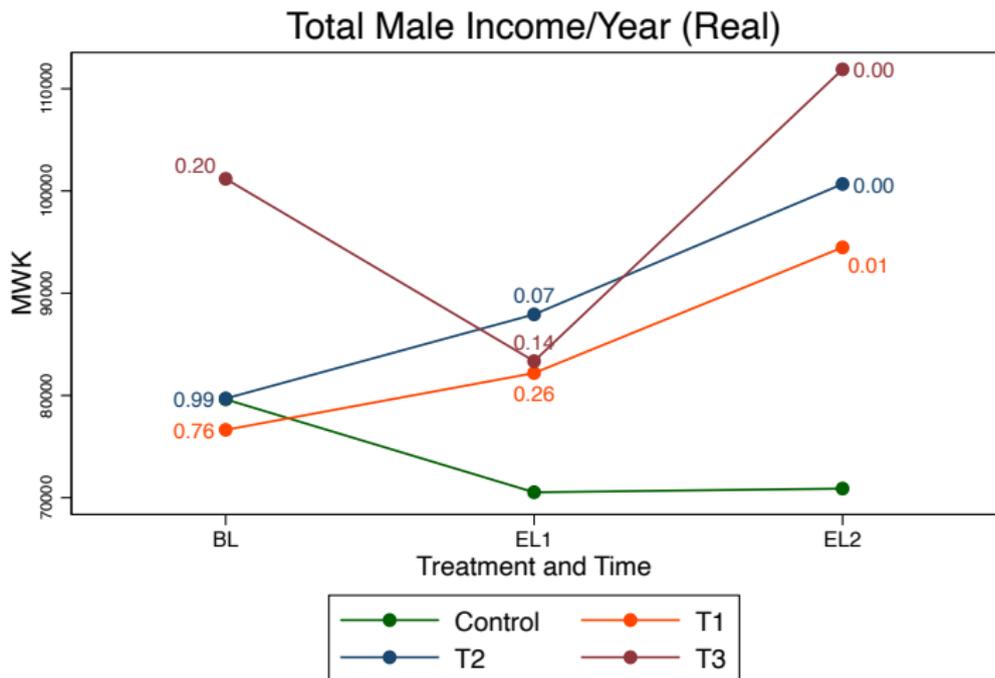
All female spouses in treated households have higher business income than control.

- But the difference is largest for Umodzi households.



# Looking at Income by Gender

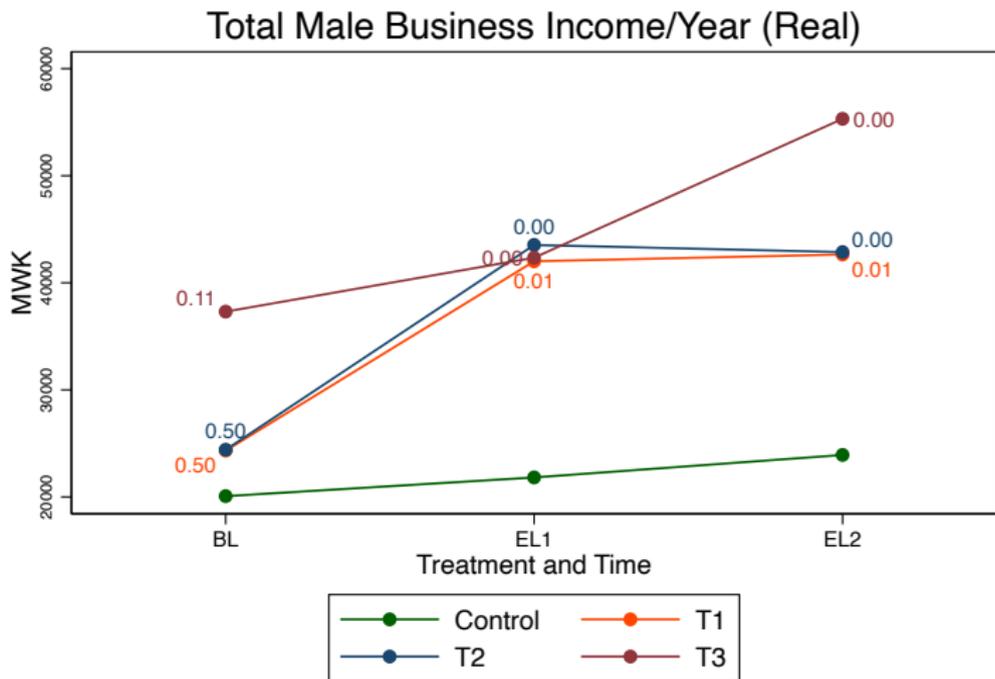
All male spouses in treated households earn more overall income than control. Similar pattern for business income.



P-values of the differences between each treatment group and control are displayed by the mean of each group.

# Looking at Income by Gender

All Male spouses in treated households have more business income than control

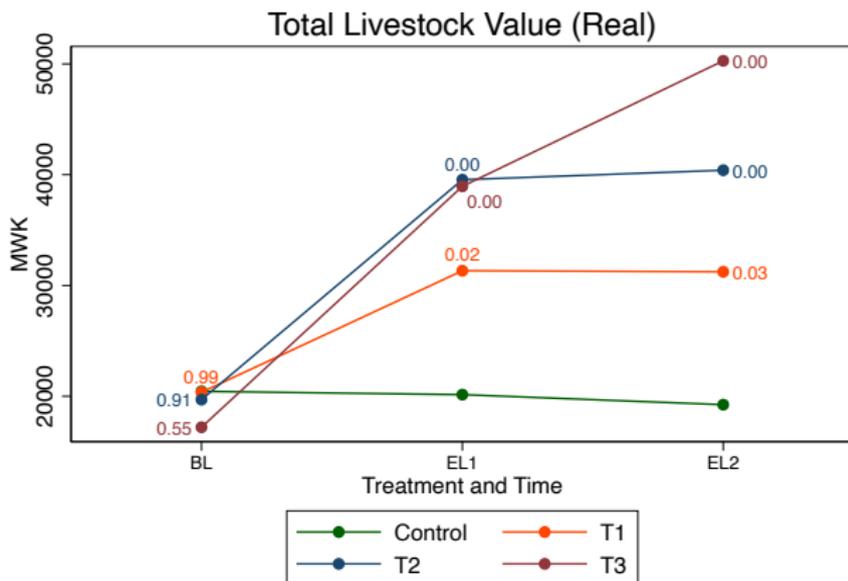


P-values of the differences between each treatment group and control are displayed by the mean of each group.

## B. Livestock Value

Livestock represents both a future income stream and a store of wealth to realise in time of need.

- Graduation HHs have livestock value 55-96% higher than control (at 5 months).
- For male targeted and Umodzi HHs this increases to 110-160% higher livestock value (at 17 months).



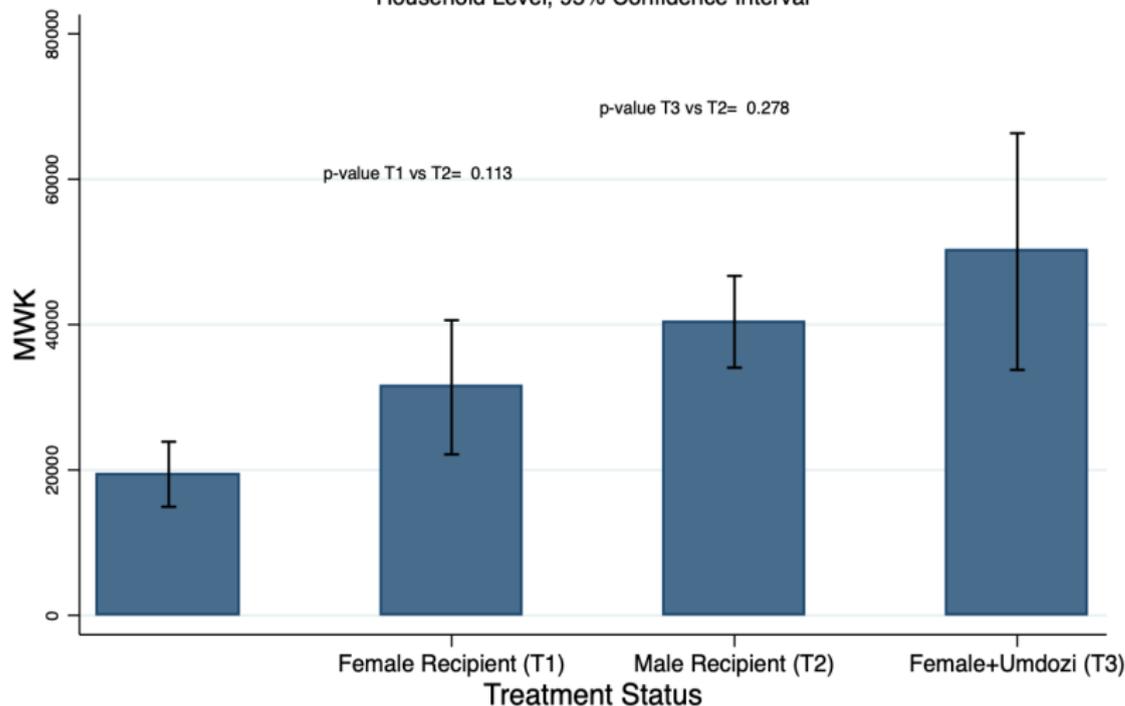
# Livestock, Treatment Group Comparison (+ 17 months)

Umodzi out-performs simple graduation, especially female targeted.

p-value I1 vs I3= 0.049

## Livestock Value, Treatment only

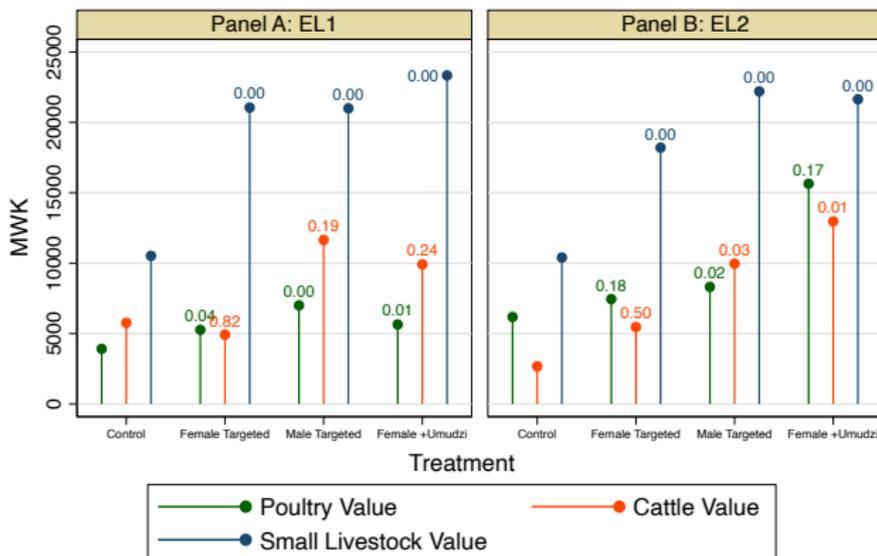
Household Level, 95% Confidence Interval



# Livestock Value, By Type

- Female targeted: greater small livestock (17 months post)
- Male targeted: greater values of all livestock (17 months post)
- Umodzi: greater values for cattle/small livestock (17 months post)

Value of Livestock by Type (Real)

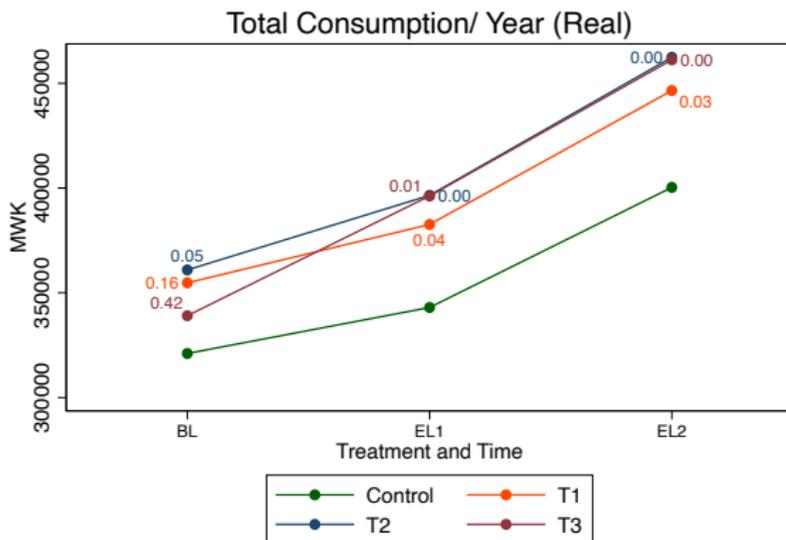


P-values of the differences between each treatment group and control are displayed above the mean of each group.

## C. Consumption

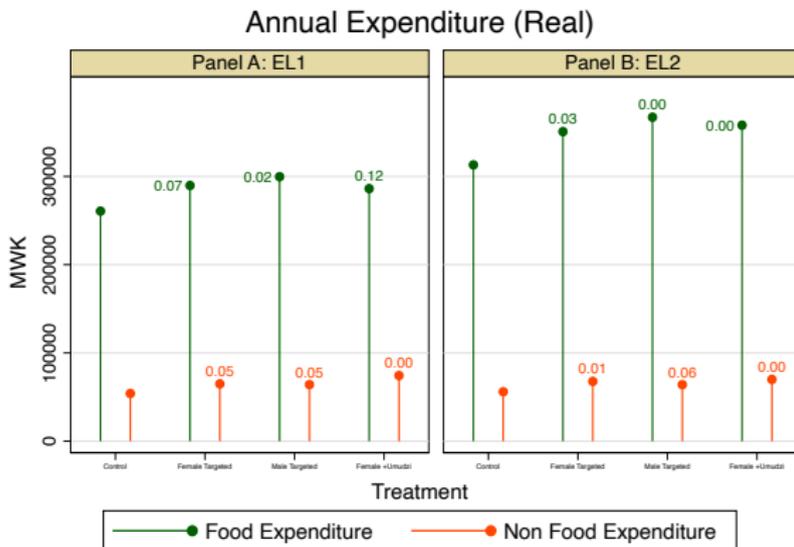
Graduation HHs greater consumption than control (at 5/17 months).

- At 5 months, consumption higher than control by at least 11.5% of the control group's average.
- At 17 months, treated households consumption is maintained (and very slightly increased).



# Consumption, By Type

- Graduation HHs food expenditure continues to increase slightly over controls.
- Non-food consumption is greater than controls (but gap not widening)

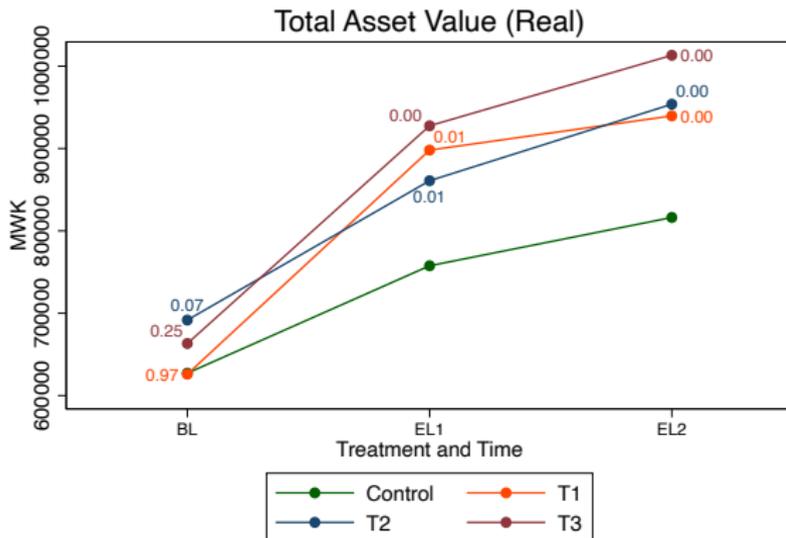


P-values of the differences between each treatment group and control are displayed above the mean of each group.

## D. Asset Value

Graduation HHs greater value of assets than control (at 5/17 months).

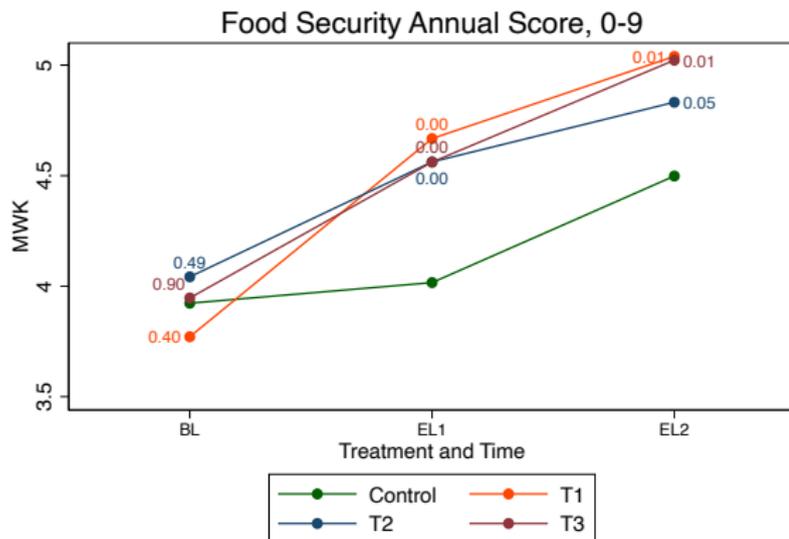
- At 5 months, asset value higher than control by at least 13% of the control group's average.
- At 17 months, treated households higher total asset values maintained.



P-values of the differences between each treatment group and control are displayed by the mean of each group.

## E. Food Security (Annual)

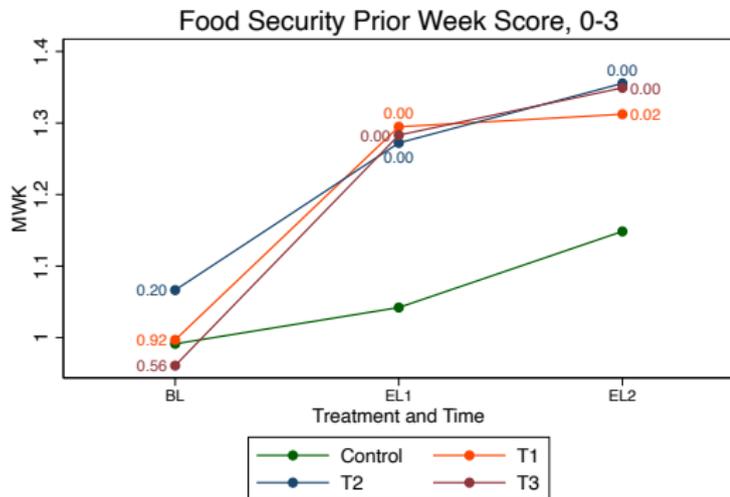
- At 5 months, 14-16% higher score than control households.
- At 17 months, all female treated households (regardless of gender training or not), maintained a score higher by 14%, while male targeted households had a score 7% higher.



# Food Security (Recent)

Graduation HHs always have greater recent food security score than control households.

- Treated households have 22-24% higher scores 5 months post programme.
- 17 months post implementation, households maintain 17% lead.



P-values of the differences between each treatment group and control are displayed by the mean of each group.

# Summary 1

## Graduation

- At 5 months structural change in income source, at 17 months higher income for all treatment groups.
- Sustained benefits for all treatments (livestock, consumption, assets and food security).

## Targeting

- Female targeting improves their total income, but not HH income.
- Higher number of business owned at 5 months, not at 17 months.
- No other differences.
- Deeper analysis still to come, including IPV data.

## Transformative Couple's Training

Umodzi is transformative.

- Overall HH gains:
  - Umodzi HHs have (marginally) higher total income than female targeted HHs.
  - Greater business income than female and male targeted HHs, accelerates at 17 mths.
  - Umodzi out-performs simple graduation, especially female targeted. Livestock.
  - No difference for HH consumption, asset values and food security.
- Umodzi improves female empowerment (see later).
- No gender differences for food security.
- Number HH and female controlled businesses higher for Umodzi.

- 1 Female targeting may not have big gains economically for HH.
- 2 ..but female income higher, different investments made in livestock.
- 3 Gender transformative training produces sizable economic returns, in addition to empowerment gains.

- 1 Efficiency and empowerment trade-offs of dynamic inter-spouse business turnover with HH.
- 2 IPV impacts of gender targeting/Umodzi.
- 3 Next cycle business support to manage business transition.
- 4 Environmental profile of businesses chosen vs foraging alternatives.