

Understanding post-programme graduation trajectories in Burundi

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1. Introduction

Graduation model programmes have gained considerable attention and momentum in recent years. Since the launch of the first graduation model programme by BRAC in 2002 entitled ‘Challenging the Frontiers of Poverty Reduction – Targeting the Ultra-Poor (CFPR–TUP)’ (Hashemi and Umaira, 2011), many similar programmes have been implemented in countries across the world. An expanding evidence base provides testimony to their positive effects, particularly in relation to economic outcomes such as assets and consumption but also living standards more broadly. A recent multi-country evaluation found that many impacts are maintained one year after programme end (Banerjee et al. 2015). However, much less is known about the sustainability of impacts into the medium term, and about the trajectories that different households may follow after graduation from the programme.

This research assesses whether the benefits of Concern Worldwide’s Graduation Programme in Burundi – also referred to as the *Terintambwe* programme – have been sustained several years after participants stopped receiving support, and if not, why not. It seeks to understand different trajectories that households may have followed after programme end, the factors that undermine or enable the ability to harness positive programme impacts, and the role played by different programme components.

The study adopts a mixed-methods and longitudinal approach. Primary qualitative data was collected in Kirundo province (in the north-east of Burundi) from March to April 2018. This data builds on and is complemented by quantitative and qualitative survey data collected from 2013 through to 2015 as part of the evaluation of the *Terintambwe* programme and a cross-country study on child poverty.

1.1. Terintambwe programme

This research focuses on Concern Worldwide’s Graduation Model programme in Burundi, locally referred to as the *Terintambwe* (meaning ‘Take a Step Forward’) programme. The programme was launched in April 2013 in two provinces in Burundi, namely Cibitoke (in the north-west) and Kirundo (in the north-east). A total of 2,000 participants (1,000 in each province) were part of the first cohort of the programme, which was implemented over a period of roughly two years from early 2013 until May 2015.

Programme participants benefited from an extensive package of sequenced support. Key programme components included (based on Devereux et al. 2015):

- (i) income support, consisting of 14 monthly cash transfers of approximately 15 USD during the first year of programme implementation;
- (ii) asset transfer, comprising of three lump-sum payments based on funds required for investments in selected income-generating activities;
- (iii) access to savings facilities, encompassing training in financial literacy and support to join or establish a Savings and Internal Lendings Community (SILC); and
- (iv) skills training and coaching, including group-based training about livelihoods activities as well as nutrition and hygiene and individual coaching through home visits by dedicated case managers.

Findings from the impact evaluation held at the end of the programme in April 2015 pointed towards the following impacts (see Devereux et al. 2015):

- The programme improved incomes and stimulated saving and borrowing through SILCs (as opposed to informal lenders);
- Terintambwe participants significantly increased their asset ownership, particularly small assets such as hoes and machetes and small livestock such as chickens and goats;
- The programme led to stark improvements in living conditions, including housing conditions and hygienic sanitation facilities;
- School attendance and seeking care from formal health providers when ill increased significantly for Terintambwe participants;
- Food security and nutrition as measured by months of hunger, number of meals per day and dietary diversity greatly improved;
- Hygiene and health behaviour improved as indicated by hand-washing practices and use of contraception;
- Social capital increased as a result of the programme, with participants feeling more confident to participate in community events and having become less dependent on others.

Both the evaluation and qualitative research were completed at programme end in May 2015, thereby stopping short of providing insights into post-programme graduation trajectories. This study sought to gain insight into households and their members' pathways in the three years after the programme had come to an end.

1.2. Study location

This study took place in Kirundo province, in the north-east of the country. It is one of the poorest provinces in the country with more than 70 percent of the population living in poverty (World Bank, 2016) and 95 percent of children aged 0-17 suffering from multidimensional poverty in 2013-14 (de Neubourg et al. 2017). More generally, the province and northern region of the country are particularly prone to climate shocks, erosion and land degradation, making its population vulnerable to diseases (such as cholera and malaria) and food insecurity (World Bank 2016).

Kirundo has been particularly adversely affected by two shocks in the period between programme end (mid-2015) and data collection for this study (early 2018), namely drought and socio-economic unrest. As a result of El Niño, the province was badly hit by drought in late 2015 and 2016 with widespread failure of harvests, causing food insecurity and hunger (World Bank 2016). The Global Acute Malnutrition rate increased by 40 percent in a timespan of only three months (WHO 2017). Socio-economic unrest that affected the country from mid-2015 onwards has caused a country-wide economic decline and a large reduction of state budget as a result of discontinuation of foreign support (UNICEF 2016). In Kirundo, research respondents indicated the unrest to have led to migration and displacement of people, both temporary and longer-term, within the province and beyond (reinforcing existing patterns of migration, see World Bank 2016). It also made cross-border trade with Rwanda more difficult, severely affecting livelihoods of those living in the northern area of the province.

As a result, this study represents an assessment of the sustainability of graduation in the context of widespread poverty, unfavourable ecological conditions and large covariate climate and socio-economic shocks.

2. Data and methodology

This study takes a longitudinal and mixed-methods approach, combining newly collected qualitative data with existing quantitative and qualitative data from the evaluation that took place between 2013 and 2015.

2.1. Data collection

We report on qualitative data from two types of activities that were undertaken during fieldwork in April 2018, namely (i) focus groups and (ii) household case studies. Focus groups included former *Terintambwe* participants that were part of the programme from 2013 to 2015, allowing for insights into how participants have fared since the end of the project, and on enablers and constrainers to sustained graduation. Household case studies also included former *Terintambwe* participants (but are different from those included in the focus groups), offering detailed understandings of post-programme trajectories for households as a whole and their individual members. Activities with focus groups and household case studies included semi-structured conversations and participatory activities such as life history mapping and relative ranking of programme components.

In order to facilitate a mixed methods approach and to build on the evaluation data that was collected from 2013 through to 2015, focus group and case study activities took place in areas that were also included in the evaluation data¹. Fieldwork primarily took place in four collines, namely Nyabikenke colline in Bugabira commune and Kagege, Kivo and Sigu collines in Busoni commune. Twelve case studies and seven focus group discussions with former *Terintambwe* participants were undertaken across these collines. A full overview of the sample is provided in Table 1.

Table 1 Overview of sample of new qualitative data, April 2018

Respondent group	Site				Total
	National	Bugabira commune - Nyabikenke colline	Busoni commune - Sigu colline	Busoni commune - Kivo/ Kagege collines	
Key informants	15				15
Focus groups		1 male	1 male	1 male	3
		1 female	1 female	2 female	4
Case studies		1 male	2 male	4 male	7
		2 female	2 female	1 female	5

2.2. Data analysis

Data analysis included a combination of thematic and case study analysis.

For the purposes of thematic analysis, a coding scheme was developed on the basis of the main themes of interest for this study (e.g. graduation trajectories; enablers and constrainers of graduation; programme components and their contribution to graduation) and new themes that emerged during the pilot testing of fieldwork tools and a first reading of transcripts. NVivo was used for the coding of all transcripts and analysis of trends and patterns across respondent groups.

Case study analysis was undertaken on the basis of a case study compendium, which collated all case study materials. Newly collected qualitative data is complemented with both qualitative and quantitative evaluation data that was collected from early 2013/ late 2012 to April 2015. This

¹ For security reasons, data was only collected in Kirundo (and not in Cibitoke).

represents a unique set of longitudinal qualitative data on former *Terintambwe* participants across a period of roughly five years, with information from when participants started and finished the programme through to three years after the programme. Table 2 provides an overview of all the case studies included in this study and the data points included for each case study. Changes over time at household level and for individual members were analysed per case study using all available materials.

Table 2 Overview of case study data

Case	Commune	Colline	Sex	quant evaluation data (2012-2015)	qual baseline data (2013)	qual endline data (2015)	new qual data (2018)
AM	Bugabira	Nyabikenke	Male	yes	yes	yes	yes
ML	Bugabira	Nyabikenke	Female	yes	N/A	yes	yes
MP	Bugabira	Nyabikenke	Female	yes	yes	yes	yes
NN	Busoni	Sigu	Male	yes	yes	yes	yes
MG	Busoni	Sigu	Male	yes	yes	yes	yes
BM	Busoni	Sigu	Female	yes	yes	yes	yes
DK	Busoni	Sigu	Female	yes	yes	yes	yes
NE	Busoni	Kivo	Male	yes	N/A	yes	yes
NC	Busoni	Kagege	Male	yes	yes	yes	yes
MA	Busoni	Kagege	Male	yes	N/A	yes	yes
NzN	Busoni	Kagege	Male	yes	yes	yes	yes
NB	Busoni	Kagege	Female	yes	yes	yes	yes

3. Framing graduation trajectories

The investigation into household trajectories post-graduation is informed by various frameworks and previous research in relation to graduation and poverty dynamics. We follow the approach adopted by Sabates, Devereux and Sabates-Wheeler (2015) and applied by Sabates-Wheeler, Sabates and Devereux (2018) in their evaluation of Concern Worldwide’s Graduation programme in Rwanda for assessing household-level graduation trajectories. We build on research into poverty dynamics in Bangladesh by Davis and Baulch (2009) to unpack individual-level graduation trajectories. Finally, we use the ‘enablers and constrainers’ framework by Sabates-Wheeler and Devereux (2013).

3.1. Household-level trajectories

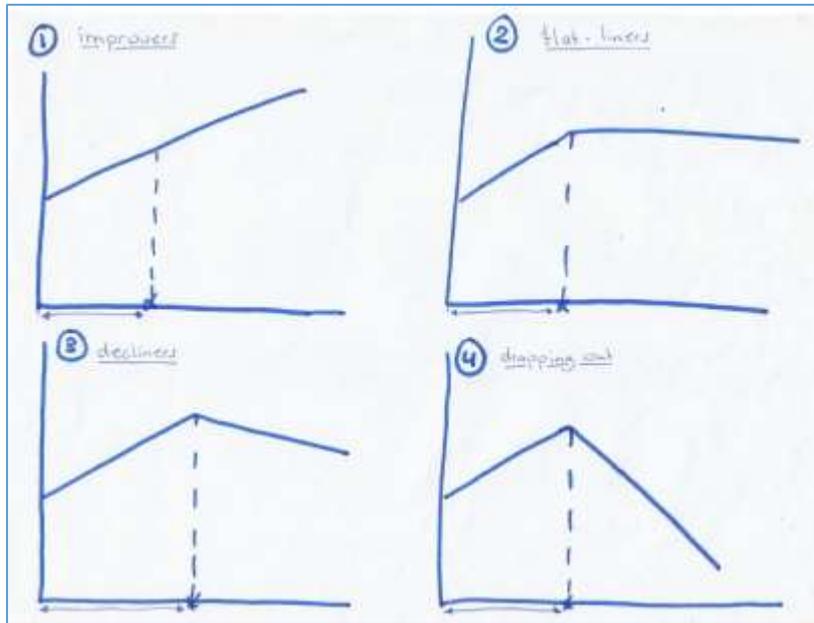
We collected and analyse data regarding household-level trajectories informed by the categorisation of graduation trajectories as put forward in Sabates et al. (2015). We include four possible trajectories:

- (1) *improvers*: sustained positive change, during and after programme participation;
- (2) *flat-liners*: positive change during programme, no change after programme;
- (3) *decliners*: positive change initially, but partial fall-back later;
- (4) *dropping out*: positive change initially, but then dropping to worse levels after the programme.

Note that the original list of categories included in Sabates et al. (2015) includes ‘late improvers’ to denote those making positive change only after the cash transfer phase of the programme. This has been replaced by the category ‘flat-liners’ to reflect the focus on post-programme trajectories and the reality that flat-lining is a more likely occurrence than improvement after the end of the programme.

This set of trajectories was used to elicit responses regarding changes in household wealth and wellbeing since the end of the programme, and how current levels of wealth and wellbeing compare to the situation before the start of the programme. The diagrams clearly mark the programme period, which assumes a steady increase², and end of the programme after which the four different trajectories come into play. We used schematic illustrations of trajectories to trigger conversations in relation to respondents' personal experiences and community-wide observations, see Figure 1.

Figure 1 Set of potential post-programme trajectories used in fieldwork



3.2. Individual-level trajectories

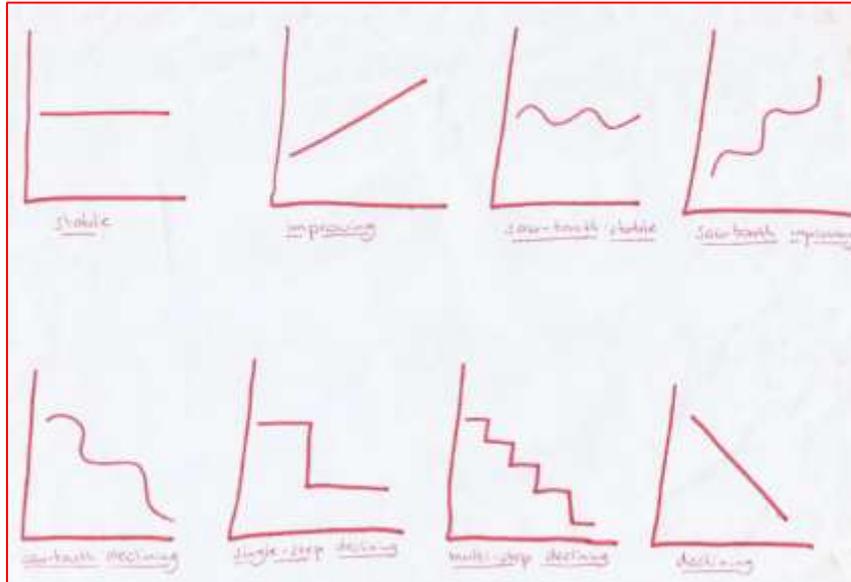
The data collection and analytical tool for gaining insight into individual-level trajectories is informed by Davis and Baulch (2009) and their qualitative research on poverty dynamics in Bangladesh. Their analysis of 293 life course histories gave rise to the identification of eight different poverty trajectories, namely:

- (1) *stable and smooth*: no change, flat line;
- (2) *improving and smooth*: sustained and linear positive change;
- (3) *declining and smooth*: sustained and linear decline;
- (4) *stable and saw-tooth*: no change overall but short-term fluctuations around the trend;
- (5) *improving and saw-tooth*: sustained positive change with fluctuations around the trend;
- (6) *declining and saw-tooth*: sustained decline with fluctuations around the trend;
- (7) *declining and single-step*: sustained decline following one single discrete shock;
- (8) *declining and multi-step*: sustained decline following multiple discrete shocks.

A schematic representation of these eight trajectories (see Figure 2) was used to trigger conversations about potential differences between trajectories for the household as a whole and for individual members.

² Evaluation results from the Terintambwe programme as presented in Devereux et al. (2015) indicated large positive effects of the programme, making it safe to work with the assumption that the programme period is reflected by a period of positive change.

Figure 2 Set of potential post-programme trajectories used for fieldwork



The second set of trajectories aimed to obtain insights into how changes played out for programme participants. Rather than comparing the situation before, at the end and after the programme, the discussion about these trajectories helped to understand whether participants experience smooth changes, fluctuations around the trend or discrete shocks.

3.3. Constrainers and enablers

Respondents in all data collection activities were asked to identify the factors that support or constrain graduation in Burundi, informed by the concept of ‘enablers and constrainers’ of graduation (see Sabates-Wheeler and Devereux, 2013). This framework offers a typology for different factors that may support or undermine graduation at five different levels: programme, beneficiary, community, market and environment. Evidence from Ethiopia’s PSNP, for example, shows that low income transfers represents a programme-level barrier, a small initial asset base is a beneficiary-level constraint, limited infrastructure constrains graduation from at a community-level, and lack of markets and climate shocks present market- and environmental-level barriers (Sabates-Wheeler et al. 2012).

Respondents in key informant interviews, focus group discussions and case study conversations were asked about their opinion regarding main enablers, or positive factors supporting graduation, and main constrainers, or negative factors that impede positive change or lead to negative change. Key informants with intricate knowledge of the *Terintambwe* programme, notably Concern staff, and former *Terintambwe* participants were also asked about particular programme components that served to enable graduation, particularly in terms of maintaining positive effects after the end of the programme.

4. Graduation trajectories

In this section, we discuss findings regarding trajectories of former *Terintambwe* participants after the end of the programme. Firstly we focus on general trends and whether former participants continued to improve, stabilised, declined or dropped to lower levels of wealth. Secondly we analyse patterns of change from an individual perspective, considering whether trajectories differed between household members. Finally, we explore longitudinal trajectories by looking at trends in household wealth before, during and after *Terintambwe*.

4.1. Household-level trajectories

The majority of respondents indicate that graduation patterns since the end of the programme mid-2015 reflect the declining pattern. Across all collines, among both focus group and case study respondents, reported that wealth and wellbeing had dropped considerably after programme support had ended, but that their situation was similar or slightly better compared to the start of the programme in April 2013. As highlighted by a male former participant from Kivo: *“The most prevalent trajectory is the decliners. Participants can feed themselves without having to work for others. They use means received from their activities.”* [NE]

The notion of not having to work for others is important in distinguishing between doing better than before the start of the programme or not. The *Terintambwe* programme was targeted at the *Ntaho Nikora* wealth category, which includes households that are very poor and predominantly landless but that have labour capacity with day labour being the primary source of income. The next wealth category up is *Umukene*, which includes households that are able to meet very basic needs but most crucially can rely on their own cultivation and economic activities for income-generation, as opposed to having to work for others. The endline evaluation indicated that the large majority of *Terintambwe* participants self-identified as belonging to the *Umukene* category at the end of the programme, and considered this to be a vital sign to suggest their graduation (Devereux et al. 2015).

Self-identification in terms of wealth category among respondents in this round of data collection is mixed. Many respondents indicated to be slightly better off than before, and that this is partly reflected by not having to work for others (as much) compared to when they started participation in the *Terintambwe* programme. As such, some respondents identified as belonging to the *Umukene* category. Nevertheless, most respondents self-identified as *Ntaho Nikora*, but considered themselves to be slightly better off: *“Our situation declined but we are not on the same level as before the programme, even though we are still in the Ntahonikora category.”* [FGD-F-Nya]

Table 3 provides an overview of changes in wealth categories across the twelve case studies, providing evidence for the prevalence of declining trajectories. Only two former participants from Busoni commune indicated to have remained in the *Umukene* category, with one former participant explaining: *“We are worse off because SILC groups stopped and the drought affected us. [... but] now I cultivate and I don’t lack seeds. I have a hoe, the main tool for cultivating and I am not obliged to work for others. Now, I am Umukene.”* [MA]

Table 3 Overview of case studies and their changes in wealth category

Case	Colline	Commune	Sex	Wealth category 2013	Wealth category 2015	Wealth category 2018
AM	Nyabikenke	Bugabira	Male	Ntahonikora	Umukene	Ntahonikora
ML	Nyabikenke	Bugabira	Female	N/A	Umukene	Ntahonikora
MP	Nyabikenke	Bugabira	Female	Ntahonikora	Umukene	Ntahonikora
NN	Sigu	Busoni	Male	Ntahonikora	Umukene	Ntahonikora
MG	Sigu	Busoni	Male	Ntahonikora	Umukene	Ntahonikora
BM	Sigu	Busoni	Female	Ntahonikora	Umukene	Ntahonikora
DK	Sigu	Busoni	Female	Ntahonikora	Umukene	Ntahonikora
NE	Kivo	Busoni	Male	N/A	Umukene	Umukene
NC	Kagege	Busoni	Male	Ntahonikora	Umukene	Ntahonikora
MA	Kagege	Busoni	Male	N/A	Umukene	Umukene
NzN	Kagege	Busoni	Male	Ntahonikora	Umukene	Ntahonikora
NB	Kagege	Busoni	Female	Ntahonikora	Umukene	Ntahonikora

The second most commonly reported trajectory referred to dropping out, meaning having a lower level of wealth and wellbeing compared to the start of the programme. Respondents indicated that former participants had dropped back to the same level as at the start of the programme, or that they had significantly lower levels of wealth than before the programme. A former female participant from Nyabikenke commented: *“When I look at other participants’ situation, they have dramatically declined, they went back to their previous state. The asset given was used for IGA and their businesses collapsed.”* [NB]

One respondent indicated that participants having dropped out constituted those who were already poorer before the start of the programme and were therefore already at a disadvantage: *“The dropping out category includes household living in extreme poverty when the programme started. They were in need of many things, hence [there were] no chances of improving.”* [MG] Another respondent pointed out that former participants who left the colline dropped out and deteriorated their situation as they had to sell all their assets in preparation of their departure: *“The least prevalent category is the dropping out. This category includes people who left. They had to sell everything they had in order to leave.”* [MP]

Some respondents indicated that a few *Terintambwe* participants had managed to maintain their wealth, thereby representing flat-liners. A male focus group respondent elaborated what it means to have maintained his position within the Umukene wealth category:

“I am no longer Ntahonikora because the program helped us a lot. For example, my wife and I were struggling to find something to eat. Our cloths were worn out and we couldn’t have new ones, neither buy soap. I remember the first time you visited us, I was living in a grass roof house without a place to sleep. With the funds the program gave us, I built a house and bought house equipment. I also bought a piece of land and now have a place to cultivate cassava. Now we can proudly go in public without facing judgments. Now I can eat two times a day without begging even if there is food shortage.” [FGD-F-Sig]

Sigu is the colline where the flat-liner trajectory was mentioned most frequently by focus group respondents, with former *Terintambwe* participants appearing to have been relatively more successful at maintaining their wealth as obtained through the programme. Enablers for maintaining wealth are discussed in section 5.2 below.

Respondents almost unanimously indicated that no former *Terintambwe* participant improved their situation. The crises since the end of the programme were deemed to have placed too much of a burden on participants to allow them to further improve their situation. One male focus group respondent in Busoni and Kagege respectively indicated that his life had improved since the end of the programme: *“Compared to when the program ended, my life has improved”* [FGD-M-Kag].

4.2. Individual trajectories

Individual trajectories largely followed those of the household with the same overall pattern being identified across all its members. The main difference pertains to whether members attribute changes to a single event or multiple shocks. Only two types of individual trajectories were identified, namely multi-step and single-step decline. Many respondents identified the drought or other large negative events as the single cause for their decline, while others attributed their decline in wealth to an accumulation of shocks that included the drought, illness and other problems. Responses included:

“I choose the multi-step decline. My wellbeing declined because of poverty caused by drought and sickness. Subsequently, I hadn’t the capital to continue my business.” [MP]

“I chose the ‘single-step decline’ because of imprisonment (in Tanzania). I got sick there and we were sleeping on the floor, sharing one mattress with 6 inmates.” [NN]

Analysis of individual trajectories also shows that members of the same household may not experience their trajectories in the same way. In a number of case studies, the main programme participant and their spouse identify different trajectories to reflect the changes in their lives following the end of *Terintambwe*. NzN from Kagege colline, for example, considers his life to have followed a single-step decline: *“My life declined when my business collapsed, hence the lack of food. The main cause is the drought.”* [NzN] His wife, however, opted for the multi-step decline, highlighting the culmination of multiple events: *“The causes of decline are sickness and the lack of food due to drought and the political crisis”* [NzN, spouse].

Even respondents who indicated to still belong to the *Urukene* category and to have maintained some level of wealth considered themselves to have experienced a decline. MA from Kagege colline, who still self-identified as *Urukene* described as follows: *“I chose the single-step decline. Due to drought, my means have declined and sources of income like SILC and my business stopped”* [MA].

Findings also suggest that children of former *Terintambwe* participants by and large experienced the same declines in wellbeing, caregivers aimed to maintain any positive impacts of the programme to the best extent possible. This pertains particularly to providing children with a diverse diet and sending them to school. Respondents reported to be aware of children’s vulnerabilities and many indicated that they were still growing vegetables and sending their children to school: *“Kids are more exposed than adults. It is understandable for adults to spend a day with an empty stomach but it is not easy for kids. They need to eat and have access to education”* [FGD-M-Bus].

4.3. Longitudinal trajectories

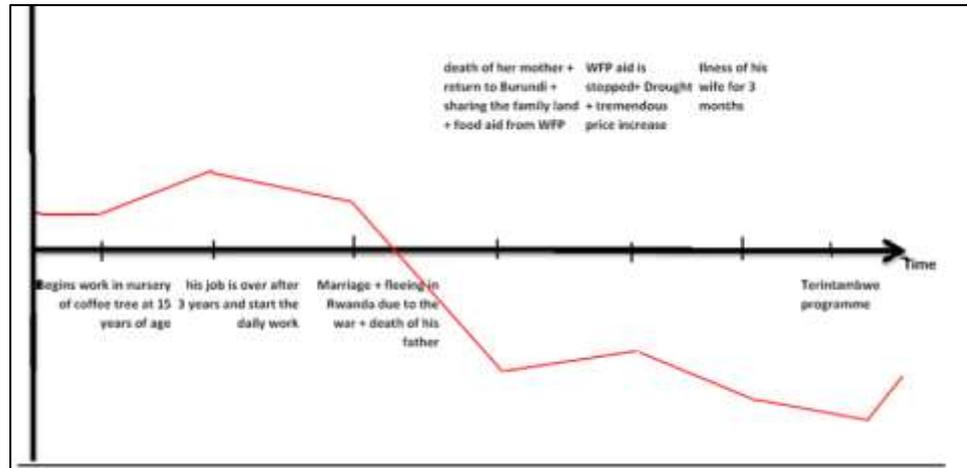
Longitudinal analysis of qualitative and quantitative case study data from before the start of the programme, during programme implementation and after the programme offers insight into long-term patterns of change for former *Terintambwe* participants. The most commonly observed trajectory across the pre-programme, programme and post-programme periods constitute a drop-improve-decline scenario.

Many programme participants experienced considerable covariant and idiosyncratic shocks that led to a decline in wealth and wellbeing prior to the start of *Terintambwe*. Early life experiences were marred by the civil war in 1993, which led to people fleeing the country to Tanzania or Rwanda. Other shocks often pertained to illness (of the participant themselves or a family member), death of a family member and climatic shocks such as drought and floods. The programme period from early 2013 to mid-2015 led to an upwards trajectory for all case study households, and these upwards moves in wealth were also associated with greater food availability, less hunger and improved housing conditions. Post-programme trajectories from mid-2015 to early 2018 are characterised by deteriorating levels of household wealth and wellbeing.

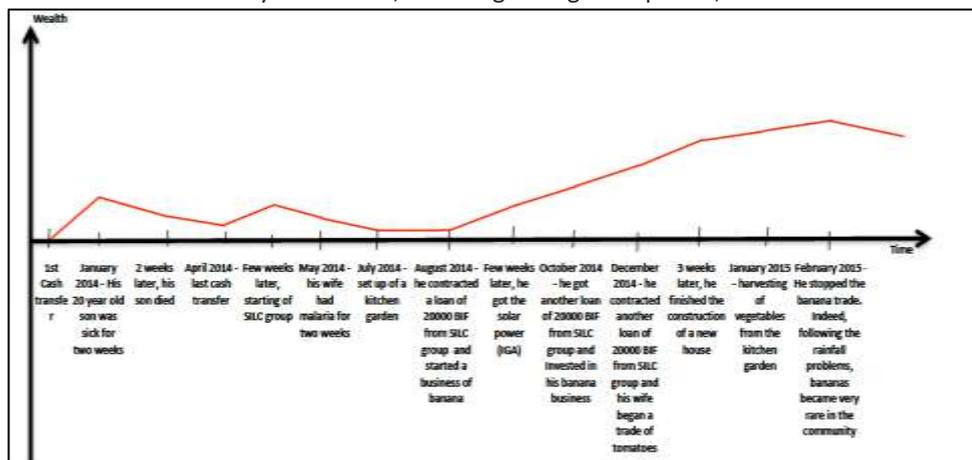
The selected case study of AM illustrates the drop-improve-decline scenario, highlighting the range of shocks that participants are exposed to and need to withstand to survive and to harness positive impacts of *Terintambwe*.

Box 1 AM from Nyabikenke colline – case study of longitudinal trajectories

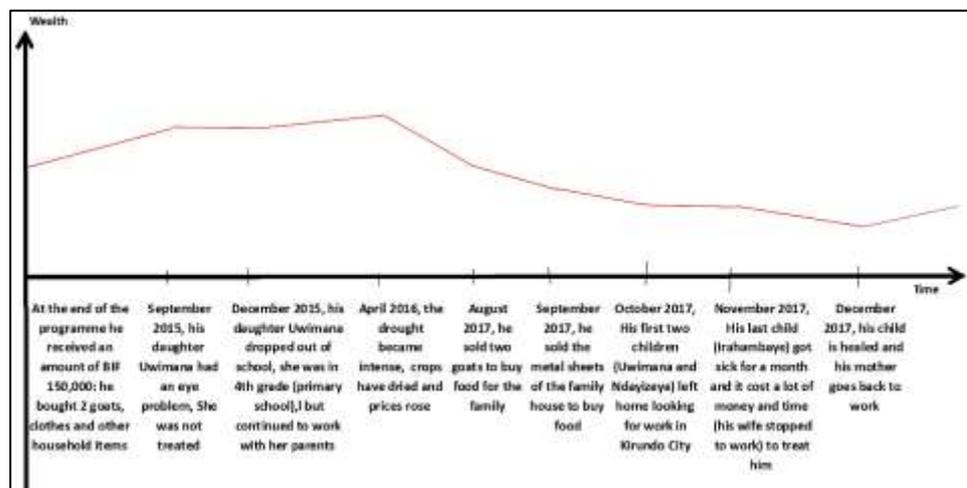
AM is a 48-year old male former Terintambwe participant, and currently lives with his wife and three of their children in Nyabikenke colline. The life history diagram depicting his self-reported wealth and wellbeing over time until before the start of the programme shows that AM had to cope with some large shocks in his early life, including the death of his parents, the flight from war, drought and illness. The war period had a particularly devastating effect.



Participation in Terintambwe contributed to improvements in AM's wealth, and that of the entire household. The history diagram covering the programme period shows that wealth increased mostly after the first year of the programme. AM and his wife started many businesses, including selling solar power, a banana business and tomato trade, which were facilitated by and taking out loans from SILCs. The household also experienced shocks, including the death of their son, and illness of his wife. Both led to decreases in wealth and wellbeing.



After the programme had come to an end, AM and his household initially managed to keep wealth and wellbeing fairly stable. His daughter dropping out of school contributed towards economic wellbeing as she was able to contribute to household work. The effects of the drought in mid-2016 had devastating effects on the harvest, and reduced crops coincided with higher prices on the market. Ultimately AM had to resort to selling assets including goats and iron sheets. Two of his sons decided to move to Kirundo city in search of work. The household situation is slowly improving again, particularly as their son is no longer ill and AM's wife can go back to work.



5. Constrainers and enablers of graduation

In this section, we explore the factors that undermined graduation trajectories after programme end, and the enablers that allowed for harnessing some level of positive change.

5.1. Constrainers

The most commonly mentioned reason for why previous *Terintambwe* participants did not do well after graduation from the programme was the **drought** from late 2015 throughout 2016 into 2017. This is illustrated by a quote from a former male participant: *“The important factor that affected people more than any other thing is the drought”* [NN] and female focus group respondents: *“Most of us had improved but declined after because of the drought”* [FGD-F-Kag].

Lack of rain resulted in a variety of challenges, many of which are interconnected and with strong consequences for household wealth and wellbeing of its individual members. It resulted in failed harvests across all study locations, translating into reduced income for those that relied heavily on cultivation: *“we had improved as we were selling banana for some of us. But when the drought occurred, it all dried”* [FGD-F-Kag].

Previous *Terintambwe* participants with other income-generating activities benefited from this diversification of economic activities but also experienced a slump in their income due to a general decrease of economic activity: *“In July 2015, the household wealth declined as the business collapsed and there were no job opportunities as people were fleeing the country”* [NzN]. The availability of day labour also decreased, making it more difficult to earn income: *“We couldn’t even find people to hire us in order to work for them. Those who were hired were paid BIF 1,000 or 1/2kg of maize costed BIF 1,000 which means that for example people who had 5 children couldn’t have enough food for both of them”* [FGD-F-Kag].

A commonly adopted strategy for coping with the drought and its consequences was the sale of assets. Many previous participants opted to sell the assets that they obtained through the programme or as a result of income-generating activities promoted through the programme. This includes mobile phones, small livestock, iron sheets, bicycles and other productive and domestic assets. A former female participants from Nyabikenke explains: *“I noticed that people destroyed their house to sell the metal sheets, and their goats which means that they returned to their previous level.”* [ML]

In terms of wellbeing, lack of food from cultivation and lack of income to purchase food or afford other basic necessities had far-reaching consequences. Many respondents reported widespread hunger. They also reported issues with health, and the inability to get health care or purchase medication to exacerbate illbeing: *“Many people became sick because of hunger and we couldn’t afford medical treatment.”* [MP]

The second most commonly mentioned constrainer in terms of graduation after the end of the programme was the political **crisis**: *“The drought and the crisis are the factors that prevented us from improving. Subsequently, we couldn’t work as before.”* [MP]

Fear and uncertainty regarding how the crisis might develop appeared to trigger coping strategies, such as sale of assets and moving away to other communes or countries. A former female participant explained how fear of conflict led to distress sales: *“When the program ended, I was selling banana juice, hence there was stability in the household wealth from that period until April when people started to flee the country. Our wealth declined since April as we sold the goat and a hen from the program because of fear.”* [NB] A former male participant highlights the role of rumours in catalysing

anxieties: *“There are some people who sold their possessions because of rumours about a probable war.”* [NE]

A few respondents also commented on **household-level dynamics** and how poor relationships may inhibit the ability to improve or maintain wealth levels. A former male participant from Sigu commented about those in the dropping out category: *“This category also includes those who broken up with their wives and are constantly in family disputes.”* [NN] A former female participant from Kagege pointed at the importance of consensual decision making: *“People in that category are household which didn’t make good use of transfers as there were no consensus in the household decision making.”* [NC]

Many of the respondents also spoke about former *Terintambwe* participants **leaving** their collines in relation to declining trajectories. This includes temporary moves to other communes, or more long-term moves to other countries. These departures were linked to the drought and crisis, although the exact reasons for leaving were not always clear. Escaping hunger, searching for work and responding to fears of conflict were all mentioned as reasons for people leaving their homes. Longer term departures were strongly associated with worsening conditions and dropping out scenario:

“[the dropping-out category] is composed of people who went to camps or in other communes because of hunger.” [NN]

“many Terintambwe participants had improved but went back to Ntahonikora category as they destroyed their houses and left. Some of those who didn’t leave are hosted by people for whom they work.” [FGD-M-Kag]

Experiences are not unequivocally negative, however. One former *Terintambwe* participant spoke of his experience of working in Tanzania, and how it affected his family both positively and negatively:

“I was in Tanzania since the end of March 2017, and we continued improving because I was sending money back home until mid-April. This is when I went to jail [because of travelling without documentation] and wealth declined. It worsened when the house collapsed, and [the household] started feeling the effects of drought until August when I got released. When I came back in December, their wealth improved a little because now both of us were working, and I had brought some money.” [NN]

Given the qualitative nature of this research, it is difficult to gauge the scale of former participants having left their homes. The issue was mentioned in almost all research activities, but some respondents indicated that the actual number of people having left is relatively small: *“Even if some Terintambwe participants left they are not many compared to others. Only 3 persons from the program left.”* [FGD-M-Kag]. This comment also suggests that former participants were less likely to leave their homes compared to those who were not part of the programme. Although not mentioned explicitly elsewhere, this does seem plausible with many former participants having reported that the programme helped them to survive as it provided them with assets to sell for the purchase of food. In contrast, others had to move elsewhere in search of work and cash to fight hunger.

Nevertheless, high levels of uncertainty associated with the drought and crisis has created great anxiety among former *Terintambwe* participants: *“The reasons of declining are the drought which caused hunger and the fear of the future that makes me permanently wonder if I will have a place to work the next day”* [NB].

5.2. Enablers

Enablers of graduation, or making improvements in household wealth and wellbeing, were almost exclusively discussed in relation to the drought and crisis and the ability to withstand these two large-scale and pervasive shocks.

Availability of assets was mentioned as the prime factor that prevented former *Terintambwe* participants from dropping out. Nevertheless, while the sale of assets was deemed to be a crucial buffer against shocks, it was also discussed in response to questions about why participants had not improved. Male focus group discussants in Kagege related the sale of assets in response to the drought to holding them back from generating income: *“My life worsened because I had a bicycle that I was using as a mean of transportation to go fetch water or cultivate but I sold it. Now I have to walk. [...] Personally, I was told in the neighborhood that I had improved because I had bought a plot in which I built a house, a new bicycle and 2 goats. My life worsened because the only thing that remains is the metal sheets, everything else has been sold.”* [FGD-M-Kag]

Ownership of land emerged as an important enabler that allowed former participants to flourish or maintain their wealth. A former male participant in Sigu indicated: *“[people in the flat-line category] had sufficient land that they had been able to exploit and had sufficient food stocks.”* [NN] Similarly, a former female participant said: *“[He] didn’t decline nor improved because he was cultivating his land. When he works for others, it was only for ensuring secondary needs such as buying salt.”* [NC] The importance of ownership of land also emerged from focus groups with male respondents who indicated having improved since the end of the programme:

“I had a field and I got a significant harvest before the drought which enabled me to face it without having to buy food. I have managed to rent other fields and I am expecting a good harvest in the days ahead.” [FGD-M-Kag]

“[I] continued improving after the program because I had a big land, thus a significant harvest which helped me to face the drought and I am currently renting fields.” [FGD-M-Kag]

The availability of alternative **economic opportunities** emerged as an important factor that allowed former *Terintambwe* participants to limit or smooth their loss in wealth. Such opportunities appear to have been most prevalent in Sigu colline, which is surrounded by lakes Rweru and Kanzigiri, neighbouring agriculturally productive communes and close to the borders with Rwanda and Tanzania:

“I know 2 people in this category who have managed to stabilize their wealth because they were doing boat transportation. [...] Those who have managed to stabilize their wealth are the ones who had other income generating activities in addition to cultivating.” [BM]

“because people in that [flat-line] category had other income generating activities like fishing or transport of people by boat; the others had sufficient land that they had been able to exploit and had sufficient food stocks.” [NN]

“I managed to stay stable because I continued selling donuts. Now I can buy 10 kg of flour and make donuts. I am moving slowly without improving or declining.” [FGD-M-Sig]

The positive effects of engaging in alternative income-generating opportunities are not limited to Sigu, however. A male focus group respondent from Kagege explained: *“I know 2 persons in this [improvers] category. One of them is selling banana fruits and the other sells donuts. They managed to continue improving because they were coltan minors.”* [FGD-F-Kag]. The combination of opportunities and

diversification of activities appears a helpful strategy, as highlighted by the experience of a female focus group respondent:

“I am umukene. When the program ended, I got a solar panel and I was charging people’s telephone and owning a hair salon. We rented a land to cultivate for 4 years and we also bought banana plantations of BIF 200,000 one and the other BIF 50,000.” [FGD-F-Kag]

The inclusion of household members can contribute to maintaining household wealth. Responses suggested that adolescents in particular were drawn into work, either at home or elsewhere, in order to contribute to the household economy. The case of former male participant AM from Nyabikenke colline (see Box 1) offers an insightful example. Both his daughter and son moved to Kirundo town to look for work. Uwimana is reportedly working as a nanny and Ndayizeye is herding someone’s goats, and they have both been sending money back home in support of the family. AM doesn’t know when his children will return but expects his son to come back after he has earned considerable money. He expressed the expectation his children are better off as a result of moving to Kirundo town: *“my children who went to Kirundo can now eat twice a day, while here we eat once. I think that they are better off than the rest of the household”* [AM].

Household dynamics were also deemed important in relation to retaining wealth and securing a level of wellbeing, particularly in the face of adversity. Such dynamics refer to planning and collaboration between household members as well the contribution of members to the overall household economy. In response to the question about what types of households might be in the flat-line category, a female respondent highlighted the collaboration between spouses: *“I know two people in this [flat-liner] category [...]. They were also in good relationships with their respective wives who were helping them [...] they were planning together within the household.”* [BM].

Other respondents referred to household size, and the benefits of having more productive member, in relation to withstanding shocks and securing a basic level of wellbeing: *“The only difference [between categories] is that some households are composed of many people, hence a significant pay when they work for others.”* [FGD-F-Nya] and *“also those who have husbands are better because they share household expenses”* [FGD-F-Nya].

In response to questions about what enabled people to retain wealth or caused them to drop down, various respondents also referred to people’s attitudes. Respondents suggested that former participants who had followed the dropping out category did not have the right **mindset** or ideas. Focus group respondents mentioned the following:

“Households which dropped out are those of people who did not mentally evolve. [...]I know one case of a person who remained in a house consisted entirely of grass because he never changed his mindset, he is irresponsible.” [FGD-F-Nya]

“People who dropped out are those who didn’t change their mindset despite trainings. For example they were having fun instead of thinking of building houses.” [FGD-M-Kag]

Finally, **improved climate conditions** mean that former participants have benefited from harvests from the end of 2017 and early 2018, increasing food availability directly for those cultivating as well as reducing prices of food: *“In January 2018, [...] there was an important harvest in the country which led to price decrease of consumption goods. [We] benefited from the situation even though they hadn’t a field belonging to us”* [NzN].

The case study of former Terintambwe participant MA from Kagege colline (see Box 2) provides an illustration of constrainers and enablers, and how they combined in trajectory that allowed for maintaining a higher wealth category despite deteriorations in household wealth.

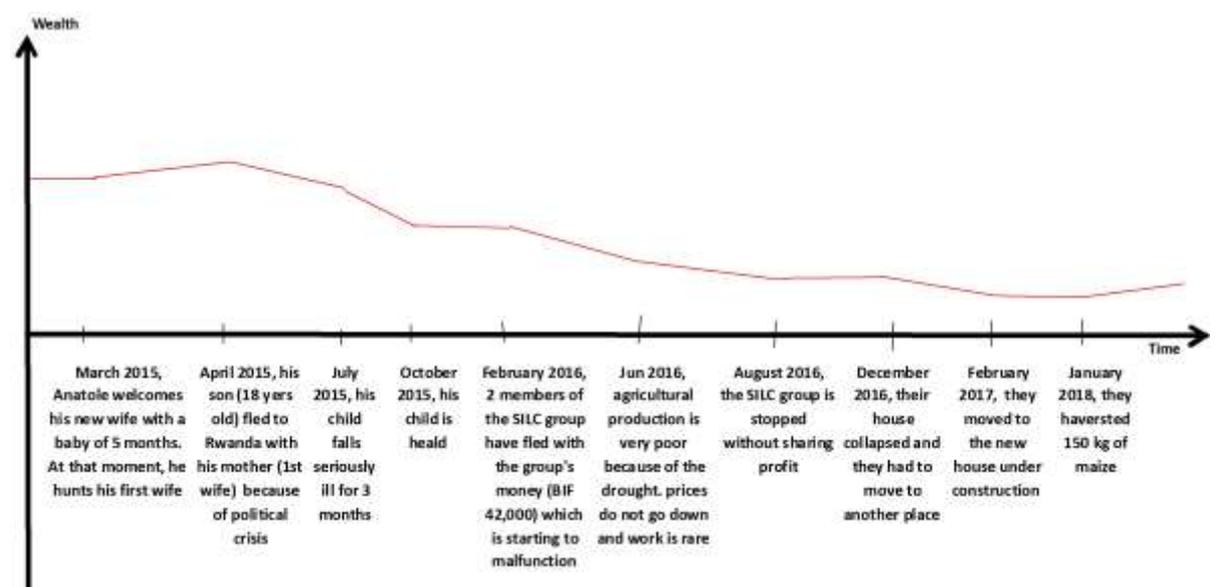
Box 2 MA from Kagege colline – case study of constrainers and enablers

MA is a 45-year old male former *Terintambwe* participant from Kagege colline in Busoni commune. He was living alone before the start of the programme in early 2013, having divorced a few years earlier from with his first wife with whom he had four children ranging between 20 and 3 years old. He was earning money as a day labourer and through trade. His 14-year old son was living with him during the time of programme, contributing to the household's (re-)productive activities after coming back from school. MA improved his household wealth over the course of the programme, starting a cassava flour business and starting to sell charcoal. He was also able to purchase land. Towards the end of the programme, he married his new wife KA, and they had a son together. His wife also contributed to income-generating activities as she was doing pottery and selling handicrafts.

MA self-identified as Umukene at the end of the programme, and still does so three years later: *“I am Umukene because I have things to rely on as I have a land to cultivate. Before, I was living from working for others only but now I rarely do it. [...] When the program ended, I was cutting trees for the charcoal from 5a.m until 11a.m. Once home, I would rest and cultivate my field in the afternoon. When I wasn't going to cut trees, I was cultivating for others until noon and in the afternoon I could go fetch water, search firewood or cook. Now I cultivate my field until noon, and in the afternoon I rest. I go to the mosque for the Muslim prayer time.”*

His spouse KA is currently pregnant but continues work: *“When the program ended, I was cultivating for others twice a week and our field the remaining days, I was also doing pottery. Moreover, I was selling fish. Now I still cultivate for others like once a week and my field the remaining days. I continued doing pottery but I stopped selling.”*

Despite having maintained wealth category, MA's wealth and wellbeing did decline since the end of the programme. The post-programme trajectory illustrates the sharp drop following the drought and its knock-on effects, and also shows other shocks that impacted income generation, including his older son fleeing to Rwanda with his mother and his youngest son getting ill. Household does begin to improve again with a recent harvest.



6. Role of Terintambwe programme

This section explores the role of different programme components in post-programme trajectories. Respondents were asked about the most important components of the *Terintambwe* programme in affecting change, particularly focused on the period after the programme had already come to an end. Questions therefore focused on which components were deemed helpful in supporting former participants to maintain their improved living conditions or to avoid falls into worse conditions. A scoring exercise was used to act as a reminder of the different programme components, and to stimulate conversation about this topic within focus groups and with case study respondents (see Pictures 1 and 2).

Picture 2 Women scoring Terintambwe programme components in Kivu colline



Picture 1 Results of scoring exercise in Kivu colline

Component	Score	Rank
Ibikorero by'ishuri	= 4	1
Elituelle (CAN)	= 4	1
Telefone	= 6	5 th
Amafaranga yo ku kwezi	= 21	7 th
Umutebe	= 19	2 nd
SILC	= 13	3 rd
Inyishu (nyuma y'ibikorero)	= 9	4 th
Akarima kigizamo	= 4	6 th

6.1. Cash and asset transfers

The scoring exercises and subsequent discussions led to a broad consensus across respondents suggesting that the cash components – including both the **cash transfers** and **asset transfers** – were most crucial in affecting positive change during the programme, which subsequently helped to survive or make ends meet during hungry and crisis period after the programme had ended. Women from Kivu colline explained as follows:

“Cash transfer comes in the first position because it has enabled most of us to build our own houses, rent a piece of land and start cultivating for ourselves, buy goats, and allow them to feed our kids.” Other women in the group said: *“For us, the asset was most important because it gave us the ability to be SILC members and start our own business. It was the asset transfer that allowed us to make the first contributions, we could not have saved [in SILC] with monthly transfers.”* [FGD-F-Kiv]

Indeed, many respondents referred to how the cash and lump-sum asset transfers contributed to the purchase of assets, which helped them after the programme period as their sale generated crucial income at a time of hunger and lack of economic activities, or because it allowed them to maintain their living conditions and livelihoods. Former participants reported to have bought household items

such as pots, plates, clothes and blankets, productive assets including hoes, bicycles and small livestock such as goats and chickens, and large assets such iron sheets for roofing and land. Former *Terintambwe* participants referred to how the programme helped them survive either because they were able to sell these assets, or because they were able to use them in ongoing economic activities: *“Terintambwe helped me to stay alive during hard times. I sold the metal roof sheets in order to live. I also bought hoes useful for my daily work”* [MP].

The investment of cash into IGAs appeared less helpful for sustainability of impacts with many former participants having been unable to continue their businesses. In both focus group discussions and case study conversations, many respondents attested to the collapse of their IGAs. Male focus group respondents indicated: *“No one is undertaking an IGA. They had started but used the asset during the drought”* [FGD-M-Bug]. Detailed discussions with case study respondents suggest that this mostly occurred from mid-2016 onwards, when they were no longer able to invest in their IGAs. The experience of a female respondent illustrate this: *“In February 2016 when the drought occurred, it affected the harvest of beans and other crops. Therefore, I stopped selling banana juice in April”* [ML].

In addition to being sold, assets in support of IGAs also got damaged or stolen or were lost, which often led to the discontinuation of the economic activity. Most of the mobile phones that were provided through the programme (and were not sold off) were reported to have broken down or have been stolen, and no longer in use. One case study respondent lost a pig due to an attack by a dog, and others reported that their solar panel no longer worked: *“I got a solar panel which got damaged, hence became useless”* [FGD-M-Bug].

The purchase of land appears to have been one of the more successful strategies in harnessing *Terintambwe*'s positive effects in the face of shocks. This is exemplified by the case study of MA (Box 2) and also evident from other responses, such as by women in Sigu: *“The contribution of the cash transfer in my current life is that I bought a plot and built a house with it and livestock”* [FGD-F-Sig] and men from Kagege: *“I used that [Terintambwe] money to sell banana. With the profit I bought a land of BIF175,000 and I built a house. That money is the origin of all I have”* [FGD-M-Kag].

Results of scoring exercise in relation to the other components were very mixed. SILC, training and coaching, kitchen garden, mobile phone, and health insurance and school materials were all ranked in the second or third position by at least one respondent. We discuss each of these components in turn.

6.2. SILC

The establishment and membership of **SILCs** appeared a mixed experience for many former participants. The ability to save and borrow offered vital opportunities for meeting basic needs and for investing in assets and livelihood opportunities, as indicated by two former female participants: *“SILC was helpful because when we shared at the end of the cycle, I got money for health care card, bought cloths and it also allowed me to buy food”* [DK] and *“My wealth increased slightly in July 2016 when we shared profit in SILC. That is also when I bought the plot”* [MP]. The SILC also helped to harness benefits from the *Terintambwe* programme, helping to invest any profits made into large assets such as land: *“SILC taught me to save. I was doing bicycle transport and when we shared SILC profits, I got BIF50, 000 that I used to buy 3 plots and I still have them”* [FGD-M-Kag].

Unfortunately in many cases these positive experiences were offset by malfunctioning or discontinuation of the groups. Many respondents indicated that the SILC in their community had broken down since the end of *Terintambwe*. Discussions regarding SILCs indicated that they appeared to work well at first, when they were set up during the programme period and immediately after the programme had ended. However, the drought and crisis meant that SILC members failed to re-pay

their loans or that they left with funds received through the SILC. Mutual trust between members of the SILC, which is key to their functioning, was undermined, leading to the collapse of SILCs that were set up through Terintambwe.

Female focus group respondents described the implications of people's inability to repay loans as follows:

"Another impact of the long dry season is that people left, most of them to Tanzania, with the loans contracted in SILC groups. In one group, 5 people left with an amount of 300.000 BiF. In another group an amount of 200.000 BiF was taken away by 2 people who left. [...] All SILC members who left did it because of the fear of not being able to pay back the loan acquired."
[FGD-F-Kiv]

In some cases, SILCs appeared not to function well because of mismanagement, such as in Sigu colline: *"We were saving through SILC [...] However, SILC groups stopped because the same person was responsible as secretary and treasury. He was keeping money saved and we lost it when we wanted to share profits (for the second cycle)"* [BM]. In other cases, disagreements led to discontinuation of the groups, such as reported by men in Kagege: *"We have stopped because we couldn't agree on some SILC rules regarding the interest rate"* [FGD-M-Kag]. One respondent indicated that SILC members who were not former Terintambwe participants were less reliable in repaying the loans, causing the group to break down.

The breakdown of SILCs negatively impacted former participants' trajectories and their household wealth: *"SILC started being less active in February 2016 until August when it definitely stopped, and household wealth declined as [I] was using SILC loans to buy seeds and pay field workers. [...] We are worse off because SILC groups stopped"* [MA]. Some respondents indicated to have started new SILC groups, including former Terintambwe participants and non-participants but connected through a sense of mutual trust.

6.3. Training and coaching

The majority of respondents referred to training and coaching as a positive component of the programme. Even if they were not afforded high scores, no negative views were shared in relation to these services. Low scores for training and coaching were attributed to participants being unable to remember the topics that were discussed or to limited changes in: *"The training enabled me to read and write but it didn't change anything in my wellbeing"* [MA].

Nevertheless, many responses attested to the value of training and coaching in improving wealth and wellbeing. New knowledge gained about SILCs, IGAs and kitchen gardens was deemed vital for the improvements that were made during the programme period and for maintaining wealth in the face of shocks. Former participants also indicated that it put them in a better position compared to non-participants to start any new businesses or economic activities now that times are improving again, with the training having provided them with essential skills and knowledge but seemingly also having instilled a sense of confidence. The following responses illustrate these experiences:

"I am Umukene because before the program, I hadn't the ability to take care of myself, I could get money and not be able to use it efficiently but through trainings I've learnt to spend responsibly. The program taught me to look for opportunities and seize them. Even if Terintambwe helped us, there was a time of starvation, and we lost everything we had, but now I can borrow money from someone and purchase goods to resell, when I make profit I will pay back and continue my business." [FGD-F-Sig]

“We are better placed because of the training received. We have been taught to cultivate in kitchen gardens and in case of lack of food, I will have vegetables to eat. Also, I can initiate income generating activities whenever I get funds.” [MA]

“We declined without reaching worse levels because of trainings from the programme. We have learned how to sustain our wellbeing through SILC, and the knowledge acquired will always help us to initiate income generating activities.” [FGD-F-Nya]

“It is true that we have declined but we are no longer Ntahnikora because even if we used and finished the asset provided by the program, we have been trained to be creative and find ways to continue living.” [FGD-F-Sig]

The role of training and coaching also extended to issues other than economic activities, including household dynamics, family planning and sanitation practices:

“There are many households that were in conflict but currently live peacefully due to trainings and coaching.” [FGD-M-Kag]

“We were taught not to be involved into adultery. We were also taught appropriate behaviour towards our wives.” [NzN]

“The coaching and training program especially family planning helped me to space births which was very helpful during the period of food shortage. I was able to move from one place to another searching for food without being obliged to travel with a baby. Also, good hygiene practices taught to us like washing clothing allowed us to be considered in community and have dignity.” [FGD-F-Kiv]

A clear gender dynamic emerged in the analysis of responses mentioning training and coaching. Many more women than men gave these components higher scores, and were more explicit in their value-added. Especially the role of training and coaching in providing knowledge, skills and a sense of confidence in terms of how to handle conflicts or make use of new opportunities emerged from conversations with female respondents in both focus groups and case studies.

6.4. Kitchen garden

Experiences with **kitchen gardens** were mixed. Most former participants attested to their value in the provision of vegetables and securing a healthy diet at the time of the programme or shortly thereafter. In some cases, the kitchen garden is still being used: *“I gave 2 points (20%) to the kitchen garden because I still consume vegetables from that garden” [FGD-F-Nya]* and *“I voted for kitchen garden because I used to buy vegetables but I have learnt how to grow it, and I like eating vegetables” [FGD-M-Bus]*.

However, many participants struggled to maintain their gardens. Many reported their garden to have been destroyed or to have dried up, and having been unable or unwilling to rebuild it. Respondents indicated that kitchen gardens are time-consuming and resource-demanding, making it difficult to maintain them: *“it is time consuming because it doesn’t last long and you constantly build a new one” [FGD-F-Kag]*.

Many respondents preferred to grow vegetables in plots rather than kitchen gardens, and indicated to have shifted vegetable cultivation from the kitchen garden to plots. A former male and female Terintambwe participant said: *“The kitchen garden was used to grow vegetables but it has dried during the drought. Now we have a field of vegetables but not in a kitchen garden” [NE]* and *“I built the Kitchen garden but it has collapsed. I still have a field of vegetables but not in a kitchen garden” [ML]*.

The experience of having set up the kitchen garden during the programme period appears to have created awareness of the importance of vegetables and knowledge of how to grow them.

6.5. Mobile phone

All *Terintambwe* participants received a **mobile phone** at the start of the programme. This was primarily used for transferring the programme's cash components to mobile accounts, but also offered an important asset to facilitate trade. Despite the large majority of participants not having owned or used a mobile phone before the start of the programme and being illiterate, most established a level of functional literacy and capacity to operate the phones over the course of the programme period (Devereux et al. 2015). Indeed, it proved a vital asset for facilitating business transactions: *"I voted for telephone because it is a must when you do business. I was using it to purchase goods and resell them"* [FGD-M-Sig].

Unfortunately the benefits of the provision of mobile phones do not appear to have been maintained after programme end. The large majority of the respondents indicated no longer to have the phone, mostly because it got damaged. Others had their phone stolen or lost it. A few respondents indicated to have bought a new phone but most were unable to buy a replacement.

6.6. Health insurance

Terintambwe participants received a **health insurance** card for themselves and their household members at the start of the programme, and were encouraged to renew it every year. The extent to which former participants found it useful in response to health issues is mixed. Many respondents attested to the value of having had health insurance, and how it allowed them to seek health care for themselves or other household members. Others, however, indicated that they did not see the value as they had not used it. This is despite the fact that health problems appear widespread among former *Terintambwe* participants, including their children. Malaria was mentioned most frequently in reference to children, while they and other members were reported to suffer from eye infections, respiratory problems and fractures: *"She [my daughter] is sick now, she spits blood when she coughs. It started a month ago and she went to see a doctor. They gave her medicines but she fell sick again"* [BM].

Given the experiences during programme implementation, some former participants renewed their health insurance cards that were provided through the programme at their own expense. One respondent explained that the experience of having health insurance triggered him to renew it, even after programme end: *"all my life I had never used a health insurance, and probably I would have never used it if I hadn't known it in the program. It is when I got it that I saw its importance and I still use it"* [FGD-M-Bus, 2018].

Others indicated that they would like to renew their health insurance but that the drops in wealth does not allow them to do so. Female focus group respondents indicated: *"I don't have it [health insurance] because I don't have means to renew it"* [FGD-F-Nya] and *"we don't have money to renew it. When my kids got sick, I ask for medicines in the neighbourhood"* [FGD-F-Kag].

Responses by those no longer having health insurance suggest that children do not get receive health care: *"She has eye problems since last week, and suffered from malaria sometimes. Except that, no other disease. When she gets sick, she stays home and wait until she gets better. We don't have health insurance"* [MG, 2018]. Children under five of years of age, however, are reported to receive free medical care, which has proven crucial in cases of malaria.

6.7. School materials

Concern provided **school materials** including books, uniforms and school uniforms to Terintambwe participants with children in the first phase programme implementation. Respondents frequently mentioned their importance in terms of helping children into school at the time of the programme, but also in relation to keeping children in school after the programme had come to an end. One female respondent explained as follows: *“My kids are still wearing the uniform we got from the program, and those who do not have uniform are chased from school. Without uniform, my kids would have been chased from school”* [FGD-F-Kiv, 2018].

Former participants with children indicated that many of the materials are still being used: *“He [my son] still uses the school materials that had been provided by the program”* [MG]. However, all school uniforms and materials were reported to have been worn down, and that no replacement was possible due to lack of funds: *“At the end of the program, he still had uniforms that had been provided by Concern. For the moment, these uniforms have been torn apart. For the rest, there is no difference”* [MP].

7. Household dynamics

The role of household dynamics in relation to wealth trajectories emerged as an important theme across the analysis of case studies. This pertains to (i) changes in household composition over time, and (ii) relationships within the household.

7.1. Changes in household composition

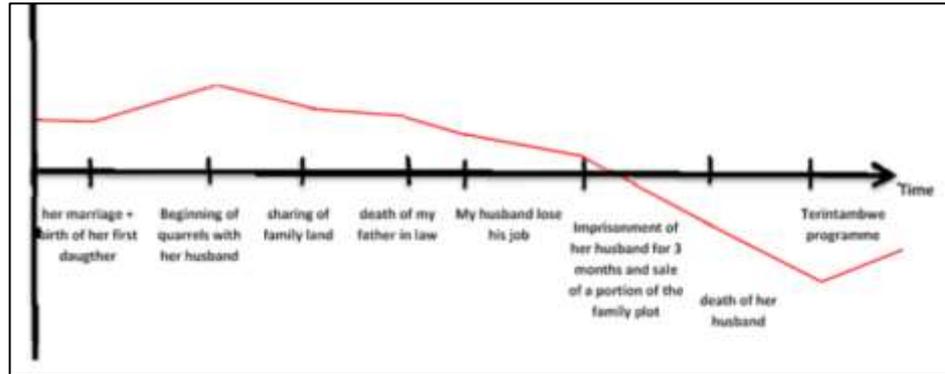
The majority of household case studies experienced considerable changes in household composition over time. Longitudinal analysis of qualitative and quantitative data shows that members leaving or (re-)entering households is common, and that disintegration and formation of new households occurs frequently. Reasons for departure include death, the formation of new households (e.g. children starting their own families), search for work in other communes, urban areas or other countries, or family conflicts. Reasons for new members coming into households include birth of babies and breakdown of relationships (e.g. children moving back into their parental home).

The departure of able-bodied household members is often associated with drops in wealth as it leads to lower levels of income. Breakdowns of relationships, particularly between spouses or main adults within the household, were also considered to be detrimental shocks as they may disrupt living arrangements and require physical relocation. As indicated by one female focus group respondent: *“the main reason why my situation worsened is the drought, and my husband left me with our four children. I couldn’t take care of them alone”* [FGD-F-Kag].

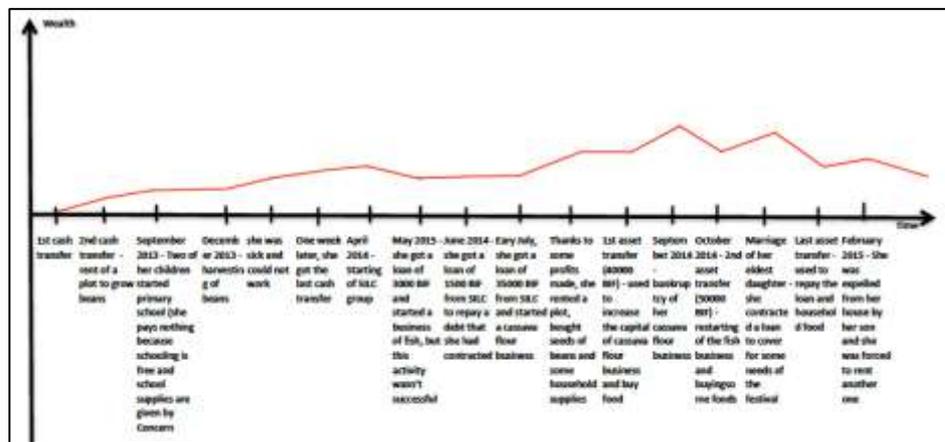
The case study by former female participant BM from Sigu colline (see Box 3) illustrates how changes in household composition affect wealth and wellbeing of its members. Since BM first formed her household around 1995, members leaving the household due to death, interpersonal conflict and breakdown of relationships represented shocks that led to reductions in wealth and wellbeing. Equally, (re-)entry of adult household members led to improvements, including a new spousal relationship and her adult daughter moving back into the house.

Box 3 BM from Sigu colline – case study of changes in household composition

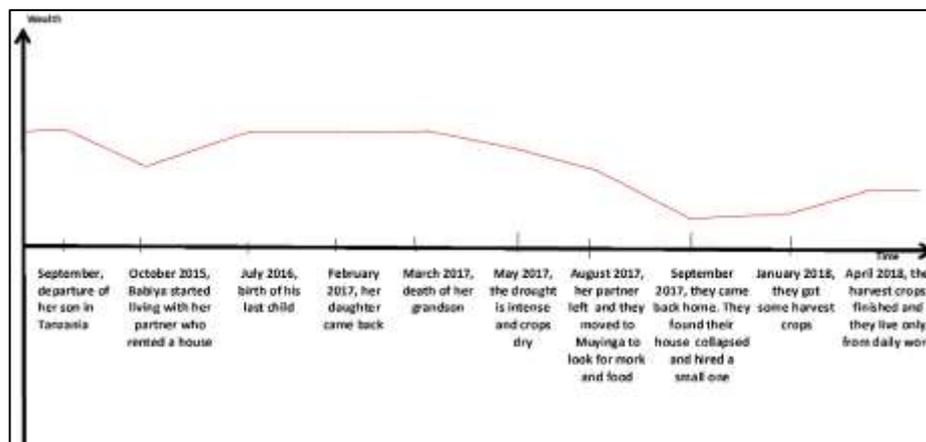
BM is a 45-year old female former *Terintambwe* participant living in Sigu colline. She is currently living with seven of her children, ranging between one year and 23 years of age. The life history diagram representing the period before she joined the programme indicates that her wealth and wellbeing dropped following family-related shocks, including a troubled relationship with her husband and deaths of her father in law and husband.



BM’s wealth started to increase after joining *Terintambwe*, with cash transfers and investments in cassava flour and fish trade businesses generating income for her and the household. Her oldest daughter’s wedding led to a drop in wealth due to expenditures on festivities and losing a productive member of the household. Towards the end of the programme period, her son chased her from her house together with her children, and she briefly rented a house elsewhere.



After the programme had come to an end, and having returned to her own house again, her oldest son left for Tanzania, causing a considerable drop in wealth. BM’s wealth stabilised after living with a new partner; unfortunately this did not last long as: “my partner left due to a country policy requiring all couples to register officially. He therefore went back to live with his first wife” [BM] Her oldest daughter returned back after separating from her partner, which contributes to availability of food in the household: “When we were in the old house [...], it wasn’t easy and we could sleep with an empty stomach but now 3 of us work and we share food” [BM, daughter]. BM’s daughter does not feel happy about being back home though: “It happens to be involved in disputes with my siblings. They mock me regarding the fact that I came back home. It’s shameful to go back home.” [BM, daughter]



Changes in household composition also interact with programme implementation, and the extent to which participants are able to capitalise on the opportunities offered. One of the case studies illustrates this challenge. Former female *Terintambwe* participant NC was 18 years old when selected for the programme and as heading a household including herself and three younger brothers following their parents' death. She got married after the end of the programme, and moved away from the household in August. Her brothers considered her departure a big shock to household wealth, as reported by her oldest sibling: *"When Claudine got married in August 2016, we significantly declined as she was the main breadwinner. She was the one connecting us [brothers] to potential employers. We continued declining during the drought because of lack of food and work."* [NC]

7.2. Household relationships

Relationships between household members, and spouses in particular, emerged as a theme in explaining positive changes in household wealth, or in keeping the household and its members back. When asked about why some households may belong to the 'dropping out' category of trajectories, respondents referred to spouses quarrelling or not making decisions together. Similarly, households that were said to do better were those in which spouses made decisions together. In relation to the different graduation trajectories, female focus group respondents described as follows: *"Households who belong to the dropping out category are households made up of both husbands and wives but lack dialogue from each part in the decision-making process. Households who belong to the flat-line category are those where husbands and wives take decisions together."* [FGD-F-Sig]

The importance of strong relationships between family members wasn't limited to spouses only and also extended to others, particularly older children who were heavily involved in business activities and were living either in or away from the household. Two widowed female former *Terintambwe* participants highlighted the importance of good relationships with their children, who had left the household after starting their own families, for their involvement in their businesses and provision of basic needs: *"I was in good relationships with my daughters, and the one who got married has been helping me to run the business, no change"* [MP]. The case study of BM (see Box 3 above) also provides an example of the importance of relationships between parents and their adult children.

Findings also point to gendered dynamics, with female respondents indicating that female programme participants fared better than men. Female focus group respondents indicated: *"Also these [dropping out] households are mostly those where the main Terintambwe participant was a men. They were wasting money and in some cases they would oblige their wives to give them the cash transferred before reaching home"* [FGD-F-Sig]. Analysis of prevalence of post-programme graduation trajectories across male and female participants does not confirm major differences, however.

Findings do suggest that women felt empowered through *Terintambwe*, both economically and personally. Women refer to having cultivated the ability to support their families, and to stand up to their men. Focus group respondents explained as follows: *"The programme empowered women. We thought that we were unable to perform men's duties. With trainings, we started building houses, educating kids and we have initiated household income generating activities"* [FGD-F-Nya] and *"The programme has given us pride, as women. We have been able to do the work usually reserved for men"* [FGD-F-Sig].

8. Conclusion

This study aimed to gain insight into post-programme graduation trajectories of former participants in the first cohort of the Terintambwe programme in Burundi that was implemented by Concern Worldwide between early 2013 and the middle of 2015. A new round of qualitative data was collected in April 2018 to complement longitudinal qualitative and quantitative evaluation data that was collected between late 2012 and mid-2015. Research took place in Kirundo province in the north-eastern part of Burundi, and which was affected by a severe drought with its onset in late 2015 and lasting into early 2017 and by the nationwide political crisis.

In this concluding section, we provide an overview of findings as well as reflections on graduation programming.

8.1. Summary of findings

The large majority of Terintambwe participants were unable to retain the positive effects of the programme. The research clearly shows the challenges in maintaining the progress that was made in the face of large covariant shocks such as drought and political crisis. Newly established businesses and IGAs collapsed, many SILCs were discontinued and many former participants resorted to the sale of assets in order to buy food. The most prevalent post-programme trajectory is a ‘declining’ one, denoting a deterioration of wealth and wellbeing although not dropping down to or below the level that was experienced before the start of the programme. From a longitudinal perspective, the majority of programme participants and their household members experienced a ‘drop-improve-decline’ trajectory.

The drought and political crisis constituted the most important constrainers for graduation, or rather causes for declining levels of wealth. Other factors that contributed to such declines were reportedly lack of collaboration between household members and migration to other collines, communes or countries, with the latter constituting a coping mechanism to manage the consequences of the drought and crisis.

Enablers, or factors that helped to harness positive programme impacts to the best extent possible, included economic and socio-relational aspects. The availability of assets, ownership of land and economic opportunities were considered vital in withstanding the shocks that entered people’s lives after the end of the programme. The benefits of assets were mostly short-lived: for most former participants it provided a source of one-off cash for the purchase of food or other necessities in very lean times. Ownership of land offered more sustained benefits as it allowed for cultivation (despite the drought) and renting out of land. *Terintambwe* participants who had managed to develop IGAs that did not rely on cultivation, such as hairdressing, fishing or transportation were faring comparatively well after programme end. Strong household collaboration and dynamics also contributed to positive outcomes.

The role of *Terintambwe* programme’s many components in harnessing positive change after it had come to an end was mixed. The monetary components – cash transfers and lump-sum asset transfers – were deemed most important as they allowed for purchase of basic necessities and domestic assets, investments in productive assets, participation in SILCs and development of IGAs. In turn, these were vital in retaining levels of household wealth and wellbeing. Participants also greatly valued the contribution of training and coaching as provided through the programme, indicating that it afforded them with knowledge, skills and experience that put them in a better position to withstand shocks and initiate new activities. Experiences with SILCs were more mixed; while they were greatly valued when they worked well during the programme period and immediately after, their discontinuation

thereafter has meant that many former participants no longer use the SILCs that were set up by the programme. Sustainability of other support that was provided by the programme – mobile phones, kitchen gardens, health insurance cards and school materials – was mixed. Experiences with kitchen gardens and health insurance cards were mixed; some participants still used them but others indicated that they were either too much work or too expensive to retain. School materials were mostly still in use and contributing to school attendance, albeit that materials were severely run down with no opportunity for replacement. Mobile phones were no longer in use due to being damaged, lost or stolen.

8.2. Implications for graduation programming

This study points towards the limitations of the *Terintambwe* graduation programme in affecting positive and sustainable change amongst participants. However, it should be noted that this research took place in an area of Burundi that is particularly vulnerable to climatic shocks and the consequences of political crisis due to its reliability on cross-border trade. The finding in this study should therefore not be extrapolated to all areas in which the *Terintambwe* programme was implemented, most notably Cibitoke province.

At the same time this study's findings hold relevance for understanding effects of graduation model programmes at large, and how positive effects may be sustained into the future. Covariant community-wide shocks and idiosyncratic household-level events can disrupt positive or stable trajectories, leading people to adopt negative coping strategies such as sale of assets and setting them back considerably. These findings are not new, and are well established in studies on poverty dynamics. Nevertheless, we learn about a variety of factors that make former participants more resilient and therefore more likely to maintain their improvements.

Firstly, findings highlight the importance of a **contingency fund** that allow for the provision of emergency support to former participants. Participants in the first cohort of the *Terintambwe* programme did receive an additional transfer at the end of the programme in anticipation of the crisis and its consequences, but it is clear that this did not suffice in preventing the declines in wealth and wellbeing. Emergency support would have been particularly useful at the height of the drought as it could have helped to avoid the widespread sale of assets.

Secondly, continued support for SILCs or other forms of **micro-credit or savings schemes** emerges as an important need for ensuring the sustainability of access to savings and credit for former participants. Discontinuation of SILCs harms members' trust in the mechanisms, and leaves them unwilling to engage in such mechanisms again on their own account and thereby without opportunities for taking out loans at reasonable interest rates. The provision of emergency support as discussed above could help to prevent such discontinuation, although only if it would extend to all community members (as they are also part of SILCs). Sustained community engagement in support of SILCs or the establishment of linkages to reputable micro-credit facilities are other options to be explored.

Thirdly, greater **focus on investments in durable assets** such as land and **wider diversification of IGAs** at the time of programme implementation appears vital to help participants withstand shocks and retain a positive trajectory after the end of the programme. The heavy reliance of many IGAs on cultivation made former participants vulnerable to climatic shocks, while the productive and household assets that were obtained through the programme (notably iron sheets and small livestock) were easily sold off. The findings in this study highlight the importance of investing in more durable assets and greater diversity of IGAs, both within and across households.

Despite the fact that *Terintambwe* participants were not able to retain their upwards trajectories after the programme had come to an end, their experiences do also highlight a positive and salient lesson learned. The combined package of support afforded participants with experiences, new skills and knowledge that places them in a better position to not only withstand shocks but also to start again; respondents in this research almost unanimously reported that they would have been in a worse position without the programme, that they were better able to cope with the drought, crisis and other shocks compared to their neighbours who were not part of the programme, and that they are in a better position to take advantage of new opportunities when they arise. In other words, graduation programmes equip their participants with vital tools for facilitating sustainable graduation. At the same time this study is a powerful reminder of the limitations of the graduation approach in lifting structural barriers and affecting contextual factors that underpin many of people's transitions in and out of poverty.

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