

QUIP IN ACTION

COMMISSIONER: CONCERN WORLDWIDE - VIA TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN

COUNTRY: MALAWI

SAMPLE SIZE: 24-48 INTERVIEWS & 4-8 FGDS IN EACH ROUND

YEARS OF STUDY: 2018, 2020, 2021

PROJECT: LONGITUDINAL STUDY OF ROLE OF GENDER IN GRADUATION MODEL

The Concern Worldwide graduation programme is a 22-month intense intervention to address the many challenges of extreme poverty by simultaneously boosting **livelihoods, income, and providing access to financial services**. The programme consists of five main interventions: (i) comprehensive targeting, (ii) consumption support (provided in the form of a cash transfer over 12 months), (iii) skills training and coaching, (iv) savings and financial access, and (v) asset transfer. In Malawi the programme also aims to tackle **gender exclusion**, and as such a gender specific intervention known as 'Umodzi' was added in 2019 as an additional component. Umodzi engages couples to reflect upon and discuss issues such as gender norms, power dynamics, decision-making, budgeting, violence, positive parenting, and healthy relationships.

Concern Worldwide is working with the Trinity Impact Evaluation Unit at Trinity College Dublin (TIME) as part of a longer-term research project on this intervention; the research will be spread over five years to assess medium term effects. The aim of the research is to estimate the role that gender plays in the graduation model by estimating the impact of three distinct versions of the intervention on gender empowerment and household welfare outcomes:

- The graduation program targeted at women in the household
- The graduation program targeted at men in the household
- The graduation program targeted at women but with additional Umodzi training (targeted at couples)

WHY QUIP:

TCD is running both quantitative and qualitative research; the quantitative component consists of six rounds of an RCT with 1,200 female and 600 male recipients in the treatment arm and 1,500 hh in the control group. The qualitative research component consists of three rounds of QuIP studies across four communities and two districts. The QuIP studies run alongside the RCT to triangulate evidence of intended outcomes and crucially provide further insights into the **causal mechanisms** and drivers of change. The open-ended nature of QuIP complements the quantitative component as it allows respondents to share their own **nuanced experiences** of change in more **depth**, to explain their perceptions of why and how change has (or hasn't) happened and the extent to which this is linked to

the graduation interventions. The goal-free style of questioning means that the responses can reveal a wide range of drivers, including unprompted attribution to the programme.

QuIP's purposive approach to case selection works particularly well within this context where the study is embedded within a wider research project. Where possible, the sampling for these studies has been guided by findings from the quantitative research findings, prior assumptions from the theory of change, and previous QuIP rounds which help to determine where deep dive research questions should be focused.

APPROACH:

In each round interviews were conducted by a local research team with members of 24 households in the first round and 48 households in the second and third rounds. The respondents are selected based on criteria unique to each round depending on research questions, including:

- **Exposure** - to a range of different programme interventions (e.g., Umodzi) and treatment (e.g., which household member was targeted with the cash transfer)
- **Location** - ensuring sufficient saturation within different districts and communities to control for external effects
- **Sex** - including both men and women to understand how messages had been absorbed via different mechanisms, and to understand the impact on intra-household relationships

Questions focus on the following broad domains, seeking to understand what changes respondents have experienced in these areas, and the drivers to which they attribute these changes:

- Income generating activities
- Spending and saving
- Intra-household relationships
- External relationships
- Wellbeing

The interviews are designed to be exploratory, with no mention of the interventions, and are also conducted using QuIP's double blinded approach (with neither interviewers nor respondents knowing the project that is being evaluated) to reduce the risk of confirmation bias. In addition to individual household interviews, focus group discussions were conducted (4 in the first round, 8 in the second round), split between two districts and treatment type. The main purpose of the FGDs is to engage in discussion about the main changes in people's lives across the communities generally, rather than the specific experiences of respondents, thereby reflecting a wider collective view of the perceptions and social norms in the area.

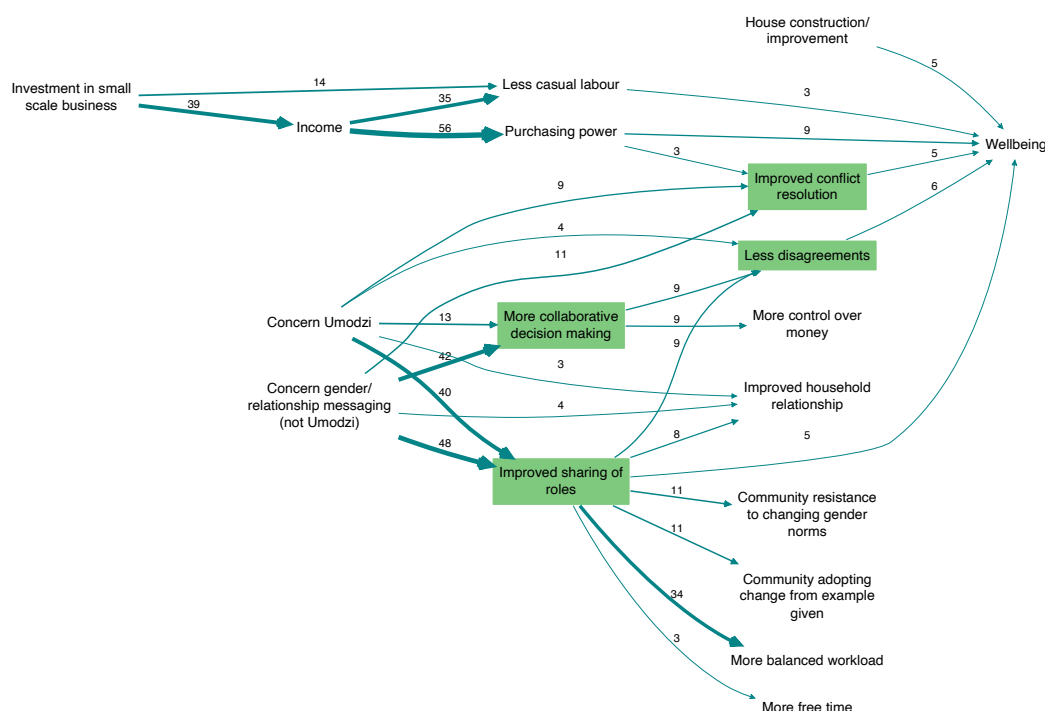
The narrative statements collected in all rounds are coded using QuIP's approach to qualitative thematic analysis, focusing on causal connections where respondents have explained how a change has happened. A narrative analytical report as well as presentation summaries have been submitted by Bath SDR for each round. These findings have been used in [workshops](#), [presentations](#) and [policy briefs](#) by TIME and Concern, and alongside other monitoring data and findings from the RCTs these helped to inform the ongoing focus and direction of research. As the research project comes to an end, Bath SDR and TIME are working on triangulating the RCT findings with Rounds 2 and 3 of the QuIP, particularly focusing on gender empowerment outcomes.

FINDINGS

Findings will not be broken down in detail for this case study. Instead, broad findings and some example causal maps will be shared, demonstrating how the maps can be used to filter by frequency, location, outcomes, drivers or particular respondent groups. These are high level overview maps, but the more detailed filtered maps did reveal some differences in experiences of change between districts and exposure to different interventions. For example, the causal maps in the second round showed that beneficiaries who had received the Umodzi intervention were more likely to report positive outcomes in the area of relationships within the household. No reference was made to the graduation or Umodzi interventions by researchers in the interviews, so any attributed change is self-reported.

Example causal map focused on gender outcomes

Number indicates source count (number of sources with that link coded)



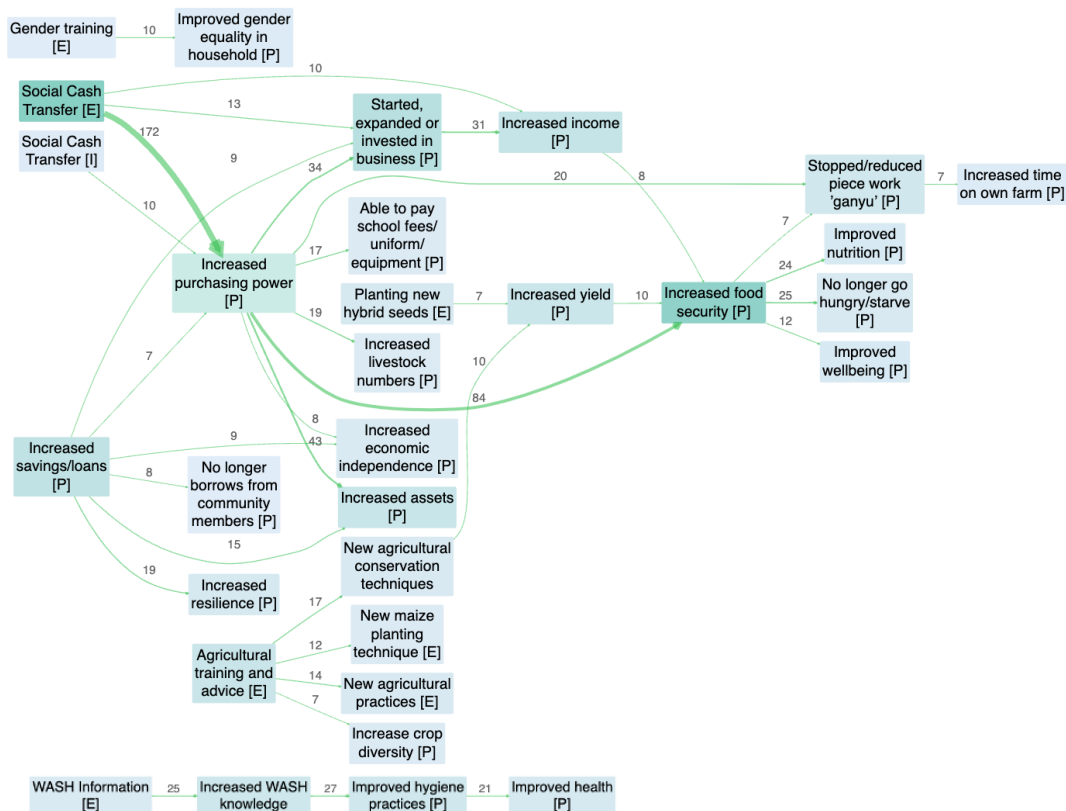
"Incorporating the qualitative impact protocol (QuIP), has played an important role in helping understand mechanisms of change in the Graduation programme in Malawi, particularly around income generating activities, changes in welfare and intrahousehold bargaining power. We have commissioned three rounds of the QuIP in our impact evaluation work in Malawi, with each round having very different learning and impact objectives. The Bath SDR team has been able to adapt the set of questions to the changing objectives, to ensure that if any impact is achieved, the team would be able to capture it through their interviews. The training delivered by Bath to the local research team was important in ensuring the success of the work... and built important local capacity. The team working on the QuIP has been flexible while maintaining high standards and they have been able to adapt the tool to the needs of the project." **TIME research lead**

Example high level causal map generated from stories of change

Simplified to the 40 most frequently cited factors and 35 most frequently used links.

Round 1: 24 individual interviews

Number indicates **citation count** (number of times link was coded)



Round 2 & 3: 96 individual interviews

Number indicates source count (number of sources with that link coded)

An orange link denotes a relationship caused by and/or resulting in 'less' of something (e.g. less income leads to less savings).

