Building Pathways Out of Poverty for Ultra-poor IDPs and Vulnerable Host Communities in Baidoa:
Evidence from the Endline Survey

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Introduction

- The objective of this evaluation is to rigorously assess the effectiveness of the **Ultra-poor Graduation Program** as implemented by World Vision and ACTED in Baidoa, Somalia.

- This was a **three-year evaluation** (2023-2025) using a mixed-methods strategy drawing on both quantitative and qualitative evidence.

- This presentation will highlight findings from the **endline** data collection (September 2024).

Study design: Randomized controlled trial

- The quantitative evaluation employs a **randomized controlled trial** (RCT) design with quantitative surveys collected at baseline (2022), midline (2023), and **endline** (2024).

- The RCT design enables us to generate **high-quality causal evidence** around the effects of the program on outcomes of interest (graduation from poverty, consumption and food security, and resilience).

- Randomization between households in **treatment** and **control** arms ensures that these households are similar in characteristics.

- Thus, as we track them over time, any differences in their outcomes can be interpreted as an effect of the program.

Impact evaluation: A visual example
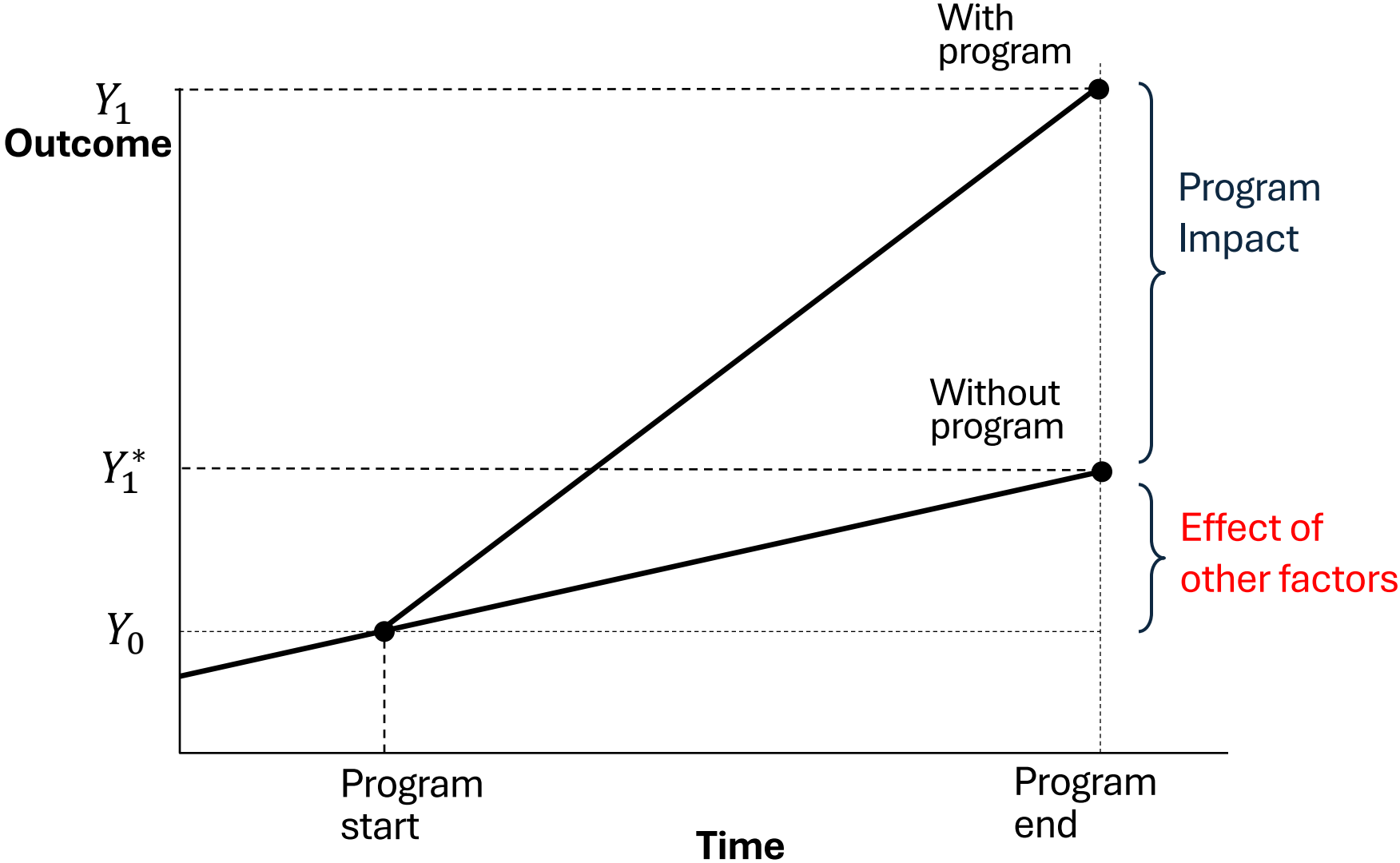
Study design - **Qualitative**

Qualitative Methods

- Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries
- In-depth interviews with program staff and community leaders
- Participant observation during field visits

Value of Mixed-Methods Approach

- Triangulation of findings for robust conclusions
- Qualitative insights provide context and explanations for quantitative results
- Captures unexpected outcomes and nuanced program effects

Evaluation questions

- What is the **effect of graduation model services** delivered by World Vision on primary outcomes of interest measured at the household level: the percent of households with moderate and severe **Household Hunger Scale** (HHS) scores; and an index of total household (food and non-food) **consumption**?

- Does households' **ability to meet their basic needs** shift following the **cessation of cash assistance**?

Study design: Quantitative sample

- The study sample was drawn from 24 IDP sites served by the UPG.

- **3,969** total households were surveyed at endline.
  - Treatment: 2,833
  - Control: 1,136

- Attrition at endline (or the number of households that dropped from the evaluation) was very low at **3.6%** from baseline, with slightly different rates between treatment and control

Study design: Qualitative sample

| CATEGORY	FGDS	KIIS	TOTAL SESSIONS
Male Beneficiaries	2	3	5
Female Beneficiaries	2	3	5
Youth (TVET Graduates)	2	0	2
Non-Beneficiaries	2	0	2
IDP Leaders	0	2	2
IDP Commission Officials	0	1	1
Total	8	9	17

Program Exposure

Awareness and self-reported exposure to UPG
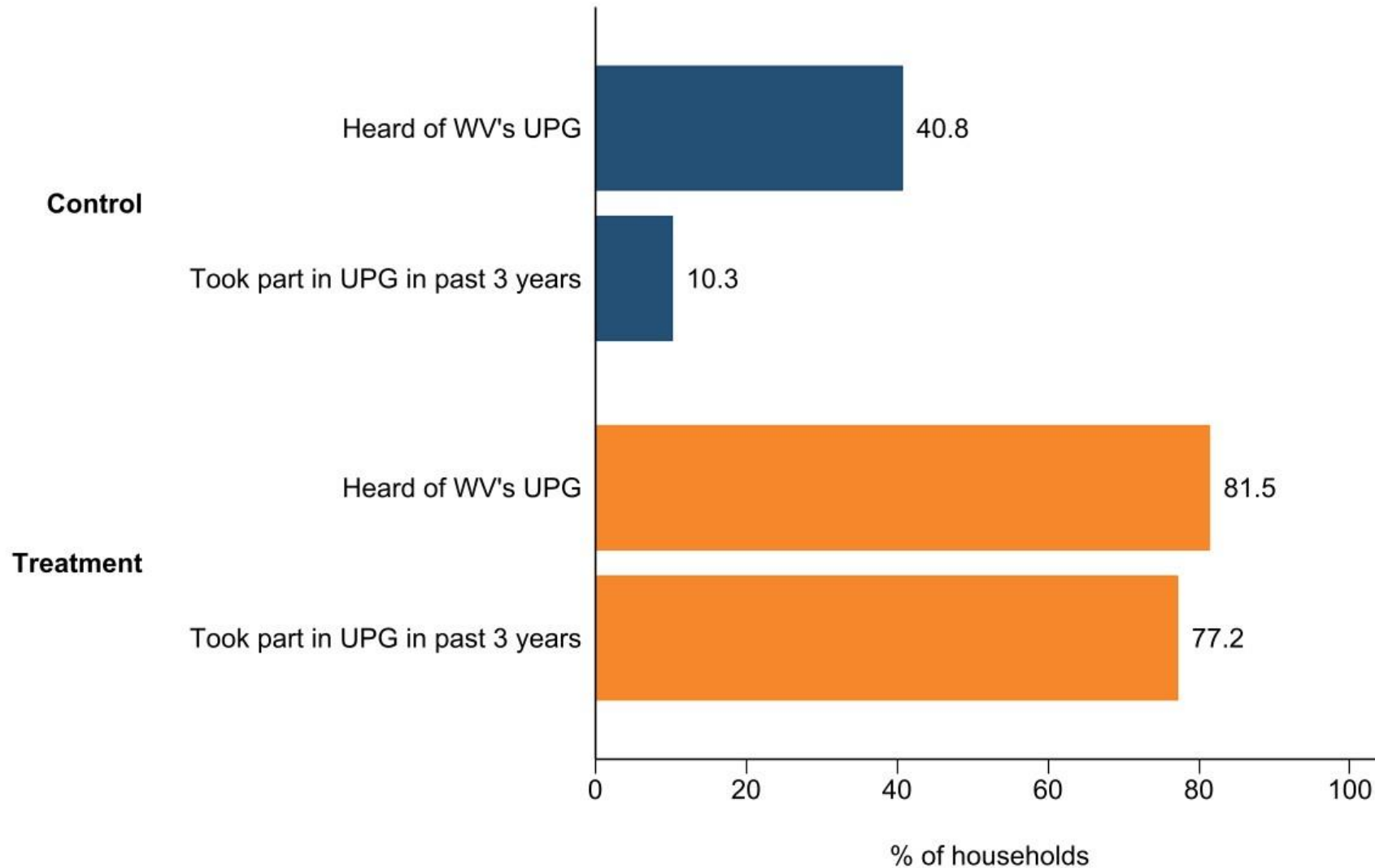
- 82% of the treated households had heard of World Vision's UPG program (41% of control households).

- 77% of the treated households reported participation (10% of the control households).

# Cash transfers from an NGO in the past 3 years
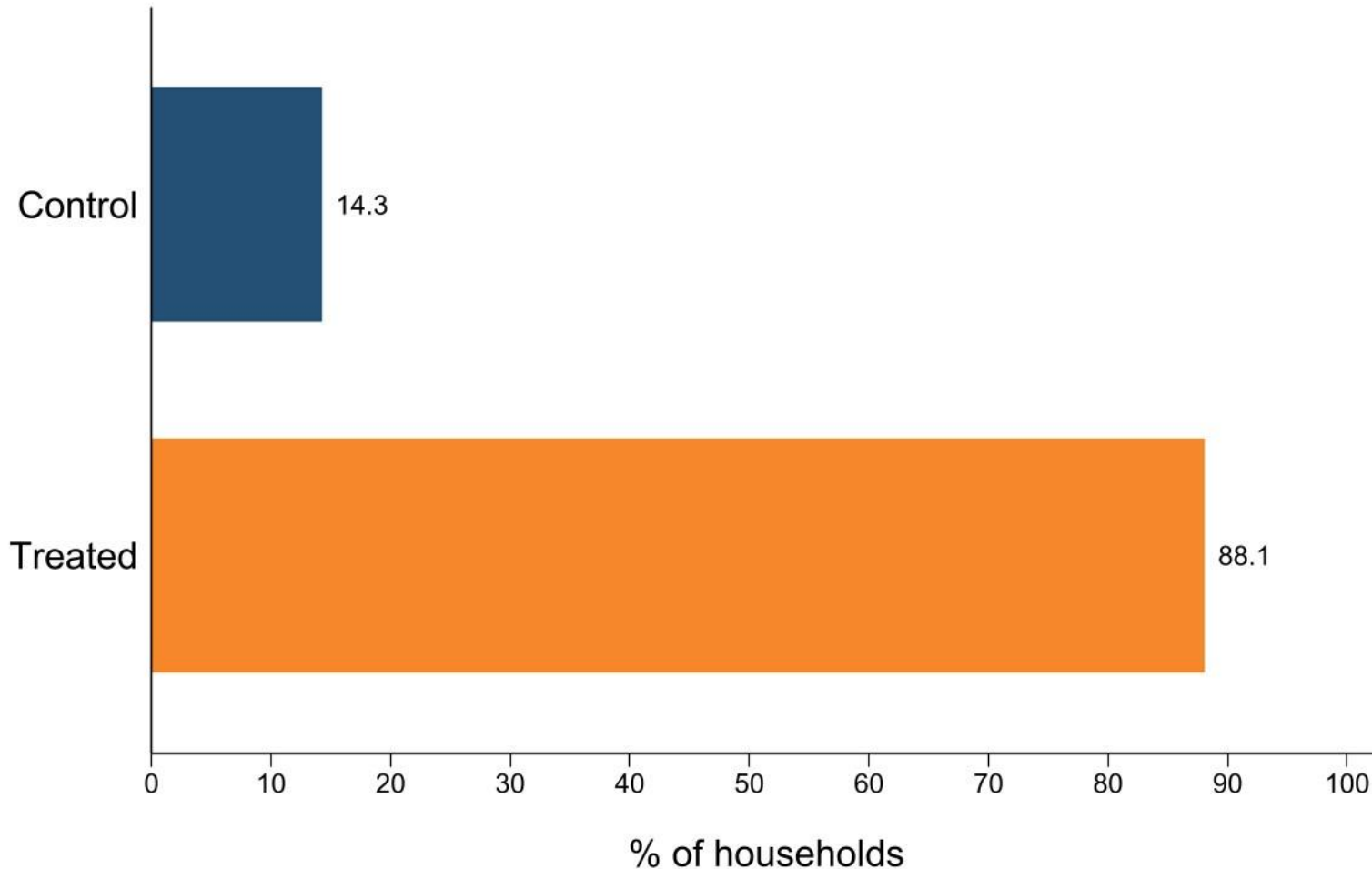
- 88% of treated households reported receiving cash transfers from an NGO in the past three years, compared to 14% of control households.

- The majority of treated households reported receiving six transfers of $42 USD each.

# Assets / training from an NGO in the past 3 years
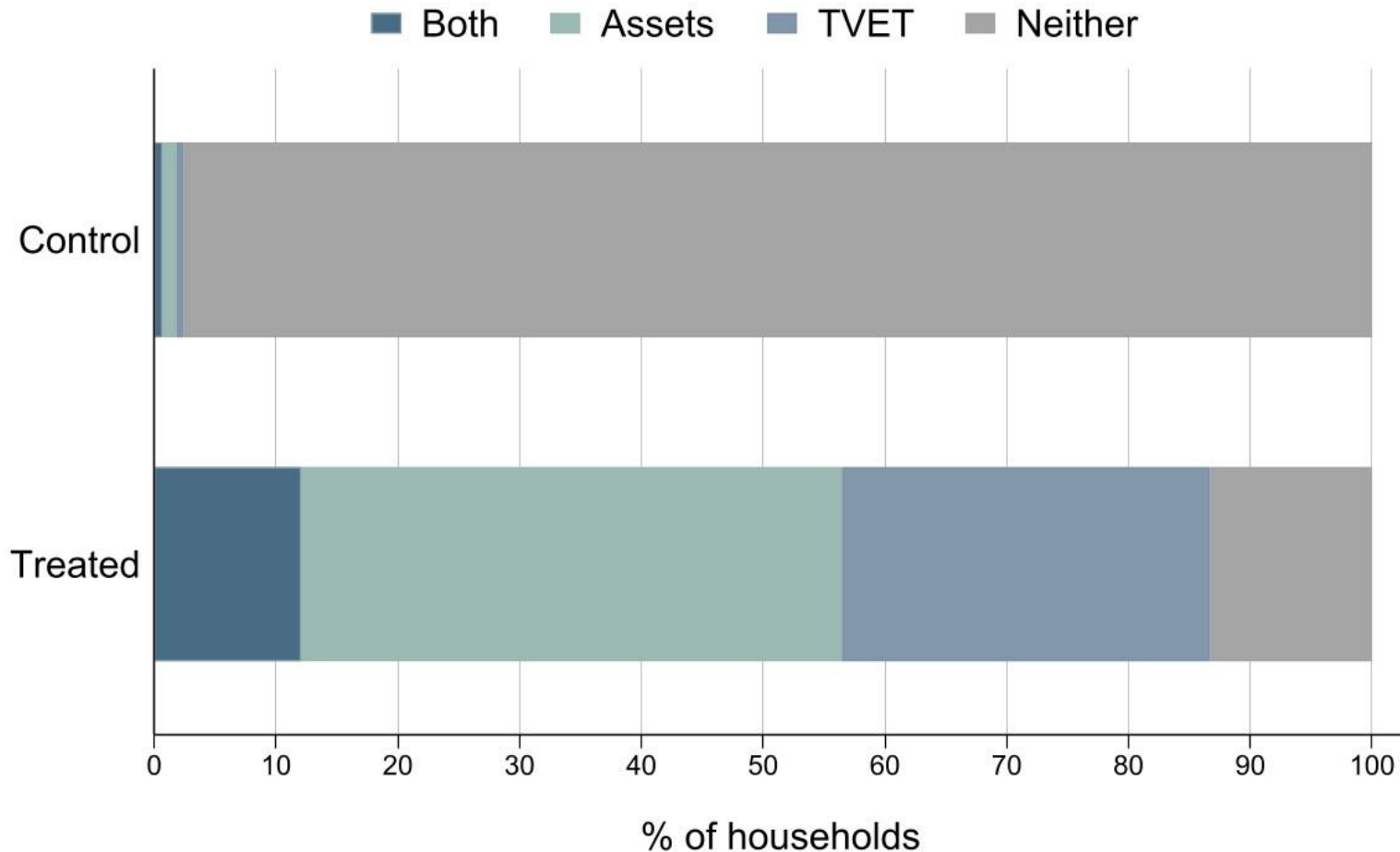
- More than 85% of the households reported having received assets or TVET training from an NGO in the past 3 years.

- 97% of the control households reported that they received no assets or TVET training in that period.

TVET courses selected by UPG households
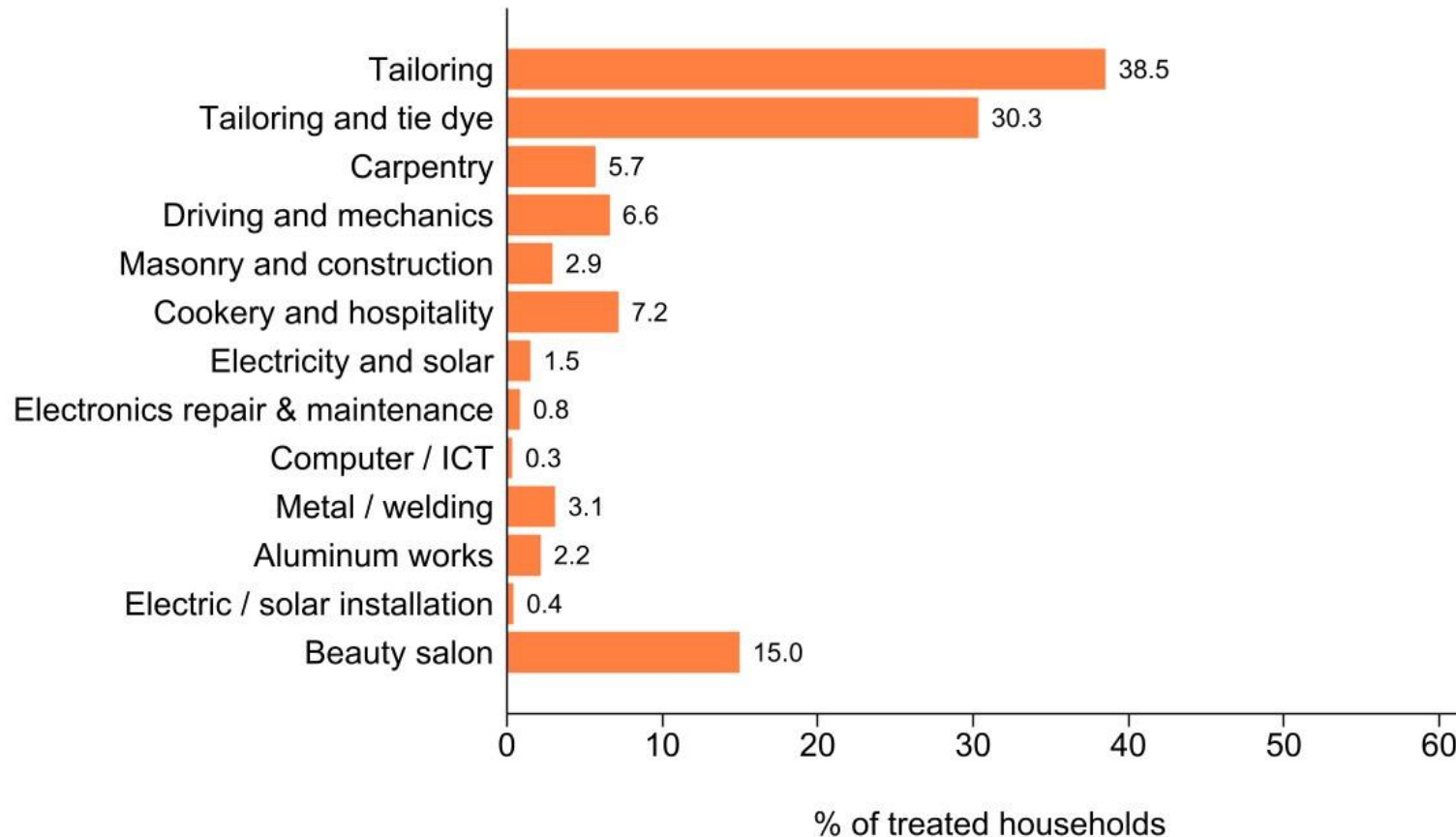
- Tailoring, and tailoring and tie dyeing were the most popular courses selected, followed by beauty salon.

- "I didn't knew the TVET knowledge before, to me TVET is very important, I learnt tailoring knowledge using the sewing machine to get the daily maintenance which I didn't have before, now my daily life is good." - Female participant, Baydhaabo

Assets received by UPG households

% of treated households
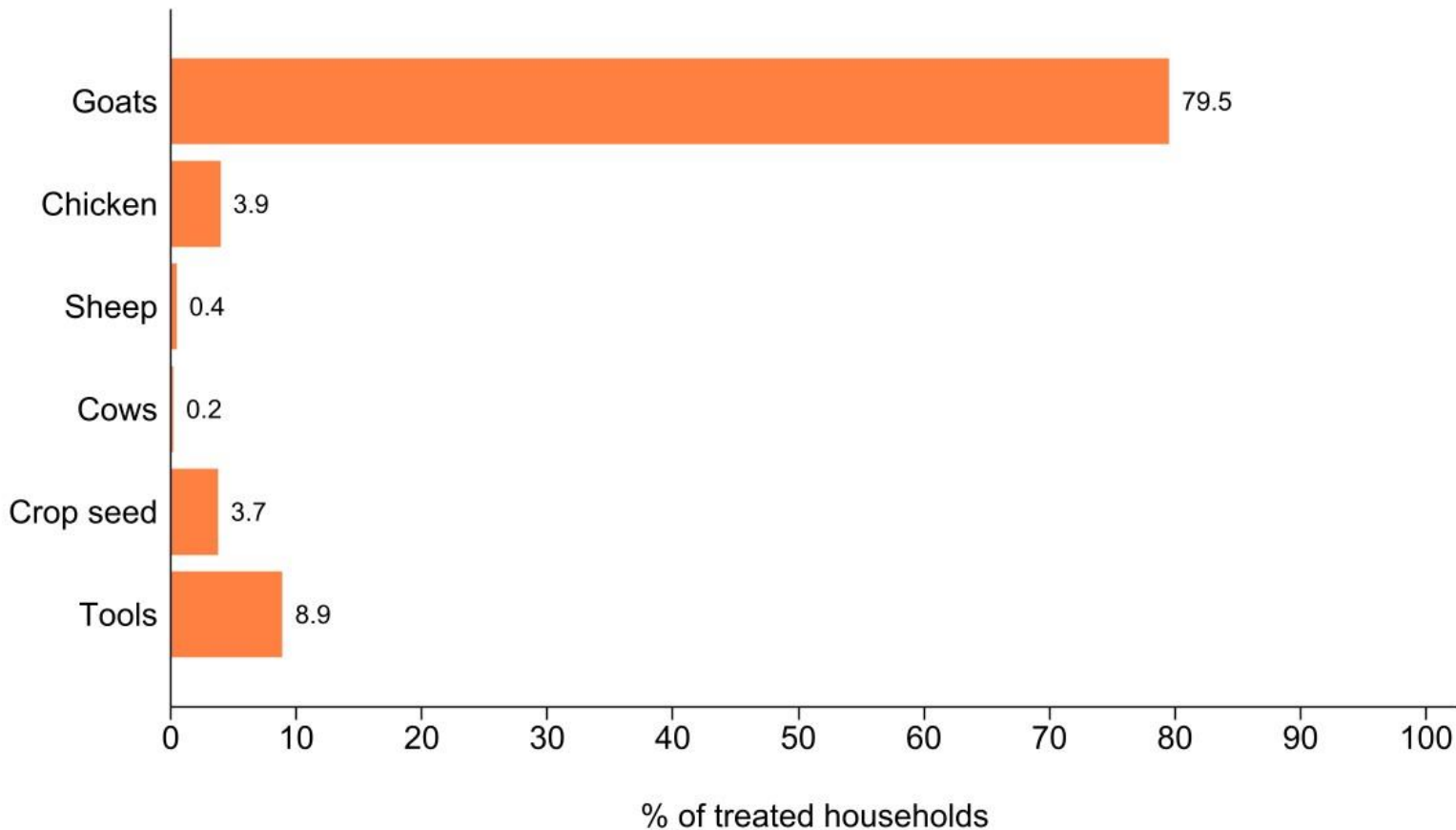
- Nearly 80% of those UPG households that received assets, selected goats.
- However, only 20% of these UPG households said that they were able to generate regular income from assets they received.

# Income generating activities in the past 30 days
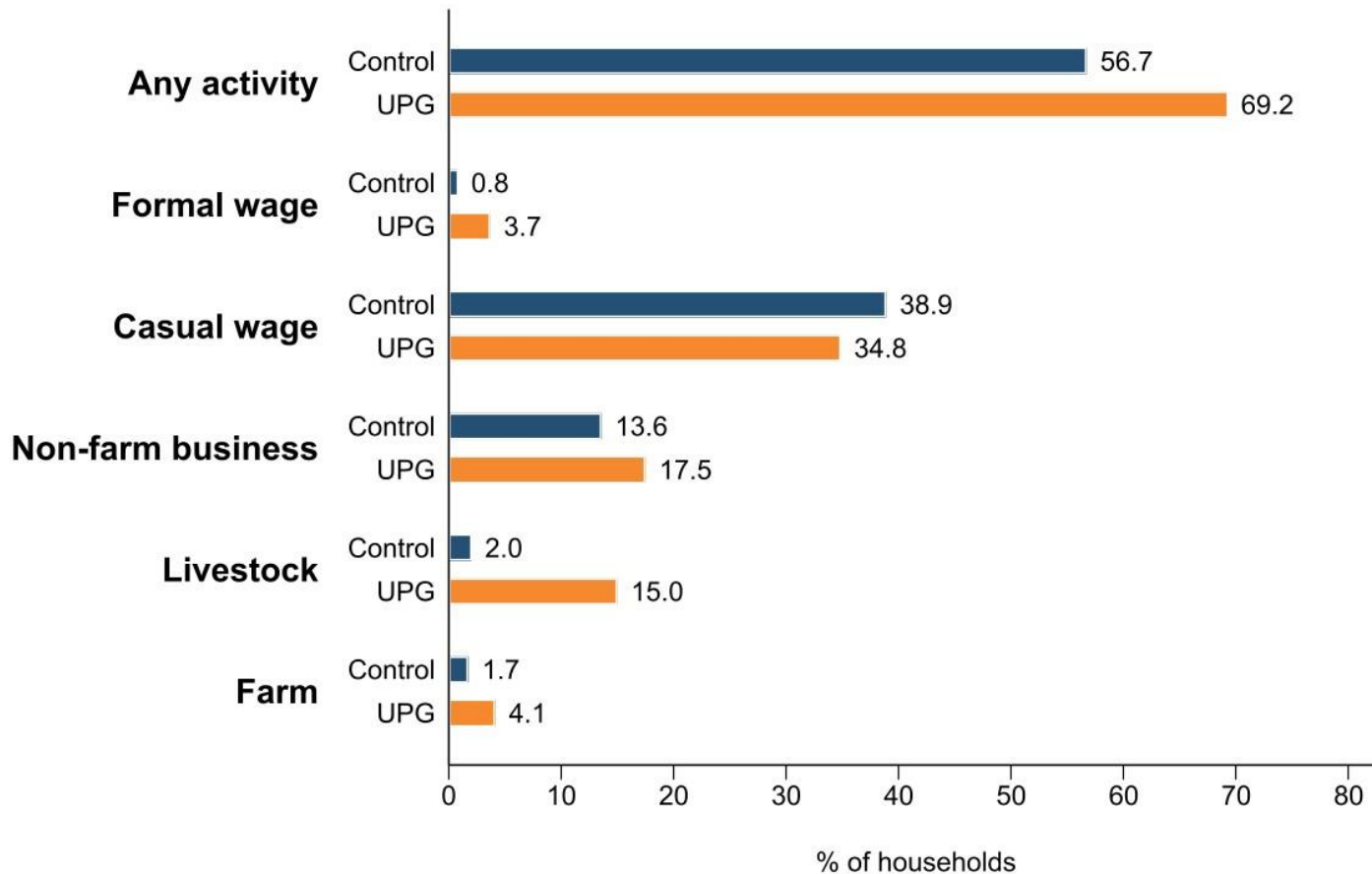
- At endline, UPG households are considerably more likely to report having engaged in any activity.

- 15% of UPG households reported engaging in livestock keeping as an income generating activity, while only 2% of the control households did so.

- UPG households were somewhat more likely to have a formal wage and non-farm business income, but less likely to engage in casual wage work.

Respondent satisfaction with UPG

- **In response to questions about their satisfaction with UPG, respondents generally concurred that the intervention was useful.**

  - TVET: More than 95% of respondents provided this response.

  - Coaching sessions: More than 95% of respondents.

  - Disaster risk reduction training: More than 98% of respondents.

  - Savings group: More than 96% of respondents.

  - Short course: More than 97% of respondents.

Program impacts

Households meeting at least 1 graduation criteria
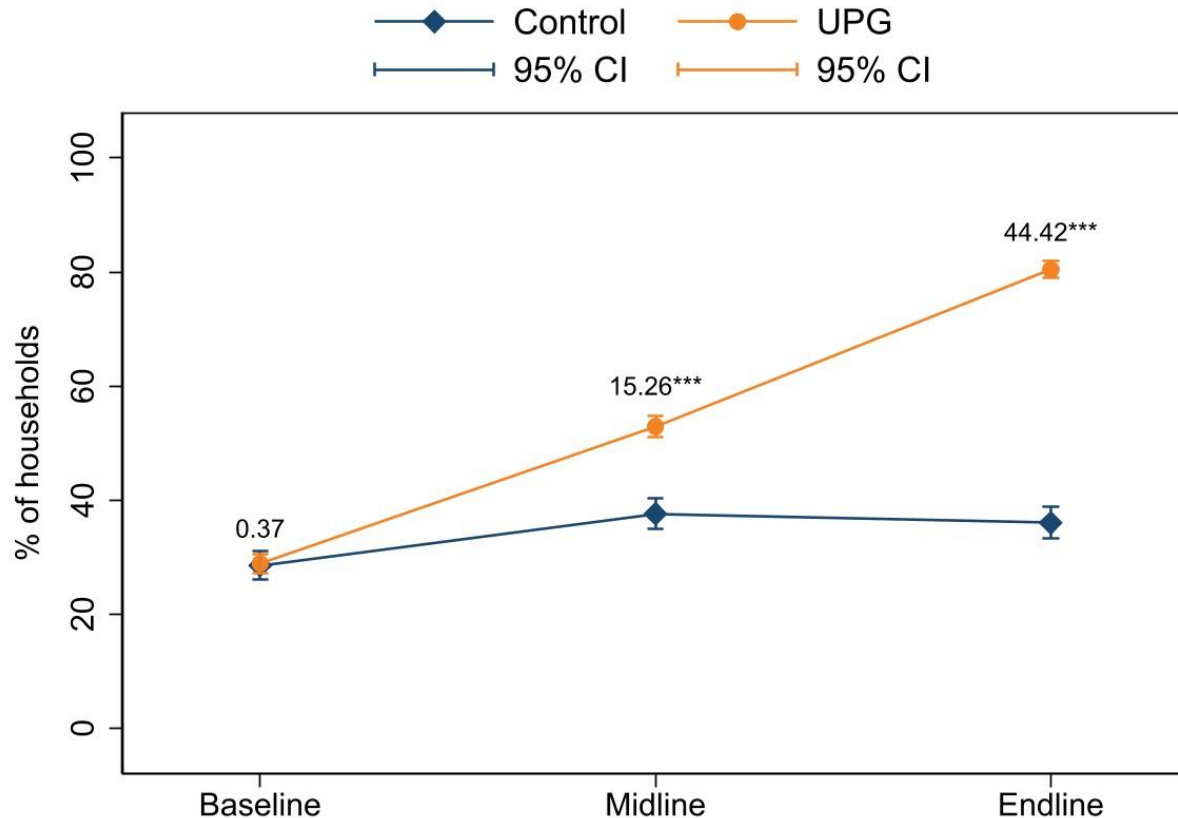
- At endline, about 36% of control households were able to meet at least one of 5 graduation criteria.

- By contrast, 80% of treated households met at least one of the 5 graduation criteria at endline.

Numbers are differences between control and treatment arms, estimated using ANCOVA for midline and endline if baseline value available (+ control for strata). Statistical significance denoted as * 0.1; ** 0.05 and *** 0.01.

The 5 graduation criteria (endline)
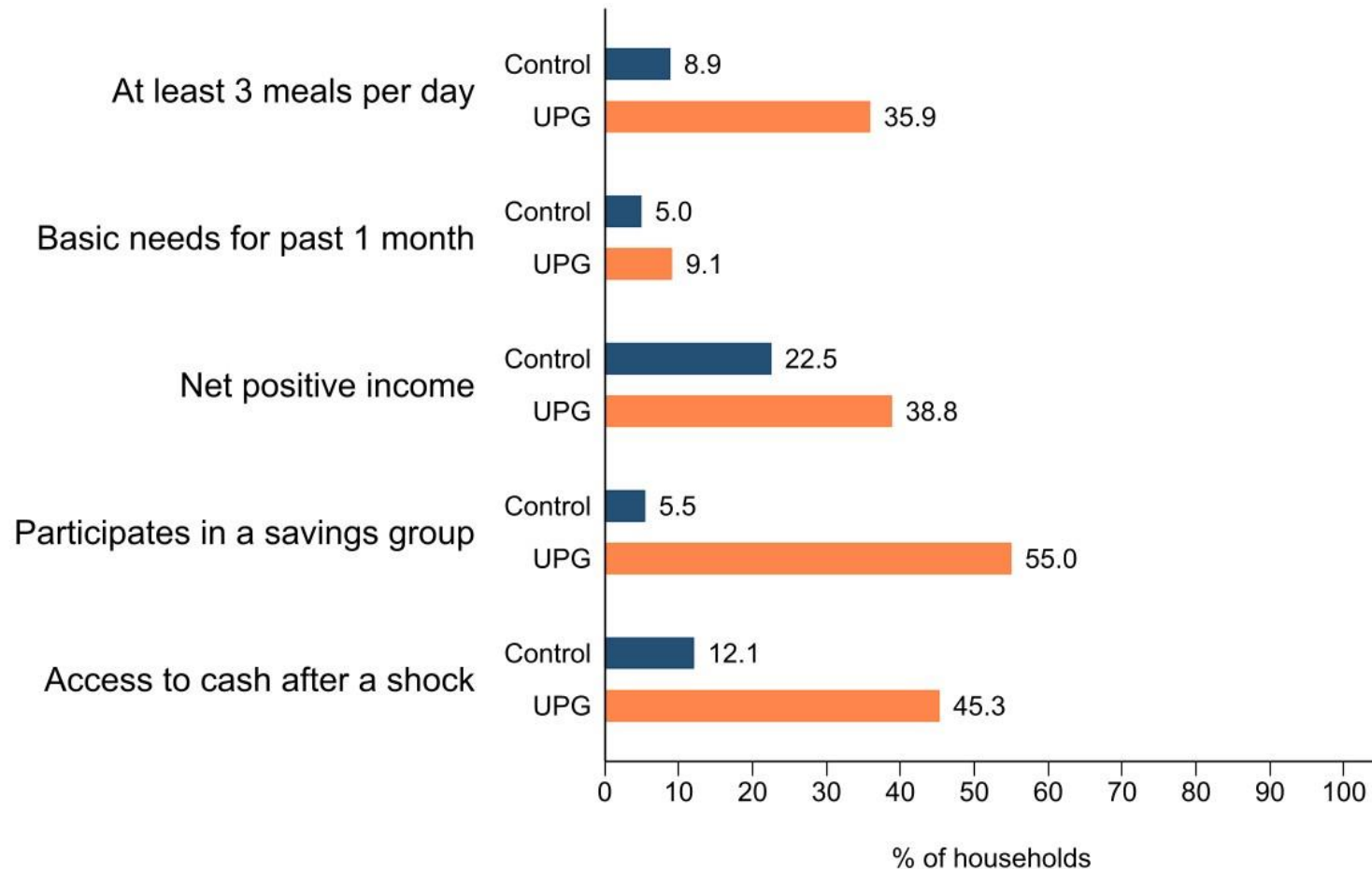
- UPG households are considerably more likely to:

- Report access to cash after a shock

- Take part in savings group

- Have at least 3 meals per day

- Report net positive income

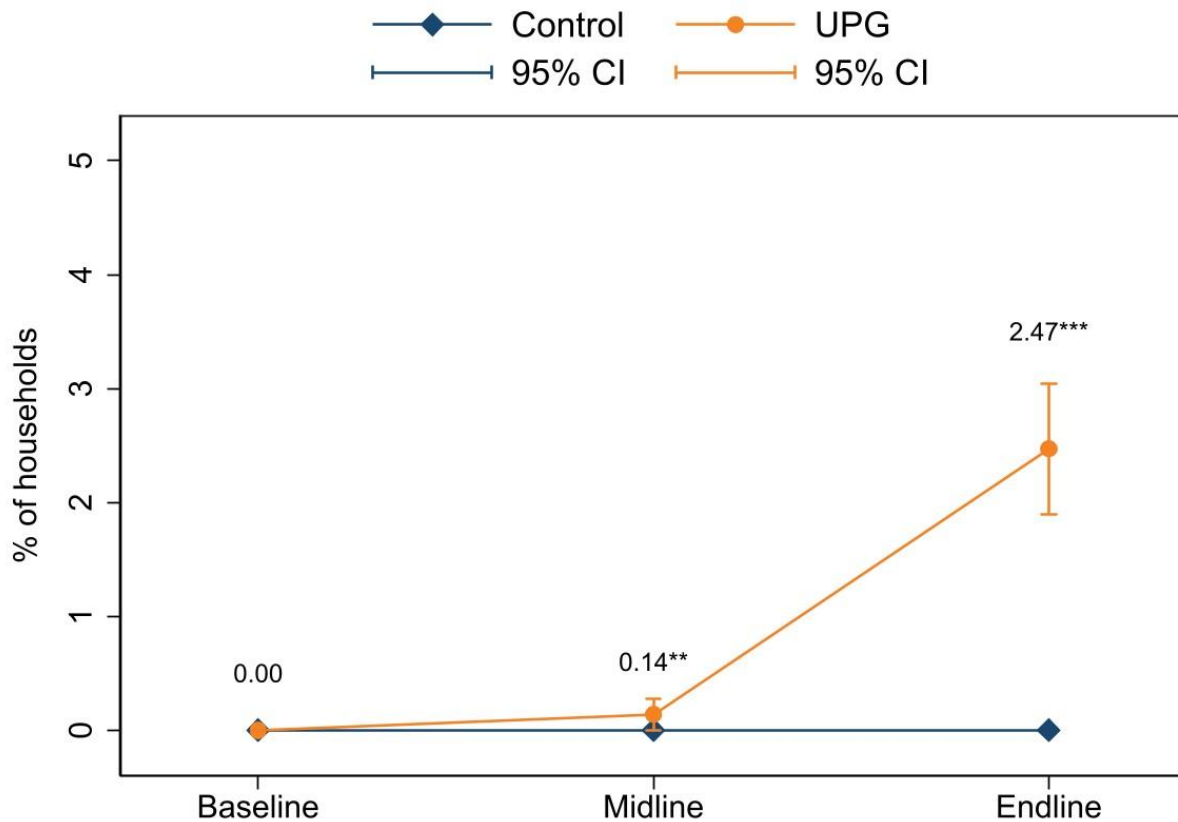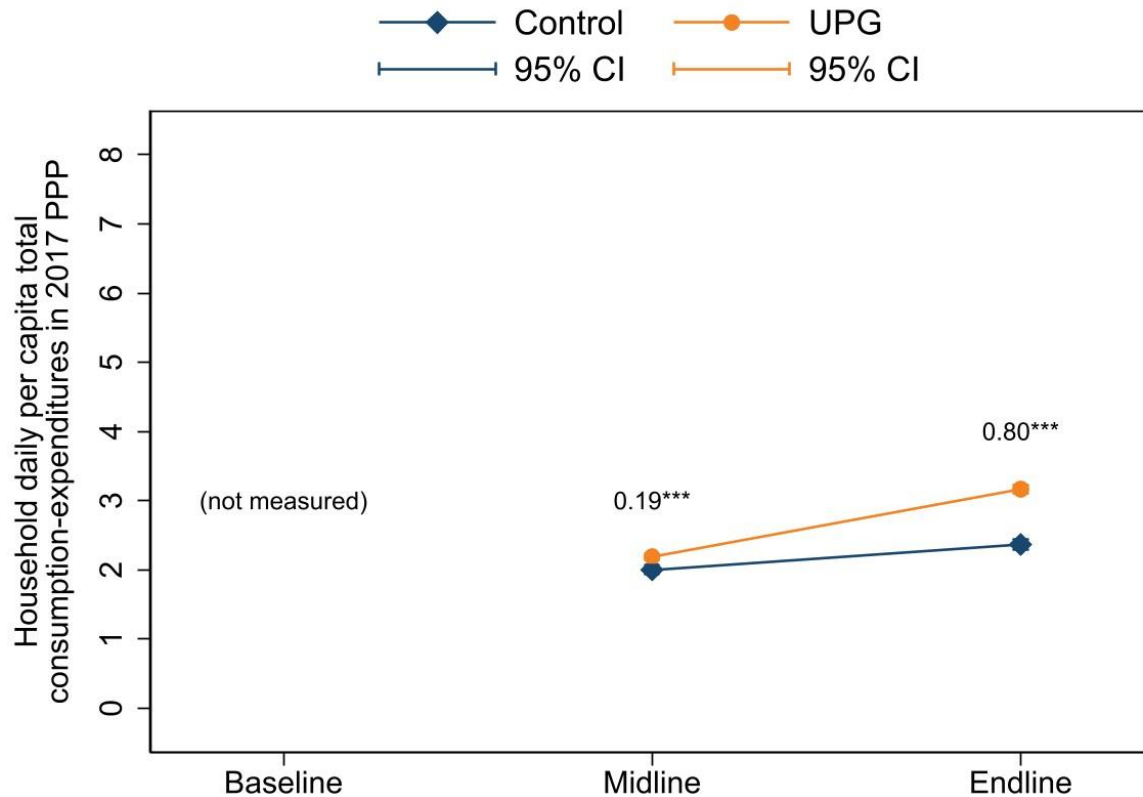# Households meeting all 5 graduation criteria

Numbers are differences between control and treatment arms, estimated using ANCOVA for midline and endline if baseline value available (+ control for strata). Statistical significance denoted as * 0.1; ** 0.05 and *** 0.01.

- At endline, no control households met all 5 graduation criteria, while about 3% of treated households were able to meet all 5 graduation criteria.

- When we look at a subset of graduation criteria for the past 3 months, about 63% of control households and 89% of treated households were able to sustain some.

Household total per capita consumption

Numbers are differences between control and treatment arms, estimated using ANCOVA for midline and endline if baseline value available (+ control for strata). Statistical significance denoted as * 0.1; ** 0.05 and *** 0.01/

- Per capita consumption expenditures were measured in midline and endline.

- At midline, the average per capita consumption among treated households was 2.19 $PPP, while among the control households it was 2 $PPP.

- At endline, treated households report 3.2 $PPP; control 2.4 $PPP.

Extreme poverty rate ($2.15 PPP)

Numbers are differences between control and treatment arms, estimated using ANCOVA for midline and endline if baseline value available (+ control for strata). Statistical significance denoted as * 0.1; ** 0.05 and *** 0.01.
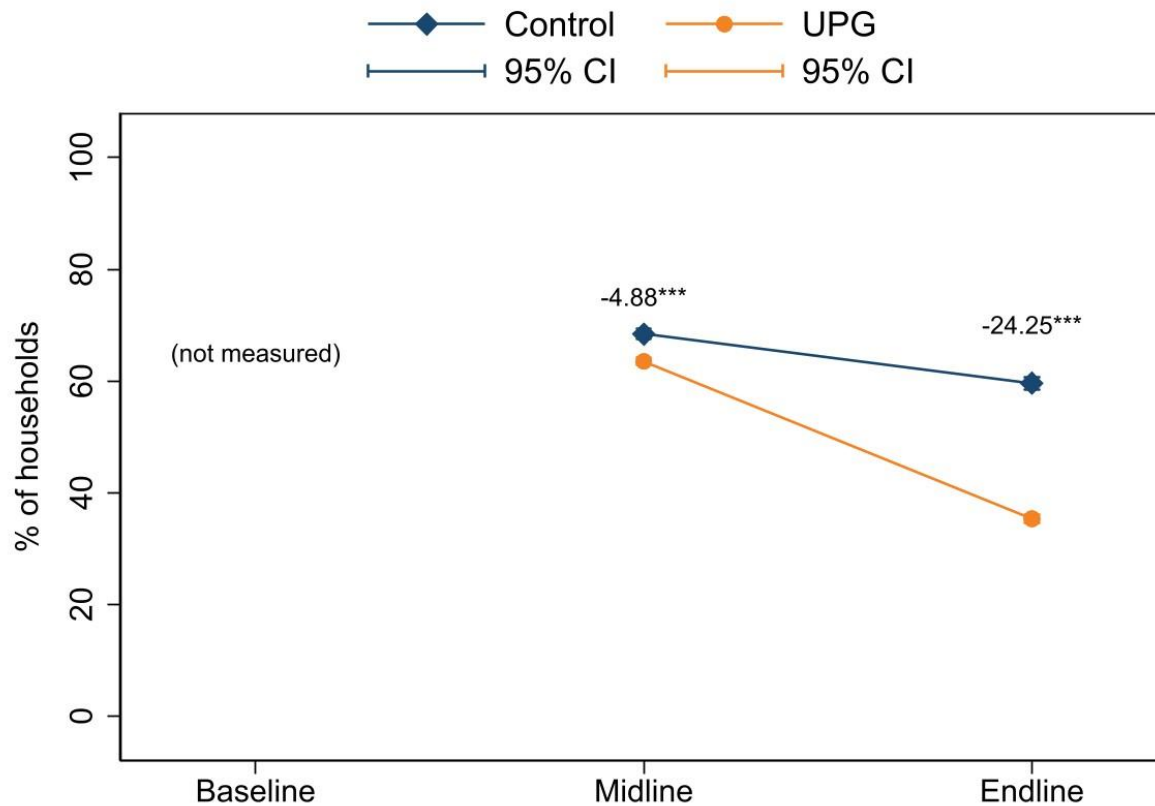
- At midline, 63.5% of the treated household members lived under the extreme poverty line (2.15 $PPP); 68.4% of the control household members.

- At endline, poverty rate in the treated households has fallen to 35.3%.

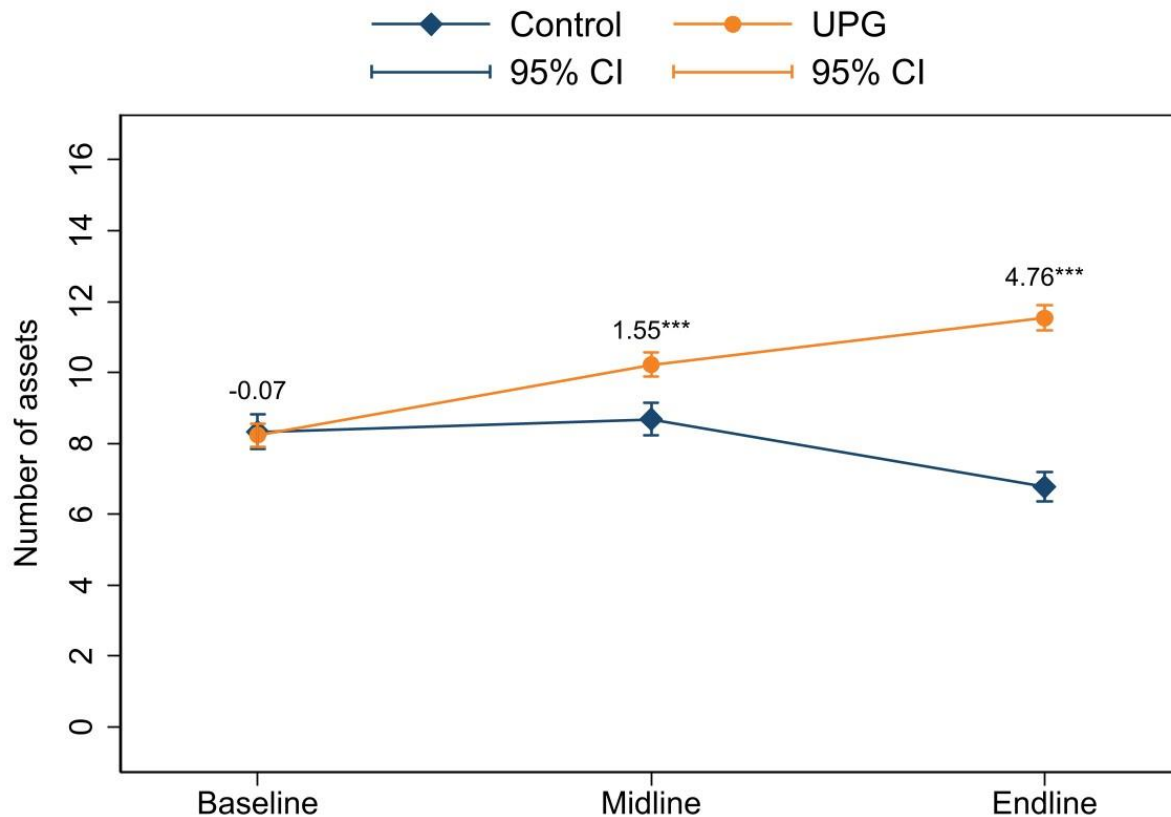- In the control households, the poverty rate fell more slowly to 60.0%.

Graduation process: Qualitative evidence

- Most beneficiaries reported improved financial resilience.
  - "The savings group was a lifeline during tough times, allowing us to manage unexpected expenses." – Male participant, ADC camp.
- Most beneficiaries also effectively utilized program-provided assets:
  - "The sewing machine I received has become our family's lifeline. I make clothes for the community, and my daughter is learning the trade too." – Female participant, Barwaaqo 2.

Diversified livelihoods: Qualitative evidence

- Most beneficiaries diversified income sources:
  - "I've learned to combine farming with small-scale trading, making our income more stable throughout the year." – Male beneficiary, ADC camp.
- Non-beneficiaries often struggled to sustain livelihoods due to lack of resources and limited diversification opportunities.
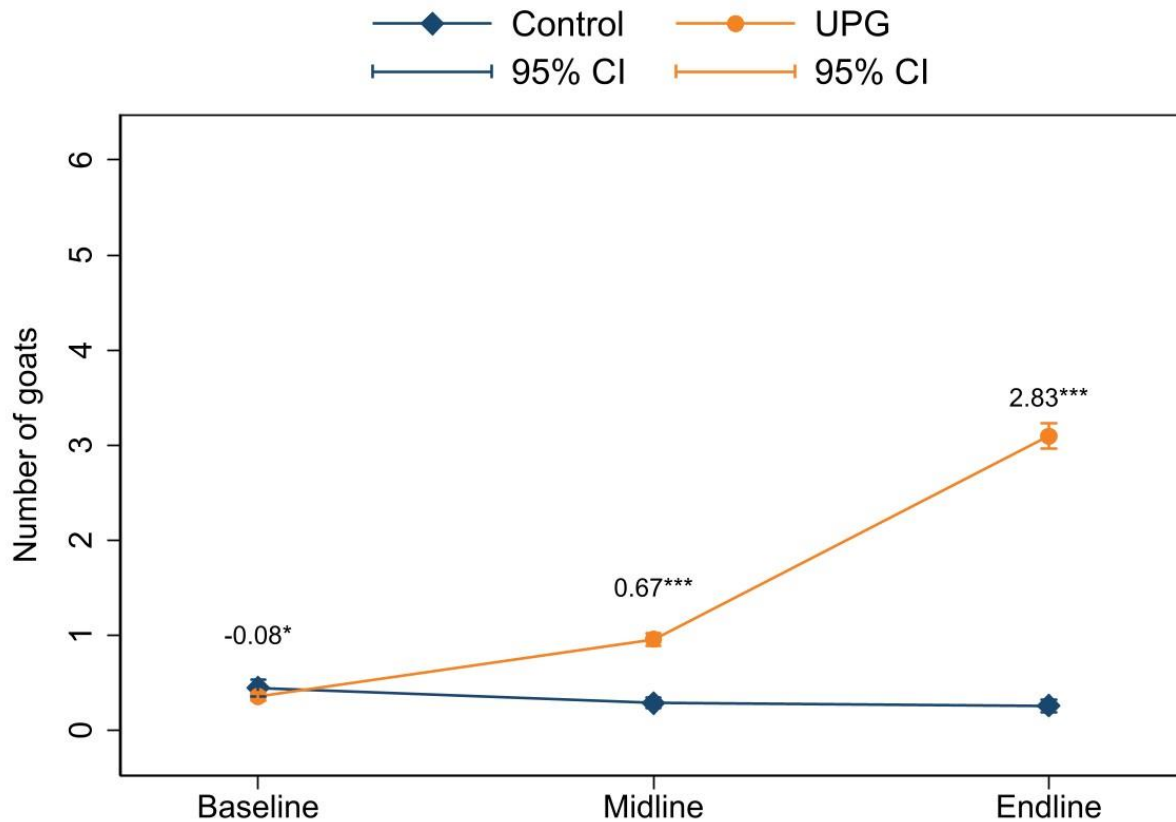
Number of assets

Numbers are differences between control and treatment arms, estimated using ANCOVA for midline and endline if baseline value available (+ control for strata). Statistical significance denoted as * 0.1; ** 0.05 and *** 0.01.

- At baseline, both control and treated households owned 8.25 assets, on average.

- At midline, treated households owned 10.2 assets and control households 8.7 assets, on average.

- At endline, treated households own 11.5 assets, control households 6.8, on average.

Number of goats

Numbers are differences between control and treatment arms, estimated using ANCOVA for midline and endline if baseline value available (+ control for strata). Statistical significance denoted as * 0.1, ** 0.05, and *** 0.01.
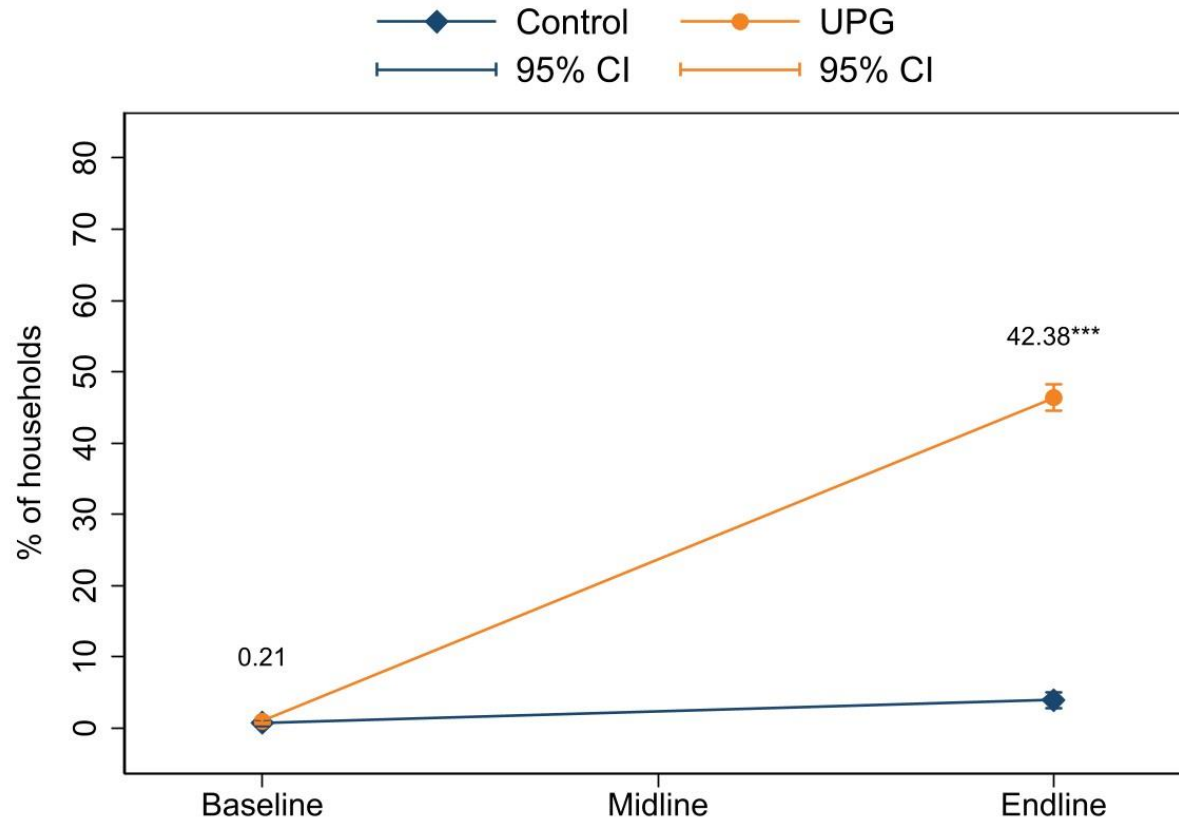
- The increase in assets is, to a large extent, driven by goats.
- At baseline, the average household owned 0.4 goats.
- At midline, the average control household owned 0.3 goats; average treated household 1 goat.
- At endline, the control average is 0.3 goats, the treated household average is 3.1 goats.

Any cash savings

- At baseline, less than 1 percent of households reported having any cash savings.

- At endline, 46% of UPG households report cash savings while only 4% of the control households do so.

Asset utilization: Qualitative Evidence

- The vast majority of beneficiaries reported utilizing assets effectively to enhance income and resilience:
    - "The goats I received have multiplied. I now have a small herd that provides milk for my family and extra to sell." – Male participant, Barwaaqo 2.
    - "The sewing machine I received has become our family's lifeline. I make clothes for the community, and my daughter is learning the trade too." - Female participant, Barwaaqo 2

Enhanced income: Qualitative Evidence

- Many beneficiaries reported increased and stable incomes:
  - "My vegetable stand gives me a steady income. I know I can count on it to cover our basic needs each month." – Female participant, Wadajir.

- In addition, beneficiaries generated multiple income streams.
  - "Besides my main business, I also do casual labor when available. It helps during slow business periods." – Male participant, Budan IDP camp.

Effect of training: Qualitative evidence

- Training and coaching empowered beneficiaries to sustain and grow their livelihoods:
  - "The beautification services training allowed me to start a small salon in my home. I now have regular customers." – Female participant, Budan IDP camp.
  - "The training of the animal treatment has significantly impacted my livelihood, because I have treated my animals in the best way and they are now healthy, the animals are generating income for me such as cheese and milk. The animals helped me to overcome poverty and provide milk for my family." – Female participant, Baydhaabo IDP camp.
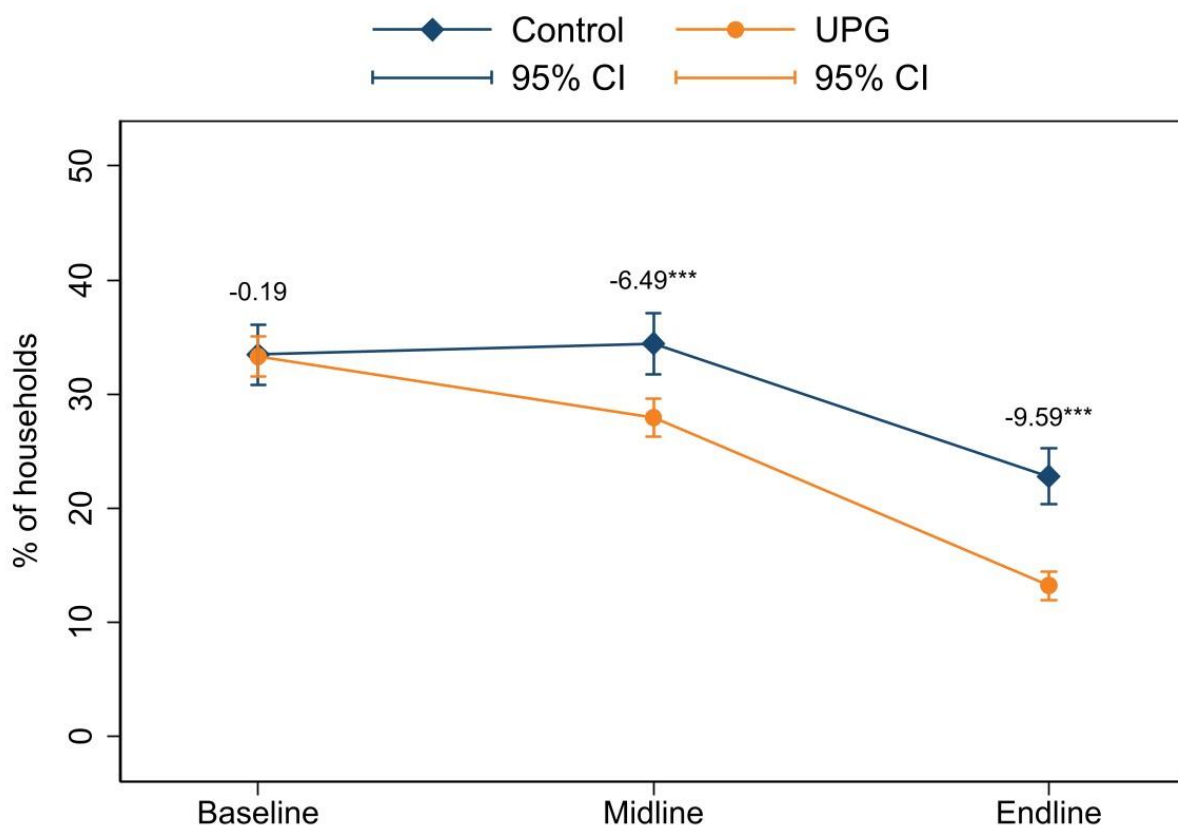
Moderate or severe household hunger score
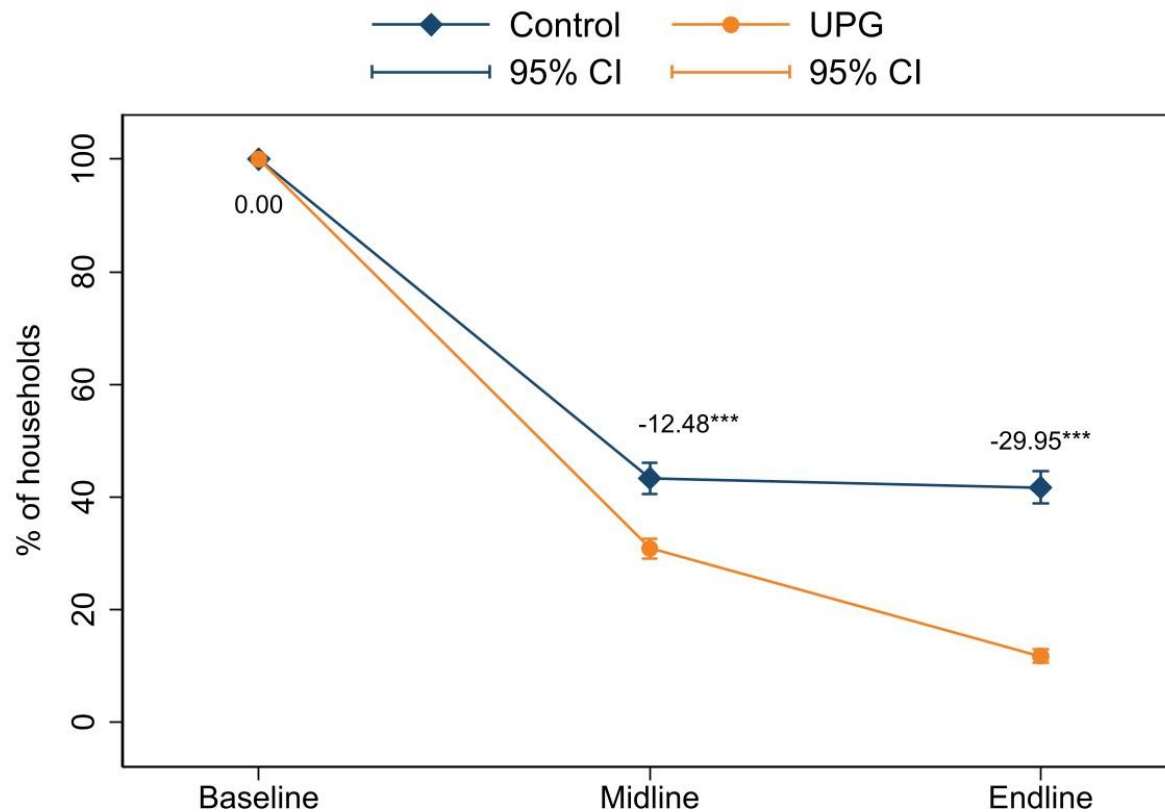
Numbers are differences between control and treatment arms, estimated using ANCOVA for midline and endline if baseline value available (+ control for strata). Statistical significance denoted as * 0.1; ** 0.05 and *** 0.01.

- The experimental effects of reduced moderate to severe hunger were even stronger at endline than at midline.

- At endline, about 42% of the control group experienced moderate to severe hunger, compared to about 12% of the treated households.

- The decreases are driven primarily by decreases in **moderate** hunger.

Households with poor Food Consumption Score

- At endline, about 23% of the control group had a poor score on the Food Consumption Score, compared to 13% of treated households.

- Treatment impacts were positive on "borderline" FCS scores as well, with 27% of control and 19% of treated households in this category.

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Qualitative evidence: Enhanced food security

- The vast majority of participants reported enhanced food security:
  - "We used to eat one meal a day. Now, we can afford three meals, including meat once a week." – Male participant, Baydhaabo IDP camp.
  - "The financial assistance allowed us to buy better food, and my children are healthier." – Male participant, ADC camp.
- Nutrition training empowered households to optimize resources for better dietary practices, especially for children.

Qualitative evidence: Resilience against shocks

- Savings groups helped the majority of beneficiaries to cope with food shortages during droughts and other shocks.
  - "Our savings group supported us during the drought. We pooled resources to buy food and water." – Female VSLA member, Wadajir.

Conclusion

- The UPG program had a range of **positive effects** on program participants, including:
  - Improved and diversified **livelihoods** opportunities and income-generation
  - Enhanced **food security and nutrition**
  - A large decrease in **poverty** rates
- The evaluation suggests that there were very high levels of satisfaction with the program, and positive testimonies from participants.

Recommendations

- We recommend **expanding the program** within Somalia and elsewhere among IDP communities.

- Future programming could consider:
  - Leveraging **savings groups** even further: they built social integration and cooperation, assisting households in withstanding shocks.
  - Improving households' access to and **integration with markets**: this was identified as a challenge for participants despite the benefits of the program.