

## The BOMA Project and the Government of Kenya

Key Findings of the Endline Evaluation on BOMA's Poverty Graduation Pilot with the Government of Kenya's *Programme for Rural Outreach of Financial Innovations and Technologies (PROFIT)*

June 2019



### PROJECT OVERVIEW

**The BOMA Project** (BOMA) is a U.S. nonprofit and Kenyan non-governmental organization (NGO) that implements an innovative, low-cost, high-impact poverty graduation program called Rural Entrepreneur Access Project (REAP) to help ultra-poor women in the drylands of Africa to start businesses and savings groups, increase their household financial and food security, build their resilience to shocks such as droughts, invest in their children's health and education, and have increased agency in their households and communities. Since 2009, BOMA has reached more than 182,000 women and children in Kenya and Uganda through REAP. BOMA's goal is to reach one million women and children by 2022. BOMA plans to reach this ambitious yet achievable goal by scaling REAP and the Poverty Graduation Approach through direct implementation, strategic partnerships with larger NGOs, and government adoption.

BOMA is actively working with both county- and national-level governments in order to rapidly scale the Graduation Approach. In June 2017, BOMA launched a Graduation pilot with the Government of Kenya's (GoK) Programme for Rural Outreach of Financial Innovations and Technologies (PROFIT), the International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD), and BRAC USA. The objective of the pilot was to test the effectiveness of the Graduation Approach in lifting ultra-poor households out of extreme poverty and the viability of integrating the poverty graduation approach into the government's social protection systems. BOMA completed the pilot in March 2019 with a total of 1,526 women graduating from the program and from poverty. In June 2019, the pilot partners held a graduation ceremony and celebration in Maralal in Samburu County that was attended by local, county and national government officials as well as hundreds of REAP graduates.

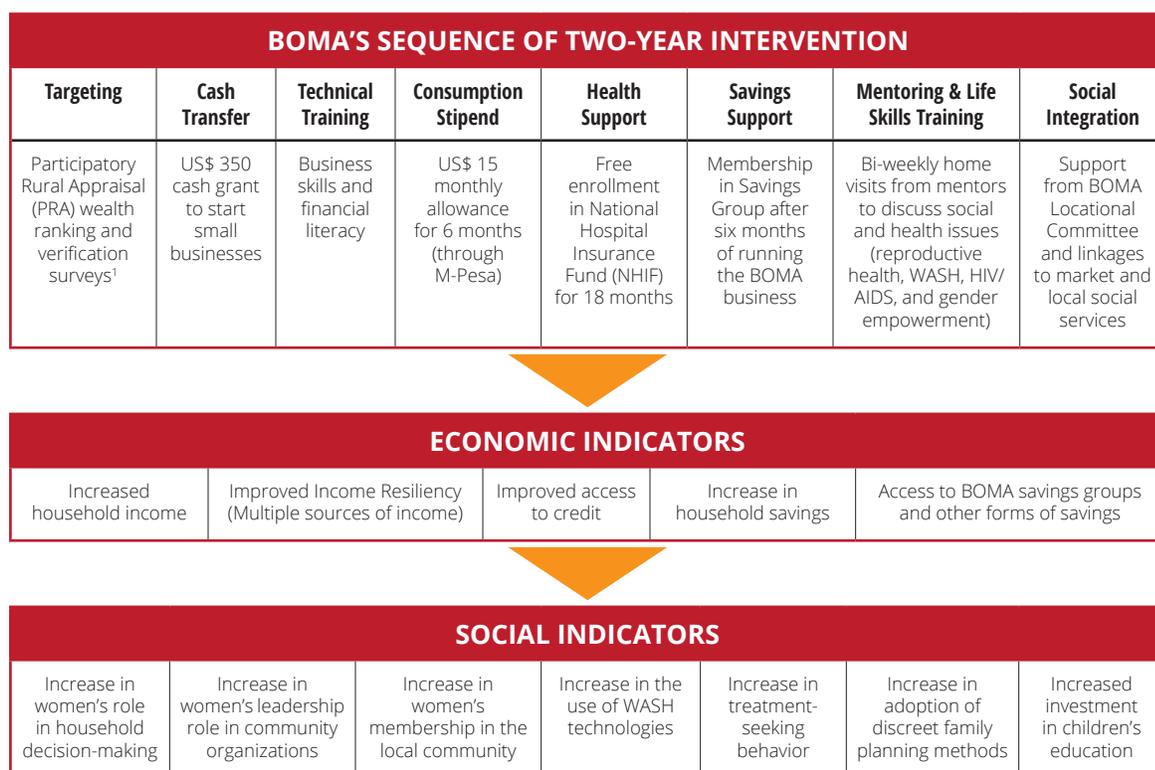
## PROJECT SCOPE

The pilot took place in seven wards of Samburu County (Loosuk, Maralal, Porro, Lodokejek, Suguta, Wamba West and Wamba North). Samburu is one of the four poorest counties in Kenya, with an overall poverty rate of 76% in 2015-2016. Communities in Samburu rely on raising and selling livestock as their primary source of income, since the county's arid climate is unfavorable for livelihoods based on agriculture.

BOMA enrolled 1,600 ultra-poor women who support more than 8,000 children in REAP for the project. We implemented two different program designs to test and compare effectiveness: one that had women run individual businesses and our traditional REAP model that had a group of three women run a business together.

## INTERVENTION

The Graduation interventions, sequenced from March 2017 through March 2019, included cash transfers, technical training, and social integration, as summarized in the table below. Endline results show significant improvement in key economic indicators such as income, savings, and access to credit. The improvement in women's economic situation has also led to improvements in social indicators, including increased leadership and decision-making roles for women in their households and communities. Please refer to the table for details:



## GRADUATION CRITERIA FOR THE COHORT

Graduation is defined as reaching a certain level of social, physical, and productive assets that allow households to become self-sufficient and build the necessary capacity to cope with shocks without falling back into extreme poverty. The following graduation criteria was established to track progress for this cohort: **(1)** Household members had two meals a day in the past week, **(2)** No child goes to bed without an evening meal in the past week, **(3)** Value of business is 25% higher than total conditional cash transfer, **(4)** Participant can access two sources of income, **(5)** Participant is a member of a savings group (with a formal constitution, credit, and loan protocols), has access to credit, and has a minimum of KES 8000 in savings. **(6)** Participant has greater awareness of family planning.

<sup>1</sup> In the PRA process, community members, including women, men, youth, people with disability, and their leaders, map their community and define socio-economic categories to rank households from richest to poorest.

## THE ENDLINE EVALUATION AND KEY FINDINGS

Expanding Opportunities, an international NGO focused on creating self-sufficiency, conducted external evaluation that explored the project's impacts in a quasi-experimental design (QED) through baseline and endline surveys administered to 50% of the treatment sample and matched comparison groups from nearby areas. Monitoring data, 14 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and nine Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) conducted at midline provide further insights into sustainability factors, stakeholder networks, and mechanisms of program benefits. The evaluation also included a comparative analysis between BOMA's unique three-person group-based graduation model and the standard one-person-per-business graduation model. Below are the key findings:

### HOUSEHOLD INCOME

- 29.64% increase in average household income from US\$ 45 (4625 KES) to US\$ 59 (5996 KES)
- 92.55% of participants have access to at least two sources of income



**Average Total Income for the Past 30 Days (KES)**  
*The evaluation noted that: "The increase in household income between baseline and endline was 1371 KES and the difference was statistically significant."*

### SAVINGS

- 1960.61% increase in savings from US\$6.37 (650 KES) at baseline to US\$131 (13394 KES) at endline
- 99.21% belong to a registered savings group and has access to credit



**Average Total Savings (KES)**

*"On market day, you will see so many women doing business from grassroots, and they started with nothing."*

PROFIT FINANCIAL  
GRADUATION PARTICIPANTS

### BUSINESS PERFORMANCE

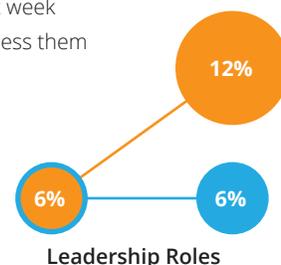
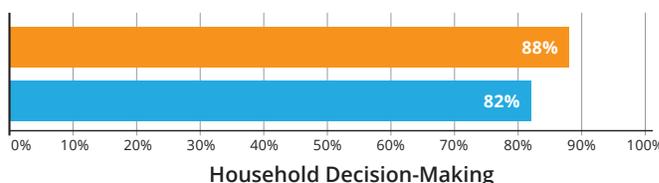
- 95% of businesses remained operational at exit
- 61.86% increase in average business value from US\$350 (35,000 KES) to US\$556 (56,652 KES)

### WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

- 6 percentage point (p.p.) increase in role in household decision-making
- 6 p.p. increase in leadership roles from baseline to endline
- 27 p.p. increase in women's confidence obtaining loans, sending their children to school, and joining committees and savings groups

### HEALTH AND FOOD SECURITY

- 99.34% of participants reported household members had two meals a day in the past week
- 98.94% reported that no child went to bed without an evening meal in the past week
- 78.36% can identify at least three methods of family planning and where to access them



#### LEGEND

- Treatment
- Comparison

- › 26% increase in households treating drinking water
- › 80% of participants have enrolled in the National Hospital Insurance Fund (NHIF) and have made premium payments for 2-6 months while the remaining 20% plans to pay premium after savings groups share outs
- › 35% used NHIF while seeking treatment

## EDUCATION

- › 84% of participants' primary school-aged children (6 to 15 years old) were enrolled in school at endline

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## LASTING IMPACTS OF THE GRADUATION PILOT

In the endline surveys participants were asked, "What impacts do you think will continue to benefit you even after the program ends?", as a means to understand their perceptions of the sustainability of program outcomes. Participants primarily shared the following impacts of the pilot:

- ▶ Increased independence in decision-making in household and financial decisions
- ▶ Sustained income and business activity through improved knowledge and skills on business and financial management
- ▶ Improved knowledge on nutrition and family health

[CLICK HERE TO READ THE FULL ENDLINE EVALUATION REPORT](#)

BOMA is encouraged by results of the Graduation pilot and the strong interest of county and national-level governments in integrating poverty graduation into their existing safety net programs. BOMA is now working towards a county-level government adoption pilot with the Samburu and Marsabit county governments of Kenya. We anticipate seeing scaled results and greater impact of the approach in two to three years' time.

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## PARTNERS



Investing in rural people

**International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)** is a special agency of the United Nations, established to finance agricultural development projects. The Fund provides financing for projects and programs specifically designed to introduce, expand or improve food production systems and to strengthen related policies and institutions.



REPUBLIC  
OF  
KENYA

**Government of Kenya's Programme for Rural Outreach of Financial Innovations and Technologies (PROFIT)**, is an initiative that promotes economic development among the poor in the arid and semi-arid lands (ASALS) of Kenya.



**BRAC** was founded in Bangladesh, with nearly five decades of experience in designing and implementing large-scale poverty alleviation programs, BRAC reaches more than 130 million of the global poor across 11 countries. BRAC's Ultra-Poor Graduation Initiative provides technical assistance to governments and NGOs implementing the Graduation approach.