

Assessing the effects of a combined economic and social intervention in Uganda on child protection and economic outcomes

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS FROM THE ASPIRES FAMILY CARE PROJECT

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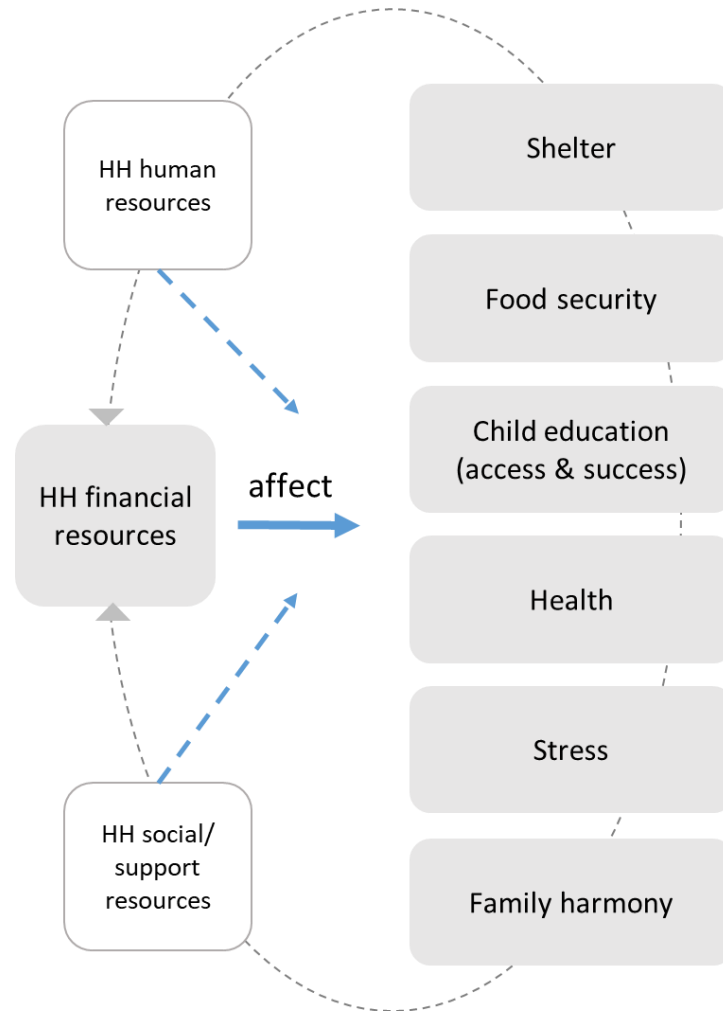
4 FHI 360, Global Education, Employment, and Engagement, USA

Accelerating Strategies for Practical Innovation and Research in Economic Strengthening (ASPIRES)



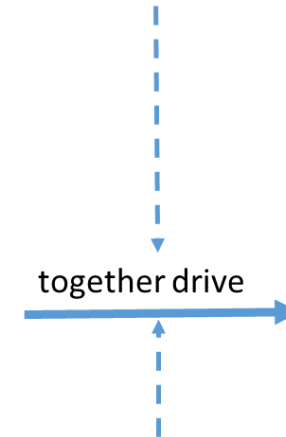
Background

- A range of economic, social, and structural issues contribute to family-child separation



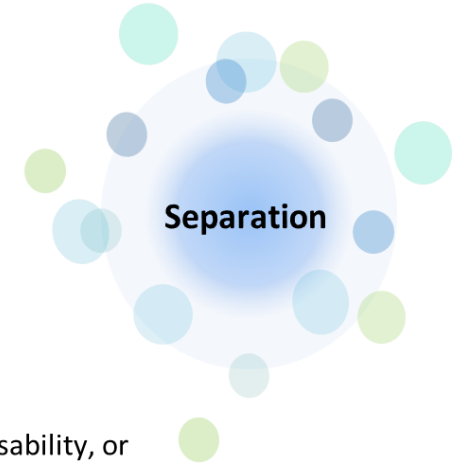
Extra-HH Moderators

- Presence of CCI
- Presence of child labor markets



Intra-HH Moderators

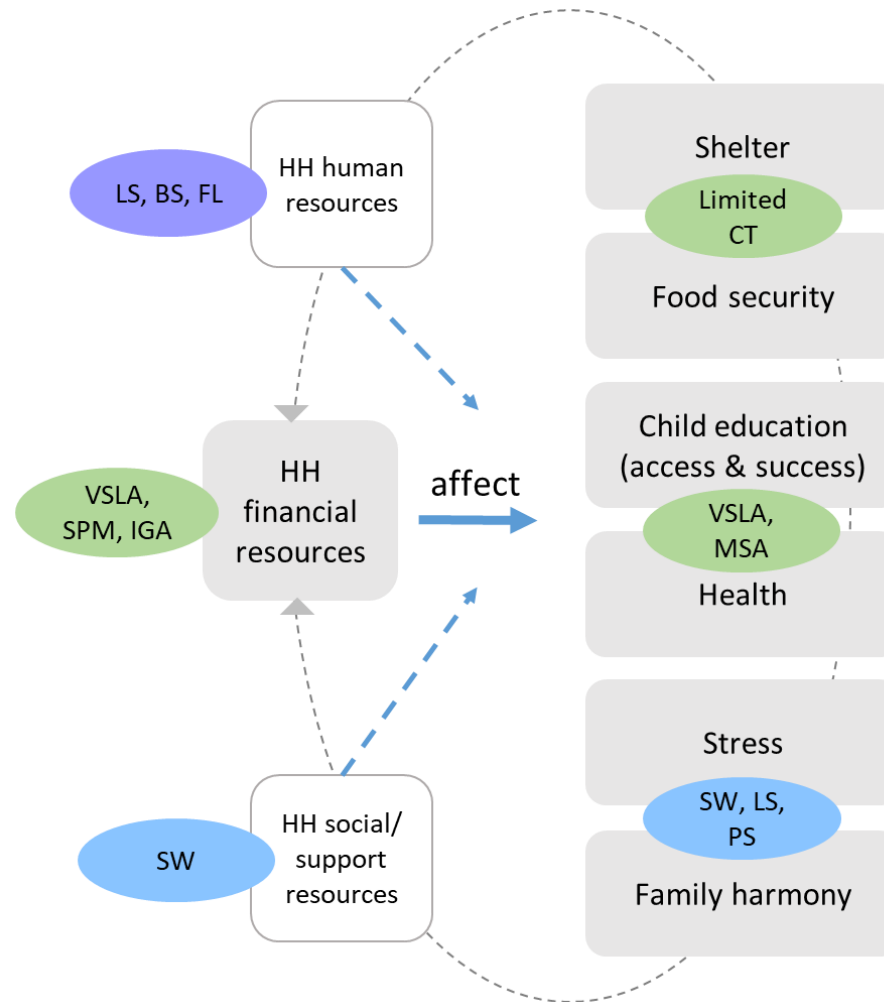
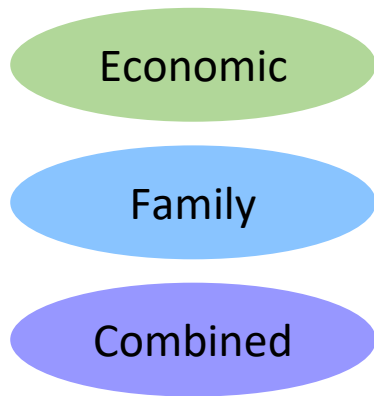
- Death, absence, disability, or illness of caregiver
- Violence, abuse, neglect, harsh discipline practices
- Substance abuse
- # dependents in HH
- Parenting skills



Namey, Laumann, Brown, in press

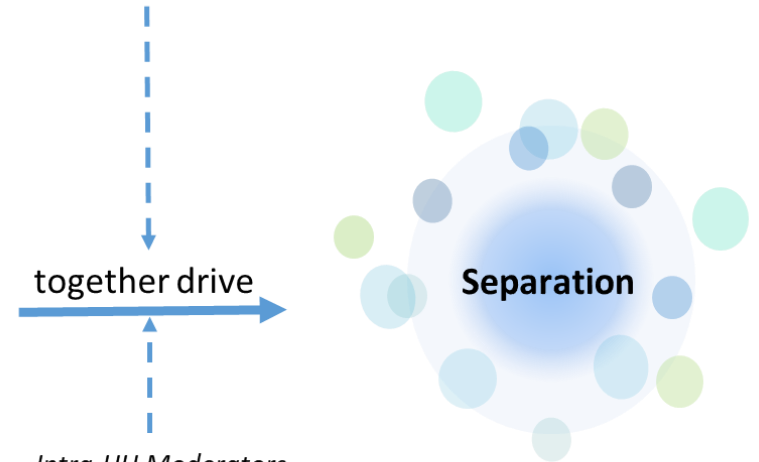
Background

- Different types of interventions are theorized to address different drivers of separation.



Extra-HH Moderators

- Presence of CCI
- Presence of child labor markets





Intra-HH Moderators

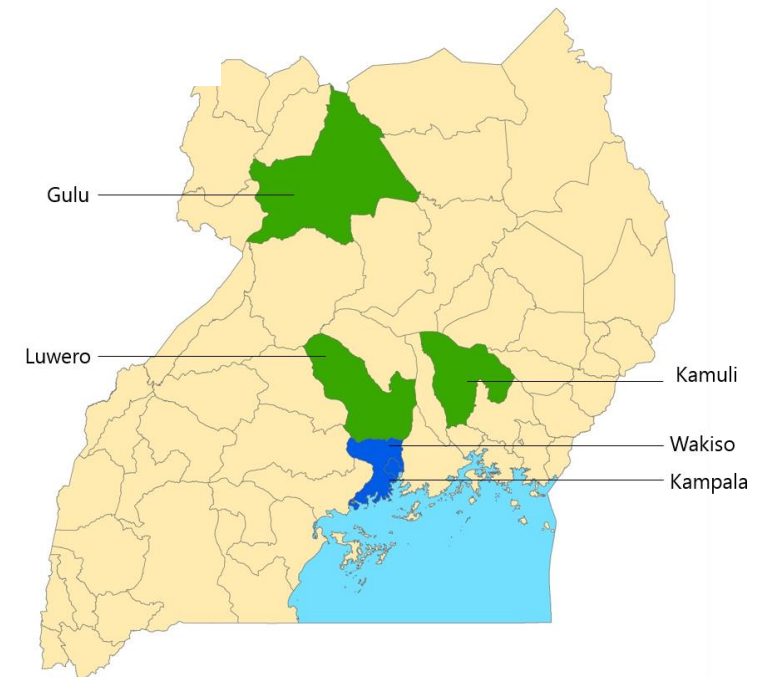
- Death, absence, disability, or illness of caregiver
- Violence, abuse, neglect, harsh discipline practices
- Substance abuse (LS, PS, FL)
- # dependents in HH
- Parenting skills

Namey, Laumann, Brown, in press

ASPIRES Family Care project

OBJECTIVE: Assess the effects of different types of economic strengthening activities integrated with family strengthening activities among families reunifying a child and families at risk of family-child separation

- Two learning projects in Uganda
 - ChildFund’s Economic Strengthening to Keep and Reintegrate Children in Families (ESFAM) 
 - AVSI Foundation’s Family Resilience (FARE) 



ASPIRES Family Care project - Activities

Case Management and Family/Social Strengthening Activities

Family assessment, household plans, visits/monitoring, counselling, parenting skills training, life skills training

Economic Strengthening (ES) Activities

Number of HHs

	At-risk	Reintegr.
• Cash transfers (CTs)	57	41
• Village Savings and Lending Associations (VSLA)	273	16
• CTs + VSLA	377	48
• Matched savings accounts	119	23
• Other ES (e.g., financial literacy training, apprenticeships)	41	49
• No ES	32	2

ASPIRES Family Care project - Indicators

Economic Vulnerability

- Median monthly income
- Median household savings
- Ability to pay for basic needs
 - Food, shelter, water
 - Health care
 - Education
- Ability to handle financial shocks

Child Protection & Well-being

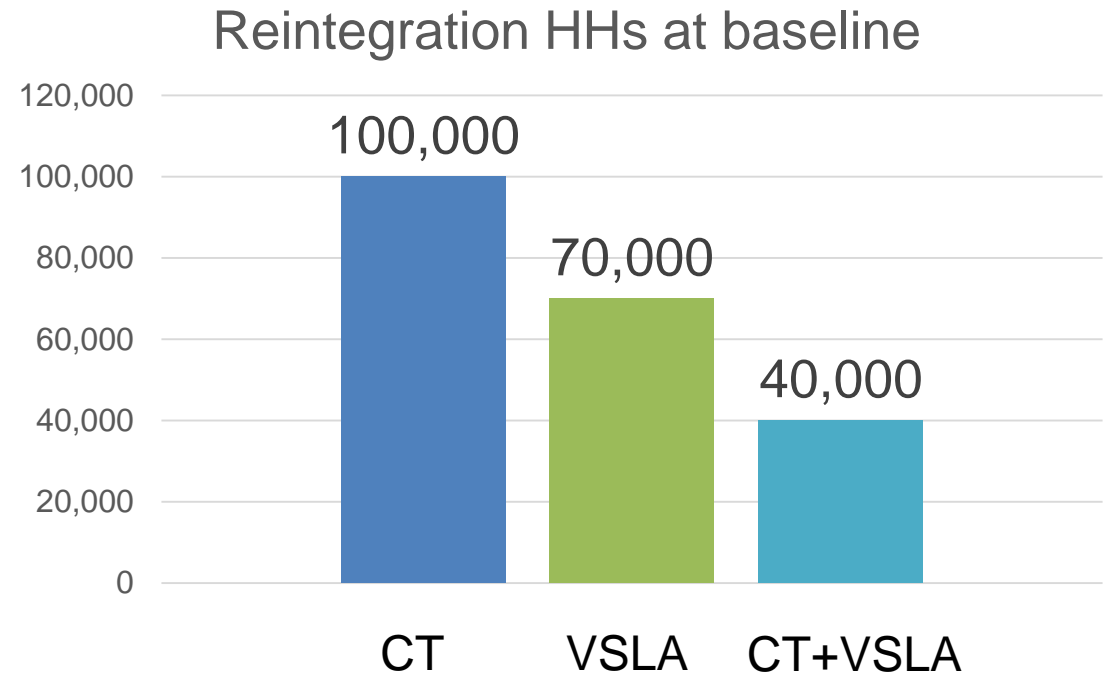
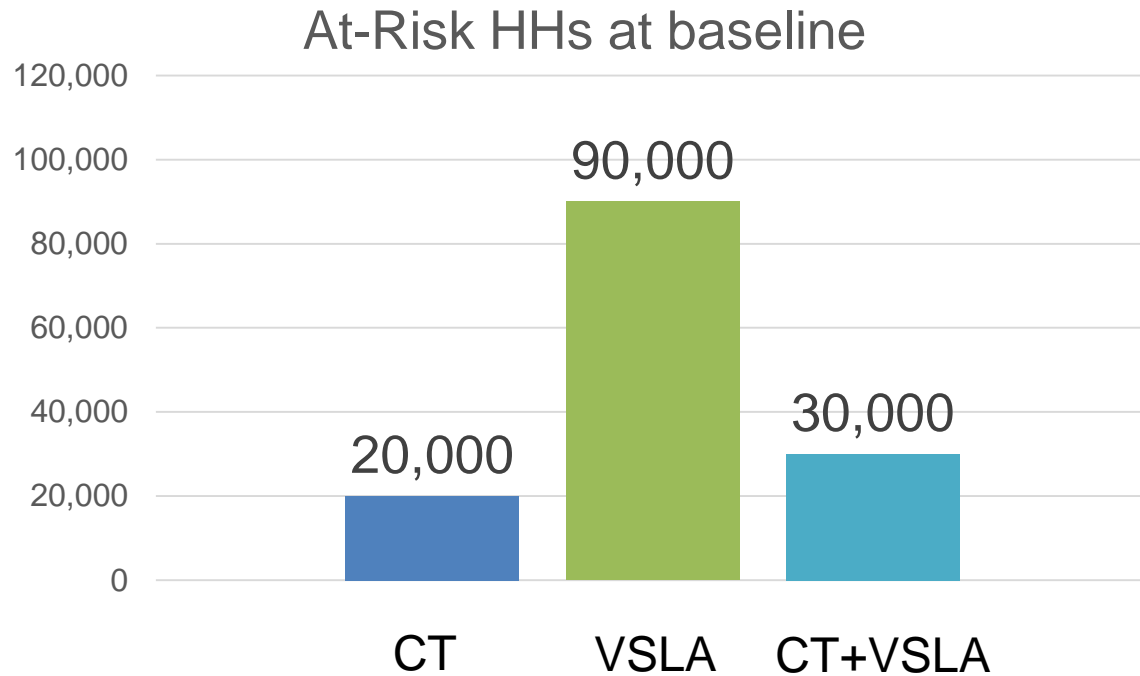
- Children living outside of family care
- Caregiver and child integration
 - Caregiver-child attachment
- Use of harsh discipline practices
- Regular school attendance

ASPIRES Family Care project – Assessment methods

- Collected longitudinal **quantitative data** on **economic vulnerability** and **index child and caregiver well-being** from all enrolled households
 - Baseline June/July 2016
 - Endline January/February 2018
- Descriptive statistics on aggregated sample
 - One small sub-sample: reintegrating VSLA HHs
- Collected longitudinal **qualitative data** from a sample of 80 HHs

Findings: Baseline Snapshots

Median monthly income (UGX)

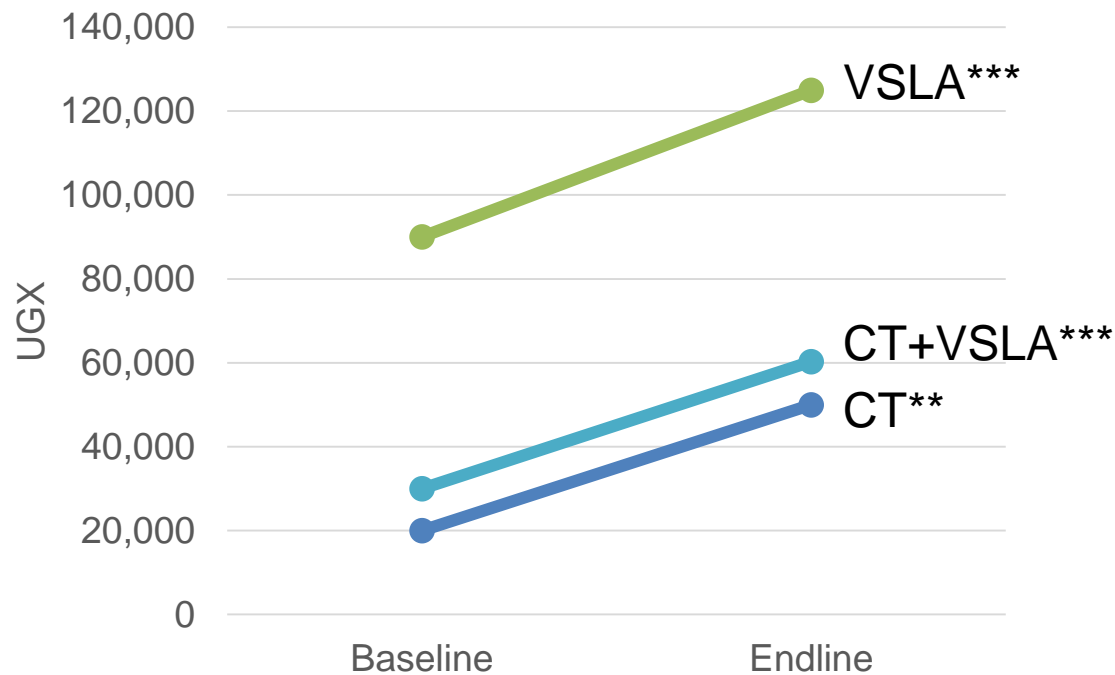


Median HH size	5.0	6.5	5.7	5.9	5.3	5.0
Median # children	2.7	3.4	3.5	3.0	3.7	3.7

Findings: At-risk HHs, Economic Vulnerability

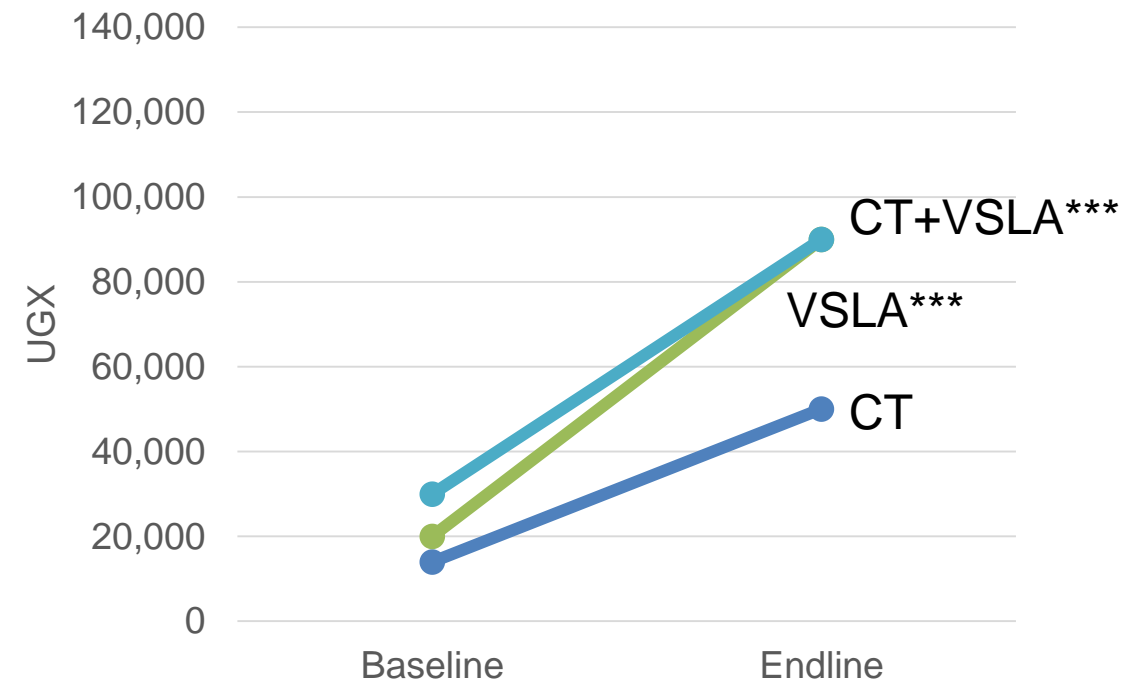
Median monthly income

- CT and CT+VSLA doubled
- VSLA increased ~40%



Median household savings

- CT and CT+VSLA tripled
- VSLA quadrupled



*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

Findings: At-risk HHs, Economic Vulnerability

Ability to pay for basic needs

- Increases across all categories of expenditure among all HHs
 - CT, VSLA, and CT+VSLA all showed statistically-significant increases
 - All HHs able to pay for basic needs ~90% of the time at endline

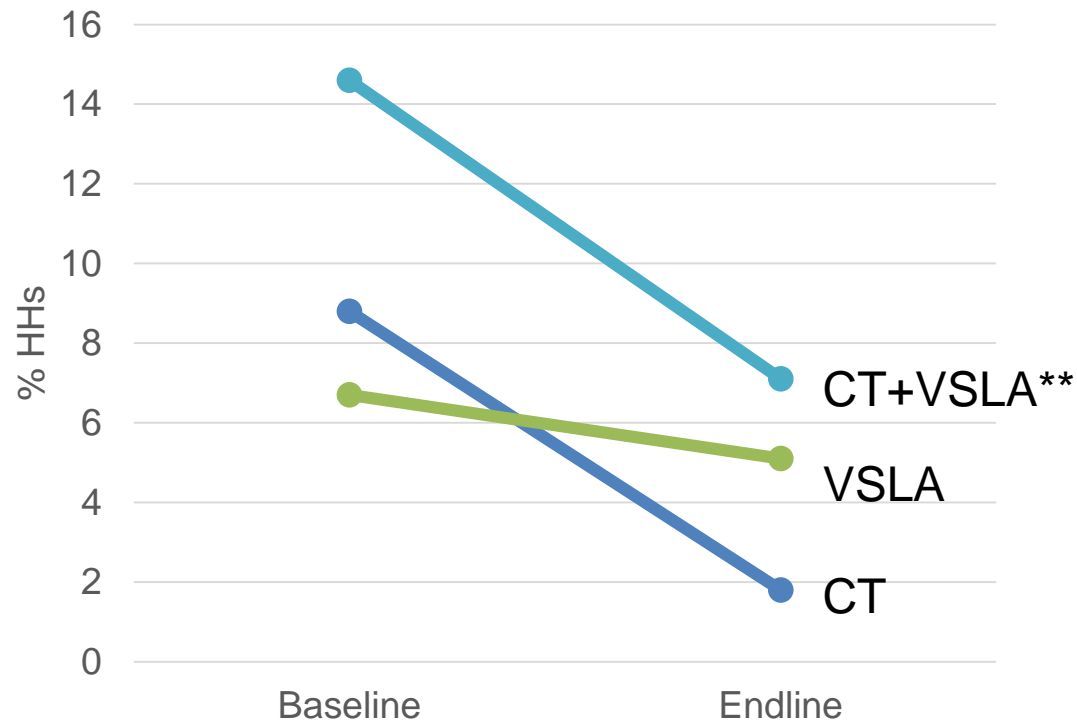
Self-reported ability to handle financial shocks

- At baseline, the majority of HHs in all groups reported being unprepared or very unprepared to handle a financial shock
- At endline, the majority (55-65%) of HHs in all groups reported being prepared or very prepared

Findings: At-risk HHs, Child Protection & Well-being

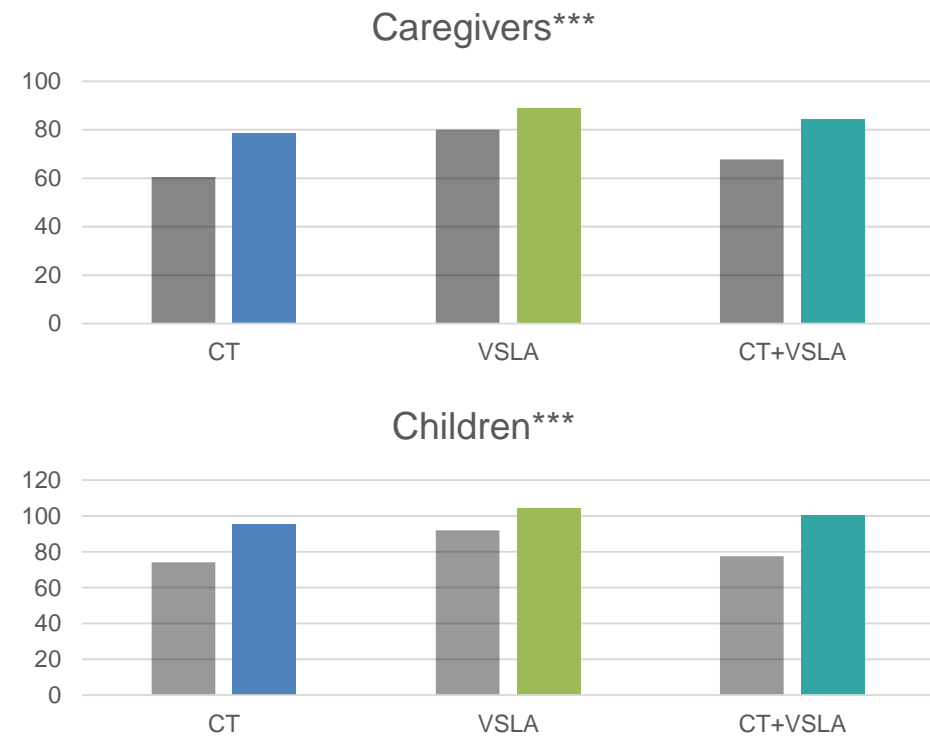
Children living outside of family care

- Decrease in HHs of all groups



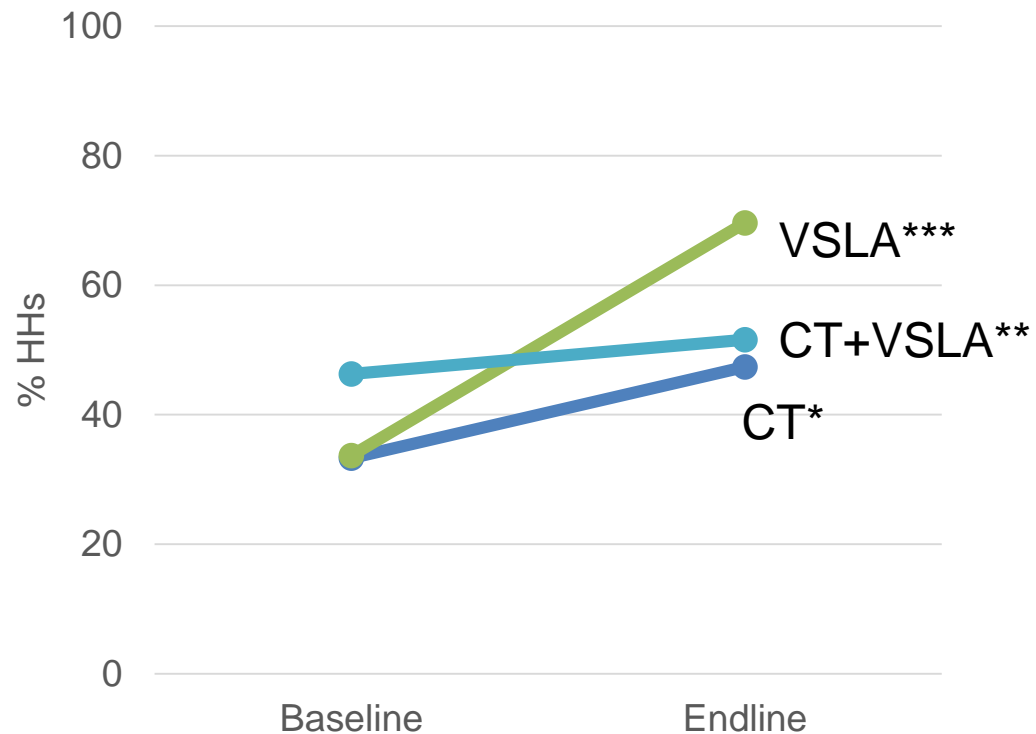
*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

Caregiver & child integration index



Findings: At-risk HHs, Child Protection & Well-being

No use of harsh discipline practices



Regular school attendance

- Percent of HHs with all school-aged children attending school regularly increased for all groups

	Baseline	Endline	% points
CT	45.6	54.4	8.8
VSLA***	36.9	66.8	29.9
CT+VSLA***	46.3	70.6	24.3

*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

Findings: At-risk HHs, Summary

	N	Income	Savings	Basic Needs	Handle Shocks	Separated Children	CG/CH Well-being	Harsh Discipline	School Attend
CT	57	+*	+	+*	+*	+	+*	+*	+
VSLA	273	+*	+*	+*	+*	+	+*	+*	+*
CT+VSLA	377	+*	+*	+*	+*	+*	+*	+*	+*

+ observed improvement in indicator

— observed decrease in indicator

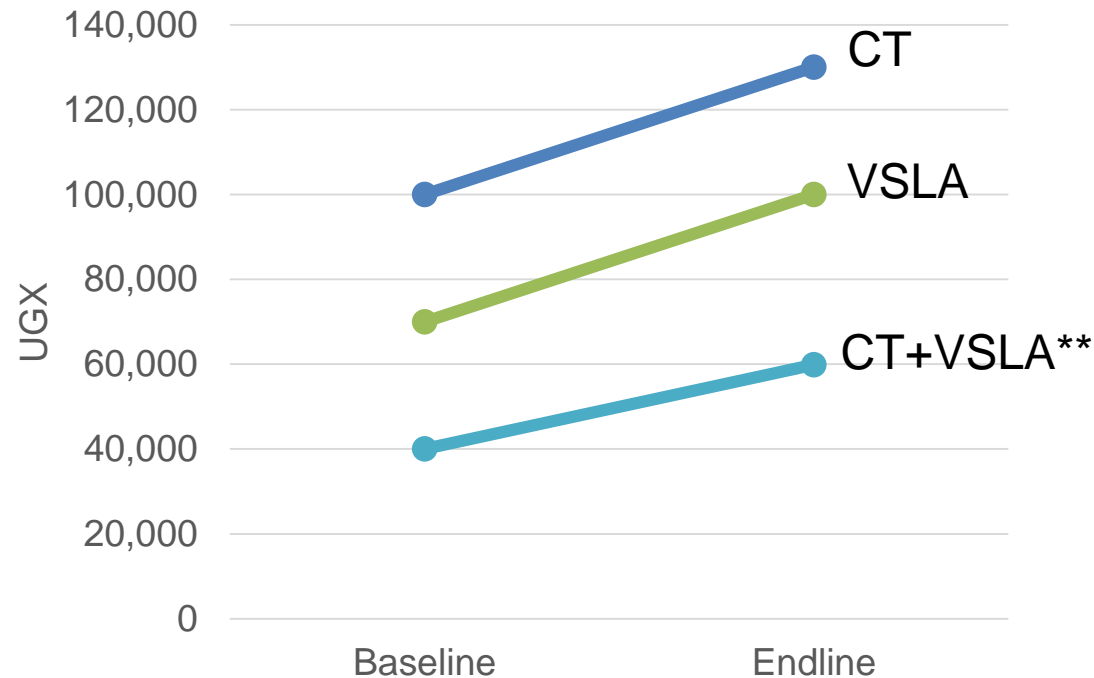
* Significant at *p<0.05 or better

Findings: Reintegrating HHs*, Economic Vulnerability

*VSLA HHs n=14

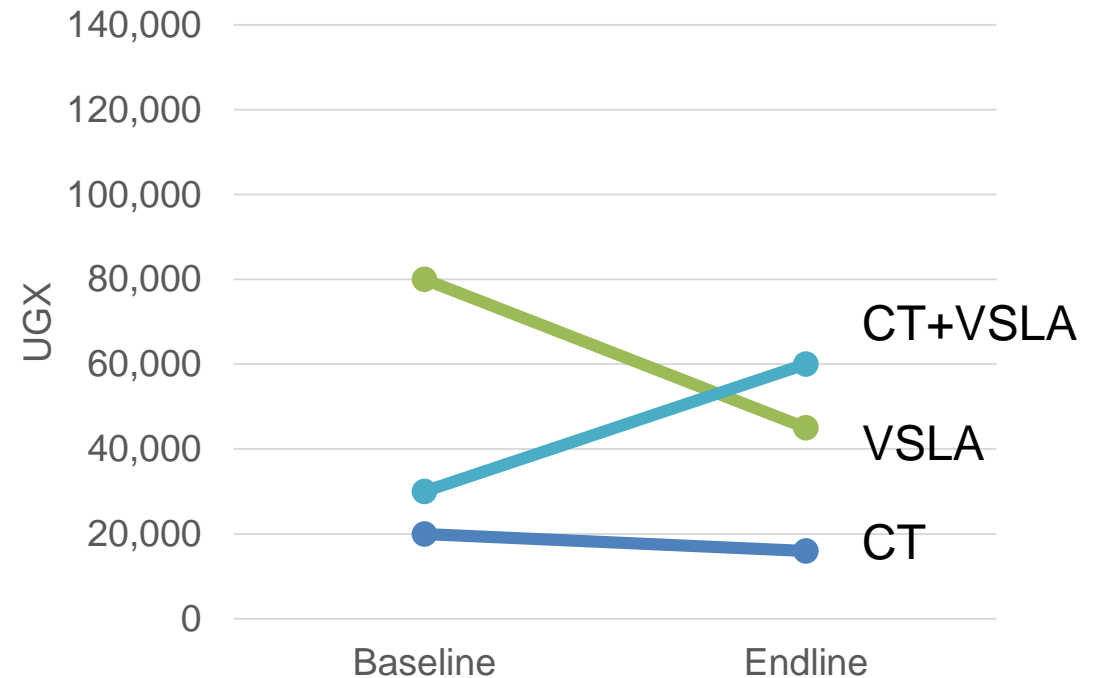
Median monthly income

- All increased 30-50%



Median household savings

- CT+VSLA doubled savings
- CT and VSLA decreased in value



**p<0.01

Findings: Reintegration HHs, Economic Vulnerability

Ability to pay for basic needs

- Increases across all categories of expenditure among all HHs
 - Statistically significant increases ($p < 0.05$) for CT and CT+VSLA

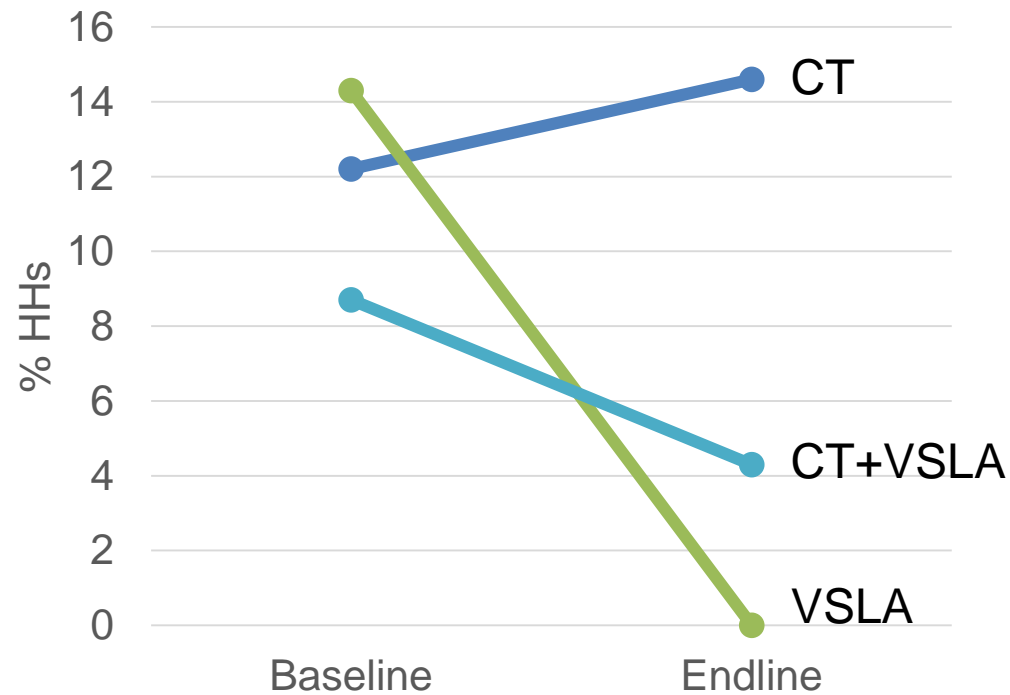
Self-reported ability to handle financial shocks

- At baseline, the majority of CT and CT+VSLA HHs reported being unprepared or very unprepared to handle a financial shock
 - Remained at endline: 81% of CT and 54% of CT+VSLA reported lack of preparedness for handling financial shock
 - 53% of VSLA HHs reported being prepared; 40% indicated they were unprepared

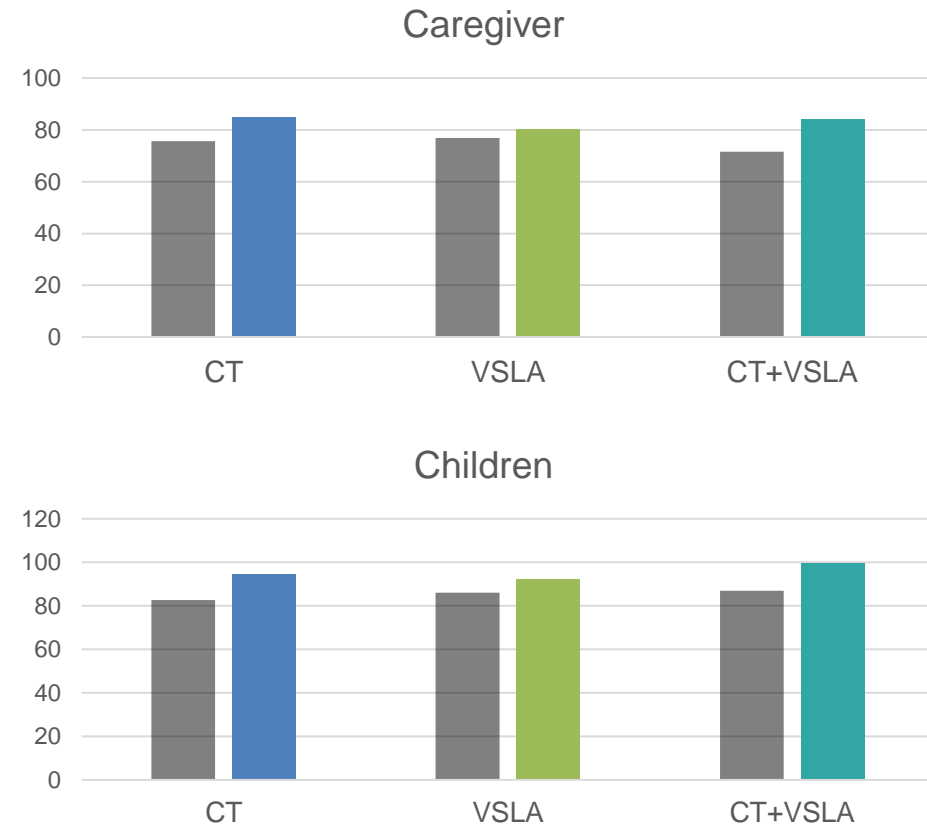
Findings: Reintegrating HHs, Child Protection & Well-being

Children living outside of family care

- Slight increase in CT HHs (n=5-6)

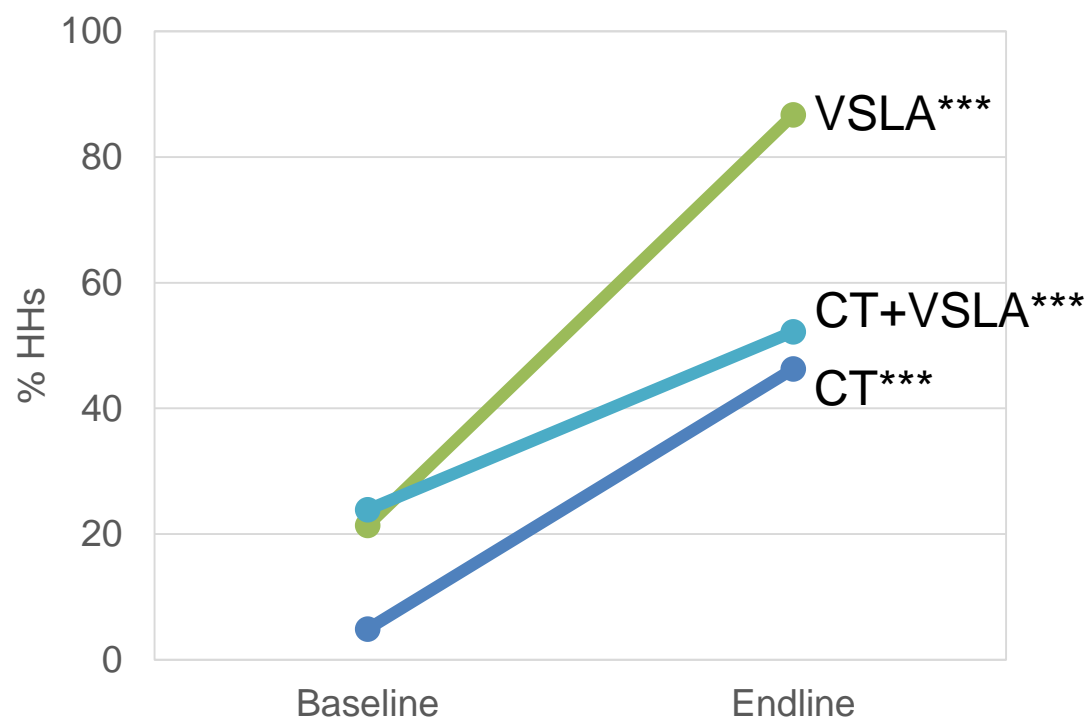


Caregiver & child integration index



Findings: Reintegrating HHs, Child Protection & Well-being

No use of harsh discipline practices



Regular school attendance

- Percent of HHs with all school-aged children attending school regularly increased for VSLA and CT+VSLA
 - Decreased for CT HHs

	Baseline	Endline	% points
CT	31.7	26.8	-4.9
VSLA	57.1	86.7	29.6
CT+VSLA*	56.5	78.3	21.8

*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

Findings: Reintegrating HHs, Summary

	N	Income	Savings	Basic Needs	Handle Shocks	Separated Children	CG/CH Well-being	Harsh Discipline	School Attend
CT	41	+	+	+*	-	-	+*	+*	-
VSLA	16	+	-	+	+	+	+	+*	+
CT+VSLA	48	+*	+	+*	-*	+	+*	+*	+*

⊕ observed improvement in indicator

* Significant at *p<0.05 or better

⊖ observed decrease in indicator

Key Take-aways

- For families at risk of separation CT, VSLA, and CT+VSLA all show promise for reducing drivers of family-child separation
- For families reunifying a child, VSLA* and CT+ VSLA show promise; CT alone may not be enough
- All of these activities were **integrated** with family strengthening activities
 - there are social benefits to economic well-being and economic benefits to social well-being

Key Take-aways

The 70,000 shillings that I receive every month has helped me because it helps me to pay the rent and to stay. My children now have a home to come to after schooling. Before the rent was stressing me a lot I could not sleep. The landlord would call even in the middle of the night. Sometimes she would come here and tell you to leave her house while other people are watching; this would get people talking behind your back. But now I feel better.

Stress

Shelter

Community belonging

Ability to pay

It also helped to increase on my income, because the money that I would have spent on rent, is now covered by the cash transfer. So I use that money to buy needs like food, sugar and milk for the children and also inject in my business.

HH financial resources

Food security

The children are happy and are no longer bothered by the land lady. Our relationship is now better because we are no longer constrained by money problems. I am no longer worried as before, so I do not take out my stress on the children shouting at them. I talk to them in case they have done something wrong.

Child stress

Caregiver-child attachment

HH human resources

Kampala at-risk CT HH

Research Next Steps

- Expanded quantitative analyses
 - Difference-in-differences modeling
 - Coincidence analysis
- Complete qualitative analysis and case summaries

About ASPIRES and ASPIRES Family Care

ASPIRES, supported by PEPFAR and USAID and managed by FHI 360, supports gender-sensitive programming, research and learning to improve the economic security of highly vulnerable individuals, families and children. ASPIRES provides technical assistance to US Government agencies and their implementing partners to advance and scale up high-quality interventions in the areas of consumption support, money management, and income promotion. It also designs and implements rigorous research to evaluate programs and inform a new understanding of best practices in ES for vulnerable populations. Please visit <https://www.marketlinks.org/aspires>.

With funding from USAID's Displaced Children and Orphans Fund (DCOF), ASPIRES' Family Care project is tackling the topics of how ES interventions can help separated children return to and remain in their families. It is also exploring how ES can help highly vulnerable families stay together. It will draw on evidence from two projects it funded and is conducting evaluation research on in Uganda, as well as learning from other projects addressing family preservation and reintegration, to develop programming guidance that will help projects match specific families with ES interventions that improve their economic circumstances and support family stability.

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APPENDIX: No ES – illustrative indicators (n=11)

