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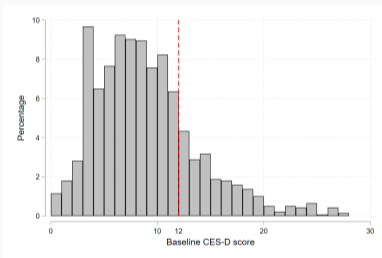
# Psychosocial Constraints & Impact Heterogeneity in a Multifaceted Graduation Program in Kenya

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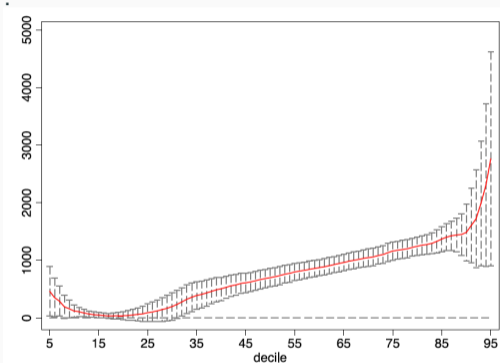


# Depression in a Deeply Poor Population



- Mo's work suggests that we might expect to find a disproportionate number of chronically poor people trapped by both their economic and their mental health
- Graph to the left shows the depression scores for a chronically poor population in Kenya that is eligible for a means-tested, multi-faceted graduation program
- While graduation programs have been shown to have impressive average impacts, do averages tell the full story
- In *Anna Karenina*, Tolstoy wrote: "Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way"
- Can we improve poverty reduction programs by accounting for the multiple ways that a family might be economically unhappy?

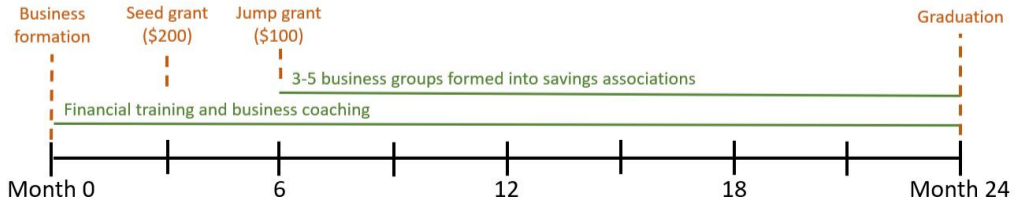
# Impact Heterogeneity of Graduation Programs



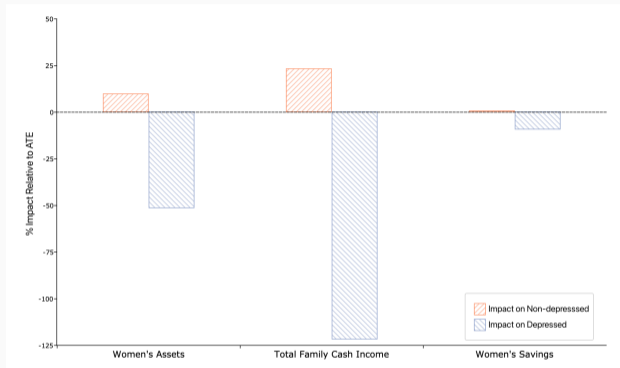
- Perhaps under-appreciated in the impact evaluation literature is that hiding beneath impressive average impacts in a reality of highly heterogeneous impacts
- The diagram to the left displays the “quantile treatment effects” of a graduation program in Bangladesh
- Without getting lost in technical thickets, the diagram shows that 35-40% of beneficiaries of a graduation program experienced not demonstrable impact from the program
- Why, and what can be done to improve program efficacy?

# The BOMA Project's Graduation Program in Northern Kenya

- Working in collaboration with the BOMA Project, the MRR Lab undertook a 4-year evaluation of BOMA's graduation program, which is undertaken in some of the most challenging environments imaginable
- Program targets women using community-based assessment procedure
- Standard graduation program (\$PPP 150 seed grant + \$PPP 75 jump grant if business survived 6 months + 24 - month mentoring and skills training from a BOMA mentor)



# Learnings from the BOMA Impact Evaluation



- On average, we find that the program has huge impacts on women's assets (324%), family cash earnings (32%) and women's savings (509%).
- Highly cost-effective, but the diagram on the left shows that the impacts are much less impressive for women who had severe depressive symptoms at the beginning of the study
- While we could make the program more efficacious in benefit-cost terms if we screened out women with severe depressive symptoms, the biggest challenge is how can we meet people where they are and devise a program that works for more people
- Let's turn now to Andrés Moya

