Research Brief: HOPE Burundi Comparative Analysis

ABOUT THIS RESEARCH EFFORT
This brief highlights key learnings from the HOPE Quotient survey administered to Burundi savings group members, providing an overview of changes observed between 2014, 2016, and 2017. The survey was not administered in 2015 due to political instability in the country.

The HOPE Quotient (HQ) is a survey tool that measures transformation in the lives of savings group members while they are involved with the savings ministry across four domains: spiritual, social, personal, and material.

The survey does not attempt to prove that all changes are a direct result of the savings ministry or HOPE’s influence; rather, we celebrate transformation that occurs within the context of local churches and communities, honoring the truth that HOPE is only one avenue of many through which God works in the lives of members.

HEADLINES
• Members are sharing what they’ve learned.
  – 64% of members have shared with a friend what they have learned from Scriptures studied in their savings group.
• Members are giving more.
  – Over half of members report their church giving increased in the last year.
• Members report growing in personal relationships and willingness to rely on others.
  – When asked to select the greatest two areas of impact on their lives from their involvement with their savings group, these areas of impact listed above ranked in the top five each year.
• Understanding changing group dynamics.
  – Reported high levels of trust between group members decreased, from 65% in 2016 to 48% in 2017. HOPE Burundi will further explore group dynamics as part of a satisfaction survey this fall.

CAVEATS
• Political unrest in Burundi since 2015 has contributed to violence and a challenging social and economic environment.
• Due to the influence of external factors and variable reliability of self-reported responses in this research effort, the following observations should be viewed as representative of the specific respondents and not broadly representative of all HOPE Burundi savings group members.
• Generally speaking, respondents to longitudinal surveys respond more openly and accurately after the first year of administration as a result of a number of factors, including greater familiarity with the questions and understanding that answers do not affect services they receive. Thus, there is more confidence in the reliability of the second- and third-year data.

METHOD
• 200 relatively new group members interviewed in 2014, of whom 170 were interviewed in 2016 and 135 were interviewed in 2017.
• Survey: Approximately 100 questions with a mix of multiple choice, open-ended, and forced ranking.
• Note: Findings represent data from 121 members who remained active and were interviewed all three years.
DEMOGRAPHICS
- 79% of group members surveyed are self-employed. 60% of group members are self-employed farmers.
- 25% of respondents reporting having dependents outside their household. This could include relatives, neighbors, or those in need in the community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never attended school</td>
<td></td>
<td>18-29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some primary completed</td>
<td></td>
<td>30-39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary completed</td>
<td></td>
<td>40-49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some secondary completed</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>50-59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary completed</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>60-70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

KEY LEARNINGS

**Self-Reported Impact**
Respondents were given a list of 11 areas of life and asked to select those areas they felt had been positively impacted by their involvement with their savings group and, of those selected, the top two areas of greatest impact.

- The five most commonly selected areas of impact in 2017 were:
  1. Personal relationships and willingness to rely on others (96%)
  2. Willingness to spend your time or money on other people (93%)
  3. Hope for the future (91%)
  4. Financial management skills (88%)
  5. Belief that you manage everything you own on behalf of God (84%).

- While there were decreases in levels of self-reported impact in eight categories since 2014, there were overall high levels of impact reported in 2017 (10 of 11 categories were above 70% in 2017, while there was 58% agreement that understanding of the Bible was impacted).

- **Greatest areas of impact**: Respondents were asked to select the top two areas of greatest impact they observed as a result of their involvement with their savings group. The top three from each year are listed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2014 Greatest Areas of Impact</th>
<th>2016 Greatest Areas of Impact</th>
<th>2017 Greatest Areas of Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Personal relationships and willingness to rely on others</td>
<td>1) Personal relationships and willingness to rely on others</td>
<td>1) Understanding of God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Hope for the future</td>
<td>2) Understanding of God</td>
<td>2) Personal relationships and willingness to rely on others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Obedience to God</td>
<td>3) Obedience to God</td>
<td>3) Willingness to spend your time or money on other people</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Spiritual Domain**
- In 2017, all active members considered themselves to be a follower of Jesus Christ, of whom two decided to follow Jesus Christ within the last 12 months. Both new believers agreed with the statements, “As a new convert, this program helped me to feel well received in my local church” and “This program helped me to grow in my journey as a disciple of Christ.”
- **Members are sharing what they’ve learned**. 64% of members have shared with a friend what they’ve learned from Scriptures studied in their savings group.
• **Members are engaging in spiritual disciplines.** In 2017, 95% reported attending church at least once a week, 90% reported praying multiple times a day or constantly, and of those able to read, 87% reported reading the Bible at least a few times a week.

• **Members are applying what they learn.** Members were invited to share an example of a specific way they have obeyed a Scripture studied in a savings group meeting. Examples included:
  - “We learned that giving brings blessing, that it is better to give than to receive. That pushed me to help others.”
  - “I forgave someone who insulted me.”
  - “We learnt about love, and the word of God recommends us to love each other. I have now got a lot of love.”

• **Members are growing spiritually through the savings group ministry,** as demonstrated by the above graph.

### Social Domain

- **Room for improvement in understanding changes in strength of group relationships over time**
  Group members were asked to rate their trust for fellow group members on a scale of one to five. Between 2016 and 2017, there was a decrease in members reporting a high level of trust (a four or five on the scale) from 65% to 48%. The HOPE team is working to better understand reasons behind this change in group relationship strength over time.

• **Members are serving one another.** Members were invited to share examples of how they helped a fellow group member or have been helped by a fellow group member:
  - “I assisted four people: we built a house for one, I helped the second to put grasses in his coffee plantation, I helped the third member to farm, and I prayed for the fourth.”
  - “A group member lost a child and we organized ourselves and contributed money, each according to his capability.”

### Attitudinal Indexes

*Note: The following section references aggregated responses to a series of statements designed to gauge attitudes and beliefs in the areas of forgiveness, social empathy, and generosity.*

Between 2014 and 2017:
- The average score for the attitude of **forgiveness** increased by 16%.
- The average score for **social empathy** did not change overall.
- The average score for **generosity** increased by 18%.
Personal Domain

Note: The following section references aggregated responses to a series of statements designed to gauge attitudes and beliefs in the areas of peace, agency, dignity, and joy.

Between 2014 and 2017:

- The average score for **peace** (primarily referring to peace about the future) increased by 5%.
- The average score for **agency** (measuring whether group members recognize their ability to be agents of change in their own lives) increased by 9%.
- The average score for **dignity** (whether members recognize that they are valuable and have dignity because they are created in the image of God) increased by 5%.
- The average score for **joy** (measuring attitude toward life independent of circumstances) increased by 3%.

![Agency Graph]

Material Domain

- **Members are giving more.** Over half of members reported their church giving increased in the last year.
- **Members report having fewer assets,** as depicted by the graph below. There has been a notable decrease in reported asset ownership since 2014. The political instability in Burundi, especially in 2015, is likely a contributor to this trend. Animals are a risky investment during unrest. Members may be hesitant to purchase animals, knowing they could be easily stolen or need to be left behind.
- 71% of active members surveyed disagreed or totally disagreed that they own enough land to respond to their needs. This is significant, considering the majority of savings group members are engaged in farming.
- **Most common plans for the future:** buy/raise livestock/domestic animals, buy land, and start/invest in a business.

![Asset Ownership Graph]