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Social protection and rural transformation in Africa

SOCIAL PROTECTION AND RURAL TRANSFORMATION IN AFRICA

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ABSTRACT

This article develops a conceptual framework on pathways through which non-contributory social protection can contribute to a resilient and inclusive agricultural growth in rural Africa. It draws insights from a review of rigorous empirical evidence on the impacts of cash transfers and multifaceted cash plus programmes on range of relevant productive outcomes, including: accumulation of productive assets; inputs and farm management practices; off-farm labour and non-farm enterprises; and farm production and income. The review demonstrates an emerging consensus in the literature that access to social protection programmes contributes positively to increasing the productive asset holdings of rural people, increased use of improved inputs and farm practices, and a shift away from casual wage labour arrangements. Moreover, there is limited evidence on heterogeneous effects across different baseline characteristics (income, sex, labour-constrained households, among others). Finally, the article highlights how social protection programmes should be considered an integral part of broader rural and agricultural development strategies in order to achieve a more productive, resilient, and equitable rural transformation in rural Africa.

JEL: H53 - Government Expenditures and Welfare Programmes I38 - Government Policy; Provision and Effects of Welfare Programmes R28 - Government Policy.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CASH TRANSFER PROGRAMME FOR ORPHANS AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN	CT-OVC
CHILD GRANTS	CG
CHILD GRANTS PROGRAMME	CGP
COMMUNITY BASED HEALTH INSURANCE	CBHI
DIRECT SUPPORT	DS
FARM INPUT SUBSIDY PROGRAMME	FISP
GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT	GDP
HARMONIZED SOCIAL CASH TRANSFER	HSCT
HUNGER SAFETY NET PROGRAMME	HSNP
LINKING FOOD SECURITY TO SOCIAL PROTECTION PROGRAMME	LFSSP
LIVELIHOOD EMPOWERMENT AGAINST POVERTY PROGRAM	LEAP
MULTIPLE CATEGORY TARGETED PROGRAM	MCT
OTHER FOOD SECURITY PROGRAMME	OFSP
PRODUCTIVE SAFETY NETS PROGRAMME	PSNP
PROJET PILOTE DES FILETS SOCIAUX PAR LE CASH TRANSFERT	PPFS-CT
PUBLIC WORKS	PW
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA	SSA
SOCIAL ACTION FUND	MASAF
SOCIAL CASH TRANSFER PILOT PROGRAMME	SCTP
SOCIAL PROTECTION	SP
TROPICAL LIVESTOCK UNIT	TLU

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1. INTRODUCTION

Recent evidence on rural transformation processes in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) highlight a persistent contradiction. In SSA, the value of agricultural production has increased more than in any other region of the world in the last two decades, and its inhabitants have increased their wellbeing as measured by improvements in per capita GDP (gross domestic product), educational attainment and life expectancy, among others (Jayne and Sanchez, 2021). However, this has occurred in the absence of significant improvements in labour, land, and total factor productivity. Instead, gains in agricultural output have come primarily through area expansion, with associated repercussions for natural resources, ecosystem functionality and soil health (Goyal and Nash, 2017; Jayne and Sanchez, 2021). Where dynamism is occurring in rural areas, it is primarily concentrated among medium-scale or emergent farmers, with limited evidence of productivity growth and consolidation in the small-scale sector (Sitko and Jayne, 2014; Jayne *et al.*, 2016). As a consequence, despite aggregate agricultural growth, poverty and food insecurity remain pressing challenges in rural SSA, where the absolute number of people living in poverty is still increasing and the vast majority of the extreme poor live (Beegle and Christiaensen, 2019).

In the early 2000s, the dominant discourse on the challenges of persistent rural poverty and low productivity in the region framed the issue as a symptom of limited adoption of green revolution technologies, including improved seeds, synthetic fertilizers and irrigation (Diao, Hazell, and Thurlow, 2010). To remedy this, governments and donors invested heavily in reviving input subsidy programmes, supporting stagnated research and extension systems, and fostering private sector engagement in agricultural markets. These investments were seen as necessary to kick-start a process of agricultural-led structural transformation similar to those experienced by Asian countries (Toenniessen, Adesina, and DeVries, 2008; Jayne and Rashid, 2013). As a consequence, by 2013 ten African countries were spending about \$ one billion per year, or 28.6 percent of their annual agricultural budgets, on inputs subsidy programmes alone (Jayne and Rashid, 2013).

However, the stylized vision of a technology and market-led structural transformation underestimated the severe material and ecological resource constraints faced by many rural people in SSA, and the livelihood risks and uncertainties associated with making proscribed changes in resource allocations or livelihood orientation. Rural SSA is plagued by issues of missing and incomplete markets for insurance and credit, which could help to offset some of the risk and liquidity constraints to making and sustaining new investments in agricultural intensification. Moreover, climate change is increasing the frequency of severe weather events and the distribution of agricultural pests, which further magnifies the risks and uncertainty of rural livelihoods in the region. Thus, despite substantial investments to increase the uptake of improved inputs and markets engagement, livelihoods decisions by many small-scale producers in SSA remain inseparable from pressing concerns about meeting immediate food security needs. As a result, millions of farm households in the region continue to prioritize

production choices that minimize short-term consumption risks, but are often low productivity, and oriented toward subsistence (Barrett *et al.*, 2017)

At the same time, the non-farm sector in SSA is still weak¹ and unable to absorb marginal farm households out of agriculture (Yeboah and Jayne, 2018; Sumberg *et al.*, 2021). The lack of economic dynamism in the non-farm sectors in SSA is closely linked to the challenges facing the farm sector. A large literature, mostly based on experiences from Asia, suggests that the development of the agricultural sector is required to foster growth linkages in the non-farm economy and to pull marginal farmers into more remunerative wage employment (Diao, Hazell, and Thurlow, 2010; Collier and Dercon, 2014).

The persistent multi-dimensional challenges facing the agricultural sector in SSA, and the limited progress achieved by the technology and market-led development approach pursued over the last two decades suggest the need for complimentary multifaceted approaches. In this article we lay out a conceptual framework and summarize the empirical evidence for integrating social protection (SP) support with agricultural interventions in order to foster sustained and equitable economic opportunities in rural SSA. While SP, and particularly non-contributory social assistance, is typically thought of as a tool for addressing acute deprivation and supporting the extremely poor to maintain sufficient consumption levels, there is emerging evidence demonstrating its productive and transformative power in the context of rural areas. Moreover, a small but growing strand of literature demonstrates the existence of synergistic relationships between SP and standard rural development interventions, which have the potential to reduce poverty and better the economic outcomes of smallholder farmers (Veras Soares *et al.*, 2017). By exploring this literature, we seek to identify key leverage points where programme integration may have the most impact to achieve an inclusive, resilient, and sustainable food systems transformation in SSA.

¹ 76.8 percent of people are informally employed in the non-agricultural sector, which is the highest rate of any region in the world (ILO, 2018).

2. SOCIAL PROTECTION IN AFRICA

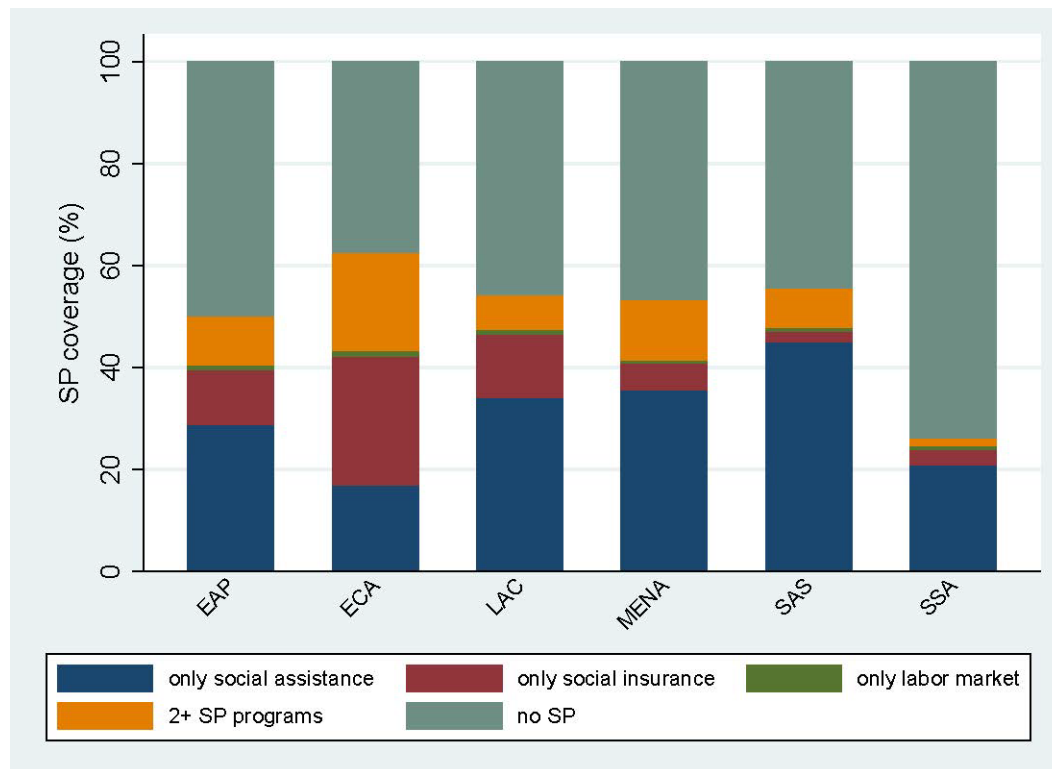
Social protection is broadly defined as the set of initiatives, public or private, which seek to minimize vulnerability and risk, and reduce poverty. The most common types of SP are:

- **Social assistance/social safety nets:** these non-contributory programmes transfer resources to individuals or households. Cash and in-kind transfers may have conditionalities, but increasingly these are unconditional. Their goal is to reduce poverty and inequality, and smooth consumption.
- **Social insurance:** comprises contributory programmes such as health insurance and pensions, which protect against risks and situations that lead to financial instability.
- **Labour market interventions:** these programmes include, but are not limited to, job training and services to promote employment such as job matching or placement assistance. They also include unemployment insurance.

Social protection programmes have a long history in other parts of the world, but in Africa their appearance is recent and rapidly evolving. With the exception of South Africa, at the beginning of the century, not one country in SSA had a national social policy programme in place. By 2019, 35 countries in Africa had rolled out at least one social policy programme (Devereux, 2020). This policy trend correlates with the relevance SP has gained in the Development Goals. In the year 2000, SP was not featured in the Millennium Development Goals, but 15 years later it is mentioned in four of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

Figure 1 shows that the coverage of SP provided by government in SSA lags compared to other developing regions. Coverage is expressed as the percentage of the population receiving a given type of SP programme, including direct and indirect beneficiaries. Social protection covers around 45 percent of the total population in all regions except SSA, where almost three quarters of the population is not covered, and around 20 percent of the population benefits from social assistance programmes only. Social safety nets typically target the poorest and most vulnerable populations. With more than 38 percent of the population in SSA living with less than USD 1.90 a day in 2019 (World Bank, 2022a), this implies that half of the poorest and most vulnerable population does not have access to any safety net.

FIGURE 1. COVERAGE OF SOCIAL PROTECTION PROGRAMMES (%), AS CAPTURED IN HOUSEHOLD SURVEYS, BY REGION



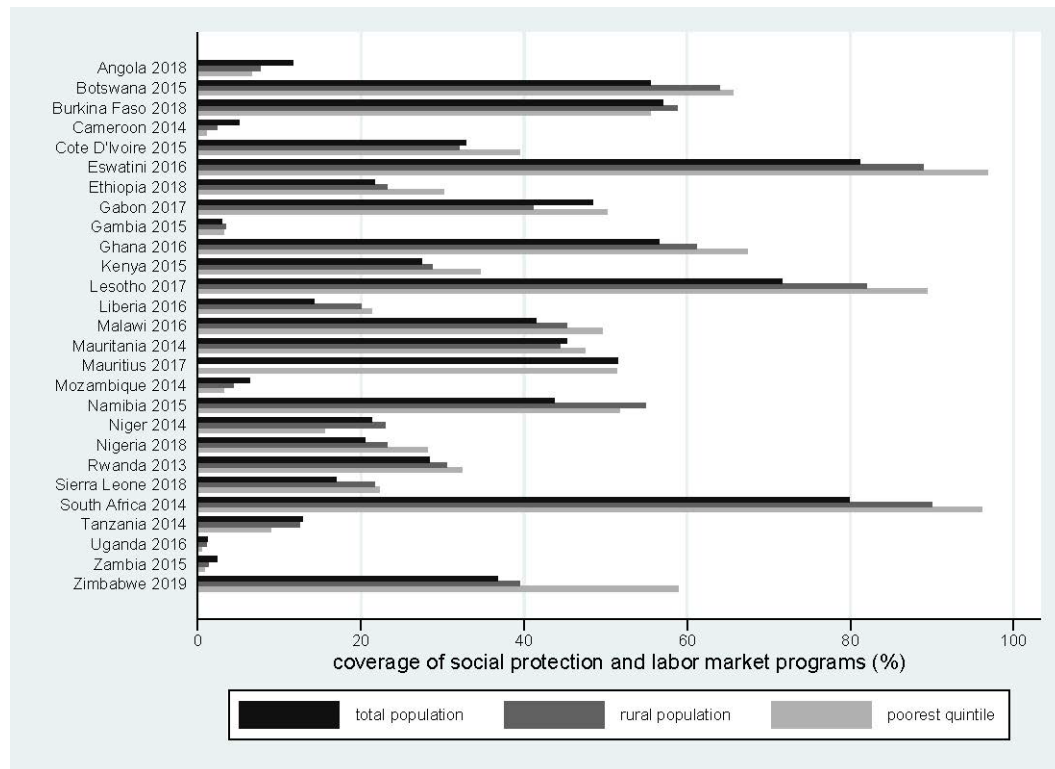
Source: Authors' own elaboration adapted from **World Bank**. 2019. *Atlas of Social Protection: Indicators of Resilience and Equity (ASPIRE)*. <http://www.worldbank.org/aspire>.

Note: Cover is determined as follows: (number of individuals in the population who live in a household where at least one member receives the benefit)/ (number of individuals in the total population). SP: social protection; EAP: East Asia and Pacific; ECA: Europe and Central Asia; LAC: Latin America and the Caribbean; MENA: Middle East and Northern Africa; SAS: South Asia; SSA: sub-Saharan Africa. Regional average calculated from the latest available figure for each country in the period 2010-2019. This figure underestimates coverage because household surveys do not include all programmes that exist in each country.

Nevertheless, this masks substantial differences in terms of resources spent and population covered by SP programmes across countries. As shown in figure 2, in Eswatini and South Africa SP programmes reach 80 percent of the total population, mostly due to widespread school feeding programmes in Eswatini and a robust child grant programme in South Africa. In several countries, the share of the population benefitting from a SP programme is below 20 percent and when this occurs, the poorest quintile has even a lower coverage rate.

Most of the countries in SSA rely on non-contributory social assistance targeting the rural population, which is often the segment with the highest levels of poverty and malnutrition. For this reason, SP coverage of the rural population tends to be relatively higher than in the total population. While the COVID-19 pandemic has led to an increase in SP coverage on the continent, many of the programmes put in place since the start of the crisis have been temporary and relatively small in size (Gentilini *et al.*, 2022; Bennamour *et al.*, 2021).

FIGURE 2. COVERAGE OF ALL SOCIAL PROTECTION PROGRAMMES (%), AS CAPTURED IN HOUSEHOLD SURVEYS, BY COUNTRY AND TARGETED POPULATION



Source: Authors' own elaboration adapted from **World Bank**. 2019. *Atlas of Social Protection: Indicators of Resilience and Equity (ASPIRE)*. <http://www.worldbank.org/aspire>

Note: Coverage is determined as follows: (number of individuals in the total population or rural population or poorest quintile who live in a household where at least one member receives the benefit)/(number of individuals in the total population). This figure underestimates coverage because household surveys do not include all programmes that exist in each country. The poorest quintile is calculated using per capita pretransfer welfare (income or consumption).

The rapid, albeit insufficient, expansion of SP programmes in SSA has led to a proliferation of scholarship on the impacts these programmes have on beneficiaries. Most of this research assesses the impacts of these programmes against their own objectives, which typically include consumption outcomes, educational attainment, and health, and generally point to positive results (Baird *et al.*, 2013; Bastagli *et al.*, 2019; Manley, Alderman, and Gentilini, 2022; Handa, Daidone, *et al.*, 2018; Millán *et al.*, 2019). However, an emerging literature explores the ways in which these programmes influence productive investments and economic decision making, with a focus on rural areas.

This review focuses on the evidence of productive economic outcomes associated with non-contributory SP programmes, which are the dominant form of SP in SSA. Most of the available evidence relates to cash transfers, conditional or unconditional, and public works programmes. The objectives of the programmes and the targeted populations vary from country to country, but they tend to share the overarching goal of supporting consumption of vulnerable population by providing a steady income flow. Most of the national social cash transfers in Africa are unconditional, even though some of them come with labelling/messaging, like the Child Grants Programme in Lesotho (Pace, Daidone, Davis, and

Pellerano, 2018), while others like the Cash Transfer for Orphans and Vulnerable Children in Kenya have co-responsibilities, which were generally weakly enforced (Heinrich and Knowles, 2020). The programme recipients are mostly ultra-poor households and the majority target labour-constrained households. We additionally consider lump-sum grants, which transfer sizable amounts of money with the objective of promoting the productive inclusion of the beneficiaries. Without the predictability of transfers associated to regular cash transfers programmes, these type of interventions may still alleviate immediate liquidity constraints, but may affect beneficiaries differently than traditional cash transfer programmes. These nuances will be addressed in the next section.

In addition to these “pure” SP interventions, we expand the analysis to consider programmes that bundled cash transfers or public works programmes with additional interventions. These “cash plus” programmes seek to enhance the productive impacts of SP interventions. While not traditionally viewed as fitting the standard SP definition, these interventions share many attributes with SP programmes and have a growing evidence base suggesting beneficial impacts on the productive capacity of recipients. Roelen *et al.* (2017) conceptualize the complementary support of cash plus interventions in two different types. The first are additional interventions that are presented as integral elements of the cash transfer programme. These elements could be additional assets or input transfers, the delivery of information or trainings related to the framing of the transfer, and psychosocial support. The second type are components that are external to the cash transfer, but that link cash recipients to services offered by other sectors. In this review, the majority of the cash plus programmes offer additional components of the internal kind, and in particular, ancillary programmes that offer extra support via focused on enhancing agricultural productivity. One of the most popular cash plus-type programmes is the graduation approach, which consist of a combination of cash transfers, productive asset transfers, financial literacy and livelihood trainings for a period of time, usually spanning between two and three years. Graduation programmes are delivered sequentially, with the intention to foster asset accumulation and transition out from extreme poverty. Graduation interventions have been mostly led by NGOs, although recently The Niger rolled out the first government-led graduation intervention (Bossuroy *et al.*, 2022).

Social pensions represent another important form of non-contributory SP. However, we did not include them in the analysis, because of the relative low coverage and the paucity of evidence on their effects. Indeed, despite the relative low proportion of elderly people in Africa, which in the last 50 years has remained constant at around three percent, the absolute number of people aged 65 and above has increased from 9 million to 35 million (World Bank, 2022b). Owing to the prevalence of informal employment in the region, only a minority of the labour force contributes to pension insurance (International Labour Organization, 2021). The absence of both a non-contributory and contributory mechanism of protection has profound implications for the rural elderly population who rely on their land assets for their basic living needs. For instance, in the absence of pensions, farmland plays an insurance function, thus

increasing the opportunity cost of rural labour mobility. Some articles discuss the welfare consequences of land and labour reallocations in China's rural areas after the introduction of the New Rural Pension Scheme, pointing to greater labour mobility in off-farm employment and an increase in the amount of land rented out by the elderly and their spouses (Shi, 2022; Ning *et al.*, 2016; Li, Wang, and Zhao, 2018). We observe similar labour supply dynamics in South Africa, where the Old Age Pension led to increased employment among prime-aged adults, which occurred primarily through rural-urban labour migration (Ardington, Case, and Hosegood, 2009). However, little is known for South Africa and its neighbor countries about other intergenerational effects of pensions, especially on land and other non-farm assets.

3. CONCEPTUALIZING SOCIAL PROTECTION AS A TOOL FOR RURAL TRANSFORMATION

In this section we present a conceptual framework to understand the pathways through which SP may lead to a more productive, resilient, and equitable rural transformation in rural Africa. Substantial improvements in labour and land productivity, investment in soil quality, conservation of natural resources, and dynamism in the rural non-farm economy are all key elements of a system transformation that are required to foster agricultural growth, reduce poverty, improve food security, build resilience, and adapt to climate change. Importantly, these dynamics must be inclusive of the rural poor. In rural SSA, the vast majority of rural people derive some portion of their livelihood from agricultural production, and this production underpins much of the rural non-farm economy. Enabling investments in sustainable agricultural intensification that improves agricultural labour and land productivity and restores and conserves natural resources is critical (T.S. Jayne *et al.*, 2019). At the same time, for many rural households with limited land and other necessary resources, agriculture is not a likely pathway out of poverty (Haggblade, Hazell, and Reardon, 2010; Davis, Di Giuseppe, and Zezza, 2017). For these households, a transition out of agriculture and into the non-farm economy is a more likely path to greater prosperity.

Improving agricultural labour productivity and enabling marginal farm households to beneficially exit agriculture requires that households have the ability to bear the risks and costs of new investments and reallocate labour to new activities. The classic agricultural household model suggests how SP can influence agricultural production and livelihoods more generally (Singh *et al.*, 1986). In this model, when markets function perfectly and households are price-takers, production and consumption decisions are separable, so that households first maximize income from production decisions and then maximize utility from consumption. However, rural markets in developing countries are either missing or do not function perfectly. In light of these constraints, production and consumption decisions of agricultural households are jointly determined or non-separable. For this reason, even though SP programmes are rarely designed to explicitly influence the economic activities of their recipients, they may, nonetheless, contribute to changes in economic behaviours through three interrelated channels: relaxation of credit and liquidity constraints of poor and vulnerable households, reduction of consumption risks, and the relaxation of psychological constraints.

3.1. RELAXATION OF CREDIT AND LIQUIDITY CONSTRAINTS

Rural households in poor countries typically have limited access to formal credit due an underdevelopment of credit markets, a lack of collateral and steep borrowing rates (Feder *et al.*, 1990). Asymmetric information further exacerbates the functioning of markets, leading to adverse selection and moral hazard risks. Social protection, and cash transfers in particular, provide a steady and predictable stream of cash that changes the current and future economic prospects of beneficiary households. Under market imperfections and non-

separability of production and consumption decisions, improvements in economic conditions through SP transfers can enable rural households to invest in productivity enhancing technologies that previously were beyond their economic means. This occurs directly by increasing liquidity and indirectly via better credit scoring (Bazzi, Sumarto, and Suryahadi, 2015; Phimister, 1995). The frequency and the security of government-backed cash transfers provide a kind of surety, allowing beneficiaries to more easily meet collateral requirements to borrow (Torkelson, 2020). Prifti, Daidone, and Davis (2019) show that the prospect of receiving future SP transfers increases the credit rating of beneficiaries, which in turn relaxes present credit constraints and enables them to make economic decisions and investments with longer time horizons. Moreover, for rural households with limited agricultural potential, regular transfers provided through social assistance programmes offer an important source of investment capital to diversify into non-farm activities (Pace *et al.*, 2022).

Providing liquidity to households may also help break the cycle of piecework labour during the farming season that many poor farm households are trapped in (Covarrubias, Davis, and Winters, 2012). In this way, farmers are able to dedicate more of their labour to their own production (Sitko, Scognamillo, and Malevolti, 2021; Asfaw *et al.*, 2014; Margolies and Hoddinott, 2012; Prifti *et al.*, 2017). This is particularly important for time-sensitive activities such as planting and weeding. Being able to perform these tasks in a timely manner is critical for improving agricultural productivity. Transfers can also contribute to a decrease in family labour dedicated on farm activities and increase the use of hired labour, depending on whether both types of labour are complements or substitutes (Prifti, Daidone, and Davis, 2019). For rural households with limited agricultural potential, this frees up labour to dedicate to non-farm businesses and diversify out of agricultural production into potentially more remunerative non-farm activities. Finally, farmers are often undernourished during the farming seasons in SSA, and food and cash transfers help these individuals have access to more and better food, with benefits for labour productivity and income (Baird, McKenzie, and Özler, 2018).

3.2. CONSUMPTION RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk and uncertainty are pervasive features of rural life. Variability in prices and weather conditions lead to large fluctuations in farm output, with consequences for both farm and non-farm income. These risks are compounded in many parts of rural SSA by the absence of markets for insurance and credit (de Janvry, Fafchamps, and Sadoulet, 1991), which severely limits people's capacity and willingness to take economic risks, and can contribute to locking households into low-equilibrium poverty traps (Carter and Barrett, 2006). Addressing high levels of risk adversity in economic decision-making is critical for fostering transformative and resilient changes in livelihoods.

By providing beneficiaries with a regular source of income or food, SP programmes help to reduce the consumption risks associated with new and uncertain investments on and off-farm and that generate higher returns. In this way, SP can alter household's risk preferences,

enabling preferences for longer-term and potentially more profitable investments (Daidone *et al.*, 2019; Sitko, Scognamillo, and Malevolti 2021; Schwab, 2019). Assuming decreasing absolute risk aversion preferences, SP can reduce beneficiary households' degree of risk aversion, which can lead to increased adoption of modern inputs and agricultural tools (Hennessy 1998; Serra *et al.*, 2006), as well as long-term investments in improving soil health and ecosystem functionality such as conservation agriculture practices (Scognamillo and Sitko, 2021). Moreover, regular SP transfers can enable farmers and non-farm enterprise owners to better withstand income volatility, without relying on the liquidation of productive assets.

3.3. RELAXATION OF PSYCHOLOGICAL CONSTRAINTS

A growing literature from behavioural economics demonstrates the negative effects of poverty on psychological well-being and preferences. This includes studies on the negative impacts of poverty on aspirations and wants (Genicot and Ray, 2017; Dalton, Ghosal, and Mani, 2016) or on risk preferences and time discounting (Haushofer and Fehr, 2014). Another strand of the literature focuses on the impacts of poverty and other negative events on “subjective” capacities and abilities, showing how such situations may instil hopelessness about the future, and how this translates into decisions that may perpetuate poverty (Lybbert and Wydick 2018; Wuepper and Lybbert, 2017; de Quidt and Haushofer, 2016; Moya and Carter, 2019). Misperceptions about ones' own capacities and abilities, having low or no aspirations, and assigning little utility to future wellbeing distorts the returns to investments, which translates into suboptimal input assignment, including labour allocation, and asset accumulation. If such effects are caused and reinforced by poverty and adverse situations, the improvement of economic prospects associated with accessing SP programmes has the potential to help break this negative cycle (Ohrnberger *et al.*, 2020; Molotsky and Handa, 2021). The relaxation of “psychological constraints” presents an additional channel through which SP may influence economic decision-making. Positive changes in hope, aspirations, sense of self-efficacy² and expanded time horizons can foster investments and other forward-looking behaviours (Carter, 2016).

While growing attention to psychological factors in influencing changes in economic behaviours has led researchers to increasingly measure them in agricultural surveys as outcome variables, the literature on the linkages between psychological wellbeing and economic decision-making remains thin, and most is limited to experiments in laboratory settings. More research is needed to establish the existence of this link and which psychological states matter the most in the context of farm-dependent rural populations in SSA.

² Self-efficacy is the belief of the capacity of being able to achieve specific goals by an individual.

3.4. CONTEXTUAL AND PROGRAMMATIC HETEROGENEITIES

The article focuses primarily on cash, cash+, and public works programmes, which vary substantially in their targeting, and the periodicity and size of transfers provided. They, therefore, likely to affect productivity impact pathways in different ways and to different extents. For instance, the frequency of cash transfer disbursements may affect beneficiaries' behaviour towards spending for consumption rather than investing. In the Kenya Give Directly randomized control trial, Haushofer and Shapiro (2016) analysed the differential effect of monthly instalments over nine months versus one-time lump-sum transfer. They find that monthly transfers have better food security outcomes than one-off transfers, while the opposite occurs for asset holdings.

One further obvious difference in programmatic approaches is the additional components provided by cash plus programmes versus cash transfers or cash based public works programmes. Cash by itself are good at relieving liquidity constraints and addressing risks, but do not provide the skills, alleviate non-financial constraints, nor relax barriers such as labour market segmentation that limit peoples capacity to gain employment. Existing evidence suggests that cash plus programmes amplify the effects of cash transfers on productive outcomes. For instance, Ambler, de Brauw, and Godlonton (2018) compares beneficiaries that received a bundled intervention of transfers (either cash or inputs) and agricultural extension support with those that only had access to the transfer and finds that agricultural investment is higher for the subgroup that benefitted from both programmes. Banerjee *et al.* (2022) tease apart the elements of a graduation programme in Ghana, finding that participants that received the whole programme show an increase in the values of their assets, income, and have a higher financial inclusion index compared to those that only received and asset transfer. Similar results are reported in Sedlmayr, Shah, and Sulaiman (2020) in Uganda and Bossuroy *et al.* (2022) in The Niger.

Although less documented, outcomes are also affected by differences in the local and household context. Dynamism in non-farm and farm economies may shape the way the channels described above operate, and shift investments and labour allocations towards the activities with the higher expected returns. Pace *et al.* (2022) found that in the medium run, the Harmonized Social Cash Transfer in Zimbabwe led to a large shift from survival-led diversification and specialization in on-farm activities towards opportunity-led diversification, thereby increasing food and non-food consumption. Further, proximity to agricultural markets can intensify or hinder the extent of productive investments and labour supply. Asfaw *et al.* (2014) find that in Kenya, more isolated beneficiaries of a cash transfer programme (living further away from the local market) increased their probability of engaging in wage labour. They posit that the transfer likely helped to reduce financial barriers to using transportation.

The articles considered in this review focus on programmes targeting ultrapoor households, reducing the likelihood of sizable differences in physical and psychological assets among

beneficiaries. Nevertheless, there are other characteristics of the beneficiaries where there tends to be more variation, such as sex and age, and that have the potential to generate heterogeneity in the results. Asfaw *et al.* (2014) finds no evidence of changes in productive asset holdings for the sample of their study. However, once the authors break the analysis to look at differences between male and female-headed households, they find a positive increase for female-headed households.

A final important household characteristic, which also is a targeting criteria for many cash transfer programmes, is whether a household is labour-constrained. Labour constrained households face substantial constraints to engaging in labour-intensive activities such as agriculture. Access to SP may, therefore, have different productive impacts for labour-constrained versus labour endowed households. For example, In Ethiopia, Prifti, Bhalla, and Grinspun (2021) find that the combination of cash transfers, nutrition training, and livestock and input transfers increased the average herd size and the ownership of agricultural tools such as plough components, water pumps and other simple tools only for labour-endowed beneficiaries.

4. IMPACTS

Evidence of the effects of cash transfers has been steadily accumulating in the last two decades. Nevertheless, the majority of it does not focus on evaluating changes in productive outcomes, given that most transfer programmes were not initially conceived for this end. In recent years, however, evidence on the transformative potential of SP policies has opened the door for more evaluations to focus beyond nutritional and food security outcomes. In this section we present a review of impact evaluations of the effects of SP programmes on productive and economic outcomes in SSA, focusing particularly on cash and in-kind transfers and related multifaceted interventions (cash plus or graduation programmes), which include SP as part of a bundle of interventions. This review is restricted to empirical evidence published in peer-reviewed journals and technical reports that rely on rigorous econometric techniques.

The productive outcomes we consider are grouped into four categories: i) productive assets, ii) inputs³ and farm management practices, iii) off-farm labour and participation in non-farm businesses, and iv) income. The first three variables indicate shifts towards forward-looking behaviours and are proxies of economic opportunities. Positive changes in these can be perceived as necessary conditions for transformational change in SSA. The last one, income, reflects changes in wellbeing and is an indicator of whether the changes in the first three lead to better material conditions for beneficiaries of SP schemes. Failure to measure increased incomes does not imply that changes in assets, input use, farm management practices and off-farm participation were ineffective, since the response may be lagged and surveys are not able to account for this, or beneficiaries shifted activities with a net change in incomes.

Identification of appropriate articles relied on two approaches. First, we focused our search on three primary repositories: Elsevier Scopus, Web of Science and the International Initiative for Impact Evaluation's (3ie). Each database search engine can filter by topic and region. Further, we used combinations of strings referring to both the type of programme and the outcomes of interest such as "cash transfers", "social protection", "assets", or "livestock", among others. We removed wrong or duplicate entries, including working papers or reports superseded by more recent and peer-reviewed journal articles, and screened studies by title and abstract. With this step we identified 44 articles out of 95 records originally identified by the three combined search engines. In a second screening phase, the retrieved studies underwent a quality assessment concerning the impact evaluation methodology (lack/weakness of control group, poor description of baseline balance, etc.). We complemented this review and identified additional records through other sources with a snowball approach, involving consultation with experts in the field, hand searches of other academic search engines (e.g. Google Scholar). In total, 40 papers met our selection criteria, with evidence coming from programmes in thirteen different countries. The Ethiopia's Productive Safety Nets Programme (PSNP) is the most evaluated programme in this list with

³ We focus on improved seeds and the use of synthetic fertilizers.

ten articles and reports, thanks to the availability of several panel datasets, which allow a wide range of quasi-experimental evaluation approaches. Annex 1 in the on-line supplementary material summarizes the reviewed papers, showing the type of programmes analyzed and their targeting criteria, among other characteristics.

4.1. PRODUCTIVE ASSETS

The prevalence of productive assets as outcome variables in the analysis of SP programmes has been increasing in the past years. The majority of articles considered measure two types of assets: agricultural tools and livestock ownership. Of the articles that focus on cash transfers, the vast majority find positive impacts on these outcomes. Indeed, only the evaluation of the Cash Transfer Programme for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (CT-OVC) in Kenya finds no effect on either of these two outcomes when looking at the whole sample (Asfaw *et al.*, 2014).

Similarly to the cash transfer studies, the cash plus and graduation style programmes tend to find positive effects on agricultural tool and livestock ownership or value. Of the studies included here, only one did not measure either of these two outputs (Daidone, Pace, and Prifti, 2021) and another found no effect on either of the two variables (Gilligan, Hoddinott, and Taffesse, 2009). Nevertheless, an increase in livestock ownership may not reflect positive changes in productive assets. In places with restricted access to financial markets, it may also be reflecting a savings strategy (De Hoop, Groppo, and Handa, 2020; Daidone *et al.*, 2019).

The magnitude of the impacts of transfers on productive assets vary substantially across the analyzed papers. For example, estimates suggest that the number of households that own agricultural tools increases by 16 percent for Social Cash Transfer Programme (SCTP) beneficiaries in Malawi and 12.7 percent for beneficiaries of a one-time transfer in Kenya (Covarrubias, Davis, and Winters, 2012; Egger *et al.*, 2019). Banerjee *et al.* (2015) find a 0.60 and 0.34 increase also in the z-score of a productive index for Ethiopia and Ghana for beneficiaries of a graduation programme, the effect size being larger in the graduation group than in the cash transfer only group. Additionally, Haushofer and Shapiro (2018) find a 30 percent increase in the value of agricultural tools for beneficiaries of a cash transfer pilot in Kenya and Ambler, de Brauw, and Godlonton (2020) find a 43 percent increase in the value of agricultural equipment for a cash plus pilot in Senegal. In Burkina Faso, Akresh, de Walque, and Kazianga (2016) compare conditional and unconditional cash transfers randomly allocated to mothers and fathers, finding short-term increases in the value of agricultural assets, which disappear at the endline after two years of implementation. Conversely, in Malawi, Ambler, de Brauw, and Godlonton (2018) find that both cash and inputs transfers increased investments as measured by the value of agriculture-specific assets, which were sustained two and three years after the cessation of the transfers. The largest reported value of productive assets is reported in the graduation programme evaluated in Banerjee *et al.* (2015) with an increase of 72.4 percent in Ethiopia. Similarly, Gobin, Santos, and Toth (2017) find a sizeable impact on a durable asset index of a graduation-style intervention in Kenya

one year after the programme started. In contrast, the effect in agricultural asset value reported for the government-led graduation programme in The Niger is only ten percent (Bossuroy *et al.*, 2022), while we observe no impacts on durable assets from the Village Enterprise graduation programme in Uganda (Sedlmayr, Shah, and Sulaiman, 2020). The latter result derives from comparing beneficiaries of the graduation-style intervention with recipients of regular cash transfers from the national programme, which may explain the relatively muted results. Finally, impact evaluations of the Ethiopia PSNP show a diverse range of results, due to the different set of outcomes, geographic coverage and programme phases analyzed. An earlier evaluation of PSNP find substantially muted effects of public works alone and in combination with the Other Food Security Programme (OFSP) (Gilligan, Hoddinott, and Taffesse, 2009). Instead, later evaluations of PSNP show a significant 2 percentage points increase in the share of households owning agricultural tools (Bahru and Zeller, 2022) and larger effects on ownership of several agricultural tools, when public works are combined with direct cash transfers in the context of the Integrated Nutrition Social Cash Transfer (IN-SCT) and Productive Safety Net Programme phase four (PSNP4) (Prifti, Bhalla, and Grinspun, 2021).

In terms of livestock, we observe that cash transfer programmes often have significant impacts. In Zambia, SCT beneficiaries report a significant increase in a z-score livestock index by 0.16 and 0.28 standard deviations (Handa, Natali, *et al.*, 2018). Handa *et al.* (2022) show a very large effect size of about 0.62 standard deviations at 30-months follow-up for the Malawi SCTP, and a smaller but still significant increase of about 0.15 standard deviations for both Ghana LEAP1000 and the Zimbabwe Harmonized Social Cash Transfer programmes. The midline impact evaluation of the United Republic of Tanzania Productive Social Safety Nets (PSSN) shows a 19 percentage points increase in the share of households owning livestock, which is driven by the higher probability of owning poultry and small ruminants (Rosas *et al.*, 2019). In The Niger, Stoeffler, Mills, and Premand (2019) find that the Projet Pilote des Filets Sociaux par le Cash Transfert (PPFS-CT) contribute to almost a 60 percent increase in the value of livestock assets relative to the baseline mean. Moving away from established government programmes, Haushofer and Shapiro (2018) find a 50 percent increase in the value of livestock assets relative to the control group in the Kenya Give Directly pilot, while Akresh, de Walque, and Kazianga (2016) report small improvements in herd size only at the endline in the context of a pilot cash transfer in Burkina Faso. Impacts on livestock ownership/herding are also significant for cash plus and graduation interventions. The Tropical Livestock Unit (TLU) measure increases by 32 percent in Senegal for beneficiaries of a pilot cash plus programme, 56 percent for beneficiaries of the government-led graduation programme in the Niger and 79 percent for beneficiaries of the IN-SCT programme (Ambler, de Brauw, and Godlonton, 2020; Bossuroy *et al.*, 2022; Prifti, Bhalla, and Grinspun, 2021). While evaluating the impacts of the Social Cash Transfer Pilot Programme (SCTP) and Farm Input Subsidy Programme (FISP) in Malawi, Pace, Daidone, Davis, Handa, *et al.* (2018) highlight the complementarity of the

two programmes, whose combination generated greater ownership of small animals than the sum of the two in isolation.

4.2. INPUTS AND FARM MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Studies focused of cash transfers that measure the use of inputs and input expenditure (including labour) as an outcome are not as common as those measuring asset ownership, but generally find positive results. Handa, Natali, *et al.* (2018) find that the Multiple Category Targeted Programme (MCT) model of the SCT in Zambia increases spending on agricultural inputs by 242 percent. They find strong impacts for the Child grants (CG) model at the midline too, though these impacts vanished at the endline. de Hoop, Groppo, and Handa (2020) report that recipients of the SCTP in Malawi and the MCT in Zambia were 5 and 18 percentage points more likely to hire help for farm activities, while Daidone *et al.* (2019) observe an impact of the LEAP programme in Ghana on seeds expenditures. Finally, Rosas *et al.* (2019) report small but significant impacts on the share of households purchasing seeds and chemical fertilizers for the PSSN in the United Republic of Tanzania (6.3 and 3.7 percentage points respectively).

Looking at cash plus and graduation interventions, Ambler, de Brauw, and Godlonton (2018) find a 23 percent increase in *ganyu* off-farm labour expenditure for the beneficiaries of NGO pilot cash plus programme in Malawi, while recipients of both the Child Grants Programme (CGP) and SPRINGS in Lesotho increase seed and chemical fertilizer expenses by 70 and 86 percent respectively (Daidone, Pace, and Prifti, 2021). The graduation programme in The Niger leads beneficiaries to increase the use of chemical fertilizer by 60 percent, but does not incentivize the purchasing of more seeds (Bossuroy *et al.*, 2022). Also in The Niger, Premand and Stoeffler (2020) find no effect in the number of fields in which fertilizers are used by beneficiaries of the PPFs-CT programme. Nevertheless, households that have been affected by drought report a 42 percent increase in the number of fields in which fertilizer is applied, suggesting beneficiaries are better able to recover productive activities following a shock. In Ethiopia, Gilligan, Hoddinott, and Taffesse (2009) report a 160 and a 145 percent increase in fertilizer and improved seeds use respectively, while Hoddinott *et al.* (2012) report a 23 percent increase in fertilizer use relative to beneficiaries of PSNP only. Further, Alem and Broussard (2018) find that food-for-work (FFW) beneficiary households decreased their fertilizer usage by 17.5 percentage points less than non-FFW participant households. Finally, Karlan *et al.* (2014) observe a significant increase in the value of chemical fertilizers used when cash is combined with an index insurance in the Ghana Takayua rainfall insurance project.

There are very few papers that consider the effects of these programmes on farm management practices. Andersson, Mekonnen, and Stage (2011) look at agroforestry outcomes, and find that public works participants of the PSNP in Ethiopia have significantly increased the number of trees they grow on their land. Ambler, de Brauw, and Godlonton (2018) find no change in an agricultural practices index, which considers the adoption of practices or technologies such as intercropping with legumes and crop rotation, for

participants in a cash plus pilot programme in Malawi. Sitko, Scognamillo, and Malevolti (2021) show that beneficiaries of a non-contributory in-kind food aid programme increases the probability of investing in soil and water conservation in Ethiopia and Malawi by 2.1 and 1.7 percentage points but it reduces the adoption of legume intercropping by 3.8 and 4 percentage points and the use of organic fertilizer by 2.4 (for Ethiopia). Participation in Malawi's largest public works programme, Social Action Fund (MASAF), is associated with increased adoption of soil and water conservation and organic fertilizer during the year households participated in the programme, during the subsequent year, and for two consecutive years (only soil and water conservation).

4.3. OFF-FARM LABOUR AND NON-FARM BUSINESSES

The evidence presented below indicates that SP programmes have impacts on individuals' economic time allocation and investments decision, with implications for both on and off-farm activities. In terms of labour allocations, Covarrubias, Davis, and Winters (2012) find that for recipients of the SCTP in Malawi, participation in low skilled agricultural wage activities drops significantly (61 percent). For the same programme, (de Hoop, Groppo, and Handa, 2020) find that paid work outside the household decreased by 12 percentage points, while for the MCT beneficiaries in Zambia, there was a five percentage point decrease. These findings indicate a shift away from low-value casual labour and toward more productive household activities. Indeed, Prifti *et al.* (2017) find that benefiting from the CG model in Zambia decreases the days per week in any paid labour by 0.28 and increases the days per week in own-farm labour by 0.27. Similarly, in Lesotho Daidone *et al.* (2017) find that beneficiaries of both the CGP and the Linking Food Security to Social Protection Programme (LFSSP) increase the probability of at least one member of a beneficiary household spending time on own-farm by 25 percent. The authors link this effect to a substitution from wage labour, which drops by ten percentage points, towards an increase in time spent in on-farm activities. The PSSN in the United Republic of Tanzania increased on-farm work for males and non-farm work for females by 6.5 and 7.6 percentage points relative to non-beneficiaries. Moreover, casual wage work decreased by roughly the same magnitude, suggesting the substitution of wage work for own enterprises (Rosas *et al.*, 2019). In Ethiopia, participating in both PSNP and Community Based Health Insurance (CBHI) translates into 17 more hours of work per month in off-farm activities as compared to participating only in the PSNP. This is consistent with the view that the CBHI helps individuals access health care, reducing health-related absenteeism in public work activities (Shigute *et al.*, 2020).

The probability of engagement in non-farm business is another important pathway by which SP programmes influences economic outcomes of beneficiaries. In Zambia and Malawi, CG model and SCTP beneficiaries increased participation in non-farm business by 17 and 12 percentage points respectively (Handa, Natali, *et al.*, 2018; de Hoop, Groppo, and Handa, 2020). In Ethiopia, PSNP and OFSP beneficiaries are 6.7 percentage points more likely to operate these enterprises (Gilligan, Hoddinott, and Taffesse, 2009), while beneficiaries of the IN-SCT pilot of PSNP4 doubled their engagement (Prifti, Bhalla, and Grinspun, 2021).For

graduation programme beneficiaries in Ghana, Banerjee *et al.* (2022) find that beneficiaries of the full programme are 17 percent more likely to have a business relative to a group that received a reduced version of the programme. Beneficiaries of the graduation programme in the Niger increase their probability of having a business by 14 percent and the number of household businesses increases by 31 percent (Bossuroy *et al.*, 2021). Sedlmayr, Shah, and Sulaiman (2020) find a 10 percent increase in total productive cash flows for beneficiaries of a multifaceted programme comprising training transfers and mentorship in Uganda. The authors report that the majority of the effect can be attributed to cash inflows coming from off-farm self-employment. Also in Uganda, Blattman *et al.* (2016) find that beneficiaries of a cash plus pilot double their probability of engaging in any non-farm self-employment. The intervention had a strong focus on business training, which may explain the sizable effects compared to other studies. Furthermore, programme participants that received additional supervision and training 12 months after the initial transfer increased the probability of starting an enterprise by six percentage points. Since beneficiaries have limited experience in entrepreneurial activities, the continued support and training is central to the observed results. For the national cash transfer in the Niger, Premand and Stoeffler (2020) find that beneficiaries have a 27 percent increase in the probability of having a household enterprise, a 40 percent increase in the number of household enterprises, and a 84 percent increase in the probability of having an enterprise related to the processing of agricultural products. These effects are all associated to beneficiaries exposed to droughts, and almost perfectly offset the negative effects related to the shock, suggesting that transfers help to protect businesses when shocks hit.

4.4. FARM PRODUCTION AND INCOME

Only a handful of studies measure explicitly the effect of SP and cash plus programmes on income and production outcome. Income is a difficult measure to construct, and agricultural modules compound this difficulty. An arguably easier way to measure wellbeing is through consumption and many more studies rely on it. Nevertheless, increased consumption does not imply increased productive capacity or economic opportunities, unless the increase exceeds the value of the transfer. On the other hand, for income to increase, there must have been a process of changes in forward looking behaviours and investments, which may take time to materialize. Nevertheless, there is indicative evidence of changes in income and profit through changes in other measures such as the value of production.

For beneficiaries of the graduation programme in Ethiopia, Banerjee *et al.* (2015) find an increase in agricultural income of 20 percent. For Ghana, Banerjee *et al.* (2022) find the monthly income and monthly crop income to be 5 USD and 8.46 USD larger for full graduation beneficiaries relative to those who benefited from a reduced programme version. Gobin *et al.* (2017) report an increase in monthly income per capita of 30 percent for beneficiaries of a graduation programme in Kenya. The effect comes all from non-agricultural income, considering beneficiaries cut time use from leisure and household activity and increased non-farm enterprise activity.

Beneficiaries of the cash transfer pilot programme in Kenya increased monthly farm revenue by 23 percent and monthly farm profit by 18 percent (Haushofer and Shapiro, 2018). Monthly livestock revenue increases 100 percent in Ethiopia and 50 percent in Ghana for graduation participants (Banerjee *et al.*, 2015; Banerjee *et al.*, 2022). Graduation beneficiaries in the Niger observe increased business and livestock revenue of 63 percent and 56 percent (Bossuroy, *et al.*, 2022). Further, beneficiaries of a cash plus poultry transfers pilot project in Ethiopia report nearly double by-product sales and 28 percentage points increase in the share of households selling poultry (Leight *et al.*, 2020).

Ambler, de Brauw, and Godlonton (2018; 2020) find no effect in gross value of agricultural output nor in the total value of crops for beneficiaries of a cash plus pilot in Senegal and Malawi, respectively. On the contrary the harvest value for beneficiaries of the Niger's graduation programme increases by 71 percent (Bossuroy *et al.*, 2022). While evaluating the Huguka Dokore entrepreneurship training programme combined with household grants in Rwanda, McIntosh and Zeitlin (2022) find large impacts of the cash transfer arms on income. However, since the combined arm reported similar effects, authors suggest a lack of complementarity. Prifti *et al.* (2019) shows that the CGP in Lesotho increased farm production by 33.5 percent, though these positive effects in crop value are found only for households with sufficient labour capacity (dependency ratio below three) and with at least two hectares of land. Similarly, Daidone, Pace, and Prifti (2021) consider baseline heterogeneities to study the impact of the CGP programme plus SPRINGS in Lesotho, finding that households headed by women increase the value of their harvest by 60 percent.

CONCLUSIONS

The evidence summarized in this article suggests that SP programmes and related interventions generate positive impacts on a range of outcomes associated with rural transformation processes. These include improvements in asset ownership, input use, labour allocations, livelihood diversification and incomes. Importantly, since SP programmes tend to target marginalized populations, the generally positive outcomes presented here are indicative of the benefits of these programmes in supporting more inclusive developmental processes in rural areas. This is critical, given the high and persistent levels of poverty and food insecurity in rural SSA.

We argue that the benefits of SP on productive economic outcomes occur through three primary channels: improvements in liquidity, reductions in perceived risks, and enhancements in psychosocial outcomes. These pathways are interactive and self-reinforcing, and their relative importance within a given context is shaped by the targeting, periodicity, and integration with other interventions of the SP programme.

While the results presented in this article point to the benefits of SP programmes in fostering economic opportunities and behaviour changes, this does not mean that these programmes are the silver bullet for resolving persistent challenges facing rural development in SSA. Investments in agricultural research and extension services, health and education, enabling markets, and opportunities in non-farm sectors are essential. Instead, we argue that SP programmes should be considered an integral part of broader rural and agricultural development strategies.

Yet this objective faces two key policy challenges. The first is related to costs. Given already constrained national budgets and generally low levels of spending on the agricultural sector, how can governments afford to expand SP coverage? One option is to reallocate portions of current agricultural budgets to support rural SP programmes. Reducing expenditures on input subsidy programmes, which absorb a large share of many agricultural budgets in many countries in SSA, may be an option. Evidence suggests that input subsidies generate low returns due to: misalignment between the inputs provided and the diverse agro-ecological conditions farmers operate in; crowding out of the private sector due to poor targeting, and; late delivery of inputs (Jayne and Rashid, 2013). However, behind the programme's design, the structure of the rural economies and market design affect efficiency of each transfer mechanism. For instance, input subsidies can be the most welfare efficient transfer scheme when input and factor supplies are elastic but input demands are liquidity constrained. Subsidies reduce costs, while stimulating output without increasing consumption costs for agricultural households, and this is crucial in rural economies where smallholders farmers are net buyers of staples (Filipski and Taylor, 2012). A second option involves lowering the unit cost of SP. Scholars have made a theoretical case that reallocating some of the public budget to subsidize asset insurance can low the cost of SP in the long-term by progressively reducing the number of people in need of proxy means-tested transfers (Janzen, Carter, and Ikegami,

2021). This approach suggests that by enabling farmers to be shock-resilient and further relaxing risk constraints, less money will be needed in the long run for SP.

The second challenge is more conceptual. Social protection, particularly social assistance, is not thought of as an agricultural development tool. Instead, it is typically conceptualized as social policy tool for people who lack alternative economic opportunities. As a result, SP is rarely mentioned in national agricultural policies or investment plans. Moreover, targeting is often restricted to the most marginalized populations, and thus leaves out many rural people with productive assets (such as land and labour) but who are trapped in low productivity and subsistence oriented activities. Entrenched views of social assistance as a hand-out prevents the scaling up of these programmes to populations who can make the most productive use of it. By expanding coverage to these populations, the economic multipliers of these investments are likely to improve, thereby generating greater overall benefits in terms of GDP.

It is our hope that this article contributes to supporting greater evidence-based discussions around SP in the context of rural development in SSA and a broader reconceptualization of SP as a developmental tool to foster more inclusive, resilient, and sustainable rural transformations in the region.

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ANNEX

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Paper	Country	Program evaluated	Duration	Condition.	Periodicity	Targeting
Akresh et al. (2016)	Burkina Faso	Nahouri Cash Transfer. Pilot program	2 years	Some treatment arms received conditional transfers that required quarterly visits to the local health clinic for children under 7	Quarterly	Poor households based on census.
Alem and Broussard (2017)	Ethiopia	Food For Work (FFW) free food distribution (FD).	FFW: between 6 and 40 days.	None	FFW: between 6 and 40 days.	Poor households, landless households, the elderly, and the disabled
Ambler, de Brauw and Godlonton (2020)	Senegal	FONGS pilot project. Cash + agricultural training	2 years	None	Cash: One time Ag. Training: monthly visits for 2 years	Households chosen by farmer associations based on socioeconomic diversity and willingness to participate.
Ambler, de Brauw and Godlonton (2018)	Malawi	NASFAM pilot project. Cash + agricultural training + marketing	2 years	First disbursements conditional on repaying the twice the amount of seed to the farmers association.	Cash (inputs) transfers: 3 times in the first year every three months.	Smallholder farmers members of the National Smallholders Association of Malawi.
Andersson et al. (2011)	Ethiopia	Productive safety net programme (PSNP)	3 years (PSNP)	None	PSNP, public works: daily.	Poor households. Direct support is given to labour-scarce households including those whose primary income earners are elderly or disabled
Asfaw et al. (2014)	Kenya	Cash Transfer Programme for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (CT-OVC)	Until reassessed	None	Monthly	Ultrapoorest households with at least one OVC (one deceased parent, or a

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						parent who is chronically ill, or whose main caregiver is chronically ill)
Bahru and Zeller (2021)	Ethiopia	Productive safety net programme (PSNP)	3 years (PSNP)	None	PSNP, public works: daily.	Poor households. Direct support is given to labour-scarce households including those whose primary income earners are elderly or disabled
Banerjee <i>et al.</i> (2015)	Ethiopia Ghana (other countries outside SSA)	NGO Pilot. Graduation (productive asset grant, training and support, life skills coaching, temporary cash consumption support, access to savings accounts and health information or services)	2 years	None	Ethiopia consumption support: food support through food-for-work programme for the duration of the programme. Ghana consumption support: weekly cash transfers during lean season	Ethiopia: Participant in food-for-work programme, at least one member capable of work, no loans taken out by household Ghana: Exclusion criteria included: (i) ownership of >30 small ruminants or >50 fowl; (ii) member found to be alcoholic or drug addict; (iii) no strong, able-bodied adult; (iv) did not have a female member; (v) did not have a member between the ages of 18 and 65
Banerjee <i>et al.</i> (2022)	Ghana	Graduating from Ultra Poverty (GUP) (productive asset grant, training and support, life skills coaching, temporary cash consumption support, access	2 years	None	Cash: weekly cash stipend for 3-10 months. Other services: weekly visits	Ghana: Exclusion criteria included: (i) ownership of >30 small ruminants or >50 fowl; (ii) member found to be alcoholic or

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		to savings accounts and health information or services). Same as Banerjee <i>et al.</i> (2015)				drug addict; (iii) no strong, able-bodied adult; (iv) did not have a female member; (v) did not have a member between the ages of 18 and 65
Berhane <i>et al.</i> (2015)	Ethiopia	Productive safety net programme (PSNP)	3 years (PSNP)	None	PSNP, public works: daily.	Poor households. Direct support is given to labour-scarce households including those whose primary income earners are elderly or disabled
Blattman <i>et al.</i> (2016)	Uganda	WINGS graduation pilot project (cash plus business training)	6 months	Approval of business plan	Cash: two installments six weeks apart Business training: five days	Marginalized villagers nominated by communities in rural subcounties
Bossuroy <i>et al.</i> (2022)	Niger	Government-led Pilot. Economic inclusion. National cash transfer programme +coaching groups, entrepreneur training and formation of saving groups. On top, i) a lump-sum cash grant, ii) a life-skills training module and, iii) i)+ii)	2 years	None	National cash transfer: monthly (for two years). Lump-sum cash transfer: one time	Women over 20 in poor rural households.
Covarrubias <i>et al.</i> (2012)	Malawi	Michinji pilot of the Social Cash Transfer Programme	SCTP: 3 years, after which participation will be reassessed.	None	Every two months	Ultrapoorest (assessed using a proxy-means test). Labour constraints, operationalized as a dependency ratio.
Daidone <i>et al.</i> (2017)	Lesotho	Child Grants Programme (CGP) + Linking Food Security	CGP: Eligibility LFSSP: 6 months	None	CGP: quarterly payments	LFSSP: CGP beneficiaries CGP: Ultra-poor and

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		to Social Protection Programme (LFSSP).CGP: Government-led, LFSSP: Pilot programme, FAO led.				poor households (proxy means score)
Daidone <i>et al.</i> (2019)	Multi-country	Ethiopia: Tigray Social Cash Transfer Pilot Programme (SCTPP) Ghana: Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty programme (LEAP) Kenya: Cash Transfer Programme for Orphans and Vulnerable Children(CT-OVC) Lesotho: Child Grants Programme (CGP) Malawi: Social Cash Transfer Programme (SCT) Zambia: Child Grant (CG) model of the Social Cash Transfer Zimbabwe: Harmonized Social Cash Transfer (HSCT)	Varies by programme	Soft conditionalities for LEAP.	Monthly:SC TPP Bimonthly: LEAP, CT-OVC, SCTP, CG model Zambia, HSCT Quarterly: CGP Lesotho	CG Zambia: Any household with a child under 5. Other countries: Ultrapoor households with different characteristics based on the programme.
Daidone <i>et al.</i> (2021)	Lesotho	Child Grants Programme (CGP) + Sustainable Poverty Reduction through Income, Nutrition and access to Government Services (SPRINGS) intervention. Government-led	CGP: Eligibility SPRINGS: 2 years	None	CGP: quarterly payments	CGP: Ultrapoor and poor households (proxy means score) SPRINGS: Poor hh with orphans and vulnerable children
de Hoop <i>et al.</i> (2020)	Malawi Zambia	Malawi: SCTP (Social Cash Transfer Programme), Zambia: MCT (Multiple Category Targeted Programme).	SCTP: 3 years, after which participation will be reassessed. MCP: 5 years	None	Every two months	SCTP: Ultrapoor (assessed using a proxy-means test). Labour constraints, operationalized as a

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			(2011-2016) retargeted			dependency ratio. MCP: Households: Poor female- and elderly-headed households with disabled persons.
Egger <i>et al.</i> (2019)	Kenya	Give Directly pilot project	NA	None	One time	Households with homes with thatched roofs in rural villages with high poverty levels where NGO had not worked before
Gillingan <i>et al.</i> (2009)	Ethiopia	Productive safety net programme (PSNP. public works (PW) and direct support (DS)) + Other Food Security Programme (OFSP).	3 years (PSNP)	None	PSNP, public works: daily.	Poor households. Direct support is given to labour-scarce households including those whose primary income earners are elderly or disabled
Gobin <i>et al.</i> (2017)	Kenya	REAP Graduation pilot project: cash transfer, business skills and savings training, business mentoring, and an introduction to savings groups	2 years	Second cash conditional on having an active enterprise.	Cash transfer: Two installments , beginning of programme and 6 months later	Poor women in rural areas with no other sources of income.
Handa, Natali, et al. (2018)	Zambia	Child grant (CG) model and Multiple category target (MCT) model of the Social Cash Transfer	CG: 6 years (2010-2016) until retargeted MCT: 5 years (2011-2016) retargeted	None	Monthly	CG: households who have children under the age of five (59 months). MCT: Poor female- and elderly-headed households with disabled persons.
Handa et al. (2022)	Multi-country	Ghana: Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty programme (LEAP)	Varies by programme	None	Bimonthly	Ultrapoorest households with different characteristics

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		AP) Malawi: Social Cash Transfer Programme (SCTP) Zimbabwe: Harmonized Social Cash Transfer (HSCT)				cs based on the programme.
Haushofer and Shapiro (2018)	Kenya	NGO pilot	NA	None	One time or monthly over 9 months	Households with homes with thatched roofs in rural villages.
Hoddinott <i>et al.</i> (2012),	Ethiopia	Productive safety net programme (PSNP: public works (PW) and direct support (DS)) + Household Asset Building Programme (HABP)	3 years (PSNP)	None	PSNP, public works: daily.	Poor households. Direct support is given to labour-scarce households including those whose primary income earners are elderly or disabled
Leight <i>et al.</i> (2020)	Ethiopia	Productive Safety Net Programme, Phase 4 (PSNP4), called SPIR (Strengthen PSNP4 Institutions and Resilience) + poultry	3 years (PSNP)	None	PSNP4: public works (PW) daily and direct support (DS) monthly	PSNP4 is aimed at poor food-insecure hh. DS is given to poor hh with no abled-bodied adults. Temporary DS to hh with women or with caregivers of children under-5.
Jensen, Barrett and Mude (2014)	Kenya	Hunger Safety Net Programme (HSNP)	2 years	None	Bimonthly	For the study, beneficiaries varied between those that were over 54 years old, households with high dependency ratio, and food insecure households (community based targeting)
Karlan <i>et al.</i> (2014)	Ghana	TAKAYUA Rainfall Insurance pilot project: Cash +	3 years, cash transfer only once	None	One time	Maize farmers with less than 15 hectares of

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		insurance grants				cultivated land
McIntosh and Zeitlin (2022)	Rwanda	Huguka Dukore (employment and entrepreneurship training) + Give Directly household grants	Two months	None	Two instalments, two months apart	Youth from poor households with less than secondary education, with an emphasis on women and youth with disabilities
Pace et al. (2018)	Malawi	Social Cash Transfer Programme (SCTP) and Farm Input Subsidy Programme (FISP).	17 months after initial SCTP planned transfer.	None	SCTP: bi-monthly payments	SCTP: Ultrapoorest (assessed using a proxy-means test). Labour constraints, operationalized as a dependency ratio.. FISP: poor smallholder farmers and particularly vulnerable groups
Premand and Stoeffler (2020)	Niger	Projet Pilote des Filets Sociaux par le Cash Transfert (PPFS-CT)	24 months	none	Monthly	The transfers are targeted to poor households selected based on a proxy-means test, and women are the recipients of the transfer within households
Prifti et al. (2017)	Zambia	CG model of the Social Cash Transfer	6 years (2010-2016) until retargeted	None	Monthly	households with children under the age of five (59 months).
Prifti, Bhalla and Grinspun (2020)	Ethiopia	Integrated Nutrition Social Cash Transfer (IN-SCT) and Productive Safety Net Programme phase 4 (PSNP4). IN-SCT was embedded within PSNP4	3 years (PSNP)	Soft conditionalities for PSNP4	PSNP4. public works (PW) daily and direct support (DS) monthly	PSNP4 is aimed at poor food-insecure hh. DS is given to poor hh with no able-bodied adults. Temporary DS to hh with women or with caregivers of

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						children under-5. PW
Prifti, Daidone and Davis (2019)	Lesotho	Child Grants Programme (CGP)	Eligibility	None	Quarterly	Ultra-poor and poor households (proxy means score) with at least one child
Rosas <i>et al.</i> (2019)	United Republic of Tanzania	Productive Social Safety Net	Eligibility	For additional payments, based on schooling and health co-responsibilities	Monthly	Poorest households. In 2013, 9.8% of the population living under the food poverty line, plus an additional 5 percent of the population in transient poverty
Sedlmayr, Shah and Sulaiman (2020)	Uganda	Village Enterprise graduation pilot programme: Cash-plus(Cash transfer, trainings, and mentorship). Tested different combinations of components.	2 years	Second transfer conditional on report showing initial transfer was invested in a business.	Cash transfer: two instalments.	Participatory targeting process as well as a proxy means test.
Shigute <i>et al.</i> (2020)	Ethiopia	Productive safety net programme (PSNP) + Community Based Health Insurance (CBHI). CBHI: Pilot programme	3 years (PSNP)	None	PSNP, public works: daily.	Poor households. Direct support is given to labour-scarce households including those whose primary income earners are elderly or disabled
Stoeffler <i>et al.</i> (2019)	Niger	Projet Pilote des Filets Sociaux par le Cash Transfert (PPFS-CT). Pilot programme	18 months	None	Monthly	Proxy Means Test with data from a nationally representative survey

Source: Authors' own elaboration.

