



Oxford Policy Management



Community dynamics, livelihoods and cash transfers in a cross country comparison: Ghana, Kenya, Zimbabwe and Lesotho

An overview of qualitative impacts

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Overview

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Background

Background

- A six country qualitative study in:
 - Ghana, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Malawi and Ethiopia
 - So far completed research in Ghana (April 2012), Kenya (July 2012), Zimbabwe (October 2012) and Lesotho (April 2013).
- Linked to PtoP overall objectives, the qualitative research seeks to understand the impact of cash transfers on three interrelated areas:
 - Household economy
 - Local economy
 - Social networks
- The study also tries to uncover how and why CTs operational arrangements affect decisions and economic impacts at household and community levels

Research Questions

Key research questions

- **Household economy**
 - How are households' decisions and decision-making processes affected by SCT in livelihood choices, investments, savings, employment and consumption?
- **Local economy**
 - How are the local markets (goods, services, labour) affected by the injection of the SCT in targeted communities?
- **Social networks**
 - How do SCTs effect social networks and how do social networks mediate effects of SCTs?
 - ✦ Do cash transfers strengthen risk sharing arrangements and economic collaboration underpinned by social capital (trust-based reciprocity)?
 - ✦ Do cash transfers permit greater inclusion for most vulnerable and least powerful people (in decision making), further increasing their entitlement sets?
- **Operations**
 - How do SCT operational arrangements affect decisions and economic impacts at household and community levels?

Research Process

Research process

In each country three weeks of research as follows:

- One week of training including piloting and refinement of research tools
- Two weeks of research
- One week per region/districts
 - ✦ Day one meeting districts officials and mobilisation in research sites
 - ✦ Parallel research by two teams within each region/district for 4 days
 - ✦ Feedback session in each research site at end of research
 - ✦ Daily debriefs and analysis in field with entire team
 - Systematic capturing of information
 - ✦ Joint research in comparison community (where possible)
- One day synthesis session at end of each week and consolidation at the end of research
- Debriefing of government and donor stakeholders in Capital

Sampling

Sampling

- **Research applies a three stage sampling process:**
 - 1) Selection of two regions/districts
 - Reflection of differences in livelihoods and vulnerability
 - One region or district to coincide with longitudinal quantitative survey to deepen analysis of trends emerging from data analysis
 - 2) Selection of one representative district/sub-district administrative unit
 - 3) Selection of three study sites: two 'treatment' and one 'control' (comparison) community
 - Sites selected according to degree of market integration (proxied by distance from main road), sampling one relatively remote and one integrated community
 - Community with median number of beneficiaries was selected
 - Selected comparison community with similar socio-economic profile

The sampling process adjusted to the geographical/administrative units of country and how and where it was implemented.

Sampling

For example

- **Lesotho CGP** implemented in 5 districts and in only 2 community councils in each district. Quant survey operated in both community councils (CCs) and in all villages. Clusters of villages divided into control and treatment groups as part of programme design therefore:
 - Two districts were selected
 - Research was conducted in both CCs
 - One/two villages were selected in each CC (depending on the number of beneficiaries available)
 - Two control communities were selected – one in each CC.
- **Zimbabwe HSCT** programme operational in one district in each of the 10 regions of country. In each district, all wards were part of the programme. Therefore sampling resulted in:
 - Selection of two districts
 - Two wards per district
 - Comparison community in a ward of adjacent district

Sampling

In community

- FGD beneficiary group participants were stratified by gender and randomly selected through beneficiary lists
- FGD non-beneficiary group participants were stratified by gender, livelihoods, wealth ranking
- KIIs with traditional authority, committee members, religious leaders, traders and business people, teachers, health workers
- Individual mini case studies with beneficiaries

Methods



Research Methods

- Research applied two principal qualitative methods of Focus Group Discussions (FGD) and Key Informant Interviews (KII). Participatory research tools were used in FGDs:
 - **Social mapping and community wellbeing analysis**
 - ✦ community poverty characteristics and perceptions of differences in poverty amongst the population;
 - ✦ estimates of the distribution of poverty;
 - ✦ perceptions of the characteristics of the most vulnerable and;
 - ✦ perceptions of the targeting effectiveness of the CT
 - **Household income and expenditure analysis**
 - ✦ Sources, size and frequency of beneficiary household income
 - ✦ Distribution of beneficiary household expenditures
 - ✦ SCT impact on beneficiary income and expenditure decision making

Research Methods

Institutional mapping (venn diagramming)

- ✦ Institutional landscape in communities;
 - ✦ SCT Impact on (formal and informal) social networks and risk sharing mechanisms;
 - ✦ SCT Impact on social connectedness/ exclusion among beneficiaries in their communities
- **Livelihoods analysis**
- ✦ Range and value of different livelihoods,
 - ✦ Impacts of SCT on the local economy (markets, prices and employment)
- The participatory tools provide both qualitative and quantitative information
 - To anchor findings in the field – strengthening external validity of qualitative findings
 - Identifying atypical cases and conditions mediating those changes
 - Process of generating numbers, prompts evaluative discussions

Application

Application of tools in field

- Decision of which participatory tool to use and with whom based on:
 - Ensuring analysis of (directly and indirectly) impacted community members represented in research study
 - Ensuring all research and hypotheses and questions addressed during period of research in any given community
- In general:
 - Social mapping and wellbeing analysis used with Key informants including community leaders, representatives from SCT committees, teachers, health workers and sometime businessmen
 - Household income and expenditure used with groups of male and female beneficiaries
 - Livelihoods mainly with non-beneficiaries (male and female)
 - Institutional mapping with beneficiaries (male and female)

Application of tools in field

- Although tools implemented in standardised format, a necessary degree of flexibility built into daily schedule (Adaptability / inductive learning)
 - ✦ hence the decision on which tool to use was determined by what information captured end of each day and where further research required
 - ✦ For instance if issues around targeting not clearly explained through KIIs, a wellbeing analysis was used as means of exploring issue further
- Additionally selection of male & female beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries determined by numbers actually present
- Generally fewer male beneficiaries present in each village

Qualifications

- This research is based on one week of training and two weeks of field research (2 districts/regions, 2 communities per region, 4 days per community) thus limiting the depth, and particularly the generalisability, of findings
- Research captures the views and perceptions of community members on the impact of the SCT. Whilst the information gained from the fieldwork has been triangulated, including through a review of programme documentation and KIIs with staff at the district level and findings from the baseline quantitative survey (in some country case studies), it is **not statistically representative** of the entire SCT programme.
- Findings provide:
 - detailed and internally valid cause-effect insights into how the SCT is operating and impacting in these sampled research communities;
 - indications as to the more general impact of the programme at national level.

Findings

Beneficiary household economy impacts

- SCT mainly function as safety net as intended by the programme objectives and design
- Immediate needs especially food requirements are prioritised and account for a large part of SCT use.
 - In Lesotho households were able to buy larger quantities of food, more varied and of better quality, and consumed more protein during payment dates. A similar pattern emerged in other research countries
- Educational needs of children were also prioritised by most beneficiary households and to a lesser extent health. There are indications of improved school attendance and access but not fully explored under this research
- SCT had made beneficiary households more credit worthy and many were able to pay back previous debt
 - Shop keepers were more likely to sell on credit to beneficiaries
 - Beneficiaries remained risk averse and unwilling to borrow beyond what immediate needs (especially food requirements) dictated

Beneficiary household economy impacts

- Households' ability and willingness to invest varied by household and context depending on their asset base, unmet priorities & needs and on the wider investment climate in the communities.
 - In Lesotho, household's livelihoods remained the same and mostly spent on food and educational requirement
 - ✦ This was because of the small amount of transfer, lack of frequency, intended purpose and also poor investment climate especially in Agriculture
 - Similar situation in Zimbabwe
 - ✦ but only three payments made at time of research in Zimbabwe
 - ✦ More examples of agriculture investments in Goromonzi (better natural resource base) than Chivi but still very limited

Beneficiary household economy impacts

- In Ghana and Kenya more examples of investments including purchase of inputs, farm assets, hired labour and small animals – especially in Owendo
- Very few examples of using SCT as working capital but for such households food entitlements already met from other revenue sources
- Some beneficiary households had reduced the amount of **casual labour they undertook**. This is was especially pronounced in Ghana, Kenya and Zimbabwe but less so in Lesotho
 - For some this meant working more on own farm
 - ✦ Potential for improved productivity on own farm?
 - For elderly households this meant less physically taxing work

Beneficiary household economy impacts

- The SCT had not transformed deeply rooted structural gender relations in household decision making, although the impact varied by sociocultural context:
 - In Lesotho women were **de facto the main decision makers** within the households due to the long history of male migration to South Africa and the need for woman to take on more responsibility and manage the households in the absence of the male
 - In Ghana there was an **increased access to and control over resources amongst female-headed beneficiary households**, but this **did not challenge household norms**, particularly in the Northern Region (a context of patrilineal land inheritance and relatively lower educational levels among women) decision making and control of resources rested more strongly with husbands, brothers and sons.

Voices from the field

- *The lives of beneficiaries who sincerely deserve the grant has changed a lot since the introduction of CGP, because one can easily see that the families can now afford to have a three meals a day of which they could not manage before receiving the grant.*
Business person, KII, Malakeng, Mafeteng (Lesotho).
- *Before the cash transfer I used to buy one bucket of maize [20kg] and now I'm able to buy 50Kgs for \$12.*
Male beneficiary, FGD, ward 11, Goromonzi district (Zimbabwe)
- *I'm now able to negotiate payment plan for school fees when I don't have cash.*
Male beneficiary, FGD, ward 11, Goromonzi district (Zimbabwe)
- *LEAP has allowed for improvements and changes in the diets of beneficiaries. Beneficiaries now able to cook with good magi and more fish. There is also more variation of foods we eat ...*
Female beneficiary, Dalung, Northern Region (Ghana)
- *Children nowadays go to the legal guardian [or grandmother] and say I want one, two, three, etc; and the legal guardians or grandmother make decisions along with the child.*
Female beneficiary, FGD, Malaoaneng, Leribe (Lesotho)

Local economy impacts

- The SCTs had varying impact on the local economy. Most of the impact at local economy has been due to increased consumption, rather than production
 - In Lesotho most of the beneficiaries income was spent locally and shop keepers noted increased sales during payment dates and often higher than month end sales.
 - This was mediated by the amount of money received (reducing % spent on transport) and proximity to larger towns.
 - Local shop keepers were more willing to provide credit and sometimes used this as a strategy to keeping beneficiaries as regular customers
- The SCTs had generally not resulted in opportunistic price increases. The prices of goods were determined by external factors including price of inputs and transportations.
 - Shopkeepers often reacted to increased demand by increasing the supply of goods and services, with the aim of building their consumer based

Voices from the field

- *We lose because of drought or poor weather and this year we believe that the yields are going to be poor because we cultivated late in December and our seeds were not up to standard and there was not enough rain to help the crops grow.*
Male non beneficiary, FGD, Metsi-Maholo, Mafeteng (Lesotho)
- *The very poor do maricho between November and April and when the harvest comes they have nothing in their own land and their own plots are not cultivated and they end up harvesting other people's land.*
CPC members, FGD, ward 11, Goromonzi district (Zimbabwe)
- *'market is coming closer' – more goods being brought closer to the people*
Owendo (kenya)
- *We are only receiving credit since the introduction of the cash transfer. Before that the business people were not sure how we could pay them back since we were not working.*
Male beneficiary, FGD, Maloaneng, Leribe (Lesotho)

Impacts on community relations and social networks

- The SCT were generally enhancing beneficiary self esteem and enabling them to become more self-reliant
 - For example in Lesotho beneficiary households were less likely to ask for goods and more likely to borrow, thus changing the nature of their relationship with the rest of the community.
- The SCTs had not significantly increased overall risk sharing and economic collaboration in research communities but had in some instances improved beneficiary access to contribution- based social networks including risk sharing arrangements, livelihoods/labour farming groups and savings groups
 - In Ghana, the SCT enabled many beneficiaries to ‘re-enter’ contribution-based social networks including extended family risk sharing arrangements, livelihood/labour farming groups and savings groups
 - In Zimbabwe the transfer was gradually enabling some individuals to build and solidify their existing social networks and better engage with their community through church offerings and more generally through increased opportunities for reciprocity

Impacts on community relations and social networks

- In Lesotho most beneficiaries were already members of funeral societies and continued to be excluded from other fee paying networks as money was not sufficient and was meant for children's priorities and needs
- In Kenya the SCT was enabling beneficiary households to contribute more reliably to contribution-based networks including savings groups and funeral societies
- The SCTs had in many instances increased community tension and resentment that had subsided overtime but were never resolved. Despite the increased tension the programme had not resulted in any serious conflict.
 - In Kenya, the SCT threatened to undermine trust-based reciprocity within communities, particularly where there were high numbers of orphans, due to jealousy by non-beneficiary households with equal or greater levels of need and the perception of targeting errors related to Programme operational dynamics.
- This impact had been exacerbated rather than ameliorated by programme operations - due to limited explanation and information campaigns at the community level.

Voices from the field

- *Before the transfer the beneficiaries used to rely on others for things but now they are less reliant and also when they borrow things now they are expected to return things, whereas before there were no expectations for them to return the things that they had borrowed.*

VAC member, KII, Malaoaneng, Leribe (Lesotho)

- *Before LEAP, they (the beneficiaries) looked miserable but (they now look) happier and hopeful'*

key informant in Dompooase, Central Region (Ghana)

- *I'm very happy as my father in law is now getting the grant which means I no longer have to support his family and am no longer burdened.*

Female non beneficiary, KII, Malakeng, Mafeteng (Lesotho)

Operations

- Similar patterns of implementation challenges were emerging across all research countries to date. These included:
 - **Limited and unsystematic information campaigns**, especially at community level where much tension and confusion prevailed. Talks about programme purpose (when done) were often scheduled around payments and focussing on how beneficiaries should use transfer. There was insufficient community level explanation of the transfer and why beneficiaries have been selected
 - Established community based structures involved in the programme were more active and effective(sometimes) during the targeting phase of the programme and less so since with limited visible role during payments and limited conduct of monitoring activities

Operations

- Lack of support and training explained the diminishing role and influence of community based structures
- Additionally, some structures were established for the purpose of the SCT programme only and were not linked to wider organic structure at the community or local government level, thus affecting their effectiveness and sustainability
- Finally payments were often delayed and beneficiaries were not always notified of this delay, with serious implications for vulnerability, coping and adapting (asset disinvestment, withdrawal from risk sharing etc)

Voices from the field

- *The transfer was targeted at the vulnerable but not everyone was selected. If you are lucky the computer does not leave your name out. It was only government officials that selected people and no one from the communities. We think that we have passed the interview when questions were asked and we qualified.*

Female beneficiary, FGD, Malakeng, Mafeteng (Lesotho)

- *The money is delayed in coming and when it arrives it is awaited by a lot of debts.*

Female beneficiary, KII, Metsi-Maholo, Mafteng (Lesotho)

- *Since the programme [HSCT] started I'm not able to join anything else.*

Male Beneficiary, Key Informant Interview, Ward 7, Chivi district (Zimbabwe)

P2P: Barriers and Opportunities

P2P: Barriers

- SCTs by design targeted at very poor households that often contain labour constrained and elderly.
 - Immediate needs, especially food requirements are prioritised
 - reduction in causal labour especially for older household members given its physically demanding nature
 - Households that meet their food needs and some of other basic needs more likely to use money for investment (... But inclusion error?)
- Programme objectives and purpose of SCT dictate/influence use of the transfer
 - In Lesotho primary purpose food and educational needs of children and thus most beneficiary households prioritised these components

The money is intended for the poor and orphans and it is for them to improve their lives. It is not right to invest the money in agriculture, it is not allowed. CGP is intended for the children.

Chief, KII, Mesti-Maholo, Mafeteng.

P2P: Barriers

- Transfer amounts are small and not always indexed to household size
 - In Ghana payment amounted to US\$4-US\$8 per month
 - But in Kenya this was US\$24 per month and more evidence of investments there (but also issues of targeting errors)
- Transfers were infrequent and not always predictable
 - In Lesotho payments quarterly but twice the quarterly payments had been missed
- Recognise and engage with wider contextualised risks:
 - In Chivi in Zimbabwe climatic conditions not conducive to agriculture investment
 - In Lesotho agriculture is generally not economically viable for most households

P2P: Opportunities

- Recognise and manage programmatic risk
 - Impact on informal social support networks? Eroding social capital? Reduction in remittances received? More ‘borrowing’ with expectation of given back rather than ‘asking’ with no need for return?
 - Those benefiting from one programme of support might be excluded from other programmes of support
- Strengthening (integrated) programmatic support for production
 - Building and sustaining Capacity of local committees/officials providing technical support
 - Transparency, regularity, predictability, communication and awareness raising
 - Complementarities between programmatic initiatives

Thank You