

From Evidence to Action:

The Story of Cash Transfers and Impact Evaluation in Sub-Saharan Africa



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



Outline

- I. Introduction to *From Evidence to Action*
- II. Results - Myths, findings and impacts
- III. What explains differential impacts?
- IV. Evidence to policy ..and back again
- V. What next?



THE TRANSFER PROJECT



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



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Save  Children



From Evidence to Action showcases evidence on social cash transfers across sub-Saharan Africa

- Government run programmes in Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe
- 8 year process of the Transfer Project
- Multi-stakeholder process (government, researchers, UNICEF, FAO, etc)
- Describes with country case studies how these programmes led to broad range of social and productive impacts on poor families
- Shows how impact evaluations are conducted, the relevance of evidence, and the ways in which evidence informs broader social protection policy and programming processes in each country
- Draws lessons from comparisons of results across countries



Innovations in the Transfer Project approach

- All government programmes, focus on linking to policy and programme implementation
- Mixed methods
 - Quantitative, qualitative and local economy impacts simulation (LEWIE)
- No one method followed by each country; each approach responded to needs, programme context and budget considerations in each particular country
- **Content**
 - Poverty, consumption, health, education
 - Youth transitions to adulthood and HIV risk
 - Productive impacts, local economy effects
 - Social networks and informal social protection
 - Political Economy Review



Programmes evaluated

Red indicates ongoing study

Country/Program	IE Design	Survey years
Ethiopia Tigray (Bolsa)	RDD	2012, 2014
Ethiopia Tigray II	RDD	2016, 2018
Ghana LEAP	Longitudinal PSM	2010, 2012, 2016
Ghana LEAP Phase 2	RDD	2017, 2019
Ghana LEAP 1000	RDD	2015, 2017
Kenya CT-OVC	RCT	2007, 2009, 2011
Lesotho CGP	RCT	2011, 2013
Malawi SCTP	RCT	2013, 2014, 2015
South Africa	PSM	2010
Tanzania PSSN	RCT	2015, 2017
Zambia CGP	RCT	2010, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2017
Zambia MCP	RCT	2011, 2013, 2014
Zimbabwe HSCT	Longitudinal Matched Case-Control	2013, 2014, 2017

Methods used by the Transfer Project

Country	Quantitative	Qualitative	Lewie	Other analysis
Ethiopia	Non-experimental	Yes	Yes	Targeting, payment process
Ghana	Non-experimental	Yes	Yes	Transfer payments
Kenya	Experimental	Yes	Yes	Operational effectiveness
Lesotho	Experimental	Yes	Yes	Rapid appraisal, targeting, costing & fiscal sustainability
Malawi (incl. Mchinji pilot)	Experimental	Yes	Yes	Targeting, operational effectiveness, transfer payments
South Africa	Non-experimental	Yes	No	Take up rate, targeting
Zambia (CG & MCTG)	Experimental	CG	CG	Impact comparisons across programme, targeting
Zimbabwe	Non-experimental	Yes	Yes	Institutional capacity assessment rapid assessment, MIS analysis, process evaluation

Results



Snapshot of results

Domain of impact	Evidence
Food security	Green
Alcohol & tobacco	Red
Subjective well-being	Green
Productive activity	Green
Secondary school enrollment	Green
Spending on school inputs (uniforms, shoes, clothes)	Green
Health, reduced morbidity	Green
Health, seeking care	Yellow
Spending on health	Yellow
Nutritional status	Red
Increased fertility	Red

Myths vs. Facts

Myth 1: Cash is 'wasted' on alcohol and tobacco

- Alcohol & tobacco represent 1 percent of budget share
- Across seven countries, no positive impacts observed on alcohol and tobacco
 - Data comes from detailed consumption modules covering over 250 individual items
- Alternative measurement approaches yield same result
 - “Has alcohol consumption increased in this community over the last year?”
 - “Is alcohol consumption a problem in your community?”
- Consistent with meta-analysis by Evans & Popova (2016) on cash transfers and temptation goods

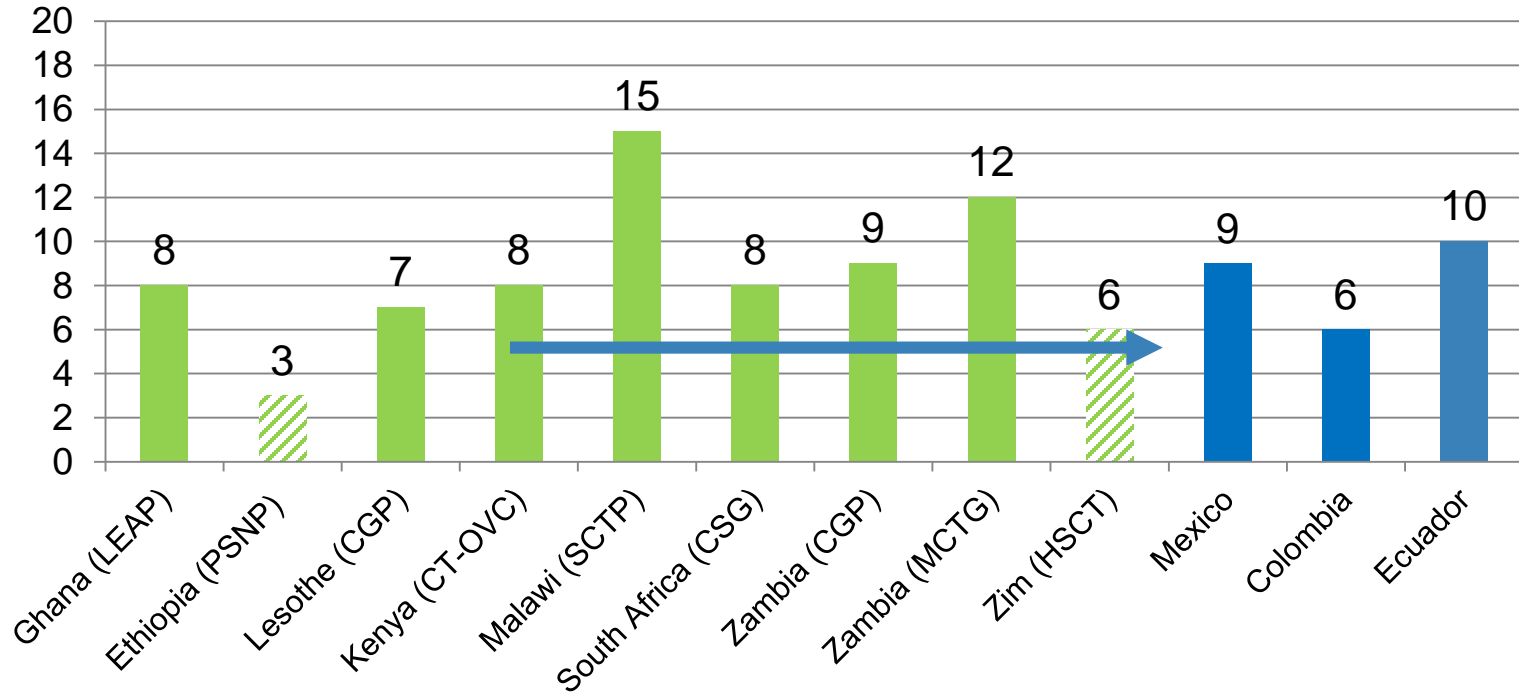
Across the board impacts on Food Security

	Ethiopia	Ghana	Kenya	Lesotho	Malawi	Zambia	Zambia	Zimbabwe
	SCTP	LEAP	CT-OVC	CGP	SCTP	MCTG	CGP	HSCT
Spending on food & quantities consumed								
Per capita food expenditure	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Per capita expenditure, food items	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Kilocalories per capita	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓
Frequency & diversity of food consumption								
Number of meals per day					✓	✓	✓	
Dietary diversity/nutrient rich food	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Food consumption behaviors								
Coping strategies adults/children	✓	✓		✓	✓			
Food insecurity access scale						✓	✓	✓

Red check (cross) marks represent positive (negative) significant impact, black are insignificant and empty is indicator not collected

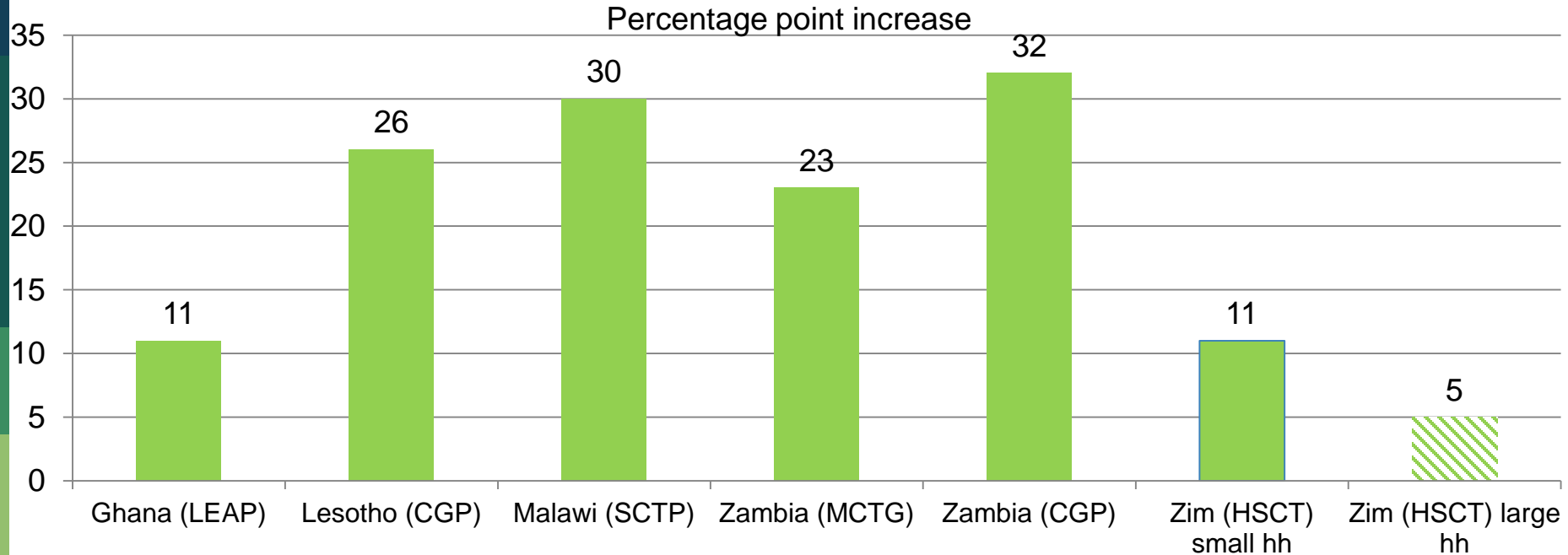
Myth 2: Unconditional transfers do not yield impacts on education

School enrollment impacts (secondary age children): Same range as those from CCTs in Latin America



Primary enrollment already high, impacts at secondary level. Ethiopia is all children age 6-16.
Bars represent percentage point impacts

Significant increase in share of households who spend on school-age children's uniforms, shoes and other clothing



Solid bars represent significant impact, shaded not significant. Lesotho includes shoes and school uniforms only, Ghana is schooling expenditures for ages 13-17. Other countries are shoes, change of clothes, blanket ages 5-17.

Myth 3: Cash creates dependency
[AKA: Poor don't have productive capacity, or
Cash is just a 'hand out']*

- Solid evidence on the **social** impacts of cash transfers
- *And*– **economic case** for expansion (productive impacts and impacts at local economy level)
- Poor and vulnerable have economic potential and can contribute to national development
- Evidence counteracts misconceptions around the role of social protection: helps to strengthen the advocacy and “Investment not a cost”

Households invest in livelihood activities— though impact varies by country

	Zambia	Malawi	Kenya	Lesotho	Ghana	Ethiopia	ZIM
Agricultural inputs	+++	++	-	++	+++ (1)	--/++	NS
Agricultural tools	+++	++	NS	NS	NS	+	+ (6)
Agricultural production	+++ (2)	++	NS	++ (3)	NS	++ (2)	++ (7)
Sales	+++	+	NS	NS	--		NS
Home consumption of agricultural production	NS	+++ (4)	+++ (4)		NS		NS
Livestock ownership	All types	All types	Small	Pigs	NS	-- Small	Most types
Non farm enterprise	+++	NS	+FHH -MHH	-	NS	--	++

- 1) Reduction hired labor
- 2) Overall value of production
- 3) Maize, sorghum and garden plot vegetables
- 4) Animal products
- 5) Male headed households
- 6) Particularly smaller households
- 7) Groundnut and roundnut; reduction finger millet

Stronger impact

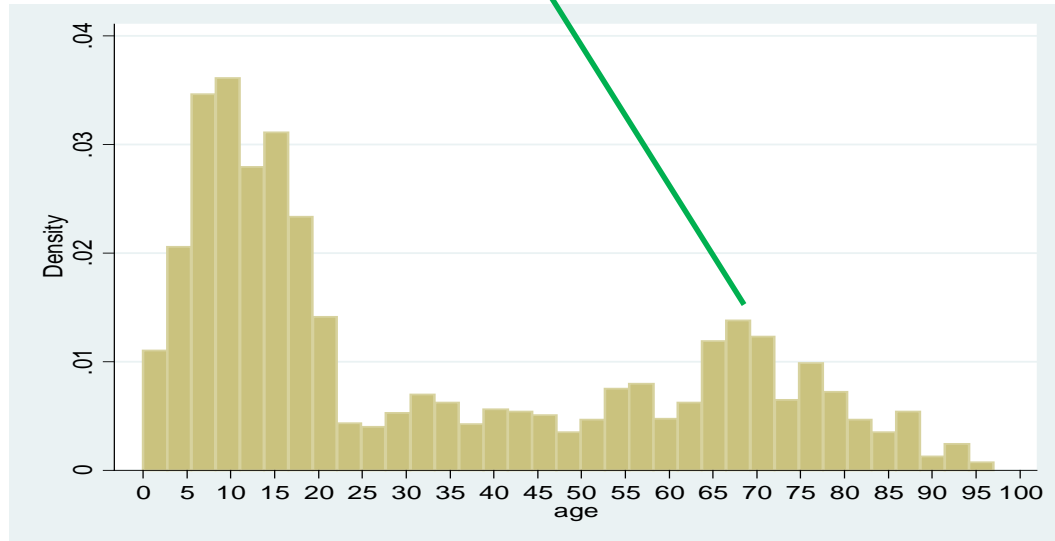
Mixed impact

Less impact

Many stories told in the qualitative fieldwork

Myth 3: People are lazy; disincentives to labor

“I used to be a slave to ganyu (labour) but now I’m a bit free.”
-elderly beneficiary, Malawi



Shift from casual wage labor to on farm and family productive activities

	Zambia	Kenya	Malawi	Lesotho	Ghana	Ethiopia	ZIM
Agricultural/casual wage labor	---	--- (1,2)	---	-- (2)	NS		NS
Family farm	+ (2)	++ (2)	++	++ (2)	+++		-
Non farm business	+++	NS	NS	+	NS	--	NS
Non agricultural wage labor	+++	NS	++	NS	NS	--	NS

- 1) Positive farther away
- 2) Varies by age, gender

Shift from casual wage labour to family business—consistently reported in qualitative fieldwork

Improved ability to manage risks

	Zambia	Kenya	Malawi	Ghana	Lesotho	Ethiopia	Zimbabwe
Negative risk coping			---	--	---		
Pay off debt	+++		NS	+++	NS		NS
Borrowing	---	NS	NS	---	NS	++	NS
Purchase on credit	NS		---	NS	NS		+
Savings	+++	+++		+++	NS		
Give informal transfers			NS	+++	+++	NS	NS
Receive informal transfers			NS	NS	+++	NS	++
Remittances			NS	NS	---		

1) Mixes remittances and informal transfers

- Reduction in negative risk coping strategies
- Increase in savings, paying off debt and credit worthiness—risk aversion
- Some instances of crowding out

Strengthened social networks

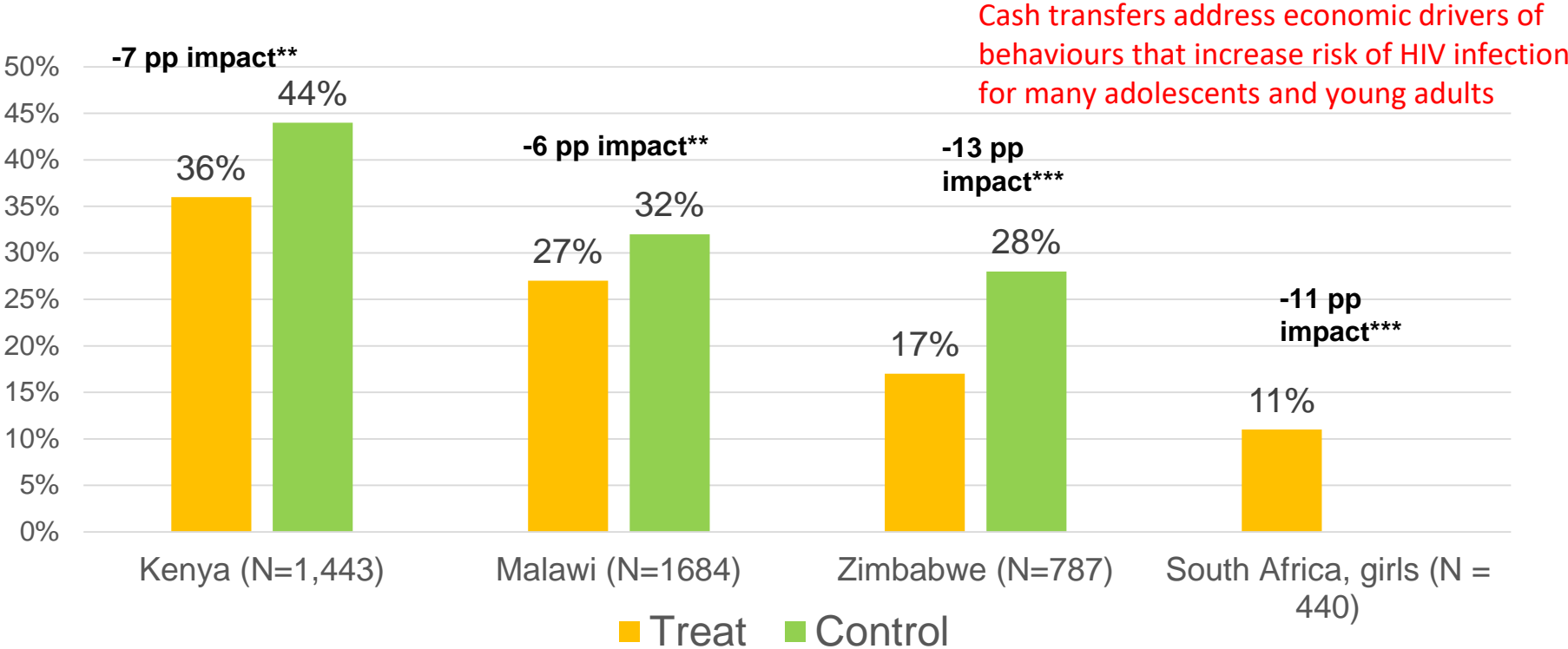
- In all countries, re-engagement with social networks of reciprocity—informal safety net
- Allow households to participate, to “mingle” again

Myth 4: Cash to households with children increases fertility

- Zambia Child Grant Programme
 - No impacts on total fertility or whether currently pregnant
 - Palermo et al J of PopEconomics (2016)
 - Some indication of improved birth outcomes (fewer pregnancy complications)
- Kenya Cash Transfer for Orphans & Vulnerable Children
 - Reduction in early pregnancy among women 15-24 by 6 pp
 - Handa et al Soc Sci & Medicine (2015)
 - No increase in number of children living in household
- South Africa Child Support Grant (Heinrich et al)
 - Reduction in early pregnancy by 11 pp



Emerging evidence that transfers enable safe-transition of adolescents into adulthood: Impacts on sexual debut among youth



Kenya and Zimbabwe impacts driven by girls, Malawi driven by boys. Zambia no impacts.

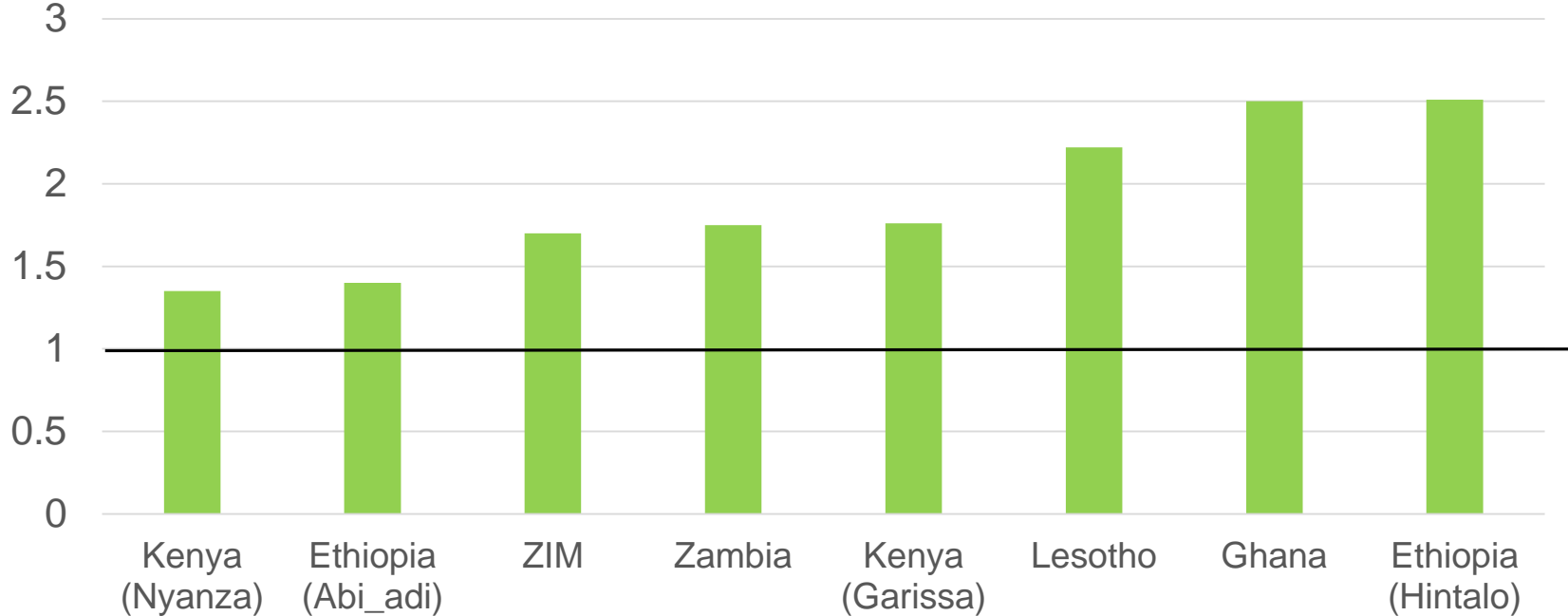
Myth 5: Cash leads to inflation

- In six countries, tested for inflation in intervention versus control communities using basket of ten goods
 - No inflationary effects found
- Why not?
 - Enough supply to match increased demand: beneficiaries are relatively small part of population, and given the transfer amount, not enough to cause inflation.



Actually, positive multiplier effects on the local economy

Amount generated in local economy for every \$1 transferred (LEWIE)



Where is evidence the weakest in terms of impact?

- Young child health and morbidity
 - Positive impacts on reducing morbidity and expenditures, but less on care seeking
 - Why? Supply of services typically much lower than for education sector
- Few impacts on young child nutritional status (anthropometry)
 - Kenya CT-OVC, South Africa CSG, Zambia CGP, Malawi SCTP, Zimbabwe HSCT
 - Why? Determinants of nutrition complex, involve care, sanitation, water, disease environment and food; poor supply of health services in rural sector

Summary: Debunking myths on cash transfers

- Cash will not be wasted; it is *not* spent on alcohol and other bads
- Cash is *not* a hand-out or cause dependency and laziness; it is invested for development in children and productive activities
- Cash does *not* lead to inflation or disrupt the local economy; spending on local goods and services leads to large local economic multipliers
- Cash does *not* increase fertility
- Cash does *not* displace local social networks of reciprocity; they are strengthened

TRANSFERTS MONÉTAIRES MYTHES ET RÉALITÉS

Les transferts monétaires sont des paiements réguliers en argent aux ménages pauvres

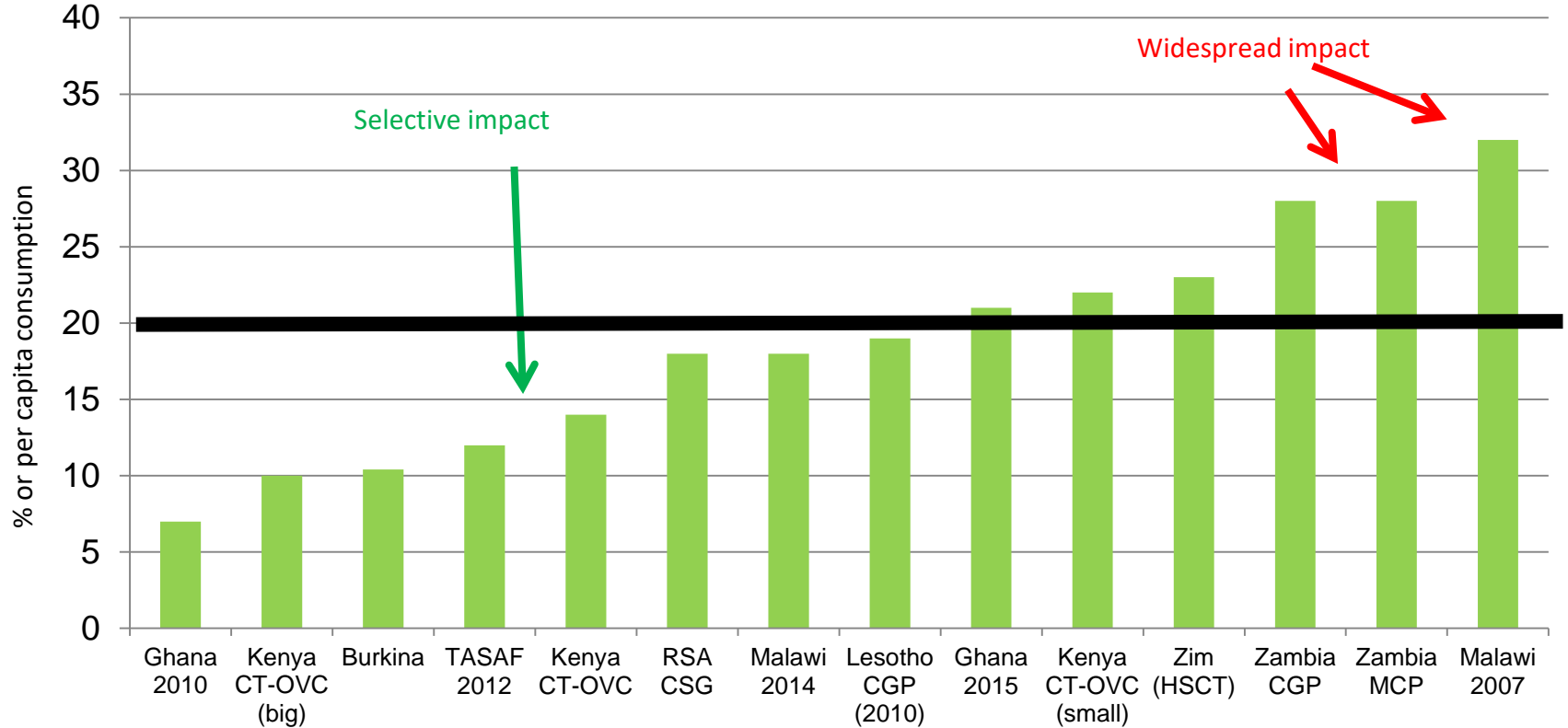
MYTHES	RÉALITÉS
<p>L'argent sera gaspillé en alcool et tabac</p>	<p>En Letonie, les dépenses pour l'alcool ont été réduites</p> <p>1-2% Cidre et le tabac représentent 10% des dépenses alimentaires</p> <p>Sur 6 pays, aucune preuve d'augmentation des dépenses sur alcool et tabac.</p>
<p>Les transferts ne sont que des sommes et ne contribuent pas au développement</p>	<p>En Zambie, les transferts monétaires ont fait augmenter les terres agricoles de 36%</p> <p>36% ceci que l'utilisation de pesticides, fertilisants et semences de haute qualité</p> <p>À cause que les intrants agricoles étaient élevés, la production globale augmentait de 36% et les agriculteurs s'occupaient d'investissement dans le commerce</p> <p>La plupart des programmes émettent une augmentation considérable des inscriptions dans les écoles secondaires et dans les dépenses pour les services scolaires et les cliniques</p>
<p>L'argent entraîne la dépendance et la paresse</p>	<p>Des milliers de pays, y compris le Malawi et le Zambie, ont vu une distribution de travail accrue, et un déplacement vers les activités plus productives.</p> <p>Il y a peu d'évidences de preuve que les transferts entraînent à la réduction des efforts de travail</p> <p>En fait, les transferts monétaires mènent à plusieurs effets positifs au niveau des communautés locales et ils renforcent considérablement la croissance et le développement dans les zones rurales</p>
<p>Les transferts mènent à l'inflation des prix et nuisent à l'économie locale</p>	<p>Pourquoi pas?</p> <p>Les bénéficiaires représentent une petite partie du commerce, généralement 0,20%</p> <p>En moyenne, une hausse de 1% des prix entraîne une hausse de 0,5% des prix de détail</p> <p>Aucune inflation observée dans 6 pays à l'échelle</p> <p>Les économies locales peuvent répondre à la demande croissante</p>
<p>Les subventions pour les enfants augmentent la fécondité</p>	<p>En Zambie, les transferts monétaires n'ont fait augmenter notablement les naissances</p> <p>-34% Au Kenya, la hausse de grossesses indésirables a diminué de 34% et de 10,5 points de % en Afrique du Sud</p> <p>-10,5 points de %</p>

Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture
 unicef
 #Ev2Act
 fao.org/social-protection/fr
 unicef-irc.org/research/273
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What explains differential impacts across countries?



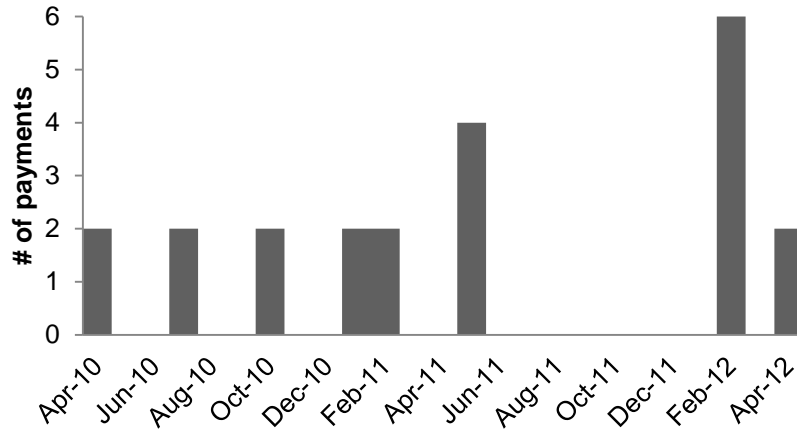
Sufficiently large transfer size



Regular and predictable transfers

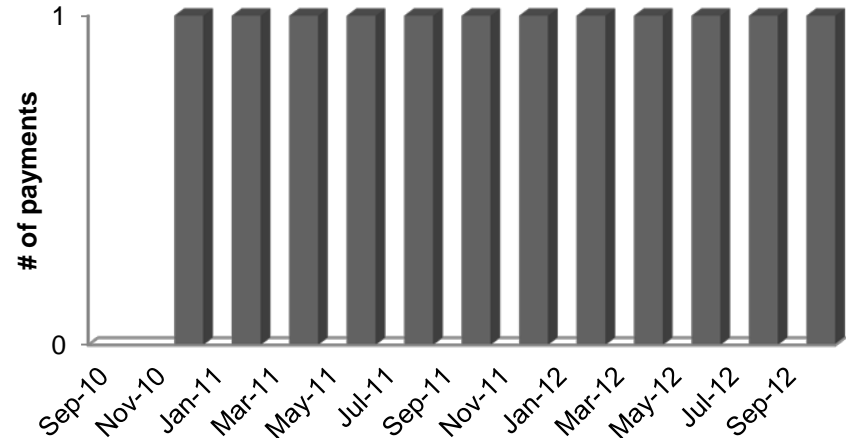
Lumpy and irregular

Ghana LEAP



Regular and predictable

Zambia CGP



Regular and predictable transfers facilitate planning, consumption smoothing and investment

Design matters

- **Supply side matters to maximize impact** (supply of health and education, user fees)
- **Targeting** (young children 0-2 missing proportionally)
- **Political commitment and domestic resource mobilization** critical to sustain programmes
- **Cash is important, but not sufficient:** moving from cash to cash+ and establish systematic linkages with services
- **Research is important, but implementation matters more:** systematically take forward findings of research and scale up!

Evidence to policy
... and back again



Impact of Transfer Project: country level

Results from impact evaluations influenced design of programs and contributed to strategic policy decisions

- Influenced changes in programme design and implementation
 - Targeting, transfer size, role of complementary interventions (nutrition, agriculture and HIV/AIDS)
- Evidence was not major driver of government decisions, but contributed to strengthen the case for scale-up and expansion
 - Shifted the narrative—from cost to investment and contribution to inclusive growth
 - Addressed concerns regarding dependency
 - Expanded audience for social protection (ministries of agriculture and finance)
 - Strengthened credibility of cash transfer programs, and confidence with which policymakers decide scale up

What were the key factors for success of the Transfer Project?

- Evidence generation imbedded in national policy processes, involving government, national researchers, and development partners
- Rigorous impact evaluation - credibility of results
- Timing: evidence (impact evaluation, targeting analysis and other) available at critical moments of policy-making
- Learning agenda more than just impact evaluation; use of data for other critical analysis (financing, targeting, etc)
- Broad scope of the evaluation enhanced understanding and appreciation of cash transfers among a traditionally sceptical audience: *social and economic*
- Government champions, political commitment and influence

Disseminating the evidence

• Book launches:

- Critical Thinking Forum-Mail and Guardian Event, *Johannesburg*
- *Lesotho* country launch, hosted by H.E. Queen of Lesotho
- Presentation at the SPIAC-B, *New York*
- Presentation at the EU Info Point, *Brussels*
- Presentation at World Bank, *Washington DC*
- Presentation to SIDA, *Stockholm*
- Social media: Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter: **#Ev2Act**



Cash grants help Lesotho's poorest

Orphaned and poor children are getting registered and into schools

Dawn Dewey

Mojeta's household benefits from the Lesotho Child Grant Programme (LCP), an unconditional programme that is now delivering a predictable quarterly cash transfer with education and health benefits to over 200 households across the country.

Orphaned and poor children are getting registered and into schools

with the Lesotho government assistance fund (especially for the children of the programme in 2014). The grant is split between 200 and 700 Maloti (1 US\$ = 1.8 Maloti), depending on the number of children per household. The money only covers a fraction of each family's needs, but it does help to cover the hidden costs of education such as school fees, shoes and transport, and provides a measure of stability to those living on or below the poverty line.



My vegetable garden helps us to grow our vegetables



Children

Cash transfers key to fight

José Graziano da Silva

Secretary-General

Through virtually every country in sub-Saharan Africa has some kind of cash transfer programme. These programmes are increasingly recognized as key to fighting poverty and hunger. Designed to reflect regional characteristics, they mobilize around community participation and focus on economically and socially marginalized populations – including children, the elderly, families without economic power and people living with disabilities.

By providing predictable, direct transfers, the programmes protect vulnerable households and households from the worst impacts of poverty and help them build resilience. In fact, the success of cash transfers is measured by a regional trend towards wider adoption of social protection policies. Across sub-Saharan Africa, cash transfer initiatives are moving from donor-funded pilots to domestically funded national programmes.

In each country, the expansion of cash transfers has followed a longer-term process of literacy among governments, and policy and international development partners. The region has now demonstrated the impact of these transfers on the well-being of children, families and communities. The evidence points to positive impacts in areas such as school enrolment, health, food security, and agricultural investment. It also shows that cash transfers can generate multiplier effects balancing local economies.

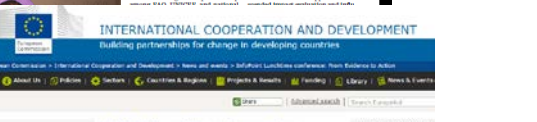
Against this backdrop, *From Orphaned to Action: The Impact of Cash Transfers and Impact Evaluation*



This new research has found clear effects on food security and food

in sub-Saharan Africa advance a regional discourse on social protection. It documents the evidence on cash transfers in the region as well as the development of social protection policies in eight countries across sub-Saharan Africa. The book synthesizes and collates evidence available through the region's Transfer Project, a joint effort of Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), along with two other partners, the University of Cape Town and the University of Zimbabwe. The project serves as

lative. Through this partnership, this innovative approach has been developed and tested.



InFoPoint Lunchtime conference: From Evidence to Action

Cash transfers have become a key social protection tool in developing countries and have expanded dramatically in the last two decades. However, the impacts of cash transfers programmes have not been widely acknowledged, understood, or used.

The book, from Johannesburg, Africa: The Story of Cash Transfers and Impact Evaluation in Sub-Saharan Africa, highlights the joint UNICEF-FAO work in developing rigorous impact evaluations of national cash transfer programmes in 8 African countries – Kenya, Ghana, Ethiopia, Lesotho, Malawi, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe – and the impact of the work on national scale-up and policy processes.

From Evidence to Action (2012) David Handberg, Trugher et al. (eds), Oxford University Press



What's next



Emerging research areas

- “Cash +” - Can we better support individuals and households by linking cash to other programmes/services? Does it improve outcomes?
 - Started in 2016 workshop; Sessions 5, 7, 10,
- Shock-responsive social protection and evaluation in fragile and humanitarian contexts (including cash in emergencies)
 - Sessions 10, 7b
- Psychological and cognitive impacts of poverty and scarcity → implications for programme design?
 - Session 12,



Opportunities & gaps/challenges

- Interest from **new countries and regions**
 - But currently gaps from African sub-regions
- In the process of making all of the **data available to the public**
 - Kenya is already out! (<https://www.unicef-irc.org/article/1548/>)
- How to best continue to contribute to **broader social protection agenda**
- **Communication & relevance**
 - Ensuring evidence is known and useful to policy and programming



It's about you!

Part of the Transfer Project's key added value – iterative process between policy/programming and research

→ Need to collectively identify areas where we need new (or ongoing) evidence to support programming, scale-up and policy



THANK YOU!

Website: www.cpc.unc.edu/projects/transfer

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