Walking the Talk – the Impacts of Cash Transfers on Gender Relations

A report commissioned by Oxfam & Concern
Rationale for the Research

- Trend towards targeting women in CT
- Assumptions, not evidence, behind this
  - Aligns with women’s productive role
  - Implicit/explicit assumption that men are irresponsible with cash
  - Empowerment: cash can improve status of women
Objectives

A. To assess the changes in gender relations within households and in the community, as a result of emergency CT programmes

B. To review the processes followed by agencies in emergency CT programming and analyse their adequacy from a gender perspective
## Location and Context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indonesia (rural)</th>
<th>Kenya (urban)</th>
<th>Zimbabwe (rural)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sudden onset – earthquake 2010</td>
<td>Sudden onset – food price rise 2009-10</td>
<td>Protracted crisis – food insecurity 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelter and basic needs</td>
<td>Food security and basic needs</td>
<td>Food security and basic needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not empowerment</td>
<td>Not empowerment</td>
<td>Not empowerment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-off CT ($84-168) plus community grant</td>
<td>Monthly CT (~$6) 8-12 months</td>
<td>Monthly CT (~$6.5) 5 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6000 (women)</td>
<td>5000 (mostly women)</td>
<td>1900 (women)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender analysis</td>
<td>No gender analysis</td>
<td>No gender analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blanket coverage</td>
<td>Vulnerability criteria &amp; random checks</td>
<td>CBT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivered in envelopes</td>
<td>Mobile money transfer</td>
<td>Delivered in envelopes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Methodology

- Qualitative approach
  - Interviews: Staff, partners, key informants
  - Focus group discussions: Men; women; joint
  - Literature review
Findings

A. To assess the changes in gender relations within households and in the community, as a result of emergency CT programmes
Positive Social Impacts

Many at HH level:

- Reduced HH tension
- Self esteem for women unused to cash
- Acceptance by men of women’s capability
- Reduced negative coping

IT ADDED TO LOVE IN THE HOUSEHOLD (MALE RESPONDENT, ZIMBABWE)

SOME MEN ARE CONSULTING THEIR WOMEN ON HOW TO SPEND INCOME FROM OTHER SOURCES’ (FEMALE BENEFICIARY, ZIMBABWE)
Limitations

- Positive impacts do not equal ‘empowerment’

- Delivering cash in this way cements gender stereotypes
  - Promoted as means for women to perform their traditional roles
  - Kenya: Short term ‘hand out’ accepted v larger transfers contested by men

WE WERE WORRIED WOMEN WOULD BECOME THE HOUSEHOLD HEAD...

IT IS NOT HAPPENING. WE ARE USED TO IT NOW.

(MALE FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION, ZIMBABWE)
Negative Impacts - Community

- **Community disempowerment** – this limits legitimacy and potential of CT
  - Non-sharing
  - Jealousy
  - Potential damaging effect on traditional coping mechanisms

IF ONE CO-WIFE IS RECEIVING AND OTHERS NOT IT WOULD CAUSE A LOT OF PROBLEMS. USUALLY CASH IS NOT SHARED BETWEEN WIVES.

(FEMALE BENEFICIARY, ZIMBABWE)
Lessons

• B. To review the processes followed by agencies in emergency CT programming and analyse their adequacy from a gender perspective
1: Design Excludes Men

- Potentially reinforcing women’s productive role

- BUT danger of legitimising men not fulfilling their productive role or sharing responsibility for HH welfare

WE WERE TOLD BY STAFF THAT MEN ARE IRRESPONSIBLE AND HAVE MANY THINGS THEY SPEND MONEY ON THAT DO NOT BENEFIT THE HH.

WE DON’T KNOW WHY CONCERN PREFERENCES WOMEN. WE WERE EVEN WORRIED ABOUT WHY THEY DO.

(MALE RESPONDENTS, ZIMBABWE)
2: Agency Gender Commitments not Followed Through

- Lack of understanding at field level
  - Meaning of ‘gender’ and ‘empowerment’
  - Rationale for targeting women
- Lack of buy in to these concepts
  - ‘empowerment’ was non-controversial only when seen as supporting women to perform their HH roles”.
3: Flawed Logic of Rationale

- Many women still defer to men on expenditure decisions
- Men not irresponsible
- Not removing the power relationship – women must find ways to hold onto cash

SOME MEN CAME TO DELIVERY POINTS DEMANDING TO GET THEIR SHARE.

SOMETIMES WE WERE FORCED TO GIVE A DOLLAR OR SO, SO WE COULD GO

(FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION, ZIMBABWE)
4: Gender Impacts not Evaluated

- The assumed ‘benefits’ to women from the receipt of the cash are not followed through to analysis in the log frame.

- A gendered approach has social implications: should be monitoring ‘do no harm’ at least.
Recommendations: Practitioners

- Operationalise commitment to gender
- Gender analysis in contingency planning
- Targeting rationale: Clarity (staff; partner; men); based on FACTS
- Realistic: Efficiency > Structural change
- Evaluate ALL assumed benefits (at very least do no harm)
Recommendations: Donors

- Admireable intention to acknowledge cross cutting issues but need to have realism in short term, ER programmes:
  - Do no harm > positive impact

- Make real your commitment:
  - Go beyond ‘box ticking’
  - Demand/fund social analysis
Thank You

- Paper available on Oxfam and Concern Worldwide websites from 9th May 2011

- Oxfam: Nupur Kukrety
  nkukrety@oxfam.org.uk

- Concern Worldwide: Gabrielle Smith
  gabrielle.smith@concern.net