

hpg

Humanitarian
Policy Group

Cash transfers, gender and generational relations: evidence from a pilot project in Lesotho

Rachel Slater and Matšelis Mphale

Humanitarian Policy Group
Overseas Development Institute, London

A report commissioned by World Vision International

May 2008



Contents

Summary	iii
Acknowledgements	v
1. Introduction	1
2. Concepts and methods for understanding cash transfers and gender relations	3
2.1 Conceptual issues and framework	3
2.1.1 A comparative approach to analysing cash transfers	3
2.1.2 A contextualised approach	3
2.1.3 Incorporating practical and strategic gender needs and interests	4
2.1.4 Understanding household relationships and resource allocation	4
2.1.5 The importance of generational relations	5
2.2 Methodological framework	5
3. Findings and analysis	7
3.1 Gender relations in Lesotho	7
3.2 Gender relations during crises	8
3.3 Impact of food and cash on gender relations	9
3.4 Impact of cash transfers on generational relations	11
4. Conclusions	15
References	17
Annex 1: List of interviews	19
Annex 2: Focus Group Discussion guide	21

Summary

Food aid has been the main response to repeated and protracted humanitarian crises in Lesotho since 2002, and during that time it has also been the major part of World Vision's emergency responses. Along with the government, donors and NGOs, World Vision is increasingly interested in the role that cash transfers can play in tackling hunger and vulnerability, and is implementing a pilot cash transfer programme in two districts in Lesotho – Maseru and Maseru's Hoek.

Whilst the potential for cash transfers to provide an appropriate and affordable response to chronic and emergency food insecurity is acknowledged, there are concerns that cash transfer programmes may have significant negative gender impacts. At the heart of these concerns are assumptions that women are less likely to be able to control the use of cash within the household compared to certain types of in-kind assistance, and that men may use cash for anti-social expenditures – notably on alcohol and cigarettes.

Drawing on the findings of fieldwork with cash, food, cash and food beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries, this paper uses a comparative approach to explore the impact of cash transfers on gender relations. The major findings of the research are:

- Gender relations in Lesotho are closely tied to shifting

employment opportunities resulting from the retrenchment of men from South Africa's mining industry and the emergence of new employment opportunities for women in Lesotho's textile industry and in South Africa.

- Gender conflicts in households are common as a result of these changes, and are magnified during times of crisis, such as food shortages.
- Cash transfers do not significantly increase anti-social expenditures (alcohol and cigarettes), but do reduce gender conflicts and tensions within households.
- Although the World Vision programme is a short-term response to drought, there is some limited evidence that it will have a long-term positive effect on household gender relations.
- A *whole-wage system* (Young, 1992: 14) is employed within households to manage and allocate income from cash transfer programmes. This leads to more equitable household expenditure than is found with wage incomes and social pensions for which other income allocation systems apply. In part, this equitable system is the result of aspects of the World Vision programme design and sensitisation process.
- Generational conflicts resulting from cash transfers are a much greater concern than gender conflicts and are particularly acute in households where the elderly are taking care of orphans and vulnerable children.

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank staff at World Vision who provided technical and logistical support to the project, in particular Motheba Lerotholi, Storie, Mbuso Jama, Junus David and Thabani Maphosa, and the many project beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries who participated in focus group discussions

and interviews. The names of the respondents who told their stories for the case study boxes in this report have been changed. Responsibility for the arguments presented here is the authors'.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Food aid has been the main response to repeated and protracted humanitarian crises in Lesotho since 2002, and during that time it has also been the major part of World Vision’s emergency responses. Among the government, donors and other stakeholders there has been growing concern about the appropriateness of repeated food distributions. These concerns have resulted in growing interest in the role that cash transfers can play in tackling hunger and vulnerability. The Government of Lesotho has begun a non-contributory old age pension scheme and pilots have been planned or are under way in several agencies, including WFP (with its Special Initiative for Cash and Voucher Programming) and UNICEF. World Vision is contributing to this process and is currently implementing a pilot cash transfer project in Lesotho in response to drought and an assessed need for emergency relief (see Box 1). Cash is being piloted as a possible alternative or complement to food aid.

In September and October 2007, ODI contributed to an assessment of the feasibility of a cash transfer project and the design of the project (Levine, 2007; Bailey, 2007). As part of a second phase of collaboration between World Vision and ODI around the wider issue of World Vision’s global engagement with cash transfer programming, ODI has conducted action research focussing on the particular issue of gender in relation to the Lesotho pilot.

One of the concerns consistently raised about cash transfer projects has been their potential impact on gender relations within recipient households. Cash has been seen as potentially having negative gender impacts in two main ways. First, it is thought that women are less likely to be able to control the use of cash within the household compared to certain types of in-kind assistance, especially food. Second, concerns are frequently cited (both by World Vision staff and in the wider humanitarian and development policy and practice communities) that cash may be more prone to anti-social use by men, notably the purchase of alcohol and cigarettes.

Research investigating these issues has, however, been limited. Evaluations of cash projects have not tended to find negative gender impacts, but there has rarely been scope for much in-depth research specifically into gender issues, so it has been difficult to draw any firm conclusions.

This report analyses findings from field research in Maseru and Mphahle’s Hoek districts in Lesotho. The objective of the research was to explore the gender issues emerging from the implementation of cash transfer programmes. The report begins by identifying key research questions and developing a conceptual and methodological framework to guide the research process. The framework draws on existing literature

Box 1: World Vision Cash and Food Transfers Pilot Project

World Vision’s Cash and Food Transfers Pilot Project aimed to address food insecurity initially in 6,500 and subsequently in 9,172 drought-affected households. The project operated between November 2007 and April 2008 in six constituencies in two districts of Lesotho – Maseru and Mphahle’s Hoek (see Table below). In two constituencies, beneficiary households received a cash transfer to the value of M80 per capita. In a further two constituencies households received a food transfer based on the WFP ration (60kg of cereal, 9kg of pulses and 3kg

of vegetable oil for an average household of five members), whilst in the final two constituencies, households received a combination of cash and food. No work was required of any of the beneficiary households.

The pilot project also had learning objectives, namely to strengthen World Vision’s capacity to deliver cash transfer programmes effectively and to assess where they are appropriate.

District	Constituency	Beneficiary households	Percent of programme	Type of transfer
Maseru	Matsieng	2,079	23	Cash
	Rothe	1,600	17	Cash & food
	Korokoro	1,172	13	Food
Mphahle’s Hoek	Mekaling	1,745	19	Cash
	Mpharane	1,076	12	Cash & food
	Taung	1,500	16	Food
	Totals	9,172	100	

on gender relations in Lesotho and wider conceptual frameworks. The analysis of findings is organised into four sub-sections focusing on gender relations, gender relations during crises, the different impacts of food and cash on gender

relations and the importance of generational relations. A short conclusion summarises the main findings and identifies the key policy and programming questions emerging from the research.

Chapter 2

Concepts and methods for understanding cash transfers and gender relations

2.1 Conceptual issues and framework

The key research questions identified in the TORs for this work are given in Box 2. In developing our conceptual framework we were guided by five critical issues:

- 1) It is important to understand the impact of cash transfers in comparative perspective.
- 2) We need to think about the changing context in which gender relations in Lesotho are embedded.
- 3) We need to consider and differentiate between the practical and strategic needs of men and women when assessing the impacts of cash and food on gender relations.
- 4) Gender relations studies provide a framework for understanding different models of household resource allocation.
- 5) Gender relations exist across generations within households, and concern more than just conjugal/marital relationships.

2.1.1 A comparative approach to analysing cash transfers

This research requires a comparative approach. It is important not to frame the questions to be examined purely around the distribution of cash. What is needed is to compare the possible gender impacts of cash distribution with comparable in-kind resource transfers and with households that do not receive any resources. Receipt of both food aid and cash might or might not create conflict within households and might or might not be used anti-socially. Equally, receipt of cash or food might or might not reduce conflict in the household during times of particular hardship. Whether food aid, cash or no assistance is received, gender relations during times of crisis need to be situated within a wider, long-term societal context. There is a need to understand baseline or normal levels of conflict, domestic violence, alcohol abuse and other gender issues, and how these are affected by crisis and by any programmed response.

2.1.2 A contextualised approach

Gender relations in Lesotho are the subject of a rich and strong research record, from Murray's seminal work on household structure in the 1970s to more recent analysis by, for example Boehm (2002). These analyses provide a strong understanding of how household gender relations are shaped both by endogenous processes (particularly the development cycle of households) and, critically, by exogenous or structural processes, including the changing structure of employment opportunities. Historically, the structural processes were driven by the migrant labour economy, under which basotho men work in the South African mining industry and basotho women were left as de facto household heads in rural Lesotho, where they

Box 2: Key research questions on cash transfers and gender relations

- What are the key features of gender relations within Lesotho society during non-crisis periods (with a particular focus on gender divisions of labour and livelihood options and social issues of domestic violence and alcohol abuse)?
- How have these been affected by the crisis, and what are the gender dimensions of key coping strategies such as consumption reduction, migration, increased casual labour and other income-earning opportunities?
- What impact has the receipt of food aid or cash had on gender relations within recipient households? Has it eased conflict over scarce resources, or created conflict over how to use or spend food aid or cash? How does this compare to households in similar economic circumstances who have not received food or cash?
- What difference, if any, do distribution modalities make? Is it helpful to try and distribute food or cash specifically to women within the household?
- Who controls decisions over how to spend cash received as part of emergency aid projects? How does this compare to normal decision-making over cash income?
- Are women or men more likely to spend cash or sell food and use it for anti-social expenditure (alcohol, cigarettes or something else)?
- Are there differences in how cash is used between female-headed and male-headed households?
- How are decisions being made about how widely to share cash or food within and between households?
- What are the perceptions of key actors (NGO staff, government officials, donors) about the likely gender impacts of cash and food and does this influence decision-making about the appropriateness of cash and food?

depended on a combination of their own productive activity and remittances from their husbands (Murray, 1981). More recently, as the South African economy has shed jobs and immigration has been tightened (Slater, 2001), the gender structure of employment in Lesotho has changed significantly as women have found work in the textile industries in Maseru and Leribe, which are allowed preferential access to US markets under the African Growth and Opportunities Act (AGOA).

This context has important implications for gender relations in households in Lesotho. There are two critical points. The first is that women in Lesotho have been managing cash income in their households for decades. The second critical point is that gender relations in Lesotho are in a state of flux as women, not

men, become the main breadwinners. Our analysis of the impact of cash transfers on gender relations must recognise these changing relationships.

2.1.3 Incorporating practical and strategic gender needs and interests

Gender and development studies differentiate between *practical* and *strategic* gender needs and interests (Molyneux, 1985; Moser, 1989). Moser describes practical gender needs as ‘those needs which are formulated from the concrete conditions women experience’, whilst strategic gender needs are ‘those needs that are formulated from the analysis of their subordination to men’ (1989: 1,803). A simple example might be where women spend a large amount of time every day carrying water from its source to their homes. Addressing their practical gender interest would mean moving the water source closer to their homes, whilst addressing their strategic interest would require changing the social relations that mean that collecting water is viewed as women’s work. Whilst the World Vision pilot is a short-term project, it is important to ask not only how far

cash and food transfers address practical needs (for example women reducing food consumption and eating less than men during times of food shortage), but also how far cash and food transfers can challenge or change unequal resource allocation and women’s subordination to men.

2.1.4 Understanding household relationships and resource allocation

Research on gender provides a very strong, although not particularly new, literature on household relations and decision-making. Whilst economists often assume a maximum utility model of household resource allocation, whereby all household members work together towards the same goal with no conflict over resource allocation and use, Sen’s model of cooperative conflict (1989), in which spouses have different goals but come to a ‘collusive agreement’, is useful for the purposes of this research. Similarly, Folbre (1986: 251) refers to the ‘partial altruism of family life’. Young (1992) draws on these approaches to differentiate between various systems of income allocation (Box 3). These provide a useful conceptual

Box 3: Systems of household resource allocation and budgeting

Young (1992) draws on Pahl’s work to differentiate between systems for control, management and budgeting of income in households. Four systems of allocation are identified:

*In the **whole-wage system** the ‘breadwinner’ gives all earnings to the household manager and is given back a proportion for personal use, while the rest is used to meet collective expenses. The whole-wage system is usually associated with a non-earning wife, but is also common in a strongly corporate family system with several earners. Monies coming into the household are divided into two basic categories: that used for collective expenditures and that for personal spending.*

Where the household manager is the wife, she may have limited control in terms of what to buy, but will have great responsibility to manage the money and usually no right to personal spending money, although she may put aside a few pennies ‘against a rainy day’. Where the manager is the household patriarch, his right to personal spending money is rarely questioned.

*The **allowance system** is often perceived as the form adopted by households where wives do not earn, but it is also common in those in which they do. This system has a number of variants. In one, the husband’s income is divided in three parts to cover (i) basic and recurrent bills (rent, utilities, school fees, medical and other insurances etc.) which he pays directly (ii) food and weekly expenses which he pays in the form of an allowance to the wife (call ‘housekeeping’), and (iii) his own personal expenses. The allowance may be paid daily, once a week, or over some intermediate period. This form of income management obliges the non-earning wife to ask the husband for personal spending money or money to cover ‘bulky’ items for the children whenever needed, or to try to save on the housekeeping to acquire a small fund of spending money. In another variant, the husband gives*

his wife sufficient for her to cover recurrent bills and weekly expenses. The rest he keeps for himself; she still gets nothing for personal spending money. Both variants represent a direct form of control over women’s decision-making and even management and involve no concept of a wife’s right to separate personal spending money.

In a third variant of the allowance system, which operates in cases where both husband and wife are income earners, the husband may still give the wife an allowance for recurrent and weekly items, keeping the rest for personal spending. Her income is set aside for ‘luxuries’, bulky items (holidays, extra clothes for the children, school-related expenses), and personal spending money. In fact, much of the wife’s income goes to the collective aspect of household consumption and on essential but ‘bulky’ items, such as children’s clothes and shoes.

*In the **shared management system** of income allocation, all earners hold aside what they need for work-related expenses plus an agreed amount for personal spending money; the rest defrays recurrent and weekly collective expenditures. In a frequent variant of this pattern, both partners know how much the other earns but keep their incomes separate. They agree on which items of collective expenditure their separate incomes will cover and what each has to set aside for savings.*

***Independent management** is a similar system. In this, husband and wife do not inform each other of their actual incomes, but agree upon a pattern of expenditure which covers all the regular collective outgoings. Whatever is left over remains in the control of the earner. Both this and the shared management system are almost entirely associated with wage- or income-earning wives.*

(Source: Young 1992: 140-141)

framework for understanding how cash is used within households, which can be adapted to the Lesotho context.

2.1.5 The importance of generational relations

Gender relations are often assumed to refer to marital/conjugal relationships between men and women. During the initial briefings for this research with the WV team, concerns were raised regarding the effects that transferring cash rather than food might be having on relationships between different generations within households. These questions have been incorporated into the research, and the methodology was adjusted to take account of possible generational conflicts. Given Lesotho's HIV/AIDS pandemic, questions about the capacity of elderly women in female-headed households to manage the demands of children, grandchildren and orphans were of particular importance.

2.2 Methodological Framework

The methodology for the study was developed to respond to the five key conceptual issues identified above (comparative, contextual, practical and strategic interests, household resource allocation models and generational relations) and to allow the questions in Box 2 to be answered.

The study relied on two qualitative research methods: focus group discussions with different stakeholder groups and individual in-depth interviews with programme beneficiaries. The focus group discussions (FGDs) were carried out with three

types of beneficiary (food, cash, food and cash) and with non-beneficiaries to enable a comparative analysis. FGDs were carried out with groups of men and women separately. To ensure that gender relations were understood in the context of wider social and economic changes in Lesotho, both the FGDs and individual interviews began with a discussion of gender relations in normal circumstances, and then moved on to discuss how gender relations changed during 'crisis'. A list of interviews is given in Appendix 1. A general guide for the structure of the interviews and the approach taken is shown in Appendix 2.

In total, 25 focus group discussions and case study interviews were carried out with beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. Participants in the focus group discussions were identified by the local chief or headman, whilst individual case studies were identified from within the focus group discussions. The key trade-off for the research team was the balance between drawing on the World Vision staff to facilitate access to beneficiaries, and the level of independence that this gave the research team. We anticipate that it also affected the responses from beneficiaries. Beneficiaries have an interest in the continuation of the programme, and we expected this to affect their responses. We believe that beneficiaries know that World Vision is concerned about alcohol use, and this may be under-reported. However, in many groups, in particular in the cash and food beneficiaries, our cross-referencing suggests that households were generally open in their responses. We placed less emphasis on one interview where a local councillor attempted to infiltrate and influence proceedings.

Chapter 3

Findings and analysis

3.1 Gender relations in Lesotho

Respondents' descriptions of current gender relations in Lesotho reflect the significant household transformations that have resulted from widespread retrenchments from South African mines in the 1990s. In all focus group interviews, there was a strong historical perspective because there were many elderly beneficiaries in both men's and women's groups.

In the 1980s and earlier, a large proportion of households had someone working in South Africa, usually in the mining industry but sometimes as labourers on white-owned farms in the Free State or further afield. Migrating men often did not return home for two or three years at a time. Husbands sent remittances through the Employment Bureau of Africa (TEBA), and sometimes sent instructions about lumpy expenditure items, but women were de facto heads of households and took responsibility for all recurrent household expenditure. Conflicts arose when men failed to send remittances and expected their wives to meet all basic household needs from subsistence agriculture:

My husband used to keep all the money in his pocket and even if there was a crisis at home, we would have to wait until he came home before we could do anything (cash and food beneficiary, Ramabele).

Another source of conflict was when men sent instructions that were not followed. In particular, there were conflicts over the allocation of income in the extended family – particularly which in-laws received the most money.

However, in the last two decades, the employment structure of Lesotho's population has changed significantly, with implications for conflicts and relations within households. All respondents reported that gender relations had worsened following the retrenchment of some 200,000 basotho mine workers in South Africa in the 1990s.

Male respondents argued that women were reluctant to give up the autonomy in decision-making that they had enjoyed when their husbands worked at the mines, whilst women suggested that men did not do enough to actively seek work. In Ramabele, men argued that:

When we were still working in the mines we were away and the women made the decisions. When the men came back from the mines the women still wanted to make the decisions. This is how conflicts are arising. We even have separation of sleeping –

the man sleeps in one room and the woman in another. Previously, if women went anywhere they would ask their husband but now they don't ask. When they return home if the husband wants to know where she has been, she says it is none of his business. In the past he would have beaten her for this, but it is now illegal to beat her so he can't really do anything. Now, if he wants water, she tells him to get it himself, she tells him there are the cooking pots, feed yourself. Now we are back from the mines, the women say that it is their turn – they want to go and get money to feed the family.

Women in the same village agreed that gender relations had worsened as a result of retrenchment, and recognised that men had been disempowered. They argued that, in order to regain control:

Men withhold money obtained from piece jobs and do not share it with their wives. They don't bring the money from casual jobs home. Instead they use it on beer and their girlfriends. Men like to control us so much that, even if we open a bag of maize for family use without their permission or discussing with them, they view it as a lack of respect. They don't want us to go to South Africa or Maseru to work.

These findings echo Sweetman (1996: 4), who concludes that 'for retrenched miners ... unemployment ... results in despair, feelings of emasculation and inability to relate to life – and the family – at home. Wives, from being de facto female heads of household during migrancy, must come to terms with the continued presence of the de jure head of the family'

Since Sweetman wrote about mining retrenchment in the 1990s, opportunities have emerged for women to work in Lesotho's rapidly growing textile industry as a result of AGOA. In the absence of their husbands' mining income, women are keen to find secure wage labour in the factories in Lesotho, creating further tension within households. The wage incomes from labour in textile factories are significantly lower than earnings in the South African mining industry. This creates additional pressure on women to stretch limited resources to meet household needs, and husbands frequently express doubts that their wives are sharing all their wages within the household.

The critical finding on general gender relations is that, as suggested from earlier analysis of household resource allocation in Lesotho, managing cash income is not a new

experience for women. This is important because it suggests that cash transfer programming in Lesotho is not likely to generate new types of conflict. Many households had a system for income allocation and budgeting in which husbands gave cash to their wives to meet household needs, and kept some for their own personal use. Women were expected to manage these limited resources, in the absence of their husbands, though because the husbands earned the money it was seen as theirs.

3.2 Gender relations during crises

Evidence from FGDs with both men and women, and from the individual interviews, demonstrate stark differences between the coping strategies of men and women when income and food production are short. On the whole, during food shortages, the main responsibility for meeting household food needs usually falls to women. The first strategy employed by households in the face of food shortages is a reduction in consumption. Households reduce both the number of meals they consume and the size of the portions. Whilst men are willing to reduce their own consumption so that their children can have full meals, there was no evidence from the research that men reduce their consumption to enable their wives to eat, even when their wives are pregnant or lactating. In contrast, women often forego meals so that their children and husbands can eat. Women in Liphiring reported that:

In times of crises, relations become sour. If we try to give our husband less food in order to reserve something for the children then he fights. When the children tell our husbands that they are hungry, they will always tell them to 'go and tell that to your mother'. We now survive on peaches and pumpkins but my husband expects miracles from me.

We eat less and make soft porridge to make the maize meal last for longer. We eat pumpkin leaves without maize meal. When our neighbours give us food, we take it home to eat it with the children. We reserve food for children and sometimes send the children to school without breakfast because they are given food at school. Sometimes we eat only once a day because we sacrifice food for men – this is to keep good relations, otherwise they fight with us or become angry – and we eat aloe fruits (torofee).

Both men and women engage in casual labour, migration and attempts to generate income, albeit in different ways. Women seek local piece jobs such as plastering walls or doing domestic work, especially laundry. Women's income-generating activities include collecting and selling wood and brewing beer, though brewing is not a particularly effective coping strategy because the payment system is usually based on credit, which means that it does not generate immediate cash that can be used to buy food. Men's casual work includes

herding (which is also done by children in female-headed households), and work such as weeding in neighbours' fields. Migration is seen as a risky coping strategy because, all too often, the transport and subsistence costs associated with job-seeking mean that, even if work is found, there may be little money to remit to the household. In the most difficult circumstances, households split and one party returns to the home of their parents. This leaves women free to establish relationships with richer men who can provide food for their children. Sometimes husbands are complicit in this separation, whilst at other times they turn a blind eye.

There is no peace in the family when there is no food to eat. Women abandon their husbands and get 'married' to someone with money. Sometimes they take the children, or husbands are left with the children. The lack of money promotes prostitution. Men with money come to house. If you have gone begging but you fail to bring anything home, your wife says that you are just looking at her. She says that others are working in Maseru and in South Africa but you are just sitting there. As a result men don't get their sexual rights (male non-beneficiaries in Matsieng)

Begging is also a critical coping strategy. Whilst it is mainly women who beg, there are isolated but increasingly common examples of men begging. However, the strategies of men and women are very different. Whilst women will ask a neighbour for a plate of maize meal, men try to beg or borrow a full bucket of maize – enough to feed them for a week, rather than a single meal. Women depend on reciprocity between neighbours, whilst men tend to rely on kinship relations when begging. Many men who refuse to beg are scathing about women who do so – even their own wives – and argue that women have no self-respect and are an embarrassment because they are willing to beg.

The differences between the begging strategies of men and women illustrate a critical difference in the way that men and women tackle transitory food insecurity. Whilst women tend to focus on meeting immediate needs in the short term, men focus on longer-term needs and opportunities. Women will share food with neighbours if they have it, whilst men will not share and will ration food so that it lasts for a month, even when that means dangerously low rations through the month. Women will eat green maize from the fields whilst men will insist that household production is stored and dried. Women will spend their last Maloti on food for their children, whilst men will ensure that their livestock are fed and watered. Male beneficiaries report that:

We try not to consume unripe maize. Instead we eat pumpkins and gather vegetable leaves if there is no maize. The kids, well they get used to it. As a parent, I only see the kids keep losing weight but

we need to continue with this until the maize is ripe and dried.

The maize I planted was disappearing. When I came home I asked who was taking it from the garden. At first I didn't know. People were taking green maize from the garden. Then I found it was the children and my wife was letting them eat the green maize so that it didn't mature and get dried for maize meal. So I threw the maize in the toilet because my wife was irresponsible and couldn't be trusted with it.

All respondents agreed that gender relations become worse during crises:

Men don't know how to beg, they keep asking us for food – they become like children. One time I had left some maize meal for the children and he ate it all. Relations become very bad and we spend most of the time not even talking to each other. The men then go drinking.

There is no peace in the family. Because in the morning women take the children to the relatives to feed them. The men wake up and look for the funeral or feast to go to and then get food. Or they go and look for piece jobs and are paid with food. It affects relationships especially when friends are visiting then she gets cross because she wants to know how will she get food to feed them.

From these findings two critical conclusions emerge regarding gender relations during crises. The first is that there are significant differences between men and women in terms of the coping activities or strategies that they employ, and that these differences cause tension and can undermine women's practical and strategic needs. The second conclusion is that gender relations worsen during crises, frequently bringing households to breaking-point. In the next section we turn to the question of whether cash and food transfers exacerbate these conflicts, or ameliorate them.

3.3 Impact of food and cash on gender relations

In the previous section, it was argued that food shortages in households create significant conflicts. In both Mohale's Hoek and Maseru districts, cash transfers are used primarily to buy food and to meet other basic household needs, such as candles and paraffin. By reducing household food shortages, cash transfers are also reducing gender conflicts within households.

In the previous section it was shown that drinking appears to increase when there are conflicts in households, particularly as men seek to escape from the problems of meeting household needs and to avoid further conflict with their wives at home. There is no evidence that cash transfers are significantly

aggravating drinking or smoking. Even in households where drinking is common, there is no significant increase in the consumption of beer. Only one respondent out of more than 100 participants in FGDs reported that cash transfer income meant for food was taken away by the husband and spent on beer.¹ There are some examples of men asking their wives to grant them a small allowance to buy some cigarettes or locally brewed beer. Men also ask for a small reserve of cash to meet other needs, for example to buy salt for livestock.

Whilst there are few conflicts between men and women over the allocation of cash within the household, there are differences (and sometimes tensions) over the sharing of cash between households. Reciprocal support, particularly between women in different households, has already been identified as a key coping strategy. Between households, cash is never shared, but it may be loaned out. In this respect, cash transfers differ from food transfers: women will give food to their neighbours but men tend to only give loans. Men are concerned about sharing food in case they run out themselves, whilst women recognise that next month or next week their neighbours are likely to give a gift in return. Differences between men and women in this regard can cause arguments, but differences are greater with food than they are with cash.

We received a combination of food and cash. We share the food and lend out the money. Women control all of the money and all of the food – though some women have to hide the money. When women are in charge, there are few conflicts. Household tension is down. There is a general decrease in household squabbles/conflict in general.

Because of the amount of cash transferred, the scope of expenditure decisions (and disagreements) is relatively limited.² However, cash transfers are also used to enable children to attend school. In December and January, school books and shoes were a common expenditure item in almost all households. Less frequently, cash transfer income was also used to invest in livelihoods – more frequently by men than women:

Now that we get cash we buy food, soap, veg oil, groceries, medication, school uniforms, and seeds (to grow vegetables). Some do everything with that cash – food, feed and so on. Others spend everything on food. For most it is mainly food – you can't buy shoes when you don't have food. Some people got cattle for ploughing – they rented cattle or paid people to plough. This was only possible for those who received payments on time in early December, otherwise was too late (Ramabele).

¹ Programme beneficiaries are well aware that World Vision expects them to spend cash on food and basic household needs and not on alcohol or cigarettes, so there is likely to be significant underreporting of alcohol consumption in this research.

² We anticipate that a larger transfer would precipitate greater discussion and disagreement.

There are wider community-level effects with implications for gender relations, and some wider effects that are of interest but are not critical for this study of gender relations.³ Both men and women suggest that cash transfers have enabled them to ‘do the right thing’ in their community – for example being able to take a contribution to a feast or community celebration. In December, households used cash to buy meat and Christmas presents (particularly school clothes) for children. As a result, families spent Christmas together and parents did not feel guilty about being unable to provide for their children.

In December the cash brought peace in families. We bought rice, carrots, beetroot, meat, drink and wheatmeal.

Cash transfers have also been used to enable women to complete the rites of mourning after they have lost husbands or children. Sesotho custom demands that women wear black for a certain period when they are widowed, and during this period they are not permitted certain behaviours – including seeking work. Before removing their mourning clothes they must slaughter a goat and buy a new dress. Many women are unable to pay for this, and until they do their livelihood/income-generating potential is undermined. Cash transfers have enabled women to break out of this trap – see Motheba’s story in Box 4.

I used the first payment to cover the costs of my husband’s funeral. I used the second payment to slaughter a goat and buy new clothes (cash beneficiary, Matsieng).

The overarching finding regarding gender relations and cash transfers is that gender conflicts within households are reduced when more resources are coming into the household, and that cash reduces gender conflict more than food. *Why is this so?* Our examination of household decision-making suggests that this may be linked to Lesotho’s experiences of migrant labour. Households in Lesotho, especially female-headed ones, have long experience of managing cash income, and systems for managing cash are well established. Most households receiving cash adopt a *whole-wage system* (see Box 3) where, irrespective of whose name is on the beneficiary card and who collects the cash, cash transfers are handed to the wife/mother, and she takes responsibility for allocation and budgeting. Conflicts over resource use do not entirely disappear – for example, husbands still object to their wives sharing food with neighbours – but the same conflicts are found in households that receive cash, ones that receive food and households receiving nothing, and so are not attributable to cash itself.

I give the money to my wife because she knows what the household needs better than I do. Perhaps I will

³ Targeting inevitably creates some tension between beneficiary households and non-beneficiary households. Interviews with non-beneficiary households suggested that households receiving cash were not sharing with others, though women receiving food did share.

Box 4: ‘Motheba

‘Motheba, a 49-year-old woman from Thoteng Ha Ramabele, lives with her 52-year-old husband Rantia (not a real name), their five children aged 25 to 14 and two grandchildren, ten and three. Her livelihood sources include making tracksuits and sewing ‘*mabraidng*’ on blankets. She has one cow and a calf, and although she does not own fields she sharecrops with relatives.

‘Motheba says that, when her daughter passed away two months ago, she was able to use the money to pay for the mortuary and coffin. She explained that “the money saved me from the shame and embarrassment of not being able to bury my own children. After my daughter’s decent burial I was able to hold my head high in the village”. In relation to investments initiated through cash transfers, she mentioned that she makes tracksuits and *braiding* for blankets. “Though modest, this activity has a potential for good returns, for instance, I buy a metre of ‘braiding’ material for R20.00. This is enough for three blankets and I charge R25.00 for each ‘braided’ blanket”. She indicated that, though there is a problem of markets, braiding business is good during the boys’ ceremony, where young men and boys like to wear light blankets (*mapae*), which are often braided.

When responding to the question of how she would cope once the cash flow stops, ‘Motheba said: “I have bought seeds for the fields that I sharecrop so that I can stand on my own feet”.

When ‘Motheba’s husband was still working in the mines, he used to send money home with instructions as to how it should be used. If she spent the money on different items or borrowed money from other people, Rantai would be angry. With cash transfer she feels free to spend it to meet her children’s needs without asking for permission: “In January I used R100 to buy one child shoes and Rantai did not seem to mind. However, I don’t want to do that often in case he feels left out or gets the impression that I have lost respect for him”.

ask her to give me something to buy some seeds or some salt. In this group, ten of us collect the cash ourselves, but nine of us give it to our wife (male cash and food beneficiaries, Ramabele).

Of particular interest in terms of programme design is the fact that the system for managing cash transfers is different to systems for managing other kinds of cash income – so they do not entirely result from norms established during migrant labour. During migrant labour, household income was usually managed using an *allowance system*. Today, pensions (for example the Lesotho Old Age Pension) and wage income (including from *fato fato* programmes and piece work) are seen as belonging to an individual. These types of income tend to result in *independent management systems* where only the wage-earner knows the income and decides how much income

is shared for common household expenditure. More research into household income allocation, management and budgeting is required, but on the basis of this research our conclusion is that the whole-wage system adopted when cash transfers are paid into the household appears to reduce gender conflicts over the use of cash in households. These effects may even be long-term, despite the limited life of the pilot programme. For more evidence, see Hadiyo's story in Box 5.

Why has a whole-wage system emerged with the cash transfer pilot? The findings of the research suggest that the World Vision programme has played a significant role here. Two features of programme design are particularly important. First, because the programme does not include any work requirement, support (whether cash or food) is seen as a gift to the whole household, rather than belonging to an individual household member. The 'gift' is managed by the household member responsible for identifying and meeting basic household needs (food, paraffin, candles). Second, at the same time, programme sensitisation means that men and women understand how the household entitlement is calculated and, in the few cases where men demand a share of the cash, they are only able to take the allocation for one person. Without the emphasis on effective information systems within the pilot project, this effect might not have emerged.

Much of the discussion thus far has focused on women's empowerment/disempowerment. Men's (dis)empowerment is also important. Gender tensions found in households where men's role as breadwinner has been undermined may be partially alleviated when cash is transferred to the household. However, it is important to consider ways in which World Vision's programmes might increase household cooperation and promote positive roles for returning men, based on sharing roles rather than on control.

3.4 Impact of cash transfers on generational relations

Whilst a clear understanding of how programme benefits are calculated for beneficiary households appears to have reduced competition and conflict over resources between men and women, the same cannot be said of conflicts between generations within households. One story of intergenerational conflict (and its resolution) has already been told in World Vision project documentation, and is reproduced in Box 6 (page 16).

Respondents reported that poverty brings conflicts in households between children (or grandchildren) and their parents (or grandparents). Women reported that children are much less likely to accept the sharing of food between households, even households that normally help them during difficult times. They also said that older children tend to try take more than their share of household food and demand that household money is spent on clothes and shoes so that they can attend school. Widows find it especially difficult to manage the demands of children regarding the use or sale of livestock.

Box 5: Hadiyo

Sixty-nine-year-old Hadiyo of T_oeneng, Rothe, lives with her husband Teboho and Mpati, her nine-year-old orphaned grand-daughter. The household owns two fields planted with maize and sorghum and a vegetable garden close to the homestead. She also has a cow, a donkey, a pig and five chickens. She sometimes slaughters a pig and sells the meat. She also sells extra produce during good years and brews beer for sale. Teboho receives a pension.

The family mainly spends cash from the World Vision programme on household items such as soap, candles, cooking oil, matches, clothes and school fees. However, in times of crisis such as drought, money is also spent on food.

When Teboho was working in South African mines he did not send money home regularly, sometimes going up to a year without giving the family anything. Similarly, when he started receiving pension he withheld some of the money, claiming that he used it to pay debts (which Hadiyo knew nothing about). When asked whether the World Vision cash transfers have lessened or worsened gender conflicts she responded that: 'Since cash is registered under my name, Teboho is more generous with his pension money and we budget together'.

Hadiyo was also asked whether Teboho might revert to previous behaviour when she stopped receiving the money from World Vision in a few months' time. She told the researchers that: 'I think the change in Teboho is genuine and long-term. Also, the experience has benefited both of us in the sense that Teboho can now trust me with the money and I also know that money is not unlimited but can only cover so many expenditures – when you don't have money and you are not used to spending it, you tend to think that people who have it are always loaded. This is what I used to think about my husband but I now know better.'

Poverty brings conflicts in the family because if you have food and want to share with neighbours who normally help you then the kids don't like that and it brings conflict. Kids have conflicts with one another that are difficult to address – for example one wants parents to do things for him or her only, that brings conflicts. Older boys tend to be selfish in the sense that even when you try and reserve something for the younger ones, the older boys will come and eat it all.

In some cases, children were demanding their share of either cash or food. This constitutes a significant departure from normal household relations. Indeed, in Sesotho, the verb and noun 'share' (*ho arola* and *karolo*) really refers to sharing outside the household. There is no Sesotho word for sharing within the household – suggesting that the notion of takings one's individual 'share' of household food is largely unheard of.

Box 6: Inter-generational conflict case study

The Ntaitsane family in Mosoang Matsieng is headed by their father Mokepi Ntaitsane, 67, whose wife died in 2003, leaving him with four children, Moleboheng (31), Lineo (26) and Mookho (17), all girls, and a boy, Moeketsi (16). None of the children is married, and therefore are still at home with their father.

The family was registered for the food/cash transfer pilot project, and therefore received M400 (\$57). During the first distribution the elder girl, Moleboheng, collected the money and refused to give her father any, but bought food for the family. 'My father wanted me to give him money to take it to other women where he spent most of his time and I refused because I bought food for our family that would also benefit him if he lives here at home with us'. 'My father wanted me to buy clothes for our young brother Moeketsi but I could not buy because the money is only enough for food not for clothes', she continued.

The father, Ntaitsane, decided to take the beneficiary card and collect the money the following month. 'I did not give my children a cent because I was having plans to take my young boy to Sesotho tradition initiation school to complete his manhood. I had to pay fees and buy food for him during his stay in the mountains. Therefore I had specific reason why I did not share the money with my daughters', he explained. However, he refuted allegations that he was not staying at home but living with other women. 'I am very embarrassed with my children's behaviour but I promised that I will share the money with them'.

The daughters took the case to the area chief, who told Ntaitsane to stop misusing the World Vision money, which was meant for food: 'This money is not for you alone but all members of your family have their share in that money, therefore in the same way it should benefit all members and should be used accordingly for intended purpose which is to curb hunger'. Ntaitsane agreed to share the money equally with his children, and when he received the money, he gave the three girls their share of M240, saying that he took the boy's share to pay for his graduation ceremony.

Source: World Vision Cash Challenges Note.

Some children can be very selfish. Although they know we are struggling, they want all the money to be spent on them. When we fail to satisfy the needs of our children, they become uncooperative – they refuse to help us.

In my sister's house – the child tells my sister 'to bring me my ration'. She is 14 years.

On the whole, conflicts are greater in households that receive cash than those that receive food. In households that receive food, we heard that:

There are fewer conflicts now that there is food. We don't worry as much now. The problem of older boys is less of a problem. Now we are less stressed because we used to think a lot about where we were going to get the next meal from.

However, in households that receive cash there are numerous reports of children demanding the M80 that they are entitled to. In interviews with children, it is difficult to know whether their demands stem simply from the fact that, as children, they

Box 7: 'Malimakatso

'Malimakatso, a 45-year-old woman from T_oeneng in Rothe, lived with her husband, who was 58 years old, and seven children, aged from two to 24. She was landless and the household's sources of livelihood were limited to piece jobs and assisting in other people's fields by hoeing and harvesting.

Following her husband's retrenchment from the mines due to illness, 'Malimakatso worked as a domestic in Bloemfontein, South Africa, but had to leave the job because her husband's condition worsened, and he needed constant care. She also had to turn down a number of piece jobs locally because she could not leave her husband unattended. Although she still assisted in other people's fields, she had to start as early as 5am, to be back home at around 9am to feed her husband and give him his medication.

'Malimakatso said that the food and cash she received from World Vision had reduced conflicts in her family:

One of the reasons why I left my work at Bloemfontein was that my eldest daughter and my husband used to fight over the money I was sending home. It got so bad that I had to call my relatives or neighbour to help me resolve the issue. Even now my daughter is still disrespectful. For example, when she is working she always gives me money not her father but since we now get food and money from the project, we can manage on our own.

Prior to the cash transfer programme, 'Malimakatso's husband was bedridden for about three months, and she could not afford to take him to a clinic. With the cash transfer, she was able to afford transport to Morija, X-ray fees and nutrient-rich instant porridges.

She also indicated that cash transfers had not been without problems, saying: 'my 17-year-old boy has demanded his share of the money we are receiving from WV. Although he has not said what he wants it for, he often smells of cigarettes and I suspect that he wants to use it for tobacco'.

do not recognise the importance of resource pooling in households, or whether they are actively calculating the cost of food and other household items and believe that they can purchase more by taking their share. In some locations, our FGD interviews and data collection showed that M80 could buy more than the food transfer allocation, whilst in other locations it would buy less.

Without further research, it is difficult to judge how serious these problems are and the extent to which they are related to cash transfers. We know that the HIV/AIDS pandemic is resulting in a missing generation in Lesotho, and that the elderly are frequently taking in orphans. As a result, many programmes now target households with orphans and

vulnerable children, but it appears that the tensions and pressures in these households are much less well understood than the basic needs of these households. This should be the focus of future work on transfer programming in emergency and development contexts.

World Vision staff have already dealt at community level with 'cases' of generational conflicts over resource use, and with some success. This suggests that, in future programming, appeals procedures or cases must recognise the importance of addressing generational issues. The focus should not be solely on inclusion/exclusion errors and gender conflict. World Vision's experiences can provide important lessons and best practice in this regard.

Chapter 4

Conclusions

In analysing the experiences of beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries in the World Vision Lesotho pilot, we have found that:

- Gender relations in Lesotho are closely tied to shifting employment opportunities resulting from the retrenchment of men from South Africa's mining industry and the emergence of new employment opportunities for women in Lesotho's textile industry and in South Africa.
- As a result of these changes, gender conflicts within households are common, and are magnified during times of crisis such as food shortages.
- Cash transfers do not significantly increase anti-social expenditures (alcohol and cigarettes), but do reduce gender conflicts and tensions within households.
- The World Vision programme is a short-term response to drought, and is not designed with explicit long-term effects in mind. However, there is some evidence that, in a small number of cases, it could have a long-term positive effect on household gender relations. It is possible that the programme might, in a modest way, support practical and strategic gender interests.
- Generational conflicts resulting from cash transfers are a much greater concern than gender conflicts, and are particularly acute in households where the elderly are taking care of orphans and vulnerable children.

Can these findings contribute to an understanding of the impact of cash transfers beyond Lesotho?

Whilst Lesotho initially appears a special case – particularly because of the effects of the migrant labour system on household gender relations – some of these findings might be used to inform policy and programming in other parts of Southern Africa and beyond:

- Whilst many of the concerns about gender and cash transfers have proved to have little foundation in Lesotho, our findings in regard to generational relations suggests that, in countries where many households are living with HIV/AIDS, more attention needs to be paid to the impact of operations on generational relations within households.
- The equitable whole-wage system of managing cash transfer income that has emerged in Lesotho differs from systems for managing other sources of income (migrant labour income/remittances, pensions, public works, piece work). This system appears to have emerged in part owing to the design and delivery of the World Vision pilot. Thus, aspects of the World Vision pilot could inform cash transfer programming in other countries, and provide examples of best practice in reducing gender conflict and supporting gender equality within households.

References

- Bailey, S. (2007) *World Vision Lesotho Cash and Food Transfer Pilot Project Design Document*. London: Humanitarian Policy Group.
- Boehm, C. (2002) “‘Now It’s the Women’s Turn to Work’: Labour, Unemployment and Gender in the Southern African Periphery”, paper presented at the seventh biennial conference of the European Association of Social Anthropologists, 14–17 August 2002 (workshop theme: Anthropological Perspectives on Unemployment).
- Levine, S. (2007) *Is Cash a Feasible Alternative to Food Aid for Post-drought Relief in Lesotho? A Report for World Vision International*. London: Humanitarian Policy Group.
- Molyneux, M. (1985) ‘Mobilisation without Emancipation? Women’s Interest, State and Revolution in Nicaragua’, *Feminist Studies*, 11(2).
- Moser, C. (1989) ‘Gender Planning in the Third World: Meeting Practical and Strategic Gender Needs’, *World Development*, 7(2): 1,799–1,825.
- Murray, C. (1981) *Families Divided: The Impact of Migrant Labour in Lesotho*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Slater, R. (2001) ‘De-industrialisation, Multiple Livelihoods and Identity: Tracking Social Change in Qwaqwa’, *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 19(1): 67–80.
- Sweetman, C. (1996) *The Miners Return: Changing Gender Relations in Lesotho’s Ex-migrants’ Families*, University of East Anglia, Gender in Development Series No. 9.
- Young, K. (1992) ‘Household Resource Management’, in L. Ostergaard (ed.), *Gender and Development: A Practical Guide*. London: Routledge.

Annex 1

List of interviews

No	Date	District	Constituency	Village	Type	Gender	Written up
1	27/2/08	Maseru	Rothe	Tsoe'eng	C&F	Women	✓
2	27/2/08	Maseru	Rothe	Tsoe'eng	C&F	Men	✓
3	28/2/08	Maseru	Matsieng	Ramabele	Cash	Women	✓
4	28/2/08	Maseru	Matsieng	Ramabele	Cash	Men	✓
5	28/2/08	Maseru	Matsieng	Ramabele	NB	Women	✓
6	28/2/08	Maseru	Matsieng	Ramabele	NB	Men	✓
7	29/2/08	Maseru	Korokoro	Korokoro	Food	Women	✓
8	29/2/08	Maseru	Korokoro	Korokoro	Food	Men	✓
9	27/2/08	Maseru	Rothe	Tsoe'eng	Individual	F	✓
10	27/2/08	Maseru	Rothe	Tsoe'eng	Individual	F	✓
11	28/2/08	Maseru	Matsieng	Ramabele	Individual	F	✓
12	28/2/08	Maseru	Matsieng	Ramabele	Individual	M	✓
13	5/3/08	Mohale's Hoek	Maquala	Multiple	C&F	Women	✓
14	5/3/08	Mohale's Hoek	Maquala	Multiple	C&F	Men	✓
15	7/3/08	Mohale's Hoek	Mekaling	Makilanyaneng	Cash	Women	✓
16	7/3/08	Mohale's Hoek	Mekaling	Makilanyaneng	Cash	Men	✓
17	6/3/08	Mohale's Hoek	Taung	Liphiring	NB	Women	✓
18	7/3/08	Mohale's Hoek	Mekaling	Makilanyaneng	NB	Men	✓
19	6/3/08	Mohale's Hoek	Taung	Liphiring	Food	Women	✓
20	6/3/08	Mohale's Hoek	Taung	Liphiring	Food	Men	✓
21	6/3/08	Mohale's Hoek	Taung	Liphiring	Food	Children	✓
22	7/3/08	Mohale's Hoek	Mekaling	Makilanyaneng	Cash	Children	✓
23	6/3/08	Mohale's Hoek	Taung	Liphiring	Individual	F	✓
24	6/3/08	Mohale's Hoek	Taung	Liphiring	Individual	M	✓

25	7/3/08	Mohale's Hoek	Mekaling	
Makilanyaneng	Individual	Child	✓	

Annex 2

Focus Group Discussion guide

Introduction

- 1) Introduce ourselves and explain that we will ask questions about the cash transfers project and other project, especially about men and women's experiences.
- 2) We encourage people to talk openly and honestly. Everyone's view and opinion is important. There are no right or wrong answers.

Gender relations in Lesotho

- 1) Tsedi tells a story about gender relations in Lesotho. The traditional roles of men and women and how these have changed over time. We will highlight where some of the tensions are – i.e. the sorts of things that create tension and conflicts within households over resources.
- 2) We ask if this story is the story of gender relations in their village.
- 3) We will ask for examples of good and bad gender relations.

Gender rel's during crisis

- 1) We tell a story of how gender relations have changed in Lesotho: men being retrenched and women getting jobs.
- 2) We will ask them how gender relations changed in other situations: what happens during other crises – e.g. drought / flood.

Coping strategies during crisis

- 1) We will ask how households respond to (cope with) crises. E.g. do they change consumption? Migrate? Look for casual labour? Other IGAs?
- 2) What are the differences between men and women and

how they try and cope? (Probes: under consumption do women eat less? Under migration: is this men or women?

- 3) Does tension get worse during crises? Are there more fights in households? How do people escape their problems? Drinking?

Support during crisis

- 1) What did they do with their support? (Where did they spend cash? Local store / town / neighbours?)
- 2) For cash beneficiaries: Ask differences between their use of support this hungry season (cash) and last hungry season (food).
- 3) What are the differences between men and women?

Impact of support on households

- 1) Impact of support on household gender relations (and also on generational relations).
- 2) Conflict over resource use increased or lessened? E.g. stories – Cape Town, Lesotho, Malawi.
- 3) Differences between cash and food? E.g. fights when husband returns home and ask for food. Is this conflict reduced or gone completely when a) get food? B) get cash?
- 4) Do kids protest more in FHH or MHH? Do boys or girls protest most?
- 5) Pension beneficiaries (shared or pocketed?)

Final

- 1) We thank respondents.
- 2) Respondents ask their questions.
- 3) Final thanks.

Humanitarian Policy Group
Overseas Development Institute
111 Westminster Bridge Road
London
SE1 7JD
United Kingdom

Tel: +44(0) 20 7922 0300
Fax: +44(0) 20 7922 0399
Website: www.odi.org.uk/hpg
Email: hpgadmin@odi.org.uk

ISBN: 978 0 85003 882 8

ISBN: 978 0 85003 882 8



9 780850 038828