The impact of nutrition-sensitive social cash transfers on diets, food security and nutrition in Ethiopia

Evaluation of MOLSA and UNICEF's IN-SCT Pilot in SNNPR, Ethiopia

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Diets, Affordability and Policy in Ethiopia: From Evidence to Action

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Motivation

- Since 2005, PSNP addressed poverty and food insecurity
  - reduced the food gap by 1.3 months and increased livestock holdings by 1.4 TLU after 5 years (Berhane et al 2014)
  - increased boys' school attendance and reduced hours worked with regular transfers (Hoddinott Gilligan Taffesse 2009)
  - increased agricultural input use when combined with OFSP/HABP (Berhane et al. 2012)
  - **no evidence of impact on child nutrition** (Berhane et al. 2017)

- In 2015, Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP4) added
  - nutrition objectives
  - linkages to basic services for Public Works and Direct Support
  - Temporary Direct Support for pregnant and lactating women and mothers of malnourished children (no work)

Improved Nutrition through Integrated Basic Social Services and Social Cash Transfer Program (IN-SCT)

- IN-SCT was introduced in 2015 to support the 4th phase of the Productive Safety Net Program, with funding from UNICEF and Irish Aid

Key features of IN-SCT around PSNP4

- Integrated package of multi-sectoral nutrition services
  - monthly nutrition counselling, antenatal care visits, post-natal care, child vaccinations, attendance to growth monitoring and promotion sessions, and regular check ups of children;
  - utilisation of education and child protection services for PDS clients
- Social Workers to link Temporary Direct Support (TDS) to services
- Behavior Change Communication (BCC) sessions for:
  - TDS clients
  - male and female PW clients

Impact Evaluation of IN-SCT

- Mixed methods (quantitative and qualitative) evaluation.
- *Quantitative:*
  - baseline data collected April-June 2016
  - endline data collected August-September 2018
  - nearest neighbor **covariate matching** (panel) and **propensity score matching** (repeated cross section) are used to measure the impact of the program
- *Qualitative:*
  - baseline data collected through a structured key informant interviews conducted during March-April, 2016
  - midline and endline qualitative interviews conducted in March 2017 and March 2018 respectively

Impact Evaluation Sample

Sample	Description	Treatment	Comparisons	Impacts
SNNP1 n=1920	Households with PLW* or children <2 yrs. Repeated cross-section.	T = TDS IN-SCT clients	C1 = neighbors in the same IN-SCT kebele	T vs C1 = total impact of IN-SCT/ PSNP
	Outcomes: maternal and child nutrition		C2= PSNP clients in non-IN-SCT kebeles	T vs C2 = impact of IN-SCT over the PSNP
SNNP2 n=1200	Households with children <5 yrs. Household panel survey.	T=PW and PDS clients	C1 = neighbors in the same IN-SCT kebele	T vs C1 = total impact of IN-SCT/ PSNP
	Outcomes: household food security, assets, wellbeing		C2= PSNP clients in non-IN-SCT kebeles	T vs C2 = impact of IN-SCT over the PSNP

*PLW = pregnant or lactating women

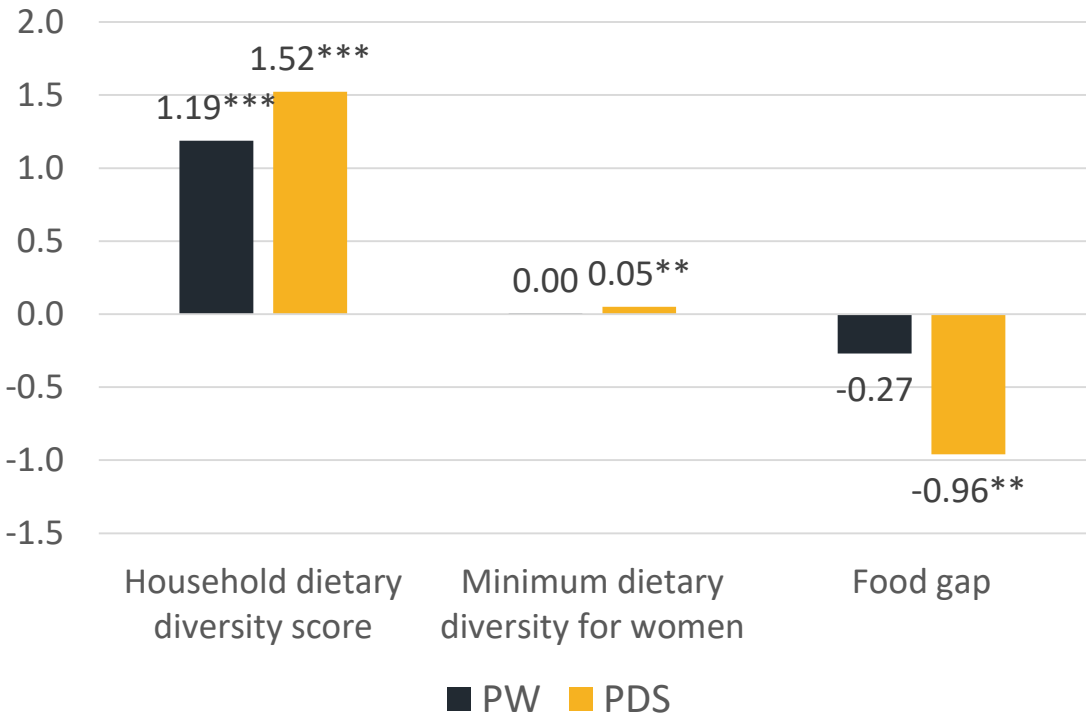
Summary of Impact Results

Outcome area	IN-SCT vs PNSP	IN-SCT vs No program
Dietary diversity	++	0
Food security	+	0
Food consumption	0/—	0
Food consumption patterns	+	+
Nutrition knowledge	+	0
Assets	+++	0
Child school attendance	+	0
Child labor	—	0
Child wasted or stunted	0	0
Child has a health card	— —	—
Child feeding practices	0	0
Breastfeeding – initiation	+	0
Mother - antenatal care	+	0

IN-SCT vs. PSNP

Dietary diversity and food security

Figure 1: Impact of IN-SCT vs. PSNP alone on food security

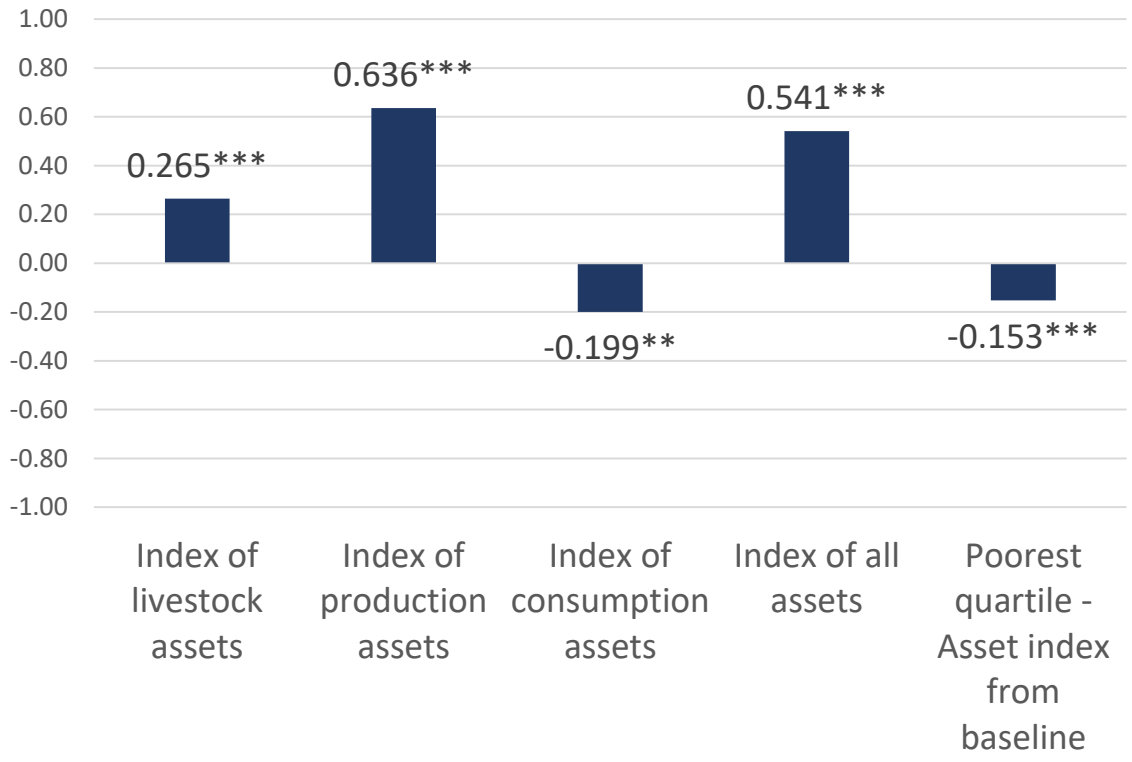


Relative to PSNP alone:

- IN-SCT **increased** the household dietary diversity score (out of 12 food groups)
- IN-SCT **increased** minimum dietary diversity for women
- IN-SCT **reduced** the food gap

IN-SCT vs. PSNP
Household assets

Figure 2: Impact of IN-SCT vs. PSNP alone on asset holdings

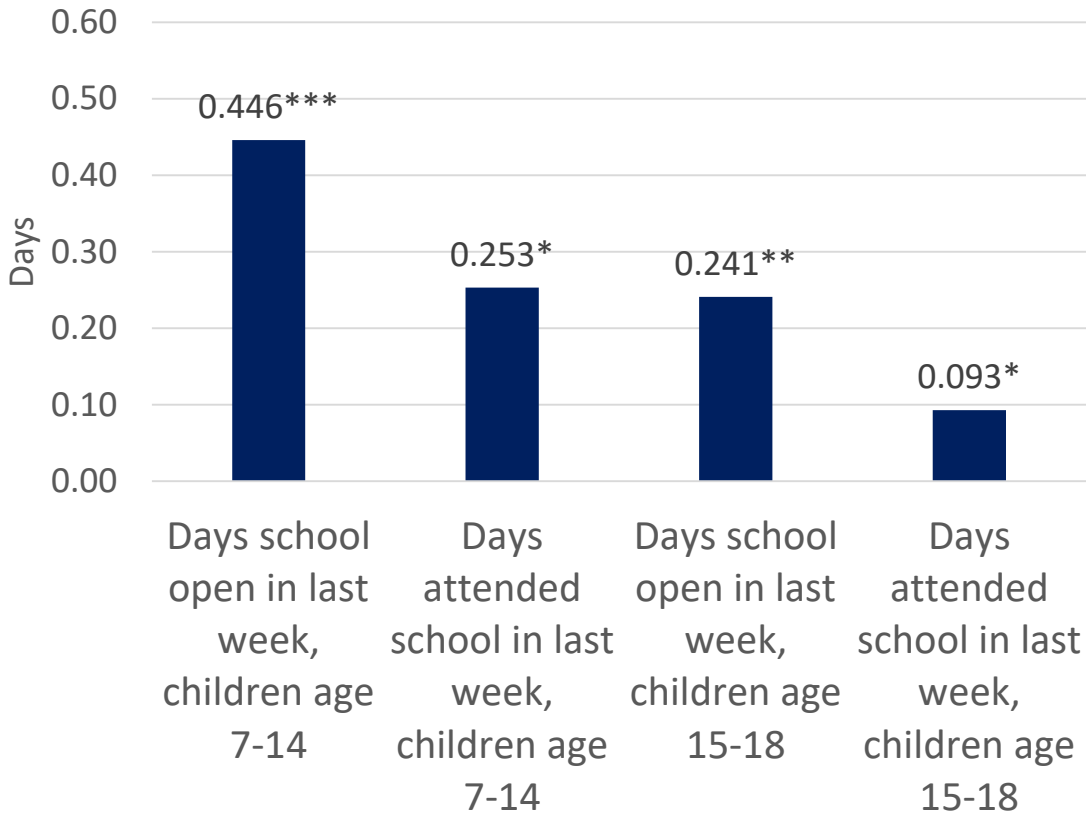


Relative to PSNP alone:

- IN-SCT **increased asset holdings** for:
  - livestock
  - productive assets
  - total assets
- IN-SCT **decreased** consumer durables
- IN-SCT **reduced** the probability of being in the poorest asset quartile

IN-SCT vs. PSNP
School attendance

Figure 3: Impact of IN-SCT vs. PSNP alone on schooling



Relative to PSNP alone:

- IN-SCT **increased** the number of days schools were open
- IN-SCT **increased** (weakly) the number of days children attended

Summary of results

- Social workers improved utilization of health services and schooling
- Comparing IN-SCT to PSNP alone, results are mixed
  - positive effects: diets, food security, assets, knowledge
  - negative effects: food consumption; child health card
- Comparing IN-SCT to nonbeneficiaries shows no impacts
  - positive spillover effects to neighbors
  - remaining bias from matching model

Recommendations

1. Strengthen IN-SCT components that improve children's diets and nutrition

2. Emphasize maternal nutrition knowledge

3. Reform the recruitment and training of social workers

4. Increase the size of the PSNP4 transfers