

# **Measuring Empowerment via Access to Resources and Markets**

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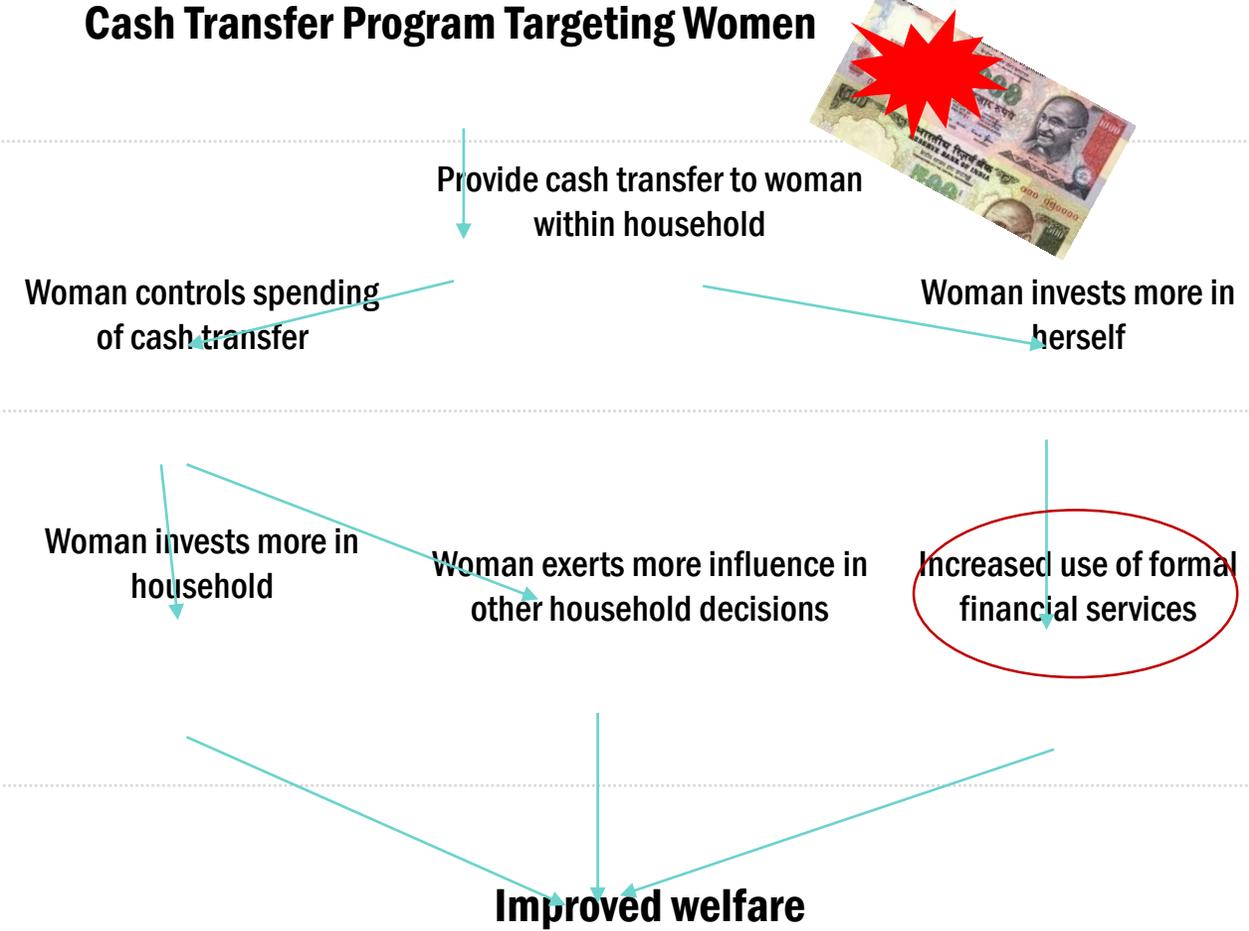
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## **Why External Measures of Empowerment?**

- Intra-household dynamics are complex and often unobservable
- Intra-household decision-making is difficult to measure and can vary along different dimensions
  - Is joint decision-making always better?
- Access to markets and resources can (in theory) signal that women are more empowered

# Measures of Empowerment

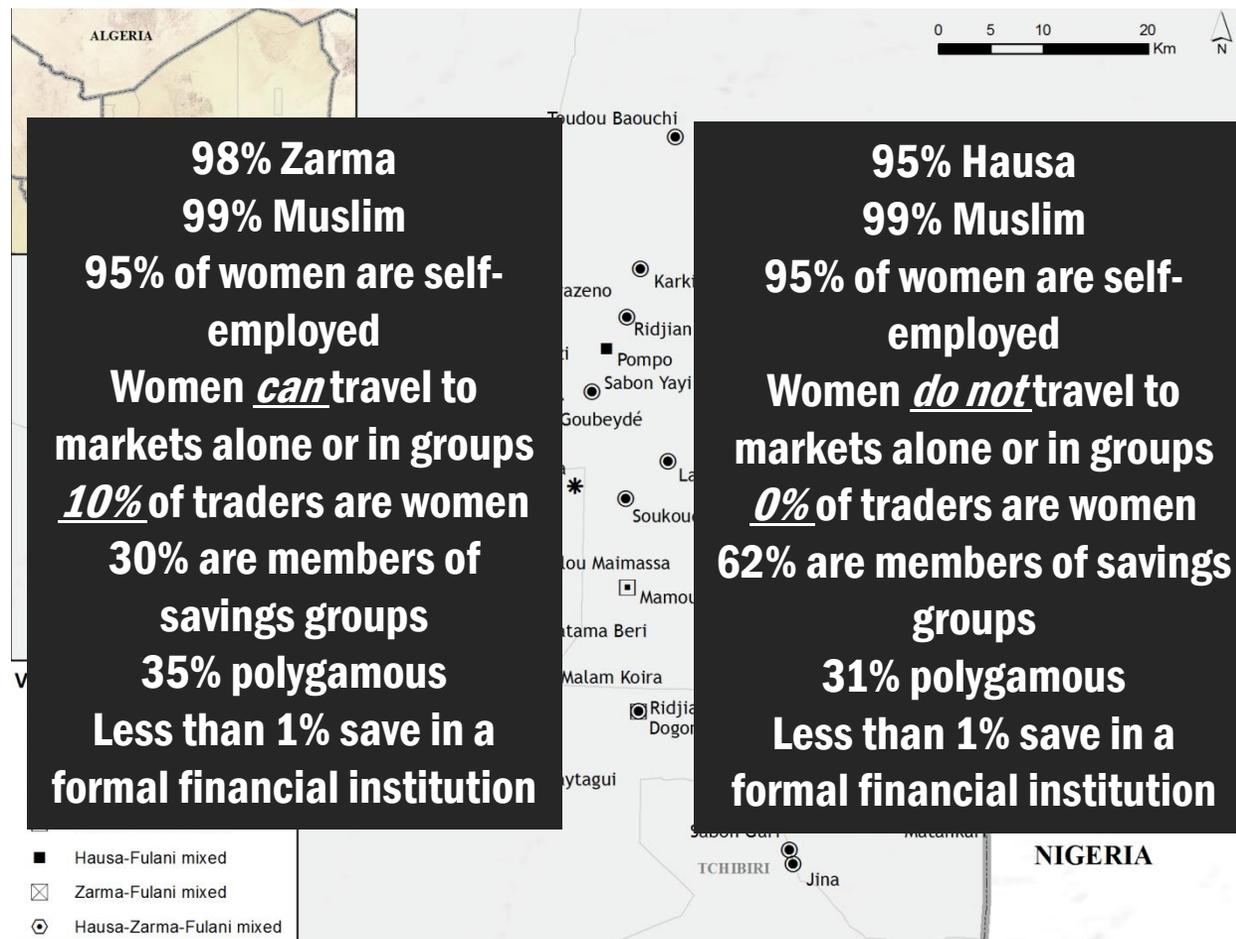
Chain
1. Inputs
2. Outputs
3. Outcomes 1
4. Outcomes 2



Indicators
Cash transfer received by woman
Who spends cash transfer
How cash transfer is spent Intra-household decision-making Access to formal financial services New businesses, Labor market participation
Consumption, expenditures, health outcomes

# A Thought Experiment

## The Ethnic “Border”



These villages are about 10 km apart:  
How do we come up with common (external) measures of empowerment? Is access to financial services and financial services meaningful?

# Indicators of Women's Empowerment in Niger and DRC

## **“Internal” Measures**

- Intra-household decision-making (ie, decisions on spending on school and health fees, travel outside of the village, financial support to relatives, decisions about agricultural production)
- Spending on women's and children's clothing for Muslim festivals

## **“External” Measures**

- Engaged in livestock-raising and sales (“embouche”)
- “Involved” in selling agricultural production
- Knowledge of market prices
- Traveled to market
- Members of savings group
- \*Mobile phone ownership and usage

**Conclusion: These can be highly context specific, even within a small geographic area**

**How do these  
compare with other  
indicators?**

- IFPRI Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (access to and decision-making power over productive resources, control over use of income, leadership in the community, time use).
- UNDP's Gender Inequality Index (labor force participation)
- GSMA (women's mobile phone ownership)
- IPA 2017 report of existing findings (employment, earnings, access to and usage of formal and informal accounts)
- But is women's empowerment correlated with other welfare improvements?

## **Mobile Phone Ownership and Usage?**

- The 2017 IPA report suggests that a key issue is to “**increase women’s mobile phone ownership**, since the expansion of digital payments, and mobile money, in particular, is limited by women’s access to and use of mobile phones. “
- In a RCT in Niger, distributing mobile phones in the context of a cash transfer program did not increase women’s control over the phone, unless it the cash was disbursed via the mobile phone
- Is it ownership or usage? What if women’s usage is correlated with literacy and other issues?