

SAVE THE CHILDREN FUND/UNICEF

MULTI-YEAR, MULTI-COUNTRY RESEARCH PROGRAMME
ON THE IMPACTS OF CASH TRANSFERS ON CHILDREN
IN EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

Joint SCUK/UNICEF STUDY Malawi Country Report

Draft for review

Jennifer Gibson and Carol Watson

February 16, 2009

This is the first draft of the country report for Malawi prepared as part of the research design phase for the joint Save the Children/UNICEF multi-country, multi-year study of the impact of cash transfers on children in Africa.

Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	II
LIST OF TABLES, FIGURES AND BOXES.....	IV
ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS	V
I. CONTEXT	7
A. WHO ARE THE MOST VULNERABLE?	7
B. WHAT IS THE STATE OF SOCIAL PROTECTION/TRANSFERS IN THE COUNTRY?	8
C. GOVERNANCE AND POLICY PROCESSES RE: SOCIAL PROTECTION	9
II. PURPOSE OF VISIT/STUDY	10
III. METHODOLOGY FOR DESIGN PHASE	11
IV. SOCIAL TRANSFER PROGRAMME DESIGN.....	12
A. BACKGROUND	12
B. COVERAGE.....	13
C. ELIGIBILITY/BENEFICIARIES	13
D. SIZE OF TRANSFER	15
E. CONDITIONALITY.....	16
F. FUNDING	16
G. IMPLEMENTATION	16
H. MONITORING AND EVALUATION.....	17
V. POLICY CONTEXT: SWOT ANALYSIS	18
VI. KEY STAKEHOLDERS FOR SOCIAL PROTECTION	20
A. MULTI-SECTORAL STAKEHOLDER STRUCTURES COORDINATED BY GOVERNMENT	20
B. PARTICIPATION OF DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS AND NGOS.....	20
C. LOCAL COMMUNITIES	21
VII. CURRENT AND POTENTIAL RESEARCH PARTNERS.....	21
VIII. PROPOSED RESEARCH FRAMEWORK FOR THE COUNTRY	23
A. POTENTIAL KEY QUESTIONS	23
B. INFORMATION ALREADY COLLECTED AND USEABLE	23
C. INFORMATION THAT WILL NEED TO BE COLLECTED	24
D. POTENTIAL OPTIONS FOR COLLECTING INFORMATION	25
E. FREQUENCY	25
F. COMPARABILITY ISSUES	25
G. KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT	26
IX. PROPOSED FRAMEWORK FOR IMPLEMENTATION	26
A. PARTNERSHIPS.....	26
B. HUMAN RESOURCES.....	27
C. TECHNICAL GAPS AND NEEDS.....	27
D. QUALITY ASSURANCE MEASURES (I.E. TRAINING).....	27
E. COSTS	27
X. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	27
XI. EVIDENCE-BASED POLICY TRANSLATION: GETTING BUY-IN.....	28
XII. OUTSTANDING QUESTIONS/FOLLOW UP	29
XIII. ANNEXES.....	30

Malawi Country Report

A. LIST OF PEOPLE MET	30
B. DETAILS OF SITE VISITS	33
C. KEY DOCUMENTS AND REFERENCES	38
D. REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS, STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP	43
E. DRAFT OUTLINE SOCIAL SUPPORT PROGRAMME.....	ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.
F. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR SOCIAL SUPPORT PROGRAMME.....	48
G. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR SOCIAL CASH TRANSFER SCHEME	49
H. CENTRE FOR SOCIAL RESEARCH RATES.....	50

List of Tables, Figures and Boxes

Table 1: Beneficiaries as of 30 November 2008	15
Table 2: Size of Transfer	15

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ARV	Antiretroviral Treatment
ADC	Area Development Committees
BU	Boston University
CBOS	Community-based Organizations
CBRC	Community-Based Rehabilitation (Centre or care)
CONGOMA	Council for the Non-Governmental Organization of Malawi
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CSPC	Community Social Protection Committee
CSR	Centre for Social Research
CT	Cash Transfer
DA	District Assembly
DC	District Commissioner
DDC	District Development Committee
DEC	District Executive Committee
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
DP	Development Partner
DSPC	District Social Protection sub-Committee
DSWO	District Social Welfare Officer
ECD	Early Child Development
EP&D	Economic Planning & Development
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organisation
FEWSNET	Famine Early Warning System Network
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HEA	Household Economy Assessment
HH	Household
HHH	Household Head
HIV and AIDS	Human Immuno-Virus and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
IHM	Individual Household Method
IHS	Integrated Household Survey
LA	Local Assembly
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MASAF	Malawi Social Action Fund
MaSwitch	Malawi Switchcard
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MoW&CD	Ministry of Women and Child Development
MP	Member of Parliament
MPVA	Malawi Poverty and Vulnerability Analysis
MVAC	Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee
NAC	National AIDS Commission
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NOVOC	Network of Organisations working with Vulnerable and Orphaned Children
NSO	National Statistics Office
NSSSC	National Social Support Steering Committee
NSSP	National Social Support Policy
NSST	National Social Support Technical Committee
OIB	Opportunities International Bank
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
PLWHA	People Living with HIV and AIDS

Joint SCUK/UNICEF Study

RHVP	Regional Hunger and Vulnerability Programme
SCTS	Social Cash Transfer Scheme
SP	Social Protection
SPSC	Social Protection Steering Committee
TA	Traditional Authority
UCLA	University of California
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VDC	Village Development Committee
VG	Village Group
VS&L	Village Savings and Loans
WB	World Bank
WFP	World Food Programme
WMS	Welfare Monitoring Survey

I. Context

A. Who are the Most Vulnerable?

Malawi ranks as the world's 11th poorest country, according to the 2006 Human Development Index. Around 52% of the population lived on less than one US dollar a day (actual amount is US\$ 33 cents = MK44) in 2005 (IHS 2005). While this figure had dropped to 40% by 2007 (WMS 2007), poverty remains widespread and generalized throughout the population. Over 4 million children across the country live in poverty, which is deep and widespread, characterised by low income, low literacy, food insecurity and high rates of child malnutrition. Almost 50% of children under the age of five are stunted. The growing HIV/AIDS crisis compounds poverty to increase poor people's vulnerability to risks and shocks. Nearly 13% of the country's 7.3 million children under the age of 18 have lost their parents and other caregivers, many to HIV/AIDS. More than 50% of children who should be in primary school have dropped out of school because of poverty, hunger and cultural barriers.¹

Malawi faces problems of both chronic poverty and vulnerability. A **poor** household is defined as a household that fails to attain a minimum acceptable consumption level of food and basic needs as defined by the poverty line (IHS 2005). According to the Malawi Poverty and Vulnerability Analysis (MPVA 2006), the key factors affecting the level of household poverty are household size, education, access to non-farm employment, access to irrigation, proximity to markets and trading centres, and access to good roads. However, none of the factors that characterize poverty in Malawi work in isolation. In addition to these, limited access to larger land holdings and failure to engage in cash crop production also contributes to the increase in household poverty.²

The poor are categorised into ultra-poor (15%) and moderately poor (25%). The proportion of the ultra-poor has declined from 22% in 2005 (IHS 2005) to 15% by 2007 (WMS 2007).

- **Ultra-poor** households are those that have few or no assets, little or no land, limited or no labour, are chronically ill and are child/female/elderly headed with high dependency ratios. Most of these households are socially excluded, extremely vulnerable to shocks, have limited coping mechanisms and struggle for survival on a daily basis.
- **Moderately poor** households are those that have some members who are able to do productive work. They can respond to labour-based projects and programmes in order to overcome their poverty and hunger. These households are vulnerable to risks and shocks like hunger and further impoverishment. Poverty is extremely dynamic, with individuals and households shifting frequently from one category to another, and even a small shock (for example a poor harvest) can tip large numbers of "non-poor" into poverty.
- **Vulnerability** is defined as the inability of households to deal with shocks to their

¹ Data MDHS 2004 and MICS 2006, cited in UNICEF/NAC, 2007 'Project Profile, Social Cash Transfer Pilot.

² This analysis of poverty and vulnerability is taken from the draft Social Support Policy of the Government of Malawi (November 2008)

livelihoods. Rising vulnerability implies both an increasing likelihood of shocks taking place, and a declining ability to overcome shocks without experiencing livelihood collapse. Vulnerabilities affecting Malawi at national level include:

- Agricultural vulnerability (i.e. erratic rainfall, land constraints, lack of livestock and constrained access to fertilisers, inputs and credit);
- Economic shocks and processes (undiversified livelihoods, weak markets, interactions between transitory shocks and chronic poverty);
- Health and nutrition risks (unsafe water, poor eating habits and limited access to health services) and HIV & AIDS; and
- Demographic vulnerability (high population growth, increasing numbers of households headed by women, children or the elderly).

Vulnerability in Malawi is often the joint effect of these factors, rather than any single factor taken on its own, that add up to greater risk and less ability to deal with shocks. Failure to recover sufficiently from past shocks (such as the 2001/02 food crisis), has had the effect of depleting household assets, and households' ability to rebuild assets.

B. What is the State of Social Protection/Transfers in the Country?

In addition to the Government Social Cash Transfer pilot in 7 districts that is the focus of this research, there are a number of social protection and social transfer programmes currently underway in Malawi, all of which could provide potential complementary or comparative research angles. They include :

- ***Malawi Social Action Fund (MASAF) Public Works***

The Malawi Social Action Fund (MASAF) started in 1995 and is currently in its third phase of operation, which is focused on improving livelihoods. As part of this objective, it implements a Public Works programme that runs during the beginning of the lean season (Sept/Oct), the aim of which is to provide people with the cash they need to buy subsidised fertiliser and seed provided as part of a US\$230 million donor funded, government implemented Input Subsidy Scheme. Under the MASAF Public Works programme, labour intensive projects that incorporate a minimum of 250 people are implemented. Participants are selected by the community and are generally those who are able to undertake physical labour, but could not otherwise afford to purchase the fertiliser subsidy. Participants work for twelve days and receive Kw200 per day (Kw2400 in total). This then enables them to purchase three bags of either fertiliser or seed. The MASAF Public Works programme is not directly coordinated with the Input Subsidy Programme, but it stresses to communities that the aim of the project is to purchase fertiliser and seed.

- ***EU Public Works***

The EU also funds a similar Public Works project with a similar aim – to enable poor families to purchase fertiliser and seed through the Input Subsidy Scheme. It enables participants to work for 20 days at Kw200 per day (Kw4000). As with the MASAF Public Works, the projects are usually physically demanding and normally targeted at building roads or other community infrastructure. MASAF and EU coordinate geographical targeting for the two projects to ensure wider coverage and avoid overlap.

Malawi Country Report

- **World Food Programme (WFP)**

WFP globally is moving from food aid to food assistance in its current (2008-2012) strategic plan, with a subsequent expansion of its 'toolbox' to include cash, vouchers, and local purchase. Malawi is one of the first countries to test this out in a pilot programme being implemented under the department of Disaster Management from 1 October 2008 – 31 May 2009. The pilot covers 11,100 beneficiaries/households in 2 districts in the south, one of which – Machinga – corresponds to the SCT programme. Baseline data for the pilot was collected with support from IFPRI, using PDAs. The target population is the ultra poor with labour and it is a conditional transfer, with beneficiaries working on community asset schemes (with a focus on disaster risk management and social protection) for payment in either food only (maize and beans); cash only (7,443 per household estimated at 5 members each – actual size not taken into consideration); or mixed cash and food (6,500 kwacha and beans). Two main issues being investigated are cost effectiveness and cost efficiency. Prices are measured by field monitors once a week through field monitors. The transfer mechanism is through the Malawi Savings Bank, with a system of finger-printed ID cards. The project also works with the CGAP – Consultative Group to Assist the Poor, a consortium of micro-finance organizations, to teach project beneficiaries about savings. This will support one of the objectives – to phase people off of support through community assets translating to individual assets and savings.

C. Governance and Policy Processes re: Social Protection

The Government of Malawi, in collaboration with development partners and civil society, has been developing a social protection/social support policy to protect and promote the livelihoods and welfare of the poorest and most vulnerable people and to cushion the livelihoods of poor people who are vulnerable to risks and shocks. The process of policy development began in 2005 through contributions of public and private institutions and individuals under the coordination of the Social Support Steering Committee (Ministry of Economic Planning and Development). After successive drafts and requests by Cabinet for further revisions, it is currently awaiting approval by Cabinet before being sent to the Parliament for final endorsement. There is some concern among stakeholders that the process of approval has been delayed and that the impending elections in Malawi (in May) could delay finalization still further. This is significant, as the policy is to set the framework for further programme development around social protection, including for the planned-for expansion of the social cash transfer scheme.

As set out in the draft Social Support Policy document (November 2008)³, the policy aims to facilitate the implementation of public and private programmes that will provide income or consumption transfers to the poor, protect the vulnerable against livelihood risks, and enhance the social status and rights of the marginalised. It is organized around four key policy themes, for which specific Goals, Objectives and Strategies have been developed. These policy themes are:

³ Information in this section is drawn from the draft Social Support Policy of the Government of Malawi (November 2008)

- 1) Welfare support
- 2) Protection of assets
- 3) Promotion through productivity enhancement
- 4) Policy linkages and mainstreaming.

A national Monitoring and Evaluation system is intended to support effective implementation of this Social Support Policy and programmes.

The ultimate goal of the policy is to enhance the quality of life for those suffering from poverty and hunger, and improved resilience for those who are vulnerable to risks and shocks. It is envisaged that the implementation of a comprehensive social support policy, integrated with other pro-poor development policies, would also contribute significantly to Malawi's economic growth. The policy has linkages to the Malawi constitution, Vision 2020, the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy, relevant international conventions, and other sectoral policies. (Republic of Malawi, Draft Social Support Policy, November 2008)

Once approved, the programmes developed from the policy will be implemented through the National Social Support Steering Committee, with the Ministry of Economic Planning & Development as its coordinating ministry and secretariat. At the local level, the Area Development Committees (ADCs) and Village Development Committees (VDCs) will work with Community Social Support Committees (CSPCs) to oversee targeting and implementation of social support activities. It is expected that civil society organisations will complement Government in its efforts to reduce extreme poverty and vulnerability to risks of many Malawians. It is recognized in the draft policy that social support interventions have strong positive linkages with other economic and social policies and with disaster risk reduction. It is also emphasized that these interventions will not infringe on or duplicate the established policies and programmes in the fields of social development, economic development and disaster risk management, but will complement these programmes.

Current debates and discussions around social protection and social transfers in particular (as evoked by stakeholders in the course of the country visit) raise issues and concerns around *affordability and sustainability* of multiple programmes; *effective targeting* in the context of wide-spread poverty; how to *strengthen linkages/complementarities* while *avoiding overlaps* among the different interventions; and the need for further *capacity development* for effective management, accountability and monitoring and evaluation at both district and national levels.

II. Purpose of Visit/Study

The two-week country visit to Malawi was conducted as part of the design phase for the development of a five-year, six-country study being planned by Save the Children and UNICEF to assess the impact of social transfer programmes on child development outcomes in Eastern and Southern Africa. The overall goal of the study is to contribute high-quality evidence to influence policy formulation and to improve the design of social transfer programmes that will achieve positive impacts on child well-being in particular and poverty reduction for children and their families more broadly. Malawi has been identified for inclusion in this research, along with Kenya, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Mozambique and Tanzania.

Malawi Country Report

During the design phase of the study (October 2008-March 2009), country visits undertaken by a two-member team consisting of lead researcher and research advisor aim to:

- Develop a clear understanding of the country's transfer programme(s), their management and operational structure;
- Consult with key stakeholders in country on the design of the framework, the development of indicators and methods for collecting and disseminating relevant data;
- Document details of the country's transfer programme (including data collection systems); identify information gaps; and recommend potential options for filling those information gaps

III. Methodology for Design Phase

During the two week visit, the Research Team undertook the following:

- 1) Interviews were carried out with representatives of key government ministries, NGOs engaged in social protection work, and international organisations to better understand how the programme(s) work, what key questions stakeholders have regarding impacts upon children and what the key debates regarding social protection in country are. See Annex A for a complete listing of stakeholders interviewed.
- 2) Site visits were carried out to see the relevant programmes in action. During the site visits, the research team held focus group discussions with beneficiaries and interviews with local officials and staff involved in implementation of the transfer. In Malawi, there were two site visits: Michinji, the original pilot district for the cash transfer, and Michinga, one of six districts including in the scale up of the programme in 2007/08. See Annex B for further information.
- 3) A stakeholder workshop was held at the end of the second week. The workshop provided a forum through which the Research Team could report back preliminary findings and also served to discuss further some of the outstanding questions that need to be resolved around the effectiveness of transfers in the Malawian context. See Annex E for the notes from this meeting.
- 4) The Research Team also met with potential local research partners to garner interest in the project and assess capacity to carry out different aspects of the proposed framework. In Malawi, the team met with the Institute of Policy and Social Research (IPSR), the Center for Social Research (CSR), the National Statistics Office and Chancellor College, University of Malawi.

In addition to the various meetings, site visits and workshop, the Research Team also consulted key background documentation, project plans and assessments and M&E plans, in order to better understand gaps in the existing monitoring systems and how the proposed research could complement what already exists.

This report of the Malawi country visit, compiled using the information obtained during the visit, will be shared in February 2009 with the study's external advisors for technical comments and with all stakeholders at country level for further discussion and feedback. Based on this feedback, the research outline will be revised and finalized, in line with

emerging issues and work on the research designs from the other countries involved in the study, with an overall research framework developed to guide and integrate the effort.

Representatives from all 6 countries involved in the study as well as the research team, Save the Children/UNICEF steering committee and external advisory board will meet in March 2009 to finalize the research outlines and discuss plans for implementation. During this design phase, it is expected that Save the Children and UNICEF at country level will bring together and continue to engage with a multi-stakeholder reference group for the study, based on current work underway as well as discussions and stakeholder meetings conducted in the course of the country visit.

In each country, either UNICEF or Save the Children, has been designated as the lead agency for the design phase of the study. In Malawi, the UNICEF office is currently assuming the lead role for the coordination of stakeholders around this research project.

IV. Social Transfer Programme Design

The primary focus of this study is the Social Cash Transfer Programme first piloted in Mchinji in 2006. The pilot phase for the programme, which now includes seven districts in total, is scheduled to end in September 2009; approval by the government for further scale up after the pilot phase is pending.

In addition to the Mchinji transfer, there are two other large scale transfers taking place in the country – a fertilizer transfer that reaches some 50% of the population and costs circa US\$230 million and three different types of Public Works programmes being run by the Malawi Social Action Fund (MASAF) and the EU. Previously, Concern Worldwide also implemented a two year transfer pilot aimed at informing best practice and policy in this area.

A. Background

A 2004 review of the Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) found that both the government and its partners were failing in efforts to achieve Pillar 3: 'sustainable social safety nets for the most vulnerable groups'. Vulnerability was increasing in the country as a result of high HIV rates and long term food insecurity; a shock in 2005 left xx people in need of emergency relief and further increased vulnerability.

The National Plan of Action (NPA) for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVCs), recognising this, outlined as a priority intervention the need to create a social safety net to support the most vulnerable households who were caring for OVCs. The creation of such a mechanism would follow the these steps:

- 1) First, a feasibility study would be done to determine the scope, implementation modalities and focus of a social protection mechanism for OVCs;
- 2) Second, the mechanism would be piloted, and
- 3) Third, government would lead full scale implementation of the mechanism throughout the country.

Malawi Country Report

In 2006 the GoM, UNICEF and the National AIDS Commission joined forces to pilot a Social Cash Transfer Scheme, as a mechanism for achieving this. The aim of the pilot is threefold:

Figure 1: Social Protection Matrix

- To reduce poverty, hunger and starvation in all households living in the programme areas who are ***ultra poor*** and at the same time ***labour constrained***;
- To increase ***school enrolment and attendance*** of children living in target households and ***invest in their health and nutrition status***;
- To ***generate information*** on the feasibility, costs and benefits, and on the positive and negative impacts of a Social Cash Transfer Scheme as a component of a national Social Protection Programme for Malawi.

B. Coverage

The pilot originally started in Mchinji district in 2006. In 2008, it was scaled up to include six further districts spread throughout the country: Likoma, Machinga, Salima, Mangochi, Chitipa and Phalombe.

A final draft of the Social Support Policy is currently before cabinet; once it is approved, the government will then consider whether or not to approve the Social Cash Transfer as a mechanism for delivering this policy. If approved, the GoM will scale up the scheme to cover all 28 districts in the country by 2012, reaching some 300,000 households with 910,000 children in them.

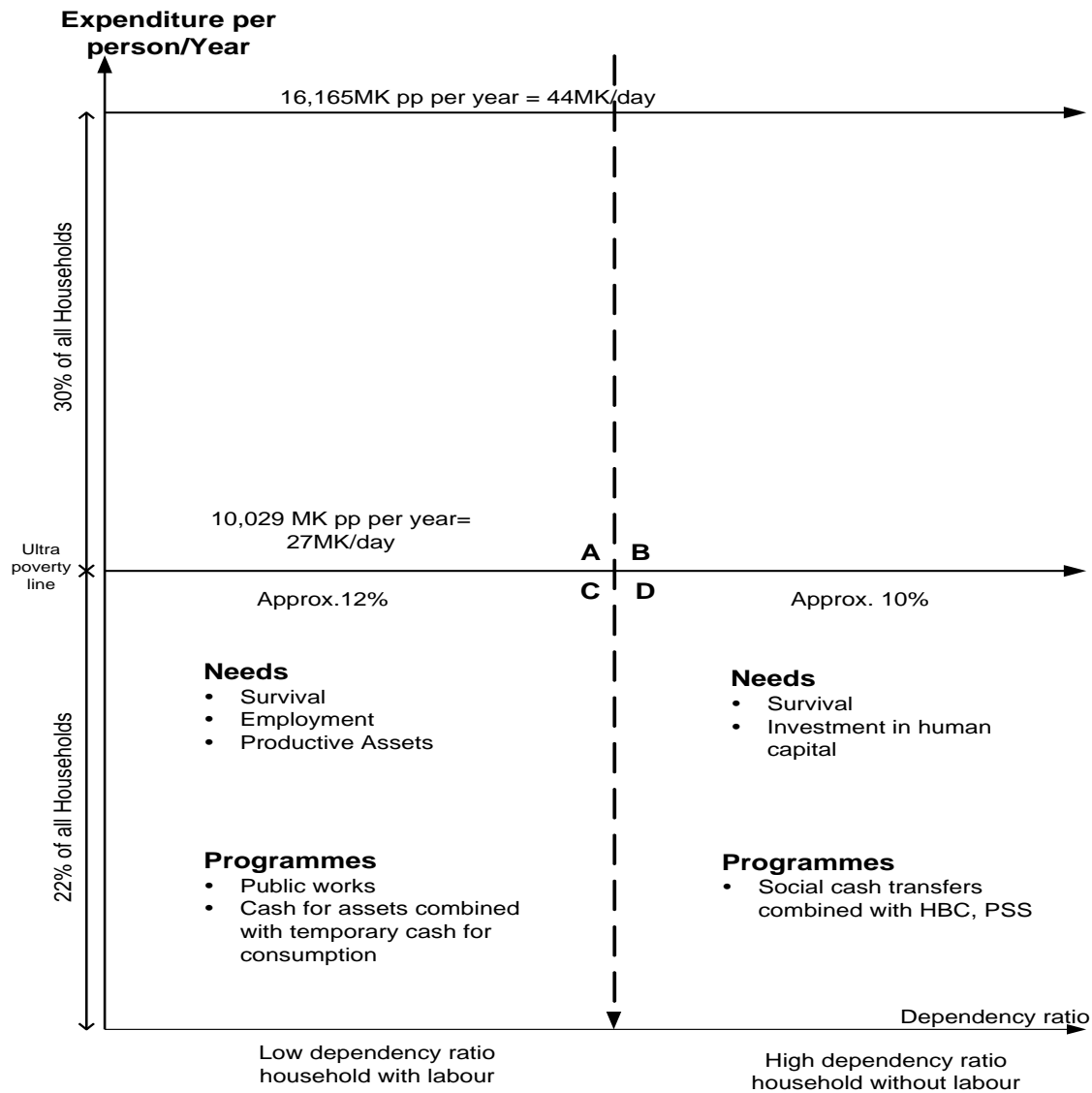
C. Eligibility/beneficiaries

Using a community based targeting approach, beneficiaries who meet BOTH of the following criteria:

- 1) Ultra poor: Beneficiaries must be living below the lowest expenditure quintile and below the national ultra poverty line, e.g. only one meal per day, no valuable assets.
- 2) Labour Constrained. A household is defined as labour-constrained when it has no able bodied household member in the age group 19-64 who is fit for work (for ex: elderly, child-headed, chronically ill, disabled,) or when a HH member who is fit for work but has a dependency ratio of more than 3.

The programme is targeted at the bottom 10 per cent, which according to the Integrated Household Survey 2005 represents the percentage of the population that is ultra poor and labour constrained.

Figure 1: Social Protection Matrix



The number of households eligible to participate in the scheme in each community (also called an enumeration area (EA)) is determined by taking 10 percent of the total number of households in the EA. The Community Social Protection Committee then identifies eligible households and ranks them according to need. The application of the 10 per cent rule at EA rather than district level has posed challenges for the programme. Poverty is not evenly distributed throughout the country nor within districts and the result of applying the 10 per cent rule at EA level has meant some eligible households have been left out of the scheme because they fall at the bottom of the community ranking and outside the total number of households in the EA eligible for support.

Malawi Country Report

In total, the programme is currently reaching 33,700 children, including 25,780 orphans and 160 child headed households.

Table 1: Beneficiaries as of 30 November 2008

District	Mchinji	Likoma	Machinga	Salima	Mangochi	Chitipa	Phalombe	Totals
Beneficiary Households	5,763	192	3,022	2,686	899	189	294	13,045
Elderly Headed Households	3,501	132	1,789	1,035	509	186	162	7,314
Child Headed Households	63	1	53	20	14	0	9	160
Individual Beneficiaries	22,941	773	13,553	7,792	4,273	814	1,244	51,410
Total Children	15,672	391	9,614	4,614	3,094	451	864	33,700
Orphans	12,005	369	6,897	3,896	1,943	313	357	25,780
Elderly	4,512	162	2,204	1,513	456	195	220	9,262
Disabled	590	52	227	133	57	37	22	1,118

D. Size of transfer

The size of the transfer is dependent upon the number of members in the household up to 4 people and is sufficient to fill the gap of US\$10 between the ultra poverty line of US\$46 (MK6,447) per month for a 5.8 person household and the average monthly expenditure of US\$36 (MK5,103) of households in the lowest income quintile.

Table 2: Size of Transfer

Number of HH Members	MK per month	USD per month
1	600	\$4
2	1,000	\$7
3	1,400	\$10
4+	1,800	\$13

Households with school going children are given a bonus of MK200 for each primary school student and MK400 for each secondary school going child.

The average cost per household per month is USD13; the average annual cost per household is USD156 plus 20 USD for operational costs.

E. Conditionality

There are no conditions on the transfer itself. The school going bonus, however, is conditional upon enrolment and attendance, both of which are officially monitored by Community Social Protection Committees and periodically verified by extension workers and district level staff.

F. Funding

The Mchinji pilot and scale up to six additional districts is being funded by the National AIDS Commission, which is the principal recipient for Malawi's Global Fund Round 5 grant and is also administering complementary funds from the Pool Fund, through which DFID, World Bank, CIDA and NORAD all contribute.

UNICEF has also provided both technical and financial assistance to the design, testing, monitoring and evaluation of the SCT. They also provide capacity development support to the government at both national and decentralised levels and act as a member of the Social Protection Steering and Technical Committees. There are no conditions on the transfer itself. The school going bonus, however, is conditional upon enrolment and attendance, both of which are officially monitored by Community Social Protection Committees and periodically verified by extension workers and district level staff.

G. Implementation

Community Social Protection Committees (CSPC) are established for each EA involved in the pilot. Members of the CSPC are volunteers⁴, chosen by the community through a community vote. They are responsible for identifying eligible households, visiting them to ensure they meet the criteria and then ranking them according to need. The list of beneficiaries is then shared with the community and the Village Development Committee (VDC)⁵ for further input before being finalised. The Traditional Chief, who does not participate in the selection process, then verifies that those on the list are actually members of his community, before the VDC sends it to the District.

Implementation of the scheme at the District level falls under the mandate of the District Assembly as part of Malawi's decentralisation process. A multi-sectoral Social Protection Sub-Committee (SPSC) is established in each district under the District Executive Committee, which reports to the District Assembly and is headed by the District Commissioner. The SPSC consists of representatives from the MoEPD, MoWCD, as well as other relevant line ministries, such as the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Local Government and NGO representatives. Daily implementation of the scheme is coordinated by the Social Welfare Officer, with the support of a Cash Transfer Desk Officer. A team of trainers is also selected, usually drawing from pre-existing trainers in other line ministries. They undergo intensive

⁴ While volunteers, CSPC members do receive between 800Kw and 1000Kw for helping on the day each month the cash is delivered to beneficiaries. They also share use of three bicycles and receive other additional items to enable them to carry out monitoring activities throughout the month.

⁵ The Village Development Committee is a pre-existing structure at local level tasked with overseeing and coordinating activities in the area. The CSPC, to our understanding, acts as a sub-committee of the VDC. There are also other sub-committees under the VDC, including on OVCs, Food Security, Nutrition, Education, Health and Agriculture.

Malawi Country Report

training at the start of the programme and are then responsible for training CSPCs, sensitising communities and periodically participating in monitoring activities.

The SPSC verifies the information submitted by the VDC by ensuring beneficiary profiles meet selection criteria before approving them for the scheme. Initially, this verification process was done solely based upon household profiles submitted by the CSPC. It is now accompanied by random visits to listed households to ensure the information on the profile is correct.

Once approved, money is disbursed monthly via the District Assembly out of a separate bank account that has been set up specifically for the scheme. Vouchers are prepared at the district office and then taken, along with the cash and police officers, to each EA, where beneficiaries are fingerprinted for verification purposes before receiving their payment.

Timely disbursement of funds has been a challenge for the programme, in part due to the financing mechanism. NAC, who funds the scheme, transfers money to the District Assembly, only after they have established separate bank accounts. NAC also works quite slowly and in several of the districts, disbursements from NAC have been significantly delayed, thus resulting in up to two month delays in the delivery of the cash to beneficiaries. Repeated power outages also create delays, as they prevent the District Cash Transfer Officer from printing the vouchers, without which, the cash cannot be delivered.

At the national level, the Department of Poverty Reduction and Social Protection within the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development (MoEPD) provides oversight to the pilot, as well as coordinating the various technical assistance needed. The Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD) is the implementing agent and Reagan Kaluluma, Programme Manager, is responsible for overseeing day-to-day delivery of the scheme in the Social Cash Transfer Secretariat.

H. Monitoring and Evaluation

During selection, basic information about each household is collected, including the size of the household, the number of children, the status of the household head, i.e. why they are labour constrained, and their living conditions.

After selection, regular monitoring for the programme is done by the CSPC, the SPSC and extension workers on the ground in communities. Households are periodically visited to verify their conditions have not changed, as well as to establish how they are doing and what challenges they may still be facing. This information is then fed back and when necessary, action is taken. For those who receive the Child Bonus, the CSPC regularly checks attendance records to ensure they are still attending school.

Of note, the programme has worked extensively to try to build linkages with other programmes and this is evidenced by the OVC bursary for secondary school students. The CSPC visits eligible households and provides them with the necessary information on how to apply. When decisions are made at district level, those already on the transfer are given priority as most needy.

Joint SCUK/UNICEF Study

A baseline and rigorous external evaluation was carried out in Mchinji in the first set of EAs to receive the transfer. The initial baseline took place in March 2006, and included a mid-project evaluation in March 2007 and a final evaluation in March 2008. Boston University and the Centre for Social Research in Malawi conducted the study, with funding from UNICEF, and measured both design and process indicators, as well as impacts on households and children. 800 households were followed, 400 of whom were receiving the transfer. Using quantitative and qualitative methods, the study covered the following areas:

- Migration (inward and outward among adults and children)
- Health and hygiene (anthropometry, perceptions of health status, recent illnesses, health care seeking, health care expenditures)
- Education (enrolment, attendance, perceptions of performance, verification of enrolment)
- Child work and other activities
- Nutrition and Food Consumption (food security, satisfaction with consumption, food diversity, intake of complex proteins, food stores)
- Asset Ownership (basic necessities, durable goods, productive assets, livestock)
- Housing quality
- Household expenditures and use of cash transfer (food, assets, health, education, and other items)
- Household shocks (experience of shocks, loss of income, and children leaving school due to shocks)
- Well being and impact of cash transfer (only for recipients)
- Decisions about spending cash transfers (only for recipients)
- Jealousy and conflict in communities

Although the intention from the outset was to have created a true counterfactual, inconsistencies in targeting resulted in this not happening. Intervention and comparison households were not demographically identical at baseline because CSPCs in comparison VDCs prioritised elderly households, while those in intervention VDCs selected households with more children. In terms of monthly expenditures, food insecurity and asset ownership, though, households were statistically the same at baseline.

Subsequent scale up in new EAs and districts has not included a baseline nor are there currently plans for evaluations in these areas. In February 2009, though, a “stock take” occurred. A team, consisting of a three representatives from MoEPD, MoWCD and UNICEF, visited each of the districts, meeting with the Social Welfare Officer, Cash Transfer Officer and a randomly selected CSPC to assess progress and challenges.

V. Policy Context: SWOT Analysis

- **Strengths:** A broad and comprehensive draft Social Support policy, now pending final approval, offers a framework for integrated approaches to social protection in a holistic sense. Multiple stakeholders have contributed to the development of the policy and are eager to move forward. A number of social

Malawi Country Report

protection programmes, including the pilot cash transfer scheme, public works programmes, agricultural input subsidies, and food aid, have been running for a number of years, with structures set up to support them and studies and analyses yielding a rich information base upon which to draw lessons for improvement. In relation to the SCT pilot in particular, an evaluation demonstrated its clear positive impact on beneficiaries and serves as a good basis for further evaluation of scaled up districts with tools that could easily be adapted for that purpose. National research capacity is also available, with support, for carrying out further studies.

- **Weaknesses.** Current debates and questions around targeting (categorical vs means-tested), the affordability and sustainability of multiple programmes and support systems (ARV programme; fertilizer subsidies, massive public works schemes, and others), capacity gaps in coordination, implementation, monitoring and evaluation (at both national and district level); and the choice of social protection instruments (e.g. universal pension versus a targeted transfer) have contributed to a real sense of confusion in the policy arena, coupled with caution on the part of the government on moving forward until the confusion is cleared up. However, the weakness of the data base on household poverty levels and lack of clear comparative costings of alternative options, coupled with weak M&E systems and lack of coordination, renders objective clarification of some of these issues difficult. In relation to the SCT pilot in particular, the commissioned evaluation indicated a number of areas for further capacity development and improvement in implementation and monitoring, and there are continuing questions about the targeting procedures and parameters, as well as potential 'graduation' of beneficiaries to the scheme and choice of instrument. In relation to the research specifically, a lack of baselines in the six scaled up districts of the pilot impedes efforts to expand the evidence and poses challenges to any sort of before and after impact assessment. This also means that the primary evidence base is drawn exclusively from a small population within the initial one pilot district, which benefited from a larger degree of technical and financial assistance than would be possible in a scale up.

Opportunities: The planned research, which aims at bringing evidence to bear on policy decisions and programme design, could usefully contribute to current national processes of reflection and debate, and could be designed in such a way as to contribute to the intended national monitoring of social support as a whole. It could thus respond well to the requirements of the draft Policy which states that "*Social Support must be based on evidence and analysis of who needs what type of assistance, when, for how long, where and why, and the impact it would have on peoples' lives and livelihoods. Social Support programmes should be designed based on peoples' needs and not by instruments and should include an analysis of the effectiveness of alternative interventions*"⁶. The baseline for the initial pilot in Mchinji also offers an opportunity for an eight year longitudinal study that could possibly provide insights into emerging intergenerational effects.

⁶ Draft Social Support Policy of the Government of Malawi (November 2008)

- **Threats:** The potential for social transfers to be used as political instruments by government and Malawi's history in this regard means there may be particular sensitivities around social transfers in this election year. This has also contributed to the delay of the finalization of the Social Support Policy, which is a necessary condition to any scale up of the SCT. Concerns on the part of the government and some development partners about the combined affordability and sustainability of multiple interventions may further impede movement forward. In addition to final approval of the Social Support Policy, further programme development and/or expansion is contingent upon endorsement of the programme itself and there still seems to be some government hesitation in this regard. In relation to the SCT pilot in particular, delays in finalization of the policy impede planned scale-up and will jeopardize funding of both pilot and the planned scale up (GAVI funding dependent on government policy approval and commitment); in that case, the parameters of the study would need to be re-thought.

VI. Key Stakeholders for Social Protection

A. Multi-sectoral stakeholder structures coordinated by Government

The **Ministry of Economic Planning & Development** is designated as the coordinating agency and secretariat for the National Social Support Programme (NSPP). In this role, the Ministry will work to harmonise the implementation of the policy and programme with the **Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development** through the establishment of integrated institutions at the District Assembly and community levels. The **National Social Support Steering Committee** (NSSSC) comprising principal secretaries from the key line ministries, heads of missions for the development partner institutions, and civil society (CONGOMA) will be responsible for matters of policy and resource mobilization. The NSSSC is chaired by the Chief Secretary to the President and Cabinet and draws together all of the key stakeholders. The **National Social Support Technical Committee** (NSSTC), chaired by the Secretary for Economic Planning and Development, is comprised of all directors and will be responsible for providing technical direction and recommendations on programme implementation. It includes development partners and NGOs (see annex x for full listing of members and institutional structure).

At district level, the **District Assemblies** will be responsible for coordinating and implementing social support activities at the district level, together with Civil Society Organisations. The District Assemblies will therefore, coordinate all the implementing partners including government sectors and the civil society. At the local level, **Area Development Committees** (ADC) and **Village Development Committees** (VDC) will work with Community Social Support Committees to oversee targeting and implementation of social support activities. It is expected that ADCs and VDCs will form Social Support Subcommittees.

B. Participation of development partners and NGOs

According to the draft social support policy, a number of development partners will participate as members of the steering committee (**World Bank, DFID, UNICEF**) and technical committees (**World Bank, DFID, UNICEF, WFP**). **NGOs** will also be active on

Malawi Country Report

both steering committee (through the Non-Governmental Organization of Malawi) and the technical committee (CONGOMA, as well as representatives from such NGOs as the Elderly People Association, the Network of Organisations working with Vulnerable and Orphaned Children (NOVOC), the NGO Gender Network, the Centre for Social Research (CSR), the National AIDS Commission (NAC), Action Aid, OXFAM, and Plan Malawi. Other development partners, such as EU, Irish Aid and others are also interested stakeholders. A number of partners are implementing complementary initiatives, such as CARE support for village savings and loans, while Save the Children is interested in the information needs and systems around social protection.

C. Local communities

Local communities are, of course, the primary stakeholders in social protection: it will be important to seek ways to meaningful participation in programme planning, implementation and review, including around issues of participatory poverty assessment and targeting.

VII. Current and Potential Research Partners

- **Centre for Social Research (CSR)**

CSR is the research arm of the Faculty of Social Sciences. They conduct different kinds of studies including: 1) socio-cultural aspects of public health; 2) design of large scale surveys at national and/or district level, through a team of statisticians; 3) democracy and governance (though they are currently lacking a staff member to run this programme); 4) environmental management and community management of natural resources (the head of this programme is currently studying abroad but will be back in July 09); and 5) poverty and sustainable livelihoods, run by the researcher who was directly involved in the evaluation of the Mchinji pilot (currently in the UK doing graduate work). CSR was initially formed through support from UNICEF and has now been around for 30 years, working with different institutions and with universities throughout the world, making somewhat of a name for themselves (see list of some 350 research publications in annex). They take on two kinds of studies – some initiated from themselves, and others proposed by partners. All contracts go through the director (see rates in annex). The Centre is somewhat under-staffed at the moment: normally, there are around 10 researchers, but they are currently down to about 4 or 5. With support staff, the centre totals about 22-23. CSR participates in regional networks, such as the African Population and Health network based in Nairobi.

- **Chancellor's College, University of Malawi**

A number of relevant social research projects and activities have been or are being undertaken by professors at the university, particularly in the Faculty of Social Sciences (Political Science and Sociology). Topics include 1) the politics of policy processes around social protection, mapping out the key policy stakeholders and their interaction (see IDS website for future agricultures for a report on findings), and 2) work supported by DFID on methodologies of stratifying rural populations for a re-targeting of the fertilizer subsidies based on a 3-part grouping: a) food secure, who can live from harvest to harvest; b) food insecure, who can live only for 6 months from harvest ; and c) extremely food insecure, who are in trouble from the start. There was also involvement in the initial stages of the design of the Mchinji SCT pilot as well as participation in the

Evidence for Development evaluation of the SCT pilot in Machinga which applied the IHM (Individual Household Model) methodology, derived from the Household Economy Assessment (HEA) approach. The IHM project still underway, based at Zomba, with the aim of linking with the Mathematics Dept to make this an 'open source' tool so that investigators can plug in different parameters/variables to test different results. MVAC - supported by DFID through Save the Children - is also experimenting with this methodology as a means of combining qualitative and quantitative measures of vulnerability MVAC officers have been trained in the methodology through the project based in Zomba and trying to train others as a tool for poverty analysis.

There used to be a university research coordinator at the university, but now they just have a research and publication committee. University staff can participate in externally commissioned research as individuals or through institutional contract through a particular department or the university. The structures are quite loose in this sense. There are connections between the University and the Centre for Social Research, but mostly through the sociology department: if collaboration is sought, it is best to build it directly into a study's TORs. UNICEF is one of the major DPs supporting research, but others do as well. In terms of qualitative research, it was suggested that we contact Pauline Peters (Kennedy School, Harvard University) who has linked with Bunda College of Agriculture. Malawi is part of the African economic Research Consortium.

- **National Statistical Office (NSO)**

The NSO is responsible for large scale national surveys, such as the Population Census, the Integrated Household Survey (IHS); the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS); the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS); and the Welfare Monitoring Survey (WMS) among others. They are also working on the Malawi Social and Economic data base (MASEDA), with UNICEF and UNDP support. Some available data and indicators go down to district level and there are efforts underway to strengthen district level M&E. Community monitoring is also being piloted by the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development – trying to get communities to report on programmes as well as vital registration, etc. NSO staff are involved in the UNICEF-supported Child Poverty Analysis and have participated in baseline data collection for the Mchinji CST pilot, linking up with indicators from the earlier IHS. An opportunity currently exists for stakeholders to influence the design/customization of the questionnaire for the upcoming (2009) Integrated Household Survey: NSO has called for a meeting with DPs to present the budget/proposal. This would be important to consider in terms of baseline data collection needs for potential SCT programme scale-up.

- **Institute for Policy Research and Economy**

The Institute engages on policy advocacy and advice as well as policy gap analysis, with the aim of contributing to broader participation in policy formulation and debate, including through use of the media. The Board of the Institute includes 8 research fellows, attached to the University and engaged in research on social policy issues. Disciplines include development studies, economics, demography, health geography, law, and sociology The Institute is a member of the national Social Protection Technical Committee, representing other civil society organizations. It has been active in dissemination of information about the Government/UNICEF SCT.

VIII. Proposed Research Framework for the Country

A. Potential Key Questions

- Scale-up timeline/decisions and baseline needs
- Targeting/re-targeting
- Linkages
- Delivery mechanisms
- Household/individual patterns and impacts (tying in as well to graduation)
- Social cohesion issues
- Graduation
- Sustainability and scalability

B. Information already collected and useable

Primary data on the SCT pilot programme itself:

- Evaluation of programme design, impact and operations, conducted by BU (Cite Candace Miller et al, 2008);
- Various reports by Bernd Schubert on programme design and pilot implementation and monitoring (2006-7);
- Estimation of the 'multiplier' effects of the transfer programme (Davies, 2008);
- Analysis by Seaman et al (2008) of the impact on household income and welfare of the pilot social cash transfer and agricultural input subsidy programmes, using the Individual Household Measure (IHM) derived from the Household Economic Assessment (HEA) methodology;
- Regular government monitoring tools (district and national);
- Reports for NAC
- Sectoral administrative records (education and health) and nutrition monitoring, though these are all apparently weak and more exploration would be needed as to their utility.

Secondary information and broader social surveys:

- A rich database on key child rights and wellbeing indicators is available in the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) (the largest nationally representative sample survey conducted by NSO covering a total of 31,200 households – 1,200 households per district);
- Other national surveys include the 2005 Integrated Household Survey (IHS); the annual Welfare Monitoring Survey; the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) planned in 2009; regular Malawi Poverty and Vulnerability Assessments conducted by the Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee (MVAC)
- Reports, studies and evaluations of other transfer programmes in the country, including MASAF, public works, agricultural subsidies

- Policy analysis on social protection (Chinzinga on IDS website) and a 2007 'stock-taking' on social protection by the World Bank (Malawi Social Protection Status Report)
- Social research (UCLA) on dynamics at the district level; other documents and analyses of decentralization processes, traditional authorities, etc.

C. Information that will need to be collected

Several decisions will need to be made both around the scope of the research and the questions to be answered. There are different types of research that could also be conducted, specifically baselines and/or more in-depth and/or comparative studies.

For baselines, there are several options:

- The Mchinji baseline in 2006 and subsequent evaluation in 2007 and 2008 provides a unique opportunity for longitudinal research. Participants from these communities could be followed as part of this study, potentially providing eight years of longitudinal data on a small set of households. This period is long enough to possibly start seeing intergenerational impacts.
- In the event that scale up goes forward, this study could provide a rigorous baseline and longitudinal evaluation in new districts. The baseline could utilise the Boston University/CSR evaluation in Mchinji, incorporating new or more rigorous elements in areas of most interest.⁷
- In the event that scale up does not go forward, the study could:
 - Re-create baselines in the six scaled up districts and then track impacts during the five years of this study.
 - Conduct baselines in areas of expansion within these six districts. The limiting factor in both this scenario and in re-creating baselines, is the difficulty in assessing changes in capacity of district structures at first scale up

For more in-depth and/or comparative studies, several potential options have arisen:

- An in-depth study of linkages and coordination at various levels within one or two districts: is there overlap? If so, where? How are the various social protection interventions targeting? How is the community identifying targeting?
- The potential use of banking as a pilot in one of the districts could provide a comparative study between the efficiencies/effectiveness of technology. It is not clear yet that this will take place, so we would need to follow on-going dialogue in the country.
- Also under discussion as a possible pilot is some type of Joint Social Support Coordination in one district where the transfer is running. The aim would be to try to coordinate the various Social Support initiatives to streamline targeting and prevent any potential overlap that exists. If this goes forward, it could provide an interesting opportunity to assess the pros and cons of such coordination and/or to compare efficiencies and effectiveness with another district where such joint action isn't taking place.

⁷ UNICEF is currently waiting to receive both the data set and the instruments from Boston University.

Malawi Country Report

- A comparison of SCT or SCT plus (i.e. OVC bursary, VSL, etc.) is also an option and could help disaggregate the impacts of various inputs going into a community.

Targeting remains an important issue in country and any research should have some element that focuses on this. In addition, it is important that children and the child focused nature of this study not be lost.

D. Potential options for collecting information

An opportunity currently exists for stakeholders to influence the design/customization of the questionnaire for the upcoming (2009) Integrated Household Survey: NSO has called for a meeting with DPs to present the budget/proposal. This would be important to consider in terms of baseline data collection needs for potential SCT programme scale-up.

Stakeholders felt there was significant scope for further research in country and felt that a research design that was as comprehensive as possible was preferable. Components that could not then be funded through the overall study budget could be fundraised for in country, using the structures put in place through the study.

The Boston University evaluation tools and data will be key to any longitudinal follow up in Mchinji, as well as to any comparative research in scaled up districts. Boston University has promised to turn over both to UNICEF, but has not yet done so. While it is clear the data belongs to UNICEF, it will be important to clarify intellectual rights over the tools used for the evaluation to ensure they are available for continued use by UNICEF.

If large scale data collection is part of the framework for Malawi, the use of PDAs to collect this data should be considered. The World Food Programme is nearing completion on an eight month pilot, comparing the use of cash v. food transfers and had great success with the use of PDAs for the survey. They have put the research team in touch with their Johannesburg office and would be a good first point of contact for a fuller costing in this area, as well as for advice on the pros and cons.

E. Frequency

Depending upon the start of the five year study and the subsequent scale up into new districts, data should be collected in new districts in years 0, 2, 4 with qualitative and analytical exercises in the intervening years, along with any complementary research funded in country. At least one follow up quantitative and qualitative study should take place in Mchinji (most likely in year 4 of this study), using the same instruments used in the Boston Evaluation study.

F. Comparability issues

There are no clear comparability issues in Malawi as long as the BU instruments and data available for use. Consideration should also be given to adapting the BU instrument for other countries in need of a baseline, which would provide some cross country comparability.

G. Knowledge Management

It should be clear from the beginning that the government owns any data collected and that any information collected as part of this study receive full government approval before being used. This is especially important given recent history in Malawi with international organisations and the Integrated Household Model study produced by Evidence for Investment. It will also be important to coordinate data collection with the variety of large scales surveys currently being run by the government, such as the DHS, MIX and IHS. There is great potential here to incorporate questions into these larger surveys, therefore creating larger comparable data pools.

IX. Proposed Framework for Implementation

A. Partnerships

Governance Structure

At national level, the research will be guided by a Research Task Team (RTT) that reports directly to the Social Support Technical Committee. The RTT will be responsible for following up on approval processes for the study, with the Social Support Technical Committee having the final approval.

The RTT will include key stakeholders from government, donors and civil society, including:

- Ministry of Economic Planning and Development
- Ministry of Women and Child Development
- Ministry of the Elderly and Disabled
- Ministry of Local Government
- IPRSE
- DFID
- UNICEF
- Save the Children
- Others as deemed necessary

Research Structure

The local research partner will be the Centre for Social Research, with provisions incorporated into the MoU and contract on collaboration with Chancellor College (Social Sciences Faculty) at the University of Malawi. For issues on statistical sampling and linkages with ongoing national surveys, collaboration with NSO should be foreseen.

As with other countries in this study, qualitative research skills are limited in country and a team of appropriately skilled researchers will need to be identified and supported with appropriate technical assistance.

Stakeholders feel that an in-country Research Coordinator will be essential to the management and implementation of this project. This person should be based in Lilongwe and have both strong technical and policy skills, as well as clear managerial capability. Further discussion is needed on where this person actually sits (i.e. which

Malawi Country Report

institution) and communication and transportation will need to be taken into consideration for budgeting purposes. A general ToR will need to be developed for countries with Research Coordinators, tailored to the specific needs of individual countries. Stakeholders also expressed a desire for clear job responsibilities to ensure that the position was in fact a full time position. To this end, one of the responsibilities of the Research Coordinator may be further in-country fundraising for additional elements of the research as and when they arise.

B. Human Resources

See above on Research Coordinator post.

C. Technical Gaps and Needs

International technical assistance will also be necessary to support some components of the research, especially for the qualitative elements.

With regards to quantitative, tools have already been designed and could be implemented in country with minimal support. The analysis and write up, however, may need external technical support; it would be ideal if this could be done as part of a joint effort aimed at building in country capacity.

Any specific analytical work would best be done by drawing upon international expertise and/or consultants in order to best utilise the current state of international debate and new methodologies. As above, though, it would be best to do this in collaboration with local researchers to build capacity.

D. Quality Assurance Measures (i.e. Training)

Regional level gathering and trainings for in-country staff will be important for the cohesion of the project and overall technical guidance.

In country, training will be needed for the following:

- Enumerator training
- Data collection, e.g.

It might be beneficial to foresee an initial orientation/training for the national research team members and their implementing partners (when chosen) to review the overall objectives of the project, outline the key data collection tools and methods, and provide guidance on some of the more technical aspects involved.

E. Costs

Costs were collected from the Centre for Social Research and are attached as Appendix X. A more comprehensive costing will be needed once the key questions have been identified and a fuller research framework developed. To provide context, the baseline in Mchinji cost approximately US\$250,000. (A further breakdown of the costs of this exercise are expected from UNICEF Malawi shortly.)

X. Ethical Considerations

- **Targeted vs Universal Approaches:** With almost half of the country below the poverty line, distinctions between 'poor' and 'poorest' have raised concerns by

some as to the ethics of targeting the 10% deemed ultra poor. Debate continues to swirl around the pros and cons of a universal elderly transfer and the SCT, especially amid concerns of the accuracy of the SCT targeting. Fears of disrupting social cohesion and creating tensions between the 'haves' and the 'have nots' also came strongly to the fore during field discussions and it was agreed that this was a significant aspect to be monitored in the course of project implementation.

- **Sustainability:** Sustainability remains a concern in country, especially with passage of the Social Support Policy stalled and thus continuation of the SCT in question. As with transfers in other countries, some have concerns about the ethics of transfers when it is unclear that government resources exist to continue funding if donors leave. In Malawi, this concern has led the GoM to express a desire to ensure it can fund the annual costs of a scaled up SCT, with donors only needed for the administrative costs associated with the first few years of scale up.
- **Research with Children:** Certain ethical considerations come to the fore in research in general – in terms of informed consent, confidentiality, and use of research results – which have particular ramifications in terms of research on and for children. Study planners and implementors will need to take care to conform to existing guidelines on research involving children and all pertinent ethical issues are taken into consideration.

XI. Evidence-Based Policy Translation: Getting Buy-In

Linking with national policy and policy monitoring progresses at the outset will greatly improve chances of research results being taken into consideration in policy formulation. The research in Malawi should therefore be designed in such a way as to contribute to the evolving thinking around social protection and to support both the policy options and monitoring component of the national Social Protection framework.

It is important that the findings from the study and its various components reach high level policy makers not just at the end point (after 5 years) but through periodic reviews of emerging findings along the way and the organization of policy discussion fora (both national and regional), which should be planned as an integral part of the study. A clear communications plan should be developed to guide all such efforts.

The monitoring and study of the cash transfer programmes themselves should also be accompanied by research and analytical work to support the government in its review of policy options through, for example, an analysis of fiscal space for social protection; a comparative cost-benefit assessment of universal benefits and targeted transfers; and other topics which might emerge as priorities through the course of the study and the implementation of national policy.

In Malawi, it will be especially important for the research to be seen as independent from UNICEF. To this end, it will be important for Government to lead dissemination of the evidence and for both CSR and Save to be actively engaged. The research should also aim to address the concerns of other stakeholders, especially those interested in the potential for universal approaches, either by factoring research on these areas directly into the study and/or creating on-going dialogue around the issues.

Malawi Country Report

Key recommendations arising from the above:

- Enlist representatives from policy making wings of government as members of the national research team/steering body from the outset
- Make use of existing fora for policy discussion and debate:
- Develop a communications plan: such a plan should aim at periodic dissemination of interim results and emerging issues through a variety of channels (media; policy briefs; national seminars, etc) rather than production of a single report at project's end
- Encourage experience and information exchange across the six countries involved in the study so that countries can learn from each other, including around issues of translating policy into action

XII. Outstanding Questions/Follow Up

- National policy and programme decisions linked to scale up will need to be confirmed.
- A National Task Team will need to be created under the auspices of the Social Support Technical Committee and a communication structure established.
- A decision will need to be taken on Save the Children's role in country. While Save UK is not currently present, Save the Children in country has already undergone Unified Presence, which leaves outstanding a question around their engagement with this project at national level.
- MoU and Scope of Work will need to be developed for CSR.
- JD for Research Coordinator and Timeline/Procedures for Hiring will need to be developed.
- A decision will need to be taken regarding where the Research Coordinator will sit and reporting structures.
- Once the research framework is finalised, a clearer costing will need to be done.
- UNICEF will need to obtain the data sets and instruments from BU for national ownership and adaptation for the project.
- Technical support will be needed in country and a decision will need to be made at the International level as to how that support is provided, as well as potential links with regional networks.
- It will be important to identify appropriate means and fora for collaborating with other participating countries, both in experience-sharing and use of common technical assistance.

XIII. Annexes

A. List of People Met

UNICEF

- Carrie Auer (Representative)
- Mayke Huijbregts (Chief, Social Policy)
- Regina , Marotto, Intern
- Chandra Sekhar, Chief Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
- Modibo Kassogue, Chief, Health
- Hanna Sinoya, Executive Assistant
- Mathias Jere and Heriv Mbera, Drivers

GOVERNMENT

Ministry of Women and Child Development

- Mrs. Hyacinth Kulemekka, Director of Child Development
- Mr. Enoch Bonongwe, Child Development Officer
- Mr. Reagan Kaluluma, Programme Manager, Social Cash Transfer Secretariat

Ministry of Economic Planning and Development

- Mr. Harry Mwamlima, Director of Social Protection and Poverty Reduction;
- Mr. Johannes Lebede, Technical Assistance, Basket Funding;
- Nelly Magelegele?
- Olex Mwati Kamowa, National Technical Advisor, Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee (MVAC)
- Mr. Kumwenda, MVAC

Ministry of Persons with Disabilities and the Elderly

- Mr. Felix Sapala, Director of Programme;
- Mr. Kilembe, Director of Administration (previously in Ministry of Women and Child Development)

Ministry of Education

- Dr. Augustine Kamlongera, Director for Education Planning

Ministry of Health and Population

- Mrs Tapiwa, Nutrition.

MASAF:

- Charles Mandala, Acting Executive Director

National Aids Commission

- Miriam Kaluwa, Policy Officer – Socio-Economic

NATIONAL RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS

Institute for Policy Research and Economy (Lilongwe)

- Mr. Chikadza

National Statistical Office (Zomba)

Malawi Country Report

- Simeon Yosefe, Maseda
- Sheldon Kamyanda (Poverty Monitoring).

University of Malawi, Chancellor College (Zomba)

- Dr. Ronald Mangani
- Dr. Blessings Chinsinga (met in Lilongwe):
- Dr. Patrick Kumbayawa, Faculty of Social Sciences, Political Science Dept.:

Centre for Social Research (Zomba)

- Alistair Monthali
- Professor Kichendro, Acting Director

DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

DFID

- Gwen Hines, **Head of Office**
- Mulle Chikoko, Assistant Policy Advisor, Social Development

USAID

- Mr. Mathew Barnhart

Irish Aid

- Mr. Pdraig Quigley (**title?**)

European Union

- Mr. Raniero Leto, First Secretary, Head of Section, Rural Development and Food Security
- Marika Uotila, Programme Manager, Rural Development and Food Security

WFP

- Niels Balzer, Programme Officer
- Dorothy (M&E) and Anthony

World Bank

- Mr. Hardwick Tchale, Agricultural Economist

INTERNATIONAL NGOS

Care International

- Mr Paul Msoma, Policy Analysis (*also part of University research board of the Institute for Policy Research and Economy*)

Concern Worldwide

- Mr. A.K.M. Musha, Country Director

Save the Children:

- Mr. Paul McCartney, Country Director

FIELD VISITS

Mchinji

District level: Blessings Nkoma, Head of Planning and Development, and Chairperson of the District Team, and Immanuel Sohay, M&E officer
Changhanka village :CSPC members and beneficiaries

Joint SCUK/UNICEF Study

Machinga

District level: Mr. Josam Kampapa, District Cash Transfer Officer and Berthe,
District Welfare Office

Saidi Mataka Village Cluster: CSPC beneficiaries

B. Details of site visits

1) Mchinji

Met with Blessings Nkoma, Head of Planning and Development, and Chairperson of the District Team, and Immanuel Sohay, M&E officer at district level. (We did not meet with the DC because he was occupied with political processes linked to upcoming elections). Also met with CSPC members and beneficiaries in the village of Changhanka.

Discussions at district office:

- **Background and programme structure:** Mchinji is the first government project of this sort in Malawi. Other districts are now coming to visit and learn from them. Of the total of 114,000 households in the district overall, some 9,000 are covered by the programme (check this). The District Team is a sub-set of the District Executive Committee including members of different sectors, planning, M&E, the social welfare officer and the community development officer chaired by the Division of Planning. The Social Cash Transfer Secretariat is in the office of Social Welfare, headed by the Division of Social Welfare: it includes the desk officer and social welfare assistants and works as well with trainers (members from all other sectors, including education and health).
- **Targeting and selection:** Community-based targeting is the norm for programmes at community level (including the fertilizer subsidies and others): in some programmes CBOs do this; in others it is done by the Village Development Committees (VDCs) or others. For the selection of beneficiaries for the CT programme, the Community Social Protection Committee (CSPC) – made up of 12 people, both men and women - do the household listing/interviews, then the social welfare extension worker cross-checks and households are visited for verification. Cross-checking includes review by the traditional leaders and village development committee members to see if all are eligible or if there are others who have been left out. It was noted that to operate well, the team needs information/data from the households: the district team is considering doing a full household listing/survey, which had not been done prior to the design and implementation of the programme. The BU evaluation had raised a number of questions on the challenges involved in the process and, as our district hosts expressed it, ‘really opened our eyes’. It was recognized that there may be some shortfalls to the necessarily ‘subjective’ community-based targeting of beneficiaries – even though it was made as transparent as possible - which might benefit from more ‘objective’ socio-economic data from a household listing/survey. This was one of the recommendations of the evaluation which will apparently be taken up in the roll-out to new households. CSPC members do get training on selection procedures and what to look for in terms of households who are ‘ultra-poor’ and ‘labour-constrained’, but understandings of these categories may not always be clear, and at village level, where the situation is fluid, it is not always easy to distinguish and may differ from one village to another. It was also recognized that sometimes, when programme planning processes are involved, villagers might inflate figures (and, in the case of

the CT programme, households may ‘import’ children.) The 10% limit for eligibility for the programme is also somewhat problematic, as some villages might have more or less than 10% of households who are ‘ultra-poor’; on the other hand, it does make planning easier and the alternative, by which some villages benefitted more than others might be difficult to deal with. The M&E officer said that at the moment, eligible households who have been excluded from the programme because of the 10% limit are consoled with the idea that retargeting will take place at some point. There may be some social tensions that arise because of these exclusion issues, but it was felt that once households understand the reason for the 10% cut-off, this was dissipated. Our district hosts noted that it would be good to find a way to link the community-based targeting with clear socio-economic data. We discussed the potential of working from the poverty profiles compiled at district level – it is not clear what degree of disaggregation is available. There is no vital registration system, but it was noted that information from the 2009 Census will be helpful in rounding out the information base on households and communities in the district.

- **M&E:** The district team is developing and M&E plan. Sector M&E officers submit administrative data to the District M&E officer who compiles it for the district as a whole. For the CT programme, there are regular reporting processes – including quarterly M&E reports and on-site monitoring through interviews with a sample of beneficiaries. They also record exceptional stories of how households/individuals have benefited. The CSPC members monitor school enrolment for children who receive the educational stipend: but it is not clear what happens if they find attendance is not kept up.
- **Graduation/sustainability:** According to our district hosts, it is not clear whether graduation will be possible for all households – each is different and there may be not one size fits all. There would need to be a way to ensure that households are able to invest some of the transfers received, but is the amount of transfer enough to do so? No one really knows: some people say it is too low: it had been set in part in relation to what civil service pensioners were getting at the time – 700+: but now the latter has been raised to 1,200. Sustainability of the programme overall is a big issue and must be taken up by the government. Before scaling up, operational costs were 5% of the total; now, with the intensification of activity in scaling up, they have risen to 15% (extra fuel costs, particularly) but will drop back down again when it is only monthly deliveries.
- **Other implementation questions:** Some argue that the programme should be implemented by NGOs – not directly by the Government. Issues of capacity are raised, along with political dimensions and the amount of money spent on operations. Our district hosts, however, disagreed, as at least the government salaries are already being paid, whereas with NGOs, this would be a big overhead. Also, NGOs have different methods of targeting. For government to effectively implement the programme, they argued, they need more staff, with dedicated time.

Malawi Country Report

Site visit to Chankhanga, about ½ hour from town. There was supposed to have been a cash transfer on the day that we visited; however, due to electricity cuts, the district had been unable to print out the vouchers and perform the necessary accounting operations, so this had to be post-poned. When we arrived in the village in the afternoon, the recipients (at least 50/60 women and some 20 men in all – we were told there were some 134 beneficiary households in all) were waiting there for the transfer, but were informed of the situation by the district M&E officer who accompanied us. Most of them then went home, but a few were asked to stay, along with the 12 CSPC members, for short discussions with us.

- The **SCPC members** (who were all proudly wearing their SCT tee-shirts) informed us that they had been selected for their participation because they were unbiased, trustworthy, and without relatives involved in the scheme. Some belong to other committees as well. The chairperson, for example, was also chair of the CBO committee, which is apparently also supported through a grant from NAC focusing on schooling for orphans. We asked the SCPC if it was difficult for them to select beneficiaries for the programme. They answered yes, because there were often more than 10% of the population who qualified; this had to be explained to the villagers by the chief so that all understood. In terms of time spent on committee work; they reported meeting with beneficiaries at least 2 days a month to talk about problems, etc. as well as a once a month committee meeting and assistance with the cash transfer itself (it was not clear whether this was counted as one of the days of meeting). They said that transportation was a problem for them as distances to residential areas were long (3-4 kilometres) (apparently bicycles have been ordered for the committee, but they have not yet been delivered) ; the committee members also requested gum-boots and umbrellas for visits conducted during the rainy season.
- **Problems raised by beneficiaries** included issues with the size of the transfer, which one woman said was not enough to cover secondary school (a discussion ensued about procedures that needed to be followed for vulnerable children to apply for the OVC secondary school bursary/grant, which was part of another programme. There seems to be some confusion/uncertain communication about this, raising the importance of ensuring strong linkages between one programme and another). Another elderly man said the size of the transfer was fine for him, but pleaded that it be expanded to others, as those who have not benefited come to him saying they have problems too, so he shares his grant with them. Others noted that at harvest time, the CT amount is enough, but at other times (like now) it is difficult. When asked how the transfer had helped them, some said they were now able to send their children to school; one said it enabled her to withdraw from piece-work. The child head of household said that his younger brothers and sisters could now go to school. Some beneficiaries noted that they had been able to invest a little (one woman buys flour and cooks little cakes for sale but did not indicate that she was making much income from this); others said they had bought livestock or fixed their houses, but most said they are not really able to save. When asked if they envisioned needing this money forever, the reply was that they would continue to need help as long as they had young children who needed schooling.

2. Machinga

Met with Mr. Josam Kampapa, District Cash Transfer Officer for discussions, and were introduced to Berthe, District Welfare Office. (We did not meet with the DC because he was occupied with political processes linked to upcoming elections) District programme implementers informed us that out of the total 14 Traditional Authorities' in the District, the cash transfer programme initially covered 3 (with 3,222 beneficiary households (or individuals?) which is 10% of the population?), and has now (in new phase of funding) scaled up to 2 more. Overall population in Machinga is around 400,000. (Need to check these figures).

Discussions at district level: *Mr. Josam Kampapa.*

- ***On monitoring, evaluation and assessment:*** Form 1 collects information on households selected to participate in the programme. Can use this as a baseline, and an ongoing monitoring tool, as community reports what they gain from the programme. For the study of Machinga – the information was collected by the researchers, but was not discussed/verified with them.
- ***On programme implementation and impact:*** Communities are investing – in goats, small businesses, etc. Will graduation be possible? There is supposed to be a retargeting exercise, but the decision on when and how has not been taken at central level. Certainly there will not be any 'graduation' for some categories – like the elderly.....
- ***On other programmes at community level:*** The district executive committee consists of all heads of department and NGOs – they have info on some programmes in the district but not others. There are different committees for each programme, but obviously, with so many programmes, there is some overlapping membership. The following are some of the committees that exist: OVC; Health; forest; water; nutrition; community-based child care; social protection. There is an overarching structure for CBOs in the district. Extension workers based at community level include health extension workers, agricultural extension workers, child protection workers (linked to Social Welfare) and with ties to the CSPC. The OVC committee makes assessment of eligible families for the secondary school bursary, which then comes through the Social welfare office. There is some collaboration at field level between the different sectors; for example, when CT recipients receive their grant, they are given a talk on different topics – health extension workers, for example, may tell them about where to purchase low-cost mosquito nets, etc. CSPC workers receive compensation of 1,250 on the day of distribution.

Site Visit to Saidi Mataka Village Cluster (population 2,000?)

We met up in the field with the Government/UNICEF team conducting the 'stocking-exercise' in all districts where the Cash transfer programme is underway, and participated with them in their encounter with members of the Community Social Protection Committee (CSPC) (12 men and 12 women). According to the CSPC volunteers,

Malawi Country Report

beneficiaries are complaining about the amount of transfer (600 kwacha is only about 2-3 dollars) and about the periodicity (would prefer monthly payments). They also note that only 101 households are receiving transfers, even though they have identified over 300 who need it - with the potential figure as high as 600. The beneficiaries also need extra money for school fees (there is some gap, apparently, in the stipends available for OVCs; and it is suggested that child-headed households need food (they do not get enough from the cash transfer for both food and school-related expenses). The CSPC volunteers themselves are asking for allowances, uniforms?, refresher training, bags to carry their binders and record books, and money for the repair of the 3 bicycles that were given to them. They also noted that the district staff is not informing the committee members when the transfers are late. The stock-taking team agreed that delays in payment were a challenge and that communications need to be strengthened, also that these issues would be taken into consideration.

C. Key documents and references

On the Government/UNICEF Cash Transfer Pilot:

Annex 4: Machinga - NAC Proposal (*Annex to what?*)

Annex 6. Logical Framework, Schedule of Activities, Budget and Institutional Framework of the Likoma Pilot Social Cash Transfer Scheme . Results of a Planning Workshop conducted by Officers of the Department of Poverty and Disaster Management Affairs, the Ministry of Women and Child Development, the Likoma District Assembly and UNICEF on 12-14 May 2007

Auer, Carrie, Representative, UNICEF Malawi (2009) 'Malawi: The Malawi Experience: Social cash Transfers and Their Impact on Children health and Nutrition' AARM presentation, Johannesburg, 14 January.

Davies, Simon and James Davey (2008) 'A Regional Multiplier Approach to Estimating the Impact of Cash Transfers on the Market: The Case of Cash Transfers in Rural Malawi', Development Policy Review, 2008, 26 (1): 91-111

Government of Malawi, Unicef. Q&A The Malawi Social Cash Transfer Pilot.

Huijbregts, Mayke and Bernd Schubert (2006) 'The Malawi Social Cash Transfer Programme: Preliminary Lessons Learned'. Paper presented at the conference on Social Protection for Children and Families: An Analysis of Recent Experiences'. New York (October)

Institutional Framework for the Social Cash Transfer Scheme (one-page handout)

Miller, Candace (2006) 'Scope of Work: Evaluation of the Mchinji Social Cash Transfer Pilot in Malawi, Boston University (BU) and UNICEF Malawi. December 13.

Miller, Candace, Maxton Tsoka, Kathryn Reichert (2008) 'Impact Evaluation Report: External Evaluation of the Mchinji Social Cash Transfer Pilot'. Boston University, UNICEF, USAID. (August)

Miller, Candace, Maxton Tsoka, Kathryn Reichert (2008) 'Operations Report: External Evaluation of the Mchinji Social Cash Transfer Pilot. . Boston University, UNICEF, USAID. (August)

Miller, Candace, Maxton Tsoka, Kathryn Reichert (2008) 'Targeting Report: External Evaluation of the Mchinji Social Cash Transfer Pilot'. Boston University, UNICEF, USAID. (August)

Miller, Candace, Maxton Tsoka, Kathryn Reichert (2008) 'Executive Summary: External Evaluation of the Mchinji Social Cash Transfer Pilot'. Boston University, UNICEF, USAID. (August)

Miller, Candace. Evaluation Survey Instrument for Round 1.

Project Profile: Social Cash Transfer Pilot, Malawi, May 2007

Responsible Officers for the Social Cash Transfer Scheme Contact Information (Information sheet)

Schubert, Bernd (2007) *Manual of Operations for the Malawi Pilot Social Cash Transfer Scheme*. Lilongwe, August. (This edition includes lessons learned from piloting the scheme in

Malawi Country Report

Mchinji District since September 2006 and was to be used for piloting in six additional districts). (Check if there is any updated version)

Schubert, Bernd (2006) 'Designing a Pilot Social Cash Transfer Scheme for Malawi (Third and final Report – 1 August to 15 September 2006)' Report on a Consultancy for the Malawi Social Protection Steering Committee financed by UNICEF. Lilongwe, September.

Schubert, Bernd (2006) 'Designing a Social Cash Transfer Scheme for Malawi, Second Report of Malawi's Government Operations Research (24 May to 20 June)'. Research supported by UNICEF&MASAF, Lilongwe, June.

Schubert, Bernd (2007) 'Update on Piloting the Scale up of the Malawi Social Cash Transfer Scheme (Sixth Report – November/December 2007). December

Schubert, Bernd and Patrick Kambewa (2006) 'Designing a Pilot Social Cash Transfer Scheme for Malawi, First Report'. Lilongwe: Consultants for UNICEF and MASAF. (May)

Schubert, Bernd (2007) 'Piloting the Scale Up of the Malawi Social Cash Transfer Scheme (Fifth Report – January to June 2007). Report on a Consultancy Financed by UNICEF. Lilongwe, June.

Seaman, John, Celia Petty and Patrick Kambewa, "The Impact on Household Income and Welfare of the pilot Social Cash Transfer and Agricultural Input Subsidy Programmes in Mlomba TA, Machinga District, Malawi" (June 2008).

Social Cash Transfer Scheme Monthly Update, August 31 2008 (Monitoring Report)

Social cash Transfer Scheme Summaries (n.d.)

Social Grant for Malawi (undated briefing paper)

Terms of Reference for Technical Assistance in support of scaling up the social cash transfer pilot scheme, 9 December 2006 until 15 December 2007

UNICEF Malawi (2009) *Telling their Stories: The Direct Impact of Cash Transfers on the Ultra Poor in Malawi* (December).

Various press articles

Wahenga. Regional Hunger and Vulnerability Programme. 'One Out of Ten: Social Cash Transfer Pilots in Malawi and Zambia' 20 November 2008 .

Website: <http://www.socialcashtransfers-Malawi.org>

On Other CashTransfer Schemes in Malawi:

Concern Worldwide (n.d.) 'Cash transfers: An Innovative and Context-Specific Response to Food Crises'.

Concern Worldwide (n.d.) 'Food and Cash Transfers: A New Approach to Predictable Food Crises'.

Davies, Simon (n.d.) 'A Multiplier Approach to Estimating the Market Impact of Cash Transfers'.

Davies, Simon (n.d.) 'Making the Most of It: A Regional Multiplier Approach to Estimating the Impact of Cash Transfers on the Market' Malawi: Concern Worldwide.

Joint SCUK/UNICEF Study

- Devereux, Stephen (2008) *Innovations in the Design and Delivery of Social Transfers: Lessons Learned from Malawi*. IDS, Concern World Wide. University of Sussex, UK: Centre for Social Protection, Institute of Development Studies. (June).
- Devereux, Stephen, Peter Mvula, and Collette Solomon (2008) 'After the Fact: An Evaluation of Concern Worldwide's Food and Cash Transfers Project in Three Districts of Malawi, 2006'.
- Kamlongera, Christopher, ed. (2007) *Challenges in Promoting Community Driven Development: Some Learning Experiences from Malawi Social Action Fund*. Lilongwe, Malawi; MASAF.
- MASAF (2009) Draft Public Works Sub-Project: MASAF 3 APL2 LDF Mechanism Implementation Guidelines (January)
- MASAF (2008) *Community Empowerment and Development: Trainers' Notes and Guide for Field Facilitation*. Lilongwe, Malawi Social Action Fund.
- MASAF (2006) *The Quiet Revolution: Malawi Social Action Fund 1996-2005*. Lilongwe, Malawi: MASAF.
- WFP Malawi (2008) Special Brief: Cash and Food for Livelihoods Pilot Project,
- White, Philip (2006). 'Cost comparison of cash, food and agricultural input transfer schemes in Malawi and Zambia: Summary of Conclusions' (30 January)
- World Bank, The (2008) *Project Appraisal Document for a Malawi Third Social Action Fund (MASAF 3) APL II (IDF Mechanism) Project*. Report no 43116-MW.
- On Social Protection Policy, Programmes and Social Situation in Malawi***
- Draft Outline Social Support Programme
- Government of Malawi and UNICEF (2008) 'Social Protection Profile' (July)
- Institutional Framework, Malawi Social Support Programme (one-page hand-out)
- National Statistical Office and UNICEF (2008) *Monitoring the Situation of Children and Women: Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2006*. (June).
- National Statistical office (2008) *2008 Population and Housing Census, Preliminary Report*. Zomba, Malawi (September).
- Republic of Malawi (2008) 'Social Support Policy: "Social Support: A Right for All" (4 November)
- Rethman, Charles, Technical Advisor to the Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee (n.d.) 'A Synopsis of Social Protection and Cash Programming in Malawi'.
- Rethman, Charles, Technical Advisor to the Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee (n.d.) Discussion Paper: Social Protection and Save the Children in Malawi (internal draft, not for citation)
- Slater, Rachel (ODI) and Maxton Tsoka (Centre for Social Research) (2007) 'Social protection in Malawi: A Status Report'

Malawi Country Report

Social protection programme resources (annex 1 – to what?)

Working Group of the Social Protection Technical Committee (2007) Social Protection Policy, Malawi: “Social Protection: a Right for All” (*Third Draft*) 27 November.

World Bank, The (2007) *Malawi Social Protection Status Report. Report no. 40027-MW* (October 4)

Website: IDS futureagricultures

Malawi Country Report

D. Report of proceedings, stakeholder workshop

**Social Transfers and Childhood Poverty
Save the Children/UNICEF Multi-Country Study
Stakeholders' Wrap-up
Lilongwe, Malawi, 6 February 2009**

Participants:

- **Research team:** Jennifer Gibson, Lead Researcher; Carol Watson, Research Advisor
- **UNICEF:** Maykje Huijbregts, Chief, Social Policy
- **Ministry of Economic Planning and Development:** Mr. Lameck Kutha, Principal Economist
- **MASAF:** Charles Mandala, Acting Executive Director
- **WFP:** Niels Balza, Programme Officer
- **Save the Children:** Paul Mecartney, Country Director
- **Care:** Paul Msoma, Policy Analysis
- **Institute for Policy Research and Economy (IPRSE),** Kondwani Chikadza

Greetings and welcome:

The UNICEF Chief of Social Policy welcomed participants to the meeting and hoped that this could provide an occasion to unite around social protection.

Overview of research project:

The lead researcher outlined the aims and intended scope of the multi-country research and gave a sense of the diversity of the social transfer programmes in the countries identified for the research: Ethiopia; Rwanda; Mozambique; Tanzania; Malawi; and Kenya.

Country visit and stakeholder consultations:

The research team reported that over the two week visit, a total of 21 institutions were visited in Lilongwe and Zomba, including 7 Government Ministries/Departments; 4 research institutions and national statistical office; 7 development partners (including UNICEF); and 3 International NGOs. The team also visited two districts (Mchnji and Machinka) for discussions at both district and village level. Available documentation was consulted – with some 54 documents collected in the course of the visit. It was noted that all visits were very useful and informative, with stakeholders sharing a wealth of insights and experience on social protection in Tanzania. The research team expressed their gratitude for the time accorded to these meetings and for the openness with which discussants provided their perspectives.

Social cash transfer scheme:

The lead researcher outlined the details of the social cash transfer scheme, to ensure that the understandings gained during the course of the visit were correct. It was noted during discussions that the scale up of the scheme is pending government approval.

Emerging research issues:

- **Scale-up timeline/decisions and baseline needs:** The presenters noted that if scale-up goes forward, a rigorous baseline would be needed, using/adapting tools already developed and – potentially – linking with planned or ongoing national surveys.
- **Targeting/re-targeting:** *Discussion:* This item generated much discussion, reflecting its importance in national policy debates on social protection. I
 - It was noted that the 10% cut-off point for targeting ultra-poor labour-deprived population is derived from the 2005 IHS, based on a consumption index – whereas at the village, you are asking people to consider a complete basket of goods and attributes. The appropriateness of the national cut-off point for application at village level was debated – given sub-national differences in poverty status, and issues of inclusion and exclusion were discussed.
 - For social protection planning purposes, it was suggested that there should be one household survey done at the village cluster (at pilot level first): villagers would be ranked into 3 groups according to neediness, then joint planning and monitoring could take place within a truly comprehensive approach. Joint discussions of the targeting issue would be important to help us look at different objectives. Targeting is expensive and communities over-burdened by all this targeting – it should be harmonized. We also need to think about capacity for targeting and help the government look into cost-effectiveness.
 - One participant acknowledged that there is no silver bullet for objectively targeting, but observed that there is an instrument (applied by Charles Rethman) for the community to effectively target in a participatory way, providing a structure through which community members and ‘interveners’ are jointly able to better understand village level poverty.
 - The Community statistics technique was presented as a means of facilitating processes by which communities may take all different factors into consideration in taking stock of their situation and how they would like to change. This is within the same basket of participatory techniques as contained in the Community Scorecard which can be used both ex post and ex ante, as is being done in Rwanda.
 - The current criteria for the social cash transfer are 1) labour-constrained; 2) ultra poor; and 3) many dependents, with a cut-off of 10%. However, there may be a need for more guidance on the application of it as well as a need to rank everyone in the village – not just the 10%.
 - The stock-take of the SCT programme just conducted by the Government and UNICEF found that the targeting itself is OK, but the 10% leaves people out. This is where the dilemma arises, with contradictions between means-testing and the 10% cut-off point. How do we address this missing group that is left out? This leads also to questions of social cohesion. Villagers may be afraid to say what is really going on when asked about whether programmes are working or not.

Malawi Country Report

- It was considered important to how to institutionalize the harmonization of targeting, considering as well the political economy and national context in which social protection is embedded. Question of 'labour-constrained' is fluid: there is the age group factor but also others. Also, if you are the only working person but with a high dependency; if you are chronically ill, you are also labour-constrained. Theoretically, things look neat, but at community level, it is messier: communities themselves are the best placed to identify this.
- Perhaps we sometimes press too many things on the community and this leads to issues of social cohesion. Giving the communities the opportunity to tell you 'who' is the poor person without imposing your standards/criteria.....might help solve this problem.
- **Linkages:** The researchers noted that this is an issue that has come up with all of the countries. The number of different SP-type interventions and inputs on the ground has both programmatic and research implications. We need to know if a cash transfer on its own is enough to produce the desired results/impact (and to be able to attribute cause and effect), or if it needs to be linked into other interventions, for example a savings and loan. We could potentially plan a comparative study (perhaps in a pilot zone) to see what is the difference between transfer and transfer+. *Discussion:*
 - Need a mapping of services at village level as well, to understand issues of service availability and accessibility.
 - Certain programmes are social protection and others are safety nets - how to look at impact when an intervention is transitory? We need to look at this over the long-term.
 - We need to look at existing social protection interventions and see how effective they are (including cost-effectiveness and efficiency). We also need to be realistic about resources available for research and follow-up of programme recommendations.
 - It is important to see how the different interventions in social protection complement each other.
- **Delivery mechanisms:** If there is a pilot testing out different mechanisms for delivery (for example smart cards, mobile banks, the study might try to look at this, in terms of cost-effectiveness/efficiency and operational costs.
- **Household/individual patterns and impacts (tying in as well to graduation):** A number of different areas of research at household/individual level were presented.
- **Social cohesion issues:** The researchers noted that the possible negative effect of cash transfers on existing social cohesion was another topic that has been raised across the different countries involved in the study: innovative research methodologies would be needed to more fully understand and assess this phenomenon
- **Graduation:** This issue is linked to policy/programme decisions on re-targeting, with research methodologies such as panel surveys a potentially useful tools to track people even after they have left a programme. *Discussion:*
 - One understanding of the cash transfer was that this would NOT entail graduation; that the beneficiaries would need to depend on this overall. This is different from a cash for work approach.

- Others pointed out that the transfer did, indeed, allow some people to invest, and that conditions on the ground were fluid such that some people may indeed be in a position to graduate from the scheme.
- Some feel that the effectiveness of a programme (for populations outside of the 10%) is really to move people out of poverty – not to keep them dependent. For the 10%, it will be the children who will be able to move out of poverty.
- **Sustainability and scalability:** A number of research issues would be important to consider in terms of sustainability for potential scale up of the programme.

General Discussion:

- How to focus on children, given that the research topics above are so broad? The scope is very ambitious – need to maintain a child-focus.
- Are we looking at social protection or social cash transfers? It was agreed that we are looking at the social cash transfer as one mechanism for social protection, in relation to others.
- How to look at all kinds of transfers and determine a coherent package?
- We do need to look at other external factors on children's well-being as well. For example what happens after a child's parent dies and all the relatives come and grab possessions, etc. What is the role of the community, and what is the OVC response? We need to link this research to the alternative care agenda, particularly now that grandmothers are dying.

Methodological considerations:

- Timing and frequency
- Design elements
- Mixed methods – qualitative/quantitative

Institutional framework

- Various options were presented for the organization of research and governance structures and the local/international/regional relationships were explored.

Discussion/recommendations:

Research structure:

- In terms of research partners at local level, it will be important to define what kind of partnerships would be foreseen.
- In actual implementation of the research, how best to ensure it is well-managed? Issues of whether you treat this as a project and commission out bits and pieces or embed it in one of the research institutions were discussed.
- One participant advised going for having an institutional base, like CSR. Some colleges have very fluid capacity, as individuals there have formed their own consultancies. The research should be managed/coordinated by the local institution.
- The option of CSR with the possibility to contract outwards (with the University) was seen to be sound: the pros and cons of placing the research coordinator within the CSR were discussed.

Malawi Country Report

- It is good idea to have a national research coordinator, bringing everyone together. It is also important to consider very carefully where this individual would be placed in terms of the leeway to manage the process.
- Placement of the research coordinator has to be strategic – it was discussed if perhaps the coordinator might be placed within one of the organizing institution (UNICEF or Save). Need to embed the research in a structure that has the most credibility, etc. Perhaps, also the Government?
- One possibility being discussed by the organizers at HQ level was to have 2 floating research coordinators, but participants did not agree, as it was felt more useful to have someone in-country to feed into policy processes, etc.
- One of the roles of the research coordinator might be to mobilize resources for additional elements of research that would be complementary.
- Need to define clearly the roles and responsibilities of the research coordinator and determine the cost implications.
- The question arose about whether the research would be a continuous process over the 5 years or whether it would come in fits and starts.....This has implications for the kinds of contractual arrangements made in-country.

Governance structure:

- It would be important to expand the task team it is important to add civil society to government and development partners; to add DFID, and to add other important government departments, such as the Ministry for Elderly Persons and the Disabled, Local Government.
- Will need to clearly define roles and responsibilities and determine any cost implications.

Going forward – Timeline and continuing engagement

- **Next steps:** A country report will be developed and sent through UNICEF for wider sharing, inputs and finalization. Representatives of all country teams involved in the study will be invited to a workshop in Nairobi for further discussion, refinement, and decision-making. It will be important for the research team to be kept abreast of ongoing policy processes of relevance to the design and implementation schedule for the research.

E. Institutional arrangements for social support programme⁸

Planned membership in the **National Social Support Steering Committee (NSSSC)**:

1. Chief Secretary (Chair)
2. Secretary for Agriculture and Food Security
3. Secretary and Commissioner for Disaster Management Affairs
4. Secretary for Local Government and Rural Development
5. Secretary to the Treasury
6. Secretary for Health
7. Secretary for Labour
8. Secretary for Transport and Public Works
9. Secretary for Women and Child Development
10. Secretary for Persons with Disabilities and the Elderly
11. Secretary for Nutrition, HIV and AIDS
12. Secretary for Irrigation and Water Development
13. Secretary for Education
14. The Country Manager, The World Bank
15. The Head of the Department for International Development (DFID)
16. Representative of UNICEF
17. Council for the Non-Governmental Organization of Malawi (CONGOMA)
18. Secretary for Economic Planning and Development (Secretariat)

Planned membership in the **National Social Support Technical Committee (NSSTC)**

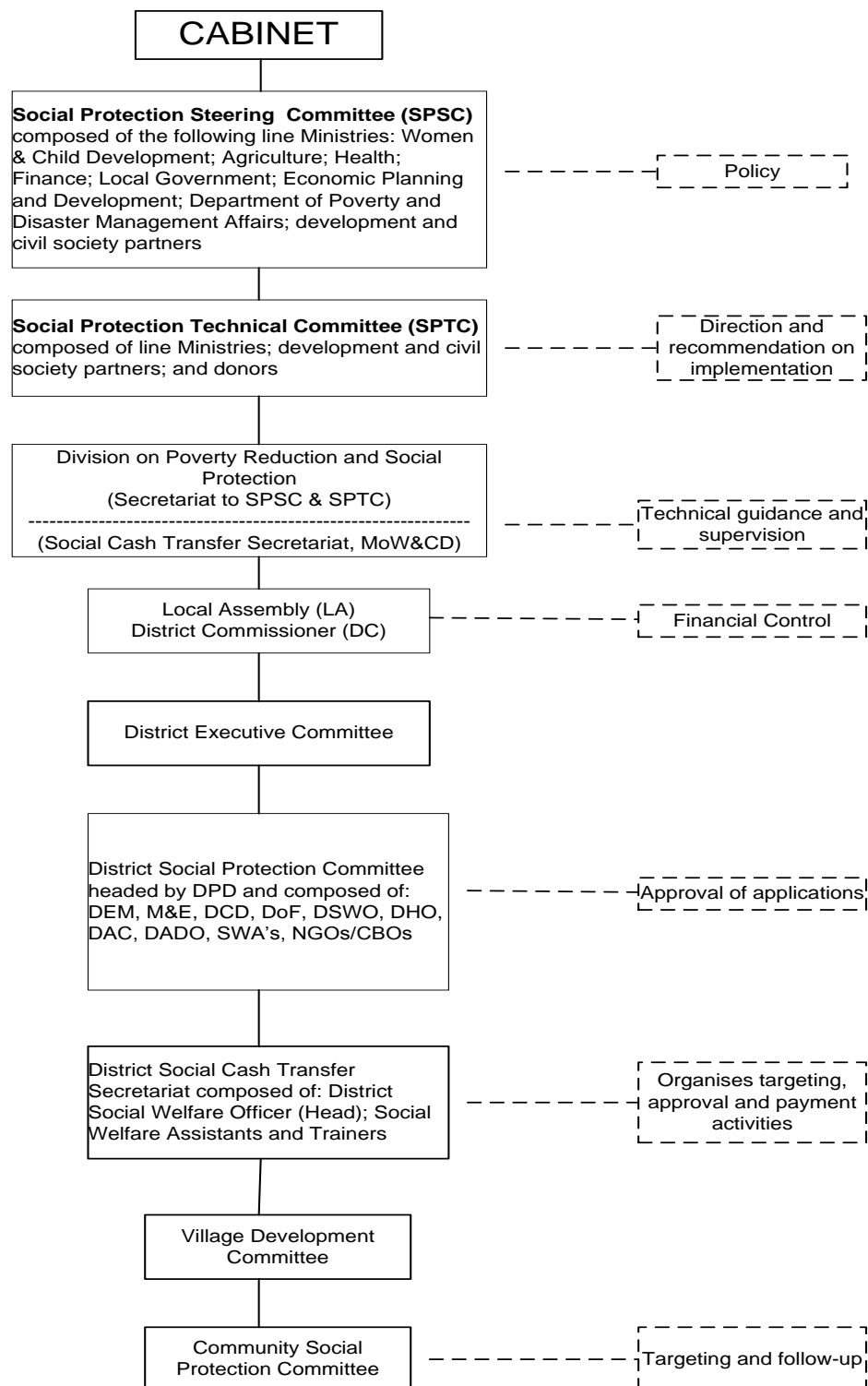
1. Ministry of Economic Planning and Development (Chair and Secretariat)
2. Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security
3. Department of Disaster Management Affairs
4. Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development
5. Ministry of Finance
6. Ministry of Health
7. Ministry of Transport and Public Works
8. Ministry of Persons with Disabilities and the Elderly
9. Department of Nutrition, HIV and AIDS
10. Ministry of Irrigation and Water Development
11. Ministry of Labour and Social Development
12. Ministry of Information and Civic Education
13. Ministry of Women and Child Development
14. Office of the President and Cabinet
15. Malawi Social Action Fund (MASAF)
16. Council for the Non-governmental Organisations of Malawi (CONGOMA)
17. The World Bank
18. The Department of International development (DFID)
19. UNICEF
20. World Food Programme (WFP)
21. Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee (MVAC)
22. Executive Director, Elderly People Association
23. Executive Director, Network of Organisations working with Vulnerable and Orphaned Children (NOVOC)
24. Chairperson, NGO Gender Network
25. Centre for Social Research (CSR)
26. National AIDS Commission (NAC)
27. Action Aid
28. OXFAM
29. Plan Malawi

⁸ From Draft National Social Support Policy (November, 2008)

Malawi Country Report

F. Institutional framework for social cash transfer scheme

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE SOCIAL CASH TRANSFER SCHEME



Joint SCUK/UNICEF Study

G. Centre for Social Research Rates

ITEM	OLD RATE	NEW RATE
PER DIEMS		
- Principal Investigator	K5,625	K15,000
- Supervisor	K2,500	K5,000
- Graduate Research Assistant	K1,875	K4,000
- Enumerators	K1,500	K3,000
- Drivers	K1,600	K4,000
- Non-Research Staff	K2,500	K6,000
PROFESSIONAL FEES	US\$250 (minimum)	K35,000 (minimum)
WAGES: SHORT TERM		
- Principal Investigator	US\$1,000/month (minimum)	K140,000/month (minimum)
Supervisor		
- Degree	K8,000/month	K30,000/month
- Enumerators (MSCE)	K3,500/month	K18,000/month
- Data Entry Clerks (MSCE)	K3,500/month	K18,000/month
Secretarial Services	K75/page	K75/page
REPROGRAPHIC CHARGES		
Photocopying& Printing		
- General Public	K8.00/copy	K12.00/copy
- CSR Staff	K2.50/copy	K4.00/copy
- Copy printing	K6.00/copy	K10.00/copy
- Laser printing	K30/copy	K30/copy
Duplicating		
Binding	K350/booklet	K350/booklet
DATA PROCESSING & ANALYSIS		
Data entry & management		
- Creating File Structure	US\$250/day	K35,000/day
- Data Process	K2,000/day	K2,000/day
- Data Analysis	US\$250/day	K35,000/day
- Computer Time	K600/hr	K500/Computer/day
- LCD Projector	K5,000/day	K5,000/day
- Overhead Projector	K1,500/day	K1,500/day
- Flip Chart	K 250/day	K 250/day

VEHICLE HIRE

Type of vehicle	Daily rate	Rate/km
Toyota Saloon	K3,500	K35
Toyota Twin Cab	K4,500	K45
Toyota Land Cruiser	K5,000	K50

These charges exclude fuel. In the event that CSR provides fuel, fuel will be charged at the rate of ruling price per litre per 6 km (1 litre of fuel covers 6 km)

Malawi Country Report
