



INNOVATIVE RESEARCH ON THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL CASH TRANSFERS IN AFRICA



What we are: A multi-country research initiative to build the evidence base on the impacts of social cash transfers (SCTs) in Africa in order to contribute to the improvement of program design and implementation.

Who we are: The Transfer Project is an innovative research initiative supported by UNICEF, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Save the Children-UK (SCUK), the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC-CH) and national governments. The Transfer Project works in close partnership with governments and local research organizations to inform the design and evaluation of national SCT programs.

What we do: The Transfer Project supports learning and innovation on social cash transfers by i) designing and implementing impact evaluations of national cash transfer programs; ii) promoting learning on the impacts of social cash transfers in Africa; iii) contributing to the expansion of the knowledge base on technical aspects of impact evaluation design and implementation by sharing tools, protocols and instruments; iv) sharing rich primary impact evaluation data sets.

Innovation in approach: We focus our efforts on partnering with governments to design impact evaluations of national programs. We design the most rigorous evaluation possible within the constraints of program operations and tailor our survey instruments to indicators in the program log-frame. We do not work outside of government, nor do we evaluate small experimental interventions implemented independently. The Transfer Project engages in theory based evaluation in order to understand why a program works and identify the areas that need further strengthening in order to inform future designs and implementation. Our evaluations begin with a specification of a complete causal chain from cash to

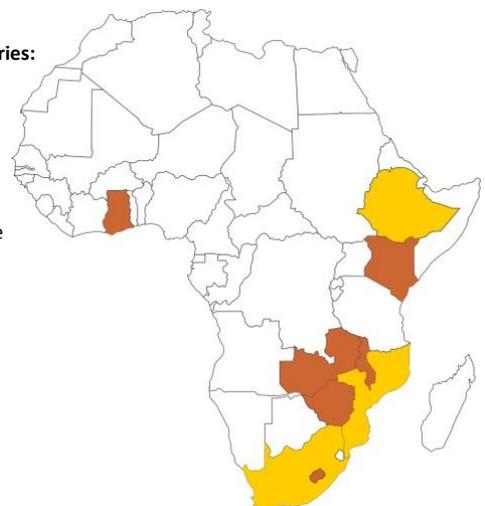
outcome or impact, and then measure indicators along the chain.

Innovation in design: We are implementing three major innovations in our evaluation design. First, since many of our focus countries are generalized HIV prevalence countries, we administer an individual interview to adolescents to measure the impact of SCTs on HIV behavioral risk. Second, under the leadership of FAO, we implement an enterprise survey and include non-beneficiaries in our samples in order to assess local-economy spillover effects and household level economic and productive effects of social cash transfers (visit the [From Protection to Production \(PtoP\)](#) website). Third, our methodology incorporates a mixed method approach, integrating quantitative, qualitative, and simulation models in our evaluation design and analysis.

Current focus countries: The map below depicts our current focus countries. Darker shaded countries are where we are directly involved in implementation of impact evaluations; lighter shaded countries are where we provide technical advice to governments and development partners on their evaluations.

Focus Countries:

Ethiopia
Ghana*
Kenya*
Lesotho*
Malawi*
Mozambique
South Africa
Zambia*
Zimbabwe*



*The Transfer Project is directly involved in evaluation implementation



ABOUT US

Innovation in topic: Beyond assessing the impact of programs on their intended objectives—typically poverty, food security, education, health and nutrition— we include specific survey items to capture psychological indicators, such as time preference, risk-aversion, mental health, subjective welfare and happiness. We also use a detailed economic activity and time-use module to understand the productive impacts of social cash transfers, an under-studied area in cash transfer evaluations. The qualitative work explores community wellbeing, social networks and risk-coping at the household level, friendships, peer relationships, perceptions and aspirations through in-depth interviews with individual adolescents and focus group discussions with both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries.

Where does our funding come from? Core funding for the Transfer Project comes only from staff time provided by UNICEF, UNC-CH, SCUK and FAO. Evaluation design, implementations and analysis are all funded in country by government and development partners. Top-up funds for extra survey rounds or additional research questions are provided by: International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3IE) (Ghana, Malawi, Zimbabwe), the United States National Institute of Health (Kenya), Department of International Development (DFID-London) (Lesotho, Ethiopia, Malawi, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Zambia), European Union and the Hewlett Foundation (Zambia). We are looking for donors to fund an expansion of our core activities in knowledge management, secondary research and comparative case studies. We are also looking for partners to help us continue these longitudinal panels in order to turn them into laboratories for global learning.



What to look forward to in 2014:

The table below summarizes our formal evaluation activities for 2014.

Country/Date (2014)	Activity
Zambia/March	Three year impact results on Child Grant Program
Zambia/March	Two year impact results on Multiple Categorical Program
Lesotho/March	Two year impact results on CGP
Zimbabwe/May	12-month follow-up survey of HSCT
Malawi /June	12-month follow-up survey of SCT
Zimbabwe/August	12-month impact results on HSCT
Malawi /October	12-month impact results on SCT

Where can I read more about new impact results from Africa?

As soon as we obtain permission to release results to the public we place evaluation reports on our website. A special issue of the Journal of Development Effectiveness (Vol 4:1, 2012) was devoted to early results from the Transfer Project. Links to recent and forthcoming publications can be found on the Transfer Project website, and a series of briefs highlighting impact results will be released throughout 2014 and 2015 as results come in. Results on the local economy and economic impacts can be found on the PtoP website. For updates on the Transfer Project, sign up for our newsletter.

Whom do I contact?

Sudhanshu Handa (shanda@unicef.org),
 Natalia Winder-Rossi (newinderrossi@unicef.org),
 Jennifer Yablonski (jyablonski@unicef.org),
 Benjamin Davis (benjamin.davis@fao.org),
 Nichola Hypher (N.Hypher@savethechildren.org.uk),
 Sara Abdoulayi (sara.abdoulayi@unc.edu).

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