

# Setting-up a community of practice

## The CCT learning group in Latin America

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# What is a Community of Practice?

- A group of active practitioners : group of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly.
- Members learn from each other sharing information and experiences (**telling stories**), and have an opportunity to develop themselves personally and professionally . They share tips and best practices, ask questions of their colleagues, and provide support for each other.
- **Dynamic:** evolves over time

# What does a CoP serve for?

- Increasing organization performance:
  - Decreasing the learning curve of new employees
  - Responding more rapidly to customer needs and inquiries
  - Reducing rework and preventing "reinvention of the wheel"
  - Spawning new ideas for products and services
- Sharing knowledge that may lead to higher productivity. A means to capturing the tacit knowledge, the know-how that is not so easily articulated.
- Helping individuals bridge the gap between knowing *what* and *how*.

# The international CCT CoP: programs learning from each other at several levels

- ★ • Three **global conferences** sponsored by international agencies and hosted by local governments (2002 in Mexico, 2004 in Brazil and 2006 in Turkey). Smaller regional events since then.
- Numerous **study trips**, often to established programs
- Several **detailed program websites**
- Extensive **publication of evaluation results** in academic journals
- ★ • A “**learning circle**” among 5 LAC programs, facilitated by the WB

# The global conferences

- Participants: all countries w/ a CCT program at the time
- Plenary sessions, discussion groups, field visits, information about programs
- Sponsored by donors: UNICEF, WB, DFID, GTZ, and host government
- Mix of policy and operational questions

## Websites:

- São Paulo 2004  
<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTSOCIALPROTECTION/o,,contentMDK:20823929~menuPK:2643917~pagePK:64020865~piPK:51164185~theSitePK:282637,00.html>
- Istanbul 2006 w/ a virtual conference  
<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/WBI/WBIPROGRAMS/SPLP/o,,contentMDK:20892674~pagePK:64156158~piPK:64152884~theSitePK:461654,00.html>

# The learning group - Its start



- Emerged from demand from the client countries
- Program managers knew each other
- They saw the WB role as convening and facilitating the meetings, also helping develop and manage the agenda with the main purpose of sharing information in a trusted environment

# The learning group - Objectives

- The group would:
    - discuss/share upcoming operational issues confidentially between peer practitioners
    - explore why programs responded differently to similar questions
  - The group also helped new managers know their peers more rapidly
- ⇒ a restricted group of senior managers
- ⇒ programs of same generation

# The learning group - Logistics (1)

- A working group of 5 program managers and their relevant technical staff + WB and IDB project staff + a VC technician (in most sites) + technical resource people as needed
- Hosted by the World Bank Global Development Learning Network (GDLN) with video-conference in Washington + 5 countries
- An internet group to share meetings agenda, presentations, background materials and minutes of meetings; and questions.



# The learning group - Logistics (2)

- Started in November 2006
- Meetings every 5-6 weeks for 2-2 1/2 hours w/ pre-established agenda
- Presentations shared by e-mail beforehand, projected to all VC sites
- Discussion moderated from Washington, each team taking turns
- Funding from the WB LAC Region's Knowledge and Learning Team and the SP Unit

## The learning group - Logistics (3)

- The SP Unit also organized the meetings, managed them and prepared minutes
- Electronic support initially through DFID's d-group platform (WB had an institutional membership): announcements, background documents, on-line discussions
- B/c of access issues, now moved to Ning, a new type of social network w/ features that facilitate communication between members

# The learning group - Topics

- Quality controls and accountability
- Relationship of the program with local governments, other sectoral ministries
- Responses to the crisis
- How to reach hard-to-reach groups?
- How to link beneficiaries to complementary services?
- Different approaches to monitoring conditionalities
- How to organize beneficiaries' "graduation"
- How to train field staff

# The learning group face-to-face

- Two sessions in 2008 (Mexico - 2<sup>nd</sup>-generation issues on youth, graduation and M&E - and Colombia - urban areas-); one in 2010 (Brazil-ECD and overall SP system)
- Larger groups with more external inputs
- Seeking to address some “big” issues facing the programs
- Documenting experiences more formally
- Enabling informal personal contacts between participants

# Some results

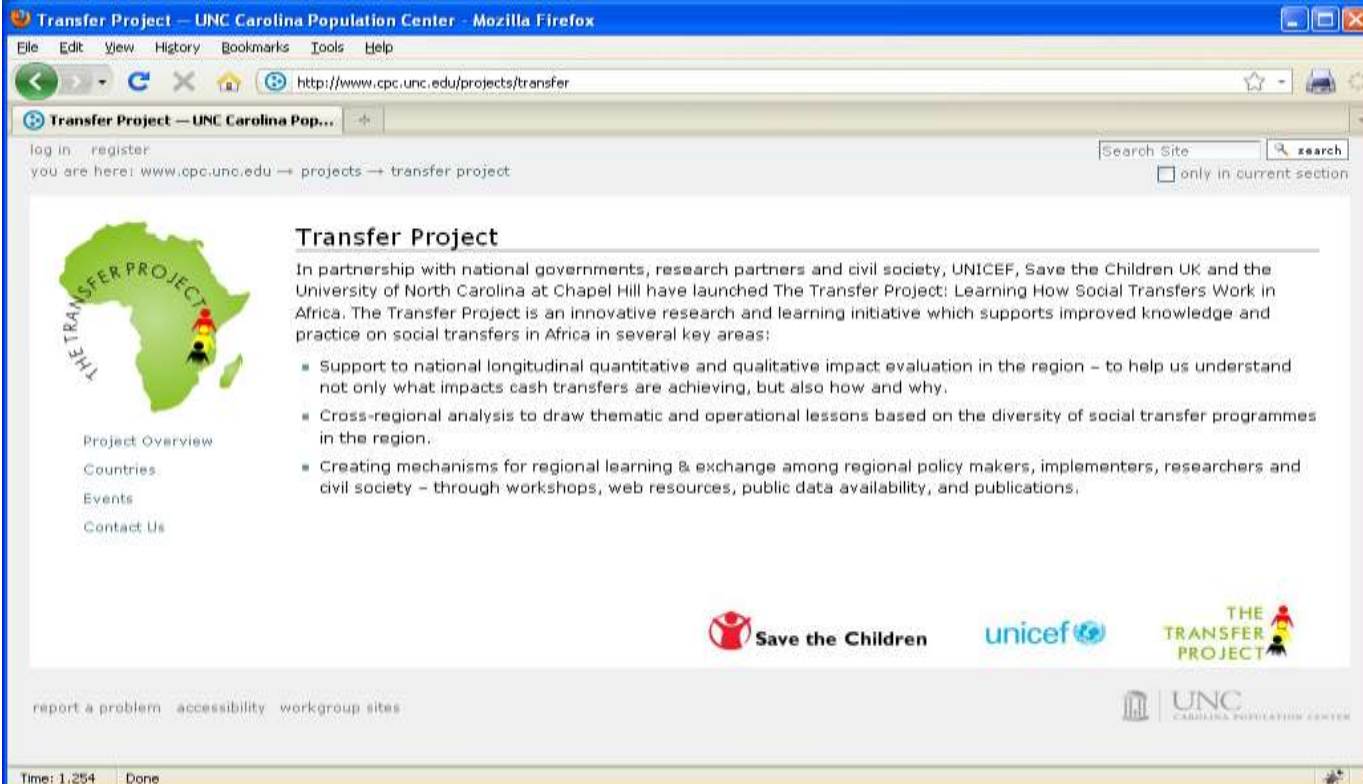
- Urban implementation issues: spreading innovative targeting methods (utility maps)
- Evolving role of M&E: clarifying which information program managers need
- WB/IDB project staff more aware of emerging challenges/issues facing programs
- Increased quick communications (phone, e-mails) b/w members => dividing information requests.

# What does it take?

- Good **technical platform**
- A **moderator/facilitator** that reminds participants of their commitment
- A **peer group** who can be open about diverse experiences, with no one dominating the conversation
- A **mix of communication tools** between the meetings to keep the group going
- **Money** (VC and management costs funded by WB, programs make staff available)
- Recognized by the WB internal evaluation as an innovation in knowledge sharing

# Some elements to build on:

- This regional meeting
- Your informal contacts
- A website:  
<http://www.cpc.unc.edu/projects/transfer>
- A listserv



The screenshot shows a Mozilla Firefox browser window displaying the website for the Transfer Project at the UNC Carolina Population Center. The browser's address bar shows the URL <http://www.cpc.unc.edu/projects/transfer>. The website content includes a navigation menu with links for "log in" and "register", a search bar, and a breadcrumb trail: "you are here: www.cpc.unc.edu → projects → transfer project". The main content area features a green map of Africa with the text "THE TRANSFER PROJECT" curved around it, and a list of project activities: "Project Overview", "Countries", "Events", and "Contact Us". The "Transfer Project" title is followed by a paragraph describing the project's partnership with national governments, research partners, UNICEF, Save the Children UK, and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Below this is a bulleted list of three key areas of focus: support to national longitudinal quantitative and qualitative impact evaluation, cross-regional analysis, and creating mechanisms for regional learning and exchange. The footer of the website displays logos for Save the Children, UNICEF, and The Transfer Project, along with the UNC Carolina Population Center logo. A status bar at the bottom of the browser window shows "Time: 1.254" and "Done".

Transfer Project — UNC Carolina Population Center - Mozilla Firefox

File Edit View History Bookmarks Tools Help

http://www.cpc.unc.edu/projects/transfer


Transfer Project — UNC Carolina Pop...

log in register

you are here: www.cpc.unc.edu → projects → transfer project

Search Site search

only in current section



Project Overview

Countries




Events

Contact Us

### Transfer Project

In partnership with national governments, research partners and civil society, UNICEF, Save the Children UK and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill have launched The Transfer Project: Learning How Social Transfers Work in Africa. The Transfer Project is an innovative research and learning initiative which supports improved knowledge and practice on social transfers in Africa in several key areas:

- Support to national longitudinal quantitative and qualitative impact evaluation in the region – to help us understand not only what impacts cash transfers are achieving, but also how and why.
- Cross-regional analysis to draw thematic and operational lessons based on the diversity of social transfer programmes in the region.
- Creating mechanisms for regional learning & exchange among regional policy makers, implementers, researchers and civil society – through workshops, web resources, public data availability, and publications.

 Save the Children  unicef 

report a problem accessibility workgroup sites

UNC CAROLINA POPULATION CENTER

Time: 1.254 Done

# An African SCT CoP

What else do  
you want  
to do?



What do you  
need to  
learn?

Thank you