

**INSTITUTE FOR POLICY RESEARCH & SOCIAL EMPOWERMENT (IPRSE)
IN CONSOLIDATION WITH NETWORK OF ORPHANS AND VULNERABLE
CHILDREN IN MALAWI (NOVOC)**

CONSOLIDATED RESEARCH REPORT

FOR

“Strengthening the Malawi Social Cash Transfer Scheme through Linking and Learning”

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In order to mitigate the economic and psychosocial impact of HIV and AIDS related illness and death of OVC and their caretakers, four Malawian registered Non-Governmental Organisations; NOVOC, CEYCA, YONECO and IPRSE in partnership with the Chitipa District Assembly have been coordinating their efforts, with support from STOP AIDS NOW! Netherlands in the implementation of a one year project aimed at strengthening the Social Cash Transfer programme through linking and learning.

The Institute for Policy Research and Social Empowerment (IPRSE) was therefore charged with the responsibility of leading the processes of conducting a baseline survey and implementing an action research to attain participatory problem identification in the scheme, participatory solution development and participatory impact assessment of key stakeholders in the process from both the state and non-state realms of the society.

The outcomes of the processes have been very encouraging with the partnership making inroads into what was initially seen as a no go zone for non governmental institutions. The Government has taken into consideration some significant policy positions while compromising on some. This subsequently offers fresh challenges for the partnership to ensure that progress that has been made thus far is sustained while strategizing to overcome challenges for future policy advocacy with particular reference to the Malawi Social Cash Transfer Programme.

While the Social Cash Transfer Scheme continues to bear observable advantages in terms of improving health of beneficiaries with fewer reported sicknesses among adults and children and increasing their demand for healthcare for children and adults and higher healthcare expenditures, it has also increased expenditure on children's schooling and subsequently reducing in child labour in the country. The Social Cash Transfer Scheme has also enhanced accumulation of household and productive assets, basic necessities and livestock while increased agricultural production with greater food stores has subsequently resulted into improved food security including higher food expenditures, fewer missed meals, fewer days without adequate food, and greater food diversity. Thus Social cash transfers have not only subsidized consumption but have also enhanced productivity of beneficiary households and communities.

On the other hand, just like any other public initiative the Malawi Social Cash Transfer Scheme stands to face challenges in its execution owed to a number of internal and external factors. To this end, this one year project has uncovered challenges ranging from inadequate human resources key to the implementation of the Scheme to limited and unpredictable income flow for the same. The targeting mechanism has also been uncovered as a to have some weaknesses in terms of permitting inclusion and exclusion errors while giving room for political manipulation at the community level. With a number of social protection instruments present in the district, the research also uncovered inadequate linking mechanisms for Social Cash Transfer beneficiaries.

But as action research entails learning through doing, through the process of quarterly Search Conferences, the research process identified solutions to some of the aforementioned bottlenecks some of which have successfully been executed. Suffice to indicate, this progress has been made possible with the improving working relationship between the civil society community party to the project and the Government at both the district and national level. It is hoped that such a rapport will continue particularly in the development and implementation of the Social Cash Transfer Programme in 2011 and beyond.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In the challenging expedition that has brought this project into conclusion, IPRSE has enjoyed enormous material, moral as well as technical support and assistance from different organisations and individuals to an extent that we cannot exclusively claim the success that the project is in the course of bearing. The Institute would therefore like to express its profound gratitude and thanksgiving to all partners and allies who continue to render their priceless support towards this cause.

IPRSE particularly extends its thankfulness to STOP AIDS NOW! Netherlands; for their incalculable financial and technical support without which this project would not have even started off. Doortje Hart has been particularly supportive during the life span of the project; we extend our appreciation to her and the STOP AIDS NOW! team in Netherlands. Network of Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children (NOVOC); who have been coordinating the work, have particularly been awesome. To Cuthbert Nyirenda and Joshua Ainabyona, words fail us. Yoneco and CEYCA have in particular completed the formula, giving IPRSE the advantage of working in an organized partnership as we strive to define the policy landscape to the advantage of the disadvantaged in Chitipa and the rest of Malawi. Let's carry on with the good job we have started.

Board members and research fellows of the Institute, notably Associate Professor Blessings Chinsinga, Mr. Henry Chingaipe, Mr. Happy Kayuni and Mr. George Vilili, need to be hailed for their timely and unrelenting technical and administrative guidance. The Budget and Finance Committee of the National Assembly, National Assembly Secretariat, UNICEF, The National Working Group on Social Cash Transfers, The Social Protection Department in the Ministry of Development Planning and Corporation, The National Social Cash Transfer Secretariat in the Ministry of Gender and Child Welfare and the National Social Protection Technical Committee also deserve our sincere thankfulness for their technical support as well as cooperation in this very noble mission.

Policy making is a political process, in which no one is an island but just part of the whole system. IPRSE could not have therefore come thus far without the support and assistance of such fellow policy stakeholders and entrepreneurs and other allies too numerous to mention. We acknowledge your moral, technical as well as material support.

Kondwani Chikadza

IPRSE

ACRONYMS

CBO	Community Based Organization
CEYCA	Centre for Youth and Children's Affairs
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
IPRSE	Institute for Policy Research & Social Empowerment
MEGS	Malawi Economic Growth Strategy
MGDS	Malawi Growth & Development Strategy
MPRSP	Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
MSCTS	Malawi Social Cash Transfer Scheme
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NOVOC	Network of Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children
NSNP	National Safety Nets Program
NSNS	National Safety Nets Strategy
SCT	Social Cash Transfer
TA	Traditional Authority
YONECO	Youth Network and Counselling

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SECTION A

BACKGROUND

1.0 Poverty and Vulnerability in Malawi

From the early 1980s Malawi has witnessed poor economic growth and diminishing living standards of her populace. Several studies point to the fuel crisis of the late 1970s and unfavourable policies imposed on developing economies particularly Structural Adjustment Programmes as advocated by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank as causes of the predicament. Adoption of these policies as a conditionality for accessing foreign aid resulted into removal of agriculture input subsidies, increasing cost of living due to devaluation of the domestic currency, rising unemployment rates owed to privatization and commercialization of state entities and generally poor service delivery in key sectors such as health and education due to the government's inadequate capacity to operate efficiently in the new order.

A study commissioned by the Government of Malawi in collaboration with the United Nations in 1998 found that 65% of the citizenry was living below the poverty line, computed at US\$1 per day. A similar survey conducted in 2005, indicated that 52% of the populace was living below the poverty line. Much as at face value the two surveys seem to suggest that progress had been made over the years, a raging debate in policy circles pointed to the fact that the marginal difference might have been prompted by the differences in methodologies that were used during the two Integrated Household Surveys. Malawi's poor socio-economic situation became a cause of concern to many people around the world. Statistics indicated that Malawi remained one of the poorest countries in the world despite undergoing significant economic and political reforms. The country was asserted as one of the poorest countries in the world whether judged by Gross National Product (GNP) per capita, the UNDP's Human Development Index or its Human Poverty Index. The key indicators on Malawi in the 2004 Human Development, for instance, made a depressing reading.

Although the situation had been that devastating, the Government and its development partners had time and again attempted to reduce the severity and depth of poverty in the country by implementing a number of pro-poor public policies and programmes. Amongst

them, the most outstanding ones included Vision 2020 in 1998, The Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy which was launched in 2001, and the national Safety Nets Programme launched in 2002. Nevertheless, despite implementation of the aforementioned initiatives, Malawians continue to live in poverty. What is difficult to understand is therefore what worsened the poverty situation in the country in the face of these “pro-poor” policy initiatives.

1.1 The Road to Social Protection in Malawi

A stock take of initiatives implemented with the primary goal of reducing poverty and vulnerability in Malawi, uncovered that a number of factors contributed to the poor performance of the aforementioned policy interventions. Amongst the critical ones were lack of capacity of the implementing partners particularly government institutions at the district and lower levels. In addition, several studies pointed out to the fact that most of these policies were imposed on the host nation by development partners as a precondition to access foreign aid. These policies were thus adopted with a *one size fits all* approach as they were imposed on different developing countries regardless of their diverse political social and economic backgrounds. Thus Malawi ended up adopting and implementing policies that were developed with no critical reflection on the social, political and economic context within which they were to be employed. The said interventions ended up doing the economy more harm than good, a development that further worsened the living standards of the populace despite Government and development partners investing huge sums of monies in the implementation of the same. A capacity study by IPRSE (2005)¹ indicated serious policy knowledge gaps at district assembly level, thus the assertion that district officials were expected to implement programmes whose objectives they did not understand leading into failure of such programmes to yield rationally optimal results in as far as the quest to reduce poverty and vulnerability in the country is concerned. More to this, Chinsinga (2004:4)² singled out lack of one policy to bring about coordination amongst multiple stakeholders in the implementation of poverty reduction initiatives as a critical contributor to the failure of the same. As a result policies and programmes have been implemented in an ad hoc and

¹ . IPRSE (2005) *Public Policy Knowledge Gaps Study: A Report to Trocaire Ireland*, Lilongwe, Malawi

² Chinsinga B (2004) *Poverty and Vulnerability in Malawi*, A Paper Presented to a Dialogue Session for Parliamentarians in Malawi; University of Malawi ; Zomba

uncoordinated manner resulting into duplication of efforts in some areas while sidelining others.

It was therefore against this background that the Government of Malawi and other stakeholders agreed to set in motion the process of developing the country's first ever National Social Protection Policy aimed at addressing the uncovered problems. Social Protection and Disaster Risk Reduction therefore featured as theme number two of the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS), the successor of the Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy, and the related Development Assistant Strategy (DAS). The goal of the social protection chapter within the MGDS framework is "to improve the social-economic indicators for the most vulnerable", to ensure that the most vulnerable with limited factors of production are sufficiently cushioned. This subsequently encompasses the expectation of improved health and nutritional status for children under the age of five, school age children, orphans, pregnant and lactating mothers as well as destitute families (MGSD:2005). In order to provide commitment and guidance for the establishment of meaningful social protection interventions especially in families hosting Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children, the National Plan of Action for Orphans and other Vulnerable Children was institutionalized to be implemented between 2005 and 2009.

1.1. 1 The Malawi Social Cash Transfer Scheme

The National Social Protection Policy, which has been subsequently renamed to National Social Support Policy, proposes a number of social protection instruments aimed at reducing poverty and vulnerability targeting respective categories of the poor and vulnerable as per the findings of the 2005 Integrated Household Survey (IHS2). Much as social protection appears to be a new concept in Malawi, the fact is that several social protection instruments have been implemented in the country by a cross section of stakeholders over time. Nevertheless, there are some instruments that are relatively new in Malawi's context, the most outstanding one being social cash transfers. Much as different stakeholders such as Concern Worldwide had implemented an emergency social cash transfer project in Dowa district before 2005, their geographical scope and project duration was somehow limited, not befitting the definition of social protection but rather safety nets. As such, it was deemed imperative to meaningfully assess the practicability of implementing social cash transfers on a wider scale in Malawi's unique socio-economic context. In April 2006, a methodology for a pilot cash transfer scheme

was therefore designed and tested in Mchinji district through operational research and from September onwards, a pilot social cash transfer scheme has been implemented and rolled out to six other districts namely, Chitipa, Likoma, Salima, Mangochi, Machinga and Phalombe.

The objectives of the scheme are to:

1. Reduce poverty, hunger and starvation in all households living in the pilot area which are ultra poor and at the same time labour constrained.
2. Increase school enrolment and attendance of children living in target group households and invest in their health and nutrition status;
3. Generate information on the feasibility, costs and benefits and on the positive and negative impact of a Social Cash Transfer Scheme as a component of a social protection programme for Malawi.

Since inception of the pilot scheme, there have been a number of studies assessing strengths and weaknesses of the scheme in a bid to realize the aforementioned goals. RHVP (2008) as well as Miller C, Tsoka M, and Reichert K (2008)³ highlight several institutional deficiencies at central government, district assembly and community levels. Based on the Mchinji Social Cash Transfer Pilot, the following improvements have been observed as advantages of the Social Cash Transfer Scheme⁴;

- Improved health with fewer reported sicknesses among adults and children
- Greater demand for healthcare for children and adults and higher healthcare expenditures
- Increased expenditure on children's schooling
- Reduction in child labour
- Significant accumulation of household and productive assets, basic necessities and livestock
- Increased agricultural production with greater food stores
- Improved food security including higher food expenditures, fewer missed meals, fewer days without adequate food, and greater food diversity,

³ . Miller C, Tsoka M, and Reichert K (2008). **Operations Report-External Evaluation of the Mchinji Social Cash Transfer Pilot.**; Lilongwe, Malawi

⁴ Wahenga Brief number 18, June 2009

On the contrary, the following challenges have also been uncovered by similar research such that they must be addressed for effective execution of the SCTS⁵

- Inadequate SCTS oversight by central ministries and District assemblies, resulting in a lack of accountability
- Skill and management deficits at the district level
- Within the financial management system, the two major concerns are (1) delays in moving money from the National AIDS Commission (NAC) to the District and (2) irregularities within accounting files and records. Evidence of fraud (SCTS recipients misleading their true situation) also exists. Most importantly, the mechanisms needed to identify measure and prevent fraud, errors and corruption are inadequate.
- The District has not implemented important SCTS activities. The SCTS budget and log frame allocates 0.88% of all SCTS funds for administering changes among beneficiary households and 0.59% of the budget for M&E. The District's monitoring of the financial system and village level activities have been inadequate.
- Instances of corruption among Community Social Protection Committees (CSPC), rather than a corrupt system (76% of recipients are correctly targeted); however, CSPCs are rarely monitored and, while training of community volunteers is improving, is still inadequate.
- There are important limitations to the current system of targeting and approvals. One critical limitation is the lack of information on the number of households in villages and the demographic and economic characteristics of these households. For example, estimates of the total number of households per village have been off by 25%.

IPRSE (2007)⁶ indicates that lack of formally institutionalized systems of grievance reporting makes it difficult for the community to channel their objections and complaints to the decision makers, thus undue prolongation of malpractices and ill-systems in the scheme.

⁵ Miller C; Tsoka M; and Reichert K (2008). Operations report. External Evaluation of the Mchinji Social Cash Transfer Pilot. August 2008

⁶ . IPRSE (2007) Report on Consultative Process funded by DFID and the World Bank “**Integrating The Voice of People into The Malawi Social Protection Policy Process**”; Lilongwe, Malawi

As such, much as it needs to be appreciated that the social cash transfer scheme continues to bear positive results on the lives of beneficiaries and their societies at large, some institutional practices pose challenges in as far as maximum realisation of set goals is concerned.

1.1.2 Strengthening the SCT Scheme through The STOP AIDS NOW! Project

In order to mitigate the economic and psychosocial impact of HIV and AIDS related illness and death of OVC and their caretakers, four Malawian registered Non-Governmental Organisations; NOVOC, CEYCA, YONECO and IPRSE in partnership with the Chitipa District Assembly have been coordinating their efforts, with support from STOP AIDS NOW! in the implementation of a one year project (2010) aimed at strengthening the Social Cash Transfer programme through linking and learning. The overall objective of this project is to mitigate the economic and psychosocial impact of HIV and AIDS related illness and death on OVC and their caretakers through strengthening the Social Cash Transfer programme. The projected envisaged realization of the following outcomes at the end of the year;

1. Improved management and implementation capacity of 1 District to deliver social cash transfers in order to increase the productive capacity of poor and vulnerable households by December 2010`
2. Improved national, district and community level commitment and support for the implementation and scale up of the Social Protection Policy and Social Cash Transfers by 2010.
3. Improved linkages between SCTS beneficiaries and other social services (psychosocial support, microfinance, livestock production, education and health services) by 2010.

The Institute for Policy Research and Social Empowerment (IPRSE) was therefore charged with the responsibility of leading the processes of conducting a baseline survey and implementing an action research to attain participatory problem identification in the scheme, participatory solution development and participatory impact assessment of key stakeholders in the process from both the state and non-state realms of the society. It is therefore against this background that this report seeks to account for the activities that IPRSE has carried out during the one year lifespan of the project.

As part of the research component of the Stop AIDS Now! Supported project, IPRSE has during the year 2010 carried out a total of five activities. These are

1. A baseline to gauge the state of the SCT Scheme in Chitipa
2. Three search conferences as part of the action research
3. One assessment to gauge current and potential programmes to which beneficiaries of the SCT Scheme can be linked to

IPRSE has also during the year made a presentation of its findings to a cross section of policy stakeholders at Capital Hotel in Lilongwe, before submitting technical submissions to the National Social Cash Transfer Technical Working Group for incorporation into the 2011 SCT programme.

SECTION B

2.0 Research Methodology

The following section gives an account of the methodology that was employed in conducting key activities under the research component of the project. These are; a baseline study, the action research and an assessment to gauge prospects and challenges of linking beneficiaries of the Social Cash Transfer Scheme to other social protection instruments being provided in the district by both the Government and the civil society.

2.1 Methodology for the Baseline

(a) Data Collection

The baseline study used both secondary and primary data. The secondary sources of data included research reports on poverty and vulnerability in Chitipa district, food security, rural livelihoods and those specific to the cash transfer scheme like monthly monitoring reports and operational manuals. Primary data was collected through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions.

The baseline exercise employed two main approaches:

- Participatory Vulnerability Analysis when collecting data at community level.
- The Household Economy Approach to food security assessment and vulnerability analysis at household level. This is a livelihoods based framework for analyzing the way people obtain access to things they need to survive and prosper.

A methodological tool was designed to capture factors affecting households' access to basic social services in education and health sectors and how they generally stand in the "eyes" of the society at large.

(b) Sampling Method

For the in-depth interviews and the focus group discussions the sampling method was non-probability purposive sampling. Thus information was sought from people that the research team believed could provide the required information.

At the district level, key informant interviews were conducted with Assembly officials and the Social Cash Transfer Secretariat. At the community level, focus group discussions were conducted and vulnerability concepts were defined, poverty categories described and the poorest families in the community were identified and mapped out. In-depth interviews were then conducted with household representatives.

The selection of the villages from which data would be collected, was guided by the District Assembly through the Social Cash Transfer desk officer who reported to the members that, SCT was being implemented in two Traditional Authorities, namely; TA Mwaulambia and TA Kameme, with both having had the processes of targeting of beneficiaries done, but with only T.A Mwaulambia having received the transfers. It was thus unilaterally agreed that, both TAs be reached to have comparative results. A village cluster was chosen from each of the two TAs and thirty six households were interviewed from the cluster.

(c) Data Analysis

The data collected from the reviews was analyzed using content analysis; the information was categorized according to the major emerging themes.

The data from interviews and focus group discussions was processed using Interpretational Analysis. This involved segmenting the data, developing categories, coding the segments, grouping the categories and developing themes from the data. Thus the verbatim transcripts from the interviews were analyzed and themes were developed. This method was opted for because the intrusive unstructured interviews resulted in information that needed organization.

Then, all the information was placed under relevant themes and codes. Finally a discussion of the results was carried out. This involved relating findings to the objectives of the study as well as picking peculiar or extreme cases that were not initially targeted by the study.

2.2 Methodology for the Action Research

The action research employed qualitative approach, which enables investigation of the interplay of values in a social phenomenon. This has therefore helped the research team to understand what the key stakeholders in the Social Cash Transfer scheme do, why they do what they do and the values underlying the environment in which they interact.

2.2.1 Data Collection

The action research employed a holistic approach to problem-solving, rather than a single method for collecting and analyzing data. These various methods, which are generally common to the qualitative research paradigm, included: in-depth interviews, review of organizational documents, participant observation recordings, and conducting search conferences. Much as the first three tools formed the basis for primary data collection; search conferences have been the main form of the data collection and analysis exercise for the research. This is owed to its participatory nature that fits rightly within the action research concept.

The Search Conference

Of all of the tools utilized in action research, the one that has been developed exclusively to suit the needs of the action research approach is that of the search conference, initially developed by Eric Trist and Fred Emery at the Tavistock Institute in 1959.

For this particular research project, searching has been carried out in a group of the relevant stakeholders at the district level. The group has been meeting quarterly under social island conditions for 2-3 days. The content has been contributed entirely by the members, with the researchers (IPRSE and NOVOC) working as facilitators only.

The process involved listing items in the first instance without criticism in the plenary session and displayed on flip charts which surrounded the room. The material was then discussed in greater depth in small groups and the composite picture checked out in plenary session. The group then examined the setting of the SCT Scheme in Chitipa against this wider background and then proceeded to constructing a picture of a desirable future of the cash transfer scheme.

2.2 .2 Sampling Method

The study had four search conferences with the same participants purposely selected both at district and community levels. They comprised of officials from Chitipa District Assembly, Civil Society, Community Based Organisations, Community Social Protection Committees and randomly selected beneficiaries of the Social Cash Transfer Scheme

2.2.3 Data Analysis

The data collected from the Search Conferences was processed using Interpretational Analysis. This involved fragmentation of the data, as well as developing categories, coding the fragments, grouping the categories and developing themes from the data. This data was categorized during the search conference.

All the information was placed under relevant themes and codes. Finally a discussion of the results was carried out. This involved relating findings to the objectives of the study as well as picking peculiar or extreme cases that were not initially targeted by the baseline study.

2.3 Methodology for the Linkages' Assessment

2.3.1 Data Collection Techniques

The main goal of this assessment was to strengthen the Social Cash Transfer Programme so that it should be responsive to the current situation and that will present an effective way of reinforcing positive change in the socio-economic development of the country. The major task was therefore to accurately assess the current status of the Programme and discern the barriers, constraints, and challenges that are experienced in terms of linking beneficiaries of the same to other social services. This will facilitate the effective delivery of an integrated strategy for long term management of poverty reduction programmes in the country. The principal data collection techniques were therefore as follows;

Key Informant Interviews

Key informant interviews were carried out at district and community levels. Individuals identified as key informants are projected to have particular insights on issues being researched and investigated. These individuals included the District Commissioner for Chitipa, Director of Planning and Development, District Social Welfare Officer, Community Social Protection Committee Officials, Extension Workers, the civil society, faith community and randomly selected beneficiaries and potential beneficiaries of the Social Cash Transfer Programme.

These interviews were carried out on the basis of specially prepared guidelines tailored according to the various levels at which the assessment was carried out. These guides were

largely used as prompters in a flexible fashion so as to make the interviews more conversational while still structured and controlled. The flexible manners in which the interviews were carried out allows for the interviewees to raise additional or complementary issues. The reason is that this interview technique uses open-ended questions that permit unexpected but relevant issues to be followed up with either additional questions or systematic probing. Wherever this happened, these became an integral part of the findings.

Focus Group Discussions

Focus group discussions (FGDs) provided a very powerful means of eliciting in depth views of the participants on the research topic especially at the community level. Three FGDs were held, in Kameme, Misuku and Nthalire with each FGD comprising seven men, seven women, three boys and three girls drawn from beneficiary and potential beneficiary households selected by respective Community Social Protection Committees.

Likewise, the FGDs were carried out using specially prepared checklists that were developed on the basis of the research question. These checklists were used to facilitate the discussion of pertinent issues to the assignment while being mindful of the fact that the basic operative rule for FGDs requires that facilitation should, as much as it is practically possible, be kept at the minimum. The major strength of the FGD technique arises from the fact that it capitalises on group dynamics. It thus becomes possible to get realistic accounts of what people think because they are prompted to critically think about, and possibly revise their views. If therefore properly executed, FGDs generate nuanced, open-minded and sometimes unexpected responses underlying what participants think but also why they think the way they do.

Search Conferences

Some lessons learned from Search conferences that have been conducted in Chitipa under the same project, form a critical benchmark for understanding significant features in terms of policy linkages between beneficiaries of the Social Cash Transfer Scheme and the aforementioned programmes. During the course of the project, strengthening the Social Cash Transfer Scheme, three search conferences have been held involving all key stakeholders in the implementation of the Social Cash Transfer Scheme at district level to unravel challenges and propose solutions to the same.

Literature Review

Literature mainly sourced from the District Welfare Office proved important in uncovering activities of other actors in sectors that can potentially be linked to Social Cash Transfer beneficiaries.

Observations

Observations are a key qualitative data collection instrument. This provides the opportunity to observe the implementation approaches and different methodologies used by different stakeholders; the interaction between beneficiaries and benefactors; the communication dynamics between the two and the quality and quantity of goods and services used.

2.3.2 Data Processing and Interpretation

Since the study employed a qualitative approach, the analysis of the data predominantly involved categorising issues according to the recurrent themes that emerged across the three levels of data collection and sampled sites.

SECTION C

3.0 Presentation and Discussion of Findings

As indicated , IPRSE has been carrying out an action research exercise for a period of one year aimed at building evidence on the performance of one of the most novel and politically contentious social protection instruments being implemented in the country; the Cash Transfer Scheme. The objective of this component of the study was to generate knowledge and evidence on the current state of the Scheme and to identify institutional gaps that might form the basis for CSO advocacy initiatives in the process. The study also sought to assess potential programmes where beneficiaries of the Social Cash Transfer scheme can be linked to.

3.1 Key Parameters of the Cash Transfer Scheme

3.1.1 Objectives of the Scheme

Just as at national level, the Chitipa Cash Transfer Scheme revolves around three main objectives;

- a) Reduce poverty, hunger and starvation in all households that are ultra-poor **and at the same** time labour constrained
- b) Increase school enrolment and attendance and improve the health and nutrition of children living in target group households
- c) To generate information on the practicability and implications of implementing a social cash transfer scheme in Malawi

3.1.2 Defining the targeting concepts

In order for a household to qualify for the scheme they have to meet two criteria;

a) Ultra-poor

This means the households are the poorest of the poor and are not able to meet their most urgent basic needs (only one meal per day, not able to purchase essential non-food items like soap, clothing, school utensils, begging, and no valuable assets).

AND

b) Labour constrained

A household is labour constrained when;

- It has no able bodied household member in the age group 19 to 64 who is fit for work **or**
- when one household member in the age group 19 to 64 years, who is fit for work, has to care for more than three dependents

3.1.3 Implementation Structures at District and Community Levels

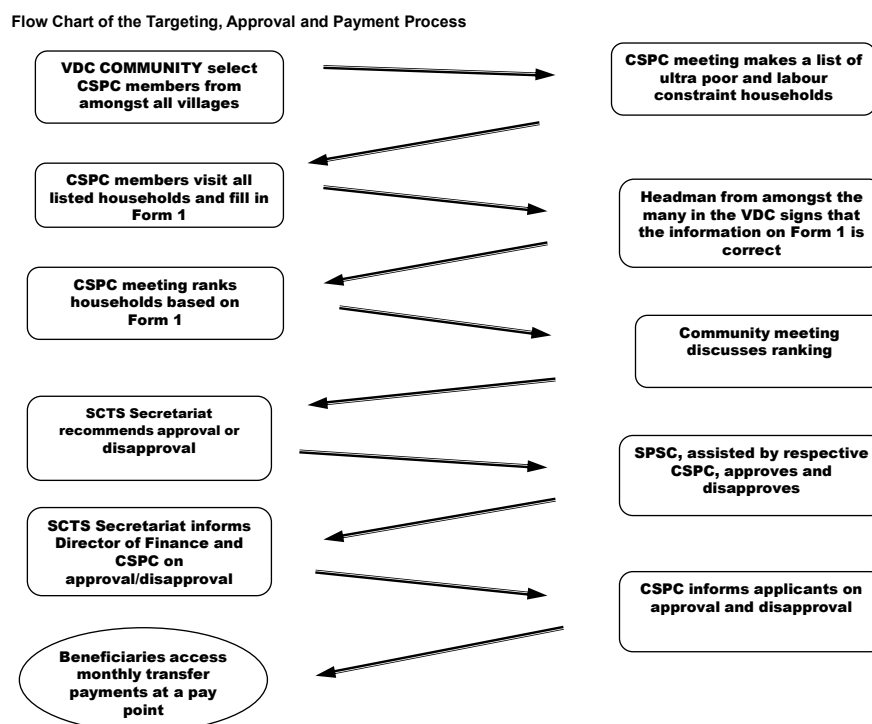
As per the modus operandi of the Malawi Social Cash Transfer Scheme the main institutions playing a key role in the Chitipa Social Cash Transfer Scheme is the District Assembly, working in collaboration with Community Social Protection Committees.

At the district level, there is a Social Protection Committee which is a sub-committee of the District Executive Committee (DEC). The committee is composed of representatives from the directorates of health, education, social welfare, agriculture and finance. The membership also includes non-state actors; World Vision International, World Relief, National Initiative for Civic Education and CHAD. The SPC is headed by the Director of Planning and Development and the main task are the supervision of the SCTS Secretariat and approval/disapproval of applicants. Ideally, the SPC seeks to ensure that the scheme is coordinated with other social protection instruments in the programme so as to realise the much needed linkages of beneficiaries of the scheme to other programmes like free primary school education, psycho-social support, school feeding programmes, school bursaries, agriculture input subsidy programme, micro-credit loans e.t.c.

The Secretariat of the SPC is the Social Cash Transfer Scheme Secretariat which is established in the Department of Social Welfare. The Secretariat has four officers; The District Social Welfare Officer, two Assistant Social Welfare Officers and a Social Welfare Assistant. The team works in close liaison with the District Training Team that has a membership of six trainers, all of them men.

The DTT is mainly responsible for training communities, monitoring implementation of the scheme and training Community Social Protection Committees which are elected by the communities to serve as volunteers responsible for overseeing implementation of the scheme at the community level. The CSPC takes a leading role in targeting of beneficiaries and monitoring changes in household structure that might affect eligibility of the respective household to continue being on the scheme.

3.1.4 Flow Chart of the Targeting, Approval and Payment Process



Levels of Transfers

- 1 person household (HH): MK 600 / app. 4 USD
- 2 person HH: MK 1,000 / approx. USD 7

- 3 person HH: MK 1,400 / approx. USD 10
- 4 person HH: MK 1,800 / approx. USD 13

Bonus for primary school going children of MK 200 and for secondary school going children of MK 400.

3.2 Key Institutional Challenges and Solutions

On the basis of the aforementioned methodology and study objectives, the search conference process uncovered the following challenges and made subsequent resolutions commensurate with available resources to tackle the same. Some of the resolutions have been executed while others are yet to be addressed.

i. Human Resource Capacity of the District Assembly

The study uncovered that there are significant human resource capacity gaps at different levels of the scheme. By the end of the day the District Assembly finds it difficult to accomplish their tasks efficiently. For instance, in Chitipa disbursement of funds takes the Assembly eight days which is very slow rate considering the fact that the Scheme was at that time operational in only one of the five Traditional Authorities. The question that was asked was therefore, “how long would it take the Assembly to deliver the cash once the Scheme rolls out to all the Traditional Authorities?” The Social Cash Transfer Secretariat, which is essentially the District Social Welfare Office, is also not spared of the human resource capacity gaps. This is more aggravated by the fact that as the district social welfare office they have other responsibilities outside the SCT Framework.

As part of the action research entails defining solutions to problems and putting them into effect, a number of resolutions were made to reduce ineffectiveness caused by this problem. These included;

1. Training of extension workers
2. Taking the Chitipa District team to other more experienced districts to learn how their colleagues are implementing the same Scheme with similar human resource challenges

3. Supporting the District Social Welfare Officer, whose office is the secretariat for the SCT Scheme at district level on a study visit to Bangladesh.

As a way of ensuring efficiency, the project also supported the procurement of a computer in the district's Directorate of Finance and design of an automated database to improve the situation as originally files were kept and accessed manually.

ii. Financial Resources

The study uncovered that the Scheme is primarily externally funded, lest for monthly remuneration packages for government officials on the public pay roll. Otherwise the cash that is actually disbursed comes as a grant from the Global Fund through the National AIDS Commission. In addition, UNICEF has played an invaluable role in building the administrative capacity of the implementing stakeholders particularly the Social Cash Transfer Secretariat.

This overdependence on donor funds has put into question the sustainability of the Scheme especially if and when the donor organisations are faced with negative externalities. At the time of the study, beneficiaries had stayed for a year without receiving their dues as the Global Fund had not disbursed their allocation to NAC due to among other factors the global financial crisis. In the absence of Government budgetary support towards the scheme this meant no shoulder to lean on for the beneficiaries who are on the scheme.

As part of the research component of the project, the STOP AIDS NOW! Partnership embarked on an advocacy campaign urging the Government to start contributing towards funding the SCT Programme in a more meaningful way. Consequently, the Government has for the first time allocated US\$1 million budgetary support towards implementation of the scheme. Much as at first value this amount might look little, it should be taken as an important step towards the right direction considering the political economy of Social Cash Transfers amongst key policy stakeholders. More significantly, this call for a more sustainable funding modality has prompted the Government to start redesigning the original funding system towards a basket one, whereby all key stakeholders, including the Government, will be putting their monies together for execution of the Scheme.

On a similar note, through the search conference process it was urged that the District Assembly should not limit its options to traditional donors of the SCT scheme in soliciting resources. Consequently, the Assembly has managed to solicit a vehicle for the implementation of the Scheme, raising the number from one vehicle at the beginning of the project to two, leaving a deficit of one.

iii. Targeting Percentage and cut-off point

The study uncovered that the targeted population for the scheme is guided by the findings of the 2005 Integrated Household Survey (IHS2) that asserted that 10% of the Malawi population was ultra-poor. As such, the Social Cash Transfer Scheme is designed in such a way that it targets 10% of the population of each geographical area where the Scheme is being piloted. Consequently, the Scheme targets 10% of the households in each cluster in the district. Consequently, districts with lower poverty levels like Chitipa have inclusion errors while those with higher poverty levels like Mangochi have exclusion errors.

As part of technical submissions to the Government, the Government has indicated in its programme proposal to the German Government that it will during the year 2011 start employing proportional targeting; whereby each district will be targeting beneficiaries according to the district's ultra poverty levels as outlined by the Integrated Household Survey number three (HIS 3), whose findings will be ready by then.

iv. Linkages with other Social Protection Programmes

Just like any other social protection instrument, Social Cash Transfers, single-handedly, are not adequate to fully address the plight of the poor and vulnerable. To this end, it is recommended that implementation of any social cash transfer programme should be adequately linked to other productivity enhancing social protection instruments.

The study uncovered that there is the aspiration to draw policy linkages in the implementation of social protection instruments in Malawi as envisaged in theme number Malawi National Social Support Policy. The expectation is therefore that, there should be formally institutionalized measures on the ground aimed at linking

beneficiaries of the Social Cash transfer Scheme to other social protection instruments being implemented by a diverse set of stakeholders in the district. However, the study uncovered that there are no deliberate measures whatsoever linking beneficiaries of the Social Cash Transfer Scheme to other social protection programmes being implemented in the districts. As common wisdom would dictate, for a family that is deemed labour constrained because of a dependency ratio higher than 1:3, it would be appropriate to support the cash transfers with some productivity enhancing instruments such as the Farm Input Subsidy Programme (FISP), Income Generating Public Works Programmes, Micro Credit Loans etc. so as to give the household some further push out of the ultra-poverty band. Similarly, it would even make more sense to prioritize secondary school going children from beneficiary ultra-poor households when it comes to granting education bursaries at the district level so as to meaningfully contribute towards objective number two of the cash transfer scheme which aims at increasing school enrolment and attendance of children from ultra-poor families. However, it was uncovered that there is no formally or informally institutionalized policy at district level to provide for such linkages so to meaningfully contribute towards reduction of poverty and increasing school enrolment and attendance. Actually what came out clearly was that beneficiaries of the Social Cash Transfer Scheme are sidelined by the communities when targeting for other social protection programmes to ensure “equitable sharing of the public cake”. Hasten to say, some of the beneficiaries have found themselves simultaneously benefiting from other programmes, though not by design. For instance, a cross section of respondents interviewed at household level indicated that they are also beneficiaries of the Farm Input Subsidy Programme, However, as indicated this happens coincidentally such that it is actually impossible to get statics to that respect.

Much as the District has intervened for inclusion of SCT beneficiaries during targeting of Farm Inputs Subsidy Programme, and has submitted a funding proposal to UNICEF for a psychosocial support programme, neither the Government nor the Civil Society community has made concrete commitment at national and sub-national levels to institutionalize such linkages. This consequently continues to remain an advocacy challenge for policy stakeholders with the aspiration to effectively address the plight of the poor and vulnerable in Chitipa district and beyond.

v. Reasons for Removal from the Beneficiary List

The study uncovered that since inception of the Scheme in Chitipa district 23 households have been removed from the beneficiary list for various reasons. Out of the 23, 15 were one member households which ceased to exist upon death. Two had relocated from one cluster to the neighbouring one and the remaining six were removed for various reasons revolving around eligibility criteria. The problem with relocation to another cluster is that the household cannot be on the beneficiary list in their new cluster up until retargeting has been done. However, since the Scheme started in Mchinji in 2005, retargeting has not been done despite the provision to retarget after every two years. Thus the implication is that once a household relocates to another cluster for whatever valid or invalid reasons they might have, chances of finding their way back onto the Scheme are essentially nonexistent.

A case to revisit the graduation processes has subsequently been submitted to the National Social Cash Transfer Technical Working Group and stakeholders are yet to meet to discuss the same. It is hoped that policy alternatives to this effect will be put forward for a fair graduation and removal system.

vi. *Challenges in defining a Household and Household Heads*

The study uncovered that much as the simple definition of a household refers to people living under one roof and eating in that house, the case in Chitipa and is uniquely different due to higher levels of polygamy and stronger bonds in extended family. Consequently there is haphazard and more chaotic movements of individuals from one house to another thereby making it difficult for one to define the household in terms of numbers as others can move in or out of the same any time. Similarly, as men with more than one wife trail from one house to the other the concept of family head becomes somewhat knotty to operationalise; if a man leaves a house for six months does he continue being the head of that household or the woman who is heading it takes over? This question becomes tricky particularly in a patrimonial society like Chitipa as the man is expected to continue being regarded as the family head thus one to be getting the cash transfers on behalf of the household even if he is not physically living in that household. Thus such challenges put into question whether the cash transfers will indeed reach the intended beneficiaries and have the

intended impact on the socioeconomic status of the intended household. To this end the district has resolved to regard the guardian who permanently resides in the targeted household as the recipient irrespective of sex and age.

vii. Exclusion of Homeless Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children

Since the Scheme targets households as defined by the communities, destitute children, roaming prostitutes, homeless OVCs who are not living in established households are left outside the targeting band. The implication is therefore that such children are left to continue living in such conditions with no hope of graduating and being steered into the mainstream society. If the scheme was extended to such children the first two objectives of reducing ultra poverty, hunger and starvation as well as to increase school enrolment and attendance would effectively be accomplished. However, with the current targeting limitations, that segment of the society is denied the opportunity to become productive members of the society someday.

With growing animosity towards introduction of “foster homes” in the country advocacy position that came out often is that the Government should embark on a massive re-integration programme to incorporate these wandering OVCs back into the mainstream society so that they also stand to benefit what their colleagues in traditional households are getting. While the practicability of such an ambitious intervention remains debatable, the position of most respondents was that “it better, in Malawi’s rural context, to take the child back to the home rather than putting them in institutions or letting them wander on the streets as they normally run away from their households mainly due to poverty”⁷.

viii. Political Interference at Community Level

The study uncovered that much as there are agreed upon procedures governing targeting and delivery of cash transfers, the implementing partners particularly at cluster level have occasionally been subjected to undue political pressures from traditional leaders. Oftentimes traditional leaders exert pressures on Community Social Protection Committees to include beneficiaries on the list even if they are not

⁷ Popular response phrased in the words of Mr. J Wafwa wafwa a SCT beneficiary in Kameme area; Chitipa district

eligible as per set down guidelines. Much as this might sound simple, it should be understood that the said committee is a composition of individuals who are subjects of the same traditional leaders. As such, if there are any fears or feeling of hatred being propagated, such occurrences, particularly if left unchecked, stand to make the lives of the committees unnecessarily too difficult considering the power and role of traditional leaders in village politics.

To this effect the National Social Cash Transfer Technical Working Group is considering a proxy means testing method that is more objective than the current one. With a proxy means testing method qualification will be strictly statistical with no subjective judgment employed. This will therefore work towards lessening malpractices in the targeting process. However, the challenge lies in processes after targeting has already been done as regards what needs to be put in place to ensure that beneficiary indeed get and wholly enjoy their entitlements without any person getting back to them to get a share of the same. To this effect, the partnership is advocating for a grievance reporting system and case management framework. According to the 2011 annual work-plan for the SCT Programme, the Government will be looking at options of institutionalizing the two, in the quest to promote democratic governance in the execution of the Scheme.

3.3 Key Advocacy Issues

As action research entails learning through doing, one of the implications was a continuous advocacy with the Government at district and national levels. Since, the Government at district level was part of the search conference it was very easy to get buy in from them as they were part of the data collection and analysis. However, for some things to change a need arose to change some policy features at national level as the district assembly lacks the mandate to do so. As such, policy advocacy was equally an important component of this project aimed at strengthening the Malawi Social cash Transfer Scheme. This experience has unravelled a number of challenges which must be considered when designing advocacy and

communication strategies for future engagement by the civil society community. Key to these challenges are the following;

i. CSOs' Relation with Government

It was found out that the CSOs access information from the Government usually through informal sources because it is difficult to get information through the formal channels. The study also found that some quotas in the public service do not want to disclose any information regarding Government expenditure and the programs being implemented; and the absence of access-to-information law aggravates the situation. Consequently, the civil society relies on informal channels which are oftentimes not very reliable.

During the course of the project, it was therefore resolved to strengthen the working relationship with Government by amongst other ways strengthening the strategic partnership with the Ministry of Women and Child Welfare and the Ministry of Development Planning and cooperation whose officials became part and parcel of the project. As such, these officials provided necessary information and clarifications on pertinent issues of the Social Cash Transfer Scheme during the research process.

ii. Government Consideration of CSO Proposals

The study uncovered that there is usually resistance on the part of the Government to consider advocacy proposals from the civil society because it does not want to be told anything to do with policy issues, accountability, transparency and how public resources are expended. The government tolerates the civil society organisations but does not really consider their recommendations or policy options. The Government reasons that this is the case because the CSOs are after serving their own agendas. Reasonable partnerships with relevant government officials and departments have proved vital towards policy agenda setting during the course of implementing the project, with reasonable compromises being made at times.

iii. Structure of the Policy Process

The procedure of policy making in Malawi poses another challenge to participation of CSOs in policy formulation. Both civil society organisations and government departments reveal that most policies that are implemented at district level are formulated at the national level with limited or no input from the districts. As such, CSO capability to change the policy landscape is only manifested during implementation of the same. As such the extent to which CSOs at district level can influence Government decisions is to a greater extent limited to resource allocation within the praxis of existing policies.

iv. The Role of the Political Economy

This is the most critical challenge to policy advocacy within the praxis of the Malawi Social Cash Transfer Scheme. Considering the fact that the SCT Scheme has greatly been donor dependent, while being implemented within the framework of the Government's decentralization system, two policy stakeholders tend to have an undue edge over others in decision making, i.e. the Government and the donors. The biggest challenge has therefore been that the agendas of the two have mainly been driven by rigid ideologies rather than needs on the ground. The civil society has had to, and continues to, sweat in order to put their policy positions across the policy table.

This has been manifested in some situations whereby professional civil servants have rejected policy recommendations because they were presented in the presence of donors, politicians and the media, only to come back later asking for a silent incorporation of the same, including incorporation of some civil society organisations into key decision making forums drafting the terrain of the Malawi Social Cash transfer Programme.

The challenge is therefore to understand the incentives, relationships, distribution and contestation of power between different policy stakeholders and entrepreneurs and analyze the extent to which such factors impact on outcomes of the Malawi Social Cash Transfer Scheme.

3.4 Civil Society Options for Change

Much as political factors have time and again dictated restraints on the extent to which CSOs participate in policy processes, there is evidence that part of the responsibility lies with CSOs themselves. Oftentimes, individual CSOs appear to work in isolation leading into poor coordination of efforts as well as germination of questions regarding their legitimacy and accountability. Another problem is that CSOs have demonstrated limited understanding of policy processes, a development that makes it difficult for them to influence policy outcomes. On the other hand, it is suffice to indicate that some CSOs have a wide repository of knowledge including real expertise in an issue area or an understanding of the concerns most important to their constituents. However, the extent to which their policy proposals are evidence based remains a myth; a development that makes it difficult for policy makers to accept the said proposals. On another note, even for the few CSOs that engage in rigorous analysis on policy issues and come up with realistic policy alternatives, policy makers have oftentimes bemoaned their inability to make their findings accessible, digestible and in time for policy discussions. Within this context, a key challenge for CSOs is one of better communication.

Overcoming the aforementioned challenges is not easy. CSOs need to understand a policy context; access and generate rigorous evidence; package it for different audiences; engage with the policy process; and network and communicate with a wide range of partners. For this to be attained there is need for financial investments and a wide range of technical capacities. Otherwise, smaller and indigenous CSOs risk being crowded out by the Government and donor agencies, given their resource differences.

SECTION D

4.0 Advocacy Recommendations and Conclusion

Based on the outcome of the search conferences done in the district, IPRSE has presented a number of policy recommendations to both the National Social Protection Technical Committee as well as to the National Assembly, particularly Members of Parliament. To this end, the following are the recommendations that have been submitted;

1. The Government should facilitate the adoption of the National Social Support Policy to provide a legitimate framework for putting its contribution towards the Social Cash Transfer Scheme through the national budget to ensure, Government ownership, predictability and sustainability of the Scheme.
2. Government should start making strides towards funding the SCT Programme through the national budget, as part of the development budget while awaiting enactment of the National Social Protection Policy
3. Government should seriously embark on a human resource capacity building initiatives for all departments and directorates at the district level, considering the multi-faceted nature of the problems being addressed by the Scheme.
4. The District Assemblies, through District Executive Committees and the District Social Protection Committee should put in place deliberate measures that link beneficiaries of the Scheme to other social protection interventions at the district level like, school bursaries, psychosocial support, Agriculture Input Subsidies e.t.c so that they maximize the benefits of the cash.
5. The Government should support regular monitoring and evaluation of the Scheme and reports should be prepared and submitted according to plan i.e. monthly, quarterly and annually.

6. Households headed by school going children aged up to 25 years must be considered labour constrained during targeting.
7. Targeted percentage in each district must be commensurate with the ultra poor percentage population of that district; not the current uniform 10% across the country.
8. Transferred amounts, along with lunch allowances for the Trainers, must be revisited in line with the changing economic landscape.

As indicated earlier on, some of these recommendations have already found their way into the SCT Scheme, and will be officially incorporated in June 2011 after a review of the Scheme, while some continue to be advocacy challenges for the STOP AIDS NOW! Partnership in Malawi. Having opened the policy window for meaningful civil society participation at the national level, the programme must institutionalize similar windows at the district and lower levels. The most challenging task at the end of the project in Chitipa is to ensure that citizen participation manifests itself in the development of the National Social Protection Programme as well as in the implementation of the several social protection instruments currently being executed at the district level.

The departure from elitist approaches to policy formulation into the formulation of the National Social Protection Policy demonstrates that it is possible to advance adherence to principles of good governance in Malawi's public policy processes. Of significant importance is the need to carry on with this commendable job in the process of developing the National Social Protection Programme that has just taken off, all the way through to the implementation of the same. On the other hand, a critical challenge remains to ensure that political pledges are matched with actions, by ensuring that the National Social Support Policy is adopted by Cabinet and subsequently enacted by Parliament. The good working relationship that the Chitipa project has witnessed blossoming should therefore be taken as a window of opportunity for the civil society community to advocate for evidence-based positions towards in our common aspiration to address the plight of the poor and the vulnerable in Malawi's larger society.

Appendix 1: List of Respondents (Key informant Interviews)

INSTITUTION	POSITION
Chitipa District Assembly	District Commissioner
Chitipa District Assembly	Director of Planning and Development
Chitipa District Assembly	Director of Finance
Chitipa District Assembly	District Social Welfare Officer
Roman Catholic Church	Priest
Malawi Economic Justice Network- Chitipa Chapter	District Coordinator
World Vision – Chitipa District office	District Coordinator
Tovwirane Youth Organization	Director
NOVOC- Chitipa district	District coordinator
Catholic Development Commission (CADECOM)	District desk officer
National Initiative for Civic Education (NICE)	District Coordinator
Community Social Protection Committee- Misuku	Chairperson
Community Social Protection Committee- Nthalire	Chairperson
Community Social Protection Committee- Kameme	Secretary
12 SCT beneficiaries	Kameme
12 SCT beneficiaries	Nthalire
12 SCT beneficiaries	Mwaulambia

Appendix 2: Interview Guide at District Level

INTERVIEW GUIDE AT DISTRICT LEVEL

For DC, DPD, DSWO and DSPC

Name of Interviewee: _____ Position : _____

Date of Interview: _____

Briefly explain the purpose and objectives of this interview, within the framework of the project aimed at strengthening the SCT Scheme with support from STOP AIDS NOW! Netherlands.

Section A: Programme Background

1. When was the Social Cash Transfer Scheme introduced in the district?
2. How has the beneficiary population improved/depreciated overtime?
3. What are the observable benefits of the Scheme so far? (probe for as many as possible)

- _____

- _____

- _____

- _____

- _____

4. May you kindly outline objectives of the SCT Scheme?

5. What are other observable areas of impact beyond the stipulated objectives?

- _____

- _____

- _____

Section B: Programme Linkages

6. How do these objectives cross cut with other sectors at implementation level?
7. What are the sectors with which the SCT Scheme crosscuts? (probe for as many as possible and list them down; provide extra paper if necessary)

- _____

- _____

- _____

- _____

- _____

8. How does the SCT potentially link with the sectors in 6 above (tally sector by sector)
9. Are there other potential sectors where beneficiaries of the SCT Scheme can be linked to?

(a) Yes (b) No

10. If Yes what are they? (probe for as many as possible)

- _____

- _____

- _____

- _____

- _____

11. How does the SCT relate to the sectors in 10 above? (probe sector by sector)

Section C: Prospects for Linkages (*for each question, probe sector by sector*)

12. What opportunities are currently available to link SCT beneficiaries with sectors above? To what extent has the Assembly utilized these opportunities?
13. Are there any deliberate mechanisms to exploit such opportunities?
14. What can be done to maximize utility of the opportunities?

Section D: Challenges for Linkages

15. What can be singled out as key challenges undermining linking beneficiaries of the SCT to the aforementioned sectors?
16. What can you present as the root causes of such challenges?
17. How can these challenges be dealt with by dealing with the root causes?
18. Who is supposed to do what, to solve these bottlenecks?

Kindly ask for supporting documents/literature for cross referencing

Thank you very much for sparing your time to respond to this interview

Appendix 3: Interview Guide At Community Level INTERVIEW GUIDE AT COMMUNITY LEVEL

For CSPCs and Extension Workers

Name of Interviewee: _____ Position : _____

Date of Interview: _____

Briefly explain the purpose and objectives of this interview, within the framework of the project aimed at strengthening the SCT Scheme with support from STOP AIDS NOW! Netherlands.

Section A: Programme Background

19. When was the Social Cash Transfer Scheme introduced in the community?
20. How has the beneficiary population improved/depreciated overtime?
21. What are the observable benefits of the Scheme so far? (probe for as many as possible)

- _____

- _____

- _____

• _____

 29. How does the SCT relate to the sectors in 10 above? (probe sector by sector)

Section C: Prospects for Linkages (*for each question, probe sector by sector*)

30. What opportunities are currently available to link SCT beneficiaries with sectors above? To what extent has the Assembly utilized these opportunities?

31. Are there any deliberate mechanisms to exploit such opportunities?

32. What can be done to maximize utility of the opportunities?

Section D: Challenges for Linkages

33. What can be singled out as key challenges undermining linking beneficiaries of the SCT to the aforementioned sectors?

34. What can you present as the root causes of such challenges?

35. How can these challenges be dealt with by dealing with the root causes?

36. Who is supposed to do what, to solve these bottlenecks?

Kindly ask for supporting documents/literature for cross referencing

Thank you very much for sparing your time to respond to this interview

Appendix 4: Guideline for Search Conference
 THE SEARCH CONFERENCE PROCESS

Stages 1-3	ACTIVITY	DETAILS
Step 1	Pre-Conference process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up Advisory Group of local representatives • Agree on process design, and participants • Send out invitations to

		participants in Chitipa
Step 2	Introductory plenary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions, review of objectives, outline process, introduce first stage • Present problem tree analysis
Step 3	Group session 1	<p>SCANNING THE ISSUE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Past and present situation • Current problem analysis, problem tree analysis • Outline probable futures
Step 4	Plenary presentation	Reports from the groups, discuss directions, introduce second stage
Step 5	Groups session 2	<p>DESIRED FUTURES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long range visions • Alternative/Preferred futures
Step 6	Presentation plenary	Group reports, review progress, introduction to third Session
Step 7	Group Session3	<p>OPTIONS FOR CHANGE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constraints and opportunities • Possible futures
Step 8	Presentation plenary	Reports, define strategic

		<p>tasks/actions, select key tasks, form task groups</p> <p>(what must change, how when and who should do what)</p>
Step 9	Task group Sessions	Task group meetings
Step 10	Final plenary	Task group reports, discuss future contacts, create new Advisory Group
	Post Conference process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • report distributed · follow-up contacts · Advisory Group facilitates meetings of Task Groups · feedback on proposed actions · further search conferences · widen network · continuing evaluation of outcomes

Appendix 5: THE FGD PROCESS

Stages 1-3	ACTIVITY	DETAILS
Step 1	Preparatory Stage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up group of local representatives • Agree on process design, and participants

Step 2	Introductory plenary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions, review of objectives, outline process, introduce first stage • Present problem tree analysis • Divide group into men, women, and youths
Step 3	Group session 1	<p>SCANNING THE ISSUE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Past and present situation • Current problem analysis, problem tree analysis • Outline probable futures
Step 4	Plenary presentation	Reports from the groups, discuss directions, introduce second stage
Step 5	Groups session 2	<p>DESIRED FUTURES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long range visions • Alternative/Preferred futures
Step 6	Presentation plenary	Group reports, review progress, introduction to third Session
Step 7	Group Session3	<p>OPTIONS FOR CHANGE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constraints and opportunities

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible futures
Step 8	Presentation plenary	<p>what must change, how when and who should do what</p>