

Learning Workshop on Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) and Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) in Kenya

At Kenya School of Monetary Studies (KSMS), Nairobi, Kenya
20-21 February, 2006

Objectives

- To strengthen understanding of key issues related to CCT, including through lessons learned from other countries, as a potentially high-impact tool to better serve Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC)
- To identify lessons and issues for the implementation of the CCT program in Kenya

Jointly Organized by:

- Office of vice- president & Ministry of Home Affairs (OVP&MOHA)
- World Bank (WB)
- United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
- UK Department for International Development (DFID)
- Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA)

Participants:

(See Annex 1 for full participant list)

68 participants from;

- Government of Kenya
 - OVP & MOHA and Children's Department from various provinces / districts
 - Ministry of Education
 - Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS)
 - Civil Registration
- External Partners
 - World Bank
 - UNICEF
 - DFID
 - SIDA
 - PEPFAR
 - Inter-American Development Bank (IADB)
- Consultants
 - Ayala Consulting
 - Center for British Teachers (CfBT)
 - Futures Group
 - Oxford Policy Management

DAY 1 (20 APRIL, 2006)

(See Annex 2 for Agenda)

Introductory Session

Welcome remarks by Noah Sanganyi, Assistant Director Children's Services. The workshop was called to order at 8.30 a.m, and participants introduced themselves. Mr. Sanganyi welcomed the participants to the workshop and chaired most of the morning session.

Workshop overview by Junko Saito, Operations Officer, World Bank. The workshop was structured as follows: a) Kenya OVC and CCT overview; b) CCT experiences from Latin America; c) Other experiences of OVC support, and implications for CCT; d) Design issues for CCT; and e) Group work and presentations.

Opening Remarks

Hon. Moody Awori, Vice President & Minister of Home Affairs.

The Vice-President referred to the Commission for Africa which has identified social transfer programs as a tool to tackle extreme poverty and inequality in Sub-Saharan countries, and has recommended governments to develop appropriate social protection strategies to support families with OVC. He pointed out that in Kenya, HIV/AIDS has contributed to the increase in the number of OVC – it is estimated that 1.8 million children are orphaned, and the number is expected to rise to 2 million by 2010. The Kenyan government and its partners have come a long way in their efforts to address OVC challenges. Key achievements include: a) National Steering Committee to coordinate national OVC issues was established in May 2004; b) Rapid Analysis and Assessment on OVC was conducted in 2004; c) 5-year National Plan of Action was developed; d) National Policy on OVC is now in final draft stage; e) A joint funding system has been proposed to allow pooling of resources for OVC; and f) the Government itself is starting to fund cash transfer programs for OVC. Further, the Government is committed to ensuring that OVC (like other children) access their basic rights that will guarantee their safe transition to responsible adulthood. Co-ordination and networking among partners dealing with OVC has been enhanced to ensure available resources trickle down to the needy. The Government is committed to continuing its efforts. The Vice-President also discussed various important issues including community based targeting and care for the welfare of children and community ownership, the gradual abolishment of children's homes (not immediate), and the need to avoid creating dependency. Finally, he emphasized that the Area Advisory Council (AAC) plays a crucial role for implementation of CCT at the district level.

Per Engeback, Regional Director, UNICEF

The Regional Director for UNICEF stressed that the OVC problem is already immense, but that the worst is yet to come. He also argues that civil society by itself cannot cope with the size of the problem, and there has to be a national level response. We should take advantage of interlinkages of on-going programs in the country (especially education) – and utilize as much as possible the existing infrastructure, rather than creating new initiatives. Going forward, monitoring and evaluation are extremely important. In conclusion, he emphasized that he was extremely pleased to see this workshop happen, pulling together different parties, as there has to be strong collaboration among all parties.

AMB.Dr.Hukka Wario, Permanent Secretary Office of Vice-President & Ministry of Home Affairs

The Permanent Secretary briefly addressed the meeting to emphasize the importance of the topic, and the crucial need to scale up the current efforts. In his remarks he stressed that children are at the centre of our business, and that addressing the welfare of children is addressing the welfare of humanity.

Ahmed Hussein, Director of Children's Services

The Director of Children's Services informed the participants that CCT project had had a pre-pilot carried out in three districts – Kwale, Garissa and Nairobi, where the beneficiaries are being assisted with K.Shs.500 per month. After three months a quick evaluation had been done and this showed that school-going children in the programme had new uniforms and were getting their basic needs being met. Currently the beneficiaries are being given K.Shs.1,000 per month and families are being encouraged to foster and adopt an orphaned child which is more sustainable. Another evaluation had done in the three districts and it was realized that communities wanted conditions to be attached to the cash subsidy – those households benefiting must send their children to school, the children should access medical care whenever they are sick, and should have their birth registered. The Director further informed the participants that the OVC section at Children's Department headquarters started with one officer, but that it is now being manned by five officers. He also stressed the need for co-ordination among the agencies dealing with the OVC to reduce administration costs. He sighted the Jamaica case where the administration cost is 10 percent, while 90 cent of resources goes to the beneficiaries.

Session 1: Kenya OVC CCT Programme: Main Issues, Challenges and Perspectives

Ahmed Hussein (Children’s Department): “Conditional Cash Transfer on OVC in Kenya”, highlighted the importance of the need for a national, harmonized approach to CCT, the empowering of families and communities, and the sensitization on OVC and CCT issues among children themselves, law enforcers and the general public.

Michael Mills (World Bank): “Orphans and Vulnerable Children, Conditional Cash Transfers”. In his presentation, Mr. Mills noted that vulnerability may be defined to be the likelihood of being harmed by unforeseen events or a susceptibility to exogenous shocks such as loss of educational chances, trauma and injury, sexual abuse, economic exploitation, psychological deprivation and malnutrition. He highlighted the need to scale up the current efforts to support OVC and for OVC programmes to be integrated in the National Plan. He also raised questions needing to be answered in doing so (the administration and implementation systems for CCT programs, capacity issues, financing sustainability, monitoring and evaluation, and mainstreaming and links with other poverty-related work). He affirmed the Bank’s commitment to support OVC.

Stephen Kidd (DFID): “Social Security and Children Affected by AIDS: Models and Challenges”. He started by quoting words of Gareth Thomas, DFID’s Deputy Minister, “we will only be effective in meeting the challenges of child poverty in poor countries if we commit to strengthen National System of Social Security that address vulnerability”. In this regard, therefore, we need to be clear on long-term aims; are we aiming to build a national programme to support access to rights, bearing in mind that cash transfer can stimulate economic development? He stressed the need for piloting is to assess whether Cash Transfer can work and also to find out its feasibility in implementing it in large scale. He also highlighted the need for political will to support cash transfer programs for OVC; the importance of pilot programs being experimental and of sufficient scale to learn real lessons; the key operational questions relating to implementation; alternative conceptions of conditionalities (weak or soft); challenges and possibilities of targeting – in general and specifically in the African context (where categorical targeting may be appropriate, e.g. older grandparents caring for OVC, child-headed household, etc.,).

Annika Nordin-Jayawardena (SIDA). She informed the participants of the areas which SIDA supports. Including: the programme in the Children Department; roads construction and repair work in the Ministry of Public Works; health care with the Ministry of Health; water and sanitation; and agriculture. She highlighted the importance of both prevention and mitigation to support OVC; the perspective of human rights; the need to create good information systems for transparency and accountability; and the comparison with the GJLOS sector

program. She also appealed to Children's Officers at the District to keep on sharing their progress of activities in the area of child protection.

Q & A and discussions highlighted the following issues

- There is need for a balanced perspective on “conditionalities” as they may be necessary and are often requested by communities i.e. “our children need to attend school, and the best way to realize is to receive money”.
- The question of “human rights” versus “poverty reduction” is a matter of difference in approach, but with the same objective (i.e. providing basic services to OVC).
- The results from the evaluation of the current schemes need to be carefully examined with full participation by all stakeholders.
- The mechanism for the transfer of funds needs to be considered carefully – banks do not seem to be interested in cooperating, but this should be checked further. Post offices may provide a more promising option, as could the private sector or schools.

Session 2: Kenya CCT Programme: Experiences so far

Joanne Dunne (UNICEF) “Cash Subsidy for OVC” highlighted the overview of the UNICEF-supported cash subsidy program in the country (objectives of child rights protection, income supplement, poverty and vulnerability reduction), and challenges including costs of monitoring and service provision, problems of transfer mechanism through the Paymaster General (PMG), and MOHA capacity. In response to this situation UNICEF/GOK programme is reaching out to these children in nine learning communities in the country through conditioned cash transfer aimed at promoting the realization of OVC rights and eventual reductions in poverty and vulnerability. So far it has been learned that community targeting increases accountability, and that communities have capacity to come up with their own conditionalities and are able to validate the selection of beneficiaries. However, the transfer of funds to the beneficiaries through the Paymaster General (PMG) is cumbersome and at times problematic, thus causing delay in the process.

S.G. Giatu (District Children’s Officer, Kwale) “OVC Direct Cash Subsidy – Kwale District”. The presenter pointed out that the district has a population of 706,692 distributed in the six divisions, 37 locations of which are covered by three constituencies: Kinango, Matuga and Kubo. The cash subsidy programme was started in October, 2004 in three learning areas within the GOK/UNICEF Program of Cooperation: Tsimba, Chengoni and Mwereni, targeting 130 children who were given K.sh. 500 monthly. The process of implementation of the programme was as follows. Area Advisory Council was sensitized on the project and selected the OVC Sub Committee. The OVC Sub Committee was trained as Trainers of Trainers (TOT) and they later trained the enumerators on data collections using a questionnaire. Village Development Committee (VDC) was also trained on household listing. Data entry and analysis done by the OVC Sub committee and in particular the District Statistic Officer. Selection criteria were based on age of the beneficiaries, orphanhood and level of monthly income of the household. The selected list was then subjected to the community for validation. The funds were disbursed from UNICEF to the District Children Officer who eventually gave it out to the beneficiaries with the help of village development committee. Monitoring is done at village level by the VDC and at the District by AAC Sub- committee on monthly basis. Overall, Mr. Giatu highlighted the overview of the cash subsidy scheme in the district, the process of targeting (use of locally hired enumerators; questionnaire with key modules on orphanhood, education, birth registration, child labour, household morbidity, income, etc; consultation and verification with communities; and selection criteria of orphanhood, age, external support, etc.). It was found that more money was spent on school-related expenses and food in the beginning, followed by a shift towards food and medical care.

B. Wambani (Provincial Children’s Officer, Nairobi) “OVC Direct Cash Subsidy Nairobi Experience”. Mr. Wambani informed the meeting that the Nairobi OVC Cash Subsidy Programme had been initiated in three locations in December, 2004 (Kangemi, Kibera and Korogocho) and has 320 children, though the number will be scaled up. Some community based organizations (CBO) were identified to assist OVC to benefit from the programme. Food and school accounted for more than 90% of the expenditure. As a result, many children who had dropped out of school were re-enrolled back; the nutrition status of the children in the programme has improved; and some households have started income generating activities. However, the K.Sh. 500 given as a cash subsidy was not adequate for families with many orphans. The flow of the cash was inconsistent and problematic. Many deserving OVC are not in the programme. Some families relocated to other locations can never be traced. There are inadequate numbers of staff to supervise the programme. There is a problem of insecurity in the slum areas. Some selected orphans have died. Overall, he highlighted the overview of the cash subsidy scheme in the province (320 OVC, K.Sh. 500 monthly). Positive outcomes were found among targeted children (resumption of school attendance, improved nutritional status, household income generating activities, increased capacity of children officers). Noted constraints include insufficient amount of support and coverage, inconsistent funds flow, inadequate staffing, security problem of traveling with cash, changes in the targeted children and household (death, disappearance, etc).

A. Yusuf (Provincial Children’s Officer, Garissa) “Conditional Cash Subsidy Garissa Experiences”

The presenter explained that the Conditional Cash Subsidy programme was pre-piloted in Garissa in June 2004 in three locations (Ifin, Dertu and Balambala) with GOK/UNICEF support. The target was 50 OVC in 50 different households. Each household was given Ksh. 500 per month starting October, 2004. Plans are underway to scale up to 500 children and the cash to be increased to K.Sh. 1000 per month. The main challenges are: long distance and vastness of the area; the nomadic lifestyle of the people, making it difficult to trace the selected children; high illiteracy level, making people indifference to education, immunization and registration of birth or death; high rates of dependency on handouts; and harsh climatic conditions making the community vulnerable to famine. Overall, he highlighted that the scheme (50 OVC, K.Sh. 500 monthly) was similar to those mentioned above. The identified issues included those related to difficulty in collecting accurate data on the beneficiaries (partly due to the bias of locally recruited data collection clerks, community leaders). However, a positive example of a family requesting the subsidy be discontinued, after having the basic needs met, was also mentioned. Challenges include wide geographical spread of the target population (three locations are 130-140 km away from each other), nomadic life style, high illiteracy level (indifference to education, etc), dependency, limited impact of the scheme compared to the scale of poverty, difficulty of birth registration. It was also witnessed that children under female caretakers are more likely to receive good care and protection.

Recommendations included increased resources to cover geographical distance (fuel, etc.), consideration for disabled children, increased efforts to ensure the basic needs are met, and simplifying birth registration

E. Akatch (Provincial Children’s Officer, Nyanza) discussed the situation in Nyanza, where it is planned to introduce the CCT program. He suggested that key issues to be considered include possible categorical targeting or child-headed households, the need for analysis of financial sustainability, and the issue of the access of OVC to secondary education.

Q & A and Discussions highlighted the following issues:

- The areas and number of OVC to be covered are vast.
- There is a serious problem with the flow of funds (the process by which the funds are transferred). The causes of the delay were explained by the MOHA, but it was clear that there needs to be further experimentation with alternative options.
- How do we serve nomadic communities for whom post offices and banks are not good options?
- Conditionalities are not yet fully in place, and need to be considered carefully.
- Good management of funds by elderly grandmothers caring for orphans has been witnessed – the funds have enabled them to start income generating activities.
- There is need for CCT sensitization.
- We need to stop calling any program by the name of an external partner (such as the “UNICEF CCT Program”, “GOK CCT program”, etc). All of them need to be coordinated under one framework.
- The criteria of the allocation of funds among different provinces and districts are a question yet to be answered.
- Money to be spent on ensuring security of officers traveling with cash is important and should not be considered as unnecessary administrative costs needing to be reduced

Session 3: CCT Experiences in Latin America, etc., and the Implications for the CCT Programme in Kenya

Francisco Ayala “Social Safety Nets: CCT/OVC: Lessons Learned from CCTs” gave an overview of CCT design issues, using examples from Colombia, Jamaica, Palestine, Paraguay, and Mexico focusing on the following aspects: objectives (varying from social assistance to the extreme poor to access to secondary education); eligibility criteria and differing targeting systems (geographical, poverty, HIV, etc., etc.), proxy means testing; types of conditionalities (education, health, etc.); frequency, level and type of benefits; problems (e.g. opportunity costs / insufficient incentives), and exit policy, etc.

Ferdinando Regalia (IADB) “Some thoughts about conditionalities in cash transfer programs: Lessons from Latin America and the Caribbean” gave an overview of issues related to conditionalities, based on programmes in Latin America, and existing literature. Noted are: the indication of effectiveness of CCT as opposed to simple cash transfer; examples of different types of conditionalities (among age groups, countries); challenges of monitoring; questions of CCT application in low income countries – e.g. the challenge of appropriate implementation mechanisms, bottlenecks of service supply, transparency and accountability.

Mary Mbuga and Stephen Wanjau Nguiko (Children’s Department) provided commentaries. Mary emphasized in particular the need to focus carefully on policy decisions up-front, particularly as donor funding will finish at some point in time. Stephen reflected particularly on the Jamaica CCT program, which had just been visited. He suggested that having a low proportion of beneficiaries in a situation of widespread poverty may cause problems; that careful attention needs to be given to the governance of the CCT programs; that there should be full clarity about the targeting strategy; and that existing mechanisms (such as school committees and/or food distribution lists) should be used where possible.

Q & A and Discussions highlighted the following issues:

- The importance of carrying out the pre-pilot (and the evaluation results need to be disseminated further).
- The scaling-up of programs takes time to plan adequately and then implement.
- There could and should be a variety of approaches even within a single country.
- On conditionalities, there is need for solid inter-ministerial coordination; one should avoid a situation where there are conditions in theory but not in

practice; the supply of services needs to be guaranteed in advance of a conditional program;

- It is essential that there is sufficient capacity building carried out; and
- The flow of funds is absolutely critical to the success of CCT programs.

Session 4: Other Experiences of Providing OVC Support Programs in Kenya, and Implications for the CCT Program

Warren Dalal (PEPFAR) “The President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief and OVC Support in Kenya” highlighted PEPFAR support to OVC in Kenya in terms of both its scale and types of support. He raised issues relating to the following: CCT effectiveness, management and monitoring capacity, ensuring mutual supportiveness between CCT and other programmes, and balancing of short and long term needs of OVC.

Professor Alloys Orago (National AIDS Control Council) “Other Experiences of Providing OVC Support Programmes in Kenya: Implications for the CCT Programme” highlighted the programmes supported by the **National Aids Control Council (NACC)** within the context of the Kenya National AIDS Strategic Plan. In particular, he mentioned the TOWA Project, and shared some findings from the “OVC Implementer Mapping Exercise”. Findings include: the challenge of data not adequately assessing the quality of OVC support organizations or their support; the difficulty in analyzing OVC household survey data; the need for the CCT program to be supported by all stakeholders; the links between the CCT and other OVC support activities under the KNASP; the importance of developing work plans through basket funding, with full sharing of information; and the need for harmonization for effectiveness.

Winnie Mwasiaji (Department of Social Services) “Community Capacity Support Program (CCSP): Department of Social Services, Ministry of Gender, Sports, Culture and Social Services” gave an overview of the CCSP and shared the following findings: the development of girl-child friendly orphan support is necessary (girl orphans are getting married earlier/moving out); the need for deliberate programming and raising awareness on the importance of orphan support (difference of nutritional status found between orphans and non-orphans); the importance of assessment of on-going activities, and the need for consolidation of on-going activities in some areas and replication in other areas.

Mary Gichuru (Center for British Teachers, CfBT) “Pilot initiative to inform a programme of support for OVC” gave an overview of an OVC study conducted in 2005. Study recommendations include: identify and assess OVC; target schools; and establish OVC Sub-committees under school management boards. The way forward includes; additions to the study; senior level discussions with key ministries; agreement on the strength and entry points with ministries; plan for collaboration and joint directives to field offices; and piloting of OVC Sub-Committees in 100 schools.

Q & A and discussions highlighted the following issues

- It is critical to improve supply side interventions (especially identifying complementarities and strengthening coordination), as stressed by many participants.

- Schools are an entry point of intervention, but not the only one (and there is often child abuse in schools).
- There is need for the Department of Social Services, the OVP & MOHA and the district children's officers to work closely together.

DAY 2: 21 APRIL, 2006

Session 5: Design Issues for CCT Programs

Francisco Ayala “Social Safety Nets CCT/OVC: Project Implementation” provided implementation-related guidance: project cycle (targeting, enrollment, payments, compliance, case management, monitoring and evaluation); structure (mechanisms, organizations); Operational Manual preparation; technology needs, etc. Key messages included:

- implementation in phases(including a pilot phase);
- simple design;
- identification of a core team of professionals to be responsible for the management of the program;
- development of MIS along with operational manual;
- clear coordination/administration with capacity;
- flexibility in designing feasible project cycle operation;
- and be open to private service providers and use of technology means

Sessions 6 and 7: “Group Work- Sample designing of CCT” and “Group Presentations and Next Steps”

Francisco Ayala provided a sample template for participants to complete in groups: objectives, targeting, defining the type of beneficiaries, conditions, level and type of benefits. Participants were divided into 5 groups, and then gave presentations back to the plenary. Some of the main points highlighted by each of the presentations of the groups and the subsequent discussions were the following:

- The major target emphasis should be orphans living in poor households.
- There is need to link the child with other services (such as ARVs).
- There is need for widespread consultation about the objectives of the program to get full buy-in. The objectives also need to be realistic (for example, not all children are accessing primary education). There is need to convince the Ministry of Finance on the importance of this program.

- It is important for there to be experimentation through the pilot program. During the pilot, different ways of implementation should be tested. The main challenge mentioned is disbursement and flow of trends.
- There is general support for the principle of some conditions, but they need to be realistic. The conditionalities should be designed to support the program and assisting OVCs, rather than as a mechanism to penalize and potentially reduce assistance (“Are we going to remove the benefit from a 70-year old grandmother caring for 5 orphans just because she missed a visit to the health center? Or are we going to remove the benefit from the child’s family if the child couldn’t go to school for a prolonged period of time due to malaria?). It is important not to penalize the child without knowing the reasons for non-compliance. Conditions should be written the ability of the family to comply.
- While there should be differences of approach in different parts of the country, this should all be done under a single and harmonized framework, coordinated by the Government;
- It is politically easier to start with small benefits, and raise them later if necessary and affordable. The kind of family structure should be considered carefully in considering the benefits.
- Capacity building is essential, but there is need for the type of training to be considered in detail.
- The design of the program needs to be costed carefully, along with an analysis of funding options;
- Steps should be taken to move towards pool funding for the program as soon as possible.
- The lessons learned from the pilot should be reviewed carefully.

Final remarks by organizers –OVP & MOHA, DFID, UNICEF, WB

OVP & MOHA

- Orphans in poor households are the most important group.
- “Conditions” should not become impediments or punishments, but rather they should act as points of entry.
- We need to document the lessons learned from the experiments and pilots.
- It is critical to work further on ways to have more efficient disbursement of funds.
- The CCT system needs to be carefully designed and gradually developed.

DFID

- We need to ensure that conditionalities are reasonable and do not punish the children and their families.
- The pilot should start off small and gradually be scaled up – not only the size of the program itself, but also size of benefits, etc.
- It is important to know the details of family structures – proportions of households of grandparents hosting orphans, and child-headed households etc.

UNICEF

- Monitoring and evaluation are critical.
- We should be mindful of budgetary restrictions.
- It is important to pilot different types of schemes and determine which the best option is.

WB

- We should not be overambitious in objectives and implementation of the pilot. For example, considering that the primary education is not yet universal, despite the fact that it is free of charge, extending CCT to secondary education may be too unrealistic.

- Pilots need to be done at the scale that is large enough to gather meaningful lessons from them. The key question to be tested relates to implementation, and especially the best way to identify beneficiaries and disburse funds.
- The design of the “conditions” needs to be agreed upon carefully.
- We need to be level-headed about the resources being spent on the CCT – on the one hand current financial commitment on CCT is a large sum of money, but on the other hand, it is small compared to the size of current social sector budgets.
- Critical problem to solve is lack of coordination and harmonization. This problem needs to be solved through obtaining buy-in from everyone.