

UNICEF Evaluation Management Response

Evaluation Title: Evaluation of the Child Grants Programme (CGP) in Lesotho (2014-2022)

Region: ESAR

Office: Lesotho

Evaluation Year: 2022

Person-In-Charge for Follow-up to Management Response: Chief, Social Policy

Overall Response to the Evaluation: The review was conducted in accordance with a stringent protocol, which contributed to its independence. The evaluators had access to all pertinent documents as well as a comprehensive list of important informants, including Ministry of Social Development, UNICEF Lesotho Country Office and the EU. The evaluator used a mixed-method approach, gathering both quantitative and qualitative data that were triangulated to provide conclusions. The evaluation was structured in two workstreams; an impact evaluation that focused on assessing the impact that the CGP had on its beneficiaries, including the extent to which the impact had been sustained or changed over time; and a process review that assessed the key implementation and operational processes and systems of the CGP. UNICEF welcomes the insights provided by the evaluation report and its accompanying documents and remains committed to reflecting the findings of evaluations in implementing the CGP. UNICEF Lesotho Country Office has accepted all nine recommendations and will closely work and support stakeholder to implement those recommendations of the evaluation and strengthening its knowledge.

Planned Use of Evaluation: The preliminary results, lessons, and suggestions were used for social policy team of the UNICEF Lesotho Country Office to continue its support to the government counterparts and the advocacy efforts for adapting CGP's key activities to ensure they remain relevant and appropriate to the current context, and for expansion and scale-up of Child Grants in Lesotho. The evaluation will also be useful to the EU, both for accountability and learning purposes, while supporting them to improve their expertise and future investment in the sphere of social protection and assistance. The evaluation further provides a set of forward-looking and actionable recommendations to strengthen programmatic strategies and activities in the continuation of the CGP in Lesotho, taking into consideration the national development priorities of Lesotho (NSDP II), Agenda 2063, the Lesotho National Social Protection Strategy of 2021 – 2025, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Lesotho.

RECOMMENDATIONS and ACTIONS:						
Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 1: Increase the size of the CGP transfer						
Management Response: (Agree, Partially Agree, Disagree): Agree						
If recommendation is rejected or partially accepted, report reasons:						
Actions planned	Responsible Office	Responsible Person	Expected completion date	Implementation stage: Not started Underway Completed Cancelled	Actions taken	Supporting documents
1.1 CGP transfer value is at least adjusted to account for the 2022 inflation.	Lesotho Country Office	Chief, Social Policy	February 2023	Completed	Advocacy on the need for an increased transfer value through technical and high-level political engagement	Budget Speech 2023/2024 https://www.gov.ls/budget-speech-2023-2024/
1.2 Establish a protocol for the longer term that the transfer value is revised regularly, including inflation adjustments, with the indicative objective of ensuring that it maintains a value of around 20% of households' average monthly expenditure.	Lesotho Country Office	Chief, Social Policy	December 2025	Completed	The Social Assistance Policy final drafted is available for the MoGYSD to present to cabinet for approval. The policy states the need for indexing the transfer amounts to inflation. It is marked completed as planned milestones related to this recommendation have been achieved as of the reporting date.	Approved Social Assistance Policy
Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 2: Strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of the case management system and develop pilot models that decouple case management from physical pay point interactions						
Management Response: (Agree, Partially Agree, Disagree): Agree						
If recommendation is rejected or partially accepted, report reasons:						
Actions planned	Responsible Office	Responsible Person	Expected completion date	Implementation stage: Not started Underway Completed Cancelled	Actions taken	Supporting documents
2.1 Strengthening the case management system with a	Lesotho Country Office	Chief, Social Policy	December 2025	Completed	The ongoing NISSA and MISSA upgrading has case and grievance mechanism	NISSA and MISSA business requirements

functioning mechanism to keep beneficiaries' records up to date.					digitilisation. The system will keep the records of the programmes up to date since it will support continuous updating the data through case management. It is marked completed as planned milestones related to this recommendation have been achieved as of the reporting date.	document and the operations manuals
Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 3: Develop an independent complaints and appeal mechanism						
Management Response: (Agree, Partially Agree, Disagree): Agree						
If recommendation is rejected or partially accepted, report reasons:						
Actions planned	Responsible Office	Responsible Person	Expected completion date	Implementation stage: Not started Underway Completed Cancelled	Actions taken	Supporting documents
3.1 Develop an independent complaints and appeals mechanism for addressing quality concerns and appeals to the case management decisions.	Lesotho Country Office	Chief, Social Policy	December 2025	Completed	The NISSA and the MISSA systems are being upgraded that will include a Case Management and Grievances Redress Mechanism with clear channels including independent complaints and appeals mechanism. It is marked completed as planned milestones related to this recommendation have been achieved as of the reporting date.	Case Management and GRM Manual
3.2 The complaints and appeal mechanism for mobile payments will be decoupled from pay day gatherings and	Lesotho Country Office	Chief, Social Policy	December 2025	Cancelled	The case and grievance procedure manual will be developed and will have clear delineated sections for CIT and digitilised payment	Case and Grievance Procedure Manual

distinguish between payment complaints that can be resolved by MoSD versus those that may need to be resolved by the payment service providers.					platforms. However, no substantial progress has been made on this; hence it has been marked as cancelled.	
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Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 4: Develop a comprehensive communication plan and strategy, including communications materials and training plans

Management Response: (Agree, Partially Agree, Disagree): Agree

If recommendation is rejected or partially accepted, report reasons:

Actions planned	Responsible Office	Responsible Person	Expected completion date	Implementation stage: Not started Underway Completed Cancelled	Actions taken	Supporting documents
4.1 Develop a communication plan focused on the rights of CGP beneficiaries to facilitate their engagement with the programme and enable them to ensure that they receive the amounts and services they are entitled to, and that their problems are acknowledged and addressed in a timely manner.	Lesotho Country Office	Chief, Social Policy	December 2025	Completed	The payment modalities are being digitilised. The MoGYSD will be assisted with development of communication plan for the digitilisation process. The aim is to increase the knowledge of communities and beneficiaries about digitilisation of payment and associated case management procedures. It is marked completed as planned milestones related to this recommendation have been achieved as of the reporting date.	Communications plan

Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 5: Develop a feasible and inclusive mobile payments expansion plan

Management Response: (Agree, Partially Agree, Disagree): Agree

If recommendation is rejected or partially accepted, report reasons:

Actions planned	Responsible Office	Responsible Person	Expected completion date	Implementation stage: Not started	Actions taken	Supporting documents
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				Underway Completed Cancelled		
5.1 Develop a clear and detailed mobile payments expansion plan ensuring the expansion's timing and coverage are both feasible and realistic.	Lesotho Country Office	Chief, Social Policy	December 2025	Completed	The digitalisation expansion plan is incorporated in the Annual Workplan	Annual Work Plan 2025/2026
Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 6: Increase the financial and technical support for NISSA						
Management Response: (Agree, Partially Agree, Disagree): Agree						
If recommendation is rejected or partially accepted, report reasons:						
Actions planned	Responsible Office	Responsible Person	Expected completion date	Implementation stage: Not started Underway Completed Cancelled	Actions taken	Supporting documents
6.1 Identify a more efficient and cost effective way of updating the NISSA data and increase the financial and technical support for NISSA to improve the quality of data, to increase the use of the data	Lesotho Country Office	Chief, Social Policy	December 2026	Completed	UNICEF and the World Bank are supporting the Ministry with cost effective ways of quality updating of household data. It is marked completed as planned milestones related to this recommendation have been achieved as of the reporting date.	NISSA Household Data Updating report
Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 7: Improve linkages between the CGP and the OVC bursary and expanding OVC bursary coverage						
Management Response: (Agree, Partially Agree, Disagree): Agree						
If recommendation is rejected or partially accepted, report reasons:						
Actions planned	Responsible Office	Responsible Person	Expected completion date	Implementation stage: Not started Underway Completed Cancelled	Actions taken	Supporting documents
7.1 Establish an agreed process so that CGP households are	Lesotho Country Office	Chief, Social Policy	December 2025	Completed	The ongoing NISSA and MISSA upgrading will address the linkages	

systematically informed about the OVC bursary and supported in applying for it.					between OVC Bursary and the CGP. It is marked completed as planned milestones related to this recommendation have been achieved as of the reporting date.	NISSA and MISSA systems business requirements
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Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 8: Conduct further research on the local economy effects of the CGP

Management Response: (Agree, Partially Agree, Disagree): Agree

If recommendation is rejected or partially accepted, report reasons:

Actions planned	Responsible Office	Responsible Person	Expected completion date	Implementation stage: Not started Underway Completed Cancelled	Actions taken	Supporting documents
8.1 Conduct research of the current local economy effects of the CGP to have a more complete picture of the CGP's impacts on Lesotho's economy.	Lesotho Country Office	Chief, Social Policy	December 2027	Cancelled	UNICEF plans to conduct a Social Protection financing and spending analysis in 2025 and an LEEA in 2026. No major achievements have been made to meet this recommendation to date; hence, it has been marked as cancelled.	Previous social sector public expenditure reviews

Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 9: Expand the Disability Grant's coverage and transition CGP households caring for children with a disabilities to the Disability Grant

Management Response: (Agree, Partially Agree, Disagree): Agree

If recommendation is rejected or partially accepted, report reasons:

Actions planned	Responsible Office	Responsible Person	Expected completion date	Implementation stage: Not started Underway Completed Cancelled	Actions taken	Supporting documents
9.1 Support the establishment of linkage between CGP and Disability Grant through	Lesotho Country Office	Chief, Social Policy	December 2027	Completed	The ongoing NISSA and MISSA upgrading will have a Disability Grant Module	NISSA and MISSA operations manuals as well as the Disability Grant Manual

<p>NISSA and MISSA by including disability module during NISSA data collection.</p>					<p>to enable harmonisation of programmes process It is marked completed as planned milestones related to this recommendation have been achieved as of the reporting date.</p>	
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