

Inception report

“Evaluation of approaches to social protection programming in humanitarian situations, focusing on cash-based programming”

8 May 2020

**Economic
Policy
Research
Institute**

unicef  | for every child

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Abbreviations and acronyms

CMO	Context Mechanism Outcomes
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease 2019
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
DFID	Department for International Development
DHIS-2	Health Management Information System
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
DODMA	Department of Disaster Risk Management
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
ECT	Emergency Cash Transfer
ECTP	Emergency Cash Transfer Programme
EMIS	Education Management Information System
EMOPS	The UNICEF Office of Emergency Programmes
EPRI	Economic Policy Research Institute
EU	European Union
FAO	The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GEROS	Global Evaluation Reports Oversight System
GRM	Grievance Redressal Mechanism
HQ	Headquarters
ICT	Information and communications technology
IDPs	Internally displaced persons
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOs	International Organizations
IOM	International Organization for Migration
JECTP	Joint Emergency Cash Transfer Programme
KII	Key Informant Interview
KFW	Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau
LTA	Long Term Arrangement
MDA	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MENARO	Middle East and North Africa Regional Office

MIS	Management Information System
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
NGOs	Non-governmental organizations
NNIS	Multi-Sector Nutrition Information System
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OECD-DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development - Development Assistance Committee
PAP	Public Assistance Programme
PDM	Post Distribution Monitoring
PMT	Proxy-Means Test
PMU	Project Management Unit
QCA	Qualitative Comparative Analysis
SCTP	Social Cash Transfer Programme
SES	Senior Evaluation Specialist
SWF	Social Welfare Fund
TA	Technical Authority
ToC	Theory of Change
UBR	Universal Basic Registry
UN	United Nations
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNU-MERIT	The United Nations University - Maastricht Economic and Social Research Institute on Innovation and Technology
UNU-WIDER	The United Nations University World Institute for Development Economics Research
USA	The United States of America
USD	United States Dollar
USAID	The United States Agency for International Development
VNA	Vulnerability and Needs Assessment
WASH	Water, sanitation and hygiene
WFP	The World Food Programme
WHS	World Humanitarian Summit

1. Introduction

In the most recent years, substantial progress has been made on emphasizing the need to leave no one behind by working towards common objectives and outcomes in development and humanitarian programming through the use of social protection systems and cash-based programming. Globally, social protection programmes, and especially cash transfers, have gained traction as instruments to reduce poverty, while achieving a wide range of multi-dimensional impacts. This increased importance of social protection and cash-based programming was also evidenced by the commitments made during the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit: the United Nations, regional organizations, non-governmental organizations and the private sector pledged to scale up cash-based programming and social protection programmes and to strengthen national and local systems and coping mechanisms.

These commitments along with the heightened interest of donors to bridge the humanitarian-development nexus through the use of cash-based programming in emergencies, have incentivized many agencies to start exploring the use of cash as an alternative way of transferring resources, permitting individuals and households to acquire the goods and services that they most need, in emergencies. Furthermore, these programmes can enable people to invest in rebuilding their livelihoods and boost their resilience to future shocks. With the shifting nature of crises from temporary to more complex, and with emergencies becoming increasingly protracted and chronic, the understanding that social protection and cash transfers programmes are appropriate programmatic options to respond to emergencies, has grown.

The increasing use of social protection, especially cash-based programming, in emergencies has also raised several questions. To start, some actors still emphasize the fact that the underlying design and implementation of these programmes differ when considering humanitarian actions as opposed to developmental social protection. As a result, the design of these programmes is often not based on the same principles, and the programmes' management and information systems, targeting methods and institutional arrangements often differ. Given the growing understanding of the need to work towards integrated approaches spanning the humanitarian-development nexus, while acknowledging that certain features between these programme categories may differ, the question of how stakeholders can best shape their work in the area of social protection, focusing on cash-based programming, in emergencies to deliver relevant and sustainable results arises.

Despite this heightened interest, a comprehensive evaluation of social protection, focusing on cash-based transfers, in emergencies,¹ has not been carried out yet. Consequently, policymakers

¹ In contrast to what it states in the ToR, the evaluation was refocused to solely concentrate on cash transfer programmes. This is largely as the vast majority of UNICEF's work on social protection in emergencies is focused on cash transfer programming.

and programme implementers in the field face questions related to the relevance of these programmes, their outcomes and impacts, and the extent to which these are equitable. Also, within UNICEF these evidence needs exist, as social protection, focusing on cash-based transfers, in emergencies is a relatively new, yet rapidly expanding area of work for the organization. No comprehensive evaluation of UNICEF's programming in this area has been conducted yet, and little is known about the results of its programming and the quality of the organization's approach and processes.

In light of the prevailing need for evidence on what works and to provide organizational direction on social protection, focusing on cash-based programming, in emergencies, the Economic Policy Research Institute, a not-for-profit organisation based in Cape Town, South Africa, is working with the Evaluation Office to evaluate UNICEF's approaches to social protection programming in emergencies, focusing on the use of cash-based transfers. Programmes in four countries, namely Nepal, Malawi, Dominica and Yemen, have been selected as in-depth case studies for the evaluation. This document serves as the project's inception report. Upon commencing with a brief introductory background on cash transfers in humanitarian situations and the four programmes included for this evaluation, the document outlines the evaluation's purpose, objectives, subject and scope, together with the evaluation criteria and questions. Subsequently, the document presents the evaluation methodology, as well as potential limitations thereof and ethical considerations. Next, the forthcoming activities and deliverables, and an updated work plan are presented. Finally, this report describes the roles and responsibilities of the evaluation team and UNICEF and presents the project's fieldwork instruments.

2. Background²

For several years, UNICEF has been working in the area of cash transfer programming as part of its global mandate to advocate for the protection of children's rights, to meet their basic needs and to expand their opportunities to achieve their full potential. UNICEF has been running several cash-based transfer programmes in emergency contexts. These cash transfers can come in different forms and with different characteristics: restricted or unrestricted, multi-purpose, conditional or unconditional, one-off or regular and predictable payments over an extended period, including so-called 'plus activities' or not.

The way in which these programmes have been set up also varies. Whereas in more development-oriented contexts, UNICEF can often channel technical and/or financial support to government-led cash transfer programmes – often aimed at making existing programmes more shock responsive – or even transfer resources directly through government programmes, in emergency contexts or contexts of fragile states, UNICEF, at times, needs to resort to setting up a parallel

² For a more elaborate background, please refer to the background note and scoping report developed as part of the scoping phase of this project.

system, including in partnerships with other UN agencies, or to piggybacking on a few structures of existing social protection programmes, to deliver cash in light of the absence of programmes or the inability to rely on government systems when responding to emergencies with cash. Various reasons underly this necessity, including the needs to respond rapidly, to protect humanitarian principles and to ensure that funds are used for the intended purpose.

In light of the commitments made during the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016, UNICEF has been working to connect these two workstreams better and bridge the humanitarian-development nexus, by strengthening the linkages between shock-responsive social protection and humanitarian cash transfer programming. Reflective of its programming and policy experience, UNICEF concluded that there is no one-size-fits all solution, but rather one that is based on a context-specific approach. Various guidance documents and coordination platforms have been developed and set-up over recent years, amongst other, the organization's Humanitarian Cash Transfer Programmatic Guidance and the Programme Guidance on Strengthening Shock Responsive Social Protection; documents that provide guidance whilst simultaneously providing enough flexibility for country offices to adapt to local contexts.

An increased commitment to using cash in emergencies, and increased organizational guidance in terms of how to use it also brings a need for evidence on whether the approach chosen works, and if so when and what added value this approach has to the larger sector. What have been the impacts of UNICEF's cash transfer programming on vulnerable boys, girls and women in an emergency setting? Have UNICEF's efforts strengthened national capacities to respond, and increase preparedness? What are the design features and implementation parameters that drive or impede successful programming? How do countries bridge efforts in emergency-programming and development-programming in this space? And, what is UNICEF's comparative advantage compared to its sister agencies, and is this being leveraged optimally? These, and other questions, are to be explored if UNICEF wants to further strengthen its cash transfer programming.

In the following sub-sections, the four countries selected for an in-depth case study are introduced, building on a structured desk review and short inception missions to each country. Afterwards, the document continues with the project's purpose, objectives and scope.

2.1. Yemen³

2.1.1. Overview

Since 2015, Yemen, a low-income country in the Middle East, has been suffering from a man-made conflict between competing centres of power. As a result of the conflict, the country, which at the time of the start of the crisis was already facing numerous development challenges, including poverty and inequality, food insecurity, unemployment and a weak economy, has since fallen

³ (UNICEF, 2019)

deeper into devastation. Currently, approximately 24 million out of a total of 28 million people in Yemen require humanitarian aid, of which 12 million are children. Various international organizations are battling a multitude of crisis on various fronts including cholera and malnutrition. The conflict has led to the collapse of the private sector causing even higher rates of unemployment and no wage payments. Furthermore, oil reserves have dried, and the currency has devalued. As a result, 65 per cent of the population now lives below the poverty line with 85 per cent of families being in debt. These factors have caused Yemen to lose 20 years of its development, disregarding the effects of the crisis on the country's institutions.

Before the eruption of conflict in 2015, the country had an elaborate system of social protection, comprised of a range of programmes including social assistance programmes, social insurance programmes and labour market interventions. One of the country's flagship programmes, was the Social Welfare Fund (SWF), managed independently under the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour. Created in 1996 to provide a social safety net to the poorest households in response to a gradual reduction of food and fuel subsidies, the SWF was as one of the largest programmes in the Middle East and North Africa region, providing a total of 9 million individuals (roughly 1.5 million households) with cash transfers.⁴ However, at the onset of the crisis, many social protection programmes, including the SWF, could not be maintained by government actors, and the fund stopped paying its beneficiaries in December 2014.

Consequently, UNICEF and the World Bank stepped in and provided both technical and financial assistance aimed at preventing the collapse of the SWF. With funds from the International Development Association (IDA), and with UNICEF as the implementing partner, partners were able to prevent the total collapse of Yemen's social protection system through the introduction of the Emergency Cash Transfer Project (ECTP), partially building on the programmatic infrastructure, including the beneficiary list, of the SWF (a timeline of project events is illustrated in *Figure 1*). The project made its first payments across the country's 333 districts and 22 governorates in August 2017, less than three months after the signature between UNICEF and the World Bank. As of February 2020, more than 273 million USD has been disbursed to beneficiaries since, at an average amount of 15,000 Yemeni Rial per beneficiary case, per quarter.

⁴ In the recent past, the World Bank, the European Union and UNICEF provided technical assistance in this process.

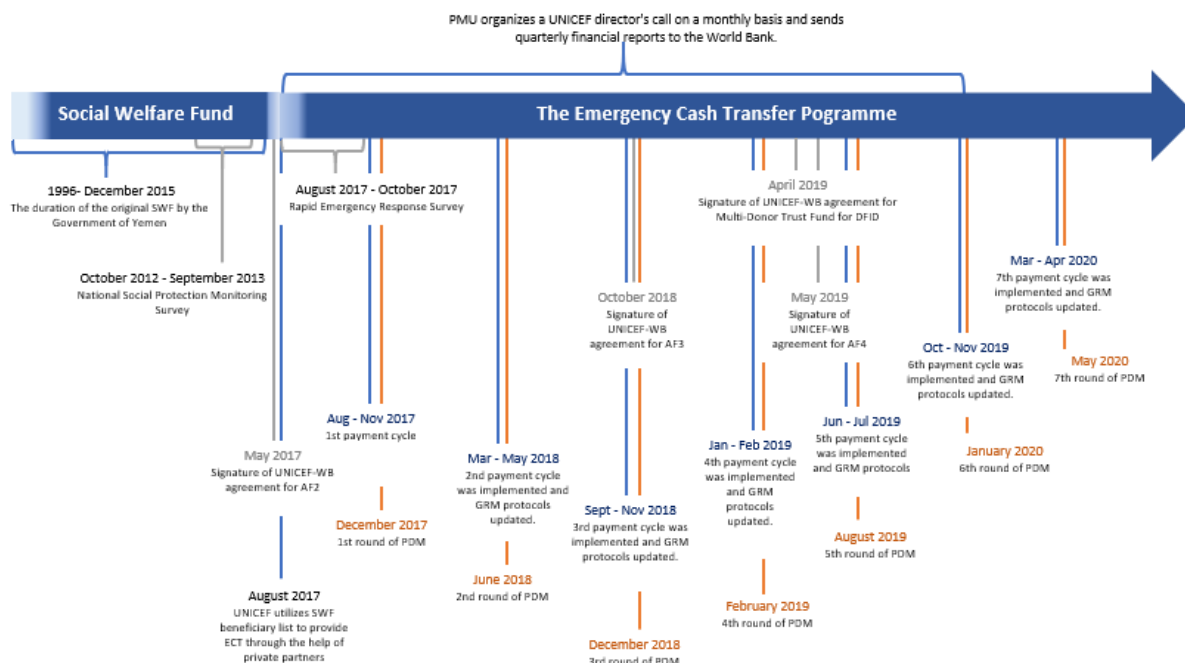


Figure 1. Yemen's ECTP Implementation timeline

2.1.2. Inception takeaways

The ECTP builds to a large extent on the existing design features of the SWF. To start, the ECTP uses the 2014 pre-conflict beneficiary list of the SWF. No changes or additions can be made to the list, though beneficiary data - such as addresses or phone numbers - can be updated. UNICEF can however restrict or precondition the payment based on results of a review of submitted grievances. Beneficiaries on this list were targeted using a Proxy-Means Test (PMT), developed and administered prior to the crisis. Those in the list are amongst the poorest households in Yemen, including female-headed households, orphans and persons with disabilities. Since the crisis, the beneficiary list has thus not changed, although people's situations have. In addition, UNICEF has also kept the benefit amount of the ECTP constant and aligned with the SWF benefit amount pre-crisis. UNICEF has committed to this alignment for various reasons, among others that it helps seek to preserve the ability of the SWF to deliver basic services in the future again. On the downside, in the absence of an indexation of the benefit, this has led to a significant decline in the real value of the transfer over time.

In terms of implementation systems, the ECTP differs from the SWF. To start, UNICEF was given a few non-negotiable conditions tied to the receipt of the funding of the programme related to how the programme would be implemented. These included, among others, the need to set up and implement an independent third-party monitoring and independent grievance redressal mechanism. As a result, these have been set up, and compared to prior monitoring, evaluation and grievance redress arrangements, represent a substantial improvement in terms of the

project's delivery infrastructure. In addition, a beneficiary verification exercise had to be conducted, ensuring that the right beneficiaries were going to get paid. Given the ongoing conflict, UNICEF constantly needs to negotiate access to communities, for which a facilitation process was developed.

Another element that has benefited from UNICEF's engagement is the project's management information system (MIS), which was substantially enhanced from its initial development. Initially, the MIS of the ECTP was managed by a third-party service provider; however, given challenges in the ability to deliver on time and with priority, UNICEF insourced the MIS by the end of 2018. The entire system functions on open source software and infrastructure, optimizing the likelihood it can be handed back to SWF successfully. The insourcing of the MIS support functions from an external firm to UNICEF also helped ensure that all knowledge is in house, not only the knowledge needed to operate and customize the MIS, but also the programmatic and contextual considerations behind the design – making an eventual knowledge transfer process easy, efficient and cost-effective. Furthermore, UNICEF can ensure that the handover of the MIS will not break any confidentiality principles and will respect all quality assurance controls in place as well as security requirements for beneficiary data protection.

To administer the project, UNICEF has set-up a specialized project management unit (PMU). The PMU is based in Jordan (Amman) and in Yemen, with staff seating in the UNICEF Yemen Country Office in Sana'a and the five zonal offices across Yemen. The PMU runs all aspects of the project and is entirely self-contained in terms of its cash transfer expertise as well as finance, procurement and contracting functions being separate from the UNICEF Yemen Country Office. The PMU oversees all ECTP processes, manages third-party service providers and quality assures their activities. The entire grievance redressal mechanism, which includes a call centre and a team dedicated to redressal, is under the PMU's direct oversight. The Team Leader of the PMU reports directly to the UNICEF Country Representative, and has easy access to the Regional Director and all relevant Directors at UNICEF Headquarters in New York. While the PMU was initially established purely for the ECTP, it is gradually taking on the implementation of more cash-based initiatives in Yemen, with plans to also support other UN agencies. And, as the experience with the PMU in the Yemen context is perceived positively, the PMU is increasingly providing technical assistance to other UNICEF Country Offices that carry out similar programmatic activities.

Since per the grant conditions UNICEF is not able to enter into any formal agreement with any government actor for the implementation of the ECTP, UNICEF has contracted extensively with third-party service providers in primarily the private sector to deliver the project. In the process, it has built their capacity and systems to deliver humanitarian projects, with these parties now receiving expressions of interest from other development partners to cooperate. To keep government actors involved in the project – despite UNICEF's inability to actively engage them in decision-making or implementation – a consultative committee has been set up as platform for

dialogue and consultation with government. Furthermore, third-party providers have retained staff that previously worked in SWF to some extent, for instance in the facilitation process that secures access for UNICEF into communities, sustaining their involvement into core processes and continued capacitation. Moreover, to facilitate a potential future transfer of the project back to the government, UNICEF has conducted an assessment of the Ministry of Social Welfare and Labour and is in the process of developing a broader transition plan, also speaking to potential programmatic options.

The model for cash delivery has evolved across cycles being responsive to learnings from the experience on the ground and emerging challenges. While the model has remained unchanged since payment cycle 3, how each component is implemented is adjusted based on lessons learned from previous cycles.

Over time, the improvements to systems and returns to the verification exercise and investments in processes and guidelines has made it easier to administer the programme. However, at the same time, contextual challenges, and an ever-deepening protracted crisis have led to new obstacles and challenges. However, getting access is becoming increasingly challenging, as the conflict drags on. In addition, governance arrangements are becoming even more complicated, with diverging central banks policies between the rivalling centres of power and increasing challenges to UNICEF's neutrality. With funding secured for a total of nine payment cycles, and with the seventh cycle currently ongoing, discussions on the project's future are ongoing, but for another six months, payments are secured.

2.2. Malawi

2.2.1. Overview

Malawi, a low-income country in Southern Africa, is one of the poorest countries of the world. Despite almost 20 years of economic growth, over half of the country's population lives in poverty, and the country ranks in the bottom decile of the Human Development Index. A large share of the population works in agriculture, and with weather patterns changing, the country is extremely vulnerable to the effects of climate change. Exposed to cyclones, floods and droughts, it is especially the country's likelihood of suffering harm when an adverse event hits (its susceptibility), and its limited adaptive capacities that make the country rank high in the global risk indices.

Until recently, Malawi had few effective coping strategies in place to deal with these shocks. As a result, over the last decade, the humanitarian community has frequently needed to mobilize to respond to the emerging needs in the population as a result of a drought, or other weather-related events. Traditionally, this has happened in a coordinated manner, through the Department of Disaster Risk Management (DODMA), with a response that focused on the provision of in-kind goods and services. However, in recent years, Malawi has been at the forefront in the provision of

cash, and the use of one of its main social protection programmes, the Malawi Social Cash Transfer Programme (SCTP), in delivering this cash, in response to these emergencies. UNICEF, together with some of its UN sister agencies, has been at the forefront of this development, helping the Government of Malawi in the process.

The SCTP is an unconditional cash transfer programme targeted at households classified as ultra-poor. The SCTP is currently operational in all 28 districts in the country, reaching about 300,000 households and approximately 1.2 million individuals of whom over 641,000 are children. The programme is funded largely by donors, including DFID, Irish Aid and the European Union, though the Government of Malawi is also responsible for the funding of one district. UNICEF provides technical assistance to the government in the programme's implementation, both generically at national level as more operationally in selected districts where Irish Aid funds the transfers.

The use of the SCTP in the humanitarian response started in 2016/2017 in response to a severe drought, after UNICEF advocated for the inclusion of the programme's beneficiaries following a 2015 study that found that SCTP beneficiaries were excluded almost categorically from the humanitarian response. That year, all SCTP beneficiaries were automatically included and benefited from the resources mobilized to respond to the emergency. In the two years following this intervention, a similar inclusion of SCTP beneficiaries was undertaken by UNICEF in the district of Balaka, one of the two districts in which the organization provides technical support to the government in the programme's implementation; as well as in 2018/2019 in other, selected districts where Irish Aid provides support. During these years, the additional support was still in addition to the humanitarian response, and any caseload paid to was added on top of the number of cases in each district as part of the standard humanitarian support allocation channel.

That changed in 2019/2020, as in the two districts the paid-out beneficiaries became part of the humanitarian response. This means that SCTP beneficiaries are targeted as part of the humanitarian caseload and reflected in the beneficiary numbers allocated to each district. In those districts where they have since been included in the response, UNICEF now provides an additional amount of cash to beneficiaries for a maximum period of four months. This top-up is equivalent to that received through the 'humanitarian response' – an amount representing 65% of the nation's food basket. In addition, a horizontal expansion, funded by DFID and the EU, is being tested in 2019/2020 in selected districts. For this expansion, new beneficiaries not previously targeted by the SCTP stand to benefit, after having been selected using a PMT administered on Malawi's Universal Basic Registry (UBR). At the time of the inception mission, the implementation arrangements were yet to materialize, detailing how exactly SCTP infrastructure may be used and for how long (see *Figure 2* for a timeline with more information).

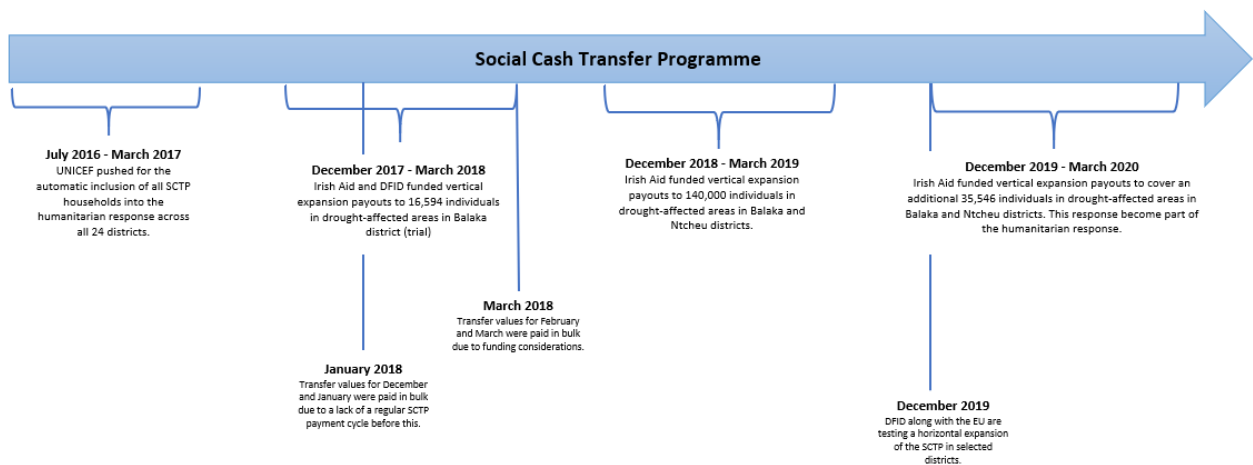


Figure 2. Malawi's ECT Implementation timeline⁵

2.2.2. Inception takeaways

The country's high level of vulnerabilities has placed a substantial strain on Malawi's humanitarian response system, especially as many emergencies are recurrent. To change how the response is organized, and to integrate the humanitarian response better into the country's development planning and programming, stakeholders are increasingly referring to 'the lean season response' in reference to the previously named 'humanitarian response'. In an effort to provide more sustainable avenues of disaster prevention and response, UNICEF has focused on scaling-up key programmes of the social protection system to respond to small- and medium-scale disasters. One such initiative has been, as described above, developed to largely depend on the existing structures of the SCTP. This includes the utilization of existing beneficiary lists, delivery systems and grievance redressal mechanisms with the aim of providing timely, cost-efficient and effective distribution of cash to individuals in need.

These efforts do suffer from the relative fragmentation of donors and actors in the SCTP. Although it is a significant achievement that various donors grouped to support one single programme, donors have different ways of doing business, different priorities and different abilities to channel support directly through the government system. This fragmentation is replicated in the efforts seen to make Malawi's social protection system more shock responsive. Parallel delivery channels are sometimes still set up, and donors have different views on the parameters and ideological foundation of the response. Furthermore, Malawi's social protection system, as well as its elements responsive to shocks, suffer at times from a preoccupation to constantly pilot innovations, stressing the system and undermining its ability to function in a regular capacity.

⁵ (UNICEF, 2016)

Further complicated by relatively short funding cycles, the ability to sustain and scale-up all shock responsive elements nationwide remains an uncertain one.

Nevertheless, in an effort to maintain the effective administration of the programme, UNICEF Malawi continues to collaborate effectively with partners, especially WFP, largely as a result of the complementary nature of the two organizations in the areas of cash transfers in emergencies. While WFP has excellent relationships with disaster management stakeholders due to its position as co-lead of the food security cluster, UNICEF is able to provide its expertise on children, multidimensional poverty and intergenerational aspects, while maintaining a close relationship to the Ministry of Gender, Children, and Community Development. Whether this productive relationship is one that stands or falls on interpersonal relationships, or whether it is the result of more structured, organization-wide efforts to strengthen working relationships, is something to be assessed.

Besides its work directly supporting shock responsive social protection, UNICEF Malawi has a broader support portfolio to the government in the consumption support pillar, where the SCTP falls under. Support in this pillar focuses on strengthening the UBR, improving the SCTP's Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) and facilitating a future transition to e-payments. And, UNICEF's support portfolio with regards to the UBR and e-payments has helped strengthen the returns to its shock responsive social protection activities, and the other way around. For instance, the availability of an e-payment system piloted with support from UNICEF was critical in convincing donors to implement the vertical expansion; whilst the increased suitability of the SCTP for disaster programming due to the presence of an e-payment system in selected districts helped convince donors of the necessity to scale-up the e-payment system nationwide.

Throughout this area of work, research and analysis has been guiding in the journey to make the country's social protection system more suitable to respond to emergencies. It started in 2015, with an assessment that found that SCTP beneficiaries were categorically excluded from the humanitarian response; paving the way for their inclusion the year after, and to a lesser extent, in the years after that. In addition, assessments were done exploring how the UBR could be used in an emergency context, and, knowing that Malawi was at the forefront of innovation in this area of work, what conceptual options one could explore with regards to increasing the programme's shock responsiveness. Most recently, acknowledging that food security has traditionally dominated the nature of the humanitarian or lean season response, UNICEF has started a research initiative exploring how other deprivations, including access to education, clean water and healthcare, evolve during this season; and how the SCTP and other transfer programmes can be used to respond to that. Overall, Malawi's cash transfer in emergency work keeps in constant evolution, and no equilibrium has arrived so far. Yet, the country remains at the forefront of global innovations in this sector.

2.3. Dominica

2.3.1. Overview

The Commonwealth of Dominica is an upper-middle-income country and currently ranks 103 out of 189 based on the 2018 UNDP Human Development Index. Dominica has increasingly been affected by natural disasters. In 2017, the country was faced with a category 5 hurricane that brought widespread devastation to housing, public infrastructure and the productive sector – mainly agriculture and tourism. More than 90 per cent of the population suffered direct damage to their housing and livelihoods. Furthermore, the destruction of infrastructure meant that the population did not have access to water, electricity, and telecommunication. These limitations severely impacted the affected population as they were not able to meet their essential needs. Taken together, it was estimated that the total loss to the economy as a result of the hurricane was equivalent to USD 1.3 billion (roughly 225 per cent of GDP).

While in-kind assistance was provided directly after the hurricane's impact, emergency cash transfers were distributed once markets gradually reactivated. As such, a month after the disaster, UNICEF, WFP and the Government of Dominica partnered to conceptualize the provision of cash transfers to the most vulnerable households. After two months of planning, the Joint Emergency Cash Transfer (JECT) programme was implemented by the Ministry of Social Services, Family and Gender Affairs (see *Figure 3* for an illustration of the programme's timeline). The programme aimed to help the most affected households by augmenting their purchasing power and contributing to the recovery of their livelihood, thereby boosting the local economy.

The JECT was designed to build upon the existing Public Assistance Programme (PAP) thereby providing unconditional cash transfers to approximately 25,000 individuals along with 6,000 children. Together this equated to roughly 8,300 households of which one-fourth were existing PAP beneficiaries, while the remaining were not receiving PAP assistance yet were eligible for the JECT. The identification of the latter was not effortless. In fact, in the immediate aftermath of the hurricane, the national system was under-resourced, weak and did not have a central digitalized beneficiary system; thereby, being largely underequipped to implement a rapid emergency response.

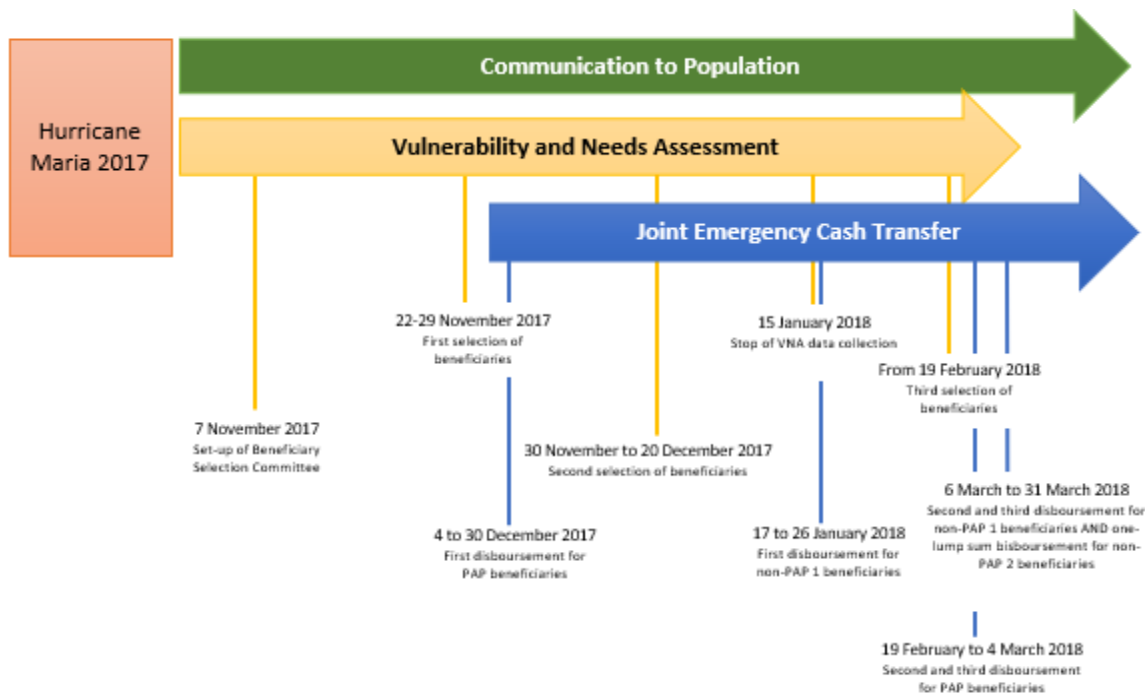


Figure 3. Dominica’s JECTP Implementation timeline⁶

2.3.2. Inception takeaways

Before programme implementation could occur, UNICEF and WFP, in collaboration with the Government of Dominica, were required to redefine the targeting criteria, map out the distribution network of current benefits, collect information on excluded households, develop a centralized information system on existing and potential beneficiaries of the JECT programme, and update the benefit amount as it was not adequate to cover the needs of the affected population. These efforts along with pre-identified eligibility criteria allowed for a selection process that was more inclusive than the PAP ultimately quadrupling the size of the programme.

In terms of programme implementation, it largely relied on existing platforms and mechanisms of the country’s national Public Assistance Programme. As such, the three-month-long JECT programme provided a monthly cash transfer to vulnerable households using largely a cash-in-envelop approach as a result of a lack of banking infrastructure in the rural parts of Dominica. These transfers, established by considering the average household size, the monthly cost of the minimum food basket and the cost of providing children with nutritious food, clothes, hygiene articles, education and any other basic needs, were equivalent to USD 140 for a family with one child, USD 190 for a family with two children and USD 240 for a family with three children or more (see *Table 1*).

⁶ (Avilar, 2018)

In order to guarantee accountability to these individuals and identify challenges in the selection and distribution processes, a joint plan was established to ensure the effective monitoring of the programme’s performance. This included the conduction of household and telephone interviews and focus group discussions in the immediate aftermath of the hurricane as well as a Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM) Survey following the final distribution of benefits to eligible households. Combined, these activities provided an insight into the perceptions of beneficiaries on the effectiveness and transparency of the process, allowed for an understanding of potential issues related to protection, and allowed for the monitoring of programme outcomes thereby placing particular attention on beneficiaries that were still facing on-going challenges even after the provision of the JECT.

Table 1. *The value of the JECT cash grants provided by UNICEF and WFP*

	1 child in the household	2 children in the household	3 or more children in the household
UNICEF support per child (Child grant)	EC\$ 135 (USD 50)	EC\$ 270 (USD 100)	EC\$ 405 (USD 150)
WFP household support (Food grant)		EC\$ 243 (USD 90)	
Total UNICEF and WFP support	EC\$ 378 (USD 140)	EC\$ 513 (USD 190)	EC\$ 648 (USD 240)

In addition to pre-existing programme platforms and mechanisms, the successful implementation of activities and the delivering of cash in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria can also largely be attributed to the effective collaboration between UNICEF and the WFP. This was largely a result of the organization’s respective comparative advantages. While the WFP had experience and expertise in the field of emergency cash transfer programming, UNICEF was in a better position to communicate with and support the relevant ministries in charge of the national systems. The realization of this allowed the organizations to build on a mutual understanding for differences in processes, decisions, level of authority and decision making, which eventually paved the way for good joint programming.

2.4. Nepal

2.4.1. Overview

Nepal is a nation with decreasing levels of poverty and improving levels of human development. It embraces a unique socio-economic development model, which emphasizes equity as an integral part of attaining a higher level of growth. As such, Nepal has increased its spending on social assistance programmes from 0.3 to 1.4 per cent of GDP over the past twelve years, making it among the highest in South Asia. However, Nepal remains highly vulnerable to natural disasters and the effects on poverty and human development thereof. The country’s inherent vulnerability to recurrent landslides, cold waves, floods, fires and earthquakes, and lacking the capacity to

prepare and mitigate the risks, increases the extent of the destruction as well as the risks to individual livelihood.

In 2015, the Gorkha earthquake shook the country, taking the lives of 9,000 individuals and injuring an additional 22,000. As a response to the earthquake, UNICEF developed and implemented an Emergency Cash Transfer Programme (ECTP), in collaboration with the Government of Nepal (a timeline which can be seen in *Figure 4*). Under this response, UNICEF provided both financial and technical support to the Government in order to expand the existing social assistance cash transfer programme to disaster-affected areas. The result was the establishment of a model of rapid social transfer to affected groups during future emergencies. In addition, the ECTP also constituted the first steps towards UNICEF’s longer-term objectives of helping the Government of Nepal establish a model of rapid social transfers to vulnerable groups during future emergencies, and ultimately to strengthen the social protection system for children in Nepal – a portion of the population that is disproportionately affected by shocks and multidimensional poverty.

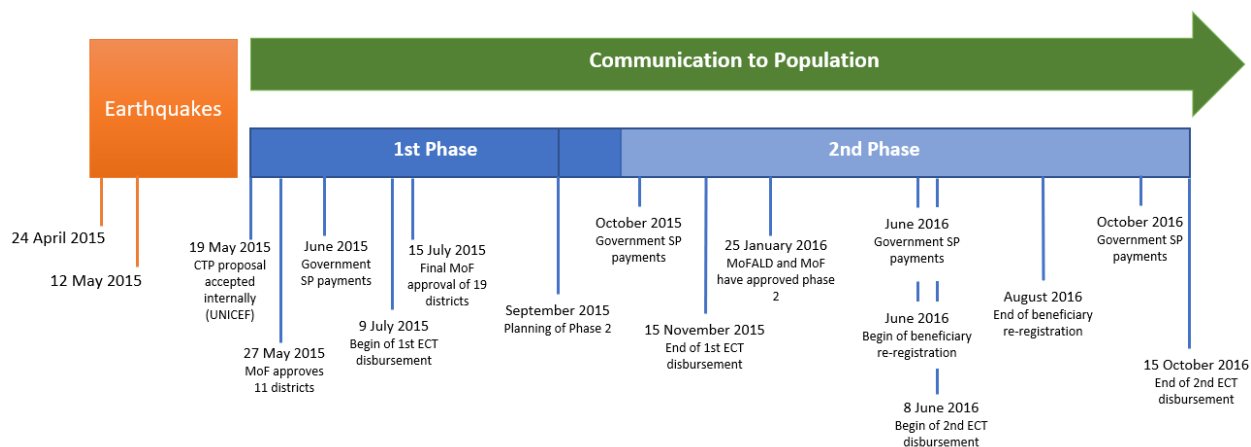


Figure 4. Nepal’s ECTP Implementation timeline

2.4.2. Inception takeaways

In the direct aftermath of the 2015 earthquakes, UNICEF Nepal focused its response specifically on health, education, WASH and nutrition. However, identified gaps in the provision of support revealed that a majority of the affected population was struggling to meet basic needs. As markets structures were still functioning, the UNICEF social policy section considered the use of cash as a response. Hence, UNICEF, together with the Government of Nepal, designed a two-phase emergency cash transfer response, with the objectives to i) provide immediate relief and support, ii) support the recovery process and iii) identify the weakness of the existing social protection system and commence on building a model for future response. It was the first time that cash was provided to address the effects of an emergency in Nepal.

In the first phase of the ECTP, UNICEF Nepal provided a one-off top-up of NPR 3,000 (approximately USD 30) to all current beneficiaries of the Government’s existing social assistance

programmes – totalling approximately 434,000 individuals. During the first phase, individuals not benefiting from pre-existing social assistance were not included in the ECTP, as it was not feasible, both politically, programmatically and operationally. It took about 2.5 months from inception until the first ECTP payment delivery to affected social assistance beneficiaries on July 9, 2015. In total, the first phase of the ECTP covered 19 disaster-affected districts and cost a total of USD 14 million.

During the second phase, the focus lay solely on the country's Child Grant Programme, until then covering only the most vulnerable Nepalese children. As children were considered particularly vulnerable in the aftermath of the disaster, UNICEF Nepal undertook a census to compile a full registry of children under-five in eleven emergency-affected districts. As a result, all children under five in these eleven districts, about 317,000 children, received a one-off cash transfer of NPR 4,000 (approximately USD 40). The second phase cost USD 11 million, bringing the total cost of the emergency response to USD 25 million.

During both ECTP phases, top-ups were provided through the payment delivery channels of existing social assistance programmes, which meant the manual delivery of cash through community volunteers, due to a lack of a widespread banking infrastructure. To reach the affected districts, the ECTP was largely dependent on the channelling of money through district government. The latter was undertaken to avoid administrative hassle and was dependent on the district government manually transferring the funds to local government representatives for disbursement on a trimestral basis. While the payment process was successful overall, a few challenges remained, mostly related to retrieving refunds on cash that was not utilized.

Throughout the emergency response, UNICEF also recognized that the monitoring of the existing social assistance programmes was a challenge, largely a result of local governments not having the capacity to adequately report on or identify issues, progress and challenges. As such, UNICEF introduced two supporting mechanisms: i) communication and awareness-raising campaigns in communities through women and elderly associations, scouts, radio and child clubs; and ii) real-time monitoring using SMSs. The latter, however, proved to have a low response rate and UNICEF additionally undertook post-distribution monitoring surveys, which allowed UNICEF to enhance the existing system of the government.

Throughout the response, UNICEF worked closely with the Government of Nepal. At the beginning concept phase, UNICEF collaborated with the Department of Civil Registration, which was responsible for managing the social registration system and overall social assistance. Upon approval of the concept note, UNICEF involved relevant district and local governments, together with research institutes, local media, elderly and women associations, scouts and local committees in the implementation and monitoring activities.

Box 1. Shock-responsive social protection in Nepal

In the aftermath of the earthquakes, the linkage between social protection and disaster management had been strengthened. Through high-level discussions, UNICEF advocated for the universalization of the Child Grant Programme in addition to the creation of a universal social registry for children. As a result, the Government of Nepal has committed itself to making social protection more shock responsive. This included the conduction of a census to determine vulnerabilities, a mapping of the most disaster-prone areas and households, the building of shock responsive preparedness at the Palika-level in eight local government areas. For the future, Nepal is envisioning the further extension of its banking infrastructure in order to ensure that every household at local level will have access to a bank account or another payment modality (e.g. mobile payment). Furthermore, UNICEF, in collaboration with the Government and other agencies, is working on guidelines to define the use of cash transfers in emergencies. This is a relatively new concept as limited initiatives to integrate activities were shown in the past. However, nowadays, organisations have a clearer understanding of the link between humanitarian and developmental activities and are aware that more work needs to be undertaken for activities in these two fields to complement each other.

Following the work on the ECTP, UNICEF, in partnership with DFID and relevant line ministries, continued to work towards strengthening shock responsive social protection in the country by strengthening the preparedness and the capacity of the social protection system for disaster response through the use of evidence-based policy advocacy. This included the analysis of the effectiveness of Nepal's social security allowance schemes in response to floods and droughts; as well as the identification of cash-based options for donors to fund when responding to disasters through the social protection system. As a result of these efforts, UNICEF contributed to the generation of evidence as well as influencing national policy. For example, the Nepalese Government drafted a standing operating procedure for the use of cash in an emergency, drawing upon lessons learned from the 2015 earthquake. UNICEF Nepal also continues to support and monitor local level governments in the areas of planning, budgeting, implementation, monitoring and reporting across all areas of programmes.

3. Purpose, objectives, subjects and scope

This evaluation of UNICEF's social protection programming in emergencies, focusing on the use of cash-based transfers, is carried out to respond to the prevailing need to provide reflections on UNICEF's work on social protection in emergencies, particularly relevant in the absence of a comprehensive evaluation of programming of this kind within UNICEF.

3.1. Purpose

The main purpose of this evaluation is twofold: (i) to understand what emergency cash transfer programmes with UNICEF inputs (financial and technical) work and under which circumstances, i.e. where, when, why, for who and how; and (ii) to identify how UNICEF can improve the effectiveness, impact and sustainability of its programming. In the long-run, this evidence will help UNICEF to improve the impact of cash transfers on vulnerable populations affected by emergencies, and to bridge the humanitarian-development nexus by strengthening linkages

between developmental social protection and humanitarian cash-based transfers. Moreover, evidence on what works can serve to strengthen UNICEF's global position in social protection in emergencies, and also enhance the capacity within UNICEF to design, deliver and coordinate these programmes.

3.2. Objectives

In addition to the overall purpose, the evaluation aims to achieve the following short-term objectives:

1. To assess the results of UNICEF-supported or UNICEF-run cash transfer programmes in emergencies;
2. To assess to what extent national capacities have been built in the design and implementation of these programmes, and in how far these results have been achieved in an efficient and sustainable manner;
3. To identify factors that drive or impede the successful achievement of results of cash transfers in emergencies in an efficient manner and how these factors can be applied to the current COVID-19 pandemic;
4. To identify what key comparative advantages and key lessons can be learned from UNICEF's work in cash transfers in emergencies.

Thus, the evaluation is summative and formative in its nature. The **summative evaluation components** focus on documenting the results achieved, especially in relation to UNICEF's inputs into the cash transfer programmes in emergencies. Here, the analysis zooms in on the processes through which results were achieved and capacities were built, and in doing so also assesses progress made towards the commitments made during the World Humanitarian Summit, i.e. to scale up cash-based programming and social protection programmes, and to strengthen national and local systems and coping mechanisms. Furthermore, recognising the relevance of preparedness in facilitating an effective emergency response, special attention of the analysis is given to evaluating UNICEF's inputs towards optimizing preparedness to emergencies through the use of cash transfer programmes.

In turn, the **formative evaluation components**, are forward-looking and identify key lessons that can be learned from UNICEF's work in cash transfers in emergencies, examining the design and implementation of such programmes, and provide actionable and practical recommendations on how UNICEF can strengthen its work in the area to in turn achieve more pronounced results. In providing recommendations, the evaluation pays special attention to identifying concrete measures through which the humanitarian-development nexus can be bridged better within the organization when it comes to cash transfer programming. This is of particular importance in light

of the COVID-19 pandemic as the findings and recommendations will allow for an improved response by UNICEF to the emergency in the short- to medium-term.

3.3. Subject

In response to the purpose and objectives of the evaluation, the subject of the evaluation, i.e. the evaluand, can be classified into two levels, as illustrated below in *Figure 5*. The **primary level of the evaluand** focuses on the cash transfer programmes that are evaluated, and UNICEF's inputs into these. To guide the decision-making on which programmes should be included in the evaluation, a range of criteria were established:

1. UNICEF runs and/or provides technical support to the design and/or implementation of the cash transfer programme;
2. The cash transfer programme is responding to an emergency;
3. The cash transfer programme provides cash transfers on a regular basis; and
4. The cash transfer programme has the aim to meet the basic needs of households and/or seeks to reduce the financial barriers to access of services.

The first criterion implies that only programmes that directly benefit from technical inputs from UNICEF form part of the primary evaluand. In addition, the provision of financial assistance and financial accountability over a programme was also considered in the selection of programmes.

The **secondary level of the evaluand** focuses on the role of the wider context, such as the existing (shock-responsive) social protection systems and programmes within the focal countries, the type of emergencies, and the different affected populations, among other factors. The second level of the evaluand also includes UNICEF inputs into the enabling environment, but not directly targeted to the programme (e.g. the capacity building of non-programme implementers or upstream policy work that UNICEF does in a country). Non-programme specific technical assistance to make social protection systems shock responsive is also part of the second level of the evaluand.

Hence, the secondary evaluand recognises the relevance of factors external and how they shape and influence results of the cash transfer programme and thereby the translation of inputs into results. And while the focus of the evaluation primarily lies on the first level of the evaluand; specific factors of relevance, in each focal country under evaluation, will also be drawn from the secondary evaluand, allowing for an adequate and comprehensive assessment of the role of context and UNICEF's work in this area.

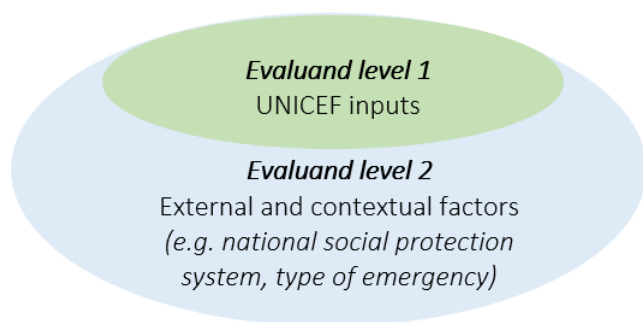


Figure 5. Two levels of the evaluation

3.4. Scope

While the evaluation has a global outlook and hence is not limited to a specific region, primary data collection activities and an integrated analysis with secondary data thereof is limited to the following four countries: (i) Yemen, (ii) Malawi, (iii) Nepal, and (iv) Dominica. In each of the countries, the cash transfer programme to be evaluated was chosen according to the criteria established above. **Table 2** list these programmes, together with their target group size. Moreover, reflective of the secondary evaluand, the system of delivery and the type of emergency are included in the table.

Table 2. Overview of country characteristics and details of identified programmes

Country	Yemen	Malawi	Nepal	Dominica
<i>Programme</i>	Emergency Cash Transfer Programme (2014 to 2021)	Social Cash Transfer Programme top-up (2017 to 2020)	Emergency Cash Transfer Programme (2015-2016)	Joint Emergency Cash Transfer Programme (2017-2018)
<i>System</i>	Mixed	National	National	National
<i>Type of emergency</i>	Man-made	Natural	Natural	Natural
<i>Target beneficiaries</i>	1.5 million households	270,000 households	730,000 beneficiaries	8,300 households
<i>Disbursement</i>	Quarterly	Monthly	One-off transfer	Depending on beneficiaries, the three-month amount was provided in one, two or three instalments

While the geographic scope of primary data collection and a thorough analysis of secondary data is limited to the above four countries, **six remote country case studies** are also carried out under this evaluation, which serve to complement and validate the findings from these four country cases as well as provide recommendations to enhance their readiness in the COVID-19 response. These remote case studies will be less detailed in their analysis and rely fully on existing documentation, with the countries consisting of the **Democratic Republic of Congo, Indonesia, Jordan, the Philippines, South Africa and Turkey**. No primary data collection activities will be

conducted for these six case studies; nor will these case studies be a separate deliverable. Instead, the findings from these case studies will be integrated into the synthesis report to triangulate the findings from the case studies of Malawi, Nepal, Dominica and Yemen.

In terms of **temporal scope**, the evaluation covers the period from 2014 to present, spanning programming activities under the 2014-2017 strategic plan up to today. The primary users of the evaluation will be UNICEF's Social Inclusion, Policy and Budgeting section under the Programme Division and UNICEF's Office of Emergency Programmes (EMOPS) at Headquarters, as well as Regional Offices and Country Offices across the globe, and UNICEF's Executive Board. Secondary users of the evaluation will be governments, other UN agencies and development partners, carrying out programming in the area of social protection in emergencies, as the forthcoming evaluation will offer insights on what works under which circumstances and can also be consulted to provide guidance on future design and implementation of programmes.

4. Evaluation design: comparative case studies

Given the context of this evaluation, covering multiple crisis contexts, wherein the crisis itself plays an important role in understanding the factors driving or inhibiting success, as well as a focus on the how and why of processes and outcomes, a comparative case studies approach was deemed suitable and feasible. While a single case study approach is oftentimes characterized by an in-depth examination of a single case over time – such as a policy, programme, intervention site, implementation process or participant - the four country programmes along with the six remote case studies are in need of more generalizable knowledge about causal questions across time (e.g. how and why particular programmes or policies work or fail to work). Moreover, comparative case studies are a relevant design option when 'how' and 'why' questions are being posed about the processes or outcomes of an intervention and/or when one or more interventions are being implemented across multiple contexts, and there is little or no opportunity to manipulate or control the way in which the interventions are being implemented. Likewise, if the context that the interventions works in is seen as being important in understanding the success or failure of the intervention or parts of it, comparative case studies are a suitable design option.

As such, it is evident that the chosen framework requires extensive conceptual, analytic, and synthesizing work. In fact, the synthesis across cases extends beyond the comparison of similarities and differences to using these similarities and differences to support or refute propositions as to why an intervention succeeds or fails, thereby allowing for the examination of causality. This attribute is of importance as it allows a comparative case study approach to be selected when it is not feasible to undertake a comprehensive experimental or quasi-experimental research design – as is the case in the emergency contexts that are being studied in this evaluation. As such, the comparative case study approach is utilized to emphasize comparison within and across contexts, thereby describing similarities and differences between contexts and approaches, assessing the

implications of these similarities and differences and, using the findings from this analysis to subsequently derive conclusions, explain heterogeneous results and inform the answers to the evaluation questions. In addition to this, the usage of available secondary, quantitative data in each of the case study countries will complement the case study approach with some quasi-experimental design elements where possible and applicable as further elaborated upon in **sub-section 6.2 Quantitative evaluation methods**.

In light of the given approach, **Figure 6**, below, maps the logic of a comparative case study approach. The boxes on the left side of the figure maps the sequence of steps to be taken under such an approach, wherein the first steps sets the focus of the evaluation, while the latter steps are concerned with data collection, analysis and reporting. The boxes on the right side of the figure (light blue) outline the corresponding steps taken as part of this evaluation, and how these are addressed in this inception report.

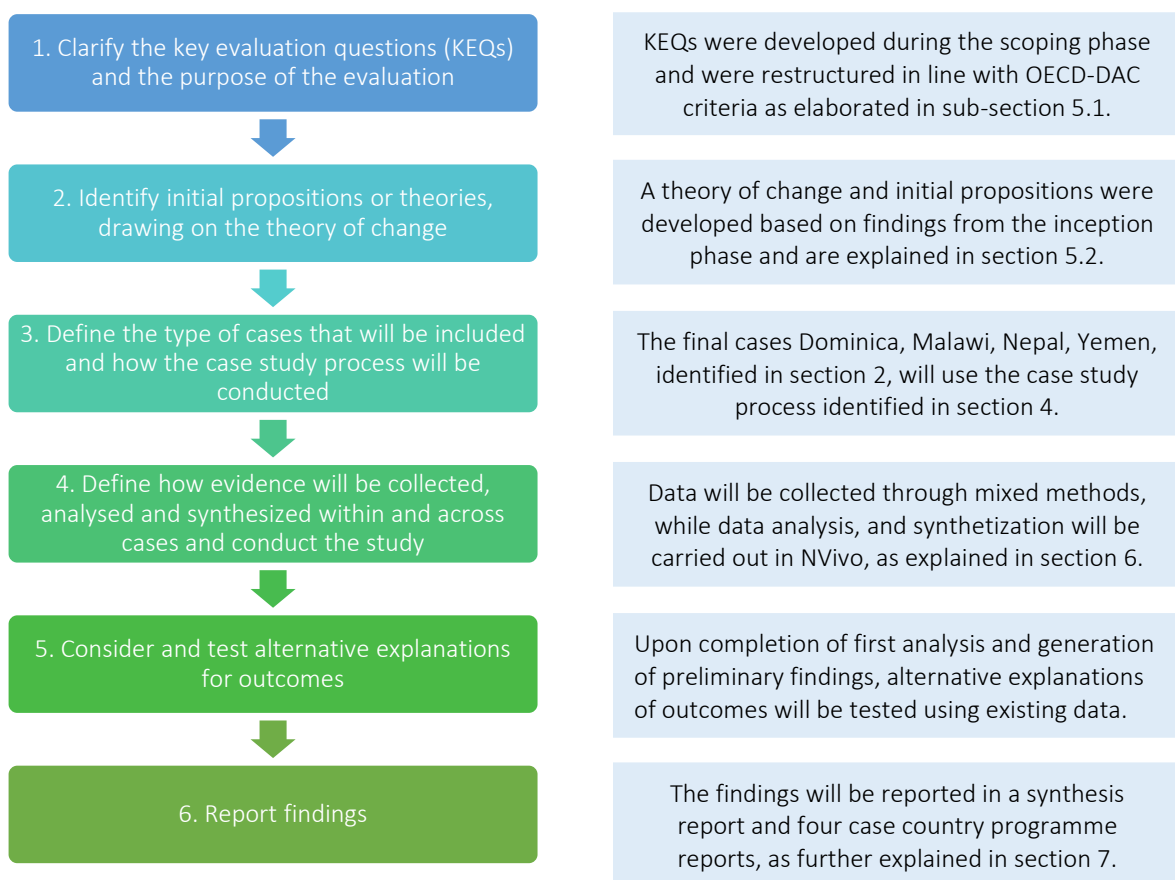


Figure 6. Logic of the comparative case study approach⁷

The following sections speak to how the comparative case study approach is reflected in, and shapes, the evaluation’s design. More concretely, **section 5** outlines the evaluation questions and ex-post evaluation theory of change, as well as initial propositions for lines of inquiry for the

⁷ (Goodrick, 2014)

evaluation's analysis within and across cases. Subsequently, **section 6** speaks to the data collection methods and analysis methods and presents data collection protocols per country. Then, **section 7** describes the reporting of the analysis findings, in terms reporting country case-specific findings, as well as reporting of synthesised findings.

5. Evaluation questions, theory of change and propositions

In line with the above-outlined purpose, objective and scope, the evaluation is guided by key evaluation questions and an ex-post evaluation theory of change (TOC). In the following, this section will firstly present the theory of change that was developed and then provide an outline of the evaluation questions, and sub-questions. Moreover, this section speaks to initial propositions on lines of inquiry for this evaluation, which were developed on the basis of these questions and the TOC.

5.1. Evaluation questions

Reflective of the evaluation's purpose and objectives, the evaluation is guided by four overarching evaluation questions, which will allow the evaluation team to evaluate the programme design and implementation, its monitoring and sustainability as well as its effects. These guiding evaluation questions allow for an identification of the similarities and differences found between the cases, focusing on explaining how the programmes in the different country cases worked in the particular context and contributed to observed outcomes. The guiding questions are as follows:

1. What are the expected and unexpected impacts of cash transfer programmes on the most vulnerable boys, girls, and women in emergency settings, and how can these impacts be further enhanced? (Objective 1)
2. To what extent do UNICEF-supported cash transfer programmes enhance the strengthening of national and shock-responsive systems, and how can this be improved? (Objective 2)
3. What are the design features and implementation parameters that impede efficient delivery of UNICEF-run cash transfer programmes, and how can these be addressed? (Objective 3)
4. To what extent has UNICEF leveraged its comparative advantages with UN Sister agencies and other key partners for better coverage and more efficient delivery of cash-based programmes? (Objective 4)

To systematically structure and categorise these four overarching questions, the questions were further broken down into sub-questions and categorised according to the OECD-DAC criteria for evaluation – (i) relevance, (ii) effectiveness, (iii) efficiency, (iv) sustainability and (v) coherence. Per definition, **relevance** is concerned with the extent to which the programme/activity to be

evaluated is suited to the priorities of the target group and the institution; **coherence** assesses how well the emergency cash transfer programme aligns with other interventions in the country or institution; **effectiveness** measures the extent to which the programme attains its results at the outcome level; **efficiency** measures the outputs in relation to the inputs, hence assesses whether the least costly resources are employed to achieve desired results; and **sustainability** is concerned with measuring whether the benefits of the programme are likely to continue and are financially and environmentally stable.⁸ Below, **Table 3** offers specific research questions per OECD-DAC criterion. These questions were developed based on the research questions outlined in the evaluation’s TOR and further questions were added based on the findings from the inception missions. In addition, the complete evaluation matrix in the **Annex** maps out the evaluation questions, corresponding indicators, constructs, quantitative variables, and data collection and analysis methods.

Table 3. Specific evaluation questions per OECD-DAC criterion

Relevance
1. To what extent is the emergency cash transfer programme relevant to the needs of the vulnerable population? How did the programme evolve over time to the evolving needs of the population?
2. To what extent is the emergency cash transfer programme relevant to needs, priorities and capacities of UNICEF?
3. What is the role of UNICEF in strengthening the enabling environment for the provision of cash (e.g. upstream policy work, general shock responsiveness or capacity building)?
4. What is UNICEF’s relevance, and its comparative advantage, in this area of work?
5. How can UNICEF increase its relevance in this area of work and optimize its comparative advantages?
6. What is the relevance of the emergency cash transfer programme and more generally shock-responsive social protection in light of the recent COVID-19 crisis?
7. To what extent has UNICEF increased its relevance and leveraged its comparative advantage in this area of work during the current COVID-19 crisis?
Coherence
1. To what extent does the programme align with UNICEF’s Strategic Plan 2018-2022, the Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action, UNICEF’s global social protection programming framework and other key UNICEF guiding documents?
2. To what extent are UNICEF’s inputs aligned with international commitments, especially the commitments in the Grand Bargain and WHS Summit outcomes?
3. To what extent is UNICEF’s work complementary or in harmony with programmes of other agencies/donors to avoid duplication and ensure a comprehensive approach to addressing the programme’s ultimate objectives?
4. How can UNICEF strengthen the compatibility of its cash transfer programmes in emergencies with other programmes within UNICEF, the broader social protection section, the emergency section and other organizations active in this space?
5. Considering cash-based programming, what lessons can be learned with respect to the level of integration of different actors (governments, UN, NGOs), the type of partnerships established, and the level of ownership by national institutions and local partners?
Effectiveness
1. What were the intended/unintended and positive/negative effects on beneficiary populations, especially the most deprived girls/boys and women/men? To what extent are the most vulnerable girls, boys, women, and their families reached?

⁸ (OECD, 2019)

2. What are the effects of using a national system, a parallel system or a mixed system on meeting the needs of vulnerable populations, and what requirements need to be met for UNICEF to use national systems?
3. What have been the organizational and operational factors driving or impeding the effective achievement of results and outputs, including when designing, implementing, and delivering cash transfers in emergency contexts?
4. To what extent do cash transfers improve on, or offer an alternative to, the systems already in place for emergency response?
5. What is the role of monitoring and evaluation in achieving outputs and results effectively with these programmes, and how can UNICEF employ monitoring and evaluation best in emergency contexts?
6. To what extent was the partnership strategy adopted by UNICEF in pursuing the outcomes and outputs effective? What were key points of contention, also with regards to competition over resources and/or power dynamics?
7. How can UNICEF improve the effectiveness of its programming?
8. How effective was/is UNICEF's response to COVID-19 when considering the utilization of social protection and cash transfers?
Efficiency
1. To what extent did the emergency cash transfer programmes use resources efficiently?
2. What have been the organizational and operational factors driving or impeding the efficient use of inputs and the efficient achievement of outputs and results? What has been the role of the characteristics of the emergency, the choice of implementation model and the level of preparedness been for the efficient use of resources?
3. How can UNICEF improve the efficiency of its programming?
Sustainability
1. To what extent has UNICEF, where feasible, worked actively to maximize the sustainability of the results stemming from its inputs? How has UNICEF done this?
2. To what extent has UNICEF been able to build capacities of national systems and actors?
3. What lessons can be learned from UNICEF's work in terms of optimizing the sustainability of programmes and inputs in the area of cash transfer programming in emergencies?
4. How can UNICEF optimize its preparedness for the use of cash transfers in emergency situations?
5. What practical and concrete opportunities exist, especially in the field of cash transfers, that allow UNICEF to better bridge the humanitarian-development nexus thereby delivering more sustainable results?
6. Have preparedness and learnings from previous emergencies enabled UNICEF to respond to the current COVID-19 crisis?

5.2. Ex-post evaluation theory of change

A theory of change is an explanation of how the activities are understood to contribute to a chain of results that will produce the intended outcomes and impacts. In the case of this evaluation, the TOC defines the specific pathways through which UNICEF's inputs in terms of emergency cash transfer programming and technical support in the areas of humanitarian cash transfer programming and shock responsive social protection (evaluand 1), as well as broader upstream policy and advocacy work (evaluand 2), are expected to have led and continue to lead to outputs, in turn resulting in outcomes and impacts. Based on the knowledge of UNICEF's approach in emergencies, obtained from existing areas of research and UNICEF guiding documents, as well as interviews and the online survey conducted during the scoping phase, an overarching ex-post evaluation theory of change was developed.

By clearly outlining the anticipated pathways of change underlying UNICEF’s approaches to social protection, focusing on cash-based programming, in emergencies, this ex-post evaluation TOC serves to map how the approaches are expected to have achieved intended results. Based on these pathways, initial propositions to assess and test with the help of data collection methods and analysis were developed, elucidating in how far these pathways held, and continue to hold true, and expected outcomes and impacts were/are achieved. In addition to the identification of success along the causal chain, the TOC also helps to define and test alternative causal pathways. The TOC allows for the use of a range of qualitative and quantitative data and provides support for the triangulation process of data arising from a mixed-methods evaluation – as is the case for the evaluation at hand.

As shown in the TOC illustration in *Figure 7* the overall idea is that different inputs from UNICEF in terms of emergency cash transfer programming and technical support in the area of shock responsive social protection, together with broader upstream policy and advocacy work (**input level**) are expected to result in a range of outputs. These include effective and efficient delivery of emergency cash transfer programming, meeting the needs of populations in a timely manner; integrated and coherent delivery of programmes and services; and strengthened administrative systems with enhanced capacity of national actors to design and deliver social protection and humanitarian cash themselves (**output level**). Along the specified pathways of change, these outputs, in turn, are expected to result in the provision of relevant support, meeting the multisectoral needs of vulnerable populations; enhanced linkages between humanitarian cash transfers and social protection systems and an overall improved national social protection system and underlying processes (**outcome level**). Ultimately, these outcomes are expected to result in an increased shock-responsiveness of national social protection systems, able to provide support to populations in need, together with enhanced preparedness of national actors and systems (**impact level**).

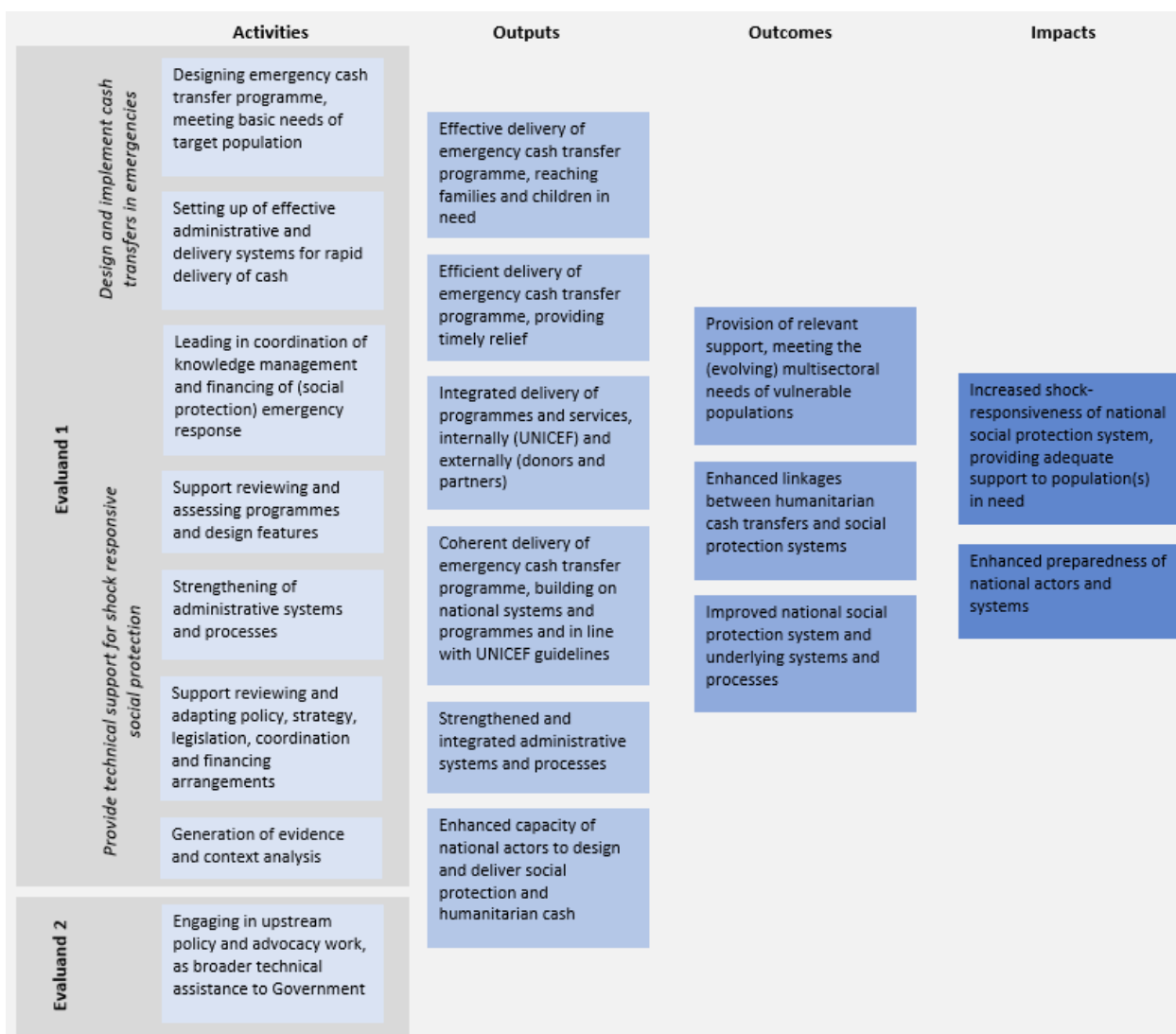


Figure 7. Ex-post evaluation theory of change

In addition to this overarching theory of change, which will serve as a guiding framework to compare and synthesize evidence across cases, specific ex-post evaluation theories of change were developed for each of the programmes in the four case study countries. These TOCs speak in more detail to the specific UNICEF inputs into the programme at hand, and the expected outputs thereof. The TOCs are included in the *Annex* of the inception report and will be used for the programme evaluation per country, which will be reflected in country-specific analysis reports (as further elaborated upon in *sub-section 7.1.3 Programme evaluation reports per country*).

5.3. Initial propositions

In outlining anticipated pathways of change, the TOC also helped to identify a range of initial propositions. A proposition is a statement about the concepts that may be judged and tested as

part of the evaluation and define whether they are relational or non-relational.⁹ Hence, propositions speak to lines of inquiry for the evaluation and in a next step also help to identify properties and dimensions of the cases to be explored. Below, the project's initial propositions are provided. The list is non-exhaustive and additional propositions and new lines of inquiry that may transpire from the iterative analysis process, which occurs as data is analysed and evidence synthesized within and across cases, might be added and tested.

Objective 1: Outcomes for beneficiaries

- UNICEF's investments in cash-based programming in emergencies have important short-term returns for the most vulnerable boys, girls and women.
- UNICEF's investments in cash-based programming are especially successful in sustaining access to services for vulnerable groups, especially children.

Objective 2: Capacity of national systems

- UNICEF's approach to cash transfer programming in emergencies helps enhance the capacity of the national system to respond.
- Areas of national systems that UNICEF has helped strengthen include designing, implementation, monitoring, evaluating, financing and coordinating cash transfer in emergencies.
- Further investments in preparedness present one way in which UNICEF could further improve its work in cash transfer programming in emergencies.
- Strengthening cooperation between humanitarian actors and development actors within and outside of UNICEF has the potential to further improve the success of UNICEF's cash-based programming in emergencies.

Objective 3: Drivers of success

- There is no one-size fits all approach to designing and implementing cash transfer in emergencies.
- Shock-responsive delivery systems are critical in optimizing the timeliness and the value of cash transfer programmes for beneficiaries.
- Investments in digital payment solutions, grievance redress systems and third-party monitoring are amongst the most successful investments in programme design and implementation features in terms of driving programme outcomes.

⁹ (Avan & White, 2001)

Objective 4: Comparative advantage

- Supporting the government on different levels (in the design and implementation of humanitarian programmes, together with technical support for shock-responsive social protection and broader technical assistance to the government) is a key driver of success in making systems more shock-responsive, and a comparative advantage of UNICEF.
- UNICEF's excellent working relationships with social protection and humanitarian stakeholders makes it amongst the best positioned to work in cash transfer programming in emergencies.
- UNICEF in designing and implementing programmes, and providing support to governments, is working to optimize these comparative advantages.

6. Data collection and analysis methods

The evaluation is guided by the comparative case studies approach (as outlined in **section 4**) relying on primary qualitative data collection, and supported by secondary, quantitative data analysis to the extent possible, to answer the above-mentioned evaluation questions and test the initial propositions. Reflective of the approach, a mix of qualitative and quantitative research methods are employed and will be reflected in this section. This includes a general introduction into the methods as well as an overview of the individual data analysis plans per country. Moreover, potential limitations of the methods are elaborated upon, together with proposed mitigation strategies. The section concludes with ethical considerations on the evaluation.

Box 2. Implications of COVID-19 on evaluation methodology

While this inception report is being developed, the spread of COVID-19 is progressing significantly, and countries have started implementing travel and movement restrictions. At the time of finalising the report, no lifting of international travel or movement restrictions was anticipated, hence primary data collection activities presented in this report limit themselves to remote key informant interviews plus an online validation survey. While initially in-country focus group discussions with beneficiaries and community members were planned, these were removed from the method in agreement with the UNICEF Evaluation Office.

6.1. Qualitative evaluation methods

Reflective of the current movement restrictions, as part of the qualitative component, the evaluation collects primary qualitative data through remote key informant interviews (KIIs). Qualitative data will be instrumental in testing the above-stated hypotheses regarding the mechanism through, and circumstance within, which programmes are achieving outcomes. Primary data collection activities will be complemented through a review and synthesis with existing, secondary information, for example, qualitative data collected during the scoping phase of this project through key informant interviews and the administration of an online survey. Finally, a short validation survey will be carried out towards the end of this project, validating the findings and recommendations derived.

6.1.1. Key informant interviews

Key informant interviews (KIIs) are qualitative, in-depth interviews of persons selected for their first-hand knowledge about a topic of interest. The interviews are typically loosely structured, relying on a list of issues to be discussed; however, can at certain times be thoroughly planned in order to test for hypotheses and assumptions – as will be the case in the evaluation at hand. It is to be kept in mind though that key informant interviews should more closely resemble a conversation, rather than a highly structured interview between interviewer and subject.¹⁰ Interview guides (see *Annex*) will be used to guide the conversation to some extent, however, keeping enough flexibility for a free discussion to evolve and allowing the interviewer to frame questions spontaneously, probe for information and take notes, which are elaborated on later.

Already during the project’s inception phase, country-level key informant interviews were organized. EPRI carried out in-person KIIs in Malawi and Yemen,¹¹ while those for Dominica and Nepal were undertaken remotely. The individuals for KIIs were selected based on their knowledge of and experience with the design and implementation of the cash transfer programmes to be evaluated. Many of the stakeholders interviewed will be consulted again during the data collection phase, using the pre-developed data collection instruments in the Annex. **Table 4** below provides an overview of the KIIs that were already carried out during the inception missions. It is to note that as a consequence of the restrictions imposed as a result of the global COVID-19 emergency, the remaining key informant interviews will all be conducted remotely.

Table 4. List of regional- and country-level KIIs for inception mission

	UNICEF	Government	Partners
Dominica	Deputy Representative Social Policy Specialist M&E Specialist	Chief Welfare Officer Social Development Planner	WFP
Malawi	Representative Chief of Social Policy Shock Responsive Social Protection Specialist Social Policy Specialist Emergency Economist M&E Specialist U-report Specialist	Deputy Director Social Welfare	WFP
Nepal	Chief of Social Policy Social Policy Specialist WASH Specialist Nutrition Specialist Emergency and DRR Specialists		WFP UNDP Dan Church Aid Nepal Red Cross Society
Yemen	Representative		

¹⁰ (USAID Center for Development Information and Evaluation, 2002)

¹¹ While some of Yemen’s programme staff were situated in Amman, Jordan and thus could be interviewed in person, others were located in Yemen and as such remote interviews needed to take place with the latter.

	PMU Team Leader		
	PMU Deputy Team leader		
	ICT Specialist		
	M&E Specialist		
	Programme Manager		
	Programme Specialist		
	Operations Manager		
	Social Policy Specialist		
Regional	MENARO Regional Policy Advisor	Social	
	MENARO Regional Emergency Advisor		
	MENARO Regional Evaluation Advisor		

For the remote data collection activities, four sets of KIIs are planned: (i) a set of KIIs with UNICEF staff at headquarter, regional and country levels; (ii) a set of KIIs with government ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) involved in social protection and cash transfer programming in humanitarian situations at the national and sub-national level, within the evaluation’s focal countries; (iii) a set of KIIs with staff from implementing partners, including other UN organizations, NGOs and private sector organizations, within the evaluation’s focal countries at national and sub-national level; and (iv) a set of KIIs with donor agencies, including for example DFID and the European Union, within the evaluation’s focal countries.

In absence of other in-country data collection activities due to COVID-19, these remote key informant interviews constitute the primary qualitative source of information on UNICEF’s approach to social protection programming, focusing on cash-based programming, in humanitarian situations. As shown in the evaluation matrix (see **Annex**), these KIIs serve to collect data and information across all five evaluation criteria. KIIs with UNICEF help to answer questions around the relevance of programming for UNICEF, its coherence with other partners, perceived effectiveness and efficiency of programming, as well as sustainability thereof, especially in light of building and strengthening the capacity of the existing social protection shock-responsive system in the country. KIIs with partners inside and outside government, as well as donors in the country, are meant to shed light on their perceptions of coherence and sustainability of UNICEF programming, while KIIs with implementing partners centre around the effectiveness and efficiency of programming.

EPRI does not anticipate any challenges in connecting remotely with the different sets of key informants at the national level. Experiences from the remote interviews conducted for the inception missions of Dominica and Nepal suggest that informants are generally available. For key informant interviews with government offices and/or implementing partners at the sub-national level, EPRI anticipates challenges in setting up stable internet connections to conduct interviews. In such instances, EPRI will carry out interviews via phone, if possible. As a last resort option, EPRI

will seek to share the questionnaire with the to-be-interviewed informants, so the latter can provide written responses to the questions.

An **expert sampling technique** will be used, which is a type of purposive sampling that selects individuals with a particular expertise on the subject matter. For KIIs with staff at UNICEF Headquarters, UNICEF Regional Offices and Country Offices, staff involved in social policy and emergency response are selected for interviews. The same technique will also be used for key informant interviews with stakeholders in government and non-governmental organisations at national level and implementers at the sub-national level. In each focal country, in consultation with the UNICEF Country Offices, a sample of experts and key informants involved in the design and implementation of the evaluated cash transfer programme and the wider social protection landscape and humanitarian response was and will continue to be selected for interviews. In addition to the expert sampling technique, a chain referral approach will be adopted, wherein identified stakeholders are encouraged to refer other individuals that should also be consulted.

By way of giving an initial indication on how many remote research activities are planned, below **Table 5** lists the number of planned research activities across different levels. As listed in the table, up to 17 remote research activities are planned at headquarter and regional level. In Malawi, Nepal and Yemen a total of 23 research activities are planned, and in Dominica 20. In total, 106 remote research activities are planned as part of this evaluation.

Table 5. Proposed number of research activities across different levels

Location					# of activities
UNICEF Headquarters	Evaluation Office, EMOPS, Programme Division				9
UNICEF Regional Offices	Social Policy and Emergency units in regions covered by study				8
Sub-total of activities at headquarter/regional level					17
In-country national level	Malawi	Yemen	Dominica	Nepal	14 per country
	KIIs (UNICEF, Government MDAs, partners, donors)				
	UNICEF Social Policy Specialist (1) Social Policy Officer (1) Emergency Economist (1) Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist (1) Programme Officer (1) Communication Officer (1) Ministry of Gender Gender affairs officer (1) Children affairs officer (1) Ministry of Finance Economic planning and development officer or treasury officer (1) MVAC Committee representative (1) Donors and IOs Irish aid representative (1) DFID representative (1) World Bank representative (1) EU representative (1) KFW representative (1)	UNICEF Social policy specialist (1) Third party monitoring specialist (1) MIS specialist (1) Programme specialist and manager (1) Payment specialist (1) PMU representatives (2) Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour WF/ECTP officer (1) Ministry of Finance Officer attending the SPCC committee (1) Social Welfare Fund Ex-SWF representative (1) Targeting Committee Targeting Committee representative (1) Donor and IOs World Bank representative (1) WHO representative (1) FAO representative (1)	UNICEF Social policy specialist (1) Emergency specialist (1) Programme specialist (1) Monitoring and evaluation specialist (1) Ministry of Social Services, Family and Gender Affairs Gender affairs officer (1) Ministry of Finance Treasury division officer (1) Ministry of Housing and Urban Development Housing division officer (1) Land and surveys division officer (1) Ministry of Health Health planning unit officer (1) Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development Education planning unit officer (1) School operations unit officer (1) Donors and IOs WFP representative (1) OCHA representative (1) IOM representative (1)	UNICEF Social policy specialist (1) Emergency specialist (1) Programme specialist (1) Monitoring and evaluation specialist (1) Field office representative (1) Ministry of Land Management, Cooperatives and Poverty Alleviation Panning and programme officer (1) Monitoring and evaluation officer (1) Ministry of Finance Budget and programme division officer (1) Economic policy analysis division (1) Planning, monitoring and evaluation division (1) Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens Department of Women and Children officer (1) Social Welfare Fund representative (1) Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development Planning and foreign aid coordination division officer (1)	

				Monitoring and evaluation division officer (1)	
In-country sub-national level	KIIs (frontline workers in implementing agencies)				9 per country, but only 6 in Dominica
	NGO or CSO CARE Malawi representative (1) Case management worker (4) Local council members (4)	NGO or CSO PMU Zonal officers (5) Representative from bank (2) Save the Children representative (1) Local council members (1)	NGO or CSO Village council representative (3) Case management worker (2) Beneficiary selection committee representative (1)	UNICEF Field office representative (1) NGO or CSO Village and district development committee representative (3) Municipal ward secretary (3) Social mobilizers (2)	
Sub-total of activities per country					23 in Malawi, Nepal, Yemen 20 in Dominica
Total of activities					106

6.1.2. Structured desk research

Qualitative data and information retrieved from the remote key informant interviews will be complemented by secondary sources. In light of the compromised ability to carry out primary data collection activities as originally planned, secondary data will be of high relevance. Therefore, a comprehensive review of existing literature and guidance documents on social protection, particularly cash-based programming, in emergencies has already been performed as part of the project's scoping phase and the research team may rely on some of the review's findings to paint an adequate background picture to the evaluation's setting and context. Moreover, a comprehensive desk review of documents pertaining to the cash transfer programmes selected for evaluation, as well as the humanitarian context these cash transfers operate in, together with the wider social protection landscape and its key actors, has been, and will continue to be, performed. The desk review comprises existing reports, assessments and evaluations of the social protection system, and documents specific to the cash transfers, such as operational manuals, internal monitoring and evaluation documents, financial reports, among others.

Additionally, qualitative data collected through key informant interviews and the administration of an online survey during the scoping phase is available for the evaluation and will complement and/or validate findings from forthcoming primary data collection (where applicable). The potential complementarity of the information gathered from Yemen, Malawi and Nepal during the survey and the evaluation questions can be seen in the evaluation matrix (see *Annex*). Likewise, the relevance of existing data and information from U-report, if available, or information stemming from the cash transfer programme's grievance redress mechanisms, will be assessed and used to complement primary qualitative data.

6.1.3. Validation survey

The final qualitative method employed is a brief survey, intending to validate findings and recommendations of the study. This survey will be rolled out digitally to UNICEF Country Offices that have experience with the implementation of social protection, focusing on cash-based programmes in emergencies as well as to those that are envisioning the adoption of such strategies in the future. The survey will be limited to a maximum of 30 Country Offices, wherein each office is required to submit one response. The scope of the survey will be limited to validating the project's main findings and recommendations. Among others, country offices may be asked to rank recommendations in order of priority and can offer complementary or diverging views with regards to the project's main findings. The survey is expected to not go beyond ten questions. The findings will be incorporated in the very final version of the main report, also subject to the timely roll-out and completion of the validation survey.

6.2. Quantitative evaluation methods

As outlined in **section 4**, this evaluation utilizes a comparative case studies approach, which will rely on the collection of primary qualitative data, to be complemented by an analysis of available quantitative data per country. The following sub-sections speak to the different existing data sources per country, their availability and their potential for data analysis.

6.2.1. Data sources and data analysis plan per country

To carry out this quantitative analysis, the evaluation is limited to existing secondary, quantitative sources for each country. Such sources include data that can shed light on the outcome question, including regular monitoring surveys and data detailing the relationship between inputs and outputs to answer the effectiveness and sustainability questions, among others. The evaluation team has worked together with UNICEF sections (Social Policy, WASH, Education, Health, Nutrition and Child Protection) on scoping and accessing the available data sources. In addition to scoping administrative data, the evaluation team scoped (representative) household datasets in all four countries. These efforts have helped the evaluation team put together a data profile for each country and options of carrying out quantitative analysis in the country. Based on this research, **Table 6** provides an overview of collected secondary data sources for each of the four countries, as well as the potential of undertaking quasi-experimental research based on the availability of secondary data sources.

Table 6. Data profile summary per country

	Malawi	Yemen	Nepal	Dominica
Programme	Vertical expansion of the SCTP	Emergency Cash Transfer Programme	Emergency Cash Transfer Programme	Emergency Cash Transfer Programme
Roll-out period	December 2017 until March 2018	2017-2021	2015-2017	2017/2018
Secondary data sources	3 rd and 4 th Integrated Household Survey; Integrated Household Panel Survey; DHS 2016, IOM displacement data, SCTP MIS, EMIS annual reports, and RapidPro report for 2019, DHIS-2.	DHS 2013, Rapid Emergency Response Survey 2017, National Social Protection Monitoring Survey, annual NNIS reports, IOM displacement data.	DHS 2011 and 2016, MICS 2014 and 2019, 2015 Nepal Health Facility Survey, 2015 Child Grant Baseline Survey; 2019 Child Grant Follow-up Survey	Population and Housing Census in 2001 and 2011, Survey on Living Conditions 2008, IOM displacement data, annual education indicators, VNA database.
Potential of quasi-experimental analysis using secondary data sources	Yes, when considering health outcomes	No ¹²	No	No

¹² If the quantitative proposal for Yemen gets approved, then a quasi-experimental research design in the form of a regression discontinuity approach can be undertaken.

The conclusion from these efforts are that the potential of quasi-experimental analysis using secondary data sources is not possible for three of the four countries given the current selection of secondary data. In Malawi, this type of analysis is possible with the DHIS-2 database. As such, for the remaining countries, the ability to answer questions related to effectiveness and results achievement is limited to the extent that the programme has collected primary data on this as part of ongoing monitoring and evaluation activities. The following sub-sections speak in more detail about the type of data that is existent per country, whether it has been accessed by EPRI, whether the data is usable and if so, how.

Malawi

The Malawi Social Cash Transfer (SCTP; Mtukula Pakhomo) is an unconditional transfer targeted to ultra-poor, labour-constrained households. The main objectives of the programme are to alleviate poverty, hunger, and starvation in the targeted households, as well as improving health, nutrition, and education conditions of the children living in those households. Due to recurrent annual food shortages in the country, UNICEF’s humanitarian response included the provision of cash top-ups to the SCTP during lean months. In an effort to assess the effect of these top-ups on beneficiary household’s welfare, access to a number of secondary quantitative data sources was requested. In addition to household surveys and programme specific systems, EPRI also requested access to government managed information systems in health, education and child protection (see *Table 7*).

Table 7. Accessible and inaccessible secondary quantitative data sources for Malawi

Data source	Status of data source	Type of data	Usability of data
<i>2nd, 3rd and 4th Integrated Household Survey along with the Integrated Household Survey Panel</i>	Accessed	Micro-data	Yes
	Descriptive – the data source allows for insights into the number of shocks that affect a household, the type of shock as well as information on how households cope with shocks in Malawi. Potential Poverty impact assessment for the year 2016/17 is possible.		
<i>2018 Population and Housing Census</i>	Accessed	Micro-data	No
	The micro-data set could not be obtained for this survey. EPRI only has aggregate tables on specific socio-economic indicators by district and TA. While it might provide a snapshot of the situation in Malawi, it does not provide any information on the SCTP.		
<i>Demographic and Health Survey 2010 & 2016</i>	Accessed	Micro-data	Yes
	Descriptive – the survey does not provide any information on the SCTP. However, it can provide details on the health of the population that can complement the findings of the 4 th Integrated Household Survey.		
<i>Education Management Information System (EMIS)</i>	Accessed	Aggregate reports	Yes
	Descriptive – although the data sources provide annual statistics, for the evaluation at hand, it would be necessary to have facility-level indicators at the district level. As such, this information cannot be used apart from a description of the education sector in Malawi.		
<i>Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2006 & 2014</i>	Accessed	Micro-data	No
	No information on the SCTP with the remaining indicators being outdated compared to the data sources above.		
<i>RapidPro</i>	Accessed	Aggregate and district-level data	Yes

	Descriptive – this data provides an overview for the year 2019 on the situation of children and their protection in Malawi.		
<i>Rural Livelihood Survey 2012</i>	Accessed	Micro-data	No
	Data is too outdated.		
<i>IOM Displacement Data</i>	Accessed	Micro-data	Yes
	Descriptive – the data on IDPs and the potential coverage of the SCTP and the lean season response can illustrate whether the programme needs to be extended in other specific areas of Malawi. Indicators include information on safety, reason for remaining an IDP, duration of displacement, composition of IDPs, the most urgent needs of IDPs, and the housing, health, education and hygiene situation of IDPs. Potential learnings and challenges in the response to the 2015 floods and cyclone Idai in 2019 could be drawn.		
<i>SCTP Management Information System (MIS)</i>	Accessed, yet waiting for permission to download	Micro-data	Yes
	Descriptive – the data allows EPRI to calculate the coverage of the SCTP and its lean season response in every district of Malawi. Furthermore, it provides information on the characteristics of beneficiaries – household composition, poverty status, education level and information on chronic disease/disability. However, this information is collected upon entering the programme and thus may have changed over time.		
<i>Health Management Information System (DHIS-2)</i>	Accessed, yet waiting for permission to download	Facility and district-level data	Yes, if download permission granted
	Descriptive and a quasi-experimental research design – the data provide monthly aggregate indicators per district for the past five to ten years. As permission to download the data has been granted, a matched difference-in-difference analysis can be undertaken. However, in order to do so, the Malawi Country Office will need to provide the names of all districts that have received an emergency top-up, irrespective of the donor. Potential indicators to be analysed are outpatient service utilization, percentage of households with improved access to sanitation/water source; suicide mortality rate; low birth weight babies; coverage of various diseases; number of OPD visits; etc.		
<i>Child Protection Management Information System (CPMIS)</i>	Inaccessible	-	-
	-		

As a recent household survey along with a corresponding panel dataset is present and the coverage per district and TA can be identified, a possible poverty assessment can complement the existing descriptive statistics. Furthermore, with the support of the Malawi Country Office, a U-report poll on the vertical expansion of the SCTP is envisioned. This will allow for the polling of four to six questions that are complementary to the results already found. The potential list of questions, which complement the questions identified in the evaluation matrix and account for the fact that FGDs with beneficiaries cannot be conducted due COVID-19, include:

1. Are you a beneficiary of the SCTP top-up? (Yes/No)
2. Does the SCTP top-up reduce the negative impact of disasters on your household? (Yes/No)
3. Do you feel that SCTP top-up provided during emergencies matches your needs? (Yes/No)
4. Tell us about your views/insights on the SCTP top-up?
5. Which of the following SCTP components do you believe is in most need of being changed in order to be more effective in future emergencies? (Higher benefit level/ Increased

frequency of pay-out/ Longer period of pay-out during emergencies/The expansion of the pay-out to non-SCTP households)

6. What do you do to prepare for a future emergency (e.g. drought, flood, cyclone, etc.)?

Yemen

The Emergency Cash Transfer Programme (ECTP) in Yemen was implemented by UNICEF in 2017 as a component of the Yemen Emergency Crisis Response Project funded by the World Bank. The aim of the ECTP is to scale-up the impact of the Yemen Emergency Crisis Response Project by specifically targeting the beneficiary households of the suspended Social Welfare Fund with direct cash assistance to improve their purchasing power for food. The evaluation of the ECTP impact will be potentially challenging due to the lack of recently collected data. To date, the most promising datasets include the Demographic and Health Survey 2013, the National Social Protection Monitoring Survey 2012-2013 and the Rapid Emergency Response Survey 2017. Given this, the evaluation team proposes an extensive descriptive analysis based on the existing secondary sources accessed as seen in *Table 8*.

Table 8. Accessible and inaccessible secondary quantitative data sources for Yemen

Data source	Status of data source	Type of data	Usability of data
<i>Demographic and Health Survey 2013</i>	Accessed	Micro-data	No
	Data is too outdated to provide any relevant information on Yemen's current situation.		
<i>Expanded Programme on Immunization 2015-2019</i>	Accessed	District-level data	Yes
	Descriptive – provides a snapshot of health of children aged 2 and under at district level. With the potential coverage rates of the ECT per district across time, a correlation analysis may be possible. However, these coverage rates would need to be obtained.		
<i>Integrated Management of Childhood Illness 2017-2019</i>	Accessed	District-level data	Yes
	Descriptive – provides a snapshot of health of children aged 5 and under at governorate level for 2017-2019. With the potential coverage rates of the ECT per governorate across time, a correlation analysis may be possible.		
<i>IOM Displacement Data</i>	Accessed	Aggregate and district-level data	Yes
	Descriptive – provides an overview of the IDP situation in Yemen due to the conflict.		
<i>National Social Protection Monitoring Survey 2012/13</i>	Accessed	Micro-data	No
	Data is too outdated to provide any relevant information on Yemen's current situation.		
<i>Nutrition Management Information System</i>	Accessed	Aggregate reports	No
	Information is not consistently provided across governorates/districts for the months and years provided.		
<i>Rapid Emergency Response Survey 2017</i>	Accessed	Micro-data	Yes
	Descriptive – provides a snapshot of health, education, income, assets, vulnerability and employment at the governorate level and for emergency and non-emergency strata. However, it is to be noted that it is a pilot survey and is thus not representative at the national level. Furthermore, it does not specifically identify recipient of the ECTP.		
<i>Weekly Epidemiological Bulletin</i>	Accessed	Aggregate data	No
	Information is not consistently provided across governorates/districts for the months and years provided.		
	Accessed	Aggregate data	Yes

<i>UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme or Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene</i>	Descriptive – provides a snapshot of how national, urban, and rural coverage of water and sanitation has changed from 2000 to 2017 across wealth quintiles.		
<i>Health Management Information System (DHIS-2)</i>	Accessed	Aggregate and district-level data	Yes
	Descriptive – provides a snapshot of district level health data.		
<i>Education Management Information System (EMIS)</i>	Accessed	Aggregate and district-level data	Yes
	Descriptive – provides a snapshot of district level education data.		
<i>Payment Progress Reports</i>	Partially accessed	District-level data	Yes, with the provision of the remaining reports
	Descriptive – these reports allow for the analysis of payments across governorates and time. It illustrates whether there have been significant number of changes in the beneficiaries and the amounts in certain places that may lead to specific recommendations on improvement through the current evaluation. Furthermore, it could provide us with cost over beneficiary ratios over the six payment cycles.		
<i>PMU quarterly financial reports</i>	Partially accessed	Annual report	Yes, with the provision of the remaining reports
	Descriptive – the reports allow an insight into each payment cycle of the ECTP. As such, EPRI can identify key challenges and opportunities in the payment and disbursement process as well as evaluate whether the key findings and actions taken were implemented accordingly by UNICEF.		
<i>WASH Management Information system</i>	Outstanding	-	Uncertain, not crucial
	Data has not been made available, so it is not possible to assess what could be done with it. Given that most sectoral data provided is at the macro-level and thereby cannot be used in an analysis, EPRI deems the provision of this data as not crucial.		
<i>Business intelligence tool data</i>	Outstanding	-	Uncertain, may be crucial
	Data has not been made available, so it is not possible to assess what could be done with it. Nevertheless, the tool is part of the ECTP and thus may provide information that is crucial to the evaluation.		
<i>Risk registry data</i>	Outstanding	-	Uncertain, may be crucial
	Data has not been made available, so it is not possible to assess what could be done with it. Nevertheless, the tool is part of the ECTP and thus may provide information that is crucial to the evaluation.		
<i>Health Resources Availability Monitoring System (HeRAMS)</i>	Outstanding	-	Uncertain, not crucial
	Data has not been made available, so it is not possible to assess what could be done with it. Given that this data source may not provide any information on the ECTP, it is considered to not be crucial for the evaluation.		
<i>Post-distribution Monitoring Survey</i>	Outstanding	Micro-data	Crucial
	Data has not been made available, yet the source is of extreme importance to answer some of the evaluation questions as it specifically collects information on beneficiaries receiving the ECTP. As such, EPRI can descriptively analyze how certain indicators such as health, education and food security have changed over time. In addition to this, its nature may potentially allow for the conduction of a trend analysis or a one-way ANOVA test . The exact technique will be determined once the actual data has been accessed. Currently, one does not know how the question is asked, what the answer options are and how complete the data is; especially, for the 1,000 households that have been followed over time. For the latter, it is also important to know whether the panel data is balanced or not. The data is also needed to test for the underlying assumptions of the analysis techniques. Without this, one cannot say whether the analysis will be valid.		

Dominica

As part of the 2017 hurricane response, UNICEF with the support of the World Food Programme implemented an Emergency Cash Transfer top-up to the national Public Assistance Programme (PAP). The coverage of this emergency top-up was provided to current beneficiaries of the PAP as well as to those that do not receive transfers from the PAP but were severely affected by the disaster. However, possible micro-data is very scarce in Dominica with the most recent datasets being (i) a survey administered by Ground Truth Solutions on information and shelter to 483 Dominicans in 2018 and (ii) the data gathered during the Vulnerability and Needs Assessments carried out by UNICEF and the WFP in the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Maria in 2017 (see *Table 9*).

Table 9. Accessible and inaccessible secondary quantitative data sources for Dominica

Data source	Status of data source	Type of data	Usability of data source
<i>Survey of Living Conditions and Household Expenditure and Income 2007/08</i>	Accessed	Micro-data	No
	Data is too outdated.		
<i>Education Management Information System (EMIS)</i>	Accessed	Aggregate data	Yes
	Descriptive – the data allows for a snapshot of Dominica’s education sector over the most recent years. However, information is only present at the national level and includes indicators such as drop-out rates, repetition rates, exam results, enrolment rates, etc.		
<i>IOM Displacement data</i>	Accessed	Site-level data	Yes
	Descriptive – the data on IDPs includes information on safety, reason for remaining an IDP, duration of displacement, composition of IDPs, the most urgent needs of IDPs, and the housing, health, education and hygiene situation of IDPs. Potential learnings and challenges in the response to the 2017 hurricane could be drawn across the four survey rounds.		
<i>Nutrition Management Information System (NNIS)</i>	Accessed	Aggregate data	No
	The information provided is scarce and not relevant to the evaluation.		
<i>Vulnerability and Needs Assessment data 2017</i>	Accessed	Micro-data	Yes
	Descriptive – the data allows for the identification of coverage as well as provides information on the beneficiaries. This includes sex, age, location of residence, number of pregnant and lactating women, chronically ill, employment status, main source of income before the disaster, whether the main source of income was lost, needs of household, and state of housing. It provides a picture of the beneficiaries immediately after the disaster occurred.		
<i>Health Management Information System (DHIS-2)</i>	Outstanding	-	Uncertain, may be crucial
	Data has not been made available, so it is not possible to assess what could be done with it. However, if the system allows for health indicators at the parish or even the facility-level, then it may be possible to match with the VNA beneficiary database.		
<i>Ground Truth Solutions Survey of People Affected by Hurricane Maria 2018</i>	Outstanding	Micro-data	Uncertain, not crucial
	Data has not been made available, so it is not possible to assess what could be done with it. However, given the limited sample size and the nature of the survey questions, the data is not crucial for the evaluation.		

Nepal

As part of the 2015 earthquake response, UNICEF with the support of the Government of Nepal implemented a one-off transfer as an Emergency Cash Transfer top-up to the existing social

assistance cash transfer programme in disaster-affected areas. The result was the establishment of a model of rapid social transfer to affected groups during future emergencies. This along with the 2nd phase of the programme (the expansion of the Child Grant) ultimately strengthened the social protection system for children in Nepal. As the impact of both programmes have been extensively assessed, the evaluation at hand will not undertake any quantitative research components. Instead, the focus of the evaluation will be on relevance and sustainability of the programmes as well as on the aftermath of the ECTP (e.g. such as the facilitation of access to services, etc.). Furthermore, attention will be paid to how the ECT top-up has positioned UNICEF and the Government of Nepal to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

6.3. Integrated data analysis methods

The comparative case studies design relies on the mixed data collection methods outlined above, integrating qualitative and quantitative data. The purpose of a mixed-methods approach is to gain an in-depth understanding of the cases and to understand and test causal propositions. In order to analyse the data and information collected through the methods elaborated upon above, and to allow for causal attribution of the evidence, different data analysis methods will be used. Overall, an integrated approach was chosen to the mixed methods evaluation, where qualitative and quantitative data are integrated into an overall design. This is done simultaneously; wherein qualitative and quantitative data are analyzed together.

6.3.1. Use of NVivo in analysis

To facilitate integrated data analysis, NVivo will be utilised. NVivo is a software that supports qualitative and mixed-methods research by enabling the user to store, organise, categorise, and classify qualitative research data, subsequently supporting a structured analysis of the latter. In NVivo single cases and observations for participants can be created and attributes, for instance organization of interviewee or role in design and implementation, can be allocated to the case. Especially for the comparative case studies approach NVivo will be helpful, as it facilitates integrated analysis of different sources and a synthesis across cases.

In a first step, all qualitative primary data collected through key informant interviews will be transcribed and subsequently coded in NVivo (see **Figure 8**). In NVivo, cases can be replicated with a node structure (or hierarchy), whereby the material can be coded in a way to get a complete picture of the case. The nodes will be organized according to key attributes related to the initial propositions with sub-nodes for each attribute (see next sub-section). In addition, variables on characteristics particular to each case will be coded. That way, NVivo facilitates analysis of each individual case, and especially a cross-case synthesis and analysis of variables. Next to the primary data, secondary data sources, including relevant reports and documents, will also be imported to NVivo and coded according to the same node structure.

In addition to the coding of qualitative data according to the specified nodes and sub-nodes, also quantitative datasets can be imported into NVivo. Following the quantitative data analysis per country according to the plan outlined in *sub-section Error! Reference source not found.*, results of the analysis will be imported into NVivo in Excel format. Subsequently, data from the Excel sheets can be coded according to the same nodes and sub-nodes structure used for the qualitative data, so that the single nodes synthesize qualitative and quantitative data.

After the coding of each case and data source into nodes and sub-nodes according to the attributes for testing, the data analysis commences. The specific methods of an integrated analysis suitable to the case study approach are elaborated upon in the following *sub-sections 6.3.3* and *6.3.4*. NVivo can support these through its word, text, and coding query functions, allowing the user to find content coded at selected nodes, a combination of nodes, or cases.

Finally, any results from the query and analysis can be noted in memos within NVivo. These memos are a type of document that allow for the recording of ideas, insights, or interpretations of the material, and can be created with links to nodes, or without a link to any node. They provide a way to keep the analysis separate from (but linked to) the material analysed. As indicated by the arrows, writing up initial interpretations and findings into memos might lead to new ideas and alternative explanations and propositions for testing, as elaborated upon in *sub-section 6.3.4*.

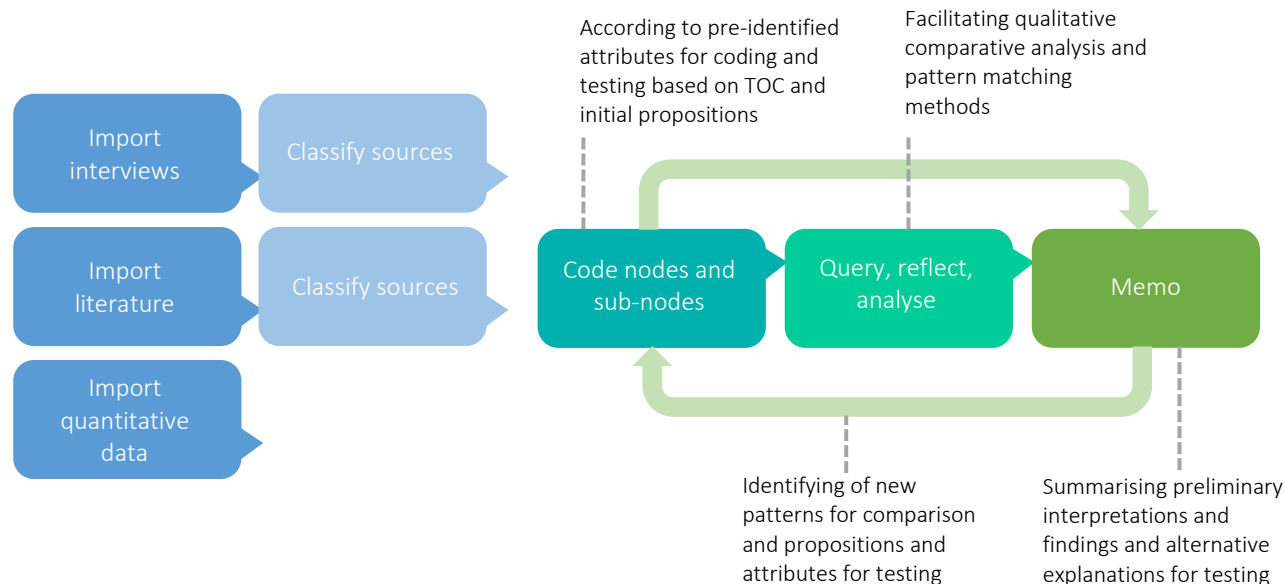


Figure 8. Data analysis steps in NVivo

6.3.2. Attributes for coding and testing

Based on the ex-post evaluation theory of change and the initial propositions for testing, a range of attributes were isolated, which will be tested as explanations for success of the interventions. The information on cases will be coded according to these attributes (in form of nodes and sub-nodes in NVivo), in order to facilitate a comparison and testing of these attributes in NVivo. Below,

Table 10 presents a non-exclusive list of attributes for coding (i.e. the initial codebook for NVivo). This list is subject to expansion and change, as other areas for comparison and cross-case analysis may emerge in the course of the evaluation, around which new attributes might be developed.

Table 10. *Attributes for testing in node structure*

Node	Sub-node
Capacity of national social protection system	Capacity of national actors
	Existing delivery systems
Shock-responsiveness of system	Extent of linkages between social protection and disaster management
	Coordination and communication of different actors
	Strategy and guiding documents
	Level of preparedness
Humanitarian cash transfer design and implementation	Delivery system for emergency response (parallel, mixed, integrated)
	Target group
	Alignment with needs
	Effects/changes for beneficiaries
	Timeliness of delivery
	Revision of design over time
	Monitoring and evaluation
	Level of integration (internally and externally)
	Linkages to national social protection system
	Partnerships
	National ownership
	Use of human and financial resources
Context-specific factors	Type of emergency
	Needs of affected population
	UNICEF upstream policy work
UNICEF capacities and comparative advantage	Capacities of UNICEF
	Priorities of UNICEF
	Alignment with plans and commitments
	Organisational guidance and preparedness
	Comparative advantage
Results and lessons learned	Relevance of response
	Coherence of response
	Effectiveness of response
	Efficiency of response
	Sustainability of response
	Organisational impeding/driving factors
	Operational impeding/driving factors
	Potential improvements for UNICEF
	Opportunities and challenges

6.3.3. Analysis methods

Comparison within the single cases and between cases is at the heart of the comparative approach. Analysis methods to be employed in this analysis supporting such cross-case analysis include qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) and pattern matching, as further elaborated upon below.

Qualitative comparative analysis

Qualitative comparative analysis is an analytic approach that supports causal attribution. This approach offers strategies that enable rigorous examination of the categorical attributes (such as capacity of national actors, existing delivery systems, extent of linkages, coordination, etc.) that may be associated with particular programme outcomes, defining success and failure, as ascribed by the theory of change. To analyse the causal contribution of different categorical attributes to an outcome of interest, QCA starts with the documentation of the different configurations of categorical attributes associated with each case of an observed outcome. These are then subject to a minimisation procedure that identifies the simplest set of attributes that can account all the observed outcomes, as well as their absence.

QCA is a theory driven approach, in that the choice of attributes being examined needs to be driven by a prior theory about what matters. It requires an in-depth understanding of the cases, strong theory and critical thinking, and testing of propositions. The list of conditions for testing may also be revised in the light of the results of the QCA analysis, if some combinations of attributes are still shown as being associated with a mixture of outcomes.¹³

While qualitative comparative analysis can draw on both qualitative and quantitative data, the analytical approach focuses on the relationships among combinations of potential causal conditions within and across cases (i.e., case-based knowledge). Thereby, qualitative comparative analysis provides a formal and clear procedure to qualitative analysis.

Pattern matching

Analysis across cases will also involve pattern matching logic, which involves examination of patterns within and across cases. Pattern matching compares two or more patterns between the cases to see if they are similar or different, as a step in explaining observed processes or behaviours. It can help to detect and understand patterns of convergence and divergence across cases. Hence, in pattern matching, patterns contributing to outcomes across cases can be identified and confirmed, and alternatively, mutually exclusive rival patterns can be compared for their consistency with the pattern observed in the case.¹⁴

Pattern matching and comparison can spur a range of new questions about the nature of the similarities and differences between different cases. These may include, but not be limited to, the following questions:

- What are the key patterns that occur over time in each of the country cases?
- What might be responsible for these patterns?
- Which actors and actions drive or inhibit these patterns?
- What is surprising about these patterns?

¹³ (BetterEvaluation, 2016)

¹⁴ (Kaarbo & Beasley, 1999) & (Goodrick, 2014)

- How can these similar or different patterns be explained?
- How are different attributes of the humanitarian cash transfer design and implementation and national (shock-responsive) social protection system related to these patterns?

6.3.4. Testing alternative explanations and triangulating

Based on the results of the qualitative comparative analysis and the observed patterns, alternative propositions will likely be derived. Such alternative propositions for testing will seek out additional evidence to test and elaborate on. For example, if the analysis of cases reveals that for a particular case the success of the UNICEF humanitarian cash transfer seems to be related to the established links between the national social protection system and disaster management, a case in which equally strong linkages exist, but weaker outcomes were achieved will be identified to test that proposition and find alternative explanations of success. Likewise, a case with weaker linkages will be identified, in order to test alternative explanations and potential drivers of success.

Furthermore, triangulation of information and sources is a key step to validate propositions and test explanations for success of an intervention. Triangulation is often used in evaluations to check answers to descriptive questions about the way things are, for example, by confirming interview statements with quantitative data or findings from existing research. In this evaluation, triangulation will also be used to check and strengthen answers to causal questions, for example, by identifying and ruling out alternative explanations, or by identifying and explaining exceptions to the main pattern observed.

6.4. Potential limitations, bottlenecks, and main risks

As with all research, potential limitations can be found in both the qualitative and quantitative approaches to evaluating cash-based transfers in emergencies. This is particularly the case in the four countries outlined in the proposal as possible bottlenecks, security/health concerns or other unsurpassable challenges may force the research team to explore alternative avenues to their proposed methodology.

From a **quantitative perspective**, the evaluation team is constrained by the secondary data available. As crisis has marked all four countries, data planning and collection activities by respective government agencies and the international community have been limited. This could be the result of instability, a lack of resources, an inability to control the environment, and/or a lack of analytical capacity, among others. Of the quantitative data that has been collected, few sources are recent or relevant to the evaluation at hand. Some may even improperly represent the target population thereby leading to the miscalculation of probability distribution and a lack of generalizability of the results to a larger population.

While **qualitative research** can complement quantitative descriptive trends and reduce some of the potential limitations, it is to be noted that the evaluation could also be constrained from this perspective. Firstly, the restrictions in primary data collection activities due to the current pandemic do not allow for a comprehensive overview of programme results, as the views of beneficiaries and community leaders cannot be represented in the evaluation. Secondly, the lack of relevant quantitative sources could affect the ability of the evaluation team to verify the results objectively vis-à-vis the information provided by questioned key informants. As such, of the information that is possible to be collected through primary qualitative research, the robustness and rigidity might be difficult to prove. The latter is also difficult in a situation in which research subjects answer questions overtly positive or negative. Nevertheless, triangulation within and between data sources will serve to control for some of these limitations.

In addition to limitations stemming from the approach possible, further limitations arise from the selection of countries. As certain countries initially envisioned to be part of the evaluation were not able to participate, and the number of countries that could replace them was limited, the selection of countries does not include programmes covering significant refugee populations and countries in which the cash transfer programme is set up completely parallel to any existing programmes. This limits the analysis of the impact of these characteristics and features to secondary sources, including the remote country case studies, which have been chosen to include programmes that address both features. Nevertheless, the ability to verify propositions for these programme types with that is more limited; though EPRI will seek to collect as much information as possible through consultations with stakeholders at regional and headquarter level to nevertheless answer these questions decisively.

A final key risk can be found in the **timeframe of the study**. To meet the submission deadlines, activities must be executed according to schedule. Any delay due to circumstances and processes out of control of the evaluation team, including the evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic, the feedback time taken by UNICEF, the ethical approval process or the speed and availability of country stakeholders to incept the remote data collection missions in the indicated timeframe for it, will delay the submission date of the deliverables.

6.5. Ethical considerations

EPRI will conduct high-quality work guided by professional standards and ethical and moral principles in line with the *Norms and Standards for Evaluation* (2016), developed by the UN Evaluation Group (UNEG), as well as the UNICEF *Procedures for Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis*.¹⁵ Strict adherence to a high set of ethical standards is of the utmost importance, given the subject matter of the study and its focus on vulnerable groups. All data collection tools together with this inception report, are subject to ethical approval before

¹⁵ (UNEG, 2016) & (UNICEF, 2015)

the start of the data collection. This ethical clearance will be provided by an ethical review committee prior to data collection activities, none of which will commence before ethical clearance is obtained.

Prior to key informant interviews, EPRI will gather the **informed consent** of all interviewees, and thoroughly explain to them the purpose of the evaluation, their role within the evaluation, and what information will be asked from them. The informed consent will be obtained verbally from all research participants. A consent script will be read out prior to the commencement of research and potential participants will be asked to provide their consent to join in the research. In gathering informed consent, EPRI will assure all interviewees of the confidentiality and **voluntariness** of their answers; if at any point a participant feels uncomfortable, he or she is not obliged to provide requested information and may state his or her reasons for doing so. While the objective of the study is to evaluate the cash transfer programme in each country, EPRI will clearly communicate to interviewees what they can reasonably anticipate from the evaluation, as part of efforts to manage expectations. By providing participants with elaborate and **transparent information** prior to the interview, their engagement and preparedness can be optimised.

At the outset of data collection, all participants will be informed that their answers will be kept **confidential**. Responses and comments will be summarised in the research report, but on no occasion, will respondents be identified by name or any other identifying characteristics aside from approximate age and gender. All information collected during the study will be recorded in audio on one device only and be kept strictly confidential and will not be shared except through the verbal or written dissemination of the findings of the study.

7. Evaluation activities, deliverables and workplan

7.1. Activities and deliverables

The above described methodology and approach will be employed to develop the different project activities and deliverables, as outlined in **Table 11** and further described subsequently. The table also lists the activities associated with the completion of each deliverable. At the end of the section a project Gantt chart (**Table 12**) maps the different activities and deliverables across the evaluation’s duration of approximately seven months.

Table 11. *Schedule of activities and deliverables*

Activities	Deliverables	Timeline
Inception meetings with UNICEF Country Offices in focal countries and relevant counterparts involved in response; desk review of existing documents and programme reports; initial review and assessment of secondary data sets; development of theories of change; finalisation of	Draft inception report including background, theories of change for all programmes, evaluation workplan, research questions and methodology, among others	March 31, 2020

evaluation methodology	workplan and		
Incorporation of inception report	comments on	Final inception report , which will also include the final qualitative fieldwork tools	May 8, 2020
Remote qualitative data collection activities (KIs); statistical analysis of secondary quantitative data sources; integrated analysis of qualitative and secondary quantitative data sources; drafting of synthesis report		First draft of synthesis report.	August 14, 2020
Development of presentation	PowerPoint	Findings and recommendations	September 11, 2020
Cleaning and anonymisation of primary qualitative data		validation workshop	
		All datasets and notes from primary qualitative analysis, including (but not limited to) notes from KIs, and FDGs	September 11, 2020
Incorporation of verbal and written stakeholder feedback and finalisation synthesis report		Final draft of synthesis report.	September 18, 2020
Drafting of four country programme evaluation reports		First drafts of country programme evaluation reports.	October 2, 2020
Incorporation of written stakeholder feedback and finalisation of country reports		Final drafts of country programme evaluation reports.	October 23, 2020

7.1.1. Inception report

This inception report is the project’s first deliverable and several key activities supported its formation. Most relevantly, meetings and key informant interviews with staff from the four UNICEF Country Offices, as well as representatives from the implementing agencies of the emergency cash transfer programmes in all four countries, carried out during inception missions, inputted into the completion of this report and the attached research instruments. The inputs from the meetings were complemented by a document review and analysis of existing secondary data sources. These activities helped the finetuning of the methods for data collection and analysis, the finalization of the evaluation matrix, and the sketching of a detailed evaluation workplan. Moreover, the instruments for primary data collection activities in all four countries are submitted as an annex to the inception report (see Annex C). Once ethical clearance has been obtained for this report and the attached data collection instruments, the evaluation team will commence data collection activities, as outlined in the project Gantt chart below (**Table 12**).

7.1.2. Main synthesis report

The synthesis report is the project’s main deliverable and will build on the qualitative research and as much quantitative descriptive and inferential analysis as is possible, using secondary quantitative sources. The report will centre around presenting the evaluation findings, synthesised across cases. To structure these findings, two obvious options present themselves: (i) structuring

the findings around the five OECD-DAC criteria (relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability); or (ii) structuring the findings around the four guiding evaluation questions, as outlined in *sub-section 5.1*. As part of the review process of this inception report, the structure for the report is to be agreed upon with the UNICEF Evaluation Office.

Next to the findings, the report also presents conclusions and recommendations across evaluated programmes and countries. Moreover, the report will contain an executive summary of maximum 5 pages, a short description of the different programmes evaluated, and the evaluation's objectives and methodology. The report will be written in English and will be in line with UNICEF-adapted UNEG Evaluation Report Standards. Excluding annexes and the executive summary, the report will be no longer than 60 pages.

A draft report including the first stage of the analysis will be shared with the evaluation reference group for written comments and feedback. After incorporation of the feedback, the evaluation team will resubmit a revised version of the document. Unlike for the inception report, no limit on the number of drafts to be submitted and rounds of feedback is set, to safeguard that quality of the synthesis report will be optimised.

7.1.3. Programme evaluation reports per country

Programme evaluation reports will be developed for each of the four countries in which a programme will be evaluated and will thus complement the synthesis report. Whereas the focus of the synthesis report lies on findings from a cross-country analysis, the country reports will speak in more detail to the evaluation findings from each of the four evaluated cash transfer programmes. The reports will provide a concise overview of the respective programme and the data collection activities carried out for the country, and subsequently centre around the findings for the country. The reports will end with conclusions and recommendations for the particular programme. The reports will be developed in English and, excluding annexes, be no longer than 20 pages. The reports will be submitted after finalization of the synthesis report.

7.1.4. Validation workshop and proceedings

Prior to finalization of the synthesis report, the evaluation team will present the evaluation's findings and corresponding recommendations to the UNICEF Evaluation Office and the evaluation reference group during a validation workshop. The workshop will serve to collect the office's and group's views on the findings and comments on the recommendations. In addition, staff from UNICEF Country/Regional Offices not visited during the assignment, may be invited to participate in some sessions of the workshop, serving to corroborate the findings with experiences from other countries and regions, further triangulating the conclusions and recommendations. The workshop will be organized after submission of the first draft synthesis report and be composed of multiple sessions, speaking to different audiences, with sessions solely targeted at the Evaluation Office

and evaluation reference group, and others targeted to a wider audience coming from Country Offices. Upon completion of the workshop, 2-pagers on proceedings will be drafted for each session. Due to the current situation, these validation meetings will likely be carried out remotely.

7.1.5. Datasets

Upon completion of the project, the evaluation team will submit all datasets and notes from qualitative and quantitative analysis, including (but not limited to) notes from KIIs, secondary data sets and surveys, and output sheets from statistical analysis, among others. Thus, all data and information required to reproduce the study will be submitted.

7.2. Timelines

The above activities and deliverables will be carried out and completed over the course of three project phases, each of which will differ in duration:

- Inception phase
- Assessment phase
- Consolidation & validation phase

The project commenced with the *Inception phase*, which was dedicated to the development of this inception report. As part of the inception phase, inception missions were carried out to the four study countries in order to have initial discussions and interviews with the respective UNICEF Country Offices and partners involved in designing and implementing the emergency cash transfer programme within the country. The *Assessment phase* follows the inception phase and is dedicated to remote, primary data collection activities in the four countries, together with an assessment and analysis of secondary data sources. The timely commencement and completion of the assessment phase highly depends on the receipt of ethical approval for the study in each of the four countries. Delay in receiving ethical approval might reflect in a delay of data collection activities and hence lengthen the evaluation's timeline.

As part of the *Consolidation & validation phase* an integrated analysis of the different qualitative and quantitative data sources will be carried out and result in first drafts of the synthesis report and country cases; however with different timelines for finalization, as outlined in *Table 11* above. Priority lies on the finalization of the synthesis report, with the development of the country reports to follow afterwards. The findings outlined in these first drafts will be presented and validated during a workshop that will likely be conducted remotely, pending developments of the COVID-19 pandemic. After the workshop and multiple rounds of feedback, the final deliverables will be completed and submitted, accompanied by all cleaned dataset and notes, relevant to reproduce the study. The end of the project timeline is envisioned to be on the 23 October 2020. Below, *Table 12* illustrates the different phases and associated activities and deliverables in the project's Gantt chart.

Table 12. Project Gantt chart

Project timeline	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	March		April					May				June				July
	16-20	23-27	30-3	6-10	13-17	20-24	27-1	4-8	11-15	18-22	25-29	1-5	8-12	15-19	22-26	29-3
Inception phase																
Inception missions to four evaluation countries (some remote)																
Development of TOC and finalised research questions per country																
Finalisation of evaluation workplan, methodology and sampling																
Drafting and submission of inception report, including instruments																
Feedback time for evaluation reference group																
Incorporation of feedback and submission of final inception report																
Assessment phase																
Obtaining ethical approval for data collection ¹⁶																
Remote qualitative data collection activities Dominica																
Remote qualitative data collection activities Malawi																
Wrap-up of qualitative data collection activities in Malawi and Dominica																
Remote qualitative data collection activities Yemen																
Remote qualitative data collection activities Nepal																
Wrap-up of qualitative data collection activities in Yemen and Nepal																
Retrieving remaining quantitative datasets, as necessary																
Transcription and coding of qualitative data in NVivo																

¹⁶ Any delay in the receipt of ethical approval will delay the in-country mission and likely result in an overall delay of the project’s timeline.

Project timeline (continued)	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
	July				August				September				October			
	6-10	13-17	20-25	27-31	3-7	10-14	17-21	24-28	31-4	7-11	14-18	21-25	28-2	5-9	12-16	19-23
Consolidation & validation phase																
Integrated analysis of qualitative and quantitative findings																
Drafting and submission of synthesis report																
Feedback time for evaluation reference group																
Development of PowerPoint presentation for validation meeting																
Cleaning and anonymisation of qualitative data and submission																
Incorporation of feedback and submission of final report ¹⁷																
Drafting and submission of draft country reports																
Feedback time for country offices and evaluation reference group																
Incorporation of feedback and submission of final report ¹⁸																

¹⁷ The number of feedback rounds is not specified to ensure optimal quality of the synthesis report and the country cases. Any additional round of feedback will result in a delay of the final submission of deliverables.

¹⁸ The number of feedback rounds is not specified to ensure optimal quality of the synthesis report and the country cases. Any additional round of feedback will result in a delay of the final submission of deliverables.

8. Roles and responsibilities

This section speaks to the roles and responsibilities of different parties involved in this evaluation, namely the Economic Policy Research Institute, the UNICEF Headquarters Evaluation Office, as well as the UNICEF Country Offices in the four case study countries. The section closes with an implementation plan outlining roles and responsibilities along the different activities of the project (*Table 13*).

8.1. Economic Policy Research Institute

The EPRI team is composed of five international experts on social policy and social protection, cash transfer programming in emergencies, and quantitative research, with the right mix of skills and expertise to successfully carry out and complete the evaluation. The team combines experiences in programme and systems evaluations, research with children and vulnerable populations, and overall social protection programming and evaluations. Moreover, the team has a proven track record of success in conducting similar analyses and evaluations for UNICEF and other UN agencies, and has gathered substantial experience operating in the humanitarian context, and thus possesses the right knowledge, experience, skill sets, and dedication necessary to work with UNICEF collaboratively on this project.

For this project, Dr. Michael Samson and Mr. Nard Huijbregts will share the role of team leader. **Dr Michael Samson**, EPRI's Director of Research, has over thirty years of experience in pro-poor policy making, specialising in designing, implementing, financing, monitoring and evaluating social programmes. Michael has been leading several large-scale impact evaluations of social cash transfer programmes for UNICEF, among others in Thailand, South Africa and Sierra Leone. Michael will be tasked with quality assurance of the main deliverable and will present study findings during major validation and dissemination events. Additional core responsibilities will involve advising the evaluation team on the sampling strategy, fieldwork design, carrying out of key informant interviews, drafting the report and especially policy recommendations.

Mr. Nard Huijbregts, EPRI's Lead Social Policy Advisor, will co-lead the team with Michael and be responsible for time management and lead on the development of all deliverables. Nard has research and policy advisory work experience in Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Ethiopia, the Gambia, India, Jordan, Lebanon, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tanzania, Thailand, Uganda and other countries, consulting for the African Union, CRS, DFID, ILO, OECD, Save the Children, UNDP, UNICEF, USAID, WFP, World Bank, and different government ministries and agencies. He is specialized in the design and implementation of social protection policies, programmes and strategies, information systems and fiscal space analyses for social protection. For this study, Nard will guide all key processes of the project and be particularly invested in the fine-tuning of the methodology, development of research instruments, designing of the sampling strategy, analysis of the findings and formation of recommendations for a strengthening of the social cash transfers

evaluated under this study. Moreover, Nard will be leading the fieldwork in all countries, starting with the inception missions.

Michael and Nard will be joined by Ms. Katharina Bollig, Dr. Lani Trenouth and Ms. Sandra Berger, in their capacities as social policy expert, humanitarian cash transfer expert and quantitative analysis expert.

Ms. Katharina Bollig, EPRI Social Policy Advisor, will be the social policy expert of the evaluation. Katharina is currently leading an evaluation of five cash transfer programmes in the Cook Islands, as well as a rapid assessment of the nutrition outcomes of a cash transfer in the Philippines. Katharina has conducted research and gained policy advisory work experience in various African and Asian countries, including the Cook Islands, the Gambia, India, Jordan, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Nigeria, the Philippines, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Uganda and Zimbabwe, among others, with consultancies for the African Union, CRS, ILO, UNICEF, UNU-WIDER, USAID, WFP and World Bank. She is specialized in the design, review and evaluation of social protection policies and programmes, and has worked extensively on collecting and analysing programme-level and institutional data of social assistance programmes in lower- and middle-income countries.

Ms. Lani Trenouth, independent humanitarian professional specialized in cash-based interventions in emergency settings will also join the team. Lani is experienced in the assessment, design, implementation, supervision, evaluation and technical backstopping of the cash transfers, cash-for-work, food vouchers, treatment of acute malnutrition, behavior change communication, agricultural livelihoods support, small business support, fuel efficient stoves, and household agriculture programmes. She has research and implementation experience in several countries, including Lebanon, Ethiopia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Guatemala, Kenya, South Sudan, Ukraine, Palestine, Liberia and Nepal. She has consulted for UNICEF, Action Against Hunger, the World Bank, Valid International, World Food Programme and several other organizations, primarily in emergency contexts.

Ms. Sandra Berger, EPRI's Quantitative Research Officer, will be the quantitative researcher of the evaluation. Sandra is currently developing a business case and fiscal space analysis for selected social protection programmes in Sierra Leone and also developing a costed sector plan for social protection UNICEF Nigeria. Sandra has conducted qualitative and quantitative research and gained policy advisory work experience in various countries, including Kenya, South Africa, Ghana, Rwanda, Côte d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Uganda, France, Thailand, Argentina, Kyrgyzstan, the Dominican Republic and Costa Rica for the ILO, OECD, UNU-MERIT, UNICEF, as well as the private sector. She is specialized in the design, implementation and evaluation of quantitative research and has collected and worked extensively on analysing data on labour migration and social protection.

8.2. UNICEF Evaluation Office

The evaluation will be managed from UNICEF's Evaluation Office, by the Senior Evaluation Specialist (SES) and assisted by an Assistant Evaluation Manager. The SES will supervise and guide the conceptual aspects of the evaluation in close collaboration with the team leader, mostly on the evaluation approach and methodology, which will be ultimately approved by the SES as he/she will contribute to the development of the GEROS compliant final evaluation and the generation and validation of the recommendations. The SES will also have responsibility to:

- Co-ordinate, direct and supervise all activities of the team leader and evaluation and its execution
- Be the liaison between the team leader, evaluation team and reference group and provide periodical updates on the execution of the evaluation, as well as internal review processes
- Prepare publishing-ready versions of the reports for issuing by the Director of the Evaluation Office
- Provide oversight and guidance to the evaluation team on UNICEF requirements and standards for evaluative work
- Provide quality assurance and approve all deliverables

8.3. UNICEF Country Offices

While not directly involved in the management and operationalization of the evaluation, the UNICEF Country Offices in Dominica, Malawi, Nepal and Yemen can support the successful operationalization of this evaluation through a range of activities. These are as follows:

- Facilitate access to relevant data for the evaluation, as feasible and required
- Provide timely feedback and inputs to the deliverables, as required
- Participate in remote key informant interviews for primary data collection in the respective country – informal during the inception mission and more formal and structure during actual data collection
- Establish linkages with and/or facilitate scheduling of meetings with Governments and other stakeholders in county, as required

Table 13. Implementation plan of the evaluation outlining roles and responsibilities

Activity/Deliverable	Timeline	EPRI	UNICEF HQ Evaluation Office	UNICEF Country Offices	Location
Finalisation of inception report and data collection instruments	8 May 2020	Finalise the report	Review of inception report and instruments	Provide timely feedback on the draft report	Remote
Accessing remaining data that is still outstanding	Until latest 26 June 2020	Outline what data is obtained and still missing	Facilitate access to data through country offices, if necessary	Facilitate access to data, if necessary	Remote
Primary data collection activities (KIIs) in Dominica	18-22 May 2020	Conduct remote interviews with key informants in Dominica	Support in reaching liaising with UNICEF CO, if necessary	Participate in KIIs, link EPRI to national stakeholders, if necessary	Remote
Primary data collection activities (KIIs) in Malawi	25-29 May 2020	Conduct remote interviews with key informants in Malawi	Support in reaching liaising with UNICEF CO, if necessary	Participate in KIIs, link EPRI to national stakeholders, if necessary	Remote
Primary data collection activities (KIIs) in Yemen	1-5 June 2020	Conduct remote interviews with key informants in Yemen	Support in reaching liaising with UNICEF CO, if necessary	Participate in KIIs, link EPRI to national stakeholders, if necessary	Remote
Primary data collection activities (KIIs) in Nepal	8-12 June 2020	Conduct remote interviews with key informants in Nepal	Support in reaching liaising with UNICEF CO, if necessary	Participate in KIIs, link EPRI to national stakeholders, if necessary	Remote
Coding of qualitative KIIs in NVivo according to preliminary codebook	8 June-3 July 2020	Carry out coding			Remote
Analyse obtained quantitative data in Excel and/or Stata	6-31 July 2020	Conduct analysis			Remote
Integrated analysis of qualitative and quantitative results with the help of NVivo	Until 7 August 2020	Conduct analysis			Remote
Submission of synthesis report	Draft version: 14 August 2020 Final version: 18 September 2020	Drafting of synthesis report according to structure outlined in inception report, incorporation of feedback received from UNICEF	Provision of comments and feedback on the report (multiple rounds, as required)	Provision of comments and feedback on the report	Remote
Development of PowerPoint presentation for validation meeting	11 September 2020	Presentation of PPT during validation meeting (remotely)	Organising and attending meeting (remotely)	Attending meeting remotely	Remote
Submission of country reports	Draft versions: October 2, 2020 Final versions: 23 October 2020	Drafting of country reports according to structure outlined in inception report, incorporation of feedback received from UNICEF	Provision of comments and feedback on the report	Provision of comments and feedback on report for specific country	Remote
Submission of cleaned qualitative data	11 September 2020	Cleaning and anonymising of qualitative data			Remote

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