



Malawi Social Cash Transfer Programme (SCTP) Longitudinal Impact Evaluation Midline Survey

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List of Acronyms

| | |
|---------|---|
| AIR | American Institutes for Research |
| CSR | Centre for Social Research |
| DHS | Demographic Health Survey |
| IE | Impact Evaluation |
| IHS | Malawi Integrated Household Survey |
| FGD | Focus group discussion |
| KII | Key informant interview |
| MDE | Mean detectable effect size |
| MIS | Management information system |
| MOGCDSW | Ministry of Gender, Community Development, and Social Welfare |
| SCTP | Malawi Social Cash Transfer Programme |
| TA | Traditional authority |
| TRG | Technical Reference Group |

1. Background and Motivation

1.1 Background

The Malawi Social Cash Transfer Programme (SCTP) has been providing monthly unconditional cash grants to ultra-poor and ‘labor-constrained’ households since 2006, when the programme was initiated in the pilot district of Mchinji. **The objectives of the programme are (i) reducing poverty and hunger; (ii) improving health and nutrition in vulnerable households; and (iii) increasing school enrolment for children.** The SCTP currently reaches over 300,000 households and 1.3 million individuals (of which over 630,000 are children). The programme is fully executed by Ministry of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare (MoGCDSW) of Malawi and by the District Councils. Funding for the SCTP is provided by the Embassy of Ireland, the German Government (BMZ through KfW), the European Union, the World Bank and the Government of Malawi, while UNICEF and GIZ provide technical support to the implementation, coordination, evidence generation and system strengthening. In 2018, the SCTP was scaled up to all the 28 districts across the country and the Government began a recertification exercise in 2021 for households who have been on the programme for a period of four years or more.

UNICEF and the Government of Malawi, in collaboration with development partners, commissioned a longitudinal impact evaluation of the Social Cash Transfer Programme that ran from 2013 to 2015. Findings of the evaluation provided solid evidence that the Malawi SCTP generates a wide range of positive impacts across most social and economic domains at the household and individual levels. The 2013-2015 evaluation influenced the design of the second Malawi National Social Support Programme (MNSSP II). The evaluation also significantly informed the scale up of the SCTP to a national programme and remains a key reference document on the impact of the programme. The evaluation was however run before the SCTP was extended to all 28 rural districts. A case study report on Malawi was also prepared by the Economic Policy Research Institute (EPRI) within a wider evaluation of UNICEF’s approaches to cash transfers in emergencies.

1.2 Motivation

Over the past ten years, Malawi has faced several shocks of different nature, from El Niño-induced drought and Cyclone Idai, to recurrent lean season or food insecurity emergencies and the recent effects of Covid-19. During this period, an average of 1.8 million people (that is, 10 per cent of the population) have been deemed acutely food insecure each year, triggering a substantial emergency response every single year. Beyond consumption support, the MNSSP II dedicates two pillars to ‘Resilient

Livelihoods’ and ‘Shock-Sensitive Social Protection’ and identifies pathways for graduation as a key priority. Resilience-building and graduation out of extreme poverty are also key objectives behind numerous government strategies, policies and support programmes.

As Malawi embarks on a comprehensive reassessment of existing beneficiaries, many of whom would have been receiving cash for over a decade, a key policy question is whether ultra-poor households are able to maintain their level of consumption after being removed from the program. The idea of ‘graduation’ is hotly debated in development policy. Evidence from the 2013-15 impact evaluation (IE) in Malawi shows that SCTP recipients are able to use the transfer productively such that they generate a multiplier of 2.94, that is, each Kwacha transferred leads to an increase in overall spending of 2.94 Kwacha (Handa et al 2021). These results suggest that households are strengthening their livelihoods base and might be able to continue a higher level of consumption even after they stop receiving the transfer. However, it is important to remember the overall level of consumption and that these large multipliers occur on top of a very low base. In Malawi recipient households have an average daily consumption of US\$0.32 per person per day prior to the program. Even a tripling of this value, as suggested by the Malawi SCTP multiplier, would merely raise consumption to just under \$1 a day per person, or \$1.75 in PPP terms, which is above the national poverty line but still well below the international poverty line of \$1.90 per day. Is it plausible then that these households can continue to thrive after being removed from the program? Or are they just one shock away from going back to their prior financial position?

Through the SCTP recertification and retargeting exercise, beneficiary households that do not meet the programme’s targeting criteria¹ are taken off the programme (exiting households) and new households enrolled in their place (new entrants), while those households that still meet the programme’s targeting criteria are maintained on the programme (continuing households). Some of the exiting households will be taken off the programme because they have ‘graduated’ from extreme poverty. Such households provide a unique sample/case as to how specific interventions (SCTP) or attributes/factors (such as productive capacities, access to financial services, changes in household demographics, etc.) may lead to household poverty graduation and the associated pathway(s). Households will also be analyzed with a resilience lens, assessing whether the transfers and accessibility to social services and complementary activities have contributed to increase the resilience of beneficiaries against shocks. A closer examination of exiting households will also provide rich insights into the specific catalytic factors

¹ Households that may no longer meet the targeting criteria include those households that are no longer ultra-poor, households that are no longer labor constrained due to change in household demographics such as children having grown up, or some households members gaining employment.

(e.g. access to finance, labour-capacity) that enabled SCTP households to build their resilience and created opportunities for their graduation out of extreme poverty. For continuing households, an analysis on the limiting factors (e.g. demographics, geographic location, etc.) that may be holding some SCTP households back from greater resilience outcomes and graduation from poverty will also be conducted. Finally, a follow up of graduated households, after they have stopped receiving social cash transfers, will provide information as to whether their graduation from poverty is sustainable, and what interventions may need to be provided to ensure that they stay out of poverty.

A combined analysis of the different cohorts of beneficiaries, in the form of a longitudinal impact evaluation, will provide a more in-depth understanding of the impact of the SCTP on the poorest households, and how changes differ over time among the cohorts, as well as the long-term effects that the programme has after households have exited (post-exit effects). Results will be critical for influencing resilience-building and graduation programming (post-project support). It will also be useful in determining the optimal transfer value and duration of support as well as types of services and linkages to other programmes that are offered to beneficiary households (e.g. cash + approaches), strengthening household resilience and potential for exiting extreme poverty in a sustainable manner. The updated learnings from the study will enrich ongoing discussions on the relevance, effectiveness, sustainability and economic impacts of the SCTP, as well as future programming through the assessment of various aspects including targeting, benefit level appropriateness, socio-economic impact on beneficiaries and their communities, and achievement of the programme's objectives. Thus, the learnings will aim at informing government's decisions on programme design and administration for greater resilience and graduation outcomes.

1.3 Purpose and content of this report

The purpose of this Inception Report is to present the overarching objective of the impact evaluation (IE), the specific evaluation questions, the proposed methodology, and workplan and roles and responsibilities. As this is a follow-up to the baseline study that was done in 2022, this Inception Report should be read in conjunction with the Inception Report and Baseline Report from 2022. The current Report reflects any issues or strategic decisions that have arisen and been discussed during the inception phase. The IE is led by the Ministry of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare, with financial support from various development partners (including UNICEF, World Bank, EU, Embassy of Ireland and KFW etc.). and is technically supported by UNICEF

2. Purpose, Scope and General Approach of the Assignment

2.1 Overall purpose

The overall purpose of the study is to carry out a midline survey of the Malawi Social Cash Transfer Programme (SCTP) to estimate the impact of the program, and to assess the trajectory of households who have been removed from the program. This inception report covers the midline phase of the long-term IE, the study design and the implementation of the midline quantitative and qualitative surveys.

2.2 Scope

The overall goal is to prepare and conduct data collection activities for a SCTP midline survey, deliver comprehensive datasets, high-quality analysis, and corresponding reports for each survey. This will provide critical evidence to support and strengthen the design and implementation of the MSCTP. The objectives of this assessment through this consultancy are:

1. To assess, to the best possible extent, relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability of the Programme, with a particular focus on equity/inclusion as well as UNICEF's strategic positioning in relation to its child rights mandate.
2. To identify and document key lessons learned, good practices and positive effects in the implementation of the Programme, which will be used to inform and support advocacy efforts for future investment and scale-up of the Programme.
3. To provide a set of forward-looking and actionable recommendations to strengthen programmatic strategies and activities in the continuation of the Programme, taking into consideration national development priorities relating to social protection, such as the new National Social Protection Policy (NSPP), Malawi National Social Protection Strategy (MNSPS) (2023-28), Malawi Short-term Implementation Programme (MIP-1) operationalizing the Vision 2063 for the first 10 years (2021-31), and National Resilience Strategy 2018-2030.

A midline household survey will be conducted in three districts (Balaka, Dedza and Nkhata Bay) as part of the ongoing 10-year longitudinal impact evaluation of SCTP. This builds on the SCTP baseline conducted in 2022, and will provide further evidence of the long-term protective, and resilience effects

of the SCTP. The scope of activities associated with this second phase of the long-term evaluation is described below, as stated in the TORs.

- i. Designing of the longitudinal impact evaluation of the Malawi Social Cash Transfer Programme, a sampling frame and a data analysis framework building on the overarching approach and key evaluation questions described in the next section.
- ii. Facilitating a discussion with the Evaluation Technical Reference Group (TRG) and key stakeholders to reach consensus on the methodology, the sampling frame, the data analysis framework and the timeline for the impact evaluation.
- iii. Designing and pre-testing of the evaluation instruments (tools/questionnaires, manuals, data storage protocols) both qualitative and quantitative, and refining the instruments based on lessons from the pre-test while ensuring quantitative questionnaires are consistent with those used at the baseline to ensure comparability of indicators.
- iv. Recruiting and training of enumerators and supervisors for conducting field data collection; design of quality assurance protocols and preparing of a corresponding report.
- v. Conducting of the midline survey (qualitative and quantitative) according to the agreed timetable.
- vi. Undertaking data cleaning and analysis in line with the agreed framework and preparing a survey implementation report with a detailed description of the processes followed during the field work (as part of the midline report).
- vii. Preparing midline survey results report incorporating quantitative and qualitative results; associated data reports; and presenting and discussing the reports with the Evaluation Technical Reference Group and other key relevant stakeholders. The quantitative analysis should be consistent with that proposed and agreed upon during the inception phase of the study in 2022.

2.3 Approach

The core design of this study was already created in 2022, at the time of the baseline (by our research team). The baseline analysis focused mostly on exiting and continuing households via in-depth interviews (IDIs) to understand why the former were able to ‘graduate’ and why the latter were unable to do so. In the follow-up, we will implement a mixed methods ‘longitudinal embedded design’ in which we will seek out the same respondents and reinterview them to understand the ways in which their lives have changed. As agreed upon at the baseline phase, all sample households will be administered a quantitative survey that will be supplemented with qualitative surveys targeted at a

smaller segment of the sample population. In addition to measuring general welfare indicators of households, the methodology will factor in potential approaches to measure a dose-response relationship between impacts and duration on the SCTP, potential household factors that may affect the likelihood of households to exit SCTP, potential long-term effects of the programme (post-exit effects), and the effect of linkages with other social support programmes or services, among other effects. As this is a longitudinal design, the quantitative sample entails re-interviewing the same households (N=3,418) as at baseline in the three study districts of Nkhata Bay, Dedza and Balaka. The four study groups in this study are:

- 1) *New beneficiaries* – households identified as eligible for SCTP but who have not received cash transfers in the past.
- 2) *Exiting beneficiaries* – households who have been receiving SCTP for at least 4 years and, due to socio-economic or demographic changes are no longer eligible for the programme.
- 3) *Continuing beneficiaries* – households who have received SCTP for at least 4 years and identified as still eligible for the programme.
- 4) *Control households* - households who have never received SCTP but are similar in key demographics and other variables to beneficiary households.

2.4 Primary intended users and intended uses

This evaluation is meant to support primarily the MoGCDSW to ensure accountability and learning for the ongoing and future implementation of the SCTP. However, it is anticipated the evaluation will be used by the Ministry of Finance and Economic and Affairs (MoFEA) - Poverty Reduction and Social Protection, to inform SP policy and programme decisions. This evaluation is also aimed at supporting the Social Policy team within the Malawi Country Office of UNICEF, who are expected to use the results to continue its support to government counterparts to strengthen and adapt SCTP's key activities to ensure they remain relevant and appropriate to the current context, and for scale-up. The evaluation will also be useful for Development Partners, both for decision-making, accountability, and learning purposes, while supporting their efforts to strengthen the SCTP and secure future investment in the broader sphere of social protection. In addition, UNICEF evaluation specialists and social protection specialists will have great use of this evaluation as findings will contribute to the global evidence on social protection and assistance and to UNICEF's evidence base in this thematic area. Finally, the evaluation will add to existing knowledge on social protection broadly, and be a source of additional evidence to aid policy debates. Researchers, practitioners, and policymakers in the social protection sector will have access to the evaluation data and trends and use these in their work to influence policy and practice.

2.5 Key Evaluation Questions for the Midline Survey

Here, we outline the research questions derived from the initial list in the Terms of Reference (TOR) and those from the TORs commissioning the overall design and baseline study. As the TORs for the midline also include questions for the SP-GEAR IE, we present only those questions relevant for the long-term IE. For each research question, we specify the approach by which it will be addressed.

Table 1: Research Questions

| Evaluation criteria | Key evaluation questions (bolded questions can be addressed in the proposed approach) | Approach and timeline |
|----------------------------|--|--|
| Relevance | <p>Is the intervention doing the right things? The extent to which the Programme objectives and design respond to beneficiaries', global, country, and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities, and continue to do so if circumstances change.</p> <p>Indicative sub-questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the Programme appropriate in the current context, to meet the needs of the beneficiaries and the priorities of the government of Malawi? • Are the interventions and outputs of the Programme consistent with the intended outcomes/impact of the Programme? Are the Programme's objectives still valid? | <p>IDIs, FGDs in midline</p> <p>IDIs, FGDs in midline; analysis of transfer values;</p> |
| Coherence | <p>How well does the Programme fit? The compatibility of the Programme with other interventions in a country, sector or institution.</p> <p>Indicative sub-questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are some potential linkages to other social services or interventions that would improve the resilience and graduation potential of households? | <p>IDIs and FGDs at midline; quantitative analysis of heterogeneous impacts based on receipt of complementary interventions</p> |
| Effectiveness | <p>Is the Programme achieving its objectives? The extent to which the intervention achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives, and its results, including any differential results across groups.</p> <p>Indicative sub-questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How has the level of transfers and payment timeliness, regularity and predictability or lack thereof affected the effectiveness of the Programme and its impacts. • What are the potential key enabling factors of Programme administration and most common characteristics of the households that have successfully built their resilience and graduated from ultra-poverty? Is there a causal relation between the duration of Programme support and the beneficiaries' poverty status? • How does the Programme perform in terms of ability to support households to become more resilient and sustainably exit from extreme poverty? • Is the programme inclusive of people with disabilities? | <p>Analysis of transfer levels and payments from MIS data;</p> <p>Heterogenous analysis of impact by household characteristics; effect of length of receipt of transfers (dosage) on sustained impacts on exited households;</p> <p>IDIs and FGDs with exited households on support received;</p> <p>Answered at baseline</p> <p>IDIs, FGDs in midline</p> <p>Long-term IE quantitative baseline</p> |

| | | |
|-----------------------|---|--|
| Efficiency | <p>How well are resources being used? The extent to which the Programme delivers, or is likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way.</p> <p><u>Indicative sub-questions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are Programme interventions or processes time efficient? What processes can be more time efficient and how? | <p>Operations module from household survey at midline on time cost of receiving payments by recipients (and comparisons with similar items from baseline to check for improvements);</p> |
| Sustainability | <p>Will the Programme benefits last? The extent to which the net benefits of the Programme continue or are likely to continue.</p> <p><u>Indicative sub-questions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What key Programme interventions can enable beneficiaries to improve levels of education, health and nutrition of their children on a long-term basis? • Given the current context and upcoming potential shocks, how shock-responsive is the current Programme? And how can the Programme be adapted to become more shock-responsive and flexible as a social assistance programme? | <p>Midline quantitative survey; IDIs and FGDs with beneficiaries</p> <p>Midline quantitative survey on coping strategies; IDIs and FGDs with beneficiaries on support needed to combat shocks;</p> |
| Impact | <p>What difference does the intervention make? The extent to which the intervention has generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended or unintended, higher-level effects.</p> <p><u>Indicative sub-questions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the welfare impacts of the Programme for the household and its members (e.g. poverty levels, household and caretaker stress, food and nutrition security (including anthropometric measures), asset accumulation and shelter, health status of adults and children, education outcomes), both while on the Programme and after being removed from the Programme? • What are the socio-economic impacts of the Programme on beneficiary households and their communities? • What is the impact of the Programme and its complementary interventions including cash plus interventions on the resilience of households against shocks (covariate and idiosyncratic)? • Do households that have exited remain out of extreme poverty after leaving the Programme? Did they have a resilience-base that allowed them to withstand shocks or did they have to resort to negative coping mechanisms? What links did households have to other interventions related to livelihoods that assisted graduation? | <p>Quantitative baseline + midline</p> <p>Quantitative baseline + midline</p> <p>Quantitative baseline + midline</p> <p>Quantitative baseline + midline</p> |

3. Detailed Methodological Approach Team

3.1 Overview

The study design for the long-term IE, agreed upon at the inception phase in 2022, is an embedded, mixed-method design to address questions about impact (*what*) as well as process and pathways (*how and why*) (Plano Clark et al. 2008). In an embedded mixed-method design, quantitative and qualitative data sources can be used to address distinct aspects of a complex program. These can include quantitatively measuring outcomes and qualitatively assessing outcomes as well as pathways of influence and operational processes. Such an approach is particularly well-suited to the research questions in the TORs, which include not just impact but also understanding the role and influence of specific program activities, linkages, and individual household behaviors. We draw on Guest and Fleming's (2014) three dimensions of integration for mixed methods research to guide our approach: *purpose, timing and weighting*. The overall *purpose* of using mixed-methods is to obtain multiple perspectives on the different dimensions of impact of the SCTP. With the integration of these methods, we will obtain clear indicators of programme outcomes along with in-depth, contextualized understanding of the processes and pathways of impact that cannot be obtained from one method alone. We will also be able to assess operational considerations, from the program implementers and individual beneficiaries' points of view, which are critical to understanding how well the SCTP is able to effectively create linkages and access to other services. For *timing*, within our embedded design, we propose sequential data collection, leading with the quantitative survey followed by the qualitative activities to preserve the objectivity of the survey and to guarantee that participants in the qualitative arm are selected from the quantitative sample. For *weighting*, we will give equal importance to the qualitative and quantitative data in our analyses and interpretation of impact using each source of data in concordance with its intended contribution to accurately obtain a more robust understanding of program impact.

3.2 Quantitative Approach

The primary objectives with this component are to establish the causal effects of the SCTP on households, and to see whether exiting households remain out of extreme poverty over time. Secondary objectives include an analysis of the relationship between program implementation,

particularly timely payments, on outcomes, and understanding the behaviors of households that exited and contrasting those behaviors with those that remained on the program. The core design, agreed upon during the inception phase of the baseline in 2022, entails four study arms as described in the TORs: 1) New beneficiaries to the SCTP; 2) Exiting beneficiaries; 3) Continuing beneficiaries; 4) Comparison households who are not receiving the SCTP but who are otherwise similar to receiving households.

For the 2022 baseline, the research team worked with the MoGCDSW and UNICEF to understand what was feasible for a comparison group, given that the MSCTP was operating at scale. Ultimately, the decision was to use alternate or waiting list households as the comparison group. These are households that are eligible for the programme but slightly above the 10 per cent cut-off in their VC. However, because the 10 per cent cut-off is imposed at the VC level, waiting list households in some VCs can actually be poorer (according to the PMT) than participant households in other VCs. Because we are pooling our samples, this actually becomes a strength of the design; it improves the comparability between the overall new and waiting list households. Baseline balance tests reported in the baseline report for more than 200 indicators show that, in fact, the two groups are comparable, and the design is robust to be able to make causal claims about programme impact.

Power analysis prior to baseline indicated that 3,200 households across 60 clusters would be sufficient to detect differences of 0.30 standard deviations (SDs) for key indicators between each of the two pairwise comparisons (new vs comparison households; exiting versus continuing households). During actual fieldwork at baseline, it became difficult to find continuing households, and because we only had preliminary (and not final) eligibility lists for the Dedza District, we added four extra clusters and 218 households for a total sample size of 3,418 households across 64 clusters.

We conducted ex post power analyses with the 2022 baseline data, using actual sample means, SDs and intra-cluster correlations (ρ) (*see Table 2*). The last column reports the ex post minimum detectable effect (MDE) for a select number of key indicators, and these are all smaller than 0.30SD, and in fact are all below 0.20SD, which is considered a small effect size in social science research (What Works Clearinghouse, n.d.). The long-term study is thus more than adequately

powered to detect small to mid-sized impacts of SCTP, even after accounting for attrition over time. For the midline, we will reinterview the same households that were in the baseline to build a panel of households, so that we can compare changes over time (from baseline to 2024) between the comparison and new households.

Table 2: Minimum Detectable Effect Sizes using 2022 SCTP Baseline (64 clusters)

| | Mean | SD | rho | MDE (SD) |
|--------------------------------|----------|----------|------|----------|
| Per capita consumption, annual | 167,717 | 111,587 | 0.05 | 0.17 |
| Worry about having enough food | 0.75 | 0.43 | 0.06 | 0.17 |
| Number of meals per day | 2.12 | 0.53 | 0.03 | 0.15 |
| Quality of life index | 20.38 | 6.45 | 0.03 | 0.15 |
| Quality of life scale | 2.55 | 0.81 | 0.03 | 0.15 |
| Perceived stress | 32.30 | 6.03 | 0.03 | 0.15 |
| Breeder or owner of livestock | 0.53 | 0.50 | 0.02 | 0.15 |
| TLU owned presently | 0.12 | 0.34 | 0.04 | 0.16 |
| Total expenditure on livestock | 0.16 | 0.51 | 0.00 | 0.13 |
| Income from livestock sale | 947.65 | 3,951.88 | 0.00 | 0.13 |
| Any savings | 0.16 | 0.37 | 0.03 | 0.15 |
| Total savings | 2,000.26 | 6,079.85 | 0.01 | 0.14 |

3.2.1 Quantitative Instruments

The fidelity of the statistical analysis requires that all indicators be measured in the same way at each survey round. Thus, we will replicate the baseline survey at midline because our review of the distribution of indicators during the analysis of the baseline confirmed that there were no concerns with measurement. Note that we administered the full consumption module used by the Malawi National Statistics Organization in its poverty estimates, and we are thus able to make direct comparisons of poverty rates in MSCTP population and in the country as a whole, which is important for assessing the targeting performance of the programme. Table 3 lists the domains in the household survey.

Table 3: Survey Questionnaire Topics

| | |
|--|---|
| Roster and Orphan Status | Stress Scale, Resilience Scale |
| Education — 3+ years | Food Security |
| Health — All | Social Safety Net Receipt |
| Disability | Shocks and Coping Strategies |
| Child Health and Diet— 0-5 years | Covid-19 effects |
| Access to Educational and Health Services | Expenditure (IHS expenditure module) |
| Fertility— women ages 12-49 | Land-Use |
| Time-Use (chores, agriculture, other)— ages 6+ | Crop Production and Sales |
| Labor (wage/ ganyu)— ages 10+ | Agriculture and Livestock |
| Household Enterprises | Hired Labor |
| Transfers Received and Made | Housing Conditions and Household Assets |
| Other Income | Mortality and Changes in Household |
| Credit and Loans | Membership |
| Subjective Well-Being | SCTP Operations |

We will also field a linked community questionnaire, which tracks prices and community infrastructure such as access to markets and urban centers, distance to health facilities, and primary, secondary and technical/vocational schools, and incidence of shocks. This questionnaire will provide surrounding contextual data to the household questionnaire. We will also collect geocodes for each household which allows us to link with secondary data on climate, rainfall and land-use, which will be important for future waves, to understand how the agro-ecological context affects the productive potential of households.

3.2.2 Quantitative Analysis

Two main research questions in the long-term IE are whether SCTP improves the well-being of households and its members, and whether households that exited from the programme remain out of poverty. The first question entails a comparison between new participants and the comparison group, to assess the impact of SCTP on those receiving the cash. We will use a standard difference-in-differences estimator, comparing the trend in indicators at the baseline with those at the midline (as was done in the previous SCTP IE) to test for impact of the programme. In the previous evaluation, we also produced a dedicated report on household resilience (Otchere et al. 2021) using the Resilience Index Measurement and Analysis model developed by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to build a resilience index. We will replicate this analysis to see whether SCTP continues to confer benefits in terms of resiliency to households.

A set of research questions in this TOR and the original TOR for the baseline of the long-term IE

revolve around exiting and continuing households, whether exiting households can maintain their standard of living and whether the accumulation of cash over time (dosage) affects impacts. A straight comparison of exiting and continuing households will answer the question of whether impacts can be sustained after leaving the programme. If they can, then a further set of questions (posed in Research Question (v) in the original TOR) asks what enabling factors or behaviours have allowed households to boost their living standards, and for those who do not exit, what additional services or supports would have enabled them to do so (Research Question (vi) in the original TOR and also part of the current TOR). However, even if, as a group, the exiting households revert to their preprogramme consumption, there is likely to be considerable heterogeneity in treatment effects, which can be exploited to answer these research questions. We propose to use machine learning algorithms (MLAs) to identify so-called high-flyers and see what we can learn about their behaviours that will contribute to a broader understanding of the process of graduation. We briefly explain the approach, which we plan to implement using baseline and midline data.

Broadly speaking, MLAs are a data-driven approach to identifying patterns and relationships in data. They are particularly useful with large numbers of possible variables and uncertainty about which variables are important and the ways in which they combine with one another. The team will apply methodological innovations from the intersection of the literatures in MLA and causal inference (Athey and Imbens 2016) that allows the data to define the subgroups for which heterogeneous treatment effects exist in an evaluation design in which the treatment can be considered exogenous, as is the case for this IE.

The approach uses classification regression trees (CART), a method that partitions or classifies the data on the basis of the degree of homogeneity of an outcome variable or target. For example, if the target is consumption and the characteristic is sex of the household head (male, female), the CART approach would partition the data into two groups (male-headed, female-headed) if the degree of homogeneity of the outcome (consumption) in each of the subgroups is greater than the degree of homogeneity in the overall sample, in which homogeneity is measured using the sum of the mean squared deviations. This is the intuition behind CART, and the typical application is when there is a large number of variables in the data, the outcome is known, and we want to classify

or partition the sample on the basis of groups of characteristics that have the same value of the predictor. In our application, we wish to classify households according to their treatment effect on consumption—high-flyers and low-flyers.

Having identified potential high- and low-flyers, we want to know which households these are and what they did. In terms of what they did, here again, MLA tools are appropriate because the possible list of actions is large, and we do not know beforehand how they interact with one another or what is important and what is not. For example, it may be the combination of a larger household with labour that diversifies by engaging in nonfarm enterprise and outmigration that ends up as a high-flyer. The MLA approach we will use to solve this problem is K-means or hierarchical clustering (Kuhn and Johnson 2013), which essentially identifies discrete groups in the data on the basis of a set of variables. In this case, the variables are the post-treatment behaviours of households (engaging in crop sales, out-migration, small businesses) and their characteristics (literacy of the head, larger size of households) and whether they received complementary services or interventions (input subsidies). We can apply this to low-flyers as well, and see if there are differences in who they are and what they did. In general, we wish to analyse pretreatment household characteristics, as well as post-treatment behaviours, to get a picture of why high- and low-flyers ended up the way they did. The set-up of the long-term IE, with households that have exited while others are continuing or new, is ideal for understanding the characteristics of high-flyers and what they did.

3.3 Qualitative Approach

As noted above, we propose an embedded design, as we have done in the previous SCTP evaluations and evaluations of cash transfer programs in other settings, whereby we recruit participants for the qualitative sample from the quantitative sample to take full advantage of the multiple sources of information generated through the evaluation activities (CPC, 2016a; CPC, 2016b; Plano Clark, 2008). In addition to data triangulation, this embedded approach also offers efficiency in the sampling and identification of participants, in particular beneficiary households that will have already been identified for the quantitative survey. To preserve the “objectivity” of the survey assessment, we will conduct qualitative fieldwork shortly after the completion of survey fieldwork in the same districts as the quantitative survey. By holding the qualitative activities in the same districts this will give a richer, more nuanced context to the data overall.

The baseline analysis focused mostly on exiting and continuing households via in-depth interviews (IDIs) to understand why the former were able to ‘graduate’ and why the latter were unable to do so. In the follow-up, we propose to implement a ‘longitudinal embedded design’ in which we will seek out the same respondents and reinterview them to understand the ways in which their lives have changed. By engaging with the same participants over time, we will be able to continue the conversation that was started in 2022, building upon the rapport established to elicit ‘narratives of change’ (Barrington and de Milliano 2020). In these individual interviews, we will probe beyond discrete outcomes to identify any examples of processes of transformation at the individual or household level that can be attributed to the programme and whether any barriers that the SCTP helped overcome. Our goal is to understand differences between exiting and continuing households in terms of the ways the cash affected them. Thus, throughout these narratives we will probe the way and the reason that impact occurs or does not occur, with specific attention to gender, which will add depth and explanatory power to the quantitative results.

In the **individual IDIs** with programme participants, we will obtain insights into the way cash is managed in the household, experiences with links, and perceptions of key impacts. On the basis of our past experiences, we will use an inductive approach whereby we ask participants to describe impact in their own words, rather than asking leading questions about specific outcomes. This will serve both to confirm quantitative findings and to identify outcomes that may not have been assessed in the survey, thus generating insights into impact beyond what we can learn from the predetermined, closed-ended questions of the survey.

We will also conduct **participant focus groups**, with which we can build upon the individual narratives by generating group discussion of programme experience and community norms, as well as dynamics that may affect programme impact. Focus groups have the potential to generate discussion, debate, critical reflection about programme dynamics and impact that is not possible in an individual interview. We hope to reconvene the same participants for focus groups as we did at baseline to elicit perceptions of changes, both in terms of improvements and challenges, again building upon the rapport established at baseline. We will use the information from baseline to refine the study guide and target specific topics that were raised at that time. We will also probe

community-level shocks and other contextual factors that could influence intensity and direction of impact in both individual and group discussions, including perceptions and satisfaction with government, to complement the quantitative measures described above.

For the follow-up, we propose to expand the sample to include new participant households, which would provide a different perspective from continuing participants. For these households, we would focus on the changes that have occurred over the last two years, since they first started receiving the transfers, a perspective that we could then contrast with that of continuing households that have been in the programme for six years or longer.

Table 4 gives the sampling design for the midline qualitative study, which is focused on the two districts that were part of the baseline survey; since our proposed design is longitudinal we will continue the study in those two districts, and will add new households from those two districts as well to allow for appropriate comparisons with continuing households. The gender composition of FGDs and IDIs from baseline followed the proportions in the overall programme and were 80 percent female.

Table 4: Sampling Design and Approach for Qualitative Component

| District | In-depth interviews | Focus group discussions |
|------------|--|------------------------------|
| Nkhata Bay | 22 (17 from baseline + 5 new households) | 13 (8 from baseline + 5 new) |
| Balaka | 24 (19 from baseline + 5 new households) | 12 (7 from baseline + 5 new) |

3.3.1 Qualitative data management and analysis

Our qualitative analytic approach is informed by Maxwell and Miller’s theory of qualitative analysis, which distinguishes between thematic analysis based upon comparisons across people and groups and narrative analysis based upon trajectories and connections within an individual’s story (Maxwell and Miller 2008). We will integrate narrative and thematic approaches through four overlapping analytic steps:

1. Summarizing: After reading transcripts multiple times, we will write a narrative summary in English for each participant to capture participants’ stories and evolution of events over time (Lieblich et al. 1998). Summaries will be written collaboratively by U.S.- and Malawi-

based research teams to confirm accuracy of interpretation and will serve as the anchor for analysis of change over time.

2. **Coding:** Drawing on salient themes in the narrative summaries, we will develop a code book with code names, definitions and instructions for use. We will apply the codes to the text, using NVivo software. We will also write memos throughout the coding process to document emerging themes and connections, and modify the codebook as needed during the coding process.
3. **Data reduction and display:** Once transcripts have been coded, we will summarize key patterns in the codes and reduce related codes into larger themes. We will visually display the data through matrices, tables and other figures to facilitate comparison and confirmation of themes across strata, as well as study context to trace pathways among experiences described in the narratives and key outcomes such as financial security and stress.
4. **Interpretation and recontextualization:** We will situate the thematic findings from the coding exercises back in each participant's narrative to recontextualize the findings. Through these exercises, we will aim to identify pathways and mechanisms to improve our understanding of the cash transfer evoked change among new participants and of the ways in which removal from the programme has affected living conditions among those who have exited. An ongoing step in the qualitative analysis will be to integrate key insights from the IDIs with insights from the quantitative survey data to address the partial understanding obtained from any one method. All analysis will be performed virtually in close collaboration between AIR and CSR teams.

We will also conduct **beneficiary focus groups**, with which we can build upon the individual narratives by generating group discussion of programme experience and community norms, as well as dynamics that may affect programme impact. Focus groups have the potential to generate discussion, debate, critical reflection about programme dynamics and impact that is not possible in an individual interview. We hope to reconvene the same participants for focus groups as we did at baseline to elicit perceptions of changes, both in terms of improvements and challenges, again building upon the rapport established at baseline. We will use the information

from baseline to refine the study guide and target specific topics that were raised at that time. We will also probe community-level shocks and other contextual factors that could influence intensity and direction of impact in both individual and group discussions, including perceptions and satisfaction with government, to complement the quantitative measures described above.

From an **ethical perspective** we will need to be sensitive to the unique positions of each participant pool, and limit potential risks. We will minimize the risk of breach of confidentiality in a number of ways. First, data will be collected on closely monitored audio recording devices and encrypted tablets so that a tablet that is lost or stolen cannot be opened. Second, interviews will be held in a secluded locations to ensure privacy and minimize eaves dropping. Third, personnel will be trained in human subjects research, and have to sign an agreement stating they will adhere to study protocols. Fourth, only professional, vetted translators will be used for translation and transcription of audio files. Fifth, electronic files will be uploaded to the AIR secure terminal server regularly and then deleted from local tablets and recording devices. At AIR identifying information will be removed from the data during data cleaning. Sixth, in the case of the focus groups, the data collector will open and close the session by stressing the need for privacy and confidentiality amongst participants. Note that the interview and focus group guides do not contain questions that might make participants feel uncomfortable discussing and excludes questions that often touch information that people would prefer to keep private or avoid discussing openly. The guides for each interview type are available separately. The evaluation will adhere to UNEG Norms and Standards as well as the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation. Here are the key principles:

1. **Integrity:** The evaluation team will uphold moral values and professional standards. This includes honesty, truthfulness, professionalism based on competence, commitment, and ongoing reflective practice. Independence, impartiality, and incorruptibility are essential.
2. **Accountability:** The team will be answerable for all decisions and actions. They'll honor commitments without exception and report any potential or actual harms observed through appropriate channels. Formal ethical review is part of the process.
3. **Respect:** Engaging with stakeholders will honor their dignity, well-being, and personal agency. Responsiveness to diverse identities (sex, gender, race, language, etc.) and cultural contexts is crucial.

Beneficence: The evaluation team will strive to do no harm, carefully considering risks

and benefits throughout the evaluation process.

3.4 Other data collection activities

An evaluation question mentioned in the TOR is how the timeliness, regularity and predictability of the cash transfer affects behavior and impact. To this end we will need information from the SCTP MIS on actual payments made to each household in our sample (both the date and the amount) and whether the payment was collected. We will triangulate this with self-reports from the beneficiaries themselves through the household survey.

3.5. Gender and Human Rights Considerations

The intervention itself, an unconditional cash transfer, is consistent with human rights principles in that it addresses a structural constraint (income/poverty) for duty bearers to fulfill their obligations to their families (children, other family members), and is not conditional on fulfilling any co-responsibility or other activity, which tends to be most burdensome for the most vulnerable. Over half the direct beneficiaries of the program are women,

The IE approach itself is consistent with Gender Equity and Human Rights principles. First, it is a mixed-methods study. Second, the quantitative analysis will report results stratified by gender, and by the poorest households. Third, a wide range of indicators are included that will allow for the identification of particularly vulnerable groups such as the disabled or chronically ill, or pregnant women, children not enrolled in school, etc. Fourth, the qualitative interviews will include both men and women, and is designed to identify particular barriers or constraints faced by beneficiaries in their ability to fulfill their duties.

4. Human Subjects

We have submitted draft survey instruments and protocols to the AIR IRB and have received clearance (see letter in the Appendix). We have subsequently submitted the protocols to the University of Malawi Ethics Review Committee (UNIMAREC) and have also received their approval. In general, all participants are adults, and there are no vulnerable groups (e.g. children, victims of abuse) being interviewed directly, so there are no special ethical issues raised by this study. The main concerns are those of data security, which we are addressing through double encryption of tablets, automatic locks, and safe passwords. The submitted study protocols are available upon request.

5. Workplan and Timeline

5.1 Evaluation Phases and Timeline

The timeline of activities is shown in Figure 1. There are three main phases to the activities. The inception phases (the current phases) includes finalizing the survey instruments and approval of study protocols by the Ethics Committees. Phase two consists of the actual implementation of the study, the data collection and subsequent analysis, and preparation of preliminary findings and associated report. Phase three is the dissemination phase, where preliminary results are presented to the stakeholders and discussed, feedback received and incorporated, and final results presented and approved. The final results will then be disseminated via the report itself as well as policy briefs. Data collection will be done in Malawi, as will dissemination activities. Data analysis will be done by staff at AIR and CSR, as will report preparation.

5.2 Division of Responsibility within Study Team

AIR and CSR have a history of collaboration on SCTP evaluations and have built a strong partnership as a result. Both organizations view this as a collaborative effort and work together on all aspects of research and maintain constant communication throughout. Due to distance and logistics, however, generally CSR handles the on-the-ground activities.

Table 5: Division of Responsibility within Team

| | |
|---|--|
| Centre for Social Research responsibilities | <p>CSR leads the overall work in-country. Specific responsibilities are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submitting local research ethics approval application • Programming the questionnaire into the tablets • Recruiting, hiring, and training personnel • Handling local procurement and logistics • Recruiting participants, obtaining informed consent, and administering research activities • Translating qualitative interviews from the local language into English • Securely transmitting data from Malawi to UNC |
| AIR responsibilities | <p>The overall responsibility of AIR is to provide technical support and analysis. Specific responsibilities are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determining sampling strategy for new baseline • Submitting AIR research ethics approval application • Designing or modifying tools as necessary |

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data cleaning and coding • Qualitative and quantitative analysis • Providing technical support and backstopping for training and data collection • Managing contracts and reporting, and acting as the main point of contact with UNICEF |
| Joint responsibilities | <p>Joint responsibilities are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring data security and evaluation standards • Questionnaire development and refinement • Contributing content to reports and presentations (all reports are jointly authored) • Disseminating results |

The members of the evaluation team are indicated in Table 6. The senior evaluation team (Drs. Handa, Tsoka, Barrington) will jointly make strategic decisions and monitor overall performance and quality and will also ensure that the various components of the project are aligned. AIR internal quality assurance expert, Ms. Andi Coombes, will read and approve all reports and will provide additional guidance based on her experience working on the 2015 to 2017 process evaluation. As indicated in the TOR, the research team will report to the Technical Reference Group in Malawi.

Table 6: Roles and responsibilities of the evaluation team

| Structure | Team Member | Responsibilities |
|------------------------|---|---|
| Senior Evaluation Team | Ashu Handa (Overall team lead), Maxton Tsoka (Malawi Based), and Clare Barrington (Qualitative lead) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jointly make strategic decisions and monitor overall performance and quality and will also ensure that the various components of the project are aligned. |
| Other team members | Paul Sirma - Quantitative Evaluation Specialist | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design the statistical analysis plan with Handa and Tsoka for the quantitative analysis, • Conduct the statistical analysis, • Interpret the results and contribute to writing the report. |
| | Emily Mutea – Quantitative researcher | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantitative data analyst working under the guidance of Dr. Sirma. • Prepare the IRB applications. • Receive the data from the field, undertake quality checks and data verification, and build the indicators. • Prepare output tables and graphs and |

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| | | assist in interpretation of the results and writing of the report. |
| | Elizabeth Kamau: Qualitative Evaluation Specialist | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve as the lead qualitative researcher working under the direction of Drs. Barrington and Tsoka. • Develop the study guides for the baseline with Dr. Barrington and the other members of the leadership team, and • Conduct the qualitative analysis and interpretation and the writing of the report. |
| | Andi Coombes: Quality assurance reviewer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read and approve all reports. • Provide additional guidance based on her experience working on the 2015 to 2017 process evaluation. |

5.3 Quality Assurance of Role of Ministry

The IE will be managed by the TRG assembled for this purpose by the Ministry. The TRG will be co-chaired by the SCTP Coordinator in the MOGCDSW and UNICEF Chief of REKM. The TRG will provide inputs to the evaluation design, support the rollout of the evaluation and validate its findings at all stages, while the UNICEF REKM Section will manage the consultancy. The TRG comprises other Ministry and Government officials, UNICEF, World Bank, KfW, GIZ, and Irish Aid.

Beyond quality assurance, the SCTP Unit, particularly the MIS and monitoring and evaluation teams will play a key role in facilitating the actual implementation of the IE. Their responsibilities include providing letters of introduction to the District Commissioner Office and the District Social Welfare Offices for permission to conduct the enumeration, and providing any other administrative data and support necessary to execute the study.

Figure 1: Timeline of Activities for SCTP Midline IE (2024)

| Activity | April | | | | May | | | | June | | | | July | | | | Aug | | | | Sep | | | |
|--|-------|---|---|---|-----|---|---|---|------|---|---|---|------|---|---|---|-----|---|---|---|-----|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Contract negotiation/ signature | █ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Draft survey instruments | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Ethics applications submitted | | | | | █ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| UBR data provided for sampling | | | | | | | █ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Inception meeting | | | | | | | | | | █ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Instruments finalized | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Ethics approvals | | | | | | | █ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Draft inception report | | | | | | | | █ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Tablet software developed | | | | | | | | | █ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Final inception report | | | | | | | | | | █ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Quantitative fieldwork training, pilot | | | | | | | | | | | █ | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Quantitative fieldwork | | | | | | | | | | | | █ | █ | █ | █ | | | | | | | | | |
| Qualitative training | | | | | | | | | | | | | | █ | | | | | | | | | | |
| Qualitative fieldwork | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | █ | | | | | | | | | |
| Data analysis | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | █ | █ | █ | █ | | | | | | |
| Draft midline report | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | █ | | | | | |
| Dissemination workshop | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | █ | | | | |
| Final midline report | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | █ | | | |
| Data sets provided | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | █ | | |
| Policy brief | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | █ | █ |

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Appendix 1: Ethics Approvals

1.1 University of Malawi Research Ethics Committee (UNIMAREC)

Available upon request

1.2 AIR Institutional Review Board Approval

Attachments:

- Notification of Approval for B&P# 8F170.pdf



Institutional Review Board

IRB00000436 / FWA00003952

AIR IRB

Approval Notification

To: Emily Mutea
From: IRB Administrator
Subject: B&P# 8F170
Date: 03/08/2024

The protocol **Midline survey evaluation of the Malawi Social Cash Transfer Programme (MSCTP)** has been approved by Mitch Morey under the rules for expedited review on **03/08/2024**.

On the basis of this review, the IRB has determined that the data collection, as described in the materials submitted, is research and involves human research participants. The research is approved because the selection of participants is equitable and the risks to the participants are minimized and are reasonable in relation to the knowledge that may reasonably be expected to result. There are no risks greater than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during routine tests or activities. The procedures for obtaining informed consent are appropriate and the procedures for protecting the privacy of participants and the confidentiality of the collected data are adequate.

Thank you,
Erin Morrison
IRB Administrator
emorrison@air.org

Please be reminded that all projects must undergo IRB review before initiating any recruitment or data collection/analyses. Material changes to project activities also must undergo review via the Amendments tab.

Appendix 2: Evaluation Matrix (approved at baseline)

| Evaluation Matrix | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|---|
| Data Source | Indicators or Measures | Methodology | Timing | Notes |
| 1. What are the welfare impacts of SCTP for the household and its members (e.g. poverty levels, household and caretaker stress, food and nutrition security (including anthropometric measures), asset accumulation and shelter, health status of adults and children, education outcomes), both while on the SCTP and after being removed from the programme | | | | |
| Household survey | Hhld consumption per capita; Worry about food, meals/day; Children 0-5 skipped meal; Material of roof, walls, floor; Livestock, productive tools, durable goods; Washington group disability index, morbidity of adults; Childhood (age 0-5) morbidities (diarrhea, fever ARI); Current school enrollment, grade/age, children age 5-17; | Difference-in-differences estimates (DD): Control vs. new entrants; Exiting vs continuing hhlds; Stratify by sex of recipient, sex of individual, and initial poverty status | Baseline and follow-ups at 2 year follow-up and beyond | See household survey instrument |
| 2. What are the socio-economic impacts of the SCTP on beneficiary households and their communities? How do people identified as ineligible benefit indirectly from transfers and how does this contribute to overall programme effectiveness | | | | |
| Qualitative interviews: IDIs with beneficiaries FGDs with community members | Themes on socioeconomic effects of SCTP and effects on wider community | Text analysis | Year 2, 4, 6, 8, 10 follow-ups | This evaluation question to be reassessed prior to each follow-up |
| 3. What is the impact of the SCTP and its complementary interventions on the resilience of households against shocks (covariate and idiosyncratic)? | | | | |

| | | | | |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| Household survey | FAO Resilience Index (RIMA II); Incidence of shocks and positive coping responses | Difference-in-differences estimates; | Baseline and follow-ups at 2 years and beyond | Check for updates to the RIMA II in future years |
| 4. Do households that have exited remain out of extreme poverty two to ten years after leaving the SCTP? Did they have a resilience-base that allowed them to withstand shocks or did they have to resort to negative coping mechanisms? What links did households have to other interventions related to livelihoods that assisted graduation? | | | | |

| Data Source | Indicators or Measures | Methodology | Timing | Notes |
|---|--|--|--|---|
| Household survey | hhld consumption per capita; FAO Resilience Index RIMA II; Coping strategies in face of shocks; Asset accumulation (livestock, productive tools, durable goods); Access to other social and productive interventions and services (e.g. FISP); | DD between exited households and continuing households; Stratify by sex of recipient as appropriate; | Baseline and follow-ups at 2 years and beyond | Indicators to be revisited in future years for relevance |
| 5, What are the potential key enabling factors of programme administration and most common characteristics of the households that have successfully built their resilience and graduated from ultra-poverty while on SCTP? Is there a causal relation between the duration of programme support and the beneficiaries' poverty status? | | | | |
| Household survey | Hhld consumption per capita; | DD between exited and continuing households using length of time in SCTP as key policy variable (dosage effect); | Baseline and follow-ups at 2 years and beyond; | Decide whether to pursue further qualitative interviews at follow-ups |
| Qualitative Interviews (IDIs, FGDs) | Identification of themes around investments and activities that allowed hhlds to 'graduate'; key characteristics of the hhld that enabled graduation, and role of complementary services (if any) | Text analysis of exited households and continuing households to understand differences in characteristics or behaviors leading to graduation | Baseline | |
| 6. Based on evaluation question 5, what are some potential linkages to other social services or interventions that would improve the resilience and graduation potential of households? | | | | |
| Household survey | Same as in Q4 and Q5 | | Follow-up at 2 years; | Use results from qualitative interviews in Q6 and quantitative analysis from Q3 and Q4 to provide guidance on linkages to improve resilience and graduation potential |
| Qualitative interviews | | | Baseline | |

| Data Source | Indicators or Measures | Methodology | Timing | Notes |
|--|---|--|-----------------------------------|---|
| 7. How does the SCTP perform in terms of administrative delivery (i.e. targeting performance), overall achievement of intended objectives, and ability to support households to become more resilient and sustainably exit from extreme poverty (i.e. design and implementation effectiveness)? | | | | |
| Household survey Qualitative interviews: FGDs with beneficiaries on SCTP operations | Operations module covering: wait time at pay point; treatment of recipients at paypoint; information provided at paypoints on other services and referrals; perceptions of fairness and transparency of selection procedures; Themes on experiences with DSWOs and other staff, and SCTP operations | Frequency tabulations and analysis by sex, age and educational attainment; Text analysis | All waves All waves | Revisit exact questions and indicators prior to each wave |
| 8. How has the level of transfers and payment timeliness, regularity and predictability or lack thereof affected the effectiveness of the SCTP and its impacts? | | | | |
| SCTP MIS Household survey | Payment amounts and timing for each household; Consumption per capita; Self- reports on expectation of future payments; Behaviors around inter-temporal choice such as savings, which entail planning and depending on regularity of payments; | Link timing and amounts to outcomes and estimate heterogeneous treatment effects using regularity of payment or total amounts received relative to amount scheduled to receive; Stratify by sex of recipient; | Follow-up at year 2 and beyond | |

Appendix 3: TORs

IDENTIFICATION

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Type of contract | Institutional Contract |
| Title of the Evaluation | Baseline survey evaluation of Social Protection for Gender Equality and Resilience (SP-GEAR) programme and midline survey evaluation of the Malawi Social Cash Transfer Programme (MSCTP) |
| Purpose | To prepare and conduct data collection activities for a baseline and midline survey, deliver comprehensive datasets, high-quality analysis, and corresponding reports for each survey. This will provide critical evidence to support and strengthen the design and implementation of the MSCTP, particularly in relation to empowering Malawi’s poorest and most vulnerable girls and women. |
| Objectives | <p>UNICEF is seeking to commission two pieces of work under this ToR:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Baseline household survey in three districts for the impact evaluation of the EU Delegation/Embassy of Ireland funded economic inclusion-related programme (SP-GEAR) within the framework of the MSCTP in Malawi. This will provide relevant evidence on the effectiveness of cash plus and shock-sensitive interventions on household resilience, as well as on the potential for scaling-up some of the innovations being introduced. b. Midline household survey in three districts as part of the ongoing 10-year longitudinal impact evaluation of MSCTP. This builds on the MSCTP baseline conducted in 2022, and will provide further evidence of the long-term protective, and resilience effects of the MSCTP. |
| Anticipated start date | January 2024 |
| Location | Malawi – Lilongwe and selected districts |
| Duration | 85 working days |
| Anticipated completion date | 31 December 2024 |
| Supervisor | Mussarrat Youssuf Chief – REKM Section |

Background and justification

Over 20 per cent of the 19.6 million Malawians live in extreme poverty. Poverty and inequality disproportionately affect women and children, narrowing their access to social services and economic opportunities. According to national statistics, women head over 75 per cent of the households living in poverty, and the incidence of multidimensional poverty among children is 60.5 per cent¹. Within this context, the Malawi Social Cash Transfer Programme (MSCTP) has been providing monthly unconditional cash grants to ultra-poor and ‘labor-constrained’ households since 2006, when the programme was initiated in the pilot district of Mchinji with UNICEF support. The objectives of the programme are (i) reducing poverty and hunger;

¹ National Statistical Office (NSO) (2018), Child Poverty Report. The NSO is currently working on updating the child poverty analysis, based on the 2019/20 IHS.

(ii) improving health and nutrition in vulnerable households; and (iii) increasing school enrolment for children. The MSCTP currently reaches over 300,000 households and over 1.3 million individuals (of which over 610,000 are children). The programme is fully executed by Ministry of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare (MoGCDSW) and by District Councils. Funding for the MSCTP is provided by Irish Aid, the German Government (BMZ through KfW), the European Union, the World Bank, and the Government of Malawi, while UNICEF and GIZ provide technical support to the implementation, coordination, evidence generation and system strengthening. In 2018, the MSCTP was scaled-up to all 28 districts across the country, and the Government has begun an exercise to recertify households who have been on the programme for a period of four years or more. Currently, recertification and retargeting of beneficiary households is underway in 15 districts and is expected to be completed in all districts by 2024.

UNICEF and the Government of Malawi, in collaboration with development partners, commissioned a longitudinal impact evaluation of the MSCTP that ran from 2013 to 2016. Findings of the evaluation provided solid evidence that the MSCTP generates a wide range of positive impacts across most social and economic domains at the household and individual levels. The 2016 evaluation influenced the design of the second Malawi National Social Support Programme (MNSSP II). The evaluation also significantly informed the scale up of the MSCTP to a national programme and remains a key reference document on the impact of the programme. The evaluation was however run before the SCTP was extended to all 28 rural districts.

Over the past ten years, Malawi has faced several shocks of different nature, from El Niño-induced drought and cyclones and tropical storms (namely Cyclone Idai, Tropical Storm Ana and Gombe and most recently Cyclone Freddy) to recurrent lean season or food insecurity emergencies and the recent effects of Covid-19. During this period, an average of 1.8 million people (10 per cent of the population) have been deemed acutely food insecure each year, triggering a substantial annual emergency response. Beyond consumption support, the MNSSP II dedicates two pillars to 'Resilient Livelihoods' and 'Shock-Sensitive Social Protection' and identifies pathways for graduation as a key priority.

Further, since the 2013-2016 impact evaluation, the MSCTP has evolved in several ways, including expanded coverage, increased financing, and a higher degree of digital integration in operational management and payment modalities. In addition, the humanitarian and development nexus has been strengthened, with increasing leveraging of the social protection system, such as regular vertical and horizontal expansions of the MSCTP during the lean season, floods recovery cash interventions, and the Covid-19 Urban Cash Intervention (CUCI).

These recent developments necessitated a new impact evaluation to understand the repercussions of certain changes and the sustained enhancement of beneficiaries' livelihoods. Therefore, in 2022, UNICEF with financial assistance from the European Union via GIZ and the Embassy of Ireland, supported MoGCDSW to design a 10-year longitudinal impact evaluation for MSCTP. This will assess MSCTP's role in safeguarding against unforeseen events, especially climate-related shocks, by monitoring households pre, during, and post-shock. By analysing different beneficiary cohorts, the evaluation will provide insights into MSCTP's influence on impoverished households over time, including long-term post-exit effects. The findings will inform government decisions regarding program design and execution, emphasizing resilience and effective graduation outcomes.

To-date, the MSCTP 10-year longitudinal impact evaluation has completed the baseline. Data was collected in three districts – Balaka, Dedza and Nkhatabay – in April/May 2022. The findings from the baseline report are being used to enrich policy dialogue on the relevance and economic impact of the MSCTP and inform future

design improvements, including targeting reforms, benefit level appropriateness, and linkages to complimentary services.

Despite the adaptations and improvements to MSCTP, the complexity and multidimensionality of poverty and inequality, and how this disproportionality affects women and girls, requires a multidimensional and holistic approach that addresses the root causes, to empower vulnerable women and girls to graduate from the cycle of ultra-poverty and inequality. For example, there are persisting high rates of child marriage (almost half (46%) of women aged 20-24 married before age 18 in rural areas),² and one in five girls (21 per cent) and one in seven boys (14 per cent) have experienced at least one incident of sexual violence before turning 18.³ To address these issues more effectively, an upcoming EU-Irish funded programme Social Protection for Gender Equality and Resilience (SP-GEAR) will strengthen/introduce 'cash-plus' actions for MSCTP beneficiaries in nine districts, the government and development partners have agreed there is a need to explore the impact of these cash-plus approaches. The programme focuses on women and girls and will work across three pillars to enhance: 1) the efficiency and effectiveness of the Malawi National Social Protection Strategy (MNSPS); 2) the resilience and livelihoods of women and girls from vulnerable households through economic empowerment activities; 3) access to social services by women and girls from vulnerable households.

Therefore, this ToR ensures a new baseline is conducted for SP-GEAR with a representative sample in three additional districts. The three new districts are purposively selected to ensure they cover a control and treatment group who are receiving cash-plus complementary services, and/or shock-sensitive social protection interventions.

To increase efficiency and value for money, funding for this ToR also contributes to ensuring the first midline of the MSCTP 10-year longitudinal impact evaluation is conducted. This will be a separate and parallel process to the above-mentioned baseline.

Scope of work

Goal and objective of the evaluation

The overall goal is to prepare and conduct data collection activities for a baseline and midline survey, deliver comprehensive datasets, high-quality analysis, and corresponding reports for each survey. This will provide critical evidence to support and strengthen the design and implementation of the MSCTP, particularly in relation to empowering Malawi's poorest and most vulnerable girls and women. It will also provide evidence for the impact of the SP-GEAR programme for empowering vulnerable women and girls to graduate from the cycle of ultra-poverty and inequality.

The **objectives** of this assessment through this consultancy are:

- To assess, to the best possible extent, relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability of the Programme, with a particular focus on equity/inclusion, gender equality, as well as UNICEF's strategic positioning in relation to its child rights mandate.
- To identify and document key lessons learned, good practices and positive effects in the implementation of the Programme, which will be used to inform and support advocacy efforts for future investment and scale-up of the Programme.
- To provide a set of forward-looking and actionable recommendations to strengthen programmatic strategies and activities in the continuation of the Programme, taking into consideration national development priorities relating to social protection, such as the new National Social Protection Policy (NSPP), Malawi National Social Protection Strategy (MNSPS) (2023-28), Malawi Short-term

²<https://www.unicef.org/malawi/media/6296/file/Malawi%20Multiple%20Indicator%20Cluster%20Survey%20Report.pdf>

³ Violence Against Children Survey (2015): <https://files.mutualcdn.com/tfg/assets/files/Malawi-VACS-report.pdf>

Implementation Programme (MIP-1) operationalizing the Vision 2063 for the first 10 years (2021-31), and National Resilience Strategy 2018-2030.

Specifically, UNICEF is seeking to commission two pieces of work under this ToR:

- c. **Baseline** household survey in three districts (proposed - Mulanje, Mwanza, and Phalombe⁴) for the impact evaluation of the EU/Embassy of Ireland funded economic inclusion-related programme (SP-GEAR) within the framework of the MSCTP. This will provide relevant evidence on the effectiveness of cash plus and shock-sensitive interventions on household resilience, as well as on the potential for scaling-up some of the innovations being introduced. The initial data collection will be complemented by an endline survey in 2026. The endline survey is not part of this ToR.

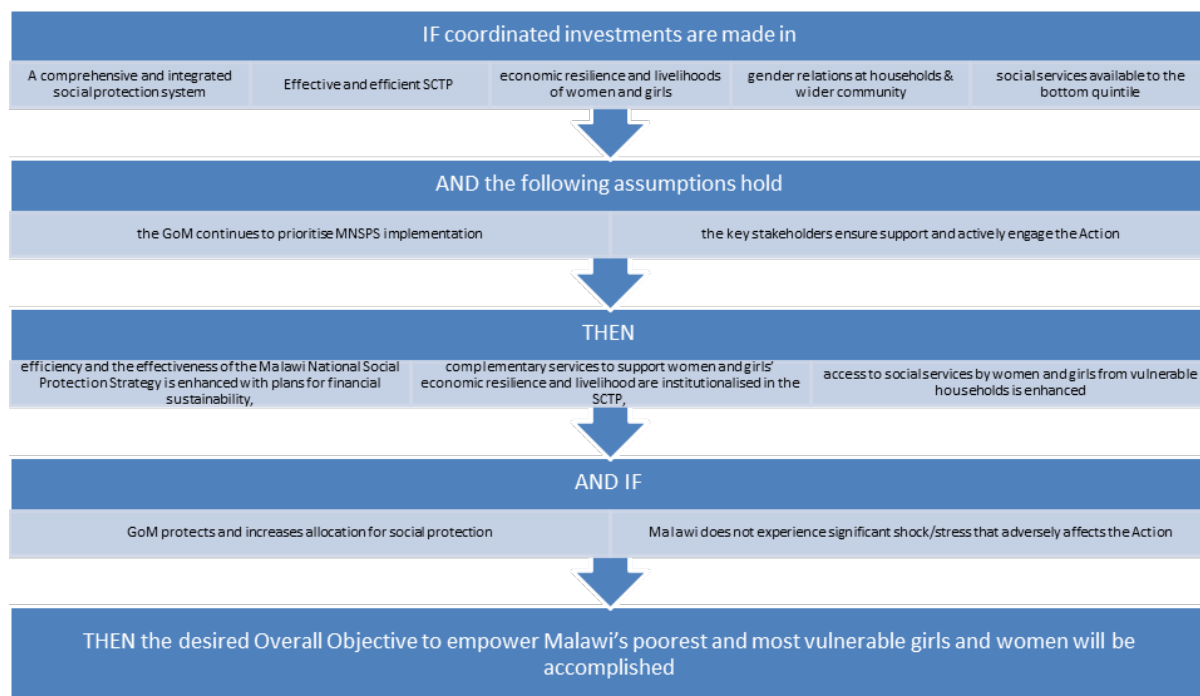
- d. **Midline** household survey in three districts (Balaka, Dedza and Nkhatabay) as part of the ongoing 10-year longitudinal impact evaluation of MSCTP. This builds on the MSCTP baseline conducted in 2022, and will provide further evidence of the long-term protective, and resilience effects of the MSCTP. Successive midline surveys are planned in 2026, 2028 and 2030, with an endline survey in 2032. These midlines and endline surveys are not part of this ToR.

2) About MSCTP and SP-GEAR

The MSCTP has been providing monthly unconditional cash grants to ultra-poor and 'labor-constrained' households since 2006. The objectives of the programme are (i) reducing poverty and hunger; (ii) improving health and nutrition in vulnerable households; and (iii) increasing school enrolment for children. The SCTP currently reaches approximately 300,000 households and over 1.3 million individuals (of which over 600,000 are children). Within this framework, SP-GEAR will be implemented in 9-districts, and will focus on the objective of empowering Malawi's poorest and most vulnerable girls and women, through the following specific objectives: 1) Enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the Malawi National Social Protection Strategy (MNSPS); 2) enhancing the resilience and livelihoods of women and girls from vulnerable households through economic empowerment activities; and 3) enhancing access to social services by women and girls from vulnerable households.

SP-GEAR Intervention Logic

⁴ The proposed districts are Mwanza, Phalombe and Chikwawa based on type of interventions to be evaluated and donor national representation.



CGP's stakeholders

SP-GEAR is implemented within the MSCTP, which is a government programme. The programme is fully executed by MoGCDSW of Malawi and by the District Councils, and in World Bank-funded districts, the National Local Government Finance Committee (NLGFC), with policy coordination and oversight from the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development. Technical assistance and financing is provided by various development partners (including UNICEF, World Bank, EU, Embassy of Ireland and KfW etc.).

As part of this assignment, the evaluation is commissioned by UNICEF Malawi, under the supervision of the Research, Evaluation and Knowledge Management (REKM) Section, in close collaboration with the Social Policy section, on behalf of the MoGCDSW, with funding from the EU, Embassy of Ireland and KfW. The evaluators will report to UNICEF directly, but the MoGCDSW will play a key role in reviewing and providing feedback on all major deliverables.

3) Evaluation scope

Evaluation criteria and research questions

The evaluation will seek to answer the below questions for both the SP-GEAR baseline and MSCTP midline (referred to collectively as the 'Programme'. This are indicative and not exhaustive.

| Evaluation criteria | Key evaluation questions |
|---------------------|--|
| Relevance | <p>Is the intervention doing the right things? The extent to which the Programme objectives and design respond to beneficiaries', global, country, and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities, and continue to do so if circumstances change.</p> <p><u>Indicative sub-questions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the Programme appropriate in the current context, to meet the needs of the beneficiaries and the priorities of the government of Malawi? • Are the Programme's current implementation modalities (e.g. targeting, enrolment process, case management, payments, cash amount and grievances) appropriate to deliver and achieve its targets and objectives? • Are the interventions and outputs of the Programme consistent with the intended outcomes/impact of the Programme? Are the Programme's objectives still valid? |

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Coherence | <p>How well does the Programme fit? The compatibility of the Programme with other interventions in a country, sector or institution.</p> <p><u>Indicative sub-questions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the Programme been complementary with other interventions carried out by the Government? If yes, how and to what extent has the Programme been aligned to their strategy and priorities on social assistance and protection? • How has the Programme been complementary and aligned with interventions by other external actors' (e.g. CSO, NGOs, etc.) in the same context? • How has the Programme added value while avoiding duplication with other similar interventions in the country? • What are some potential linkages to other social services or interventions that would improve the resilience and graduation potential of households? |
| Effectiveness | <p>Is the Programme achieving its objectives? The extent to which the intervention achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives, and its results, including any differential results across groups.</p> <p><u>Indicative sub-questions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How has the level of transfers and payment timeliness, regularity and predictability or lack thereof affected the effectiveness of the Programme and its impacts. • What are the potential key enabling factors of Programme administration and most common characteristics of the households that have successfully built their resilience and graduated from ultra-poverty? Is there a causal relation between the duration of Programme support and the beneficiaries' poverty status? • How does the Programme perform in terms of administrative delivery (i.e. targeting performance, case management and GRM mechanisms), overall achievement of intended objectives, and ability to support households to become more resilient and sustainably exit from extreme poverty? • Does the Programme address the strategic and practical needs of women and girls? • Does the Programme facilitate division of labour that challenges gender stereotypes? • Is the programme inclusive of people with disabilities? |
| Efficiency | <p>How well are resources being used? The extent to which the Programme delivers, or is likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way.</p> <p><u>Indicative sub-questions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on other similar programmes/interventions in the country or in the region, to what extent are the Programme interventions cost-effective? What areas can be made more cost-effective and how? • Are Programme interventions or processes time efficient? What processes can be more time efficient and how? |
| Sustainability | <p>Will the Programme benefits last? The extent to which the net benefits of the Programme continue, or are likely to continue.</p> <p><u>Indicative sub-questions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the Government be able to maintain the Programme operations and functions after the end of the funding support? • What key Programme interventions can enable beneficiaries to improve levels of education, health and nutrition of their children on a long-term basis? • Given the current context and upcoming potential shocks, how shock-responsive is the current Programme? And how can the Programme be adapted to become more shock-responsive and flexible as a social assistance programme? |
| Impact | <p>What difference does the intervention make? The extent to which the intervention has generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended or unintended, higher-level effects.</p> <p><u>Indicative sub-questions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the welfare impacts of the Programme for the household and its members (e.g. poverty levels, household and caretaker stress, food and nutrition security (including |

| | |
|--|--|
| | <p>anthropometric measures), asset accumulation and shelter, health status of adults and children, education outcomes), both while on the Programme and after being removed from the Programme?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the socio-economic impacts of the Programme on beneficiary households and their communities? How do people identified as ineligible benefit indirectly from transfers and how does this contribute to overall Programme effectiveness? • What is the impact of the Programme and its complementary interventions including cash plus interventions on the resilience of households against shocks (covariate and idiosyncratic)? • Do households that have exited remain out of extreme poverty after leaving the Programme? Did they have a resilience-base that allowed them to withstand shocks or did they have to resort to negative coping mechanisms? What links did households have to other interventions related to livelihoods that assisted graduation? • Does the Programme guarantee improved status and position of women in society? • Does the Programme lead to better access and control of vital resources for women? |
|--|--|

Additional detailed evaluation questions will be provided during the inception phase of the consultancy.

Note that most of these evaluation questions can only be answered with follow-up data from future mid-line and end-line surveys. UNICEF expects applying firms to provide a list of the answers they plan to answer and how.

The main topics covered in the quantitative household survey for the MSCTP baseline are listed in Table 1, and are motivated by the key evaluation questions listed above. The key measure of well-being or living standards is consumption, hence a full consumption module similar to that implemented in the Malawi Integrated Household Survey is included. This is key to understanding overall well-being as well as how the cash is spent by households. An extensive set of modules captures economic activity (including time-use) in order to understand the determinants of graduation, a module on subjective well-being complements the monetary well-being measure, a module on SCTP operations will help us understand the functioning of the programme as perceived by beneficiaries, and modules on schooling, nutrition and health will measure children’s outcomes.

Table 1: Survey questionnaire topics

- Roster and Orphan Status Education — 3+ years Health — All
- Disability
- Child Health and Diet— 0-5 years
- Women's empowerment and gender equity
- Sexual and Gender-based Violence (SGBV) /Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)
- Access to Educational and Health Services Fertility— women ages 12-49
- Time-Use (chores, agriculture, other)— ages 6+ Labor (wage/ ganyu)— ages 10+
- Household Enterprises Transfers Received and Made Other Income
- Credit and Loans Subjective Well-Being
- Stress Scale, Resilience Scale Food Security
- Social Safety Net Receipt

- Shocks and Coping Strategies Covid-19 effects
- Expenditure (IHS expenditure module) Land-Use
- Crop Production and Sales Agriculture and Livestock Hired Labor
- Housing Conditions and Household Assets Mortality and Changes in Household Membership
- SCTP Operations

Primary intended users and intended uses

This evaluation is meant to support primarily the MoGCDSW to ensure accountability and learning for the ongoing and future implementation of the MSCTP being led by the Ministry. However, it is anticipated the evaluation will be used by the Ministry of Finance and Economic and Affairs (MoFEA) - Poverty Reduction and Social Protection, to inform SP policy and programme decisions. This evaluation is also aimed at supporting the Social Policy team within the Malawi Country Office of UNICEF, who are expected to use the results to continue its support to government counterparts to strengthen and adapt MSCTP's key activities to ensure they remain relevant and appropriate to the current context, and for scale-up. The evaluation will also be useful for Development Partners, both for decision-making, accountability, and learning purposes, while supporting their efforts to strengthen the MSCTP, and secure future investment in the broader sphere of social protection. In addition, UNICEF evaluation specialists and social protection specialists, will have great use of this evaluation as findings will contribute to the global evidence on social protection and assistance and to UNICEF's evidence base in this thematic area. Finally, the evaluation will add to existing knowledge on social protection broadly, and be a source of additional evidence to aid policy debates. Researchers, practitioners, and policymakers in the social protection sector will have access to the evaluation data and trends and use these in their work to influence policy and practice.

Table 2: Summary of evaluation users and usage

| Primary users | Evaluation use |
|--|--|
| MoGCDSW / MoFEA – PRSP | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform programming • Ensure accountability and learning • Inform government's work around social protection practices and social assistance policy • Share learning and recommendations with target communities/beneficiaries and ensure meaningful accountability |
| UNICEF Malawi Social Policy and Evaluation teams | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform programming • Inform and support advocacy work • Inform other social protection programmes or similar work in Malawi • Ensure accountability and learning internally and with partners • Share learning and recommendations with target communities/beneficiaries and ensure meaningful accountability • Use findings to contribute to the UNICEF's evidence base in social protection and assistance • Drive Malawi Country Office's evaluation agenda and build Malawi Country Office's evidence base |
| UNICEF ESARO Social Policy team | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use findings to contribute to the global evidence on social protection and assistance • Inform other similar programmes in the region |
| Development Partners: European Union Delegation / Embassy of Ireland / KfW | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform programming • Inform and support advocacy work • Inform other social protection programmes or similar work in Malawi • Demonstrate accountability and learning |

| | |
|---|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve current and future funding in social protection sector |
| Researchers, practitioners and policymakers in social protection sector (general) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to available data for further research • Access to findings to inform similar programmes in the country or region • Access to findings to inform policymaking in the region |

Evaluation approach and methodology

Evaluation design: It is expected that the study will be based on a mixed-method longitudinal evaluation design that is gender-sensitive and socially inclusive, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative methods. In line with UNICEF’s data quality standards, all data collected and analysed will be disaggregated by gender, age, locations and where possible, by vulnerable groups (including disability). The consulting firm is expected to utilize electronic data collection for this work. While the evaluation will be independent, it will be designed and implemented in collaboration with the Government and overseen by a multi-stakeholder Evaluation Technical Reference Group (TRG).

Building on the agreed design for the ongoing 10-year longitudinal impact evaluation of MSCTP, the MSCTP baseline (2022) tools will be adapted to include cash plus and shock responsive questions, which can be administered for both the SP-GEAR baseline and MSCTP midline. As per the MSCTP baseline, a stratified multi-stage sampling selection strategy will be employed for both surveys. A district will constitute a strata, and data will be collected from a representative sample in 3 districts for the SP-GEAR baseline, and 3 districts for the midline survey. The multistage sampling entails first sampling village clusters (VCs) (stage one) and then within the sampled VCs, sampling households from the below four groups (stage two). For both surveys, consideration and mitigation of potential spill-over (e.g., resource sharing between transfer recipients and non-recipients, cash plus activities etc.). For SP-GEAR this may require reassessment of the above-mentioned sampling approach.

The four groups are:

- 1) New beneficiaries – households identified as eligible for MSCTP but who have not received cash transfers in the past.
- 2) Exiting beneficiaries – households who have been receiving MSCTP for at least 4 years and, due to socio-economic or demographic changes are no longer eligible for the programme.
- 3) Continuing beneficiaries – households who have received MSCTP for at least 4 years and identified as still eligible for the programme.
- 4) Control households - households who have never received MSCTP but are similar in key demographics and other variables to beneficiary households.

The sample frame will be based on the household-level dataset provided by the MSCTP with information about each household's eligibility/recertification status and whether it is a current MSCTP beneficiary.

In alignment with the MSCTP baseline, the SP-GEAR baseline survey is expected to be administered to approximately 3,400 households identified randomly in VCS across the districts of Mulanje, Mwanza and Phalombe. The SP-GEAR baseline survey will be conducted in the last quarter of 2023, immediately after the retargeting exercise is completed, and households have been enrolled, retained, or exited from MSCTP. The retargeting process is ongoing, and UNICEF will follow-up with government counterparts to obtain clear timelines.

The MSCTP midline will follow the same process as the MSCTP baseline – covering approximately 3,418 households identified randomly in 64 VCs across the same districts of Balaka, Dedza and Nkhatabay. The midline survey will be conducted in April/May of 2024 to match the same timeframe as the 2022 baseline.

The below tables provide indicative sample sizes, but during the inception phase, the evaluators will be expected to review the sampling frame and use it to confirm the powered sample size for the quantitative data collection and analysis. This will need to factor-in potential attrition between this round and future rounds of surveys.

Indicative sample sizes:

| BASELINE (SP-GEAR) | | | | |
|--|----------------------|-----|----------|--------------------------|
| Timeline | Districts | TAs | Clusters | Number of households |
| <i>Data collection in late December 2023 or January 2024 – pending contracting and retargeting timelines</i> | Phalombe | TBD | TBD | 1,310 |
| | Mwanza | TBD | TBD | 600 |
| | Mulanje ⁵ | TBD | TBD | 1,490 |
| | TOTAL | | | 3,400⁶ |

| MIDLINE (MSCTP) | | | | |
|--|--------------|-----------|-----------|----------------------|
| Timeline | Districts | TAs | Clusters | Number of households |
| <i>Data collection in April/May 2024 to align with the MSCTP baseline (2022)</i> | Balaka | 4 | 19 | 1,239 |
| | Dedza | 3 | 32 | 1,402 |
| | Nkhatabay | 7 | 13 | 777 |
| | TOTAL | 14 | 64 | 3,418 |

Data collection tools: All the beneficiaries will be administered a quantitative survey that will be supplemented with qualitative survey targeted at a smaller segment of the sample population. The existing survey tools used for the MSCTP 10-year Longitudinal Impact Evaluation Baseline will be provided.

The **qualitative component** will encompass In-Depth-Interviews (IDIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with beneficiary households, and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with Programme/implementing stakeholders to gather feedback on operations dynamics. The purpose of the qualitative component is to provide richer details on beneficiary and implementer experiences/perceptions of the Programme.

Quality of work: The quality of all work undertaken as part of this assignment will be assessed against UNICEF’s Evaluation Quality Standard. UNICEF’s REKM Section will be monitoring the quality of each deliverable and ensure that all key deliverables achieve the required quality per UNICEF standards. UNICEF will encourage the Evaluation Team to refer to UNICEF/UNEG standards in their development of the Inception Report and the Draft and Final Evaluation Report.

Potential risks and challenges

The main foreseen risk and challenge that may arise while conducting this impact evaluation is the window to collect data. The data must be collected after the retargeting exercise, but prior to cash transfers being provided to households. There have been delays with the retargeting process, but the current estimation is that retargeting will be finalised in one of the districts at the end of December. To mitigate this risk, UNICEF will closely engage with government counterparts to better understand the timeframe, however, the recruited firm will also need to be able to adapt the existing MSCTP survey with cash-plus and shock responsive elements and mobilise enumerators rapidly after the contracting is finalised. UNICEF will also

⁵ Mulanje is replacing a previously selected district due to retargeting timelines.

⁶ The exact number of TAs, clusters, and households will need to be assessed during inception.

assess other potential districts that could replace the districts mentioned in the TOR if the window for data collection is deemed too narrow.

Evaluation ethics

Evaluators must clearly identify any potential ethical issues and approaches, as well as the processes for ethical review and oversight of the evaluation process in their proposal. It is required that the evaluation will follow the UN Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards (available online) and UNICEF's standards for ethical data collection. The REKM Section will share these with the selected evaluation team at the outset of the evaluation. The principle of 'do no harm' should be at the forefront of all ethical planning and application.

Evaluators will be required to develop an ethical approach to ensure complete compliance with international good practice relating to research ethics and protocols, particularly with regards to safeguarding children and vulnerable groups. The ethics plan should recognise the power dynamic between evaluators, clients, and programme stakeholders, and address this imbalance for the evaluation process, as well as ethical safeguards for participants of the evaluation (including fair representation, respect for dignity and diversity, confidentiality, avoidance of harm, etc.). In addition, the evaluators will have to apply for ethics clearance and approval from the Government of Malawi before data collection can start.

Considerations should be given to:

- Administrative, technical and physical safeguards to protect the confidentiality of those participating in the research
- Obtain informed consent for voluntary participation of beneficiaries and stakeholders in the evaluation, as well as ensuring data protection protocols are implemented and met.
- Safeguards for those conducting research
- Do No Harm safeguards for people participating in research, including physical safeguards as well as emotional/psychosocial safeguards
- Parental or caregiver consent concerning data collection
- Appropriate spaces and methodologies tailored in consideration of unique needs of vulnerable adults, including those with disabilities
- Appropriate language and communication

4) Specific tasks/activities under this assignment

Once hired, the evaluation team is expected to carry out the following activities for both the SP-GEAR baseline and the MSCTP midline surveys, analysis and reporting. Since these are two different IEs, the evaluation team will be required to provide two sets of inception reports, data collection report and draft and final evaluation reports separately for the SP-GEAR baseline and MSCTP midline. This should be discussed and clarified during the scoping phase after contract confirmation. The below-mentioned key activities will be required separately for the baseline and midline, under separate timelines:

a) Inception activities

- Conduct a desk review of all relevant programme documents and existing social protection and social assistance data for the programme focus area.
- Prepare and apply for ethics approval/clearance in Malawi
- Attend inception meetings

- Develop an inception report, which includes sampling methods and sampling frame for both quantitative and qualitative data collections, detailed workplan, list of tools and mapping of tools in relation to the evaluation criteria/questions, mapping of secondary and primary data to respond to evaluation criteria / questions, fieldwork strategy, data quality assurance, etc.
- Develop quantitative and qualitative data collection tools and materials
- Translate the data collection tools into Chichewa
- Finalize and validate data collection tools based on consultation with Evaluation Technical Reference Group and other relevant stakeholders, and pre-testing (tools piloting activity)
- Prepare for fieldwork with logistics

b) Conduct data collection / fieldwork

- Hire and train enumerators and/or research assistants on the tools for quantitative and qualitative data collection activities
- Prepare and provide all necessary tools for data collection, including print interview guides, consent forms, voice recording device as needed, etc.
- Lead and implement activities of primary data collection (quantitative and qualitative) in communities as needed (depending on sampling methodology)
- Lead and collect secondary data to be used for the evaluation analysis where needed
- Lead stakeholders' interviews (qualitative)

c) Data analysis and report writing

- Quantitative data analysis (including different disaggregation levels, e.g. location, gender, age range, disability status)
- Qualitative data analysis (including different disaggregation levels, e.g. location, gender, disability status)
- Write draft evaluation report, which includes populating the evaluation matrix, an executive summary, evaluation findings, conclusions, and recommendations; and submit for comments and feedback – **note, for the SP-GEAR baseline, findings and analysis will be compared with the 2022 MSCTP baseline, and a consolidated report will be drafted.**
- Produce final evaluation report based on comments and feedback received
- Develop a PowerPoint presentation on key findings, conclusions and recommendations
- Use the PowerPoint presentation to communicate findings, conclusions and recommendations to relevant staff and audience
- Produce a policy brief based on key findings, recommendations, and conclusions
- Produce infographics based on key findings

d) Coordination and technical support

- Lead on the full coordination, planning and execution of the evaluation activities in-country and remotely
- Liaise and report regularly to UNICEF Malawi

- Attend calls and meetings as needed, and assist in preparing background materials and taking minutes
- Responsibilities of the parties involved in the assignment

Responsibility of UNICEF Malawi

- REKM Section to provide overall supervision, in consultation with the Regional Office Evaluation Team. REKM will also provide all documents related to guidance on evaluation standards, inception report preparation and ethical review; providing quality assurance throughout the evaluation process including the training of enumerators and data collection phase.
- SP team to provide all relevant technical documents, including previous impact evaluation reports, previous studies, programme reports, monitoring reports, previous datasets; and financial documentation to the evaluators as required
- SP team to provide overview of the programme, Theory of Change, results framework, list of target communities and households, and list of beneficiaries included in the last impact evaluation
- SP team to help receive confirmation of approval for the evaluation from the MoGCDSW; REKM team to ensure QA and get approval from the regional evaluation team
- SP team to provide contact list of key stakeholders and people in-country and in the field
- REKM to support identifying suitable local enumerators, if needed
- SP to support in setting up introductory meetings with relevant stakeholders and communities
- REKM/SP to review all deliverables submitted by the evaluators and provide feedback as appropriate
- Participate in interviews/focus group discussions if asked
- REKM/SP to promote the use of evaluation findings and recommendations
- Provide updates to donors and stakeholders as required

Responsibility of the Evaluators

- Meet evaluation standards for each deliverable including the inception report, data collection process, draft, and final evaluation report.
- Provide two different inception reports separately for the SP-GEAR baseline and MSCTP midline
- Describe the overall evaluation approach, drawing from prior evaluation reports and available datasets
- Collaborate with UNICEF Malawi to agree on final evaluation questions
- Identify options for methodologies and tools for the agreed evaluation questions
- Develop ethics protocols and apply for ethics clearance/approval from the Government of Malawi and UNICEF third party reviewer (through REKM)
- Design or modify tools as necessary and secure UNICEF Malawi approval for all data collection tools
- Report to the Evaluation Technical Reference Group and attend meetings as agreed with UNICEF REKM Section
- Submit (by email) to UNICEF's REKM Section bi-weekly or monthly progress reports as well as progress meetings/calls during the evaluation period, summarizing activities / tasks completed to date (% achieved), challenges and mitigation strategies, time spent, etc.

- Run analysis of the findings and produce reports, which sufficiently explore and explain the results
- Develop and agree on a reporting structure and format with UNICEF’s REKM Section and the Evaluation Reference Group, including presentations of findings and produce any other relevant dissemination materials
- Conduct a thorough desk review, including examining available data from prior evaluations and from monitoring, from other country-specific reports and activities to inform tools, analysis, reporting.
- Conduct fieldwork:
 - Recruit and train research assistants / enumerators on data collection tools and research practices in the field
 - Make own logistical arrangements to reach the selected communities and organize interviews, and ensure full logistical support for the entire exercise across all districts
 - Supervise and take full responsibility for the behavior and performance of data collectors, including data collection quality checking in the field
 - Ensure individual data collection reports outlining progress achieved and any challenges are completed by enumerators and that these are compiled into an overall fieldwork report

Technical Reference Group

The consultancy will be overseen by an Evaluation Technical Reference Group (TRG) composed of UNICEF CO and RO), MoGCDSW and other selected key stakeholders.⁷ The TRG will be co-chaired by the SCTP Coordinator in the MoGCDSW and UNICEF Chief of REKM. The TRG will provide inputs to the evaluation design, support the rollout of the evaluation and validate its findings at all stages. UNICEF REKM Section will manage the consultancy.

Responsibility of the Technical Reference Group

| Key tasks | Deliverables | Duration (Estimated # days) | Estimated Completion Date |
|---|---|--------------------------------|--|
| Inception phase activities (refer to Section 4.a) <i>(both for SP-GEAR baseline and MSCTP midline)</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set of final data collection tools (quantitative and qualitative) in both English and Chichewa • Ethics approval completed and obtained • Final inception report (both for SP-GEAR baseline and MSCTP midline), including annexes | 15 working days | 29 February 2024 |
| Data collection / fieldwork activities (refer to Section 4.b) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>(both for SP-GEAR baseline and MSCTP midline)</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bi-weekly or monthly (TBC) fieldwork progress reports • Data collection activities are completed | 40 working days | 31 March 2024 (SP-GEAR baseline) 31 May 2024 (MSCTP midline) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data analysis and report writing activities (refer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft evaluation report with a ‘satisfactory’ or higher rating from GEROS • Final evaluation report, including annexes | 30 working days | 30 June 2024 (SP-GEAR baseline) 30 September 2024 (MSCTP midline) |

⁷ For example – PRSP, NLGFC, EU, Ireland, KFW, GIZ, ILO, World Bank.

| | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| to Section 4.c above) (both for SP-GEAR baseline and MSCTP midline) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final PowerPoint presentation • Final datasets (quantitative and qualitative) • Validation workshop with key stakeholders held • Policy brief • Evaluation infographics | | |
|--|---|--|--|

- Provide technical assistance when/where necessary
- Provide guidance to the final evaluation design during the inception phase
- Review and provide feedback on all key deliverables (inception report, evaluation report and dissemination plan)
- Participate in interviews/focus group discussions if asked
- Review and provide feedback on management response

Expected deliverables and reporting requirements

Table 3: Outlines the consultancy deliverables for both the SP-GEAR baseline and MSCTP midline, which will need to be submitted separately. Please note, the estimated days are the total for both the SP-GEAR baseline and MSCTP midline deliverables.

The draft and final evaluation reports should be between 40-60 pages, excluding the executive summary and annexes. The report should indicatively be structured as follows:

- a. Executive summary
- b. Introduction
- c. Description of the project, including the Theory of Change
- d. Overview of the evaluation approach, the design and methodology, methods used, sampling details, limitations and challenges, ethical standards
- e. Findings
- f. Conclusions and lessons
- g. Recommendations
- h. Annexes

The UNICEF's Evaluation Quality Standard and Evaluation Report Standards can be found here:

<https://www.unicef.org/evaluation/media/816/file/UNICEF-Adapted-UNEG-Evaluation-Report-Standards.pdf>

All reports should be submitted in electronic form and in English. As annexes to this TOR, please find all relevant **UNICEF-GEROS2 Quality Assessment System and Checklists** for your review and understanding of our expectations.

In addition to the above:

1. Applicants are required **to provide a draft clear workplan in their application** incorporating all relevant tasks and milestones of the Evaluation study from start to finish, with roles and responsibilities clearly outlined for all proposed team members. A final version of the detailed workplan will be included in the Inception Report.

2. The Evaluation Team will be required to deliver a face-to-face and/or online **presentation** of the evaluation findings, as an integral part of the submission process.
3. Other **communication materials** (e.g. photo stories) for dissemination are encouraged. The project is particularly interested in materials, which will help us provide feedback to beneficiaries and communities we work alongside, engaging stakeholders more widely. These will be agreed with the project team during the inception phase.
4. **Final Data Collection Tools** – The Evaluation Team and UNICEF Malawi will work collaboratively on all methods of data capture for the Evaluation. At the end of the evaluation, the Evaluation Team will be expected to submit a clean copy of all data collection tools developed and used in the study to UNICEF.
5. **Clean and Final Datasets (including qualitative transcripts)** – The Evaluation Team will be expected to provide fully ‘cleaned-up’ datasets for both qualitative and quantitative aspects of the evaluation. For quantitative reporting, this may be in SPSS, Stata or SAS file format accompanied by the code used to carry out analysis and a variable codebook. Similarly, for qualitative work, this should include cleaned and anonymized transcripts and coding framework. UNICEF will have the sole rights to keep and use the datasets.

Reporting

| Name of the evaluation manager: | | Mussarrat Youssuf |
|---|---|--|
| Name of the programme Section: | | REKM & Social Policy |
| Planned activity | Achievement indicators | Means of verification |
| Inception phase activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethics approval obtained. • Timely delivery of deliverables and at least satisfactory rating (GEROS) on the key deliverables: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ set of final data collection tools (quantitative and qualitative) ○ final inception report | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval document from the Department of Ethics in Research at the Ministry of Health (SP) • GEROS / UNICEF ratings and completed checklists on the final inception report (REKM) |
| Data collection/fieldwork activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of working relations and of written materials produced is high and satisfactory to UNICEF Malawi • Adherence to timeline and set deadlines | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bi-weekly or monthly fieldwork progress reports reviewed and validated by UNICEF Malawi teams |
| Data analysis and report writing activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timely delivery and at least satisfactory rating (GEROS) on the final evaluation report, including annexes. • Timely delivery and high quality of outputs produced: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ final PowerPoint presentation ○ final datasets (quantitative and qualitative) ○ final policy brief ○ final infographics | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GEROS / UNICEF rating and completed checklist on the final evaluation report • Final PowerPoint presentation, policy brief, infographics and final datasets reviewed and validated by UNICEF Malawi |

Desired competencies, technical background, and experience

Bidders are required to clearly identify and provide CVs for all those proposed in the Evaluation Team, **clearly stating their roles and responsibilities** for this evaluation. The assignment requires a team of consultants consisting of a lead institution partnered with a local research/academic institution/firm in Malawi. The terms of this contract will involve provision of technical support to a local research/academic institution/firm to support local capacity strengthening. Bids that respond to the Request for Proposals (RFP) should name the selected local institution and provide justification for its selection as well as clearly outlined roles and responsibilities of each institution. The arrangement of necessary human resources including evaluation assistants, enumerators and data entry clerks must be well defined in the RFP response.

The proposed evaluation team should include the technical expertise and practical experience required to deliver the scope of work and evaluation outputs, in particular with regards to:

Qualifications of the lead institution

- At least 10 years of demonstrable institutional experience in evaluations with a track record of leading and conducting impact evaluations; use of mixed method approaches, qualitative research, data collection and analysis are a mandatory requirement.
- Demonstrable experience in the design, implementation of longitudinal evaluations of large-scale government implemented social protection programmes in developing countries is required. Experience in such projects in sub-Saharan Africa is an added advantage.
- Demonstrable experience evaluating cash transfer programmes or other social protection interventions is a distinct advantage.
- Familiarity with poverty reduction issues including poverty assessment methodologies is an added advantage.
- Successful demonstration of effective rural household surveys focus group discussions and key informant interviews and Human Rights Based Approach to Programming (HRBAP) is required.
- In depth understanding of development context of Southern and Eastern African countries and experience in working in Malawi, especially with the government and on the existing social protection programming (MSCTP), is desirable.

Qualifications of the local institution

- At least 10 years of institutional experience in social research with demonstrable track record in impact evaluations, use of mixed methods, qualitative research, data collection and analysis are required.
- Demonstrable experience evaluating cash transfer programmes and familiarity with poverty reduction issues including poverty assessment methodologies.
- Proven experience of effective rural household surveys and use of participatory research methods such as focus group discussions and key informant interviews and Human Rights Based Approach to Programming (HRBAP) is required.
- In depth understanding of development context of Malawi and experience in working in with the government at national and sub-national levels is required.

- Previous experience with the MSCTP or other similar social protection programming highly desirable.

Qualifications of Individual Team members

Team Leader

- Advanced University degree (masters or PhD) in one of the following disciplines: Statistics, Data Management, Social or Public Policy, Development Economics, or other relevant social science.
- At least ten years working experience in designing, implementing and evaluating social protection/social cash transfer programmes.
- Demonstrable experience in designing and leading impact evaluations; statistical analysis and management of large dataset produced through experimental and quasi-experimental techniques, from impact evaluations or similar assignment.
- Demonstrable experience/understanding of such techniques as propensity score matching, difference in difference methods and sampling methods.
- Demonstrable experience of conducting social research utilizing a mixed methods approach.
- In depth understanding of development context of Eastern and Southern African, experience in Malawi preferred.
- Demonstrable experience with or understanding of the functioning, limitations and data provision through sectoral Information Management System.

Supporting International Consultant(s)

- Advanced University degree (masters or PhD) in one of the following disciplines: International Development, Social or Public Policy, Development Economics, Statistics or other relevant social science.
- At least one of the supporting consultants should be a statistician and/or data analyst.
 - At least five years working experience in designing, implementing, and evaluating social protection programmes.
 - Proven experience of conducting social research utilizing quantitative and/or qualitative research approach.
 - Demonstrated experience in quantitative and/or qualitative data analysis.

Local/National Consultants

- Advanced University degree at Master's level or higher in Statistics, Data Management and Analysis, Development, Social or Public Policy, Development Economics, Statistics or other relevant social science.
- At least five years working experience in designing, implementing and evaluating social protection/ social cash transfer programmes.
- Proven experience of conducting social research utilizing qualitative research approach.
- Demonstrated experience in Information Management System
- Familiar with social protection and poverty reduction issues including poverty assessment methodologies.
- Successful demonstration of effective rural household surveys, experience conducting of focus group discussions and key informant interviews in Malawi is preferred.
- Experience working with government at national and sub-national levels on social protection programmes (MSCTP).

CVs of involved professionals should be made available upon submission of a technical proposal.

Language Required for the Consultancy:

- Excellent spoken and written English is required.

- Local institution team must also be fully fluent in Chichewa, knowledge of other local languages in the country is desirable.

Other Skills and Attributes:

- Excellent analytical, research and report writing skills.
- Excellent communication and relationship-building skills.
- Excellent facilitation and problem-solving skills.

The institutional contractor must provide UNICEF with a Certificate of Incorporation or comparable proof of registration as a company or institution, according to the relevant national legislation.

Administrative matters

- The selected Institutional contractor will be governed by and subject to UNICEF’s General Terms and Conditions for Institutional contracts
- The Institutional contractor will work on their own computer(s) and use their own office resources and materials in the execution of this assignment
- Provide necessary documentation for approval by UNICEF before engaging sub-consultants. The Institutional contractor, under ordinary circumstances, shall not engage any sub consultants for any part of the assignment, unless otherwise specifically approved by UNICEF.
- As per UNICEF DFAM policy, payment is made against approved deliverables. No advance payment is allowed unless in exceptional circumstances against bank guarantee, subject to a maximum of 30 per cent of the total contract value in cases where advance purchases, for example for supplies or travel, may be necessary.
- The Institutional contractor’s fees must be ‘all inclusive’ of all administrative costs; and
- The Institutional contractor is expected to be available and fully in charge of supporting all activities and operations of the consultancy for the full duration of the contract.

Payment schedule

The payments will be made upon satisfactory completion of tasks and deliverables (as reported in table 3), and submission of invoices. The final payment is made only upon certification of the **satisfactory** completion of the assignment as a whole, and completion by the supervisor of the evaluation.

Table 4 – payment schedule:

| Deliverables | Payment |
|---|--------------------------|
| Final inception report for baseline (including final data collection tools and ethics clearance obtained) with a ‘satisfactory’ or higher rating from GEROS | 25% of the total payment |
| Final fieldwork report for baseline | 15% of the total payment |
| Final inception report midline (including final data collection tools and ethics clearance obtained) with a ‘satisfactory’ or higher rating from GEROS | 25% of the total payment |
| Draft evaluation baseline and midline report with a ‘satisfactory’ or higher rating from GEROS | 25% of the total payment |
| Final evaluation baseline and midline report, along with clean and final datasets (quantitative and qualitative), final policy brief, evaluation infographics and a final PowerPoint presentation | 10% of the total payment |

How to Apply and Technical Evaluation Criteria

Interested candidates will be required to submit the following application:

A two-element procedure shall be utilized in evaluating proposals, with evaluation of the technical proposal being completed prior to any financial proposal being compared.

For the first element, applicants will submit a **Technical Proposal**:

The technical proposal should be prepared on the basis of the tasks and deliverables (as per Table 3 above). The proposal should include approach and methodology for sampling and suggested evaluation design, as well as a draft detailed workplan and timeline for the different inception, data collection, and data analysis/report writing activities. The Technical Proposal shall also include updated CVs (as annexes), relevant examples of past work (e.g. evaluation reports) and 3 references for similar assignments.

| TECHNICAL EVALUATION | Max score |
|---|------------------|
| 1. OVERALL RESPONSE & METHODOLOGY | 35 |
| Understanding of scope, objectives, and completeness of response | 5 |
| Quality of the proposed approach and methodology | 15 |
| Quality of proposed implementation plan, i.e., how the bidder will undertake and staff each task, and time-schedule, risk assessment | 15 |
| 2. PROPOSED TEAM and ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITY | 35 |
| Leadership Skills: Relevant leadership/management experience, skills, and qualifications | 5 |
| Technical expertise: quantitative and qualitative expertise and experience, experience in sampling and conducting fieldwork for data collection, skills, and qualifications for evaluations | 10 |
| Technical expertise: experience and expertise in research about children and women, about social assistance/protection, about cash transfers and vulnerable households in rural contexts. | 10 |
| Organization of the team, roles and responsibilities and presence in Malawi | 10 |
| TOTAL MARKS FOR TECHNICAL COMPONENT | 70 |

As a second element, applicants should submit a **Financial Proposal (max score: 30)**.

The bidder must submit in US dollars (USD):

- Cost breakdown of consultancy fees, **inclusive of all costs**, daily subsistence allowance (DSA) and travel costs for the fieldwork in Malawi.
- Rates/prices offered shall remain fixed for the entire period from the commencement of the contract
- No Letter of Credit or Advance Payment
- The Financial Regulations and Rules of UNICEF preclude advance payments and payments by letter of credit, except in special circumstances. Such provision in a proposal will be prejudicial to its evaluation by UNICEF.