

Mid-term Impact Evaluation of the Emergency Social Cash Transfer (ESCT) program Management Response

Evaluation Title: Mid-term Impact Evaluation of the Emergency Social Cash Transfer (ESCT) program

Region: ESAR

Office: Zimbabwe Country Office

Evaluation Year: 2023

Person-In-Charge for Follow-up to Management Response: Rumbidza Tizora (Research and Evaluation Specialist)

Overall Response to the Evaluation: *UNICEF Zimbabwe commissioned a Mid-term Impact Evaluation of the Emergency Social Cash Transfer (ESCT) program to assess its progress towards intended impacts and sustainability. The evaluation, which covered the period from August 2020 to July 2022, focused on all eight districts where ESCT was operational, with particular insights from the handover process in Gutu and Highfields. These insights aimed to guide the future transition of the remaining six districts to the Ministry of Public Service Labour and Social Welfare (MoPSLSW).*

By the time the evaluation concluded, UNICEF ZCO had already begun implementing some recommendations. Actions completed include providing technical assistance to MoPSLSW to revise the HSCT targeting model, advocating for a uniform targeting approach, and exploring partnerships with various mobile service providers and cash distributors. Additionally, UNICEF organized reflection workshops with implementing partners and MoPSLSW to analyze lessons from the handovers.

In conclusion, UNICEF ZCO views the evaluation as a valuable tool that will not only enhance future emergency social cash transfers but also significantly inform the government's broader cash transfer strategies, particularly the Harmonised Social Cash Transfer (HSCT).

Planned Use of Evaluation: *The planned use of the Mid-term Impact Evaluation of the Emergency Social Cash Transfer (ESCT) program is to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of future emergency social cash transfers and inform the government's broader cash transfer strategies, particularly the Harmonised Social Cash Transfer (HSCT). To facilitate the intended use by stakeholders, including the Ministry of Public Service Labour and Social Welfare (MoPSLSW) the evaluation findings will be shared through detailed reports and presentations to all relevant stakeholders. Technical assistance will be provided to MoPSLSW to implement recommended changes, such as revising the HSCT targeting model and establishing partnerships with mobile service providers and cash distributors. Regular monitoring and feedback sessions will be conducted to assess the progress of implementation and make necessary adjustments. This process will ensure that the evaluation findings are integrated into program planning and execution, leading to evidence-based decision-making that improves the efficiency, effectiveness, and impact of social cash transfer programs in Zimbabwe.*


Allowed Editors: *Rumbidza Tizora and Godfrey Chagwiza*



RECOMMENDATIONS and ACTIONS:

Evaluation Recommendation 1: The UZCO should continue working with the MoPSLSW to improve the design and implementation of the HSCT programme, leveraging the insights gained from the ESCT Programme.

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

If recommendation is rejected or partially accepted, report reasons:

Actions planned	Responsible section	Responsible Person	Expected completion date	Implementation stage: Not started Underway Completed Cancelled	Actions taken	Supporting documents
<p>1. Provide technical assistance to the MoPSLSW to review and revise the HSCT targeting model, advocating for a uniform targeting approach for both the public sector and development partners. The priority in these revisions should be to develop a shock-responsive targeting model. This model would grant HSCT the flexibility needed to adapt to humanitarian situations and eliminate the need for re-validation exercises during future transitions. Similar to ESCT, the targeting model should also prioritize vulnerable populations including women, PWDs, and the elderly as key recipients.</p>	<p>MoPSLSW, UNICEF ZCO – Social Policy, Social Protection and Research Section, and Implementing partners: GOAL and World Vision</p>	<p>Mr Tirivavi -Deputy Director Family and Social Protection Tendai Mukurazhizha - Social Protection Technical Advisor Ruth Wutete - Social Protection Specialist (UNICEF) Michael Tigere - Social Protection Officer(UNICEF) Gospel Chingwaru - Programme manager – GOAL Abraham Mamvura - Project coordinator – World Vision</p>	<p>Dec 2023</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>Study done; recommendations adopted. New targeting and registration approach rolled out in the rural phase</p>	<p>New rural and urban registration form  2023 MoPSLSW Harmonised Social C</p>
<p>2. Continue supporting the MoPSLSW in implementing a robust, technology-based Complaints and Grievances system. This will</p>	<p>MoPSLSW, UNICEF ZCO – Social Policy, Social Protection and Research</p>	<p>Mr Tirivavi -Deputy Director Family and Social Protection Tendai Mukurazhizha -</p>	<p>June 2024</p>	<p>Cancelled</p>	<p>Ministry have changed their plans and have preference for a Complaints and Grievances system</p>	<p>N/A</p>

streamline the system, enabling timely tracking and resolution of emerging issues and complaints, including those related to GBV and child protection	Section, and Implementing partners: GOAL and World Vision	Social Protection Technical Advisor Ruth Wutete - Social Protection Specialist (UNICEF) Michael Tigere - Social Protection Officer (UNICEF) Gospel Chingwaru - Programme manager (GOAL) Abraham Mamvura - Project coordinator – (World Vision)			that covers for all the Social Protection Programmes. This is however not possible as the funds were tied to ESCT and cannot be repurposed.	
3. Advocate for and provide assistance to the MoPSLSW in exploring partnerships with multiple mobile service providers and cash distributors (such as banks and private sector entities) to expand the network and improve access. By collaborating with different mobile service providers, HSCT recipients would have various options for mobile money transfers.	MoPSLSW UNICEF ZCO – Social Policy, Social Protection and Research	Mr Tirivavi -Deputy Director Family and Social Protection Director Social Development – Mr Zimhunga Tendai Mukurazhizha - Social Protection Technical Advisor Ruth Wutete - Social Protection Specialist (UNICEF)	February 2024	Completed	UNICEF had initial discussions with the MoPSLSW. They have the appreciation ECOCASH is restrictive. There was a meeting with ECOCASH and we gave them the list of the areas with no networks.	List of the areas with no network coverage completely.  Makoni and Mangwe.xlsx  Binga.xlsx

Evaluation Recommendation 2: Support the future implementation of HSCT by conducting assessments to gather evidence on the effectiveness of women as primary cash transfer recipients and to better understand the underlying reasons for GBV cases.

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



If recommendation is rejected or partially accepted, report reasons: Following a series of disbursements, the primary recipient became the woman. This gender-sensitive shift in targeting was implemented to acknowledge and address the gendered aspects of poverty and vulnerability, such as women’s limited access to income, assets, education, health, and social protection. It also aimed to recognize and support women’s roles and contributions as caregivers and providers for their families and communities, and to promote women’s empowerment and gender equality by enhancing their access to, control over, and

ownership of resources, as well as their voice and agency in household and societal decision-making. Despite a few isolated cases, Gender-Based Violence (GBV) was not a significant issue in the ESCT, and prompt assistance was provided to those affected. This was consistently emphasized to the evaluation consultants during their finding's presentation. Allocating resources to conduct an in-depth assessment of the factors contributing to the reported incidents of GBV in the targeted districts may not be cost-effective, given the infrequency of such cases. This is similar to the GBV cases in the HSCT programme. It is not a major problem, and assistance is readily available to victims.

Evaluation Recommendation 3: Advocate for the introduction of a Cash Plus Approach that includes a broader range of topics, including nutrition, social protection, gender rights, and child protection.

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

If recommendation is rejected or partially accepted, report reasons:


Actions planned	Responsible section	Responsible Person	Expected completion date	Implementation stage: Not started Underway Completed Cancelled	Actions taken	Supporting documents
4. Advocate with the MoPSLSW for the integration of a Cash Plus Approach into the HSCT programme, emphasizing the inclusion of nutrition, gender rights, and child protection messaging alongside cash transfers. The evaluation findings highlight the positive impact of these messages, particularly among female recipients, in improving nutritional practices.	MoPSLSW, UNICEF ZCO – Social Policy, Social Protection, and Research Section, and Implementing partners: GOAL and World Vision	Mr Tirivavi -Deputy Director Family and Social Protection Tendai Mukurazhizha - Social Protection Technical Advisor Ruth Wutete - Social Protection Specialist (UNICEF) Michael Tigere - Social Protection Officer (UNICEF) Gospel Chingwaru - Programme manager (GOAL) Abraham Mamvura - Project coordinator (World Vision)	June 2024	Completed	The discussions have been initiated with the ministry and will be consolidated during the planned transition workshop with MOPSLSW officials, here lessons learnt will also be presented. Results from the ESCT evaluation will also be presented at this workshop as well as proposal for Endline evaluation.	Transition plan  Transition from ESCTtoHSCT.docx PowerPoint presentation for the ESCT findings  ESCT evaluationfindingsp


Evaluation Recommendation 4: The UZCO should inform the future transition plans for the remaining six ESCT districts by leveraging the lessons

learnt from the transition in Gutu and Highfields. These future transition plans should prioritize a smooth transition and minimize operational disruptions for rights- holders, including women, men, PWDs, the elderly.

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

If recommendation is rejected or partially accepted, report reasons:

Actions planned	Responsible section	Responsible Person	Expected completion date	Implementation stage: Not started Underway Completed Cancelled	Actions taken	Supporting documents
<p>5.Organize one or a series of reflection workshops involving IPs and the MoPSLSW to analyse the lessons learnt from the handovers in Gutu and Highfields. Use these learnings to develop future transition plans, delineating roles and responsibilities, establishing clear timelines, and identifying the required resources. The transition plans:</p> <p>a. Prioritize achieving operational readiness for the HSCT programme's takeover of ESCT districts. Essential actions should include conducting validation exercises in advance, setting up ECONET lines, and establishing effective communication channels with right holders.</p> <p>b. Prioritize transparent communication throughout the transition process, including post-transition.</p> <p>c. Offer explicit information regarding the transition process, HSCT targeting criteria, disbursement amounts, and potential delays.</p>	<p>MoPSLSW, UNICEF ZCO – Social Policy and Research Section, and Implementing partners: GOAL and World Vision</p>	<p>Mr Tirivavi -Deputy Director Family and Social Protection Tendai Mukurazhizha - Social Protection Technical Advisor Ruth Wutete - Social Protection Specialist (UNICEF) Research and Evaluation Specialist – Rumbidza Tizora (UNICEF) Michael Tigere - Social Protection Officer (UNICEF) Gospel Chingwaru - Programme manager (GOAL) Abraham Mamvura - Project coordinator (World Vision)</p>	<p>June 2024</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>There is a ESCT transition workshop planned for May 2024.The issues from the workshop will be collated in a transitioning process document.</p>	<p>Transition plan</p>  <p>Transition from ESCTtoHSCT.docx</p>

<p>6. Considering the MoPSLSW's limited capacity to assume control of the ESCT districts, it is recommended to implement a phased approach, possibly in batches, for the future transition of ESCT districts to HSCT. This approach is likely to facilitate a responsible and seamless transfer in terms of responsibilities, preventing overwhelming the implementing agencies and district administrations.</p>	<p>MoPSLSW, UNICEF ZCO – Social Policy and Research Section, and Implementing partners: GOAL and World Vision</p>	<p>Mr Tirivavi -Deputy Director Family and Social Protection Tendai Mukurazhizha - Social Protection Technical Advisor Ruth Wutete - Social Protection Specialist Michael Tigere - Social Protection Officer Gospel Chingwaru - Programme manager (GOAL) Abraham Mamvura - Project coordinator (World Vision)</p>	<p>June 2024</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>The transition in the eight urban districts to Government has been done in a phased approach and in batches.</p>	<p>Presentation at the transition workshop highlighting the phased approach.</p>  <p>Lessons learnt workshop.pptx</p>
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Approved by: Dr Nicholas Alipui

UNICEF Zimbabwe Representative ad interim



Signature:

Date: 15 July 2024