Cash Transfer as a Social Protection Intervention: Evidence from UNICEF Evaluations 2010-2014

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UNICEF Evaluation Office
Background

- A large portion of UNICEF’s social protection investments focus on supporting national policy development and government-led cash transfer programmes through advocacy and technical assistance to designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluation.

- Are cash transfers working in low- and middle-income countries?

- Is UNICEF’s current focus on cash transfers an effective way of achieving results for children?
Purpose / Objectives of the Evaluation Synthesis

To inform the delivery of UNICEF’s Strategic Plan, and future policies and programmes on Social Inclusion, by:

• Reviewing quality and coverage of evidence in the field of social protection (2010-2014)

• Presenting sectoral impacts of cash transfers as well as cross-cutting findings

• Providing recommendations to strengthen UNICEF engagement in cash transfer programming and beyond
Conclusions

• Cash transfers in the hands of poor populations will generate multiple positive outcomes.

• Households exhibit highly rational decision-making.

• Enabling factors that increase impacts are evident.

• Unconditional cash grants generate the broadest range of benefits and offer maximum flexibility and respect for beneficiary views, in line with a rights-based approach to programming.
Conclusions (continued)

• Cash transfers can work well across all contexts, with appropriate modifications.

• Many smart implementation decisions must be taken for benefits to emerge in any context.

• Strongly resourced research approaches are suited for these complex programmes, but there are many issues still to investigate.

• Transfer programmes fit well into UNICEF’s forward-looking vision.
SOCIAL PROTECTION & CASH TRANSFERS
Recommendations

- Focus on cash plus interventions
- Consider cash transfers for each outcome area
- Examine cash transfer programmes in humanitarian contexts
- Examine the evidence base beyond cash transfers
- Update technical guidance documents
- Make technical support available earlier on in the process

On cash transfer programming  On technical support  On strengthening evidence
Thank you for your attention!