

Using evidence in the design of Social Support Programmes

The Case of Malawi

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Outline

- SAPs and Safety Nets
- Design of the Malawi National Safety Nets Programme (MNSNP)
 - SP in MPRSP
- Design of the Malawi Social Cash Transfer Programme (MSCTP)
- Evidence and the future of SP

SAPs and ad hoc safety nets

- UNICEF's Adjustment with Human Face (1990)
- WB's response: social dimension of adjustment using PWP and micro credit
 - Missed the ultra poor households without labour and assets
- Government's response: PAP (free agricultural inputs and subsidised credit) – no evidence
 - Not for ultra poor but sometimes included
 - Those included either consumed or sold them
 - Subsidised credit – high targeting errors

Malawi Safety Nets Programme

- Evaluations of PWPs, subsidised credit, free inputs found high targeting errors
- Need for a holistic safety nets programme
- Officials designed a programme (2000) based on
 - Evaluations of the ad hoc safety nets programmes implemented under the SDA and Government's poverty alleviation programme
 - Poverty profile and the different needs of different categories the poor
- Donors bought the evidence but not government
 - Safety nets (apart from free inputs) donor funded

Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy

- WB and IMF condition for indebted country access to HIPC-II resources
- Using the MNSNP as evidence, the 2002 MPRS included SP as a theme together with disaster management
- Only the politically palatable free and subsidised inputs were funded
- Ultra poor still effectively excluded in inputs programmes

Social Cash Transfer Pilot

- Livingstone Call for Action on cash transfers – evidence from elsewhere
- UNICEF/Govt. officials designed and implemented an operational research in the first half of 2006 to generate evidence
- Based on evidence from the operational research, a 7-district pilot was designed and approved
- Govt. approved a 7-district pilot and required an evaluation
- Three part evaluation done (impact using an experimental design, operation and targeting)

MSCT Program

- Evidence from the operations and targeting evaluations fed into the design of the current programme
- Apart from the evidence from the evaluation, the design also took advantage of monitoring data, field observations and review of SP initiatives
- In some cases, evidence was not used
 - Transfer levels were increased against evaluation recommendation
- Monitoring data, field observations and two evaluations are likely lead to further modifications of the institutional set up

- **END OF EXAMPLE**