



# Evaluation of Cash Transfer Pilot Project in Western Province, Zambia

Full Report

Oxfam GB Programme Evaluation

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Commissioned by: Oxfam GB

Evaluators: Mpulu Makayi, Dailes Judge, Mark  
Nyungula, Chris Leather



**Mid-term evaluation: DFID funded Cash Transfer Pilot Project,  
Western Province, Zambia, January 2006**

**FINAL**

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*Evaluation Team: Mpuli Makayi, Project Officer; Dailes Judge, Communications Officer; Mark Nyungula, Risk Adviser; Chris Leather, Emergency Food Security & Livelihoods Adviser.*

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Overview of cash project

Oxfam GB is providing an unconditional, monthly cash transfer of ZK 90,000 per month (approx. 26 US dollars) to up to 13,500 households (approximately 30% of the rural population) in Kaoma and Mongu Districts, Western Province during the months from November 2005 to March 2006. 200 HHs were provided with cash in Mongu District in October as a test/trial.

#### 1.1.1 Number of beneficiary households and % of total households (HHs) per District

<b>Mongu</b>					
Mongu Rural pop.	117,692				
Av. rural HH size Mongu	6.4				
	# of households (Planned)	# of beneficiaries (planned)	# HHs (actual)	# beneficiaryies (actual)	% total rural HHs
Trial		trial	200		
1. Nov/Dec	6,087	38,957	6,041	38,662	33.8%
2. Dec/Jan	6,556	41,958	6,481	41,478	35.2%
3. Jan/Feb	7,752	49,613	7,762	49,677	42.2%
4. Feb/Mar	7,752		(TBA)	(TBA)	(TBA)

<b>Kaoma</b>					
Kaoma Rural pop.	150,205				
Av. rural HH size Kaoma	7.5				
	# of households (Planned)	# of beneficiaries (planned)	# HHs (actual)	# Beneficiaries (actual)	% total rural HHs
Trial			0	0	0.0%
1. Nov/Dec	4,500	33,750	4,355	32,663	21.7%
2. Dec/Jan	4,500	33,750	4,464	33,480	22.3%
3. Jan/Feb	5,748	43,110	5,725	42,938	28.6%
4. Feb/Mar	5,748	43,110	(TBA)	(TBA)	(TBA)

<b>Total</b>			
Rural pop.	267,897		
Total Planned # of Households	# HHs (actual)	# Beneficiaries (actual)	% total rural HHs
0	200	0	0.00%
10587	10,388	32,663	12.19%
11056	11,069	33,480	12.50%
13500	13,510	42,938	16.03%
13500	(TBA)	(TBA)	(TBA)

The purpose of the project is to support households achieve short-term food security without having to employ harmful coping strategies and to prevent malnutrition, according to the findings of the VAC and INGO assessments conducted in May 2005. The use of cash transfers is as an alternative to

food aid and is a relatively new type of intervention. Thus, in addition to post distribution monitoring and planned final evaluation, this mid-term evaluation was carried out.

## **1.2 Overview of mid-term evaluation**

The mid-term evaluation was undertaken between 23/01/06 to 30/01/06 by Mpulu Makayi, Oxfam GB Project Officer; Dailes Judge, Oxfam GB Communications Officer; Mark Myungula, Regional Risk Assessment Adviser; Chris Leather, Oxfam GB Humanitarian Dept., Food Security & Livelihoods Adviser.

The stated objectives of the evaluation were to:

- Provide a qualitative picture of the impact that the cash transfers are having in a household, particularly in terms of gender and HIV/AIDS, to complement the quantitative data coming from the PDMs.
- Document the unintended impacts, both positive and negative, that the programme is having. We can specify as much as possible e.g. markets, social relationships, community welfare mechanisms
- Document in general what is working in the programme and what isn't.
- Assess the accountability mechanisms the teams have put in place.
- Provide recommendations for immediate uptake by the programme and for long term learning, as well as areas for examination in the final evaluation.
- Recommend action research that needs to be further undertaken by the programme.

The team visited two communities and one cash distribution. During the community visits the team interviewed groups of men and women and individual HHs representing beneficiaries, non-beneficiaries as well as Village Relief/Development Committees (VR/DCs) and interviewed local traders. The team also observed the cash distributions and interviewed individual HHs and Oxfam GB monitors. In addition, the team held discussions with Oxfam GB senior project staff and with representatives of other aid agencies.

For further details of the project and the evaluation methodology please contact Mpulu Makayi, [mmakayi@oxfam.org.uk](mailto:mmakayi@oxfam.org.uk)

## **2. Baseline analysis**

In order to establish a baseline against which to measure the impact of the cash project and to check the food security situation, the team collected information on household food and income security and integrated the findings with analysis provided by the VAC and Oxfam GB's own assessments. In addition, the team did a market study<sup>1</sup>.

### **2.1 Livelihoods and vulnerability**

Geographical diversity in livelihoods between districts and within districts in particular Mongu is according to whether communities live in upland or lowlands. The majority of the population live in wetland areas, which support fishing, rice and maize production and livestock rearing. Rice is a cash crop. Other crops grown include sorghum, millet and sweet potato and are harvested between April to July. The uplands are characterised by Kalahari sands of low fertility. The dominant crop is cassava. Maize is of secondary importance. Crop production is rain fed and most foods are harvested between April – July. Livestock production is an important livelihood strategy but cattle stocks have been severely affected by CBPP over the last few years – now chickens, goats and pigs are more important.

#### *2.1.1 Sources of cash income*

Fish are an important source of income close to the Zambezi River, although fish stocks are going down. Timber is an important source of cash income for richer households and provides significant casual labour opportunities for the less well off, as do the sugar estates in nearby Districts. The poor also find casual labour opportunities on other people's farms during the growing season. ¾ of households have at least some livestock and livestock sales are an important source of income for all socio-economic groups. Sale of vegetables is a significant source of income especially for poor

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<sup>1</sup> These documents available from the Oxfam GB Lusaka or Pretoria.

households (and especially in wetland areas) together with the sale of forest products including firewood, charcoal, grass, wild foods (e.g. mushrooms, *mabuyu* and *mungongo*). There is seasonal migration from the flooded Barotse Plain to the upland area during the peak period of water accumulation in April.

### 3. Evaluation of implementation process

#### 3.1 Targeting and determining population and numbers of beneficiaries per community

The team used community based targeting to identify beneficiaries and in general this was well done. In Mongu, the satellite committees identified beneficiaries first and then verified them in community meetings whereas in Kaoma people were identified and verified simultaneously. Some committees (neighbourhood health, committees under food security) existed already, in other places Oxfam GB staff had to facilitate the establishment of new committees. In the selection process, Oxfam GB is seen as impartial.

The number of beneficiaries per district was based upon VAC figures and using population data from Central Statistical Office. Wealth ranking of ward populations was done in order to arrive at a proportion of population in need of assistance for each ward. Beneficiaries from each ward were then registered up until the total numbers of beneficiaries for each distribution were reached.

Some intended target areas were left out in the initial targeting rounds in October/November or were not represented at ward meetings<sup>2</sup>. In some places it seemed that the committee was more responsible for selection than community. In general there appeared to be good enhancement of the selection process by verifying a sample of selected households through household visits following the community selection process. It is not clear if inter-ward variation in need was taken into account in the registration of wards.

##### 3.1.1 Selection criteria

The evaluation team observed that the criteria of HH's harvesting <60% of needs and having a 50% reduction in harvest did not appear to be used by many committees, perhaps because "needs" and "reductions in harvest" are open to interpretation and are difficult to measure and given the urgency to conduct targeting at the start of the project, there was not enough time was devoted to discussing this with committees. More emphasis was put by communities on social categories e.g. disabled, orphans etc. In addition communities looked at underlying vulnerabilities and level of support from extended family and assets to sell. In the circumstances, the application of stated criteria was appropriately flexible to allow communities to target who they perceived to be most in need and to deal with conflicts that arise.

##### 3.1.2 Possibility of inclusion and exclusion errors

It appeared to the evaluation team that overall the committees had selected the poorest and most vulnerable members of their communities – and on this basis inclusion errors can be considered to be within acceptable limits. However, it appeared that some proportion of beneficiaries were able to meet their immediate food needs without having to resort to highly damaging coping strategies. However, this was not a result of less needy people being selected to the exclusion to the more needy – it is due to the fact that the number of severely food insecure households is probably lower than originally projected by the VAC and INGO assessment, as noted in Oxfam GB's baseline report.

There were reports and observations of better-off households being included when they should not have been because they were seen as deserving, e.g. a teacher, committee members, women being prioritised over men even if they were less needy, or because they were related to committee members or because of fears of witchcraft. Where such inclusion errors were found they were corrected immediately. In general, significant efforts were made by Oxfam GB programme staff to tackle targeting issues throughout the course of the project by re-sensitising communities and local leaders and re-verifying beneficiary lists.

Some of the very poor did not participate in community meetings because they were not able to and were excluded and therefore some slightly better off households may have been included in some

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<sup>2</sup> This was corrected in December/January.



locations. There was also some non-participation of vulnerable in community meetings due to suspicion (fears of “satinism”) at the beginning of the project. Overall, however, exclusion errors were probably minimal.

### **3.2 Accountability**

Accountability or mechanisms to ensure the adequacy of information provided to beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries was good, especially given the time and resource constraints. There was, however, some confusion about how many distributions there would be and for how long distributions would carry on. This confusion, at the start of the distributions, extended to some staff due to the swiftness that decisions needed to be taken and inherent problems in communicating across distances with poor cell phone coverage. This confusion has largely been cleared up but there is still some lack of acceptance by communities.

In general the evaluation team found that beneficiaries seemed to have a good understanding of the rationale and purpose of the project in that they knew the project was to mitigate the impact of drought. They were also clear about what they were entitled to. Issues of HIV/AIDS, gender and the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse were discussed during the initial implementation phase and it was made clear that people should not have to work or provide sexual or other favours in order to receive cash. However, awareness of these issues was mixed, particularly in Kaoma.

Communities were not always clear why the number of distributions were reduced to 4 from the initial 5 and the number of beneficiaries from 14,300 to 13,500. Communication could have been better especially on these changes so staff, community and stakeholders all have one understanding.

The complaint mechanism is not very elaborate or structured and committees are not very clear about their role in this respect. Many people did not know how to complain or who to complain to. In addition, people do not always know committee members perhaps since they were not always chosen by the entire community nor re-introduced during community meetings. The Oxfam GB policy on not remunerating committee members was not communicated clearly from the beginning of the project.

Finally, non-beneficiaries turn up at distributions, this provides some accountability as they can see who is receiving the cash, providing for a degree of transparency.

### **3.3 Accessibility of distributions points**

Appropriate increases in the number of distribution points in the 2<sup>nd</sup> distribution meant people did not have to walk as far. Some people requested more points because of still having to walk for 2 hours or more.

### **3.4 Cash delivery mechanism**

The bank tellers are responsible to pack cash in envelopes with the same amount per envelope, and then the cash is loaded into a sealed box with padlocks. The sealed boxes are then carried by security company car, carrying armed police officers, to the distribution points. The bank tellers, who have keys to cash boxes, travel with the Oxfam GB car, separate from the security company car carrying cash. The two cars meet at pay points, where the security personnel hand cash boxes to tellers, the tellers sign delivery notes from the security personnel, then open the cash box and are ready for distribution. The teller must ensure that the box seals are not tampered with when signing delivery documents from the Security Company. The bank manager in Mongu monitors the Oxfam GB bank account daily through an organized spreadsheet and any cash returned is credited back to the Oxfam GB account. The bank confirmed that the cash is insured when it is transported to the field or pay points in the community.

The Mongu and Kaoma district terrain has a lot of Karahari sand; hence four-wheel drive vehicles are required to pass through difficult roads and pathways in remote villages. During the rainy season, (in full swing at the time of the distributions) vehicles had to pass through streams and flooded rivers. This brings in a severe challenge to reach pay points on time.

Generally, after the first few days of distributions when everyone was getting used to the systems, there has been minimal delay to reach pay points by Oxfam GB and the Security Company. There was one incident where a security company car, a Toyota Hilux carrying cash, had to be towed by an

Oxfam GB car when it was stuck in the sand. This jeopardizes cash security and Security Company had been advised to use four-wheel drive cars to carry cash to the communities.

The sharing of information and communication between the communities, bank, Security Company and Oxfam GB was problematic at the start of the programme but has significantly improved.

### **3.5 Security and accountability at distribution point**

People saw security as re-assuring and not as a threat, people favoured armed security. The communities the evaluation team visited didn't have a "security and safety committee", that can organize the community to safeguard cash distribution at the pay points. The community depended on the Security Company and police to secure the area, but it would be beneficial to involve the community in securing the area as the community know the area better than Security Company plus police who come during the distribution only.

The communities are informed of the date of cash distribution at least one week before the distribution day for their planning and for organizing the beneficiaries. The traders responded to such information by pre stocking required and necessary supplies. The beneficiaries know that they have to come with identity cards to every distribution for identification by a bank teller and Oxfam GB staff. There was a complaint from the community that households of different sizes receive the same amount of cash i.e. ZK90, 000 for each household at every distribution. This was explained that it is done per average households and for easy administration of cash from bank packing to distribution and then for reconciliation.

The distribution sheets had no total amounts at the last page that shows total amount planned for each pay point and the actual amount paid per pay point. This is important as reconciliation of cash should start from the pay points before it is consolidated after the end of the distribution of all pay points.

#### *3.5.1 Verification of identity at distribution points*

Almost all beneficiaries were able to present national registration cards but a voter's card was accepted when this was not possible, though the latter does not have a photo.

#### *3.5.2 Amount of cash received*

Cash is packed in individual envelopes. There were no reports of people not receiving the correct amount of cash. The amount of cash is checked by an Oxfam GB member of staff in front of the beneficiary and in full view of other beneficiaries and a relief committee member, who are in the same room.

### **3.6 Protection issues for communities**

There were no reported issues of sexual exploitation by selection committees however there was concern expressed that traders may try and exploit girls at market places, but no reported incidents of this.

### **3.7 Inter-agency communication and coordination**

There has been good participation by the District Disaster Management Committee (DDMC) and efforts to coordinate with food aid interventions. It was agreed in the DDMCs that cash and food aid would not be distributed in the same wards, however, in Kaoma the District Commissioner wanted food aid and cash assistance to be distributed evenly throughout the District rather than targeted according to level of need. On one occasion, Oxfam GB arrived in a community to distribute cash to find that food aid had already been distributed. When Oxfam GB tried to leave the site the community surrounded the vehicles and demanded the cash be distributed, which it was. The incident was followed up with a visit to the DC and discussion with all the Ward Councillors. There have been no further problems.

Another incident was that some ward officials and churches in Kaoma spread rumour, at the start of the project, that aid agencies distributing cash are associated with "satinism". This was apparently due to resentment at some wards not being targeted and because it was the first time for a cash

intervention of this kind. The result was that some potential beneficiaries did not want to receive assistance. This was resolved quite quickly once Oxfam GB staff became aware of the issue.

In addition, one NGO believes that the distribution of cash in the same communities where they are implementing longer-term livelihoods programmes without adequate coordination has resulted in some households receiving assistance from both agencies whilst others have not received any. This is being discussed with the agency concerned.

#### **4. Evaluation of impact**

Post Distribution Monitoring (PDMs) are carried out after each distribution. In general the evaluation team found they were well carried out and provide useful information. However, they could be complemented with other activities and methods, specifically the use of focus groups and semi-structured interviews to collect qualitative information, which would provide for more robust monitoring. It was also felt that specific households should have been targeted and monitored monthly to track changes in their consumption patterns, availability and diversity of food and utilisation of cash, intra household relationships etc during the project period and compared to the individual baseline. This could complement information gathered by the PDM and could highlight impacts that could not be captured in the more qualitative PDM reports.

##### **4.1 Use of cash by beneficiaries**

The findings of this mid-term evaluation confirm the findings of the PDMs conducted thus far<sup>3</sup>, i.e. that the major proportion of household expenditure is on food for household consumption, specifically on maize meal, but also on cassava, oil and fish and that some households are spending a small proportion of money on food to share with non-household members, agricultural inputs, health care, education, clothing and transport.

The evaluation team believes that the value of the PDM data is limited by only asking informants how they utilised the ZK90,000 which they received from Oxfam GB. It is possible that many households will report their food expenditures in the PDM given the emphasis that Oxfam GB and the committees placed on this in the sensitisation of communities about the project and therefore it is possible that other expenditures are under-reported in the PDMs.

The consumption of *nshima* made of maize meal at least twice per day is seen as a very high priority within households. Thus, it is likely that the majority of the cash is spent on improving the quantity and quality of staple food, i.e. purchase of maize meal. Most households are able to access some alternative sources of income to meet essential goods and services. Proportional piling was done with a number of beneficiaries to understand expenditure patterns and monthly timelines to check how long the supplies bought from cash received lasted. Indications were that distributed cash lasted up to 2 or 3 weeks. For the period until the next distribution, labour exchange, gathering of forest foods and products for sale or consumption sufficed.

The late on-set of the rains enabled some households to purchase seeds, however, the late start of the project meant that it was too late for many households to use the cash to purchase improved seed varieties.

Expenditure on health is lower than might be expected as people prefer spending on traditional medicine and getting herbs from forests than going to health clinics. Education expenses are also low because there are no school fees and a uniform is not a requirement.

##### **4.1.1 Intra-household decision making on expenditure**

As found in the PDMs, it is mostly women that are making the decisions about how money should be spent. Men who receive pass it on to wives because women are the ones who buy food. Oxfam GB told men not to take money away from wives however there were no indications to suggest that existing gender roles in the communities were influenced by information provided to the beneficiary households.

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<sup>3</sup> PDM reports available from the Oxfam GB Pretoria or Lusaka offices.



## **4.2 Intended impacts**

The evaluation team found that the transfer enabled people to access the type, quantity and quality of food that they prefer, i.e. increased consumption of *nshima* made of maize meal and reduced dependence on cassava, mangoes and wild foods. From a nutritional perspective, it seems likely that the majority of beneficiaries would have been able to meet minimum food needs and there would not have been significant increases in acute malnutrition even without the cash assistance. However, the PDMs suggest that the number of meals have increased (for both adults and children) and there is some indication that the transfer might be improving dietary diversity.

In terms of coping strategies, without the assistance people would have been more dependent upon piecework and sale of forest products than they would have been in normal years and would have had to reduce expenditure on other items. The project therefore helped to prevent strategies which may have led to long-term consequences, e.g. on health, education, family cohesion, the environment (e.g. forest and fish resources) some of the beneficiary population. In addition, the evaluation team felt that the project helped to prevent the use of very highly damaging coping strategies which could have had a more immediate impact on people's livelihoods, health and dignity for a significant proportion of the beneficiary population.

The impact on medium-term food security (i.e. 06/07 consumption year) appears to have been very minimal, in part due to the late implementation of the project and missed opportunity to support people in accessing seeds and draught power, however, this was not the primary goal of the project. One potential positive impact on the medium-term was that the cash may have reduced the dependence of some households on piece-work and thereby increased the time available to spend on their own farms.

## **4.3 Market prices and activity**

Maize prices have declined during the course of the project as a result of the harvest of the winter crop in wetland areas. The distribution of food aid in the area may also have had an impact. Therefore, the project has not resulted in an increase in market prices. Traders reported benefits, i.e. increased business and profits. Other observations by the evaluation team:

- No increase in number of food traders – they have increased their supply
- It is mainly those who are selling food stuffs (mealie meal, maize, oil, sugar, etc.) who are benefiting, not vendors of clothes etc.
- Traders buying from mills and then selling in local markets
- Traders are very well aware of when distributions are taking place and stock shops in advance.

## **4.4 Gender and other social relations**

It was reported by both male and female informants that women were empowered to receive and make decisions on how to use the cash, however, there was little evidence to suggest that the project challenged existing gender roles as women are normally the purchasers of food. The Team believed that the project had a positive impact overall in terms of people's awareness of HIV/AIDs and the risk of sexual exploitation.

# **5. Evaluation of appropriateness of project type and design**

## **5.1 Appropriateness of selection criteria**

The evaluation team believed that the communities' perceptions of the selection criteria were too narrowly focussed on food for the same reasons as discussed above in relation to the intended impacts and purpose of the project. Furthermore, there was concern that the use of the social criteria, identified and used by selection committees, i.e. HHs with high % chronically ill and disabled people, orphans, elderly and orphan headed and female headed), are not the best for targeting those least able to meet their minimum food and non-foods needs.

## **5.2 Appropriateness of intervention**

### *5.2.1 Cash versus food aid*

People normally purchased significant quantities of food and other commodities from the market; food is available locally; markets are functioning; prices have not increased; and it has been possible to deliver the cash safely, thus, cash was the appropriate instrument to use as opposed to food aid. Beneficiaries preferred cash because they could access the goods and services, which they see as priorities and they can meet a wider range of needs.

### *5.2.2 Unconditional transfer versus cash for work (CFW)*

Given the limited timeframe to implement the project from the beginning of October, it was the appropriate that the cash was provided unconditionally to all beneficiaries. However, if there had been more time available for planning and preparation, the evaluation team felt that CFW would have been more appropriate for at least 50% of the beneficiaries as they were able to work, their food security situation was not so critical and the medium term impacts of the project on food security could have been significantly increased as a consequence of the double impacts of CFW projects.

### *5.2.3 Cash versus vouchers*

The use of vouchers was not appropriate as there was not a need to restrict the types of commodities that people could buy, nor a need to control commodity prices.

## **6. Transition to the long-term**

The evaluation suggests that long-term cash transfers may provide an effective instrument to promote food and income security and access to other essential goods and services for chronically poor and vulnerable households. Such a social transfer programme is most likely to be effective when it is integrated with development and vulnerability reduction programmes, which increase the supply of essential goods and services such as agricultural inputs and extension services, health and education. Types of sustainable livelihood projects and activities could include: canal cleaning, seed and cutting multiplication (early maturing varieties of cassava), micro-finance, promotion of vegetable production and marketing, support to agricultural extension and veterinary services, promote improved processing, storage and utilisation of food.

There are initiatives underway to promote the establishment of a national cash-based social safety net as a component of a wider social protection and poverty reduction strategy. Donors should give greater emphasis to the funding of sustainable livelihoods and drought mitigation programmes – even during years of reduced crop production.

## **7. Recommendations**

### **7.1 Suggestions for the current project**

#### *7.1.1 Monitoring*

- Intensify and adapt the PDM, if time allows to:
  - Verify the eligibility of beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. One particular point is to monitor whether the definition of a household is being complied with.
  - Estimate a households total monthly expenditure and what they had been able to buy as a consequence of the distribution which they had been unable to buy before.
- Carry out more rigorous monitoring of market activity, e.g. changes in number of consumers, traders, frequency, duration of markets, types of commodity available.
- Train Project Officers in interview techniques, perhaps using the Household Economy Approach (HEA).
- Provide for greater involvement of Project Officers in monitoring and evaluation and increased support for the Project M&E Officer.
- Monitor trends and variations between villages over time.
- Carry out an assessment in February/March (prior to harvest) to compare the nutrition and food security situation in communities in Mongu and Kaoma Districts that have (1) received cash assistance; (2) have received food aid; (3) have received neither of these in order to gain a clearer understanding of the need for and impacts of different types of assistance.

### 7.1.2 Accountability

- Continue with communication to communities to the end of project.
- Provide more discussion of HIV/AIDS and gender issues at distributions. One suggestion is to contract local drama groups to do sensitisation on HIV/AIDS, gender and sexual exploitation at distribution points and market places.
- Carry out training for Project Officers on how to communicate with rural groups on gender, HIV/AIDS and issues around the prevention of sexual exploitation of beneficiaries in humanitarian operations.
- The programme staff should further train committee members on how to disseminate information to the community to avoid misunderstanding of programme activities, deal with complaints and give feedback to Oxfam GB for learning and future programme planning improvement.

### 7.1.3 Targeting

- Re-emphasise economic criteria to committees and communities, i.e. it is not just because you are old, orphaned etc that you are automatically entitled to assistance, nor that “being deserving” is a selection criteria. If committees have concerns about how a HH will spend the money, the monitors should discuss with them ways that they can ensure vulnerable HH members can benefit, e.g. by giving money to a different clan member who can take care of young children.
- Produce monthly verification reports including statistics on number of false positives (receiving but ineligible) and false negatives (not receiving but eligible) and numbers of ineligible excluded as a result of verification.

### 7.1.4 Cash transfer mechanism

- Support the community to form “safety and security committees” that will be responsible to help the security of cash in each pay point. The committee should set up community members who will be vigilant to secure the pay point areas and if they suspect any security threat, they should inform the security company and the police in the scene to be more alert.
- The distribution forms and reconciliation sheets should be redesigned to include total planned amount and actual amount paid per pay points. This will help in the reconciliation of cash.
- It is suggested that staff wear Oxfam GB t-shirts when participating in meetings, distribution points, PDM at least until a time when they become known to the community.

## 7.2 Recommendations for the longer term

### 7.2.1 Targeting

- If possible and applicable, it is suggested to broaden the selection criteria to be more directly related to people’s food and income security, e.g. *HHs least able to access an essential “basket” of good and services (e.g. food, hygienic items, livelihood inputs, health, education) without having to employ damaging coping strategies.*
- It is important that the committee members who do the targeting have the necessary capacity, on their roles, conflict resolution, group dynamics and gender issues. This might require specific training which should be built into the design of the project.
- Committee members should be selected from amongst the needy and should therefore be eligible to receive assistance. This will help to reduce complaints from members that they are doing a lot of work for no recompense.
- Need to ensure that there is sufficient preparation time to discuss objectives and selection criteria with beneficiary selection committees, noting that this is more complicated in a cash transfer project than, for example, for food aid as the former is very new to communities and their leaders.

### 7.2.2 Project design

- The ideal time to have implemented a drought response would have been earlier in the year, i.e. through interventions to support winter and summer cropping, vegetable production, canal cleaning with a view to increasing local food availability and household income through their own livelihood activities. Ideally, a project could have been implemented earlier in the year,

which aimed to protect and promote the agricultural and other livelihood activities of the population.

- The goals, purpose and output of the project could have been less focussed on peoples food needs and avoiding harmful coping strategies and more explicitly focussed on helping people to maintain and even increase their access to a range of other essential goods and services, including agricultural inputs, health care and education.
- Consider carrying out a longer term programme in the same areas to respond to chronic vulnerability. This could be done by continuing the provision of a monthly transfer to the poorest HHs (5%?) over a larger geographical area as a pilot social assistance programme and evaluate potential for scale-up. Such a programme should only be implemented as part of a national initiative led by the government to pilot and scale-up social assistance schemes, in a similar vein to the GTZ/DFID/CARE work and plans.
- Put project information and/or HIV/AIDS messages on envelopes and make use of other media to take account of local culture.
- Consider CFW projects for the less food insecure, i.e. households with available labour whilst also ensuring the participation in CFW projects does not divert people from the household's own livelihood activities, the care of the chronically ill, young children etc.

#### 7.2.3 *Information analysis and assessments*

- Continue to promote improvements in the accuracy of and linkages between food security, poverty and vulnerability monitoring, especially at the national level.
- Monitor intra-community variations in household poverty and vulnerability within development programmes will provide a clearer basis for targeting in times of acute food deficit.

#### 7.2.4 *Advocacy*

- Using evidence from Oxfam GB's use of cash transfers in response to acute food insecurity, actively support national initiatives for the use of cash within social safety net programmes.
- Actively advocate for a shift in the balance of funding away from programmes to support short-term food consumption to longer-term programmes to support food production, marketing and social safety nets.
- Advocate for cash as an alternative to food aid for some households in response to future acute maize deficits.

#### 7.2.5 *Learning*

- Make certain that all the knowledge held by programme staff (many who are on short term contracts) is not lost, perhaps by commissioning one of these staff to write a manual on how the project was implemented. This would ensure Oxfam GB captures this learning on practical implementation methods and constraints and that this is fed into the next version of the global guidelines.

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