



SOCIAL CASH TRANSFER PROGRAM (SCTP)

Executive Summary

Malawi Leave No One Behind coalition was established in 2020, with a purpose to collect citizen generated data to be used for policy, strategy and program development to ensure marginalized groups voices are heard and elevated to policy level discussions.

The citizen generated data (CGD) study findings have revealed that over 80% of the marginalised groups are not aware of SDGs and cannot articulate them which is a worrisome situation considering that only less than 7 years are remaining to 2030.

The SCTP was chosen because it is designed to fight poverty in Malawi by helping the most marginalized to move out of poverty and gain respect.

Context or Scope of Problem

Malawi is a signatory to a number of International Conventions, Protocols, Declarations and Treaties among others.

Lately Malawi subscribed to the SDGs; AU Agenda 2063 the Africa We Want and domesticated the instruments into the MW2063 maintaining the Leave No One Behind (LNOB) commitments.

The Malawi LNOB Coalition built on the Government's commitment to initiate a process of institutionalizing the CGD into the NSO data sets for policy formulation, strategy and programme development and decision making and service delivery to benefit marginalised groups.



The LNOB Coalition wanted to assess the marginalised groups knowledge on SDGs and how they are benefiting on their implementation especially SDG 10; on Equality.

The study findings show that 80% of the population in Malawi live below the poverty line and it should be noted that the 20.7% ultra-poor will always be there and they will require the targeted support.

SDG 1 on poverty is very far from being met regardless of targeted programmes to ultra-poor.

The use of a 5 years old database for the selection of social protection beneficiaries could easily lead to abuse.

The removal of local leaders from the verification criteria using the Universal Beneficiary Register (UBR) means that dead people continue to appear and can easily create abuse.

While SCTP accommodates school going girls and boys the lack of graduation criteria makes the programme recipient dependent regardless of it bringing dignity to the ultra-poor, chronically ill, child headed households, persons with disability and elderly.

The fact that SCTP depends mainly on donor support is worrisome and not sustainable except for one district: Thyolo.

At times there is delay in the disbursement of the cash due to transport bottlenecks and wait for months before receiving the cash.

The cash is very little and it does not move someone out of poverty and it does not take into consideration devaluation nor inflation.

Policy Alternatives

1. Increase the amount of cash to \$45 per month; it should be paid using e-payment and be reviewed in line with devaluations and inflation.
2. Government must start absorbing the SCT budget in its annual allocation.
3. The beneficiary selection criteria should be reexamined in order to give real time data and actual SCT recipients.
4. An independent accountability mechanism be developed comprising government and CSOs to enhance programme effectiveness including economic empowerment of the beneficiaries.

Policy Recommendations

1. All the marginalised group categories wanted the programme to continue but requested for an increment of the numbers of the beneficiaries.
2. Community members and service providers recommended increasing the amount of money allocated to match the devaluation of the Kwacha and inflation. “The ideal amount is K45,000 considering other variables”.
3. Chiefs and the community should take part in the validation of the legitimacy of beneficiaries as it was done at the beginning of the programme.

4. Service providers should improve in the way they address complaints and they should provide timely feedback on the issues raised.
5. Sensitize the beneficiaries and community local structures on the programme and how the beneficiary concerns can be solved.
6. Communities should be sensitized on the programme in order to remove the discriminatory words of [Amanja Lende].
7. A transparent process of recruiting and graduating SCT beneficiaries involving all key stakeholders should be established.
8. Intensify awareness creation and implementation of programmes which will assist Malawi to attain the SDGs.

Appendices (Backing documents to support our argument)

As a coalition, we conducted a study whose purpose was to bring out recommendations to enhance the inclusion of marginalised groups into the two social protection programs Social Cash Transfer (SCT). Furthermore, the study sought to solicit citizen feedback on their perceived performance of the Social Protection Programs in Malawi, particularly the social cash transfer Programme in line with SDG 10. The development of Malawi therefore depends on providing equal opportunities to all including the most marginalized groups.

The study brought out salient issues and voices of the marginalised groups in the community. The measurement of success is the interest shown by NSO, UNICEF, EU and UN Resident Coordinator’s Office LNOB desk at LNOB Malawi coalition’s work and CGD.

Appendix 1 MW Final Report Lena edited, 2023; and Appendix 2 Malawi Narrative Report, 2022.



Malawi joined the Leave No One Behind (LNOB) Partnership commonly known as the International Civil Society Centre (ICSC) for LNOB in 2020. The Malawi coalition comprises Plan International Malawi (PIM); Centre for Social Accountability and Transparency (CSAT); Care International; National Economic Planning Commission (NEPC); Malawi Network of Older Persons Organisation (MANEPO); and Do for Children (DFC).