



VI International Seminar on Conditional Cash Transfers

Conditional Cash Transfer Programs from a Human Rights Approach

FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean
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ANALYTICAL GUIDELINES

1. Introduction

The objective of this document is to guide the analysis of Conditional Cash Transfer programs (CCTs) from a human rights approach. Firstly, it presents background information on the role of these programs in the social policy framework and how to further their potential through a rights approach assessment. Secondly, it contains analytical guidelines based on the technical contents developed during the “*Conditional Cash Transfer Programs from a Human Rights Approach*” Expert Workshop, held at the FAO Regional Office on March 17th and 18th, 2011¹.

These guidelines were developed to facilitate the analysis and preparation of national presentations next September by the teams responsible for CCT design, implementation and/or execution in the region. An additional purpose is to contribute to the development of a comprehensive evaluation culture, capable of promoting public value decisions for the well being of population.

The topics identified in the guidelines are organized around the universal principles of the human rights approach. They are presented in the following tables made up of four columns: the first one describes the proposed evaluation variables; the second shows specific questions -based on the human rights approach- to be raised in the analysis of each variable; the third column contains a brief technical rationale for each question and variable; and the fourth includes specific references to the technical documents supporting each question.

¹ More information can be found in the Expert Workshop website:
http://www.rlc.fao.org/iniciativa/expertos/index_en.htm

2. Background

The analysis of CCTs from a human rights approach relates directly to how social policy, plans and programs are conceived. In this case, the starting point is not the existence of individuals with needs or at risk, but rather citizens with enforceable social rights. This condition necessarily demands the implementation of social protection and promotion measures for their inclusion, aimed at strengthening public responsibilities, public space and systemic governance.

CCTs have positive impacts on individuals access to basic social services and family income, advancing the accumulation of human capital and access to goods and services. Therefore, CCTs can be conceived as mechanisms which contribute to the realization of social rights, taking shape as an effective social policy option to combat structural poverty, as long as they are dynamically complemented with intersectoral intervention plans and programs in the framework of a comprehensive social policy.

Human rights are universal; they complement each other and should be progressively applied. The International System of Human Rights provides contents and minimum obligations for each State to comply with, the evaluation of which can take place within a broad policy framework. Consequently, specific intervention programs can be thought of as policy components contributing to the achievement of social objectives conceived at a higher level. In this sense, as CCTs adopt the fundamental principles of the human rights approach – equality and non discrimination, participation and empowerment, accountability and transparency, progressiveness and non regressiveness– their performance will be maximized towards the inclusion of citizens and overall improvement of living conditions of all recipients.

As a general recommendation, CCTs should look for: (1) more sustainability with the support of adequate legal and institutional frameworks; (2) reasonable and non discriminatory criteria applied to eligibility, selection and the administrative admissions process; (3) design and execution of co responsibilities in coherence with recipient needs, capacities and their socioeconomic context, safeguarding human rights protection above all; (4) preventing the reproduction or facilitation of gender violence and discriminatory treatment of indigenous and/or vulnerable population; (5) the establishment of adaptable and acceptable amounts, according to progressiveness criteria, while also aspiring to cover all the target population living in poverty; (6) the generation of effective mechanisms for interinstitutional coordination at the operational and technical levels; (7) guaranteeing the effective participation of recipients and the community; (8) guaranteeing adequate access to public information; and (9) counting on effective accountability and redress mechanisms.

3. Analytical Guidelines for Conditional Cash Transfer Programs

3.1. Equality and non discrimination

Variables	Questions for the analysis	Rationale	References
Identification and inclusion of recipients	What measures does the program undertake to prevent and/or correct recipient exclusion errors?	<p>To a great extent, selection procedures and inclusion criteria define the course recipients will follow in social protection, their future expectations and degrees of certainty regarding material and social conditions.</p> <p>In principle, errors related to the exclusion of poor and indigent individuals should be avoided. These errors may occur due to outdated social and geographical information systems, lack of identification through an identity card, excessively complex or rigorous focalization and verification mechanisms. A good practice at hand is to establish a single registry for all social program recipients.</p>	<p>UN (2009a, pp. 12) UN (2009b, pp. 17) HFLACI (2011a, pp. 30) Cecchini y Madariaga (2011, pp. 26-30) HFLACI (2011c, pp. 7,14,15)</p>
Application and selection criteria and processes	Do the criteria used to design and implement application and selection processes have any potentially discriminatory effects?	<p>Setting application and benefit allocation deadlines is not in line with the rights approach. Recipients are permanently entitled to social rights, these are not limited by deadlines. Application procedures should not be cumbersome or become a disincentive to include population in a program due to the time and monetary costs resulting from inefficient process design. Focalization and selection processes should not become an end in themselves.</p>	<p>NU (2009a, pp. 13) HFLACI (2011a, pp. 44) Cecchini y Madariaga (2011, pp. 26-30)</p>
Coverage and exclusion	<p>What mechanisms exist for the progressive inclusion of poor and/or indigent population who comply with eligibility conditions but are excluded from the program?</p> <p>Does the program consider the adoption of any special/adaptive measures to include communities lacking in infrastructure?</p>	<p>CCTs should progressively increase coverage until inclusion of the total target population (families with school age children and pregnant women) living in poverty.</p> <p>It is fundamental to have a plan in order to identify and include all eligible individuals who have been excluded from the program. Likewise, excluding communities with a deficit of services infrastructure constitutes a serious error from a human rights standpoint. In the absence of alternative plans or programs to ensure inclusion in social protection, CCTs should implement mechanisms for quick inclusion through an adaptive implementation system.</p> <p>Currently, the <i>Juntos</i> program in Peru and <i>Tekoporâ</i> in Paraguay include community selection mechanisms at the final stage of the focalization process. On the other hand, the Plurinational State of Bolivia resorts to the Armed Forces to make payments under the <i>Juancito Pinto</i> and <i>Juana Azurduy</i> bonus programs in remote and distant localities; and in Panama, the <i>Red de Oportunidades</i> program has made use of couriers working for the Postal and Telegraphic Services (COTEL).</p>	<p>NU (2009a, pp. 12, 24) HFLACI (2011a, pp. 30-31, 41, 45) HFLACI (2011c, pp. 19) Cecchini y Madariaga (2011, pp. 28-29) Sepúlveda (2011, pp. 8-9)</p>

<p>Inclusion of ethnic and gender approach</p>	<p>How has program design and execution been adapted according to specific gender and ethnic vulnerabilities? Have discriminatory effects resulting from program implementation among women, indigenous and afro-descendant population been identified?</p>	<p>Programs for vulnerable and historically excluded sectors require specialized design and execution. Non specificity in CCTs possibly contributes to accentuate exclusion as the offer may not be culturally pertinent.</p> <p>As an example, both the <i>Red de Oportunidades</i> program in Panama and the <i>Familias en Acción</i> program in Colombia have adapted their design and implementation modality according to ethnic-based criteria. Indigenous views on life and territory were taken into account in the design of program components, and program decisions are validated through community participation and spaces for debate.</p>	<p>NU (2009a, pp. 17-21, 25) NU (2009b, pp. 18, 24) Sepúlveda (2011, pp. 6-8) Robles (2009) HFLACI (2011a, pp. 10, 21, 31-33,44)</p>
<p>Economic pertinence of transfers</p>	<p>Has the implementation of different transfer amounts according to each individual's characteristics been considered?</p> <p>Do the amounts transferred to poor and indigent households allow significant access to goods and services ensuring food and nutritional security and asset protection?</p> <p>Are poverty and indigence gaps considered in the figures? Are there regular and automatic indexation mechanisms applied to the amounts being transferred?</p> <p>Are the transfers guaranteed on a regular basis and for a reasonable period of time?</p>	<p>CCT amounts should be sufficiently significant to guarantee the survival of recipients and prevent individuals from adopting survival strategies based on devaluation of assets and human capacities. Non consideration of the number of persons per household or specific opportunity costs according to sex and age of school age children is not only inefficient from a technical design and CCT objectives standpoint; it could also imply excessive inequalities in the wellbeing of recipient families.</p> <p>On the other hand, it is recommended to determine transfer amounts according to the existing poverty gaps, ensuring the application of indexation based on the general or food price index. It is particularly important to guarantee transfers for a reasonable time period, in order to avoid a "temporary entitlement" of rights among vulnerable population. This allows families to plan for better use of the money received, favoring capitalization.</p> <p>At present, both <i>Oportunidades</i> in Mexico and <i>PATH</i> in Jamaica have established different amounts according to the sex of school age minors, aimed at providing an effective incentive to girls and boys enrolment in the school system, based on previously identified gaps. The legal and regulatory frameworks of the <i>Asignaciones Familiares</i> program in Uruguay and <i>Oportunidades</i> in Mexico have indexation mechanisms according to the cost of the Basic Shopping Basket or the Consumer Price Index.</p>	<p>HFLACI (2011a, pp. 25-27, 46) HFLACI (2011e, pp. 10-15) Cecchini y Madariaga (2011, pp. 47 - 51) Sepúlveda (2011, pp.10)</p>

<p>Plan preparation and monitoring to manage demand and offer of social services implied in CCT implementation</p>	<p>Are there any follow up and monitoring activities undertaken regarding social services demand resulting from program implementation?</p> <p>Are there any plans and strategies to manage services offer in communities where the program is implemented?</p>	<p>Co responsibilities implemented in the framework of CCTs imply increased demand for social services. In some cases, this new demand cannot be adequately covered, resulting in non compliance of conditions, disaffection of recipient population and reduced program effectiveness. From a human rights perspective, a poor quality offer means infringing the right of individuals to access quality social services.</p> <p>If this situation is neither monitored nor are there adequate plans and strategies to develop and improve the public services offer in the medium and long term, effectively building human capital and reducing poverty become very difficult tasks.</p>	<p>Cecchini y Martínez (2011, pp. 98, 130-133) HFLACI (2011a, pp. 47) HFLACI (2001c, pp.19)</p>
<p>Conditions and sanctions</p>	<p>Are co responsibilities and sanctions adequate with respect to recipient capacities and their socioeconomic context?</p> <p>Do penalties imply worsening the well being of individuals?</p>	<p>The establishment of co responsibilities, which are disproportionately strict with respect to the offer of services available, makes compliance difficult. The social and economic context of recipients should be taken into account, including an analysis of the special characteristics and capacities of each group, before mechanically engaging in the design and execution of a co responsibility system.</p> <p>At the same time, CCT design should consider incentive mechanisms without generating arbitrary exclusions or discrimination that imply worsening the well being of recipients. This will prevent making the role of the State unclear regarding the compliance of social rights obligations.</p>	<p>HFLACI (2011a, pp. 40,41,45). HFLACI (2011c, pp. 19-25) Cecchini y Madariaga (2011, pp. 91-94) NU (2009a, pp. 16) Sepúlveda (2011, pp. 9)</p>
<p>Existence and type of evaluations</p>	<p>Have the evaluations undertaken implied the arbitrary exclusion of individuals from program services?</p>	<p>Evaluations have the purpose of detecting the need for changes and improvements to CCTs, and promoting the provision of objective and transparent information to citizens, ensuring continuity in spite of political and economic cycles.</p> <p>In experimental and quasi experimental impact assessments, part of the program's population is randomly excluded, depriving them of their right to access social protection. Consequently, the recommendation is to choose strategies which ensure a good evaluation, without deliberately excluding individuals in vulnerable conditions.</p>	<p>HFLACI (2011, pp. 40, 47)</p>

3.2. Participation and empowerment

Variables	Questions for the analysis	Rationale	References
State-citizens interaction	<p>Are there plans or strategies in place to guarantee a secure relationship between the State and the citizens? What specific mechanisms have been implemented in the framework of each program to prevent onerous and/or discriminatory treatment?</p>	<p>Direct dealings between public officers and CCT recipients should be appropriate, avoiding any actions that may foster preferential treatment, corruption or actions against the dignity of individuals, particularly women, indigenous and afro-descendant population.</p> <p>On this issue, it would be necessary to have specific training and human resource management plans and strategies, as well as especially designed procedure manuals, customer service protocols and community/social support guidelines.</p>	<p>NU (2009a, pp. 13-14) HFLACI (2011a, pp. 21, 31-32, 34-35) Gruenberg y Hevia (2010)</p>
Opportunities for citizen participation	<p>How is inclusion in the program's participation spaces ensured for all recipients? What strategies are implemented to prevent clientelism, ethnic or gender discrimination, and/or the reproduction of inequalities in the participatory process?</p> <p>What is the effective degree of incidence of program recipients on public decisions related to the program?</p>	<p>Citizen participation and empowerment depends to a great extent on the availability of spaces to streamline concerns, demands and complaints, and which will have real incidence on public decisions to improve program legitimacy. From a human rights perspective, it is fundamental that each CCT includes participation mechanisms. Situations where the program manipulates pre existing participation spaces or makes them invisible, or which lead to the reproduction of power inequalities in the participation schemes created for each program –particularly at the local level- should be avoided..</p> <p>One first step in this direction has been taken by <i>Bolsa Familia</i> in Brazil, <i>Familias en Acción</i> in Colombia, <i>Oportunidades</i> in Mexico and <i>Juntos</i> in Peru, where direct social audit mechanisms have been established and where program recipients and diverse professional and public entities can participate.</p>	<p>NU (2009a, pp. 14-15) NU (2009b, pp. 17) Cecchini y Madariaga (2011, pp. 167, 168) HFLACI (2011a, pp. 41) HFLACI (2011d, pp. 19-25) Sepúlveda (2011, pp. 12-13)</p>

3.3. Accountability and transparency

Variables	Questions for the analysis	Rationale	References
Information availability and dissemination	<p>Is detailed information about the program available through pertinent media?</p> <p>Do the information dissemination strategies consider culturally appropriate contents and media?</p>	<p>CCT recipients should be previously provided with all basic information about access requirements set out by different focalization criteria; application or registration procedures; socio economic assessment procedures and criteria; type of services delivered; code of conduct; national registry of recipients; forms of payment and/or transfer delivery; complaint, claim and reinstatement mechanisms; renewal or recertification procedures for recipients; status of files or procedures requested to public administration entities.</p> <p>Despite the fact that publishing such information at the central level through a virtual and mass communication interface is imperative, it is important –from a human rights approach- to count on dissemination media strategies and contents that are coherent with the recipients social and economic context at the local level. This should be reflected in the use of an adequate cultural adaptation of materials, media and language.</p>	<p>UN (2009a, pp. 13) HFLACI (2011a, pp. 33-34) HFLACI (2011d, pp. 7-12) Sepúlveda (2011, pp.11)</p>
Public information access procedures	<p>Do public information access mechanisms favor their use by all types of users?</p> <p>What mechanisms are there in place to avoid wrongful use of public information pertaining to the program (use for political, commercial purposes or facilitating discrimination)?</p>	<p>Access to program information is fundamental for citizen empowerment and for social audit by recipients. Therefore, in addition to the required strategies for active transparency, programs should avoid furthering the reproduction of social inequalities concerning access to and use of public information.</p> <p>While access to information is always positive, there are occasions where transparency may have a potentially discriminatory impact, as information requests may generate certain forms of political persecution and/or capture, or social stigmatization of recipients for being part of a cash transfer program focused on poverty and indigence.</p> <p>For example, in the case of <i>Chile Solidario</i>, <i>Bolsa Familia</i> in Brazil and <i>Oportunidades</i> in Mexico the registry of recipients is open for public access. In the case of <i>Asignación Universal por Hijo para la Protección Social</i> in Argentina, recipients can be identified through their identity card; and in Colombia a system was implemented through which SISBEN recipients are not associated to a name, but rather to a personal identification number.</p>	<p>HFLACI (2011a, pp. 33, 34, 46) Cecchini y Madariaga (2011, pp. 173, 174) Sepúlveda (2011, pp.11) UN (2009a, pp. 13)</p>

<p>Social accountability mechanisms</p>	<p>Is there periodical and regular delivery of products to ensure social accountability of the program? Are they sufficiently detailed? Are they easily accessible by the public?</p>	<p>Social accountability to citizens adds social value in terms of transparency, responsibility of authorities and social audit, setting in motion public pressure mechanisms in the face of irregular situations and strengthening governance at the national and local levels.</p> <p>Adopting the rights approach requires the preparation and publication of reports whereby CCTs can be made accountable to citizens, such as specialized reports and all types of assessments, audits and comprehensive management balances, updated statements of administrative and financial execution, official announcements and regulations.</p> <p>Currently, <i>Bolsa Familia</i> in Brazil, <i>Chile Solidario</i>, <i>Mi Familia Progres</i>a in Guatemala, <i>Oportunidades</i> in Mexico and <i>Juntos</i> in Peru have different types of evaluations and updated execution reports in their website. <i>Tekoporá</i> in Paraguay and <i>Solidaridad</i> in the Dominican Republic make up another group of programs, which only show execution reports in their website.</p>	<p>UN (2009a, pp. 13-14) UN (2009b, pp. 17) HFLACI (2011d, pp. 8) Sepúlveda (2011, pp.11)</p>
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3.4. Complaint and redress mechanisms

Variables	Questions for the analysis	Rationale	References
Presence of pertinent and inclusive mechanisms in each program	<p>Does each program offer pertinent and inclusive mechanisms to make complaints and allegations? Are these depersonalized, safe and anonymous?</p> <p>What are the prevention mechanisms against potential control by political operators or individuals who could make wrongful use of the information contained in the claims system?</p>	<p>For the effective realization of the human rights approach, it is fundamental for each program to have procedures for filing complaints and allegations. Charges may relate to the procedures established in each CCT process framework: selection of recipients, transfer delivery, customer service by program management and during compliance with conditions.</p> <p>Suing mechanisms are fundamental for the protection of individuals, because they should take into account the specific nature of CCTs and their recipients. They should be designed according to recipients specific capacities. In particular, recipients should count on depersonalized, safe and anonymous mechanisms to avoid being victimized once again or controlled by political operators, with special emphasis on the protection of women.</p> <p>As an example, the Sistema de Atención Ciudadana (SAC) of the <i>Oportunidades</i> program in Mexico, receives citizen queries in the form of applications, questions, complaints and claims, and which may be in writing using mailboxes, electronic mail, free telephone service, fax, personal meeting and Internet.</p>	<p>UN (2009a, pp. 14) Cecchini y Madariaga (2011, pp. 168, 169) HFLACI (2011a, pp. 34-36, 46, 48) HFLACI (2011d, pp. 13, 14) Sepúlveda (2011, pp. 11-12)</p>
Identification, systematization and follow up of institutional violence	<p>Are there monitoring, systematization and follow up mechanisms being implemented for all complaints and allegations? Is this information used productively (for example, identification of training needs, enforcement in the field, disaggregation and association with other data bases, studies and research)?</p>	<p>Promoting accountability and social audit of social programs may be constrained by institutional violence, discriminatory treatment or practices associated with clientelism by program staff and other social and political players involved in implementation. Therefore, it would be convenient to put in practice effective control, tracking, systematization and follow up mechanisms to monitor complaints and allegations. Adequate management of such information allows useful disaggregation levels, and facilitates on site research by program authorities, program enforcement and research by social and territorial organizations or by an independent attorney.</p>	<p>HFLACI (2011a, pp. 39, 48)</p>
Monitoring and evaluation of administrative management	<p>Are institutional responses to complaints and allegation monitored in terms of effectiveness and efficiency?</p> <p>Is program design and execution corrected in order to prevent future victimization of recipients?</p>	<p>For the upper level management of each program, obtaining information about claims and complaints can represent a key resource for decision-making, helping build public value. From a human rights perspective, it is indispensable to monitor the efficiency and effectiveness of institutional responses generated by each complaint. Likewise, all allegations should be used as relevant information to correct the future course of each program in the medium term, redefining and optimizing processes and procedures, and taking the necessary action with staff involved in abuse reports.</p>	<p>HFLACI (2011a, pp. 39) HFLACI (2011d, pp. 14)</p>

3.5. Progressive and non-regressive program development

Variable	Questions for the analysis	Rationale	References
Institutionality involved in implementation	<p>Does the program institutional setup have an adequate level of sustainability in the face of political and economic cycles?</p> <p>Do the agencies responsible for the program and its execution have adequate institutional weight and counterweights to optimize the realization of human rights-based principles?</p>	<p>CCT institutional framework should establish rights to guarantee individuals access to all program services, including protection of the latter from political and economic fluctuations.</p> <p>In order to consolidate progress in social programs and prevent any regression, the selection of entities to take on responsibility for the CCT and its execution should avoid any potential opacity in public information, accountability and social audit. In the case of CCTs, materialization of the rights approach demands that these form part of a system with adequate institutional weights and counterweights, so as to prevent the removal of social policy and programs from an institutional setup, and to reduce risks related to clientelism, proselytism and inefficiency.</p>	<p>UN (2009a, pp. 10-11, 23)</p> <p>HFLACI (2011a, pp. 22-23, 44)</p> <p>Sepúlveda (2011, pp.4-5)</p> <p>Cecchini y Madariaga (2011, pp. 158-166)</p> <p>Cecchini y Martínez (2011, pp. 185-186)</p>
Projection of CCT coverage and expenditure	<p>Are there plans to progressively increase program coverage? What are the temporal and budget limits to reach 100% of the target population living in poverty and/or indigence?</p> <p>Are there state mechanisms for the care of the poor in the medium and long term? Is there a plan to develop and strengthen public capacities to ensure program sustainability?</p>	<p>In order to avoid any regressions on the progress made by the programs and their economic sustainability, it is fundamental to count on coordinated medium and long term strategies.</p> <p>Having economic sustainability mechanisms in place will ensure the resources required for CCT operation, help build State capacities for more efficient and effective management, and the possibility of maintaining / increasing coverage and transfer amounts.</p>	<p>Cecchini y Madariaga (2011, pp. 157-158)</p> <p>HFLACI (2011a, pp. 27-28, 48)</p> <p>HFLACI (2011e, pp. 16-20)</p> <p>UN (2009a, pp. 11)</p>
Interinstitutional coordination modes and level of progress	<p>Are there any horizontal (between sectors) or vertical (between levels of government) coordination mechanisms considered in the political, technical and operational spheres? Do these help prevent inconsistencies and duplications?</p>	<p>The multidimensional view of poverty implied in CCTs and the coordination of interventions focused on income, consumption and human capacities, require further degrees of integration between government sectors and levels, adjusting offer and demand, and coordinating policies and actions to avoid inconsistencies and duplications.</p> <p>Examples of coordination at the political level can be found in the work carried out by the Executive Secretariat of <i>Chile Solidario</i>, the Intersectoral Coordination Committee of the Dominican Republic's <i>Solidaridad</i> program and the Management Council of <i>Bolsa Familia</i> in Brazil. Likewise, the establishment of recipient information and registry systems such as <i>CadUnico</i> in Brazil and the <i>Sistema Único de Beneficiarios</i> in the Dominican Republic are good examples of operational coordination at the intersectoral level.</p>	<p>HFLACI (2011a, pp. 22-25, 46)</p> <p>Cecchini y Madariaga (2011, pp. 175-177)</p> <p>Cecchini y Martínez (2011, pp. 156-160, 174-179)</p> <p>HFLACI (2011b, pp. 27-29)</p>

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