Innovation Support for Social Protection

**Millennium Development Goal:**
Goal 1 - Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

**Target:**
Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day

**Relevant India Development Goal:**
Reduce the poverty ratio by five percentage points by 2007 and 15 percentage points by 2012

**Background**

Conditional Cash Transfers (CCTs) are broadly defined as schemes that provide cash directly to poor households and/or individuals that fulfill specific conditions such as meeting minimum attendance of children in schools, fulfilling a specified number of visits to health clinics and participating in immunization schemes.

Social protection programmes that include CCTs have successfully tackled exclusion, inequality and poverty in many Latin American countries. These programmes which have looked at multiple sectors have generated significant interest amongst governments in Asia and Africa in piloting such approaches to address various dimensions of poverty. According to the UNDP Breakthrough Strategy 2010, CCT instruments could provide countries with a powerful tool to accelerate progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals. An international seminar on CCTs organized by UNDP and the International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth in 2009 allowed countries to share their experiences with CCTs.

The Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (GNCTD) with UNDP support has launched a project to design and apply CCTs to improve education, health and nutritional status of poor households, especially women and children. Households that voluntarily participate in the pilot, and fulfill certain criteria such as minimum attendance of children in school, participation in immunization campaigns and visits to health clinics will receive cash transfers.

**Objectives**

The project aims to develop a model and operational plan to introduce CCTs to address various dimensions of poverty and vulnerability by providing incentives to encourage improvements in educational and health outcomes of the vulnerable. As part of the project, transfer of cash, both conditional and unconditional, was introduced in one district of Delhi on a pilot basis for a year. The pilot is expected to generate valuable lessons on the efficacy of applying CCT instruments in urban poverty reduction as well as on the policy implications of upscaling the pilot in Delhi and nationally.

**Project Information**

**Area:** Poverty Reduction

**Budget:** US$ 1 million

**Duration:** 2009-2012

**Implementing Partner(s):**
GNCTD/Mission Convergence, research organizations, non-government organizations (NGOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs)

**Location(s):** Delhi
Results so far

- Pilot to test scope of upscaling conditional cash transfer support to most vulnerable households rolled out in one district of Delhi
- A first-ever night survey of the homeless in Delhi resulted in over 60,000 names added to the National Population Register, and hundreds were issued smart cards to access entitlements through this identification
- A pilot to test people’s preferences and responses to cash transfers in lieu of food rations has been upscaled from one district to three districts in Delhi
- Identification of vulnerable people undertaken through a comprehensive vulnerability survey of 1,350,000 people. The survey looked beyond economic parameters, to take into account, spatial, occupation and social indicators of vulnerability
- A high-level National Advisory Board comprising members of the Planning Commission has been constituted. It has enabled identification of policy implications of social protection instruments in reducing urban poverty
- Development of family vulnerability and family development indices

Looking to the Future

- Roll out of conditional cash transfer pilot for vulnerable households in one pilot district of Delhi by the GNCTD
- Roll out of action research pilots providing cash in lieu of Public Distribution System ration in two additional districts of GNCTD
- Generation of knowledge products on cash transfers (conditional and unconditional, urban vulnerabilities and social protection) that capture processes, methodology, findings and policy implications of the project
- Publication of two knowledge products that can provide useful policy guidance – survey of Delhi’s homeless and CCT design/vulnerability index

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