



## Knowledge hub - Collection of best practices

### Summary of the best practice

1. Title of the best practice (e.g. name of policy, programme, project, etc.) \*

Cash transfers to reduce inequalities in education

2. Country or countries where the practice is implemented \*

Brazil, Mexico, Colombia, Nicaragua, Tanzania, Ghana, Cambodia etc

3. Please select the **most relevant** Action Track(s) the best practice applies to \*

- Action Track 1. Inclusive, equitable, safe, and healthy schools
- Action Track 2. Learning and skills for life, work, and sustainable development
- Action Track 3. Teachers, teaching and the teaching profession
- Action Track 4. Digital learning and transformation
- Action Track 5. Financing of education

4. Implementation lead/partner organization(s) \*

Governments, Global Partnership for Education, World Bank, IDB, UNICEF, EU Commission

5. Key words (5-15 words): Please add key descriptive words around aims, modalities, target groups etc. \*

Targeting the poorest, cash transfer in education programs (e.g. scholarships) and social protection financing policies (e.g. conditional cash transfer programs that require children to receive health services and attend school regularly)

6. What makes it a best practice? \*

Cash transfers can have large effects on reducing inequalities in education and have been successful in increasing secondary school participation of girls, children from rural areas, and the poorest.

## Description of the best practice

### 7. Introduction (350-400 words)

This section should ideally provide the context of, and justification for, the practice and address the following issues:

- i) Which population was affected?
- ii) What was the problem that needed to be addressed?
- iii) Which approach was taken and what objectives were achieved? \*

Cash transfer in education programs (e.g. scholarships) and social protection financing policies (e.g. conditional cash transfer programs that require children to receive health services and attend school regularly) are proven to have a remarkable impact on improving educational attainment and reducing inequalities in education (GEMR 2020).

Conditional cash transfer programs in Latin America in the 1990s resulted in a fall in poverty, improved nutrition, increased school attendance, and grade progression; the impact on school attendance is most effective among girls, children from rural areas, and the poorest (GPE 2014). The programs in Mexico and Nicaragua also reduced child labor significantly for adolescents and domestic work, especially for girls; in Cambodia, the program, which gives transfers to children in transition from primary to lower-secondary school, reduced work for pay by 11 percentage points (World Bank 2009).

A need-based scholarship program in Ghana increased secondary school completion rates by 30 percentage points (Duflo et al 2021). A community-implemented conditional cash transfer program targeted to poor households in Tanzania significantly improved vulnerable children's school participation (Evans et al 2021).

Turkey's conditional cash transfer program since 2003 was found large positive effects on the secondary school enrolment rate among 14- to 17-year-olds, especially in rural areas (Ahmed et al., 2007). In 2017, the government later scaled up the program and extended it to reach Syrian and other refugee children. (GEMR 2020)

## 8. Implementation (350-450 words)

Please describe the implementation modalities or processes, where possible in relation to:

- i) What are the main activities carried out?
- ii) When and where the activities were carried out (including the start date and whether it is ongoing)?
- iii) Who were the key implementation actors and collaborators? (civil society organizations, private sector, foundations, coalitions, networks etc.)?
- iv) What were the resources needed (budget and sources) for the implementation? \*

The conditional cash transfer program in Turkey, which include refugee children, is implemented through a partnership of the Ministry of Family, Work and Social Services, Ministry of National Education, Turkish Red Crescent, European Commission and UNICEF. By June 2019, more than 500,000 students regularly attending school were receiving a transfer of between US\$6 and US\$10 per month; 83% of the families also benefited from Emergency Social Safety Net grants of US\$20 per family member per month. (GEMR 2020)

In Brazil, the Bolsa Familia program started in 2003. A family's monthly per capita income between 60 and 120 Reais (approx. \$60USD) with children under 16 years old or a breastfeeding or pregnant woman is eligible to receive a cash transfer. Families with monthly per capita incomes below 60 Reais are classified as very poor and receive payments even if no children or are not pregnant or breastfeeding. Conditions for eligible families include health care of children and regular attendance in school. In 2014, the monthly payment to very poor families is 62 Reais. In 2011, 12 million families (about 46 million people—1/4 of Brazil's population) received Bolsa payments.

In Mexico, Progresa Oportunidades (former ProGreSa) started in 1997. The transfer value is nearly 25% of the mean value of household consumption. In Colombia, Familias en accion started in 2001. The program covers 20% of the poorest households, and transfer value covers 30% of pre-transfer household consumption. In Nicaragua, Red de Proteccion Social was started in 2000. Cash transfer amounts were the equivalent of up to 18% of a typical beneficiary household's expenditures.

The finance of programs came from the government and donors. For example, the majority of the Bolsa Familia program was funded by the Government of Brazil, with some investment from World Bank and IDB loans. In total, this project cost \$24.5 billion USD, and only \$563.9 million was financed through the World Bank (World Bank, 2012).

## 9. Results – outputs and outcomes (250-350 words)

To the extent possible, please reply to the questions below:

- i) How was the practice identified as transformative? (e.g., impact on policies, impact on management processes, impact on delivery arrangements or education monitoring, impact on teachers, learners and beneficiary communities etc.);
- ii) What were the concrete results achieved with regard to outputs and outcomes?
- iii) Has an assessment of the practice been carried out? If yes, what were the results? \*

Conditional cash transfer programs redistribute resources to the poor and encourage households to invest in the human capital of their children. Cash transfer in education programs (e.g. scholarships) provides opportunities to continue learning in school for the most vulnerable children. In Brazil, the program resulted in a 3.7% - 4.4% increase in school attendance for children aged 6-17 years; 9.2% for girls aged 15-17 years; 9.3% for girls aged 15-17 in rural areas; and in poorer northeastern region for girls aged 6-17 years, the attendance increase is 11.7%. In Mexico, At the Grade 7 level where the highest dropout rate is expected for girls in transition from middle school to secondary school, the program showed the largest impact of 14.8 percent. In Colombia, the program boosted secondary school enrolment rates for 12-17 years children by 5.2% in urban areas and 10.1% in non-urban areas. In Nicaragua, the program resulted in a 20% increase in enrollment and school attendance; gains for the poor were 23% and 33% for the extremely poor. (GPE 2014)

A study that evaluated the cash transfer program in Tanzania found an impact on the education of children facing different challenges (e.g. being girls, orphans, among the poorest, and having low baseline exam performance). On average, being assigned to receive transfers significantly improves children's school participation (by between 8 and 10 percentage points) and primary completion rates (by between 14 and 16 percentage points). Differing point estimates suggest that gains are unequally distributed across children. As a result of the program, the poorest children are more likely to ever have attended school, whereas the less poor are more likely to complete primary school. (Evans et al 2021)

A study on secondary education in Ghana by Duflo et al (2021) found scholarships increase secondary school completion rates by 27 percentage points and increase the fraction of youth who ever enrolled in tertiary education by 2019 (after 11 years) from 15% to 20%.

Several CCTs have been successful in reducing child work. Frequently, these impacts have been concentrated among older children. In Nicaragua, the RPS reduced child work by 3–5 percentage points among children aged 7–13 (Maluccio and Flores 2005). Furthermore, the fraction of children who only studied (as opposed to worked and studied, only worked, or neither worked nor studied) increased significantly (from 59 percent to 84 percent) as a result of the RPS (Maluccio 2005). Similar effects were also found in Mexico, Cambodia and Brazil (World Bank 2009).

## 10. Lessons learnt (300 words)

To the extent possible, please reply to the following questions:

- i) What were the key triggers for transformation?
- ii) What worked really well – what facilitated this?
- iii) What did not work – why did it not work? \*

The essence of a conditional cash transfer program is that families must make sure their children use health and education services. If those services are not available, then the families will be excluded from the program. Some programs, at least in their early years, aimed to cover poor areas as indicated by a poverty map, but they set up operations only in areas where services were deemed accessible and intentionally excluded all those poor people who lived in areas without minimum service capacity. For example, de Janvry and Sadoulet (2005) suggest that Oportunidades have little impact on children who live more than 4 kilometers from a secondary school. (World Bank, 2009)

## 11. Conclusions (250 words)

Please describe why may this intervention be considered a “best practice”.

What recommendations can be made for those intending to adopt the documented “best practice” or how can it help people working on the same issue(s)? \*

Conditional cash transfer programs redistribute resources to the poor and encourage households to invest in their children's human capital. Cash transfer in education programs (e.g. scholarships) provides opportunities to continue learning in school for the most vulnerable children. Enormous studies have shown its effectiveness and efficiency in improving educational attainment for vulnerable children and reducing inequalities.